new releases that inspire and inform

The Lost Arts of Hearth & Home: The Happy Luddite’s Guide to Domestic Self-Sufficiency
(Perigee Hardcover, 2012)

In an age when DIY is all the rage, and pickling and canning are back in vogue, this book provides ideas for adding homespun touches to your weddings and events.

The book features many recipes, including Pickled Green Walnuts, homemade soy sauce, mead, sugar candy, and Pottage of Fat Goose with Pureed Peas, adapted from a recipe published in Paris in 1656.

And while you'll find many unusual dishes in these pages to add to your menus, you'll also discover ways to add rusticity to event décor. Learn how to dry out gourds to use as storage vessels, and how to hammer silver quarters into wedding rings.

The processes may take awhile, but that's the point, say authors Ken Albala and Rosanna Nafziger Henderson. "We are writing for people who are fed up with the way modern food industries (and other household industries) connive to get us to buy things under the pretext that they will make life quicker, easier and more convenient," they note in the introduction. "We like doing things the slower way, so that first and foremost food tastes good, and the objects we live with are aesthetically pleasing and useful."

It's My Company Too! (Greenleaf Book Group Press, 2012)

"How do organizations develop the commitment and loyalty from their employees that propel performance beyond 'normal' to 'extraordinary' on a daily basis? That's the question asked by the authors of this book, who spent two years researching eight award-winning organizations to find the answer. One of the authors is Thomas J. Walter, CEO and Chief Culture Officer of Chicago-based Tasty Catering, one of the companies profiled in the book (the other authors are Dr. Kenneth R. Thompson, Dr. Ramon L. Benedetto and Molly Meyer).

"Creating an entangled organization with entangled employees at every level does not happen overnight," says Walter, a serial entrepreneur who has been an owner/operator in the food-and-beverage service industry for more than 40 years. "I had a few tough lessons along the way before mastering true leadership, which is engaging the minds and hearts of people."

"Entanglement," as defined in the book, is going beyond employee engagement, creating a culture that leads "employees to achieve more than they thought they could do." This book serves as a guide on how to help employees be the best performers they can be, with chapter topics ranging from "Building an Ethical Organization" to "Increasing an Individual's Self-Efficacy."