After I put away my fishing equipment I bumbled around the house for a few days feeling depressed and discouraged and dreading the confinements of winter..

Normally, before the fire, lawsuit and hullabaloo last year, I would begin to experiment with different ingredients to develop new and more effective mosquito repellent concoctions. Since the authorities have installed sensing and monitoring devices throughout the house this is no longer possible. In addition all the neighbors have the various emergency agencies phone numbers in their speed dialers hoping that one of them can be the first to catch me violating my parole. Bunch of misanthropes!

I can accept the fact that I can no longer attempt to develop new and better mosquito repellents but when these monitoring devices get in the way of the application of my culinary skills I feel that it has to be some kind of violation of my rights.

I talked to my attorney about filing some kind of complaint that the terms of my parole are "cruel and unusual" since they deny me the enjoyment of some of my favorite personally prepared dishes. For instance the last time I prepared my zesty peppy chili and garlic bread combo it set off the monitoring system and you would have thought it was the beginning of Armageddon. Malevolent bunch!

I called my attorney right away so he could witness the disruption to my peace and tranquility and this travesty of justice. He came right away but must have been coming down with something because shortly after his arrival his eyes were watering and he was laboring to breath. He gesture that he would call me. I didn’t hear from him so I called his office the next day and his secretary said he would call me when he recovered his voice.

I noticed that in the crowd there was a gentleman I recognize from the trial. I wasn’t sure because he was wearing a gas mask and I had remembered him as a bearded and scholarly person. I recognize his young assistant and remembered that they were doing research and writing a paper on the Hallucinogenic Affects of the Combination of Natural Occurring and Household Cleaning Ingredients. His young assistant, who declined
wearing a gas mask, was an affable young man with a contented smile. He recognized me and said “Hey Dude wassup?”

I didn’t remember the gastrointestinal affect of my zesty peppy chili and garlic bread combo and I unintentionally set off two false alarms the night of the original incident. To make matters worse the authorities had trouble turning off the claxon, but, considering my situation, it saved me some embarrassment. The noise also kept the crowd further back and only the small object being thrown reached the house.

I let the dogs out, electrified the fence and spent the night in the bomb shelter I built during the Cuban Missile Crisis. In the close confines of the bomb shelter I felt even more lonely and rejected. I also gained an understanding of some of the objections the neighbors had to my zesty peppy chili and garlic bread combo.

Confined to the shelter, no longer having any friends and being considered the scourge of the neighborhood deepened my depression. I resolved that I was going to become a model neighbor and discontinue my efforts to create the perfect mosquito repellent and forgo my dreams of becoming a chef.

My granddaughter is getting married this summer and I decided to devote my time to making baskets to decorate the tables.

One of the last steps in making baskets is to trim off what I call the “frizzles”. These are very fine hairy strands of reed and it is tedious work. I had been thinking of ways that I might speed up this work and it occurred to me that these “frizzles” are so fine that I might be able to simply pass the flame of my little propane torch over them and burn them off. I couldn’t locate my little propane torch but I did find my dad’s old gasoline blow torch. I figured that it would do the job.

I got busy making baskets feeling confident that no possible harm could come from that.

Sodus Sam