

559 Carpenter Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19119 phone: 215-843-2350 · fax: 215-843-6945 www.WeaversWay.coop

# Manager's Corner

by Glenn Bergman

She comes in the dark of night... She comes in the dark of night, before many of us have even thought of getting out of bed to face the new day. Even before she gets out of her car to enter the building, with the sun nowhere in sight, she has already put in an hour or two at home working on her computer keeping track of you No, she is not a member of the NSA or Homeland Security. She is our own super woman, Madelyn Morris, and after more than 30 years, Madelyn is retiring from her full-time position as Weavers Way Membership Coordinator. Working side by side with her sister, Barbara Green, the two have managed our records, answered your questions, oriented new members, handled complaints, and have been an important part of the glue that keeps this place together through good times and bad.

In order to stay out of everyone's way and to get her job completed, Madelyn and Barbara have been coming to the Coop at five or six in the morning to pull your card, enter data into the system, update your records, place stars and slips of yellow paper onto the cards to remind you to pay your dues and update your information, and to count membership dues for deposit. She has been doing this since the late seventies. The two people who have been on the Co-op payroll the longest actually work off-site (our produce buyer, Paul Labess, has been with us a few months longer than Madelyn).

Madelyn has known when you have been "bad" and have not completed your work schedule or paid your annual dues. She knows when you need to be changed from one cycle to another. She shows compassion when you explain that you have just had triplets, your house has been flooded, you started a new job that requires you to travel two hours each way every day, and your partner is also working in another state and there just is no way you can get your hours completed on time. You explain how much you love to shop at the Co-op and you cannot live without this life line to Mt Airy.

Madelyn has been that lifeline to our members. She rarely has missed a new member orientation meeting; she is set up and ready to greet our 20-50 new members each month with a smile and a stack

continued on page 7

# Inside:

<b>Board Business</b>	2
Election Ballot	3
Price Comparison	14
Trip to Chiapas	26
Suggestions	28

# the Shuttle vol. 35, No. 2



AFTER ALMOST 30 YEARS, CO-OP MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR MADALYN MORRIS (CENTER) IS STEPPING DOWN. SHE IS PICTURED HERE WITH HER SISTERS, BARBARA GREEN (L), WHO HAS ASSISTED MADALYN AND IS ALSO STEPPING DOWN, AND BOARD VICE PRESIDENT SYLVIA CARTER.

#### Weavers Way Spring General Membership Meeting

Summit Church, Greene & Westview Streets

Saturday, April 29, 2006 • 7 p.m.

#### <u>Agenda</u>

- Approval of Minutes from previous meeting
- Keynote Address: Gar Aplerovitz
- President's Report
- Song: 50 Ways to Love Your Co-op
- General Manager's Report
- Member Survey Presentation
- Questions & Answers
- Announce Election Results

#### Weavers Way Introduces "Eco-buy!"

by Ameet Ravital

Many Weavers Way shoppers would like to shop responsibly, using our purchasing power to buy healthy food from companies with responsible environmental practices, who don't use wasteful packaging, and who are relatively nearby, decreasing our environmental footprints. But we want our shopping trips to be quick, not morphing into research missions, requiring magnifying glasses to glean the information required to make

wise choices. Voila Weavers Way has deployed a team of volunteers to streamline this process by researching our inventory and generating product "scores," making it quick and easy for those so inclined to be better eco-shoppers.

In the past few months, you might have caught sight of us — pairs of Co-op members, standing in front of one of the shelves with a clipboard, animatedly debating one product after another. Food products are rated in four areas:



**Health Impact:** Products that are organic, unprocessed, and contain no refined sugar or hydrogenated oils.

Packaging: Minimal and easily recy-

continued on page 8

# Thought Provoking Forum on Membership Requirements

by Aron Goldschneider

A wide range of opinions on changing membership requirements was expressed at a well-attended Member Forum at Summit Church on Tuesday evening, January 17. Board President Bob Noble brought the meeting to order, introduced the issues to be discussed, and set out the agenda, which included

break-out/small group discussion, reassembly to report, and general discussion. The purpose of the forum was to introduce issues, air thoughts from members in response, and open up a dialogue on what changes might be beneficial to the membership rules, or if change is desirable at all. Actual changes to the rules can only be effected through a member vote at a semi-annual meeting, like the

Weavers Way Cooperative Association

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FORUM ON MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS, JANUARY 17

upcoming meeting on April 29.

The issues addressed by the individual groups, and later reported on, included:
1) whether the annual equity contribution of \$30 per household and lifetime cap of \$400 should be changed, or perhaps be flexible, according to the Co-op's needs; 2) whether members should be allowed to work in lieu of the contribution; 3) whether members should be allowed to

continued on page 6

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#### What You Think

Members respond to Co-op survey

by Jackis Winterbottom

In January 2005, a committee was formed to survey the members of Weavers Way Co-op. The objective of the survey was to determine the following:

- Member priorities/Co-op performing;
- Members' views on the Co-op's community values;
- Member thoughts for new Co-op strategic direction;
- Membership demographics, who are we, what do we look like.

Bob Noble, President of the Weavers Way Board, said the Board needs to determine the interests of the members in order to plan for the future. To get as accurate a picture as possible, the committee decided to randomly select approximately 500 members (out of a total of 3,000) and request that they answer 40 questions either via email or paper. 355 members (72%) completed the survey.

The survey committee members, Glenn Bergman, Sukey Blanc, Robin Can-

continued on page 10

# Come & hear Gar Alperovitz at the

Spring
Membership
Meeting, 7:00
Sat., April 29
or visit the book
signing at the
Big Blue Marble,
6-6:30 p.m.
details on page 28



#### Editor's Note

by Jonathan McGoran

Norman and Margie just returned from their epic journey to Chiapas. Norman was pretty disappointed at first when he found out that wasn't where Chia Pets come from, but he was soon quite taken by these people and their plight. There was even speculation that he might leave the Co-op to join the Zapatistas, but when asked about it, he replied, "What, and leave show business?"

Weavers Way is introducing a new program called *Eco-buy* that gives products an environmental rating, so shoppers can be green without doing all that research. It replaces an earlier program, where shoppers could select the most conscientious-looking shopper in the store and just buy whatever they bought. That program was called *Echo-Buy*.

Madelyn Morris is now retiring. And she's taking her sister, too.

When I mentioned that her departure had me thinking about my own retirement, everybody laughed and laughed.

"That's a long, long way off," they said.

"Actually," I replied, "I'm not as young as I look."

That made them laugh even more. "No, you look like hell," they all said. "What we meant was, you'll be lucky if you can afford to retire before you've been dead five years. And even then you'll need a part-time job."

Unfortunately, they were right. The financial crisis a few years back didn't help. Just like all those people at Enron, I lost half my retirement savings because it was all invested in the company I worked for. (The fact that those savings fit well under the Co-op's \$400 investment cap didn't help, either).

But I've done some budgeting and some thinking, and I've got a plan. Sure, I'll need a little extra income when I retire, but I've found a niche. When I retire, I'm not just going to get a part time job; I'm going to start my own business. I even have a name for it:

Jon's Flying Pig Removal Service.

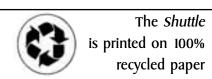
The Shuttle is published by Weavers Way Coop and is mailed to all members. **Deadline for the next issue is: April 1, 2006** (no foolin'!)

#### Statement of Policy

Articles should be under 500 words and neatly typed, on disk, or e-mailed to jonmcgo@weaversway.org. Be sure to include your name, phone number, and membership number. Drop them off by the deadline to the *Shuttle* mailbox on the second floor of the Coop. The purpose of the *Shuttle* is to provide members with information as well as education about co-ops, health food practices, and other matters of interest to the members as consumers and citizens of the community.

Articles express only the views of the writers and not those of the Co-op or the Board of Directors, unless identified as such. Articles, letters, comments, criticisms, and suggestions are welcome and should be directed to the editor. Space limitations require that the editor has the right to edit all articles.

Ad rates are available upon request, in the advertising mailbox on the second floor, or at wwwweaversway.coop. All ads must be cameraready and submitted with payment. Products or services advertised in this paper should not in any way be construed to be endorsed by Weavers Way Co-op.



#### Earth Day Fair at the Wissahickon Charter School by Bonnie Hay

Set aside Sunday, April 23 from 1-5 p.m. to attend the Second Annual Earth Day Fair at the Wissahickon Charter School, 4700 Wissahickon Ave. The day's activities will highlight the 3 R's: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.Admission is free; parking is limited.

Weavers Way, Wissahickon Charter School, Mount Airy Greening Network (MAGNet) ,and PhillyFreecycle.org and Please Take Materials Exchange are co-sponsoring this event which will include entertainment, information booths, food, and recycling opportunities including a Free-for-All. At the Free-for-All, donated items will be given and taken without any money changing hands.

Look for further details posted at Weavers Way closer to the date. For more information, contact Liz Biagioli, at Wissahickon Charter School, 267.338.1020 or visit www.mtairygreening.net. For directions to the school, visit www.wissahickoncharter.org.



LAST YEAR'S EARTH DAY FREECYCLE WAS A HUGE SUCCESS (AND NOT JUST BECAUSE THE EDITOR GOT AN AIR HOCKEY TABLE)

#### Co-op Attorney Giving Lawyers a Good Name

by Sloan Seale

Glenn Bergman likes to tell this story about Co-op member and volunteer lawyer David Kraut. At the end of the Co-op's first full-scale, outside audit in 2004, the auditor had a sit-down with Glenn to discuss any concerns that she had about what the audit had found.

First, she assured Glenn that everything looked good, but then said she was wondering about one expense she was sure we'd incurred, but which didn't show up in the books. At this point, as Glenn tells it, he had to suppress a smile, because he knew what she was wondering about. "For a company like this one," she said, "that has had legal issues with the District Attorney's office and a former staff member, I would have expected to see substantial legal fees. I believe that the fees may not have been booked correctly for the past year."

Now Glenn could barely hold back his laughter, as he explained to her that our legal representative, David Kraut, donates his work as a way to fulfill his work commitment to the Co-op. Although she understood that as a co-op, we have volunteers who work hours, she had never heard of an individual donating so much of his time and effort to an organization. She was mighty impressed, and said that effort like that is probably why the Co-op was able to make such a strong comeback, in such a short time, from the financial crisis of 2003.

In fact, David has been doing all of the Co-op's legal work since 1984. As Glenn puts it, David is an important "silent member who has helped to push us in the right direction without taking any special recognition." Back in 1984, when the Coop was first looking for a lawyer, David applied and went through an actual interview process to get the job. Although the Co-op at first paid him a nominal stipend, he soon decided that this didn't make any sense, and started working on a volunteer basis — not even for hours, because at that time he had three strong-bodied teenagers living at home, who could do all the family's hours.

Now that they've all grown up and flown the coop to interesting jobs, however (son Larry, who graduated from Penn in May, is now working as a singer, keyboardist, and all-around French-English translator at Club Med Martinique ).

Rebecca is also a lawyer and Alisa is a designer (and a member of the co-op). David's wife, Marilyn, has also been a member with me and during her time with the Co-op has worked on a number of personnel/ human resources related issues over the years.

David at least gets work-credit for his legal skills.



CO-OP LAWYER DAVID KRAUT

Over the years, David has performed all of the Co-op's routine legal duties regarding real estate, labor relations and contracts, and other issues which would come up. As a founding partner in a general civil litigation firm with a background in civil rights and labor law, David was able to call on the expertise of his partners, if need be.

By far his biggest adventure working for the Co-op has been the crisis of 2003. When then-General Manager Ed Mc-Gann first discovered the financial shortfall, he immediately called David. The next day, David and Ed met with managers at Chestnut Hill Bank, where David found that the Co-op had been charged \$2000 in overdraft fees in just the past month, and over \$100,000 for the past two years. Once he recovered from his shock at the numbers he was seeing, David quickly negotiated a settlement with the bank in which the bank reimbursed the Co-op for \$75,000.

This was clearly a major step in getting the Co-op back on track, and over the next year he helped the Co-op institute routine business and legal practices (such as the outside audit) that had previously been lacking. Prior to the crisis, says David, the Co-op had never really adjusted to the change from a little hippie establishment on the corner, to a five-million-dollar-a-year business. In some ways, then, the crisis was helpful because it made us realize that we needed to start acting like the successful, growing business that we are.

A lifelong Philadelphian, David's father wanted him to become a doctor, but while an undergrad at Penn State, David earned a "C" in chemistry as a way to make sure that didn't happen. As a child of the 60s, David knew he wanted to be either a lawyer or a journalist, and eventually decided on law. After living in the Art Museum district for a time, David first moved to Mt. Airy in 1980 and promptly joined the Co-op. Now, 26 years and three grown kids later, David has moved to Laverock but is still a loyal member, and of course, our lawyer. A former president of the Germantown Jewish Center, David points to the Co-op, the GJC, and a handful of neighborhood churches as the institutions "that make Mt. Airy what it is, and I'm committed to those ideals."

#### **Board Business**

by Bob Noble, Board President

#### December 2005

Announcements: Attorney-member David Kraut has OK'd General Manager Glenn Bergman's proposal regarding his Valley Green Bank conflict of interest disclosure. • On April 7 and 8 there will be a regional meeting for general managers, board leaders, and new board members in Vermont. • The Finance Committee will review compliance with the Co-op's financial controls in June. This will be in addition to our year-end review by independent accountants. • Membership Count: 2,993 households.

Ends Discussion: The Board continued its ends discussion. We tentatively agreed to use "Weavers Way is a sustainable cooperative enterprise benefiting both a growing membership and the wider community" as our core ends policy. A number of subordinate ends were also tentatively agreed to. (See January '06 Ends Discussion below.)

General Membership Meeting Review: Board members shared regrets that some of the Co-op's good news was not presented at the November meeting as a result of time given to discussion of and voting on member initiatives and bylaws. It was suggested that the Board could do a better job of educating and preparing members with regard to bylaw amendments.

Spring General Membership Meeting: The Board approved 7 p.m. April 29, 2006, as the time and date of the spring 2006 General Membership Meeting with Gar Alperovitz as the featured speaker. Gar is a political economist involved in studying and promoting community-based political-economic development through grass roots democratic structures. He gave the keynote address at the national food co-op conference last June.

Member Forum: The Board expanded the scope of the upcoming I/17/06 Member Forum to include changing all membership requirements. At-large Director Joe Sullivan presented the Shuttle article he wrote to inform members about the forum. Advertising for the forum will be included in the patronage rebate mailing.

Shoplifting Policy: Glenn and Operations Manager Rick Spalek presented information about several recent incidents of shoplifting. The Board discussed their and management's roles in addressing the problem. Management must take reasonable measures to prevent shoplifting, including staff training on proper handling of suspected shoppers. The Board must address matters of member suspension and expulsion as per the bylaws.

(continued on page 4)

Candidates for the Weavers Way Board of Directors were asked to answer the following questions: 1) Why is WW Co-op important to you? 2) What volunteer experiences have you had with other cooperatives or organizations? 3) What experiences and skills or unique perspectives do you bring to the Co-op board? 4) What do you think are some important challenges for the Co-op in the short and long term? 5) Any other personal information you would like to share i.e. family, hobbies, work experience, special talents, etc.?

#### Chris Hill

- 1) Weavers Way is the heart of the community, and on the front line in the region in making a local, sustainable food system a reality.
- 2) Actively involved in co-ops in Minneapolis in the 70s. Served on the board of the Duval Street Improvement Association. Served recently on the Organic Committee of the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture. Currently on the board of Amigos de Chocola, a new nonprofit devoted to improving the lives of residents of Chocola, Guatemala.
- 3) For the past four years, I've worked closely with farmers and farming organizations to promote and support sustainable farming through www.newfarm.org, a national web site serving farmers and food activists. I bring to the board a deep knowledge of farming and rural economies, and a passionate concern

#### Stuart Katz

- 1) WW is important to me because it helps to create and sustain community.
- 2) For two years I have been a member at-large of the Weavers Way Board. Prior to that, I worked on the Accountability Committee.
- 3) I served in many capacities at the Jewish Children's Folkshul, as well as on the board of directors of several organizations. I work as the Health Services Administrator at a City of Philadelphia Health Center.

#### Jim Peightel

I have lived three blocks from Carpenter and Green and been a member of Weavers Way for more than 15 years. Weavers Way Co-op symbolically represents the West Mt. Airy community I know and love. It values the sense of community, progressive ideals, and health and environmental consciousness shared by many in our neighborhood.

My co-op volunteer activities now include my last two years on the Weavers Way board of directors as a member atlarge. Also a number of years ago in graduate school at U.T. Austin I lived in a student run co-op residence, got interested and informed about the co-op movement, and served for six months on the board of directors.

#### Josh Giblin

First and foremost, Weavers Way is a source of sustenance, both culinary and monetary; it is where I spend a good chunk of time during the week. However, it is also a great social atmosphere, both on and off duty, where I can interact with my neighbors and like-minded community members.

For a few years, I was heavily involved with a summer camp in Florida designed specifically for children with chronic illness. I have also volunteered for a number of WXPN events, service projects at Springside School and a couple of tree plantings.

As a young staff person and Co-op member, I have the opportunity to see the Co-op through fresh eyes, without some

Weavers Way Co-op is an important

neighborhood institution and communi-

ty asset. I support the Co-op's broader

goals beyond selling quality food and

Rick Sauer

and supporting local businesses and the environment. I live right around the corner from the Co-op and am also appreciative of how the Co-op has served as an anchor to attract other small businesses

(continued on page 9)

#### creasing access to local foods. (Roots of interest? Years spent on granddad's farm in Oklahoma, inflamed by reading Wendell Berry's passionate critiques of U.S. agriculture.) I'm an innovator—cofounded the City Paper, New Farm, a dozen other web sites, publications. My collaborative approach to leadership has

resulted in creative work by committed

people taking passionate ownership of

their work.

about building infrastructure for and in-

- 4) Challenges: How to handle expansion and growth in a way that doesn't violate the spirit of the community. Related issue—membership requirements.
- 5) Passionate gardener with a thing for tomatoes and hot chili peppers; can, freeze, dry, roast hundreds of pounds a summer. Writer and editor with 25 years experience. Have had success with grant writing.
- 4) Continuing the process of institutionalizing sound business practices into our operations remains a high priority. In addition, I am convinced that implementation of the WW Strategic plan which calls for ongoing organizational and financial development so that the Co-op can effectively grow is an absolute. Growing isn't just a nice goal, but is essential if we are to ensure that the Coop remains vibrant and effective.
- 5) I am a 16-year member. I have a wife and two children, ages 16 and 21. I live in a row house in Mt. Airy.

The skills I bring to the table include the practical board experience these last two years, Board of Directors orientations and trainings we've had, and a variety of experiences working in non-profit, healthcare, and informal organizations.

I think the upcoming challenges for the Co-op include further strengthening our business and financial solvency; finetuning our board procedures and policies and ensuring they pass the "common sense" test; and using the recent member survey and other member input to inform the directions for our growth and development. We need to value our traditions and heritage, and yet balance that with staying relevant, modern, growing and vibrant.

I am an avid cinema-phile, public sector physician, and tennis fan.

of the burden of prior experiences. I am articulate, approachable and have a genuine desire to make a positive impact on my living and working environments.

I think in general, the biggest challenge to the Co-op is how to grow without losing sight of its core values. Major issues include spatial and technological growth to serve increasing membership numbers and needs.

My wife Liz and I moved to Germantown in 2004. I am pursuing a solo career in woodworking and operate out of my basement workshop. In my free time, I also play Ultimate Frisbee in a league and have done a lot of rock climbing in the past few years. We also have a dog, Truman who can be seen on the bench outside the Co-op waiting for my shift to

#### Louis Dobkin

- 1) Weavers Way is my day job. I have been Financial Manager for three years. I would serve as staff representative. After some challenging times, we are a much stronger organization, thanks to the hard work of many. I want to continue to contribute to the growth of Weavers Way.
- 2) I am currently on one board, The Walker Center, a Mental Health/ Mental Retardation residential program where my aunt is a resident. I have also served on the boards of Friends of Farmworkers, a community legal services program, and the Grass Roots Alliance for a Solar Pennsylvania. In both positions, I lent financial expertise in a regulated not-for-profit en-
- 3) In addition to working for and volunteering with nonprofit organizations, I have worked in accounting in the for profit sector, including in retail environ-

ments. I have also been involved with volunteer or membership organizations most of my working life. Without giving away my age, let's just say this adds up to a lot of life lessons.

- 4) Expansion is both a short term and long term challenge. In the short term, the Co-op needs to expand and upgrade our efficiency to maintain quality service to the membership. Long term, the Co-op has not met its responsibilities to the rest of the Philadelphia area. Co-ops have a substantial positive economic and social impact on their communities. We can help spread that message and help nurture other co-ops and grocery stores in underserved communities.
- 5) Sadly, unlike Jon McGoran or Norman Weiss, I have no pending movie or book deals. I have one son, age 11, catcher for the AAA champion Mt. Airy Pirates baseball team. My wife works for an NPO in public relations/communications.

#### **Nancy Weinman**

I have been a member of Weaver's Way since 1974 and have been involved in cooperative enterprises for as long as I can remember. From the time I was child, I was a member of Beachcomber's cooperative swim club and, as a parent, enrolled my sons in the cooperative nursery school at Summit Church. There is nothing more enriching, in my view, than being an active participant in a community that works together to put shared values into action, especially where those values include a respect for diversity and a commitment to protecting our environment and lending a helping hand to those

I am an attorney with more than 30 years experience in representing businesses and non-profit organizations. As a partner in Schnader, Harrison, Segal & Lewis, LLP (a full-service law firm), I currently focus on representing healthcare providers (including physicians, hospitals, and non-profit service organizations) who look to me for advice on operational and governance issues and for regulatory guidance. In the early 1970s, I was a staff attorney for Community Legal Services and, in that capacity, worked with a number of community start-up organizations

When I learned of the Co-op's financial crisis several years ago, I immediately asked what I could do to help the Co-op survive and was encouraged to become a candidate for the Accountability Committee. After being selected to serve on

(continued on page 4)

#### **BALLOT**

Election: Weavers Way Co-op Board of Directors Saturday April 29, 2006, at the General Membership Meeting, Summit Church, Greene & Westview Sts. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. Voting ends 7:00 p.m.

#### **BOARD POSITIONS**

<b><u>AT-LARGE</u></b> (2-year term; vote for 5)
☐ Stu Katz
☐ Jim Peightel
Nancy Weinman

☐ Rick Sauer

☐ Chris Hill

no other nominations were received

#### **STAFF DIRECTOR** (vote for 2)

☐ Lou Dobkin (2-year term) ☐ Josh Giblin (2-year term)

no other nominations were received

To vote: Place ballots in the box provided at the store by 6:30 p.m. Saturday April 29, 2006; vote at the Membership Meeting by 7 p.m.; vote by mail. Ballots will be accepted by mail if received by Saturday April 29, 2006. Mail to: Weavers Way Coop, 559 Carpenter Lane, Philadelphia PA 19119, attn: Leadership Committee. **One** vote per household (latest date counted). Please be sure to provide your membership information or your vote will be void. You may fold your ballot for confidentiality, leaving only your member information visible.

Fold line (fold top down to here for confidential vote)

AME MEMBER	MEMBER #	

(please print clearly)

SIGNATURE **DATE** Membership information is mandatory for your vote to be counted

to the neighborhood. products, its cooperative approach, and its commitment to building community

#### Wissahickon Day Parade, Sunday April 30



The Wissahickon Day Parade (pictured here in 1949) was started in 1912 as PART OF A "SAVE THE WISSAHICKON" CAMPAIGN PROTESTING A PROPOSAL TO OPEN THE MAIN PARK PATHS TO THE NEW "AUTOMOBILES" OF THE DAY. OVER 600 RIDERS AND 10,000 SPECTATORS RALLIED TO KEEP THE PARK FREE FROM AUTOMOBILES. THE PROPOSAL'S DEFEAT GAVE RISE OT THE NAME "FORBIDDEN DRIVE."

#### Nancy Weinman

(continued from page 3)

the Committee, I spent countless hours examining the weakness that led to the crisis and formulating recommendations for strengthening the Coop's governance structure. I am now ready to play a role in implementing the lessons learned.

I believe one of the Co-op's most important challenges is to maintain a strong and effective Board that is accountable to

the members, thinks and acts strategically, and provides appropriate guidance to management. We cannot expect to meet this challenge unless more members are willing to become candidates for Board seats, thereby giving members a choice in who will represent their interests. Another challenge is to find ways for the Coop and its employees to grow and change without sacrificing the sense of intimacy and shared values that make Weavers Way such a special place.

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#### **Welcome Spring** by Preserving Your Park

by Rebecca Yamin

When the world is muddy and luscious, we will be back in the woods.

Led by the Environment Committee, Weavers Way adopted the portion of the Wissahickon Woods in the vicinity of the Toleration Statue three years ago. Since then, a spirited group of Co-op members and friends have coaxed the area back to health.

Under the direction of David Bower, Fairmount Park's volunteer coordinator for the Wissahickon, we removed invasive species — Japanese Knotweed, Devil's Walking Stick, grape vine and bittersweet, to name a few — and last fall we planted the indigenous things that were supposed to be there.

In all, we put in 65 individual plants including oak trees, spice bush, white pine, hickory, black haw viburnum, persimmon, tulip trees, and umbrella magnolias.

On Sunday, March 26, we will return to our grove to check on its progress and continue the work. Please join us—all are welcome. We will meet at the base of Hortter Street where it intersects Park Line Drive at 9 a.m. on March 26 and work until noon.

If you need more information, call Rebecca at 215-248-1880.

#### **Board Business**

(continued from page 2)

#### Review QI Financial Report:

Glenn presented the financial report for the 3-month period ending 9/30/05. Net income was \$16,700 on sales of \$1.4 million. Balance Sheet and analytic ratios were within acceptable norms. While sales performance was ahead of last year, it was less than budgeted. Operating expenses were over budget. Labor expenses as a percentage of sales were greater than budgeted. Consequently, although the bottom line was positive, it was significantly less than the 2% budgeted. Glenn explained how he is working to reduce costs.

Andi Sheaffer Update: Because former Finance Manager Andi Sheaffer has so far not agreed to any dates for a meeting as per her ARD agreement with the D.A., the Board authorized Attorney David Kraut to try to set up the meeting.

General Manager Review: The Board discussed, in executive session, matters related to the annual performance review of the General Manager.

#### January 2006

Announcements: Marc Steir will introduce Gar Alperovitz at the Spring Membership Meeting. A "Wanted" ad will be published in the Jan/Feb issue of the Shuttle soliciting members with public relations experience to help with promoting Gar for the 4/29 meeting. • The D.A. has given Andi Sheaffer until mid-February to meet with us. • Discussions on 'Board Leadership Transition" have been

(continued on page 6)



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#### Member Who Designed Co-op Logo Now Launches Line of T-shirts

by Barbara Lee Sherf

When Weavers
Way member
Caren Goldstein
was approached
to help design
the Co-op's new
logo, she figured
she would take
the project on
in part to fill her
work requirements. Little did
she know that
after several
brainstorming



CAREN GOLDSTEIN (L) AND BARBARA OVERHOLSER HAVE LAUNCHED A LINE OF UNIQUE T-SHIRTS.

sessions and numerous conceptual drawings, she would actually meet her work requirements for the next three years.

"It's always a process," Goldstein explained while sitting in High Point coffee shop, sharing some of her graphics work on her Macintosh G4 laptop. "I'm happy I could use my skills to help the Co-op. I'm hopeful they'll use it for as long as it works for them."

The design is the simple apple logo you see on the front of the *Shuttle*. However, the initial concept didn't begin with an apple. "I like the apple. It speaks of the fresh produce and organic nature of the Co-op. It's simple, yet makes a statement. That's what you want in a good logo."

A Mt. Airy resident for seven years, Goldstein fell into graphic arts while pursuing an acting career in New York City. While working days at a small company she was approached "because of her creative flair" to do a brochure. "I had no idea what I was doing. But they liked the final product and then more and more work kept coming in." Goldstein has had her design business for seven years and works with a host of non-profits, educational institutions and theatrical companies in and around Philadelphia.

She and Barbara Overholser, another Co-op member, recently launched a new business of children's and women's t-shirts under the company name Piper + Olive. (http://www.piperandolive.com.) Over the past year, Goldstein and Overholser have worked hard to turn their conceptual ideas into the beginning of a thriving business. "Our name came about through a creative process as well," explains Overholser, a Chestnut Hill resident who knew Goldstein through a mutual friend.

"We decided upon Olive, which to us had a multitude of character — but the domain name was taken. A friend of mine recently named her baby Piper and we both liked that name, so we decided upon

Piper + Olive."

By the time you read this, they hope that the site is up and running. Selections from the children's and infants' line is also available in a Chestnut Hill store, BE Monograms on Germantown Avenue near the Laurel Hill Nursery. "We were pleased that such a nice boutique was giving local designers an opportunity, on our first day pounding the pavement," Overholser said, noting that they just launched the products in October at the Chestnut Hill Fall for the Arts Festival.

Overholser, who has a Masters Degree in Communications, has also learned a bit on the design end, and the two collaborate on graphic concepts. The duo researched brands of T-shirts for months before they found American-made high-quality shirts.

"We didn't want to support sweatshops, although we've created one in Barbara's mud room," Goldstein joked; that's where the silk-screened imprints are put on baby's onesies, children's T-shirts and women's T-shirts. The pair also have even designed custom T-shirts for special occasions. The children's line runs from \$22-26 and \$24-30 for women.

Overholser's two young boys have given input into the children's line.

"Nine-year-old Jesse and six-year-old Matthew have been our own private focus group. They have great concepts and really brainstorm with us on things that work for kids," Overholser said proudly. "I feel very fortunate to be doing something creative with flexible hours."

Their goal is to get sales on the Internet and eventually into boutiques around the country, something they are working towards with an upcoming show in New York City. They would also like to see the product line in Weavers Way one day.

You can reach Caren or Barbara by e-mail at carenag@comcast.net or bover-holser@comcast.net.

You can visit Barbara Sherf at http://www.communicationspro.com.

# Farm Committee Looks Toward Spring

by Shira Kamm and Jonathan McGoran This is an editted version of minutes from the January meeting of the Farm Comnmittee

Rickie Sanders graciously hosted fellow committee members Nancy Anderson, Glenn Bergman, Norma Brooks, Howard Field, Mirta Guglielmoni and friend, Chris Hill, Shira Kamm, Marilyn Khan, Mark Klempner, Jean MacKenzie, Christiaan Morssink, Emily Neuman, Tamika Stanford, and Raisa Williams

A review of the Annual Report on the 2005 growing season addresses the issue of compost. Chris Hill and Marilyn Khan will organize a delivery of compost from the city's supply of leaves and mulch. Municipal biosolids will not be used.

Plans were discussed for the 2006 growing season. Co-op Produce Buyer Jean MacKenzie came to discuss logistics and a produce wish list

Tomatoes & Cherry Tomatoes. Discussion focused on using flats to protect the tomatoes in shipping and varieties to plant.

**Eggplants.** Standard eggplants are easy to come by, and Jean suggested unusual varieties, and unusual eggplants.

Hot peppers. Several varieties of hot peppers will be grown by Howard Field at the Monastery Gardens site.

Watermelon Radish. Apparently, we cannot grow enough watermelon radishes Other interesting varieties of radish will be considered, such as the black Nero Tondo radish, or bunching Easter Egg radishes.

Cucumbers. Jean suggested that we stop growing cucumbers, as it is easy for her to source these elsewhere.

Summer squash. Green and yellow Patty Pan squash were a big hit at the Coop last year. Jean suggested baby zucchini and baby yellow squash, maybe a shishkebab produce section with small vegetables ready to be put on a grilling skewer.

Beans. Rather than standard green beans, interesting varieties like purple beans (either pole or bush beans), edamame, or even Red Noodle beans were considered.

Snap peas. These failed last year, because they did not get watered enough, but we could try again.

Peppers. Small sweet peppers (red and yellow) would be great, because the Coop does not have a large selection of pep-

The Weavers Way Organic Farm's Annual

#### habiadald Moitadald

Set., Merch 18 10 s.m. to Noon, on the porch at

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pers. However, standard green peppers can be better sourced from other farms.

Okra. We can't grow enough of it. Usually we harvest something like 1.5 lbs of okra at a time, which sells within two hours of delivery. Jean does not have another source of organic okra, so this is a real contribution to the selection at the Co-op.

Horseradish. We would only need horseradish for one week a year, to harvest for Passover, but it's hardy and an early crop, and could be a good activity for the schoolchildren. We would need to be careful in planting it, as it can really take over.

Leafy greens. Jean steered us away from growing leafy greens, as these just don't seem to hold up well.

Herbs. So many people in Mt. Airy already grow their own fresh herbs, there does not seem to be a large market for growing herbs such as basil, parsley, thyme, and rosemary. However, it may make sense to grow basil for the prepared foods efforts at the Co-op.

Beets. Jean already has a source for multi-color beets, but she would welcome them if we chose to grow them. Jean is not interested in purchasing beet greens for the Co-op, but suggested that we could market them to local restaurants.

Carrots. Unusual carrots, such as rainbow carrots, or purple carrots, could be a fun addition to the produce selection, although previous efforts with root crops have been stumpy and not particularly attractive.

Garlic scapes. Garlic scapes are wonderful to have and sell. The garlic bulbs were small and did not sell well, although

(continued on page 9)

# Big Blue Marble has expanded!



Check out our new sections on the second floor including cookbooks, crafts, spirituality, Buddhism, gardening and more! Also check out our new cafe serving fair trade organic coffee, organic Rishi teas, and locally made pastries.

Here's a few events coming up in March:

March 10, Friday, 7:00pm. *Blood Luxury* by Ewuare Osayande. *The Quarterly Black Review* has called Osayande, "one of Black America's newest insurgent intellectuals." Join us for a book reading/signing of Ewuare's newest collection of poetry.

March 11 & 16, Saturday, 1-5:00pm. Blowing Up Barriers. Join Niama Williams in our community room for two Saturday workshops that will explore the crafting of poetry that startles and stuns, one session focusing on poetry of the inner self and theother on our response to the information onslaught that is our exterior world. What within you has never been spoken? What are you afraid to let out?

**March 24, Friday, 7:30pm. Poetry Aloud and Alive.** Featured Reader: Allison Whittenberg. Allison Whittenberg is a poet and author of *Sweet Thang*, a young-adult novel. Hosted By Michael Cohen. Open Reading to follow.

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AT THE MEMBER FORUM ON JANUARY 17, MEMBERS BROKE INTO SMALL GROUPS TO DISCUSS AND RE-EXAMINE WEAVERS WAY'S MEMBER INVESTMENTS, WORK REQUIREMENTS AND OTHER CO-OP MEMBERSHIP REQUIRMENTS.

#### <u>Membership Forum</u>

(continued from page 1) pay the Co-op or someone else to do their

work hours; 4) whether the work requirement should be reduced or eliminated entirely; and 5) whether non-members should be charged a 20% surcharge on their purchases.

Though some members had already formed strong opinions on some of these issues, many members felt that they needed more information on which to base an opinion, and the meeting was clearly a first step in this process. For example, although most, if not all, members agreed it was not

fair that non-members were able to shop and receive the benefits of membership without meeting the work requirement or financial contribution, it was news to many just how large the sales to non-members were. Indeed, there was genuine surprise among many that the number was approximately \$100,000 per year, and some discussion ensued on what this income means to the Co-op, how to best promote membership among the non-member population, if possible, or whether a surcharge might make more sense.

Information shared with members included the facts that: the Co-op is appar-

ently one of only two co-ops in the nation that has a mandatory work requirement, but the other, Park Slope, requires six hours per month, rather than six hours per year; under the current membership fee structure, the Co-op is predicted to have a surplus of \$621,500 in 11 years; about 150 members withdraw each year to be replaced by 150 new members; and 50% of households that leave have been members for two years or less.

As a starting point, there were those who felt the Co-op should be oriented toward evolving and looking to the practices of other co-ops across the nation, and those who felt that care should be taken when making changes that could affect our co-op's tradition and culture. In response to this potential clash of values, one member thoughtfully observed that the answers to many of the questions discussed depended on what one's vision of the Co-op is; that is, in the broadest terms, is Weavers Way essentially a store, or is it an organization or community?

Much was accomplished, but the work remains unfinished. The board will need to absorb the opinions expressed at the forum along with the recently completed member survey (see separate article on page one). A committee may be formed to continue investigating the issues raised, and another forum may be held when more information is available and the is-

#### Board Business

(continued from page 4)

added to the agenda of several upcoming Board meetings to help prepare for the election of the new president and vice president at the May board meeting. • Membership Count: 3,018 households.

CBLD Survey: The 2006 Cooperative Board Leadership Development Survey was distributed and completed by board members present.

Ends Discussion: The Board approved the following Ends Policies as replacements to our existing ends: 'Weavers Way is a sustainable cooperative enterprise benefiting both a growing membership and the wider community. E1. The diversity of our community is reflected in our membership, staff, and all aspects of our cooperative. E2. Members own, operate, govern, contribute to, and participate in a democratically controlled enterprise. E3. Products and services provide high quality, are fairly priced, and meet our members' needs. E4. The local economy, community groups, and institutions are strengthened. E5. Members of our co-op and the wider community are informed about cooperative principles and values, consumer issues, and environmental concerns. E6. Our operations balance economic, social and environmental responsibilities."

**Proposed Board Budget Re**quest: The Board approved a \$15,850 budget request for board-related activities for the Fiscal Year beginning 7/1/06.

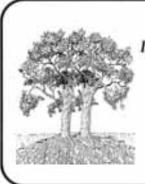
Shoplifting: The Board affirmed its support for Management's handling of recent shoplifting incidents, establishing written procedures and guidelines, uniform and non-discriminatory enforcement, further staff training, consultation with knowledgeable professionals, and reporting all shoplifting incidents to the board. Susan, Dorothy, and Bob will work on drafting a formal written Board policy on shoplifting.

**Grievance Committee Chair Se**lection: The Board discussed its role in (continued on page 8)

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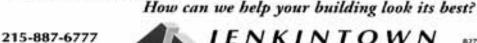
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#### **Weavers Way Financial Report**

by Lou Dobkin

As of this writing, an evaluation of the second quarter, ending December 31, has not been completed and reviewed by the Finance Committee. Quarterly results are four times a year (thus the name) and the *Shuttle* comes out six times a year. So, twice a year we get to just chat. For those of us who look forward to reading long columns of numbers – I feel your pain. I can say, without giving away too many surprises, that sales are more than 6% greater than last year and less than 1% under budget.

We had a dividend rebate based on purchases by members during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005. We started giving them out at the register on December 28. By December 31, \$7,080 of the \$16,000 had been cashed in, and as of January 31, a total of \$12,352 had been cashed. The more that is paid out at the registers, the less we have to spend on checks and postage. Good work, members

For co-ops, a dividend rebate is an interesting device that makes a cooperative a tax-favored entity. Namely, we can reduce the taxable income of the corporation by simply giving the money back after the end of the year and before we file the tax return. So, if we find ourselves in a tax bracket that does not suit us, we just give that portion of the earnings that would put us in the higher bracket back to the members, after we have found out what our tax liability would otherwise have been. It is also a financing tool, whereby we can retain income in the

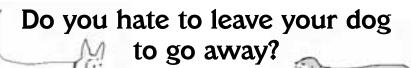
member accounts – where we can still use it – but it is deductible from taxable income. In practice, this income – and the tax on it – is not paid out in cash until the member leaves. If there is no profit in the year in which the member leaves, we do not pay tax on that income at all. Assuming an average membership duration of eight years, the Co-op would have the tax deferral of those eight years. This is the stuff of which tax accountants dream.

We have also decided to do some different things with cash. As was disclosed in our financial statements for fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, we had funds in banks in excess of FIDC coverage. We have a "sweep account" that actually sweeps excess funds overnight into a governmental instrument that earns interest for us. That makes our risk rather small. But we have decided to make that risk even smaller by moving some of those funds to Valley Green Bank, a new local bank. We are also buying some certificates of deposit to get a better interest rate. We also have a reserve fund, now at Calvert in a Social Investment Money Market, that we are moving to a certificate of deposit at the National Co-op Bank to get a better interest rate and to renew a relationship with an institution that has given us financing in the past.

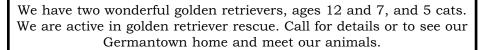
The purposes of these moves are to increase interest income, decrease risk and establish relationships with institutions that may help us with any future financing needs.

See you next time. I'll bring the numbers

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#### Let's Plant Some Trees!

by Dave Tukey

The Right Tree in the Right Place. That's the well-known advice for urban street trees. In the November-December 2005 issue of the *Shuttle* we gave some guidelines for the Right Place, such as a tree pit located between the curb and the sidewalk at least 3-feet by 3-feet in size, and a commitment by the owner to care for the young tree (including 10 gallons of water per week for the first year, rain or shine).

The Right Tree concerns a multitude of environmental issues. Good varieties for street trees are those that will not grow too tall (to avoid overhead wires) or too wide (to interfere with pedestrians or vehicles), and also be suitable for an urban environment. Soil conditions, amount of sunlight, resistance to various tree diseases and tolerance for salt are important factors.

Here are some good varieties to consider for street trees in our area. These particular varieties were selected for the annual bare-root planting to be held in mid-March:

For locations under wires: Tatarian Maple (tree form), Canada Red Chokecherry, 'Autumn Brilliance' Serviceberry and Cockspur Hawthorn.

For locations without overhead wires: Swamp White Oak, 'Autumn Gold' Maidenhair and 'Bloodgood' London Planetree.

If you'd like to be actively involved in

caring for city street trees, whether Co-op trees or those near your homes, a great introduction is the Tree Tender training sessions offered through the Philadelphia Green program. For those interested, the next Philadelphia Green Tree Tender training series will be held Wednesdays, May 10, 17 and 24, from 5:45 p.m.-8:45 p.m. Since 1993, this program has trained more than 1,500 volunteers in 100 Philadelphia neighborhoods and is now expanding to nearby counties in Pennsylvania. The series is free of charge, but you must register; it's not uncommon for the program to be booked to capacity. For more information on the Tree Tenders program, contact Mindy Maslin, The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, at (215) 988-8844 or mmaslin@pennhort.org.

And if you want some early spring season hands-on experience with bareroot planting, nearly two dozen street trees will be planted the weekend of March 18-19 in locations across West Mt Airy, stretching from Germantown Ave. to Wissahickon Ave. Look for postings in the Co-op for updated information on how to volunteer to help plant these street trees.

For more information on the Co-op's Tree Tender efforts and/or the March 2006 bare root planting efforts, contact Dave Tukey at (215) 844-2807 or train-bow2@yahoo.com.

#### Manager's Corner

(continued from page 1)

of paperwork.

If you come in early on Thursday or Saturday morning, you will see her Ford parked out front. You may also get a sense of how the Co-op is being taken care of by this great person who has silently and diligently completed her important job of keeping the membership system running. In the cold of early morning in winter, Madelyn is at the Co-op plugging away with Barbara, and more recently with Robin Cannicle, who will soon be taking her place. It is true dedication.

I will miss her. It is at times like this, when a person is moving on, that we realize how much we will miss them. We have been in good hands for many years, and we will continue to be a good hands in the future. But we will miss those hands that have helped us get this far.

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#### Eco-Buy

(continued from page 1)

clable packaging (glass, metal, or card-board).

Distance: Locally grown or packaged. (If this is not discernible from the label's information, it is scored "low.")

Social and Environmental Impact: Again, organic ingredients (for their safety for agricultural workers, as well as for the land), fair-trade and/or co-operatively run businesses.

These four scores are combined for an overall "Green Score." In evaluating products, the audit attempts to assess the impact of transporting them from their point of origin as well as their end-of-life impact on our planet. We may also identify products we think are missing and research purchasing options.

For non-food items (especially on the second floor), a high green score is based on the same packaging, distance, and social impact criteria as above, as well as three additional ones:

Resource use: Products that actually reduce household resource consumption (such as a low-flow showerhead).

**Durability:** Long-lasting over many uses.

**End of life:** Reusable, recyclable and/or biodegradable.

In many categories, the results are not obvious. Take a box of Envirokidz' Or-

ganic Gorilla Munch. It rates a high score on social and environmental impact (they donate a percentage of sales towards wildlife conservation), a medium score on health impact (despite the organic label, the second ingredient is evaporated cane juice, or sugar), a medium score on packaging (like most cereal, its inner lining is neither recyclable nor reusable), and a low score on distance, since it comes from across the country (more fossil fuel for transporting it to the Co-op). So, is it a good product or not? Gorilla Munch's green score comes in at 65 (out of 100), well above Kashi Medley's (50) but not quite as green as Arrowhead Mills' Seven Grain Cereal (75), which tops the list. Comparing green scores should be as easy as comparing prices. Of course, the score doesn't tell you if your kid will eat the higher scoring product... But at least you'll know your options

In reality, no product comes close to getting full marks on all criteria. We envision an ongoing process of evaluation, with a goal of expanding our products at the highest possible end of the green score scale. Members can then have a range of choices in shopping, including items that help your household live lightly on the earth with a less negative impact on resources.

The Eco-Buy Audit, once completed, will be used in several ways. First, we will

identify the green leaders in each category. These eco-winners will be labeled with our newly designed "Eco-Buy" logo, making them easy to spot throughout the store. Second, the audit also identifies products that could be readily sold in bulk (thereby eliminating a great deal of packaging), and this list will help develop an expanded bulk-foods section. Finally, having green scores makes it possible to make strategic decisions to eliminate certain items (that are notoriously low-scoring) and to press our suppliers to offer items that are higher scoring.

Down the road, we hope to export our home-grown Weavers Way ranking system to cooperatives throughout the country, giving rise to higher visibility of all of the green criteria used in scoring products and placing more pressure on suppliers everywhere to offer sustainable and socially-just products.

The audit team is happy to have additional volunteers. You can contact me at aravital@gmail.com if you want to join our ranks. It's an educational and interesting way to meet your WW work requirement.

#### **Board Business**

(continued from page 6)

the current staff grievance system for selecting a Grievance Committee Chair and alternate to be on retainer for two years. The next term begins in May 2006. The Board requested that Glenn ask Operations Support Committee Chair David Baskin to make a recommendation to the Board by the April board meeting.

Recycle Bank: Steve reported that the Environment Committee has endorsed the new Recycle Bank, a for-profit recycle program paid for by the city, currently being tested in Chestnut Hill and elsewhere. He acknowledged that the program would recycle more items than the city has done in the past, but bemoaned the lack of community involvement, as has been the case with the Coop's recycling efforts. The Board felt no action was needed.

General Manager Review (Executive Session): The performance evaluation of the General Manager is postponed until April. A committee was established to assist the Board: Bob (chair), Vice President Sylvia Carter, and At-large Director Jim Peightel.







#### A name to remember,



### service not to forget

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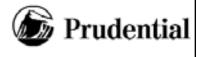
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#### Co-op Farm

(continued from page 7)

they were very flavorful and delicious. The Co-op had nice signs about the garlic scapes explaining how to use them.

Fiddlehead ferns. People like them, and they are hard to come by. They will be looked into.

Brussel sprouts. Like the cluster tomatoes, we could sell brussels right on the stalk. There is a demand for organic brussels at the Co-op, and Glenn is an enthusiastic brussel sprout supporter. This would be a great fall crop that would help extend the season.

Winter squash. The Co-op is having trouble finding winter squash this year. However, this may change for next year, and winter squash take a lot of space.

Gourds. There is a market for decorative gourds and colorful mini-corns at the Co-op. This could be a good activity for schoolchildren, as well - harvesting minicorns and tying them up in attractive bundles. This would be the Farm's first venture into decorative and value-added products.

Potatoes. The Farm has always avoided potatoes altogether so as to elude the

#### <u>Rick Sauer</u>

(continued from page 3)

I have worked in the non-profit sector for nearly 20 years, with a focus in housing and community development. I am a member of Weavers Way Co-op, the Mt. Airy/Chestnut Hill Babysitting Co-op, and previously served on the Non-Profit Board of the Childspace Day Care Center Cooperative, which my two daughters attended. I currently serve on a number of non-profit boards and committees.

Through my work experience, including as Executive Director of the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations for the past seven years, I bring knowledge of organizational dreaded potato beetle, but we might reopen the discussion.

Miscellaneous crops. Celery root is not too much trouble to source. Turnips can be used for Thanksgiving dishes. Jean wouldn't mind having local shallots, which are delicious and can be expensive to procure. However, shallots need to overwinter, so we will not be able to plant these until next year. Leeks are already in plentiful supply from a local farmer. The Co-op does not typically carry organic parsnips. Although they are a steady seller, parsnips should not be a huge growing priority.

Marketing. Efforts to help Jean prepare for new or unusual vegetables were discussed, like help with finding recipes and serving suggestions on-line.

Other business. There is enough room at the farm to grow more than we did in the 2005 growing season... Emily reminded us not to get too creative with new crops, as it is important to have a good crop rotation... With a large diagram taped to the door, we planned the 2006 farm layout... We decided to harvest the sunchokes on Sat., Jan. 28 (rain/snow date will be Sunday February 5).

development and management, fundraissus around issues.

From my perspective, key issues facing the Co-op are building on recent improvements, further diversifying the Coop membership, and effectively managing growth/expansion.

ing and financial management, policy development, and community-based real estate development. I have developed a broad range of relationships with stakeholders in the public, private and nonprofit sectors, and have the ability to see issues from a variety of viewpoints. I have good facilitation and negotiation skills, a commitment to process, and experience in getting groups with diverse perspectives to reach agreement/develop consen-

#### **Introducing Co-op Ride Share**

by Meenal Raval

Walk to Weavers Way, then get a ride home for you and your groceries A few of us have discovered that we love walking in our neighborhood, especially to the Co-op, but the return trip home, laden with groceries, has us resorting to driving about, even in lovely, walkable Mt. Airy. We're therefore introducing a unique, one-way ride share system – just to get you and your groceries home.

The member that wants a ride would write her name, time and destination on the yellow signup sheet by the checkout line. For example: Betsy 11:45 to W. Mt Airy & Cliveden. She could continue to shop, then wait outside by the bottled water, at the Co-op Ride Share sign (to be erected).

The member that can offer a ride would scan the yellow signup sheet while at the checkout line to see if she can offer someone a ride. If there is someone going in the same general direction, the cashiers could announce the ride offer on the intercom.

Benefits of the Co-op Ride Share are: 1. Increased purchasing – People who walk to and from the store only buy what they can carry or wheel home. This should increase our sales.

- 2. Reduced parking congestion We all know how tight the parking is around our favorite co-op. This should reduce the demand for parking spaces around the store, benefiting all.
- 3. Decreased global warming by using less fuel - While the passenger made one less

car trip, the driver used the car to haul one more person, both jointly making a smaller ecological footprint.

4. Building a more generous, cooperative community – We suspect that both ride requesting and ride providing will become socially accepted, like using canvas bags. In time, members would just look around for someone they know and ask for a ride, before posting on the bulletin board. Newcomers would meet oldtimers, neighbors would catch up. All-inall, we hope it would promote an interdependent culture.

5. Promotes healthy life styles by facilitating walking.

6. Promotes diversity by supporting carless Weavers Way members.

7. Expands Weavers Way services with no significant cost to the Co-op or the members – another reason to shop at Weavers

> If you have questions, ideas or comments, please contact:

#### **Betsy Teutsch**

bpteutsch@comcast.net www.mtairygreening.net)

#### **Meenal Raval**

meenal@mtairygreening.net www.mtairygreening.net)

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#### **Banding Together** to Save Rubber

by Betsy Teutsch

If you, like my household, receive your mail double rubber banded every day (adding up to 600+ rubber bands a year) and only have use for a few of them, I've discovered you can return them to your local Post Office.

I've been saving the rubber bands for a few years. When I took about a dozen bundles to the Mount Airy post office, they were very pleased to accept them. They told me this was maybe the second time in 20 years someone had done this.

Reusing is even better than recycling, which involves degrading the resource and remanufacturing it, which consumes energy. Reusing takes no energy at all, except your energy in collecting and dropping off the rubber bands

#### <u>Survey</u>

(Continued from page 1)

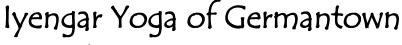
nicle, Chris Jacobs, Ted Reed, Gloria Rohlfs and Jackie Winterbottom, recently completed the final report, which was presented to the Board by Glenn Bergman at the February 7 Board meeting. Given the amount of information contained in the report, the committee decided the best approach for sharing this information in the Shuttle would be a series of articles, each one covering a section of the survey. The complete report is available on the Weavers Way Web site at www.weaversway.coop.

The first section of the survey covered Reasons for Shopping at Weavers Way and asked respondents to indicate how important the criteria were and then how Weavers Way was performing. The survey article in the next Shuttle will compare shopping at Weavers Way to other stores. Some of the results may surprise you.

#### Gap Analysis: Criteria for Choosing to Shop at Weavers Way Importance versus Weavers Way Performance Importance Performance Cleanliness 3.48 Customer Service Staff Friendliness Welcoming Atmosphere Co-Operator Friendliness Other Shoppers

- Cleanliness, customer service, staff friendliness and a welcoming atmosphere are most important to Co-op members
- Generally, members see room for improvement on all these dimensions, but especially on cleanliness

(continued on page 11)



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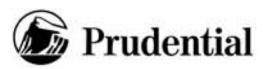


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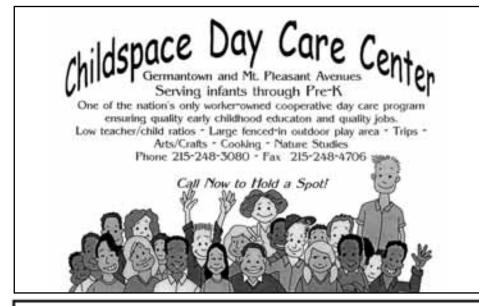


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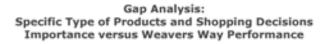
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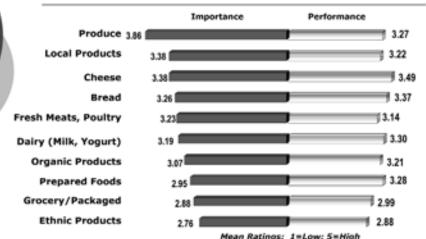
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- Mean Ratings: 1=Low; 5=High
  Produce is especially important in shopping decisions of Co-op members. But a variety of other product categories are also considered important.
- Members clearly identify areas where they think Co-op product offerings need to be improved (produce, local products, fresh meats/poultry) and where they excel (cheese, bread, dairy)

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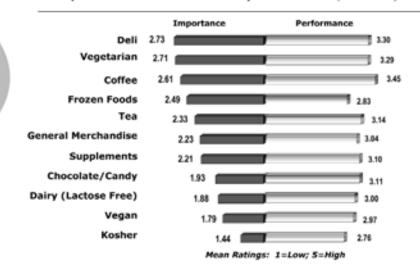
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#### Gap Analysis: Specific Type of Products and Shopping Decisions Importance versus Weavers Way Performance (continued)



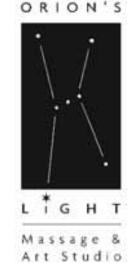
The Co-op performance clearly exceeds expectations for many product categories rated as less important in their shopping decisions by members



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#### Friends of the Wissahickon Launch **Valley Green Restoration Project**

by Denise Larrabee

Valley Green Inn isn't always as pristine as this early postcard suggests. Back in the summer and fall of 2004, after the second of two horrific thunderstorms, Valley Green was sitting in a river of mud. Runoff from surrounding neighborhoods rushed downhill into the Wissahickon Creek, carrying tons of

dirt, rocks, and other debris and causing the creek's tributaries to overflow. The rubble clogged the opening to an underground pipe that carries water downhill to the creek from a stream above Valley Green Inn, causing the stream to overflow and muddy water to flood the area below.

By the end of the summer of 2005, the Friends of the Wissahickon (FOW), Fairmount Park staff, and other volunteers restored the footpath leading down to the Valley Green Inn from the upper parking lot on Valley Green Road. This walkway had been closed after parts of it collapsed into the adjacent tributary during the first storm. But severe storm flooding is not the only threat to this structure, which has been at the heart of the Wissahickon Valley since the mid-nineteenth century. Overuse has also eroded much of the beautiful landscape surrounding this historic structure, at times limiting the public access to the area and damaging the Valley Green building.

Currently, the FOW is raising funds for its Valley Green Restoration Project, which will address the storm damage and erosion problems that have affected this area by improving drainage around the Inn and restoring vital wetlands plantings



on and around the creek bank. The Chestnut Hill Garden Club has recently donated \$15,000 toward the purchase of these plants, as well as rain gardens of native plants in front of the stable area and on the Roxborough side of the parking lot. These rain gardens will capture water so that it has a chance to slowly filter into the ground rather than run off into the creek.

For over 80 years, the Friends of the Wissahickon have preserved the natural beauty and wildness of the Wissahickon Valley. It is a non-profit organization dedicated to maintaining 1,800 acres of forested gorge and over 57 miles of hiking, biking, and riding trails. Their work protects the Wissahickon watershed and preserves the natural and historical features of this spectacular urban wilderness for future generations. The FOW expects this current project to result in a beautifully landscaped setting for the inn, with increased public access to the area and an increased capacity to withstand flood conditions.

For further information or to make a donation to the Valley Green Inn Restoration Project, contact the Friends of the Wissahickon at office@fow.org

#### The Simplicity Dividend

#### TV Guide to the Perplexed

by Besty Teutsch

The premise of The Simplicity Dividend is Time = Money = Stuff. Therefore, if you want more stuff, you must spend more of your time working to pay for it. Perhaps you want more time? Cut back on how much stuff you fund, and you may liberate some of your working hours. Many discover that, paradoxically, simpler living improves quality of life. How do these principles apply to an individual or household's choices among entertainment options? I have concluded that, at least in my case, more is less. The options for entertainment have multiplied so exponentially during my adult life that I have been left behind. Overwhelmed by the choices, I rarely opt to watch TV or movies at all.

I recently attended a get-together at a friend's house where a bunch of us, all middle-aged women, were scheduled to watch a movie on DVD. As a mother of two teenagers, the member of the group who hosted possessed a big screen TV, ideal for group watching. When we arrived she was tearing her hair out. She had tested out the system before our arrival and discovered her normal system operation didn't work; all her alternative attempts had failed, too. She finally had taken the FOUR remotes (TV, cable, DVD player and universal) and hurled them to the floor in frustration and disgust. Between the five of us, we did manage to watch the DVD, but I learned something important. I AM NOT ALONE

When my daughter was out of the country, I devoted myself to taping Gilmore Girls for her each week. Watching this show is our delightful motherdaughter ritual. (When my son visits, our mother-son ritual is watching The Daily Show.) Week after week I would follow the steps to coordinate the VCR's timer with the cable system to add another episode to the cassette. One week it might tape perfectly; another it would

just be audio with no video, and some weeks, nothing at all because I had left out a step. The VCR manual didn't mention cable hook-ups; the cable manual didn't mention VCR's. Unfortunately, I don't yet have a system that allows me to just talk to the TV and say, "Tape The John Doe Show on Tuesday night at 8 on Channel 99," though artificial intelligence experts assure us it's in the works. Basically, I gave up and asked a teenager to tape them for me at her house.

I was not always incapable of programming a VCR, the classic description of a techno-illiterate. When my children were little, before the advent of cable or computers, I enthusiastically taped a host of NPR shows for late afternoon airings. I fondly recall Square One, 321 Contact, and Reading Rainbow. I just didn't advance to the next level: the kids grew and watched TV without me, VCRs added computerized programming, and cable came to our household, courtesy of my husband who likes background movies and TV shows while he does his academic work. We've added a DVD player/recorder because the last time the kids went to rent a video, only DVDs were available. Recently we've upgraded to cable's Digital on Demand. The cable representative proudly showed us the 1000's of offerings at our fingertips. We can watch any feature in the participating cable channels anytime we choose; we are not limited to real-time broadcasting schedules. The hitch is mastering the controls. You can't just tell Digital what you want, either. You have to scroll through endless offerings and highlight your choice. (There is a search feature online, but not on the television. The hardcopy cable TV Guide has been discontinued.) My eyes glazed over, and I have yet to use it.

On the rare occasion when I consider watching a TV program or movie, other than during a national crisis, I have two barriers to overcome. The first is that I can't process all the information required to decide what to watch, since the grid in the newspaper is only a small fraction of what's available and I can't even make

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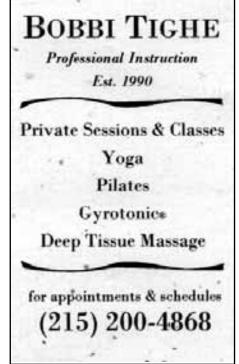
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(continued on page 19)



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#### **Exotics Invading, Natural Environment Losing**

by Francis Lawn, Director of Land Restoration at The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education in Philadelphia

Invasive plants are increasingly contributing to the degradation and decline in the health and economic value of our local environment. If we do not manage the current populations and monitor new plants for potential invasiveness, our ecosystem will become a monoculture of few plants, and we run the risk of permanently destroying the diversity of our forests, meadows, and wetlands.

For many centuries, plants from other countries have been brought to the United States. Such plants have been used for ornamental, medicinal, or culinary reasons. Most of these exotic plants are fairly harmless and stay put where they are planted; it is the ones who don't, who outgrow their natural boundaries that pose the greatest risk.

Over the last few decades, plants such as Oriental Bittersweet, Japanese Honeysuckle, Garlic Mustard and Japanese Stilt-Grass have become an ever-more-alarming sight in many forests in our region. Where native ephemerals and perennials once grew, they are now being replaced by these tenacious plants, reproducing at a high rate, and preventing any native plant from competing. Invasive plants have no natural predators to keep them in check. Few animals, insects, or pathogens will touch them; therefore, they can spread very quickly.

The unfortunate aspect of this invasion is the decline in biodiversity in our forests. In fact most of these plants prevent the regeneration of native plant species, therefore putting our forests in stasis. There is even speculation that some of our forests are reverting from a healthy multi-layered system — with large canopy and understory trees, and a shrub and herbaceous layer — into a tangled single-layered infestation of vines.

Researchers at Cornell University estimate that invasive species are costing

Americans approximately \$137 billion every year (*Pimentel et al. 2000*).

Land disturbance tends to be the largest vehicle for this disruption. As a healthy forest becomes fragment-

ed by development, the infestation becomes inevitable. Forests cannot deal with disturbance as in the past. Instead of evolving in a distinct successional process, they are invaded by exotics early on, preventing this natural process from occurring.

If we are to gain a foothold in the struggle against these invasive plants, there must be better guidelines set in place, such as a weed management plan. Improved procedures must be established to strictly monitor plants coming into this country for potential invasiveness. In addition, the leaders in the horticultural industry should take responsible action and stop producing and selling plants that are known to be invasive.

Despite the knowledge that invasive plants exist, many park systems in this

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area don't have the manpower or funds to manage their land properly; therefore more funding is needed for highly trained specialists who can manage invasive plants, restore degraded ecosystems, and conduct additional research to learn more about the potential hazards of these plants.

There is also a need to educate the public on these important issues. Many

people don't realize their impact on the environment around them. In fact, many perpetuate the situation by inadvertently using nonnative invasive plants for landscaping, rights-of-

way, erosion control, and habitat improvement. Unknowingly, they allow invasive plants to escape into surrounding natural areas. Individuals can do their part in preventing the spread of invasive plants by planting native species indigenous to their area, helping to preserve local biodiversity, which is essential for maintaining our quality of life. There are organizations, like The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education that teach volunteers how to identify potential invasions and how to manage them.

Our forests and other ecosystems are at risk of failing if nothing is done to prevent and manage invasive plants. Public involvement and education are some critical tools needed to help protect our forests. The more involved we are, the better chance we have at winning this battle

As a local environmental expert, The Schuylkill Center is currently taking a more sustainable approach to managing invasive exotic plants by fostering methods that encourage healthier plant communities that naturally resist invasion. To read more about these efforts visit www.schuylkillcenter.org and click on "Land Restoration."

Don't miss your opportunity to purchase native plants for your garden at The Schuylkill Center's annual Native Plant Sale on Saturday, April 29, and Sunday, April 30. Experts will be on hand to answer questions. For more information regarding invasive plants, contact the Restoration Department at 215-482-7300.

To learn more about invasive exotic plants visit the Mid-Atlantic Exotic Pest Plant Council at www.ma-eppc.org . To learn more about biodiversity visit Pennsylvania Biodiversity Partnership at www.pabiodiversity.org .

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#### This April, "Art Quilts at the Sedgwick" ... on Rittenhouse Square?

by Betty Ann Fellner

Heard around Mt. Airy Town: "So what's happening with the Quilt Show?" "No quilts this year?" "What's the date of this year's Quilt Show. I don't want to miss it "

I could go on and on. Not to worry. Art Quilts at the Sedgwick [AQatS] *will* return to the Philadelphia scene April 8-May 21, 2006. But because the Sedgwick Cultural Center is undergoing re-organization, AQatS will be held this year at the Philadelphia Art Alliance on Rittenhouse Square.

When it began in 1999 as a 10-day invitational show at the Sedgwick, AQatS recognized that it had the heady task of explaining the very words "art quilt" and showing quilts on the wall to many visitors who knew only the functional bed quilt. To the organizers' surprise, the success of this brief exhibition surpassed all expectations. In fact, AQatS attracted so much attention from both the public and the press that it expanded annually and became a month-long, juried exhibition

in its third year. Fulfilling its mission to provide a consistent venue for the exhibition of the art quilt and the education of the public about this important and everevolving art form, each year the AQatS committee has also produced a CD-Rom that catalogues each featured quilt as well as comments by each artist and each juror. Producing the show became such a formidable task that AQatS became a biennial show in 2004.

Art Quilts at the Sedgwick is still planned and administered by an independent committee of multi-talented quilt artists, with the support of other fiber artists and art aficionados who share their commitment to promoting the art quilt. Once again, active Co-op member Deborah Schwartzman, in the good tradition of the co-operator, serves as Co-Director of AQatS.

"We've always appreciated the support of many Mt. Airy neighbors, and I hope to see many old friends at this year's show on Rittenhouse Square," Debbie said. Not shy to boast, she continued, "I think you'll find that this is among the strongest shows we've ever presented.

"Of the hundreds of submissions from artists from every region of the country and from abroad as well, the jurors have selected 44 quilts that demonstrate the glorious variety of the medium today. You just have to see it"

AQatS will host an Artists Reception on Friday, April 7, 5:30-8:30 p.m. The galleries will be open Tuesday to Sunday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Guided tours will be offered on Thursdays and Sundays at 2 p.m. In addition, AQatS will present a special event on Saturday, April 8, at the Stotesbury Mansion, 1923 Walnut St. in Philadelphia, only a few blocks from the Philadelphia Art Alliance. Juror Rebecca A.T. Stevens will present a slide/lecture

"The Quilt Idea" at 12:30 p.m. At 11 a.m. before the lecture, a brunch will also be available. The cost of the brunch/lecture combination is \$20; the lecture is \$8. For reservations, call 215-840-8778.

Art Quilts at the Sedgwick: on the Square is proud to continue the tradition it began four years ago to highlight not only its own exhibition of fine art quilts but also to promote the many other regional venues that now feature the fiber arts as part of "April is Fiber in Philly."

For further information about the exhibition, the CD-Rom catalog, the April 8 lecture and brunch and other venues participating in "April is Fiber in Philly," visit www.phillyfiber.blogspot.com and www.aqats.com



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#### **Farmland Trust Saves Lancaster Farmland**

by Amy Friedman

For several years my son and I have been preserving the rich farmlands of Lancaster County by bike rides and going on picnics. Perhaps you'd like to join us

Weavers Way Co-op members are a natural constituency for the Lancaster Farmland Trust, a non-profit organization that makes it possible for Lancaster farmers, including Amish and Mennonites, to preserve their property as farmland for future generations. And some of their events are fun ways for supporters to help the cause.

We all know the county by the excellent Lancaster produce, yogurts, and meats we find clearly labeled as such at the Co-op. But behind the scenes, farmers face severe economic challenges, and developers harbor plans which sometimes threaten the beautiful countryside. The Lancaster Farmland Trust works with farmers to preserve their land, and they have also been ensuring their progress through some creative partnerships with an array of Lancaster organizations. They also raise funds for farm preservation through their Annual Pedal to Preserve bike ride through the farmland, and their autumn picnics, which highlight preserved farms. The 2005 picnic at Cherry Crest Farm in Ronks, which showcased a new partnership with the Strasburg Railway to maintain the rail line's farmland corridor, was preceded by a ride on a chartered steam train from Strasburg to Paradise.

Karen Weiss, former Director of Land Protection and Chair of the Board of Trustees who is currently on the Board, explains that the mission of the Trust "is to work directly with land owners who want to preserve their land." To do this, the Trust assists farmers in obtaining "a Conservation Easement that restricts development of the land forever. That is when our work really begins. We hold the Easement forever in trust and enforce those restrictions against development in the future." She clarifies that "we don't own the land — the farmer retains ownership."

Although there is a county government office that works to preserve farmland, the Trust's unique situation as a private non-

profit has allowed it to forge ties with the Amish and Mennonite communities who are such a famous but cloistered segment of Lancaster. These communities, Weiss explains, "do not want to work with government organizations or take government funds. We've developed inroads with them, though, earned their trust, and word has spread." The Trust had a banner year in 2005, preserving 28 farms totaling over 1,600 acres. Since 1988, they have managed to protect 226 farms in Lancaster.

Although current news stories emphasize changes that might threaten Lancaster's agriculture, such as the discussions of drastically widening Route 23 or building a casino in the city of Lancaster, Weiss emphasizes that farm preservation is a narrative of success. "It may appear that a lot of land is being lost currently," she says, "but if you get off Route 30, we have the strongest agricultural culture in the U.S., and it is worth preserving. It's a vibrant economy, culture, and way of life. And we have made huge progress."

Two new partnerships highlight the advances the Trust is making. There is the above-mentioned plan with the Strasburg Steam Railway, which will ensure that the trains continue to run past farmland and not strip malls and parking lots. The other is with Turkey Hill Dairy, which will feature the Trust's logo on its new line of All Natural ice creams, and donate a portion of profits to saving farmland. Preserving some of the region's most beautiful countryside can now be done in vanilla, chocolate, coffee, mint, and Neapolitan.

The Trust sponsors lectures, occasional farm visits, fundraising events, and also holds an annual dinner to honor farmers and activists for their services to agriculture. Supporters can join in the Pedal to Preserve bike ride (which will be on June 3 this year, with roughly six-, 20- and 50-mile distances departing from the Garden Spot High School in New Holland) and the autumn picnic. To find out more about Trust events or how Easements work, visit savelancaster-farms.org.

#### **Buttonless No More!**

by Mindy Lemoine

I learned to sew in 4-H Club in Opelousas, Louisiana. The home demonstration agent showed me how to place pattern pieces, match seams and gather sleeves, but she never taught me the tricks of knotting thread and sewing buttons on or the difference between pressing and ironing. That gap has been remedied by my coworker and fellow Co-op member Nan Ides. She has published Hand Mending for Beginners: 10 Easy Illustrated Steps to Save You Time and Money.

How often have you put aside a shirt or pair of pants "until I get around to sewing on that button" and ended up giving it to Goodwill years later, still lacking that button? How many hems are held up entirely by safety pins? Have you bought a bargain pair of jeans, then paid more than they cost to get them hemmed? Do you know what to do when your iron starts spitting?

Do you endure eye-rolling from the menders in your life when you profess (honestly) complete ignorance of how to mend a ripped pocket? This book will end clothing-maintenance-related eye-rolling. Imagine how charming she will find you when you offer to fix her drooping hem. This book is really basic. Threading the needle gets a chapter of its own Same for knotting the thread Directions are very precise—"hold the needle with fingers over the eye." There's a picture of a hand needle with the eye labeled. More experienced sewers will find useful tips as well. I didn't know the trick for splitting the seam for a hem on tapered pants legs.

Unless you already know what a serged seam looks like or own a press cloth, you can learn some useful skills from this short book. It would be a practical gift for high school graduates on their way to college. Keep one handy for the next time your partner or child declares a clothing repair crisis.

The book is being sold on the second floor of the Co-op, as well as next door at the Big Blue Marble Bookstore. Still not convinced you can do it? Come to the Big Blue Marble Bookstore, 3 p.m. on Saturday, February 25, when Nan will be demonstrating how easy it is to thread a needle or sew on a button. The book is also available to order at any bookstore chain or through Nan's website at: www.handmendingbook.com for \$10.95.

# Environment Tip of the Month

Use newspaper (preferably you have already read) in place of kitty litter. This means you will not be polluting the environment with waste and your home with unhealthy dust. It does need to be changed once or twice a day, so your cat is likely to be healthier as he or she is not being exposed to antibiotics or germs. Your cat will get used to it. Ours did.





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#### **Spring Garden Thoughts**

by Mark Goodman

Let's start the garden season with some "Garden Myths and Garden Realities"

Myth #1: Azaleas are shade-loving evergreens. Reality: Most azaleas need some sun to thrive, preferably morning sun (less hot than afternoon sun). Also, in a cold winter, many azaleas will lose some or most of their leaves because they are semi-evergreens. This means they will keep their leaves only if the winter stays relatively mild. Other semi-evergreens are leatherleaf viburnums, glossy abelias, and nandinas.

Myth #2: After the first year, you don't need to water shrubs, trees, perennial flowers, or ground covers that much. Reality: All plants need water in hot, dry weather, whether it's the plant's first year or fortieth. The droughts that have plagued our area since the late 1980s have taken their toll on beech and oak trees, rhododendrons and azaleas (and other shallow-rooted shrubs), and ground covers, particularly pachysandra. Even local stands of decades-old rhododendrons have been decimated during these droughts. Water these plants twice a week during hot and dry spells.

Myth #3: Powdery mildew on your plants mean that they're dying. Reality: Powdery mildew is a grayish fungus that coats the leaves of plants such as lilac, summer phlox, peonies, zinnias, monarda (bee balm), and annual asters. While it looks bad, it rarely kills the plant. To combat powdery mildew, try applying garden

sulfur or Safer's fungicide. Also, make sure that the plants have decent air circulation. Finally, when buying new plants, seek resistant varieties.

Myth #4: Roto-tilling is good for your garden. Reality: It depends on the condition of your soil. If you have a bed without tree roots underneath or without thickly rooted weeds, go ahead if you want. However, roto-tilling too close to trees can damage the machine. Furthermore, tilling where you have, say, goutweed or thistle is not recommended because you will chop the weed roots into smaller pieces generating more weeds over a larger area. Think of The Sorcerer's Apprentice.

Myth #5: Home vegetable gardens are too much trouble. Reality: If you've never planted, watered, weeded, nurtured, and harvested your own fruits or vegetables, you're missing a basic human experience. Especially if you have children, this is a great activity, even if it's a tomato plant in a pot. Then you don't have far to go to explain miracles to your kids.

While we're in a mythical, reflective mood, let's wrestle with our loss of touch with the earth. In the Greek myth, Antaeus was a strong giant who was invincible as long as he was touching the earth. He was defeated when Hercules lifted him, and he lost contact with the earth. Are we Antaeus? Is our out-of-touchness with the earth a defeat and our downfall? Or is this part of a letting-go process so that we (the human race) can evolve to a higher level, one where we won't be

weighed down by earthly things, including the Earth itself? You have the rest of the spring to ponder this one.

Plants to consider for this year: thornless blackberries (variety "Arapahoe"); asclepias or butterfly flower (not bush), an orange flowering perennial that lasts all summer; physostegia (or false dragon head), a late summer/early fall spiky perennial that flowers pink or white.

Spring Garden Reading: Gardens of Philadelphia: Gardens and Arboretums of the City and Delaware Valley, by John G. Hope, photography by Blair Seitz. This is a visual treat of 20 local sites of horticultural interest, including Germantown's Wyck garden and Chestnut Hill's Morris Arboretum. A great way to use this book is to enjoy the exquisite photography and then visit some of the nearby gardens and arboretums.

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Beth McConnell of Neighborhood Networks will lead a discussion after the movie.

# Stalking the Wild Gentian

by Mark Goodman

Who hasn't had the fantasy of using a map to find hidden treasure? This fantasy came true for me last fall. However, the bounty was not silver, gold, or jewels. It was wild gentians.

About 12 years ago, one of my landscape customers mentioned to me that she was going with a friend to an unnamed location to look at wild gentians. I knew the friend because I had previously done some landscaping for her in Northwest Philadelphia. The two women wanted to keep the wildflowers' whereabouts secret because they feared that people would dig up the plants and take them home, disrupting the natural habitat.

Fast forward to last April, when the woman from Northwest Philadelphia called for some garden work. I mentioned the gentians and asked if she would entrust me with their location. She said that she would have to check with her friend, who now lives out of state. A few days later, I got the O.K. The nature lover wrote directions to the gentian field, and I put the folded paper inside my Audubon Guide to North American Wildflowers book for safe keeping until the fall bloom season.

In the first week of October, my wife Shelley, son Alex, and hound dog Blue took off with the map and the field guide. The directions were very clear, and in less

(continued on page 17)

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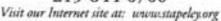




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# Certified Naturally Grown: An Alternative to "Organic"

by Sandra Folzer, Environment Committee

In the July-August 2005 issue of the *Shuttle*, some of us were shocked to learn that companies like Heinz own 20% of Hain who, in turn, owns Celestial Seasonings, Westsoy, Arrowhead Mills, and others. Kraft, who owns Marlboro, Virginia Slims, and Benson & Hedges, also owns BocaBurgers, Balance Bars, and Back to Nature Cereal. There are many others. Hence, "organic" has taken on a whole new meaning.

The reason that many agribusinesses now own most of our familiar organic food products is that many small farmers couldn't label their food "organic" after October 21, 2002, unless they were USDA certified.

Cornell University did a survey in 2002 in the Hudson region in New York. They found that 80% of the farmers were not becoming USDA certified. One reason was that the certification cost \$1000 or \$2000 initially, as well as many hours of paperwork, inspector fees, etc., which could drive their costs up to \$10,000. Most small farmers can't afford this.

There are over 100 USDA accrediting agencies who compete for business. They compete by making it easier for companies to qualify by helping them to learn how not to get caught when they are audited. Many USDA certified farms may have questionable practices. For example, they may use sprays like copper sulfate, which is an organically approved fungicide. One "organic" farmer used enough to kill a sheep four times if he ate the produce that had been sprayed. USDA

doesn't require soil tests. These agribusinesses often don't diversify, which is better for the soil, making it less disease prone. Some "organic" companies are known to "top off" on the way to market. This means they begin with organic produce but add much non-organic in order to increase their profit.

Smaller farmers have gotten together to create their own standards. The label they use is "Certified Naturally Grown," a group founded by Ron Khosla who farms in New Paltz, N.Y. (www.flyingbeet.com) At present there are over 400 farmers who belong to this nonprofit certification organization. Unlike the large organic companies, these farmers don't use bone meal and blood as fertilizers, which are byproducts of factory farms. They also sell as directly and locally as possible, unlike the larger companies who ship over long distances. Certified Naturally Grown (CNG) requires no fees but runs on small donations for costs.

CNG farms are inspected once a year. The results are posted online. (www.naturallygrown.org) These small farmers inspect one another. In fact, each has to agree to do one inspection of another farm. They also encourage the farmers to support one another by giving suggestions. In contrast, USDA forbids inspectors giving suggestions.

As Congress continues to gut the definition of "organic," we have Certified Naturally Grown food as an alternative. (Taken from an interview with Ron Khosla in Satya, Dec 05-Jan 06 issue. www.satyamag.com)

#### Wild Gentians

(continued from page 16)

than an hour, we were at the outskirts of a field. We walked into a wild area, and as we turned into a thicket, there they were tall, beautiful, wild purple gentians.

I was thrilled to find these flowers. We spotted more nearby, and Shelley took some pictures, which we sent to our gracious guide. Alex was more taken by the accuracy of the map, akin to treasure maps in pirate movies. Blue was happy to run around and sniff and chase.

I realized that many more stalks had already lost their blooms. Next year, we'll go a week earlier to see a fuller display.

I had seen fields of wildflowers before, most notably purple loosestrife (Lythrum) and cardinal flowers (Lobelia) in upstate New York near my sister's house. But to stand and kneel among these graceful beauties was a special experience. I felt as if we had actually found treasure

Overall, it was a nice family outdoors day. I felt honored that we were given access to one of nature's wonders.

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#### The Organic Bandwagon/Satire

by Don Silver

With aging baby boomers fueling double-digit growth of companies like Whole Foods Markets, there's a scramble taking place among consumer foods companies to jump on the natural foods bandwagon. *Shuttle* investigative reporter Dirk Darnell has identified several strategies multinational conglomerates are using.

Some companies would like to see the organic label relaxed and expanded which would have the benefit of making organic products more affordable. This could be achieved using a multi-level strategy similar to the one used by the Department of Homeland Security.

"Organic food is virtuous," said Morty Gordon, a consumer products lobbyist. "We'd like the FDA to assign colors to foods based on organic purity. Forest green for soy burgers, all the way down to maybe sandalwood, for products like Pine Sol, which incidentally contains at least one natural ingredient."

Other companies say don't tamper with the organic standards. Amalgamated Foods joins Dannon Yogurt, who acquired Stonyfield Farms, and Unilever, who purchased Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, Benson & Hedges and the H.J. Heinz company. Together, these corporations own hundreds of companies with New Age names.

Amalgamated has adopted an unusual strategy, announcing the purchase of the Karaokke Origami Company of Kyoto Japan.

"We're extremely excited about this," Robert Ellsworth, VP of Communications, told the *Shuttle*. "Wait till you see some of the changes in packaging we're coming up with for products we sell through food co-ops, health food stores and the Whole Foods chain."

Mr. Ellsworth held up an odd-shaped box, folded over many times. "Take a look at this box, will ya? Cool, huh?" Indeed, the crème filled cupcakes had a new brightly colored logo and bore the stamp: 100% Origamic."

Montana Wellspring, of the consumer watchdog agency, Real Food, called the label nothing but a marketing ploy. "What does a consumer product have to do with the Japanese art of folding paper? People are going to see the label Origamic and think it's about food."

"Don't be ridiculous," Attorney General Alberto Gonzales said, defending the merger. "We'd much rather see this than Americans having more colors to worry about. Besides, it's about free-market economics, freedom of speech and the love of one's country, and we believe the Supreme Court will support that."

Justice Scalia and Vice President Cheney were rumored to be filming a public service announcement in support of Amalgamated, whose subsidiary, Food for Justice, has the food concession for the Supreme Court.

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#### Your Morning Cup of Coffee, Part I

(Margie Felton & Norman Weiss's trip to Chiapas)

by Margie Felton

My regular morning cup of coffee will never again be just a bleary eyed wake-me-up cup. After spending a week in Chiapas, Mexico, with Norman Weiss and other co-opers from around the country learning the politics, culture, economics and growing process of coffee, that cup is now much more than a quick fix. Coffee now brings to mind a one-hour hike straight up the side of a mountain to pick the coffee "cherries," the smiling faces of the children in the farming community and the tears of the farmers telling us about their friends and family killed in the fight to regain their land. The process of getting coffee to Weavers Way and your homes is very complex, and the history and lives of the small coffee farmers are long and difficult.

On Sunday January 8, after three plane rides and an hour and a half van ride, we arrived in the beautiful city of San Cristobal de las Cases, Chiapas, Mexico. We had a delicious dinner at an organic vegetarian restaurant, then settled into our hotel.

On Monday morning, after a good night's sleep, we met for breakfast. Our group was part of a tour hosted by Equal Exchange Coffee Company. The group consisted of eight employees from co-ops around the country (including Norman and me) and two members of Equal Exchange staff. After our meal, we traveled by foot through the stone streets of San Cristobal to our first meeting at CIEPAC (Center for Economic and Political Research and Community Action). Our speaker, Miguel Pickard, explained the political and economic situation in Chiapas, the role of the Zapatistas, and how international policies such as NAFTA and Plan Pueblo Panama affect the small farmers of Chiapas.

In the afternoon, we attended a meeting at the Fray Bartolome de las Cases Human Rights Center. We learned more about the lives of the indigenous people, about how people have "disappeared," been displaced, intimidated and killed in the struggle for land, a voice, and basic human rights. The center has a wall of pictures and names of people that are missing or have been killed.

On Tuesday morning, we learned about Fair Trade and Equal Exchange Coffee Company. Fair Trade involves more than a fair price. It's a guaranteed minimal price, a long-term relationship with the coffee co-ops, pre-harvest credit to the farmers, and an agreement to work only with democratically organized co-ops. Equal Exchange is a worker-owned co-op; the coffee farmers are members of co-ops; the mill where the co-ops bring their coffee for processing is a co-op; and of course Weavers Way is a co-op. It's all about co-ops

Our group was now ready to see coffee production and the co-ops first hand. We piled into the van and headed to the highlands. Our first stop was the Zapatista resource center. We stopped, got out, stretched our legs and handed our passports to a woman wearing a black mask who disappeared for 20 minutes. She returned with permission for us to enter the center. The center contains a health clinic, school, store, and other administration buildings. We ate lunch there and continued on our way to the city of Simojovel, home of the coffee co-op CIRSA. When we arrived at CIRSA (Communities Indigenous of the Simojovel de Allende Region of Chiapas) the members were in the middle of their monthly meeting. They stopped and clapped for our arrival and welcomed us and shook our hands. We returned when their meeting was over for more formal introductions and dinner at a nearby restaurant. Connections were made through sharing a meal and teaching each other words in Spanish, English and their indigenous language, Tzotzil.

Wednesday morning we enjoyed a wonderful breakfast of organic vegetables, eggs, black beans, and tortillas. We were joined by Father Manuel Paldron, who shared with us his work of helping to organize the indigenous people, especially this co-op. He was jailed for 50 days for doing this. He said, "Us sitting here drinking coffee together without borders is an amazing beginning to a new world". He thanked the producers for letting him walk their path with them and us for giving him the opportunity to know us. The board of CIRSA told of their history and the importance of the co-op in their lives. They told us the pride people have being able to produce on their own land in their own way.

We then departed for what I feel was the most important part of our trip; our stay in the coffee farming community. We stood in the back of an open truck with four-foot sides for our two hour ride to the community. The road was unpaved and rough but the scenery was beautiful. We traveled into the mountains, past villages and rivers, picking up and dropping off other travelers on our way. Around one corner a few young boys hung onto the back of the truck. The truck stopped. We had arrived

We jumped off the back of the truck and saw the entire village staring at us and we stared back. Live music started to play and we all shook hands. Hundreds of children gathered around, smiling and giggling. We were ushered onto the outdoor stage with the musicians. The CIRSA members traveling with us introduced themselves. We introduced ourselves and many villagers introduced themselves. It was very emotional and overwhelming and many of us were crying. We were ushered into a community building for dinner and then into the church. The whole village tried to squeeze into the small church. Incense was burning and we were each given a candle. Prayers were spoken and music played. We were instructed to dance and then the village elder told the story of the people regaining their land from a German land owner who treated them like slaves and paid them very little. An elder woman asked for us to please help them and don't let the Mexican government make them slaves again. There were more tears. After the church service, everyone went outside for a night of music and dancing. A steer was sacrificed in our honor. Eventually, we were shown where we will sleep. We were brought to a cement house and given blankets and a room that was also used to store bags of coffee. We tried to get some sleep on the cement floor with music playing all night long.

The next day we hiked up the mountain to the coffee plants. It was hard to breathe because the path was steep and the altitude was high. Larger trees shade the coffee plants. We were taught how to pick the coffee "cherries." We split into two groups and had a contest to see which group could pick the most. We learned how the heavy coffee bags were carried and we headed back down the mountain. Dinner that evening was the sacrificed steer followed by a two- hour sermon in the indigenous language and more music and dancing.



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Friday morning after a breakfast of more steer — which was actually very good — it was time to leave. We said goodbye and got into the truck for our journey back to Simojovel. Our van and driver met us at CIRSA to bring us back to San Cristobal. When we reached the Zapatista center our van stalled. We sat quietly as the driver flooded the engine trying to restart it. Eventually, with Norman's help, the van started. The driver had to get out of the van frequently to restart it, so Norman had to drive the rest of the way back. Forty-five minutes later we arrived safely in San Cristobal. Norman saved the day

Saturday, we left San Cristobal and headed to FIECH, the secondary co-op, where the coffee is milled. On our way we were side-swiped by a mini van. No one was hurt and after money and insurance numbers were exchanged, we continued. At FIECH, we

(continued on page 19)

#### Morning Cup of Coffee

(continued from page 18)

learned about the devastation caused by Hurricane Stan. Many coffee farmers in the coastal regions lost everything and people were left without food or water or homes. We saw the coffee milling and sorting process and took part in a coffee cupping (tasting).

After lunch at the co-op, we were treated to a boat ride in a beautiful canyon. We then headed into Tuxla Gutierrez, the capital of Chiapas. We checked into our hotel and then went to a café owned by FIECH. It was a very nice café and we all had cappuccinos, espressos, etc... FIECH is roasting their own brand of coffee called Biomaya. They are trying to get Mexicans to enjoy good quality coffee. The café is successful and is expanding. We ate dinner at a taqueria then returned to the hotel for our last night.

Sunday, January 15, we arrived at the airport at 6:30 a.m. Everyone flew to Mexico City together, where we had a few hours to wait. It was our last real time together. We flew to Dallas, where everyone went in different directions to catch flights to their separate destinations. We agreed to keep in touch and to never forget what we learned and experienced together. Norman and I continued on to Philadelphia.

Now, we are back at Weavers Way, and being part of this co-op has new importance for me. Norman and I continue to learn more about Chiapas and coffee through books, the internet, and conversations with others who have had similar experiences. We both hope to return to Chiapas with family and friends and share what we have learned.

We hope this is just the start of our writing and telling everyone about our trip. Look for more articles in the future and please drink Fair Trade Coffee

Chiropractor

Dr. Lenny Roberts

#### <u>Simplicity</u>

(continued from page 12)

sense of all its published channels and numbers; they need to be used in conjunction with the TV Guide channel. Way too much effort required here.... The second is a deeper issue. I really don't like watching TV all by myself; it feels too isolating. I work by myself and prefer entertainment to be more interactive. Hence it is not coincidental that when I watch TV it is either with my kids or for crisis news coverage with its sense of national solidarity.

How do others manage their entertainment? Each person I asked utilizes a different format, heavily dependent on age. Our parents watch TV pretty much as they have since the 1950s, except cable gives better reception and more choices. My age peers vary enormously. Many subscribe to cable, spending well over \$100 monthly. Another option is cable, but no premium channels. Others have satellite dishes, offering more choices than straight non-cable, but less expensive than a full cable system. Some just stick with a plain old TV which they use more like a DVD player. They rarely watch TV shows in real time, but are avid Netflix subscribers. With Netflix, you order DVDs on-line and they arrive by mail. You pay, of course, but much less than cable subscription. Others chiefly rent DVD's from video stores, download video off the internet, or check media out of the library, which is free.

Among the younger generation, the options are wider. Some graduate students I spoke with, tight on time as well as money, do not own TVs and report that going to the movies is an exceedingly rare, and primarily social, event. They watch rented or downloaded DVDs on their computer monitors. They describe marathon breaks watching a whole sea-

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son of a favorite TV series on DVD. They also mentioned having weekly get-togethers at the home of a fellow-student who indulges in cable TV, to watch each episode of a shared favorite series. This sounds like a lot of fun. (In college my son watched West Wing with his fraternity brothers on their large-screen TV; political science professors would often join them and their analysis during the commercials was high level, indeed.)

At the other end of the spectrum, many young people have achieved the gold standard of technology & media: convergence. They use computers to program, often via TiVo, (as in "I'm TiVo-ing all the C-Span Alito hearings to play back when I can't fall asleep") their cable and non-cable TV watching. This way they are not limited to real-time broadcasting and – good or bad, depending on your perspective - they zap out the commercials. They also download TV shows and movies to watch in transit on MP3 players, IPods, or other mysterious handheld devices. The technological boundaries have blurred. What is a TV? What is a TV show? What is entertainment? (What is a book?)

For those seeking a simpler life, TV is dispensable if you have a computer for

weather and news. Certainly one can get by without a fancy television or enhanced reception. With a little planning, it's possible to download, rent, or check out media content for a quite modest outlay, with the added advantage that you can enjoy commercial TV productions without advertisements. Certainly you are not consigned to being a couch potato surfing channels for something to watch. Continually updating all your gizmos and forpay services provide more options than a human could possibly utilize, all at a relatively high cost. Is it worth your money? Does the passive nature of watching a screen discourage you from more satisfying active pursuits, or do you TiVo exercise shows to get you moving? Does solo TV watching isolate you from beneficial social contact, or does your cable enable you to invite friends over to watch football together? There are no correct answers to these questions, since tastes and preferences differ enormously. But it's certainly worth evaluating, and cutting back on your media consumption if you are not really deriving pleasure and benefit from your outlays. Nowadays, a person is more a media manager than a passive TV watcher. Seen any good shows

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#### I'll Pay You Tuesday for a Veggie Burger Today

by Peter Samuel

My children remind me that it is not every household where the Dad is found leafing through stacks of cook books searching for the perfect veggie burger recipe, or coming home with a bag of items labeled Vegelicious, Veggie Patch or Sunshine Burger. And truthfully I could not explain to them how or why I was on such a quest. I didn't know myself. What I sensed, though, was that there has been a revolution in the country, and no one is talking about it.

Around the time I stopped taking pleasure in having hamburger juice drip down my chin I noticed that the words "veggie burger" were being thrown around in casual conversations. Did this happen after McDonald's hit the one trillion burger mark, and folks decided it was time to give those cows a break and keep their chins clean?

The true origins of the hamburger have not been recorded officially. Its birth is claimed by people in Connecticut, Wisconsin and Ohio. It seems to have been launched anywhere between the 1880s and 1900. Some say it actually started in Hamburg, Germany, but no one is really sure. Most people though are convinced that hamburger is up there with apple pie as an American symbol of goodness.

And then in recent history, somebody (again, I don't know who or where) came up with the idea of a veggie burger, and now even the fast food joints have joined in the Cultural Revolution — most sell some version of a burger made of nonmeat products. Was it something Oprah

said about the beef industry or the salmonella scare?

People for the ethical treatment of animals (PETA) has a website that rates the veggie burgers available at fast food emporiums and gives Burger King their best rating, followed by Johnny Rocket's Streamliner, Ruby Tuesday's Mama Mia Burger, and Chili's Black Bean Burger. Other popular pseudo fast food joints have joined the veggie burger parade and include: Bennigan's, Denny's, EatnPark, Fuddruckers, Hard Rock Café, and TGI Fridays. In other words, there can be no doubts that the veggie burger is now truly part of the American culture.

They say the veggie sandwich has far fewer calories and much less fat than the full-scale Whopper. The BK "Veggie" contains 10 grams of fat, and 14 grams of protein with a calorie total of 330. The Whopper comprises 39 grams of fat and 29 grams of protein with 680 calories. BK Veggie has around 50 ingredients, including things like Calcium Caseinate, Hydrolyzed Corn, Autolyzed Yeast Extract and other items we wouldn't ordinarily find at the Co-op or possibly anywhere.

As someone who started out life watching Popeye consume canned spinach to gain strength and muscles it was clear to me that the Sailor Man's best friend, Wimpy, with his stacks of burgers, would never have the strength or endurance to rescue Olive Oyl from danger. Wimpy ate nothing but hamburgers and was always trying to con people into giving him another. "I will gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today," is the

only thing I remember him saying.

Because I have two daughters who are vegetarians (not vegans), I thought I had the perfect set-up to do some serious testing of store-bought veggie burgers. The plan was to then move onto homemade "burgers," and see what we could recommend. As with many of my crazy projects, I never got around to doing all of the testing. My children were the main guinea pigs, and the conditions were anything but controlled. I told them to consider the burgers in terms of a range of savory flavors, moisture and texture. One of my group was wild about the Sunshine Burger, but when I got around to trying it, the box was empty. America's Test Kitchen we are not

If you stop by the Co-op you will find a variety of choices: Southwest Organic Sunshine Burger, Amy's California Burger, Nate's Meatless Meatballs, Gimme Lean (hamburger and sausage varieties) and a mix made by Fantastic Foods called "Nature's Burger" that you mix with water. At the "other" store I found a Franklin Farms Fresh Veggi Burger, Veggie Patch meatless meatballs, and products by Morningstar Farms, Vegelicious, and Bocaburgers. With all the choices it makes old fashioned hamburger meat seem pretty dull. Number one ingredient in most of these is soy protein.

Soy protein products can be good substitutes for animal products because, unlike some other beans, soy offers a "complete" protein profile. Soybeans contain all the amino acids essential to human nutrition, which must be supplied in the diet because they cannot be synthe-

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Philadelphia Art Alliance 251 South 18th St., Philadelphia, PA GALLERY Hours: TUES - SUN 11-5 PM www.aqats.com 215.840.8778 sized by the human body. Soy protein products can replace animal-based foods — which also have complete proteins but tend to contain more fat, especially saturated fat — without requiring major adjustments elsewhere in the diet. Scientists agree that foods rich in soy protein can have considerable value to heart health, a fact backed by dozens of controlled clinical studies.

When I looked to see what other reviewers were testing for, I discovered that there was a lot of emphasis on how much the fake burgers tasted like real burgers. People said things like "had the consistency of a real burger" or "enjoyed the smoky almost bacon-like taste" or "high marks for an appealing meaty taste and texture." Hmm. What if you have been a vegetarian since age six, like my daughter? Are you still concerned with "the real taste of meat?"

For you hard-core vegetarians who have probably been making your own non-meat patties for ages, here is a sampling from the 25 recipes that I found in 13 different books (keep in mind that all of the ingredients are available at the Coop): Lentil burgers, basic bean burgers, wheat berry bean burgers, millet burgers, Swedish bean balls with gravy, walnut oatmeal burgers, lentil nut loaf, buckwheat loaf, spicy lentil burgers, peanut burgers, rice balls, broccoli timbales, Greek cheese and potato patties, Thai tempeh cakes, spinach patties, corn and pepper fritters, potato cakes, tofu cutlets, tofu fingers, tofu burgers/meatballs. If you want a recipe, call me. Unfortunately we have rated none of these.

Special mention should be given to the falafel. The ancient middle eastern sandwich made from ground fried chickpeas. Not officially a burger, but it could be considered as part of the larger category.

If we were doing this right, we would have everyone in white coats with blind folds and spittoons. But as usual, before the project was completed I was onto my next craze. Sorry kids

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#### In Praise of Old Bags

by Jessica Roland

It started when I went to D.C. to visit a friend last spring. I saw a bag at a store called Go Mama Go that I loved. But I held off. When I was still coveting it a year later, that store was one of my first stops when I returned to D.C. Go Mama Go carries imported housewares and accessories, many made from recycled materials. My bag was made from fruit juice pouches that had been cleaned and sewn together. Picture Capri Sun bags, but with images of guavas and mangoes. The bags were from the Philippines. They carried a tag from the company Mo' Betta World that explained that they were made by low-income women to support their families and keep their community "clean and green." It turned out that my D.C. friend also coveted a bag. Hers was made from seat belts. My friend is an environmental lobbyist, and she said that the seat belt bags were a ubiquitous Capital Hill accessory. My interest was piqued, and I started looking into bags made from recycled materials.

First, I contacted Mo Betta World. Monique Gordon stumbled upon the bags and became the U.S. distributor after helping the woman design more intricate bags that she thought would sell well here. The juice pouches are collected by

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call Rod 215-745-2987 267-918-6597 the women, washed, and sewn into quilt-like bags. They range in price from \$7 for a change purse to \$40 for a large tote.

The Harvey's Seatbelt Bag's web-site tells the story of the first bag, made for Harvey's wife to match their new car. The bags are made in U.S. factories so as not to exploit sweatshop-like conditions overseas, and to employ Americans. I think they actually have a picture of a waving U.S. flag on the web-site. However, it turns out that the bags are made from all new materials. They are also pricey, ranging from \$70 to \$165.

Already residing in my home was a Frietag bag, my husband's birthday present from a few years ago. These Danish bags are made from recycled truck tarps and seat belts. The bags are visually dynamic, with the colors and graphics varying widely. Even the web-site is fun. The company was formed by two eco-minded brothers in 1993. The bags are virtually



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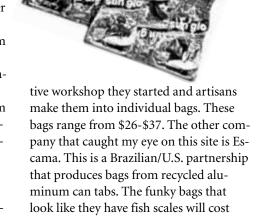
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indestructible, but a warning, the vinyl smell is pretty strong for the first few months. They range in price from \$40-\$182, plus shipping of course.

An internet search yielded some other good options. Bags by Vy and Elle are made from vinyl billboards salvaged from landfill. Another duo, these two women are professional designers who make a variety of products with enviro-conscious materials. I have seen the bags at museum stores. They, like Frietag, offer unique designs because of the nature of the materials. A wallet can be had for \$20 with a larger bag going for \$115.

The web-site Hip and Zen carries a variety of bags made from recycled materials. One of the companies they represent is called Conserve. This is an NGO in Delhi. Their mission is to combat the huge problems of litter and environmental waste problems in their city. They pay local women to collect plastic bags and then use a machine they have designed to press them into thick, durable sheets. They then turn these over to the coopera-



There are some great options out there, beautiful things being made from recycled materials. It would be great to have more of them at the Coop for the eco-fashionistas out there. Its worth mentioning though, that an all natural Weavers Way cotton tote bag is your best buy.

you—\$30 for a small cosmetic bag up to

\$160 for a messenger bag.



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#### Low Impact Vacation in the Caribbean

by Kim Empson

Looking for a quiet peaceful vacation with no television, and virtually nothing to do but walk, swim, sit and eat? If its simplicity you're after — but without sleeping on the ground — then I have just the lodging you've been looking for. Do you loathe shopping, other tourists, and generally dislike waiting or lining up for anything? Do you worry about treading lightly on the planet and don't even like purchasing airline tickets, just thinking of all that fuel used for frivolous pursuits? If you've answered yes to the previous questions, ask yourself, but do I truly need to get out of Philadelphia and relax somewhere slightly exotic? Yes to that one and you're not alone. Even though there are a number of water related sports, etc., available, the main attraction on St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands is tranquility. My

husband and I considered it heaven.

Eco-tourism is defined as responsible travel to natural areas that conserve the environment and sustain the wellbeing of local people.

On St. John, there is a four-location eco-resort that happens to be Arthur Fromer's favorite hotel in the world. The Discovery Channel calls it the world's best alternative energy lodge. They are: Maho Bay Camps, Estate Concordia (where we stayed), Harmony Studios, and Concordia Eco-tents. The president/owner says they are all based on the same idea: creature comforts for all creatures.

Here you'll find green travelers happily supporting the principles of environmental sensitivity and responsible consumption. Concordia borders the U.S. Virgin Islands National Park (though you won't find it on the National Parks Mo-

nopoly game). You can stay in a tasteful studio apartment or eco-tent which is nestled in the lush vegetation on the hillside overlooking the ocean, complete with harmless indoor lizards and hummingbirds at your balcony; oh, and go ahead and throw your edible leftovers right over the side of your deck to be nibbled on by hundreds of noisy hermit crabs. You'll soon be able to identify that scratching sound all over the island. You can rent snorkel equipment, recycle all those empty rum bottles, borrow a book on the history of slavery on the island, or use the free item exchange shelf where you can take or donate items such as food, clothing, books, etc. (you'll love that part).

Go to www.maho.org for a complete description of the place. The staff is very friendly and can tell you all about the local restaurants. Hiking, snorkeling, and breathing were by far our favorite activities. I highly recommend the latter as the air is delicately perfumed with something akin to fresh lime and pungent beer. The snorkeling and swimming were perfect, as was the temperature of the water. You can find a self-guided snorkeling trail on one of the world's top 10 beaches. A direct flight from Philadelphia will take you to St. Thomas, where you will board a ferry for a half hour ride over to St. John. You'll dock at the most bustling part of the island where there are some shops and restaurants.

Please have a smoothie (they're unbelievable) and pick up maps and trail guides at the National Park visitors' cen-

ter. Then, in your rental car, (watch out; you're driving on the left) immediately head out for the undeveloped end of the island. Driving tip: Don't take your car off road unless you want to look and feel like Indiana Jones looking for the Temple of Doom. Hiking trails here will not disappoint. All of them seem to reward you with either a breathtaking vista, remote bay, or dramatic drop into the sea. You'll find a book in your room, which is indispensable for hiking.

One trail in particular caught my eye because of the foreigners who depend on it. It leads from the ocean to a main road in Coral Bay where Chinese citizens walk at night after being dropped from a boat. They are en route to Puerto Rico where they apply for political asylum. Along this trail, you will find all sorts of interesting stuff that they drop along the way. Unlike Hansel and Gretel – they're not marking the trail for a return hike. I found clothes, shoes, books, toothpaste, and other items. If you're really a non-shopper you could take back one of these items as your low impact souvenir. (I did).

And as for the local people, I can't say, since I was busy eating and walking. I spoke with almost no one there except a couple of waiters, a gas station attendant and the guy at the mini market. The cabby had the most beautifully lilting accent I have ever heard, and the sun-drenched fellow at the bar seemed to be a walking endorsement for the local rum. They were all remarkably pleasant, but then wouldn't you be, if you lived on St. John?



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#### **Sugar: A National Obsession**

by Sara Lomax-Reese

Easter is fast approaching. Visions of chocolate bunnies, marshmallow chickies and jellybeans are dancing in my head. As someone who has had a passionate, lifelong love affair with sugar, I have always adored this holiday. What more can a sugar addict ask for than to have a day set aside to bask in all things sweet and chocolaty?

Like most Americans, my sugar obsession started early. When I was just a baby, I sucked on a sweet, tangy concoction of honey and vinegar in my bottle to soothe me to sleep. Little did I know that while it tasted good going down, it was rotting most of my baby teeth. Forty years later, I'm finally actively working to kick my sugar habit.

The bottom line is sugar, long considered a harmless flavoring agent, is one of the unhealthiest ingredients in our diets. Currently, the average American consumes approximately 150 pounds of sugar each year (compared to 22 pounds per year in 1850). And we wonder why obesity is an epidemic in America; why diabetes threatens to overwhelm the healthcare system; why heart disease is the number one killer of men and women. A big part of this answer lies in our unhealthy obsession with sugar.

Not only is sugar everywhere and in everything, it has zero nutritional value. Yet, take a look at the labels on most foods and you'll find some form of sugar in the most unlikely places — saltine

crackers, spaghetti sauce, salad dressing — not to mention the obvious ones like commercial breakfast cereals, cookies, and fruit yogurts.

There are so many different names for sugar (about 40 to be exact); many times we don't even know we're eating it. So beware of anything that ends in "ose" – sucrose, dextrose, maltose, etc. These are just dressed up names for sugar.

So what do you do? Check out these tips to begin your journey to reduce or eliminate sugar from your diet.

Cut the caffeine.

Drink more water.

Eat sweet vegetables and fruit.

Use more natural sweeteners like stevia, maple syrup and brown rice syrup.

Cook your own food (many times excess sugar is added in restaurants or takeout joints).

Turn Easter into an opportunity for the family to make some homemade low sugar or sugar free treats. (A great book with innovative recipes is: Get the Sugar Out by Ann Louise Gittleman).

For more information about sugar addiction and tips for kicking the habit, email Sara Lomax-Reese at slr@healthquestmag.com.

Sara Lomax-Reese is the host/producer of a weekly health and nutrition radio show called HealthQuest Live on WURD-900 AM. She is currently studying at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition to be a certified holistic nutrition counselor.

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#### Feral Cats: A Continuing Saga

by Brenda Malinics

This story has three endings — one happy and one sad and one that simply continues.

Fourteen months ago, three kittens, about seven weeks old, appeared in my backyard. They hid under my shed. They roamed my cul-de-sac street, searching for food, with their mom who was a tiny wisp of a cat, probably very young herself.

I set the hav-a-heart traps (traps that do not harm animals) and caught two kittens the first night. It was three weeks later before I caught the third kitten. It was heartbreaking to see the kitten struggling inside with mom frantic on the outside unable to help. She wailed when I walked inside with her offspring and cried outside my house for hours. I continued unsuccessfully to set the trap for the mother for the next three months. I'd see her occasionally and at the trap attempting to pull the food from the sides through the bars. She was hungry, but too smart to go inside.

Meanwhile inside, her kittens were terrified little bundles of fur that hissed and spit and cowered when I approached. In order to socialize wild kittens, they must have forced interaction as often as possible. I had to wear long leather gloves to catch them and hold them as they tried to scratch their way out of my grip. In working with wild cats, one can't expect appreciation for caring. I was nothing but a giant predator who had plucked them from their mother and forced them into a cage.

To make matters worse, they had just about every parasite possible, including ringworm, which required them to be bathed twice a week for six weeks. This task required two people. The shampoo had to remain on for 20 minutes, after which their skinny little bodies had to be dried with a blow dryer. This exercise left me — and those brave enough to help – soaking wet, sometimes bloody, and always emotionally exhausted. Two of the kittens were easy (that's a relative term) to handle. They would go limp when held firmly by the nape of their neck, but the gray and white one, fought continuously and managed to spiral her body and do flips while we struggled to keep soap out of her eyes and keep her under the heat lamp while the shampoo was soaking into their skin. It was like trying to shampoo a

While the kittens got healthier, I not only got attached, I got ringworm, as did

my "shampoo" friends, Laura and Don, and my oldest cat, Magellen. Laura was becoming smitten with the two black and white ones, later named Butler and Zoe, and I decided to keep the 'fish,' and call her Lydia. The ringworm cleared up and was not as hideous as every medical book described, and Lydia became a friendly, loving cat full of trouble who continues to make me laugh each day. As weeks turned into months, I put the trap away thinking that mom had moved on or been killed by a car or a predator.

Fastforward. One year later, I experienced deja vu. Three more kittens appeared in my back yard along with the same mom from last year Out came the traps. I was lucky to catch all three kittens in one night. As much as I dreaded repeating the experience from last year, winter was approaching and I couldn't just ignore these kittens. Once again, mom cat watched sadly and darted about frantically as I carted away her crying offspring. These kittens were older than the previous litter and harder to handle. Laura (Butler and Zoe's adoptive mom) came over and was bitten by the largest black one on the first handling attempt. As the kitten broke free, and Laura's thumb was oozing blood, I questioned my sanity as the kitten dove under a dresser, taking down everything in its path.

My cat began spraying indoors, and once again the house was cordoned off . After a few weeks, the kittens showed promise of adoption. Through a friend, I was lucky enough to find Nancy, an angel who had previously owned ferals and didn't want to split up this litter. She took all three kittens I opened champagne.

Now I was determined to catch mom, no matter how long it took. Having seen her kittens fall prey to this metal box, I knew that catching her would not be quick or easy. I used all types of bait, including chicken necks, which made me gag as I cooked them (I am a vegetarian). I began putting food inside the trap but rigged it so that it would not spring when the pedal was touched in an attempt to gain mom's trust and lure her slowly incide.

I could only set and monitor the trap in the evenings and on weekends. It needed to be checked every 30 minutes and closed during the night because of the cold temperatures. Because the space is so tight inside a trap, and because the animal

(continued on page 24)



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#### Feral Cats

(continued from page 23)

is so confined, it can become hypothermic or develop pneumonia from remaining stationary. In cold temperatures, an animal should not be in a trap longer than 30 minutes. It is also inhumane to allow an animal to thrash about inside a cage. Immediately upon trapping, the cage must be covered and brought inside. If you cannot keep the animal inside until surgery, it should be taken to the vet inside the trap for overnight boarding. These arrangements should be made in advance with a vet since not all vets are willing to work with ferals. And, because an animal should fast at least 12 hours before surgery, it is best to catch them a day in advance.

Rather than catching mom, who was still hanging around the neighborhood, I caught a huge gray tom. I had him neutered, got him rabies shots and a treatment of Revolution and set him free in the neighborhood. Cats I'd never seen before were showing up in my yard eating from the unset trap. Next, I caught a young female feral and had her spayed. The vet thought that this cat was less than one year old, and probably a kitten from a recent litter. Dr. Guth, a relatively new feline-only vet in Manayunk (Caring for Cats), was terrific, but she isn't yet associated with any low-cost spay groups. She accommodated my schedule and endured the wrath of biting, scratching, terrified felines. I endured depleting finances, indoor spraying cats and sleepless nights trying to figure out how I could trap

One early Friday on my way to the Schuylkill Wildlife Rehab Center, I saw mom cat lying in the road. She had just been hit. I didn't want to stop; I didn't want to see her injuries up close. I wanted to just drive away. I began trembling as I approached her. She was dead. She had taken the impact to her head and it was gruesome. She was warm and soft and still bleeding. As I carried her to my car, a woman stopped and asked if I had hit her. I shook my head and said nothing. "Is she yours," she asked. I began to shake and cry as I put her body inside my car. My hands were covered with her blood. I was finally touching this sweet elusive cat that had brought me two litters of kittens and who had been part of my life for the last 14 months. "Why don't you bury her with her favorite toy," the lady suggested. She offered her condolences as she drove off.

I brought mom to my house, phoned Butler and Zoe's mom, Laura, and hysterically told her the news. Laura came over and we buried this nameless stray in my back yard. We wrapped her little body in new flannel receiving blankets and included one of her daughter Lydia's favorite toys. Laura reassured me that it was not a coincidence that I had found mom cat on the road and put her to rest in the backyard spot where I had first seen her over a year ago.

I continue to trap neighborhood strays in my backyard in the trap that sits

on mom cat's grave. I am astounded by the number of strays that appear in search of food. There are too few barn placements for these homeless and unaltered cats. What I've come to realize is that regular feeding of strays without making an attempt to stop their breeding contributes to the overpopulation of homeless animals. Trapping and altering takes a lot of time, planning and resources. If you don't want to trap them yourself, you can support organizations that offer low cost certificates such as (locally) The Spayed Club, Spay & Save, KAT (Kitten Adoption Team or (nationally) Friends of Animals, to name a few.

What I've learned from my brief experience of trapping ferals is:

Have a plan before you catch the cat (or any animal). Are you sure the cat is a stray and not a pet. You can recognize the behavior differences between a domestic and a feral. Strays also look thin and tattered and act nervous. A domestic often cries when trapped while a feral will either thrash about or become quiet as it is paralyzed with fear.

Know that feral cats are escape artists and can be dangerous.

Don't try to transfer a feral from the trap into a cage for transport to the vet.

Find a vet that will deal with ferals. Are there designated spay days? Discuss the costs of altering.

Know where you will house the cat while it is recovering from surgery. You CANNOT release a cat the same day as it has had surgery. A female needs at least five days of confinement to recover. Unless you plan to pay for boarding, be prepared to have a secure place in your

home. Cats can escape from spaces much smaller than you realize. Do not underestimate a feral's capability to escape.

Even if you find a barn placement, you CANNOT simply take the cat there and drop it off. It must remain in a cage for at least four weeks while it acclimates to the new sounds and smells of a changed environment. The barn manager must be willing to feed the cat and change its litter box for at least a month. This requires a commitment and can be scary.

A cat cannot stay in a cage in an unheated barn during the winter during the acclimation period.

It is best not to trap in the winter.

If you get a low-cost spay/neuter certificate, you are restricted to work with their associated vets. Check the list and know which days are devoted to feral spaying. Explore these options before you are ready to have an animal taken to the vet.

No cat caught in a trap should be released unless a vet has checked it to ensure that it has been altered. Female cats will have scars on their bellies that a vet will recognize.

Working with feral cats is basically a thankless job and it can be heartbreaking. But if you can prevent just one cat from breeding, you have helped wildlife and the environment and prevented suffering. Remember this staggering statistic from the Humane Society of Baltimore County: Two uncontrolled breeding cats plus all their kittens and all their kittens' kittens, having two litters per year with 2.8 surviving kittens per litter and a ten-year breeding life, can equal over 80 million cats in just ten years.



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#### **Produce Price Comparison**

by Jean MacKenzie

Weavers Way has won the Best of the Northwest Award for Produce, which I think is quite wonderful. I know you have choices in this area when you're looking for produce, so I don't take it as a given that you would buy here first.

Over this past week, I've been told that an investigator has been following and observing me and my children to de-

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t 610 358 4300 f 610 358 3330 termine whether we really live in Spring-field Township (We do I'll show you the lease I'm getting ready to go home and eat and sleep there right now ). This makes me really happy that I sell produce for a living instead of spying on people, but it did make me think that maybe Weavers should hire this guy. Oh sure, you say you're loyal to Weavers, but didn't I see your car in the Genuardi's parking lot last week? And what about that trip to Whole Foods?

If you had made those trips during the week of January 17, here's what you would have found in the produce sections

Every time I do these comparisons, I am impressed by our pricing. The bigger stores can always underprice us on a few things, but our basket of produce stands up pretty well even against other stores' "special" prices.

Keep telling me what you want, and I'll keep trying to improve the diversity, dependability, and overall quality of our produce department.

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### L • E • T • T • E • R • S

I have gone through your 28-page newspaper two times and read many, if not all, of the articles. It is impressive and it carried me back to the beginning of the *Shuttle*. It was Maggie Heineman's idea and I believe she did the writing on the first few copies. I did the typing, which meant "cutting" stencils... and I did the mimeographing also, and that was the messy part. In retrospect, I believe I did some editing also as I did have a background of education and writing in the field of journalism. One of my brothers was the chief European correspondent for the old *New York Herald Tribune* and later the *Los Angeles Times*. This was all during and following the years of W.W. II He lived in Europe for about 40 years.

My parents wrote and distributed a journalistic newsletter for a national Christian group interested in healing among other things. The four children in our family all took journalism at Abington High School and did well in writing. The journalism teacher in those days was a strange and gaudy maiden lady of some years and eccentricities including a horrendous wig of red curly hair, because of which she was always calling for the windows to be shut whenever a breeze became noticeable.

We all wrote articles for the local papers such as the *Jenkintown Chronicle* and the *Glenside News*. The point of this rambling is to get back to my being impressed and grateful for what you have accomplished in your years of being Managing Editor. You and the paper have grown in stature along with the rest of our enterprise. For that I am deeply grateful and nostalgically impressed. You have "done us proud" my friend. I thank you on behalf of those of us who have been engaged here since 197? and have deep emotional and parental and protective feelings and reactions to much of what transpires at and through Weavers Way.

Again, Thank you, enjoy your accomplishments, take pride in your work and have lots of good years and good words to enjoy.

Respectfully yours, Dorothy Guy

Weavers Way recently held a Member Forum (1/17/06), at which the issues of the Co-op's work requirement and investment requirement were discussed. Among the ideas examined that evening were reducing, or eliminating, the six-hour work requirement, and the question of allowing non-members to shop, but charging them a surcharge (10%? 20%?) on their purchases.

As we entertain these types of changes at Weavers Way, I think it's important to keep in mind one basic fact of physical reality; that we operate in a very small building (two rowhouses, converted), and that the store is often rather crowded, especially on weekends, evenings, and around holidays.



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7500 Germantown Ave, Mt Airy 215-248-1662 \* www.phillywaldorf.com We've all experienced the crowded shopping conditions of Weavers Way; it's difficult to find counter space, to navigate through the store, to bring children in and keep track of them. And then there's the checkout line, which is often long. As a staff person working on the first floor, the term "contact sport" comes readily to mind. And all the people involved here are, for the most part, Co-op members who have made the decision to join Weavers Way, attended an orientation meeting, gotten "trained" about how to shop at the Co-op (very few carts, narrow walkways, shopping bins on counters), and are willing to put in the six hours per year work requirement.

While we're operating at our present location, I cannot imagine that dropping the work requirement would be a sound idea, simply because of the crowding problem that it would create if membership were to suddenly increase. I'd be against allowing non-member shopping for the same reason.

It is true that our present system of verifying each shopper's membership and "good standing" can use improvement, and it is hoped that the capabilities of our new cash register system will allow us to make those improvements.

If we move to, or establish a second location in a much larger building, then let's talk about opening up "the floodgates." In our present location, we need our membership requirements, including some sort of work requirement, to keep the store manageable, and at times even enjoyable, to shop or work in.

Sincerely

Chris Switky (Weavers Way staff, 1991 – present.)

Thanks for all your hard work in producing the *Shuttle*. I am always happy to get and read it. I'm writing in regards to an article, which appeared in the January/February issue of the *Shuttle*. "The New Medicare Coverage," by Solomon Levy Ph.D., CFP ® contains errors and misleading information. With all due respect to Dr. Levy, the Medicare Part-D Prescription Drug Coverage is indeed complicated and confusing. As a Medicare recipient, I had to find out about it in order to make an informed choice. Perhaps I can shed some light. Please consider printing a brief correction, even though most of the people affected will already have joined by the time the next *Shuttle* is issued.

Dr. Levy begins paragraph four by stating that the premium is \$37.00 per month. The fact is that of the 52 plans to choose from, (not counting the Medicare advantage plans), the monthly premiums range from \$10.14 to \$68.61. He is correct in saying that the assistance in paying those premiums is available to those who qualify.

In paragraph six, Dr. Levy suggests that those who do not spend much on medica-

(continued on page 27)

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Liz Schlesinger, Ph.D. Donna Allender, M. Ed.

(continued from page 26) Letters

tions sign up for the discount card. However, the new Medicare Part D program replaces the Medicare Approved Discount Card Program.

Anyone who had a discount card already may use it until their Part D begins, or May 15, 2006. Medicare Discount Cards are no longer available.

I assume, based on the voting reference at the start of his article, that Dr. Levy was looking at the www.medicare.gov website in early November or before. In late November, the Drug Plan Finder was added. I found it to be an indispensable tool. You enter your zip code, which drugs you take (although it was a little buggy about adjusting the dosage), and pharmacy preference, if any. The program then lists all of the plans, in order of which will save you the most money. A table is provided which shows what your premium, co-pay, deductible(if any), and total out-of-pocket expenses will be for each plan. I found that this site also had detailed, comprehensive information, including a FAQ section that has about nine pages of questions (not answers – nine pages of just questions. The answers took many more pages.)

The table which Dr. Levy included is misleading, if not downright erroneous. Perhaps AARP experts are challenged to understand this complex program, too? Firstly, it implies that everyone will have to pay a deductible of \$250. Actually, only about half of the plans require that a deductible be met. Of those, most are \$250, although they vary, with one being only \$50. The co-pays, again, vary significantly, depending upon the plan and the actual drug.

Finally, the note at the bottom of the table is wrong also. The total spending figures, in the left side column, include monthly premiums.

I have to admit, I do agree with Dr. Levy's commentary at the end of the article. From what I have heard, most of those who made a decision about the new program got significant help from someone else, either through a clinic or senior center volunteer, or from a friend or relative. The program is complicated enough that I can't imagine making an informed choice without use of a computer and the internet. Because most senior citizens (and therefore, most Medicare recipients) don't have computer know-how, this program was not considerate of their needs. Those who are financially limited, and most in need of finding an economical plan, are probably the least likely to be computer savvy. Unfortunate indeed.

The plans do vary widely, so it is essential that those who are choosing a plan find the one that is best for them, based on their own medications. Couples will likely find that they do better with different plans, by different companies (each company offered two or three plans). And next year, when each insurance company has negotiated new contracts with each pharmaceutical company, and the plans are different, we will get to do this whole process again Whee

I hope these corrections are helpful. I tried not to ramble on about them. Thanks again for your fine editorship and sense of humor.

Regards, Donna Seiz

#### Suggestions

(continued from page 28)

me to WAWA or the Acme."

r: (Chris & Norman) The 16 oz. sour cream that we used to carry (Lehigh brand) was the same price as the organic sour cream that we sell, so I dropped the Lehigh 16 oz for space reasons. I would never send you to WAWA, or Acme, except that we have a treaty with them which requires us to send them four customers per month so they feel like part of the community, and in return they promise to devote the majority of their space to colorful packages of soda and chips.

- s: "Is it possible to carry soybutter? I'm not sure about the brand..."
- r: (Chris) We do carry soynut butter, displayed next to the ramen and Nutella.
- s: "Kashi 7 Grain Flakes high in fiber, good taste. Muir Glen Fire Roasted Tomatoes, more flavor than non-roasted."
- r: (Chris) SPACE is the consideration (problem) with adding either of these products... we don't have space to add them without dropping another cereal or canned tomato product, all of which are selling fairly well. Either item can be special ordered by the case.
- s: "Can we get some more "Ewephoria" cheese? I love it."
  - r: (Margie) Yes. I love it too.
- s: "Thanks for the very nice expansion of the mushroom department, especially the locally grown types."
- r: (Jean) Thanks for noticing, and thanks for shopping our Produce Department. All our mushrooms, so far, are locally grown. Kennett Square is the

mushroom capital of at least this region, if not the country, and maybe the world. We'll continue to try to carry a couple exotic mushrooms.

- s: "Do you plan to sell Fair Trade cocoa? It will make great chocolate cakes '
- r: (Chris) We do sell Frontier brand organic Fair Trade cocoa, it's in a one-pound foil bag in the Baking Section.
- s: "Will "Nature's First Law" raw chocolate pieces and Goji berries be back?"
- r: (Chris & Jon) Yes. These were temporarily replaced by "Location, Location, Location" brand, but now they're back. They're displayed on the upper shelf above the carrots and avocados.
- s: "Instead of investing all that money in fancy new check-out computers, why don't we put that money to good use and invest in signs kindly reminding people to avoid long pointless conversations with other shoppers in front of produce or other foods. It impairs my shopping and also it annoys the hell out of me when there is spit on my apples."
- r: (Glenn & Jon) Actually, this reminds me of what someone in the store was telling me just the other day. It seems that her cousin, who also shops at the Co-op, ran into another friend of hers, whom she went to school with. They both majored in literature at University of Pennsylvania, although her friend majored in American literature, whereas she majored in classical literature. Anyway, her cousin told her that... oh wait, I see what you mean. Actually, I do mention this in the new member orientation class. And we recently ran an article about this. If you would like to assist me with signage and wording please call me. Or we could talk about it over the apples.

#### R Ν 0 0 0 M Α 0

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Board members and committee chairs have mailboxes on the second floor of the store, 559 Carpenter Lane

#### **STORE HOURS**

Sunday 9-6 Monday-Friday 9-8 Saturday 9-6

#### Schedules

Orientation meeting schedule is on page 28.

#### Co-op Meetings

**Board** 1st Tuesday 3rd Wednesday 7:00 p.m. Education 7:30 p.m. Environment 1st Wednesday 7:30 p.m. 3rd Thursday, 7:30 p.m Finance 7:15 p.m. Diversity 3rd Tuesday

Operations, Membership, Merchandising, and Leadership Committees meet as needed. All meeting schedules are subject to change. Meetings are held at 610 and 559 Carpenter Lane and at members' homes. For more information about committee meetings, call Administrative Assistant Sarah James, 215-843-2350, ext. 120.

#### Weavers Way Recycling

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#### **Membership Coordinator**

Madelyn Morris 215-247-0790 (before 7 p.m.)



#### **Suggestions**

by Norman Weiss

Greetings and thanks for writing. As usual, suggestions and responses may have been edited for clarity, brevity, and/or comedy. If you've called the Co-op in February you may have noticed that an actual person answered. After about 12 years, our auto-attendant/voice mail system has relocated, preferring life in a landfill instead of taking messages from cold-call salespeople trying to sell Lydia the latest homeopathic remedy for liking candy. In researching new phone systems, I found one company, Inter-Tel, no longer uses the term "telephone" or "phone." They use the term "endpoint." I think they are trying to make

the point that with modern systems, (which include Voice Over Internet Protocol telephony, or "VoIP"), it is likely that a call may be answered by any one of a number of devices; a digital phone, an IP phone, a computer, a PDA, a wireless gadget, etc. I don't think they have thought this through though. First of all, since typically at least one of the people involved in a call has actually initiated the call, won't it be confusing to initiate a call from an "endpoint"? Second of all, imagine life in the Mafia, when a boss wants to tell a hit-man who just arrived at the social club that his mother just called and asked for her son to "phone" home and the boss says "endpoint your mom." Maybe we should pick a different phone system.

#### suggestions and responses:

- s: "Our family loved the chocolate chip cookie raw dough found around T-giving Any chance of stocking it regularly? Or by special order? Also the non-organic bagged spinach has been dreadfully tough and tasteless. Any other complaints? Thought I should note it."
- r: (Bonnie) Thanks. Glad you loved the cookie dough. We do stock this regularly in the winter months. Kudos to the lovely Maureen Gregory, who whips it up in a flash. (Jean) This is the first

complaint I've heard about the spinach but I'll be alert to more. And please see me to get a refund or free bag of spinach — I really want produce customers to be happy with our produce.

- s: "Missing Patak's chutneys and relishes."
- r: (Margie) We all miss them. Our distributor stopped carrying them and I can't find another source. Sorry.
- s: "For those of us wheat-adverse folks, spelt flour is a wonderful baking alternative. Arrowhead Mills makes one the same size as the other specialty flours that the Co-op already carries."
- r: (Chris) We'll look into adding this flour to our line. Meanwhile, you can special order it if you wish. Minimum is three two-pound bags; price is around \$3.49 each.
- s: "Please restock organic peppermint tea by Celestial Seasonings or a reasonable replacement. Thank you."
- r: (Chris) Celestial Seasonings stopped producing their organic tea. We are looking at replacements. Meanwhile, you can special order Choice brand, minimum of three boxes (16 bags/box), for \$2.59 each.
- s: "1) Regular loose onions. Lots of us buy just one or two pounds. 2) Possible to get better quality bananas? Finding even green ones not ready to eat a challenge."
- r: (Jean) 1) I'll put a sign on the onions go ahead and rip open a bag, and weigh them up at \$.59/pound. Maybe we can make everyone happy grab a bag, or weigh your own. 2) Hmmm. This is the first complaint I've ever had about our bananas. I opened up several, in varying stages of ripeness, from different boxes, and I cannot find bad ones. Next time you're in, please show me what you mean.

s: "RE Breadshop 'Blueberries and

Cream' granola: the number of blueberries in the mix is just 'not enough' — please add a goodly, visible amount to the mix.

- r: (Norman) At any given time, there is a limited number of dried blueberries in the world, and portioning them out using an equitable system has been an issue since the first Constitutional Convention. Issues include how many to apportion to each constituency. Should breakfast cereal get more than desserts? Why? Should cereals with mixed fruit get more than those with just blueberries? Should children's cereal get more? How to decide? Should there be a lottery? Plus, how many to save each year for the Federal Strategic Blueberry Reserve? You see how this is not simple. Until this is settled, the number of blueberries in granola is established at the manufacturer. The different batches of granola are assigned blindfolded ducks. The ducks get 30 seconds to scoop mouthfuls of dried blueberries from the blueberry supply conveyer, then drop them in the granola conveyer. Ducks have incentive to do their job well (without crushing the blueberries); they are rewarded with stale pieces of white bread. This is the most fair system devised so far, and Weavers Way staff are unwilling to modify such a carefully thought out sys-
- s: "Is there a specific reason we only carry the 70% lactose free milk? It seems to my lactose intolerant stomach, this isn't good for it"
- r: (Chris & Jon) At the moment, none of our distributors carry the 100% lactose free milk. We are continuing to search for a source... In the meantime, you could just drink the 70% with no lactose.
- s: "What happened to 16 oz. of regular sour cream? Nonfat/lowfat is not worth it and the small regular size is too small. With Hanukkah & latke eating just days away, what's a girl to do? Please don't send

(continued on page 26)

# Important Speaker at Spring Meeting

Weavers Way is pleased to present political-economist and a historian Gar Alperovitz, PhD, as guest speaker at the Spring General Membership Meeting, 7:00 p.m. April 29. A Professor of Political-Economy at the University of Maryland, he has also taught, among other places, at Cambridge University, Harvard's Institute of Politics, and as a Guest Scholar at the Brookings Institution. His most recent book is America Beyond Capitalism: Reclaiming Our Wealth, Our Liberty and Our Democracy. His other books include Rebuilding America, Making a Place for Community, and The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb. Alperovitz will be signing books at Big Blue Marble, 551 Carpenter LAne, 6-6:30 p.m., Saturday, April 29, before the meeting.

A founding Principal of The Democracy Collaborative and a former Legislative Director in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, his articles have appeared in *The New York Times*,



GAR ALPEROVITZ

The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, The New Republic, The Nation, and The Atlantic. He has been profiled by The New York Times, The Associated Press, People Magazine, UPI, and Mother Jones and he has appeared on numerous network television news programs including (among many others): "Meet the Press," "Larry King Live," "The Charlie Rose Show," "Cross-Fire," and "The O'Reilly Factor."

#### "Grocery News"

formerly of Basket Bulletin fame, now humbly submitted for the Shuttle in the post-James era at Weavers Way.) by Chris Switky

Greetings, shoppers. If you're wondering what's new on the shelves, in the dairy case, and under the radiators of the Coop's grocery department, here's some news you can use:

tion, on the shelves above the carrots and avocadoes. New in the candy section are Alpsnack snack bars and Dagoba chocolate bars, each in three varieties, again brought in due to shopper requests. On

First, a bit of bad news: The one distributor we dealt with who carried Cape Cod potato chips has stopped carrying them, and we have yet to find another source. We're still looking, but "the darkest day in the chips aisle" continues as I type these words.

Two new items recently added to the dairy case: Fage whole milk yogurt 17 oz., and Pequa plain whole milk yogurt 32 oz. Fage is imported from Greece. Pequa is made locally in Lancaster County. We had numerous requests for both of these items; we made space to bring them in, and now we've got them. Enjoy

Raw chocolate (cacao bits) and Goji Berries now have a permanent shelf location, on the shelves above the carrots and avocadoes. New in the candy section are Alpsnack snack bars and Dagoba chocolate bars, each in three varieties, again brought in due to shopper requests. On the seaweed rack (near the flour and sugar), you'll find Bonito flakes (dried bits of shaved mackerel), and in the dressing section, two new flavors of Drew's dressings: Sesame Orange and Kalamata Caper.

Three new items in the Asian cooking section: Kame hot chili oil, and jars of minced ginger and grated ginger, "Ginger People" brand. Last, but not least, Agave nectar has made its debut in the syrups section. Find it in between the dried ramen and the Nutella hazelnut spread.

Finally, the Grocery Dept.'s joke of the month: A horse walks into a bar. Bartender looks at the horse and says, "Hey, why the long face?" Thank you, and good night.

#### Welcome to Weavers Way Cooperative Association

Dear Neighbor,

If you are not already a member of Weavers Way Co-op, you are invited to join. Weavers Way is a member-owned, not-for-profit cooperative. Our bylaws require that in becoming a member, someone from your household attend an orientation meeting, where details of membership will be explained. Meetings are held at the Germantown Jewish Center (GJC), Lincoln Drive and Ellet Street, and at Church of the Annunciation (CA), Carpenter Lane and Lincoln Drive. Upcoming Orientation Meetings are on the following dates:

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<b>LOCATION</b>
Wednesday,	Mar. 1, 2006	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Wednesday,	Apr. 5, 2006	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Saturday,	May. 6, 2006	10:30 a.m.	CA
Wednesday,	Jun. 7, 2006	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Wednesday.	Jul. 5. 2006	6:45 p.m.	GJC

Meetings start promptly and last about 1 1/4 hours. Latecomers cannot be admitted. Written reservations are required, so please fill out the tear-off sheet below and return it to the store. At the close of the orientation meeting, you will be expected to pay your initial \$30 annual investment (check or cash). We look forward to seeing you and welcoming you into the Co-op.

Madelyn M. Morris, Membership Coordinator

PLEASE RETURN THIS PORTION TO WEAVERS WAY
Someone from my household will attend the orientation meeting on
Name (please print)
Phone Number
Address (including zip code)