

## Helping Hands' Nifty News and Notes Fall, 2011

*Halloween or not, there's no disguising our love for a clean, orderly home. Let us help you get ready for the busy season ahead with this issue's specials. Still waffling on a **costume** idea? Check out the profile of our illustrious Joe, the Dean of Clean. He's got one. And, if there's a "candy rapper" in your household--you know, a smooth-talking kid who "trades" with all the other kids for the best loot, be sure to scroll down to the Helping Hands List to find out about two of our **favorite candy stores** as well as our **scrumptious candy recipe** for this month.*

### ***Helping Hands Just For You!***



#### ***Our Trick of the Trade Special:***

As cool as stainless looks in our kitchens, it sure can get some scary-looking scratches. The Dean of Clean has mastered the art of stainless facelifts. If there is a slight scratch or some surface scruffs, his method works wonders. Email Debrah to make an appointment.

*debrah@helpinghandscentral.com*

### ***The Helping Hands List***

#### ***Our Favorite Candy Stores***

### ***In The Spirit of Halloween!***



#### ***Our Corny Special!***

We are not in to scare tactics, but holidays are just around the corner and company's a comin'. Want your place looking drop-dead gorgeous? Let us plan some extra time to polish up the silver, iron those holiday napkins, freshen up the guest suite, and clear out the cobwebs!

***Don't hesitate, email for an appointment soon.***

***Debrah@  
helpinghandscentral.com***



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### ***Meet The Staff***



You gotta love a holiday with no higher purpose than the brazen pursuit for candy. But that doesn't mean it has to be the crummy supermarket stuff that comes in 5-pound bags. This Halloween or any time you're looking for something sweet, divine, and special, here are two destination shops definitely worth the calories.

### **Business #1: Enchante**

**Speciality:** Handmade chocolate, candy, popcorn, and gift items. Holiday-themed candies for grown-ups and children. (see photo above)

**Address:** 10821 SE Main St.

**City/State:** Milwaukie, Oregon

**Phone:** (503) 654-4846

**Hours:** Opens at 11 a.m.; Closed Sunday and Monday

**Web site:** [enchantechocolatier.com](http://enchantechocolatier.com)

**Why we recommend:** Owner Kim Keehner's Parisian-style candy store is a hidden gem for grown-up sweet lovers, and now that it's almost Halloween, the store is a blaze in artfully-wrapped orange and black treats as well as all those chocolate-covered goodies you crave (as in toffee-pecan clusters; chocolate-covered raisins; and even chocolate-covered Nutter Butters). Little wonder it was named one of the top 10 candy stores in the United States ("Thank you USA Today."). A client of ours told us that this store reminds her of several French candy stores she visited recently in Paris and Provence. Hmmm, it's cheaper than an airplane ticket!

### **Business #2: Northwest Sweets**

**Speciality:** Handmade chocolates, truffles, caramels, and other confections; old-fashioned, retro favorites. Great hand-crafted lollipops too (we use them as plate favors at dinner parties).

## **Joe "The Dean of Clean"**



**Hometown:**  
Springfield, Oregon

### **Favorite Cleaning Tip:**

I have two: First, a clean fireplace with stacked logs ready for the next fire makes anyone an instant gentleman. Check out Clean Chic's tip on our Helpful Hints link on how easy it is to do (FYI: That's Debrah: I taught her everything she knows!)

The second tip has to do with keeping your car in great shape. Want to know the easiest--and best--way to clean the removable floor mats? Run them through the dishwasher: One mat on the top and one mat on the base. Just make sure not to run the dryer cycle or you'll have a real mess.

### **Debrah on Joe:**

If Joe can't clean it--it can't get clean. And, he's the master of making up a bed, even better than the best hotel. How good? Let's just say, when you see it, you want to slip in and . . . maybe that's why I married him!

### **Life's Dream:**

I have a few: To go to an

**Address:** 740 NW 23rd Ave.  
**City/State:** Portland, Oregon  
**Phone:** (503) 360-1350  
**Hours:** 10am - 7 pm; closed Tuesdays  
**Web site:** [www.nwsweets.com](http://www.nwsweets.com)

**Why we recommend:** This pint-size shop is home to confectioner Steve Gazda, a man who knows magic when it comes to a candy thermometer. His caramels, brittles, toffees, and--Yes--marshmallows are to-die for. Also just the right amount of old-fashioned, retro favorites to tuck into your purse or man-bag.



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## *Helping Hands in the Kitchen*



### **Bittersweet Caramel Honeycomb**

You'll find this scrumptious candy surprisingly easy to make--and a little magical, too. It's the candy of my childhood. We would get big chunks of it at the little blue store on the corner. Each piece was covered with dark or milk chocolate. I marveled at all those wonderful, tiny holes. How did they get there?

Now I know. It happens when the baking soda comes in contact with the hot sugar syrup. The mixture foams, creating spongelike holes that give the candy its heavenly crunch once it's cooled. Be sure to follow the instructions, word for word, and don't worry if you don't have a candy thermometer (I never use mine for this recipe).

Makes about 1/2 pound

Italian villa with 30 of my closets friends; to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro by myself; and to float the Colorado River with Debrah.

**Favorite Pastime:**  
Watching a Duck football game at Autzen Stadium. The whole event, right down to the standing in the porta-potty line. That, and going to the St. John's theater and watching a movie with Debrah.

**Birthday:**  
September 26

**Favorite Treat:**  
Eggs over easy with fried Spam and potatoes dusted with paprika, a stack of dark rye toast, and a mug of hot, black coffee.

**Latest Costume Idea:**  
Boo-Tooth---"Hell-OO."  
All I'll need is a bed sheet; I'll strap on my wireless communications device, and make no apologies for using it all night.

*(P.S. Thanks to [www.dailycandy.com](http://www.dailycandy.com) for some great Halloween inspiration.)*

1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda  
1/4 cup water  
3 tablespoons light corn syrup  
1 cup granulated sugar  
4 ounces premium dark chocolate, melted

Lightly grease an 8-by-8-inch baking pan with cooking spray. To remove the candy with ease, line the pan, lengthwise and widthwise, with two 12-by-7-inch-wide sheets of parchment paper and use the overhang as handles. (Since the paper tends to fall inwards towards the hot candy, you may want to use a clothespin to secure the parchment on each edge.) Place the pan next to where you will be cooking. In a small bowl, stir the baking soda to get rid of any small lumps.

In a heavy, medium saucepan over medium-high heat, combine the water, corn syrup, and sugar. Cook until the mixture becomes a very pale straw color (300°F, hard-crack stage), swirling occasionally, about 10 minutes. Do not let the mixture get any darker. Remove from the heat and add the soda. The mixture will foam and expand.

Using a silicone spatula and working quickly, stir in the soda until it is blended and the color is even. Do not overwork. Pour the foaming syrup into the prepared pan. Do not spread, although you can tip the pan slightly to "move" the syrup a little towards each edge. Set for 10 minutes. Pour the melted chocolate over the candy, tilting the pan to spread the chocolate over the surface. Let the candy rest at room temperature until it is set, about 3 hours. The cooler the room, the faster the chocolate will set. (You can speed up the process by placing the pan in the refrigerator for 10 minutes, but no longer.)

Once the candy is set, use the parchment on both edges to lift from the pan. To cut into uniform pieces, turn the candy over. Using a metal ruler and a knife, score one length at a time, then bend. The candy will break along the score line. Continue in this fashion to cut the desired number of pieces. If you prefer, you can use the dull side of a heavy knife or cleaver to break the candy into bite-size pieces. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 week.

### **Variation**

To make Caramel Crackers to use as a garnish for other recipes or as a treat all on its own, follow the main recipe, substituting a lightly oiled baking sheet for the baking pan. Pour the foaming syrup onto the prepared pan and let it spread. Do not coat with chocolate. Once the candy is set, use the dull side of a heavy knife or cleaver to break it into bite-size pieces.



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