

Story Time: Making Fire at The Picnic

I mentioned this in comments a couple days ago, but it's a fun story, so here goes:

Many years ago my extended family went to Palo Duro Canyon for the day. We planned to grill hamburgers and hot dogs for a mid-afternoon lunch- and I planned to wander extensively. It's my *favorite* thing to do.

When it came time to light the charcoal in the grill, we realized no one had any matches or lighters. Yes, it was long enough ago that it was before I carried such things with me at all times.

My brother-in-law said he would head to town and buy a lighter or matches since the park store was closed. I said not to bother, I could make fire without one. Their confidence in my abilities was such that he set off to town anyway.

I scrambled around gathering what I needed for a bow drill set-up. I got a stick for the bow, a spindle, a fireboard, a socket. I even lucked out and found a big tangled wad of string in the underbrush- this saved a lot of time since I didn't need to make cordage from scratch. I twisted the string into some serviceable cordage, gathered tinder, and sat down near the grill to get to work.

It wasn't the best setup but I still had the fire going before my brother-in-law returned. Everyone was amazed that I had done it. I don't know why they didn't believe I could do it. Hey, I may be mostly incompetent in the *modern* world, but when things are more primitive I'm in my element.

That's when I started making sure I always had fire making supplies with me at all times. In fact, I'm almost obsessive about it.