

the Shuttle

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

Manager's Corner

The Importance of Our Board

by Glenn Bergman

When I was in line as a "shopper" or even the "next shopper," I never gave any thought to the Weavers Way board of directors.I mean *never* It was all I could do to get through the store and shop, run back to the house, and go on with my life.Today, I see the importance of the board and how delicate a balance a board can have from year to year depending on who serves and how they serve.

I have had the chance over these last three years to visit other co-ops and to attend meetings of the NCGA (the National Cooperative Grocers Association, of which Weavers Way is a member) with other GMs and board

(continued on page 2)

Members to Receive Rebates

by Josh Giblin and Jonathan McGoran

After another successful year at Weavers Way, the Co-op's board has declared a rebate of \$100,000 to be returned to the membership. This rebate allows members to share the benefits of their patronage while reducing the Co-op's tax liability, thus saving members even more money. Each member's portion of the rebate is based on their shopping during the fiscal year July 1, 2005, through June 30, 2006.

Seventy-five percent of the rebate will (continued on page 4)



ALL THAT GREAT PRODUCE FROM THE CO-OP'S FARM STARTED OUT AT LAST YEAR'S PROPAGATION PARTY. THIS YEAR, THE SEASON GETS UNDERWAY SUNDAY, MARCH 18 FROM 1 TO 3 AT SUMMIT CHURCH, GREENE AND WESTVIEW STS.

Environment Committee Now Accepting Grant Applications

by Sandy Folzer

Local community groups are invited to submit grant applications to the Environment Committee. The Environment Committee receives incentive funds through the Philadelphia Partnership Recycling Program as a result of recycling efforts. These grants are used for public purposes, resulting in a tangible improvement in the community. Funds may be used for planting trees and other vegetation, gardens, and supplies to support gardens. Also, environmental training programs and after-school programs are some of the ways in which youth and the public may learn about caring for the environment.

Anyone requesting a grant will learn within a month of the deadline if they have been selected. We anticipate giving grants ranging from \$100 to \$1000, depending on the available funds from recycling. Grantees are then obliged to submit a report with receipts describing exactly how the money was spent.

Those wishing to submit a grant should pick up an application and guidelines from the Environment Committee box (Sandra Folzer) on the second floor of the Co-op. Applications are due April 25, and should be returned to the same box by that date.

Grant applications and guidelines are also available at www.weaversway.coop.

Environment Committee Adds Film Series to List of Accomplishments

by Scott Robinson

"It's the one thing we all have in common," said Brian Rudnick at the Feb. 7 meeting of the Environment Committee.
"The environment is where we all live."

It actually seemed as though we all lived in the Co-op meeting room, with 14 people packed in at the meeting's height.

"And there's no boundaries, either," Rudnick continued. "If the water or the air is polluted, it's all polluted."

There were apparently few boundaries to the committee's activities, either.

The packed meeting had an agenda as diverse as a healthy biome. Guest Larry Schofer, of the Education Committee, proposed a film series, to be co-sponsored with the Environment Committee. In order to avoid the problems they'd encountered in other venues in the past, Schofer suggested using the screening room at Video Library, located at 7147 Germantown Avenue. The space, which can accommodate between 20 and 25 people, has theater seats and a large projection screen; Schofer likened it to a small commercial cinema. The room is available for \$50 an evening.

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New Director, New Location for MACCC

by Sloan Seale



ANGEL LABELL, MT. AIRY COMMUNITY COMPUTER CENTER'S NEW DIRECTOR, NEXT TO THE SIGN THAT MARKS THEIR NEW LOCATION ON MT. PLEASANT AVE.

The Mt. Airy Community Computer Center has a new director, Angel LaBell; it has a new home at 17 E. Mt. Pleasant Ave.; and it has a renewed energy to pursue its mission of helping all residents of Mt. Airy bridge the digital divide. According to both Angel LaBell and Weavers Way General Manager Glenn Bergman, who sits on MACCC's board, the one thing that is unfortunately lacking for MACCC is public awareness of this unique resource in our area. But Angel and MACCC's

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NOTICE

of
Nominations for
Board of Directors

Elections will be held at the Weavers Way Co-op Spring General Membership Meeting May 19, 2007

at Summit Presbyterian Church

Board Positions to be filled for 2-year terms:

- 4 At-Large Directors
 - 1 Staff Director

Nomination form is on page 2

Annual Spring General Membership Meeting

5 p.m. Saturday, May 19, 2007 Summit Presbyterian Church Auditorium Greene & Westview Streets

Agenda:

- Meet and greet, with light fare for adults & kids
- Report from General Manager
- Report from President of the Board
- Approval of minutes from previous General Membership Meeting
- By-law changes discussed and voted on
- Breakout sessions for member discussion of co-op values and priorities
- Open sharing and discussion following breakouts
- Childcare will be available
- Announcement of Board of Directors Election Winners

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And of course... scads more

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Editor's Note

by Jonathan McGoran

Among the many differences between your co-op and regular retail establishments are rebates. like the \$100,000 being returned to members as you read this (when Co-op's give their members money back it's called a "rebate," whereas when "for profit" stores do it, it's called "change"). Another big difference is the way we promote our products. This month, our deli and produce departments are joining forces to spotlight Mexico, getting a two-month jump on those other retailers and their boring old Cinco de Mayo specials.I call it Cinco de Marcho.

In community news, we welcome Angel LaBell, the new Director of the Mt. Airy Community Computer Center (MACCC). Among other goals, MACCC is helping to bridge the digital divide, and I think we can all agree that it's about time someone got the PC people and the MAC people to coexist peacefully.

The Spring General Membership Meeting is fast approaching, and your co-op urges you to Run for the Board It sounds like some sort of 5k fundraiser for the chronically uninterested, but it is actually an important way to help guide your co-op into the future. You can nominate yourself or someone else. It doesn't even have to be someone you like, and it's at least as funny as ordering a pizza in their name.

Finally, we have not one, but two articles about the writings of Michael Pollan, author of the landmark book, The Omnivore's Dilemma. Pollan has gotten a lot of praise for his work, but personally, I'm not so sure. For instance, Pollan advocates eating the way your grandmother used to eat. Frankly, I'm not convinced gumming overcooked porridge is the right way to go. I don't know about you, but my grandmother was notorious for chewing with her mouth open. Maybe Pollan means you should eat the kinds of foods your grandmother used to eat, but even there, I have to disagree; my grandmother was from the old country: cabbages and gruel, the occasional blood pudding. Squirrel on Sunday, if she was fast enough. No thanks.

People tell me I'm missing the point, but even if what Pollan is really saying is that we should eat whole foods, I'm still not signing on; the way I see it, the "whole foods" diet is the *real* omnivore's dilemma. I'm all for avoiding overly processed, chemical-laden techno-food, but as far as I'm concerned, it's for vegetarians only. I've tried the "whole foods" diet and believe me, you can only eat so many hooves and beaks in the name of good health. And don't even get me started on "raw foods."

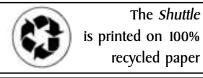
The Shuttle is published by Weavers Way Coop and is mailed to all members.

Deadline for the next issue is: March 1, 2007 **Statement of Policy**

Articles should be under 500 words and can be submitted neatly typed, on disk, or e-mailed to jonmcgo@weaversway.coop. Be sure to include your name, phone number, and membership num ber. Drop them off by the deadline to the Shuttle mailbox on the second floor of the Co-op. 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 arti-

Ad rates are available upon request, in the advertising mailbox on the second floor, or at www.weaversway.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.



Manager's Corner

(continued from page 1)

members. The co-ops that I admire for their strong position in the community and growth of the cooperative economic principals in their area all have dedicated board members. I have also heard and seen what happens when the board is not aligned with the membership or the GM; it is ugly. That is why, whenever we have board elections, it is important for people who have not served to step forward for a few years to help out and to continue to guide us in to the future.

Many of these co-ops follow the policy governance model (as we are working toward doing), that sets limitations on management, but allows staff to manage the business. That helps to keep the board at arm's length from operations, but it still has its influence through setting goals (Ends) and management limita-

Board meetings are important. While they might be long, at times wandering through the world of policy governance, I have grown to admire these dedicated volunteers who care about an institution that serves the community. At these meetings, I get to see a group that is aligned with the mission and cooperative principles that are posted on the walls of the Co-op.

The board sets a tone for the staff and me to perform our work. It provides guidance and helps to keep me aligned with the membership. It is important that people from all areas of our community run for the board, and if elected, become involved and make that commitment for however long they can.

Lastly, the board is your connection to management. Should I not perform to a standard that meets your needs, or in a manner that you believe is just wrong, the board is there to be your voice. If I have not heard you through a letter, a telephone conversation, etc., the board can be brought in to make me listen.I like that. Especially with a board that is committed to the true principals of democratic control and not autocratic power.

The board is important... now is a good time to step forward and run for the board this spring

Kosher Chicken in the Freezer

by Betsy Teutsch

Great news Weavers Way is now carrying frozen Empire boned chicken breasts They are in the frozen food section, second door

from the right, second shelf from the bottom (below the Amy's burritos). The Co-op generally does not sell frozen meat or poultry, emphasizing fresh instead, so this is out of the ordinary protocol. But as anyone

who shops for kosher chicken at Weavers Way knows, the supply of fresh Empire chickens has been 1) limited to whole chickens, which not everyone likes purchasing, and 2) only available a few days a week. This now gives us a consistent local source of kosher chicken breasts.No more emergency trips to suburban supermarkets (And then you still have to

come back to Weavers Way anyway, for our superb challah choices)

Dale Kinley, who is in charge of meat

purchasing, reports Weavers Way has sold a case in just the first week, which is good volume.Please spread the word, and thank her when you see her

Also, spread the word to friends, since it is now possible to shop at Weavers Way without being a mem-

ber. There is a modest surcharge, which is credited back if the non-member joins within sixty days.

challah and baked goods, kosher grape

So it is now one-stop Shabbat shopping for those among us who adhere to the Shabbos chicken habit

Weavers Way also carries Rolings juice, and even Shabbat candles.

New and Noteworthy on the Second Floor

by Martha Fuller

Do you have a front loader washing machine or are you considering the purchase of one? We sell laundry detergents that can be used in them. Bio-Pak Laundry detergent and Ecover Laundry Wash are suitable for these newer, energy-saving appliances.

Baby's Bliss Gripewater is an effective herbal supplement that parents and caregivers may use to ease the stomach pain and gas associated with teething, colic



and hiccups. Their formula does not contain sucrose, alcohol or petroleum products.

Burt's Bees continues to expand their product lines with products for every age group - babies and infants, teens, young adults,

adults - you name the age and they have a product. Check out their lip shimmers, the parsley blemish stick with willowbark, the baby products, facial care products from toners to creams and lotions, as well as three lines of very popular shampoos and conditioners.

Tips From Shoppers

Our shoppers have lots of good ideas and we would like to share them with you. If you have something you would like to share, please let us know.

Here's our first tip from a Co-op member: She finds that Burt's Bees Coconut Foot Creme with Vitamin E is also great for chapped hands. It smells good, too.

Board Position Nomination Form For Candidates for Election to The Weavers Way Board of Directors

All Nomination Forms must be submitted no later than 5p.m., Tuesday, March 27, 2007. Place completed form I with answers to the five questions (see below) and a photograph in the Leadership Committee mailbox on the second floor of the store, and call Bob Noble, Leadership Committee Chair, 267-973-6619, to confirm nomination. A copy of this form is also available on our website, www.weaversway.coop. For further information call Bob Noble or Sylvia Gentry, 267-323-2089.

Name:		Member #:		
Board Position (circle one):	At-Large Director	Staff Director (must be WW employee)		
Phone:				
Address:				
E-mail Address (optional): _				

Please answer the following five questions on a separate sheet of paper. Your entire response to all five questions Imust not exceed 250 words.

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

Produce News

by Jean MacKenzie, Produce Manager

PASA Conference

Every year the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) holds a "Farming for the Future" conference in State College. Weavers Way is a member of PASA, and this year I finally managed to get to the conference. There was a huge range of choices for workshops: I wanted to sign up for "Adopting Modern Machinery to Draft Horses," "Basic Beekeeping" and "Building a Straw Bale House," but Glenn and Rick just didn't believe I was sincere in planning to replace our produce truck with draft horses. So I had to be content with "Omega-3 Fatty Acids" (take a supplement; eat/drink only grass-fed meat, poultry, dairy), "Preparing Meals Using CSA Surprise" (I was so not surprised), "2007 Farm Bill" (tell your representatives to listen to the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition www.msawg.org - before they vote), and "Eating Year-Round in Your Foodshed" (yes, it can be done, with careful planning). Amy Trauger, who led the Foodshed workshop, needs to write a book, with menus and recipes, and she needs to do so immediately.

I now have about 20 pages of notes, lists and lists of websites, a pile of business cards - and an even deeper commitment to finding regional, sustainable produce for Weavers Way. It's harder than you might think: Most of the farmers and producers have small – some very small - very labor-intensive farms. They don't qualify for the subsidies and loans available to the big guys. They often really need the higher price they can get by selling their products at a farmstand or farmer's market, or to restaurants. In the marketing workshop I attended, Ann Karlen of the Buy Fresh Buy Local campaign talked about wholesale, and asked for a show of hands – how many growers/producers in the workshop were selling to stores, restaurants, or institutions, or wanted to? Almost no one. As the sustainable agriculture movement grows, this will become easier. In the meantime, I'll be relying heavily on Ann's extensive contacts in local agriculture.

Produce prices

Have you noticed that when a produce price goes down, I write "LOWER PRICE" in red on the price sign? I've also begun writing "(OUCH)" when I have to raise a price. Lately I've had to

write "(OUCH)" so much that I was afraid I'd develop a repetitive motion injury (ouch). I went on a field trip to two nearby supermarkets, and found \$4.99 pineapples, \$1.79/lb apples, 2/\$5.00 cantaloupe, \$1.99 avocados, and cute little vegetables (you know how I feel about this) in shrink-wrapped trays, \$3.99 for eight ounces. Good grief.

It's time to do a more systematic produce comparison, and you can help. First, I need a couple of your grocery lists – I like to make these comparisons as authentic as possible. Then I'll need some help getting prices from Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, and one supermarket during a single week. Let me know if you can help.

I may not be able to lower prices, but maybe those "(OUCH)"es will hurt a little less if we can show that Weavers Way is cheaper.

Coming Soon: Fair Trade Bananas

You don't want to know the logistics involved in getting bananas from Central or South America to Philadelphia, or in getting them to ripen correctly. I don't want to know either, which is why I'm letting Rob Amsterdam and Oké USA do the work of finding a Philadelphia-area banana broker to accept and ripen shipments of Fair Trade bananas, and then finding other stores besides Weavers to buy some, too. I'm excited that we will finally have some Fair Trade produce at Weavers Way, although I dread the flood of bad jokes based on the brand name ("How are the bananas today, Jean? Good, or just Oké? Hahahaha ")

Oké imports Fair Trade bananas, conventional and organic, from Costa Rica and Ecuador. They currently import only Cavendish bananas, but plan to add mangos, pineapples and baby bananas. Check out their web-site at Okeusa.com.

More About Bananas

Did you know that bananas are the single biggest sales item in almost every produce department in the United States? And that, while there are many kinds of bananas (at least 57), the banana industry has taught us to eat only Cavendish bananas? And that every single Cavendish banana is genetically identical to every other Cavendish banana? Did you know that a bunch of bananas is called a "hand," and each banana is called a "finger"? (eewww)

What's the second biggest sales item, Jean?

Potatoes.

March Grocery News

by Chris Switky

Greetings, Co-op shoppers. Late winter is a tough time for Weavers Way staff, many of whom are moving slowly in order to conserve energy, as winter food supplies start to run low. We actually have a few staffers who, at press time, are hibernating...but Keith Kelleher is not one of them. Keith knows a lot of various foods, as well as drink, especially beer. Even though we can't legally sell beer here at the Co-op, Keith is always willing to talk about it. At his suggestion, we are now stocking Colmans Hot English mustard. Use sparingly; it does have a "bite" to it. Very tasty

Other new items to look for at the coop: Ryvita Dark Rye crackers, found on the shelves above the bagel bins; "Gingin" hard ginger candies, in the candy section; Nature's Yoke wide egg noodles, locally made in Lancaster County; and in the freezer, Health is Wealth Thai peanut spring rolls.

For the pomegranate juice crowd, we've expanded our selection of Lakewood pomegranate juices. There's "heart healthy" pomegranate blend, 100% pure pomegranate, pomegranate

cranberry, and pomegranate acai. These drinks are on the seltzer shelf by the exit door, great for mixing with seltzer, and they almost make up for the fact that we don't have any beer.



That's it, folks. Thanks for reading. I'll be running into you...in the grocery aisles.

Help the Philadelphia Parks Alliance Support your Parks! Show your support with these PPA buttons, available at Weavers Way

Deli & Produce Departments Feature Mexican Products throughout March

During the month of March, the deli and produce departments are featuring Mexican products. The deli currently sells an interesting

assortment of dried and canned chilies, tamale flour and my two favorite hot sauces, Tapatio and Bufalao Chipolte Sauce. These products, which are located on the shelf next to the deli meat case, have been relocated to the shelf above the hot soups for the month of March. The deli also carries two Mexican cheeses, Queso Fresca and Chihuahua.

The produce department is carrying jicima (a crunchy slightly sweet tropical root vegetable), cilantro, tomatillas, fresh jalapeños, and, as always, tropical fruits such as pineapple, bananas and mangoes.

The following recipes are two ideas using the Mexican products available at Weavers Way.

Orange Chipotle Jicima Salad serves 6-8

Ingredients

- 2 large jicima, peeled and grated
- 1 lb carrots, peeled and grated
- 1 medium red onion, thinly sliced
- ½ bunch fresh cilantro, chopped (approx. ¼ cup chopped)
- 1 cup orange juice
- ½ cup canola oil

Juice of 2 limes

1-2* chipotle chilies in adobo sauce, finely chopped Salt to taste

Instructions

- 1. Mix the cilantro, orange juice, oil, lime juice, and chipotles (with a little of the sauce) in a large bowl.
- 2. Add remaining ingredients. Mix well.
- 3. Season with salt to taste
- 4. Allow to sit for about ½ hr. Stir and adjust seasonings.
- *Chipotle chilies are very spicy. Only use one if you don't like very spicy foods.

Shrimp and Caramelized Onion Quesadillas serves 4

<u>Ingredients</u>

- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 1 lb. medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2 cloves of garlic, chopped
- 1 fresh jalapeño, minced
- ½ bunch fresh cilantro, chopped
- ½ lb. Chihuahua cheese, grated
- 1/4 lb. Queso Fresca, grated
- 1 package of flour tortillas or 2 packages of corn tortillas*
- 4 tbls. Olive oil

Instructions

- 1. Over low heat cook the onion slices in 2 Tbs. of olive oil, stirring occasionally until brown and caramelized.
- 2. In another pan, heat the remaining 2 Tbs. of olive oil. Over high heat, add the shrimp and cook, stirring often for about two minutes or until no longer translucent.
- 3. Reduce heat to medium. Add the garlic and jalapeños. Cook for one minute. Turn off heat and add cilantro.
- 4. Heat a flat pan large enough to hold one tortilla over low heat. Place one tortilla in the pan top with ¼ of the shrimp mixture, ¼ of the caramelized onions and ¼ of the cheese. Place another tortilla on top and press down lightly with a spatula. After approx. 1 min. flip the tortilla. When both sides are lightly browned and the cheese is melted transfer to a cutting board.
- 5. Repeat instruction #4 for three more Quesadillas. Cut each Quesadilla into quarters and serve four wedges per person with a side of Orange Chipotle Jicima Salad.

*If using corn tortillas make two per person dividing ingredients into 1/8 per Quesadilla.

*You may also want to use a little olive oil in the pan with the corn tortillas because they don't brown as nicely without it.

Equal Exchange

Coffee of the Month



Breakfast Blend Dark \$6.99/Ib.

Reg. \$8.50/lb

Aroma: Vanilla, Roasted Nuts, Smokey, Savory Flavor: Black Pepper, Vanilla, Cherry-Vanilla, Savory, Dark Chocolate, Roasted Nuts, Cereal, Raisins Mouthfeel: High-very creamy Acidity: Medium Aftertaste: Tobacco, Cereal, Creamy Vanilla

Other Specials:

Breakfast Blend, Regular \$6.99 Reg. \$8.50/lb Cafe Peru French \$7.75 Reg. \$8.75/lb



<u>Rebates</u>

(continued from page 1)

be deposited automatically into members' equity accounts. The remaining 25 percent will be distributed as cash. If the cash portion is less than \$1.00, the entire rebate will go directly into equity. Until your rebate is claimed, your receipts will show the total amount of your rebate as well as the equity/cash breakdown.

The 25 percent cash portion of the rebate can be redeemed in any of the following ways:

- Receive in cash at the register
- Use as payment at the register
- Authorize that it be deposited into your equity account
- Authorize that it be donated to any of

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the three Weavers Way Community Programs (farm, marketplace and environment committee)

• Request that a check be mailed to your household (This will take 3-4 weeks to process and will cost the Co-op money that could go toward next year's rebate, so members are strongly encouraged to redeem their rebates at the store).

Members have until Sunday, March 11 to redeem the cash portion of their rebate at the register, after which time they will be mailed checks.

Important note: You or a member of your household must sign for your rebate at the cash register. To the right are some questions that we anticipate might be asked frequently.

Since at press time, we hadn't actually received any questions, we can't have a "Frequently Asked Questions" section, but there are "Questions You'd Expect People to Ask." Instead of a FAQ section, we have..."QUEPA."

Rebate QUEPA

Questions You'd Expect People to Ask

Who gets a rebate?

Members who shopped between July 1, 2005, and June 30, 2006, who were members in good standing on June 30, 2006 and are members in good standing today.

Is this taxable income?

No. By IRS rule, patronage rebates to consumer food co-op members are not taxable income.

How long do I have to redeem my cash rebate?

You have until Sunday, March 11, 2007 to redeem the cash portion of your rebate. After that time, you will be mailed a check. If the check is not cashed by July 15, 2007, the amount of your cash rebate will be deposited into your equity account. If your rebate check is subsequently cashed, that amount will once again be deducted from your equity account.

If I miss the deadline and the cash portion of my rebate is deposited into my equity account, can I still get it out?

Yes. If you miss the deadline, you can submit a signed request to Membership Manager Robin Cannicle and receive the cash portion that was deposited into your equity account.

Does the portion of my rebate deposited into my equity account count towards my \$400 equity requirement?

Yes.

If the portion of my rebate deposited into my equity account brings me over the \$400 equity requirement, can I cash out the extra?

No. Your equity in the Co-op stays in your equity account until you leave the Co-op.

How much is my rebate?

The amount of your rebate is determined by how much you spent in the store in Fiscal Year (July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006). The amount will be printed on the bottom of your receipt until your rebate is redeemed, or until March 11, 2007. If you do not shop in that period, your information will be mailed to you.

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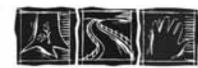
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OPEN 7 DAYS

Weavers Way Chess Team Scores at Last!

Blasts out of basement in final rounds of tournament.

by Susan Saxe

Building on the theme of "No place to go but up," and infused with the youthful talent of two Masterman High School students, Evan Ames and Joel Fagliano, the Weavers Way chess team advanced its position in the Greater Philadelphia Chess League Tournament by winning three games in the fifth and sixth of eight rounds, followed by five wins and a draw in the seventh and eighth rounds.

In rounds five and six, Evan Ames scored two wins (and later celebrated his victory by scoring the last slice of the team's pizza in the car on the way home). The third win was scored by Morris Saxe-Smith, a student at the Miquon School. Morris demonstrated he knew what he was doing in the endgame by promoting a pawn, then executing a king-queen checkmate.

Age returned for the final Saturday, Rounds Seven and Eight, in the persons of Paul Glover and David Tukey on boards one and two. Building on the halfpoint momentum of the young players from the previous Saturday, our stalwart band swept all four boards in round seven (four wins to no losses) to get a full match



point. Then, in the final round, they lost the match by only half a point. Overall, the day provided individual highs:Paul Glover's win in Round Seven gave him his first victory since returning to officially rated play after a long hiatus; David Tukey had a win and a draw for 1.5 out of a possible 2.0; Morris Saxe-Smith copped a win, continuing the ratings climb he has had going

since entering organized rated play; and captain Al Pearson snapped a disastrous seven-game losing streak with two wins.

If, like this author, you have only a vague notion of what all this means, come to the club and learn. Then you, too, can amaze your friends with cool chess talk Club announces Monday night "Ladder."

For those who enjoy the thrill of (friendly) competition, a ladder is a ranked list of players who compete to determine their ranking. Players are matched by proximity on the list. If the higher rated player wins, the ranking stays the same. If the match is a draw, the lower rated player moves to the position directly below the higher rated player. If the lower rated player wins, he or she moves to the slot directly above the (formerly) higher rated player. See? Now you know another cool chess term, and that's just from reading this article.



CLUB LEADER AL PEARSON LOOKS ON AS MORRIS SAXE-SMITH PLAYS NED CASE, A RATED CHESS EXPERT IN HIS COL-LEGE DAYS.

Because the club is an official US Chess Federation affiliate, players will have the opportunity to play for USCF ratings by mutual consent of both participants... or just for fun.

The club meets from 7-9 p.m. Monday nights at the Co-op's first-floor meeting room at 610 Carpenter Lane. Anyone is welcome to drop in, no experience or commitment required. Come to compete or just stop by for a lesson. Beginners are always welcome.





Free Tax Help

by Caleb Furnas

Tax season is here If you want an easy way to file your tax return, check out Solutions for Progress' new self-serve program, Sidney.

Sidney takes you through a series of questions, and when you're done, uses the information you entered to complete and file your federal return and selected state returns.

It's fast, it's easy, and it's free. To register, or to get more information, visit https://sidnev.solutionsforprogress.com/.

This program has been designed specifically to help working families file for tax credits and refunds that they have earned, but may not be aware of or know how to claim. It is intended especially to help families who are eligible for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit, a refundable credit of up to \$4,536. Families with children earning less than \$38,348 per year, and families without children earning less than \$14,120, qualify for the EITC. The EITC is the nation's most effective antipoverty program, lifting four million individuals — roughly half of them children — out of poverty each year. The program also makes it simple to file for credits available to families raising children, for child care expenses incurred while adults are working or looking for work, for certain post-secondary educational expenses, and for persons taking courses to acquire or improve job skills.

In addition to Sidney, Solutions for Progress offers another program called The Benefit Bank. Unlike Sidney, The Benefit Bank is a counselor-assisted tax and benefit application filer. Sites such as community organizations, churches, and municipalities have trained counselors who can help you complete your tax return or apply for benefits. If you would prefer to have a person help you with your taxes, or you want to apply for benefits, click on http://www.thebenefitbank.com/ to find a site near you.

Sidney and The Benefit Bank both have an income limit of \$52,000. Your total household income must be less than \$52,000 to use these programs.

Sidney and The Benefit Bank are designed to help low to moderate income families. These tax-payers are often overcharged by other tax preparers. Help us in our mission to create and promote these great services by telling your friends and family.



Save these Dates! Mt. Airy Kids' Literary Festival!

Saturday, April 14, & Sunday, April 15, 2007!

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Henry School, Sarah Steele Turning Hate Speech into Art

by Kimberly Newman

The students and teachers of the Henry School will be participating in an exciting project over the next few weeks; they have been invited by the artist Sara Steele to help demonstrate how hate can be turned into something beautiful.

In 2004, the Montana Human Rights Network acquired 4,000 volumes of hate speech manuals published by the World Church of the Creator, one of the most aggressive anti-Semitic groups in the country, from a defecting official in the WCOTC organization.

Together with the Holter Museum of Art in Helena, they are organizing a major show using the books to create art for the exhibition, with the aim of encouraging civil discourse around issues of hate speech. Montana PBS plans to produce a documentary of the project, which will open in January 2008, with plans to tour the exhibition and encourage discourse in venues throughout the country.

Mt. Airy artist Sara Steele was invited by the Museum to create work for the project. As part of her entry into the show, she will work with the children of the Henry School to create a thousand origami peace cranes using decorated paper from the unbound books. The artist will utilize these cranes to create a three-dimensional piece of art. The use of cranes is based on the story of Sadako, a Japanese girl who was very young when Hiroshima was bombed.

This project will include all teachers and students at the Henry School. Classroom teachers will make students familiar with the story of Sadako, and the origami cranes will be made with the help of Mrs. Bock, the art teacher.

The Henry School community is thrilled to be a part of this special opportunity.

Environment Committee

(continued from page 1)

Noting the frequent disparity between the number of people who sign up for the Education Committee's workshops and the number who actually attend, Schofer advocated a nominal charge of two dollars as a way of encouraging members to turn out on screening nights.

The screenings will take place on the second Wednesday of the month from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m., and a discussion, led by a guest speaker, will follow.

The first screening is tentatively set for March 14. Most of the meeting's business was recycling related, and resulted in a number of initiatives, of which the Committee wants Co-op members to be aware:

- * Anyone wishing to recycle thin film plastic bags can take them to Whole Foods. The Virginia-based Trex company buys them and converts them into plastic lumber.
- * People with fluorescent light tubes to recycle can take them to the Customer Service desk at Ikea for recycling.
- * RecycleBank (http://www.recyclebank.com/), which offers coupons for recycled materials, has asked Weaver's Way to be a coupon redemption site.

The Committee is requesting that RecycleBank allow Co-op members a choice between redeeming the coupons for merchandise and applying them to grant funds to support local greening efforts.

The Environment Committee itself has a grant fund for environmental initiatives, and the deadline for applications is April 25. (Guidelines will be posted on the Co-op website.) Unlike most grant-administering organizations, however, the Committee does not necessarily limit its options to acceptance or rejection; sometimes they come back with alternatives.

Member Richard Williams applied for a grant to fund the installation of security cameras in the vacant lot across from his residence on Bringhurst Street. Neighbors and contractors had been illegally dumping trash in the lot, and Williams thought the cameras would serve as a deterrent.

The Committee disagreed, and proposed sending a crew to the site to clean it up instead. Led by Committee member David Bower, the cleanup project which the Co-op registered as a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day service project descended on the lot on the morning of Jan. 14.

"We ended up having about 23 people," says Bower. "It was a very diverse group that came from about six different places. Everybody worked under really bad conditions; it was nasty, it was spritzing off and on throughout the day, and everybody got really dirty. But we ended up hauling away one heavy duty pickup truck overflowing with tires, car batteries, glass and aluminum cans and bottles, and 'mystery substances."

And that's only the recyclables.

"We loaded up the truck nine times and took it to Domino Lane (transfer station) with 10,800 pounds of trash," Bower says. Williams will brainstorm with the Committee at a future meeting, to find ways of deterring future dumping.

Co-op members have more upcoming opportunities for cleanup projects. Awbury Park, at Haines and Ardleigh Streets (not to be confused with the Awbury Arboretum) will be the next site. Interested members should convene at the park sign at 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 3. The cleanup will last until noon.

The following day, March 4, interested members will meet at Park Line Drive and Hortter Street for a 9 a.m. to noon cleanup in nearby Carpenter's Woods.

According to Bower, the sewer installation that has been disfiguring the site is now complete and the trail head has been rebuilt. Member volunteers have also restored the trail to its pre-construction condition and installed a sign at the street entrance to the park. The upcoming cleanup project, called Preserve Your Park, will focus on cutting down devil's walking stick and other invasive plants.

The Committee also wishes to install message boards at Ellet Street and the Wayne Avenue bus station, and is now seeking funding for them. Members may send donations to: Friends of the Wissahickon, 8708 Germantown Ave, Philadelphia PA 19118. Co-op General Manager Glenn Bergman has offered to match member contributions up to \$1000, so be sure to include "Co-op Member Friends of Carpenter's Woods" on the memo line of your check.

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Kicking and Screaming in Mt. Airy

by Anne Wainer

On a recent January evening, I found myself in the basement of my West Mt. Airy home with my three college-age stepdaughters lunging, kicking, and screaming "No" at the top of my lungs, while upstairs, my husband and our dog paced and wondered what in heaven's name we were doing.

It all started with a meeting at Summit Church about crime last October. As a person who walks in the woods and around our neighborhood on a daily basis, I wasn't very happy to hear my neighbors tell about break-ins, vandalism and muggings. I relish my independence, but needed little encouragement to come up with scenarios where I could be victimized.

In December, my husband and I looked through the Mt. Airy Learning Tree catalog to try to find a class in self-defense that would meet when our daughters were on break. Unable to find one, we decided to contact Iris Marie Bloom, the founder of WAVE (Women's Anti-Violence Education) directly. Happily, she agreed to come out to our home.

We started our session with a discussion of why we wanted to learn self-defense, which then led to sharing about each of our strengths (personality, intellect, physical attributes). I was pleasantly surprised to find that you don't need to be tall or hefty to perform debilitating defense moves (debilitating is the operative word here, because if someone has managed to get in close for an attack, there are only a few things you can do to buy time to get away).

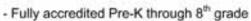
During this one two-hour session, we learned about mental and physical selfdefense, personal safety, street smarts, physical moves that don't require a black belt and how to really project our voices.I learned a new term – mugger money – a roll of bills you keep handy that you can throw in one direction (to fix a mugger's attention) while running in the other. We also got instruction on more intense forms of defensive maneuvers including strikes, kicks and rolls. Iris also talked sensitively and openly about acquaintance and date rape and we learned through demonstration and play scenarios how to best use our voices and bodies to extricate ourselves from messy and dangerous situations.

All in all, it was very empowering. We got practical suggestions and even better, a sense of what it would be like, if challenged, to defend ourselves. Ir is warned us we'd be sore for a few days and we were – not from being out of shape – but from unfamiliar exercise combined with flooding adrenaline associated with playing out frightening scenarios.

Now that I've had the instruction, I feel a lot more prepared and I like it that my stepdaughters are going back to school with some really useful knowledge.It's a drag to think about this kind of thing, but like learning how to drive a car on ice, it's better to have information than not.As an instructor, Iris Marie Bloom made the experience positive, safe and fun.

To learn more about WAVE or to contact them, go to www.waveselfdefense.org or call them at 215-564-5301.

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Commune at the Bike Church

by Meenal Raval

Now that global warming has got us resolved to bike more (well, maybe once Spring rolls around), wouldn't it be nice to have a place to wheel your old faithful, maybe learn how to give it a tune-up... say, a bike support group?

At the last Environment Committee meeting, new member Turgut Durduran inquired if Mt. Airy had a Bike Church like the one he'd frequented in West Philly. When I looked into this, I learned that the Bike Church's parent organization, Neighborhood Bike Works, is housed in a church basement; that their mission is to increase opportunities for urban youths through bicycling; that the Bike Church is their adult program — a gathering of volunteer facilitators and bike owners — a place to hang out, learn about the bike and upgrade it with parts left-over from the day-time youth programs. For more info about Neighborhood Bike Works, see www.neighborhoodbikeworks.org.

I also learned about an innovative bicycle-lending program, the Buffalo Blue Bicycle. Blue Bicycle members have access to a fleet of metallic blue bicycles located at a number of conveniently located hubs across the city and can use them for a couple of hours or up to two days. Members are able to check out any one of a wide array of bicycles equipped with lock and bell after first making an online reservation. Membership costs \$25 annually and the bikes can be returned to any of the hubs in the city. For more info, see www.buffalobluebicycle.org.

Interested in bringing the Bike Church to Mt Airy? How about their youth programs, such as Earn-a-Bike? Do you have basic bike repair skills to share? Can you offer, or know of, a space where folks can commune over their bike repairs, with ability to store bikes and parts? Eager to welcome Spring by attending a bike repair class? With enough interest, we can do this and more for a greener, more sustainable Mt. Airy.

Contact Meenal Raval at 215-438-1517 or meenal@mtairygreening.net

First Ever Mt. Airy Kids' Literary Festival!

y Maleka Fruei

The first ever Mt. Airy Kids' Literary Festival will take place in collaborative venues throughout Mt. Airy on Saturday, April 14, and Sunday, April 15, hosted by Big Blue Marble Bookstore. The weekend will be full of readings/signings, crafts, contests, workshops, and kids' concerts — multicultural, intellectual, and funfilled events celebrating the community of Mt. Airy, wonderful children's literature, and a love of reading.

Authors and illustrators already confirmed include Deborah Kogan Ray, Rebecca Thornburgh, Gregory Frost, Ellen Datlow, Steve Berman, Judith Berman, and Pamela Ehrenberg. More authors and illustrators (including a tentative David Wiesner) will soon be announced. Also, Linda Goss, Leeway Transformation

award-winner for 2006, will be doing storytelling and giving a presentation on the art of storytelling, sponsored by Weavers Way Co-op. Weavers Way will provide healthy snacks for children during the storytelling. Other businesses involved will be High Point Cafe, Maternal Wellness Center, InFusion Coffee, and Walk a Crooked Mile Books. More details and a confirmed schedule for the weekend will be available soon on Big Blue Marble Bookstore's website, www.bigbluemarblebooks.com.

For more information on the festival, or Big Blue Marble Bookstore's other events, please contact Maleka Fruean at 215-844-1870, events@bigbluemarblebooks.com.

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Preserve Your Park and Clean It Up, too

by Rebecca Yamin

The Environment Committee's activities in the park (and parks) have expanded to include clean-ups on demand as well as taking care of our own piece of ground in the Wissahickon Woods.

On Sunday, Jan. 14, with lots of help from other Martin Luther King Day volunteers and the inimitable leadership of our own David Bower, we removed nine pick-up truckloads of debris from what had become a dumping place at the end of Bringhurst Street in Germantown. David took 10,800 lbs of debris to the Domino Lane transfer station and filled another truck with recyclables. Red bricks piled by the side of the road were listed on NWPhillyFreecycle and picked up before the afternoon's end. Our next cleanup effort is scheduled for Saturday, March 3 (see announcement). We are also scheduled for a return to our piece of the woods on Sunday, March 4.

Please join us (members and friends welcome) to chomp away at the devil's walking stick and start an experimental program of cutting back the Mountain Laurel to encourage more growth. The woods need us, and our winter-bound bodies (and souls) could surely use a dose of outdoor activity. We will meet Sunday, March 4, 9 a.m. to noon at the base of Hortter Street, where it intersects Park Line Drive.

If you have questions, call Rebecca at 215-248-1880.

The WPA and the Wissahickon: What is the Connection?

by Denise Larrabee

If you take time to read the signs posted on shelters, guard houses, and other structures throughout the Wissahickon, you may notice that the Works Progress Administration (WPA) is given credit for much of the work. On Wednesday, March 21, David R. Contosta, Professor of History at Chestnut Hill College, will give a presentation on the structures built by the WPA in the Wissahickon at the Chestnut Hill Library beginning at 7 p.m. sponsored by the Friends of the Wissahickon (FOW).

Those attending "Conflict and Consensus: the WPA in the Wissahickon," are invited to join Contosta and David Bower, Volunteer Coordinator for Fairmount Park, on a walk in the Wissahickon to view WPA structures on Saturday, March 24, from 10 a.m. to noon. Participants should meet at the WPA shelter at Harper's Meadow south of the beginning of Forbidden Drive at Northwestern Avenue. You must attend the lecture in order to participate in the walk; participants will be driven in Fairmount Park vans to some sites.

The WPA was a Federal program that operated during the Great Depression of the 1930s, offering jobs to unemployed men and women. Thousands of WPA employees worked in Fairmount Park building shelters, dams, guardhouses, trails, and walls. The Friends of the Wissahickon initiated a program to restore these neglected buildings in 1996. When one of the guardhouses they restored was destroyed by arson last sum-

mer, Weavers Way Co-op members donated \$1000 to restore it. Work was completed in December 2006.

Contosta is the author of 15 books on urban and suburban history, architecture and landscape, and various topics in social, cultural, and intellectual history, including A Philadelphia Family: The Houstons and Woodwards of Chestnut Hill (1988) and Suburb in the City: Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia (1992) He is

currently working on a book with Carol Franklin, Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, entitled *Philadelphia's Wissahickon Valley.*

David Bower has been working for the city for six years, one of five volunteer coordinators in various sections of Fairmount Park. Annually, he leads over 3,000 volunteers in performing over



Woodwards of Chestnut Hill (1988) and Suburb in the City: Chestnut Hill, Philodolphic (1992) He is the City in the City (1992) He is the City (1993) He is

5,700 hours of service, and has an intimate knowledge of the Wissahickon and its structures

Space for the walk on March 24 is limited. To register for the walk, please call FOW at 215-247-0417. For directions, contact David Bower at 215.685.2189. For more information, go to www.fow.org.

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Simplicity Dividend

Swap 'Til You Drop!

by Betsy Teutsch

I am already psyched about the upcoming March 11, Women's Clothing Swap. Will I snag another perfect, gorgeous little black dress, like I did last year? How many bags of unworn but "gently used" items can I clean out of my drawers and closets? How many laughs will we have in the dressing room, trying on outfits we might never have considered if we'd seen them in a store? What size truckload of surplus clothing will we send off to Planet Aid, and how much money will we raise to Save Darfur?

This is the third year this event will take place in our neighborhood, an idea introduced here by Weavers Way member Genie Ravital. A women's clothing swap offers many virtues. From an environmental standpoint, it affords a great opportunity for Reusing, an often neglected part of the Reduce/Reuse/Recycle mantra. Reusing items not only keeps them out of landfill, but also decreases demand for new items and the energy and natural resources consumed in their manufacture. From a personal standpoint, it's a really fun way to shop for new clothes for a song, especially this time of year when we can all use a little wardrobe lift. For those who have bursting closets full of great items they don't wear, it's an incentive to pass things along. My sense (completely devoid of any statistical research) is that the average woman wears about 25 percent of her wardrobe about 75 percent of the time, leaving many items unused. I try to pass along clothes and shoes when I notice I haven't worn them for a year that way they are still vaguely in style and someone else may enjoy them. And even more virtue: two charities benefit from the \$20 entrance fee — a fund to Save Darfur and Planet Aid. Anti-genocide activists have been tirelessly fighting against the government's atrocities in Sudan. Clothing donated to Planet Aid (www.PlanetAid.org) is resold and proceeds are used to support education, community development and HIV/AIDS programs in Africa and Asia. And though we had many shoppers who went home happy last year, we still had an enormous quantity of clothing to donate to Planet Aid.

Here is the drill: the event is at Germantown Jewish Centre, Sunday, March 11, from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. You are invited to come early and help set up. (And get an early bird look at some of the donated clothing) Your \$20 entrance fee will go straight to the Darfur Action Campaign of the American Jewish World Service, www.AJWS.org. There is no requirement to donate your own items.

We accept women's clothing, shoes, jewelry, and accessories. Spare hangers and shopping bags are helpful, too. You will be asked to place your donated items in the designated areas before you take clothes to try. There will be an opportunity to write letters to express outrage about the Darfur geno-

cide, and all who write letters will be rewarded with a free CFL bulb, yet another incentive. Bring your daughters, your sisters, your mothers, and your friends. This is really a fun outing.

One caveat about The Swap. When trying on clothes, put the clothes you were wearing in a safe place. Last year I left mine lying around in the dressing room and when I finished trying on all

AT LAST YEAR'S SWAP, THE FOUR "F"S OF RECYCLING: FRIENDS, FROCKS, AND THAT WARM FUZZY FEELING.

kinds of fun stuff, my original clothes were nowhere to be found Someone had mistakenly taken them back out to the clothing tables, and they were gone. (But of course I was flattered that someone had chosen my *schmattes* for their very own)

Betsy Teutsch blogs about money at www.moneychangesthings.blogspot.com.

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Native Plant Sale at Schuylkill Center

by Joanne Donohue

Another planting season is upon us and that means The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education's Third Annual Native Plant Sale will soon be here When the Restoration Department sat down to plan for this year, we thought "How can we make this native plant sale the best there is?" We wanted to keep our focus on the reason we host the sale: to promote native flora that sustains the diversity of the natural world around us. We wanted to support our mission of providing the public with environmental education that fosters a deeper appreciation and understanding of our natural resources. We wanted our patrons to recognize that using native plants supports sustainability and is just one piece of the puzzle of living an ecologically minded lifestyle. Here's what we came up with:

Locally Grown

This year, we are offering a brand new line of native plants, grown from seed responsibly harvested from our own property. Some are rare, some are common, and some are just fun to grow. By making these plants available to you, we are helping to preserve the local genotypes. We hope this special line will continue to expand for future sales

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

Last year, we asked our patrons to recycle pots and what a great response we got Over 500 pots and trays were returned and reused for this year's plant sale. Recycling of pots not only keeps plastics out of the trash stream and our costs down (costs of pots have skyrocketed with the rising costs of petroleum), but it also allows us to pass our savings on to you. Again this year, we are asking for our patrons to recycle their pots and trays from our sale.

Free Stuff

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Members Get Star Treatment

Members are treated to an exclusive members-only preview night on Friday, April 27. Come choose from the best selection, enjoy wine, hors d'oeuvres, and live acoustic music, and take home a free native plant, grown from local seed. New and lapsed members also welcome. Become a member or renew your membership and reap the benefits immediately

Discounts

Come spend \$50 at the sale and save \$5. Spend \$100 or more and save \$15.

Activities, Vendors, Refreshments

This year, we are offering educational classes, children's activities, and hands-on family workshops to engage people of all ages. In addition, we will have a number of vendors on hand selling their gardenrelated and environmentally-focused wares. Enjoy coffee, donuts, and other snacks while you shop

Bigger Selection & Better Displays

Over 90 species of native trees, shrubs, vines, and wildflowers to choose from 25 new species Plants will be displayed on tiered benches, made from 100 percent recycled plastics.

Mark your calendars now for April 27 (members only), April 28, and April 29. Bring your family and friends to The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education's 2007 Native Plant Sale and contribute to a good cause Your support helps us fund our restoration efforts and programs. For more details and a list of plants, visit www.schuylkillcenter.org.

Preservation Alliance Presents "Old House Fair"

by Patrick Hauck

The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia is pleased to announce the long-awaited return of the OLD HOUSE FAIR on Saturday March 17, 2007 at the Germantown Friends School located at 31 West Coulter Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

The one-day (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.) fair in the heart of historic Germantown is one of the longest running restorationthemed fairs on the East Coast. The event is designed to connect owners of historic homes contemplating anything from major restoration to a weekend repair or decorating project with the appropriate professional resources. Thousands have attended the Alliance's past Old House Fairs. The Alliance anticipates over 1,000 guests will attend this exciting one-day event, which provides attendees with a special opportunity to interact directly with business and trade professionals operating in the greater Philadelphia metropolitan region.

The event features 50 vendors of preservation-related products and servicdemonstrations and presentations



about the products, skills or services that they offer and "ASK THE EXPERTS" areas with free consultations with old house professionals.

New for 2007, the Preservation Alliance will introduce their new "Awards of Recognition" to private homeowners who have shown exemplary stewardship in historic preservation through renovation and maintenance of their property.

The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia actively promotes the appreciation, protection, and revitalization of the Philadelphia region's historic buildings, communities, and landscapes. A 501c3 non-profit membership organization, the Alliance leads in setting the agenda for preservation issues of regional importance and advocates strong public preservation policies. For more info, visit www.preservationalliance.com.

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Garden Notes: Potted Plants

by Mark Goodman

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We've all seen the photographs of the potted geranium on the Lower East Side tenement fire escape. To condense the 1000 words that this picture is worth, just about everybody wants to garden, no matter where they are. Living in the city is no excuse for not getting your hands dirty with real dirt.

If you've been hesitant to start gardening because you think of yourself as horticulturally challenged, fear not. You can begin, as did the New York apartment dweller, with one potted plant.

First, the pot. Ceramic glazed pots are the nicest looking, but they are also the most expensive, and the pots don't "breathe" (allow air and moisture to permeate and escape). Terra cotta pots, the sentimental favorite, "breathe" and are reasonably priced, but since they breathe, trapped moisture can freeze and thaw

inside the walls of the pot, making it easier to crack.

Increasingly popular are the faux (fake) terra cotta pots made from plastic, that look good and are inexpensive. They don't breathe, but they don't crack as easily as real terra cotta pots.

And occasionally, you can use the pots that plants come in from the nursery. Some have eye-catching blue, green, or terra cotta colors, and even if they have brand names on them, they are attractive. Of course, whatever pot you choose, particularly the glazed ceramic type, make sure that there are ample drainage holes in the bottom. Notice that I haven't recommended wooden pots they rot too easily.

Next, the potting soil. After putting an inch or so of stones or broken pottery (the terra cotta pot that cracked over the winter) at the bottom, fill with soil half-

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way. Of all the commercial soils, I like Baccto potting soil the best because it doesn't dry out as quickly as the others. Of course, you can concoct your own mix using topsoil, peat moss, and coarse sand in the ratio of 2:2:1. After planting your flower or vegetable, fill the pot to within 1 inch of the top. This leaves room for a layer of mulch and prevents messy overflows of soil and water.

Finally, the plant. If you are a complete novice or want minimal maintenance, go with the favorites: geraniums, begonias, and ornamental hibiscus. Attractive plants that need a little more water are lantana, coleus, strobilanthus (beautiful purple leaves), and New Guinea impatiens — but remember that impatiens dry out quickly and need more frequent watering.

Some perennials make good potted plants and will return each spring if protected in the winter. I recommend purple leaf coral bells, larger sedums (including Autumn Joy and Autumn Fire), lavender, and smaller dianthus — especially the blue leaf variety. A colorful foliage perennial for pots is houttuynia, but don't plant



it in the garden or it will take over.

For hanging plants, consider fuschia(1/2 shade), "hanging black-eyed Susan" (thunbergia), and Wave (trailing) petunias. Of course, herbs are naturals for pots and are handy right outside the kitchen door. One mint, thyme, oregano, or rosemary plant will last all season and will usually come back the following year. Biennial herbs (they flower and seed the second year) such as chives, fennel, and parsley do great in pots too.

If it's vegetables you want, make sure your pot is wide and deep. Tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants grow well in pots, as do bush varieties of zucchini and cucumbers. If you can find a strong slender 6' wooden or plastic stake, you can grow climbing beans. I recommend scarlet runner beans for their attractive (to hummingbirds, too) red flowers and large (8-12"+) tasty beans.

So don't despair if space or skill are limited. Go get your pots, soil, and plants, and join the rest of us who love to watch things grow right under our noses.

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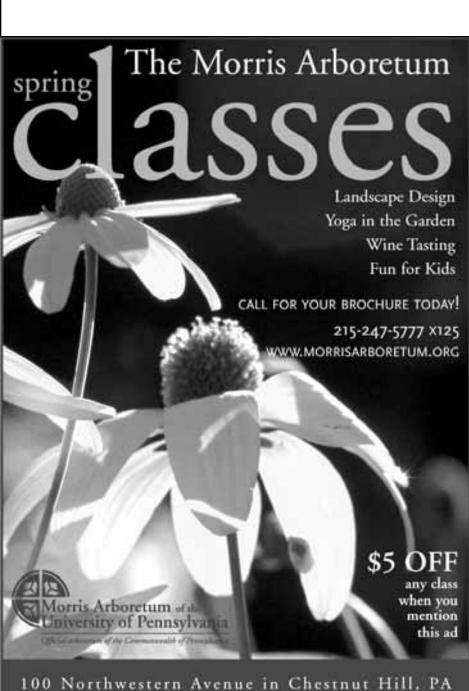
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The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals By Michael Pollan

Review by Jennifer Rellis

In the modern supermarket, selecting greens for your dinner salad means negotiating an entire refrigerator wall. This plethora results from a modern food production system that is increasingly industrial and international. Michael Pollan, in his recent book *The Omnivore's* Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals, sees this cornucopia of choice as creating an "omnivore's dilemma." He argues that "when you can eat just about anything nature has to offer, deciding what you should eat will inevitably stir anxiety. "To educate readers, Pollan deconstructs four meals that represent vastly different approaches to eating by following key ingredients "from the earth to the plate."

Pollan first explores what he terms an "industrial meal"—a meal from McDonald's that he appropriately consumes with his family in their car. While many of us do not frequent McDonald's or other fast food restaurants, by explor-

ing this industrial meal first, Pollan is able to show how McDonald's-style production methods permeate our food culture

Corn is the key ingredient in the industrial meal. When Pollan had his McDonald's meal analyzed under a mass spectrometer, a device that is able to read corn's unique chemical structure, the end results were astonishing. The meal was primarily composed of corn. The soda was 100% corn, the milk shake 78%, the salad dressing 65%; chicken nuggets 56%; cheeseburger 52%, and French fries 23%.

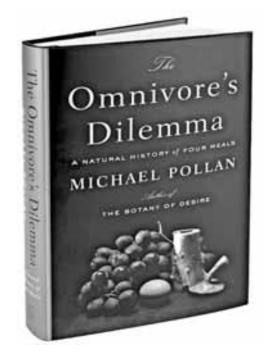
Corn's prevalence in our diet is no accident. After World War II, there was a surplus of ammonium nitrate since munitions plants no longer needed this substance to make explosives. The chemical fertilizer industry ignited as "the product of the government's effort to convert its war machine to peacetime purposes." With artificial fertilizer, corn flourished. Land can not sustain constant

crops of corn, because corn consumes more fertilizer than other crops. Chemical fertilizers solved this "problem." But corn overproduction made prices drop. Farming corn would have become unprofitable—without two new ways to dispose of the corn surplus.

The first source was the American farm. Farmers began feeding cows and chickens corn despite the fact that these animals are naturally designed to eat grass and have to be fed antibiotics if they are fed corn. Factory farming—the mass production of animal meat—is made possible through this corn surplus.

The second solution to the corn glut was the decision to mill corn and break it down into syrup and starch. Walk down any aisle of the supermarket, pick up an item at random, and you will likely see these two ingredients. Think back to the mass spectrometer analysis of the McDonald's meal as well. Corn, in various formats, is in everything we consume from meat to sodas to salad dressing.

Well, we know McDonald's is bad for us. But what's wrong with Whole Foods?In the next section of his book,



Pollan explores the organic movement and presents two different meals: one from Whole Foods and one from a local farm. The contrast between these two meals shows the malleability of the term organic.

Pollan writes that the organic label is "really just an imperfect substitute for direct observation of how a food is produced, a concession to the reality that most people in an industrial society haven't the time or the inclination to fol-

(continued on page 13)

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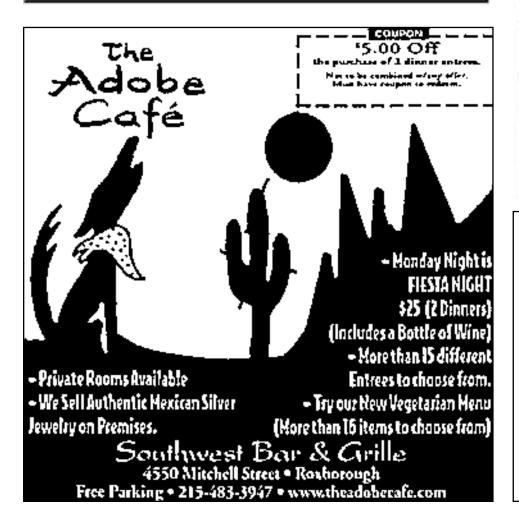
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Omnivore's Dilemma

(continued from page 12)

low their food back to the farm, a farm which today is apt to be, on average, 1,500 miles away." This is the key contradiction of "big organic." It is based on the pastoral ideals that sparked the organic movement but it requires industrialization. Two organic growers dominate the produce section of Whole Foods; it would not be feasible for a corporation the size of Whole Foods to deal with individual local producers in order to stock its salad bins.

Some people argue that organic is always better. Pollan challenges that argument by describing two "big organic" meals from Whole Foods. The first meal closely parallels his McDonald's lunch. It is a contradiction in terms—an "organic TV dinner" with organic high fructose corn syrup as an ingredient. The second meal features organic produce including asparagus from Argentina, blackberries from Mexico, and lettuce from Arizona. While this produce is organic, it is drenched in fossil fuels—traveling to your plate from more exotic destinations than many of us have stamped in our passports. Pollan also roasts an organic chicken, which has been fed organic corn. The chicken is labeled "free range" because it is not caged, although Pollan learns that this "free range" chicken never goes outside to feed on grass.

Pollan's inquiry into "big organic" Whole Foods deconstructs the narrative promise of labels like "organic" and "free range. "This meal also stands in striking contrast to the meal Pollan composes after working for a week at Polyface farm.

The proprietor of Polyface calls himself a "grass farmer." Indeed, Polyface is completely antithetical to the big industrial farms Pollan explores in the first half of the book. Polyface is diversified. One hundred acres produces chickens, beef, turkeys, eggs, rabbits, pigs, tomatoes, sweet corn, and berries. The animals take turns grazing on the land, each finding its favorite grass variety. Here, the "free range" chicken is what we might imagine. a chicken pecking for food on a grassy hillside. Allowing the animals to graze avoids the need for chemical fertilizer; animal waste distributed as the animals roam the land is sufficient. And Polyface animals and animal products are richer

in nutrients, since the animals feed on grass instead of corn.

Pollan spends an exhausting week herding the animals and slaughtering chickens. At the end of the week, Pollan creates a meal with Polyface ingredients including chicken, corn, and a rich soufflé using eggs from grass-fed chickens. Pollan writes, "I had made pretty much the same meal on several occasions at home, using the same basic foodstuffs, yet in certain, invisible ways this wasn't the same food at all . . . the fact that the animals in question had spent their lives outdoors on pastures rather than in a shed eating grain distinguished their flesh and eggs in important, measurable ways. A growing body of scientific research indicates that pasture substantially changes the nutritional profile of chicken and eggs, as well as beef and milk. The question we asked about organic food—is it any better than the conventional kind?—turns out to be much easier to answer in the case of grass farmed food. "Food from grassfed animals has larger quantities of beta-carotene and omega-3s, vitamin E, folic acid, and less total fat and saturated fat than their industrial farmed counterparts.

While many readers might think that the Polyface meal is the ideal, Pollan pushes his connection with his food one step further by becoming an amateur hunter and gatherer to forge his ideal meal. This whimsical fantasy is farther than many of us would go to reconnect with nature. The meal takes a full day to cook and many months to prepare. Pollan joins a friend to hunt wild boars, forages for wild mushrooms, bakes his own bread using yeast captured from the air, picks cherries from a neighbor's tree, and even tries to gather salt.

The aim of Pollan's book is not to revert readers back into hunter-gathers, but to teach us about our daily meal. Pollan believes that "our food system depends on consumers not knowing much about it beyond the price disclosed by the checkout scanner. Cheapness and ignorance are mutually reinforcing."

After reading *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, you will be more likely to think before buying avocados and blackberries in January, and seek out the subtle flavor of local eggs from free-range chickens.

Unhappy Meals Pose Another Dilemma

by Sara Lomax-Reese

With all the advances in health, medicine and science over the last 50 years, why are Americans getting fatter and sicker? Michael Pollan, author of *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, has an answer. In his exhaustive *New York Times* essay about America's evolving relationship with food, he juxtaposes his simple and uncomplicated recipe for good health: "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants," with the reality of today's fast food, money-driven, over-consuming culture.

Through a broad lens, Pollan considers how history, science, marketing, the media, and politics converge to cre-

ate confusion on the food front. This "conspiracy of confusion" has robbed us of our ability to instinctively know what to eat, he says. He places the blame on three major players: The food industry, nutritional science, and journalism, "three parties that stand to gain much from widespread confusion surrounding what is, after all, the most elemental question an omnivore confronts."

Highly critical of the scientific community, Pollan sees the rise of "nutritionism" as a key element feeding this "conspiracy of confusion."

(continued on page 14)



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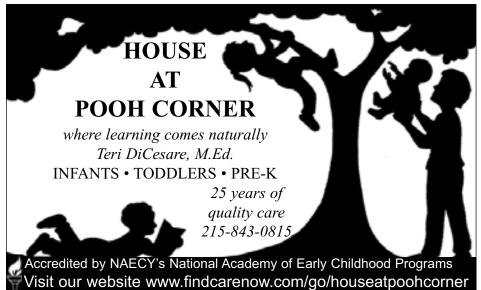
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Unhappy Meals

(continued from page 13)

Nutritionism sees food only as a collection of nutrients. With a hint of sarcasm, he writes, "Since nutrients, as compared to foods, are invisible and therefore slightly mysterious, it falls to the scientists (and the journalists through whom the scientists speak) to explain the hidden reality of foods to us. To enter a world in which you dine on unseen nutrients, you need lots of expert help."

He points to the fact that individual nutrients act very differently when they are isolated and formulated into a supplement or used to fortify refined foods versus when eaten as a whole food. Therefore, the science is often unreliable and misleading. It becomes even more troubling when nutritionism is used for food marketing purposes. Go into any supermarket and the shelves

are packed with junk foods masquerading as nutritious health food.

But what may be most troubling, according to Pollan, is the effort to place food so deeply into the scientific sphere that it is no longer about nourishing the body, mind, and spirit. It is devoid of all joy. It's no longer about creating community or an expression of culture and tradition. Food simply becomes a means to shovel in the day's required number of vitamins and minerals.

Pollan masterfully explores this vast, winding terrain with clarity, humor and wit. Most importantly, though, he ends by offering a concise nine-point strategy to help cut through the confusion. (See "Rules to Eat By," at right.)

Sara Lomax-Reese hosts HealthQuest Live, a weekly healthfocused radio show on 900 AM-WURD every Tuesday from 10 a.m. – 12 noon.



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Pallan's Rules to Eat By

- I. Eat food. Though in our current state of confusion, this is much easier said than done. So try this: Don't eat anything your great-great-grandmother wouldn't recognize as
- 2. Avoid even those food products that come bearing health claims. They're apt to be heavily processed, and the claims are often dubious at best.
- 3. Especially avoid food products containing ingredients that are a) unfamiliar, b) unpronounceable c) more than five in number or that contain high-fructose corn syrup.
- 4. Get out of the supermarket whenever possible. You won't find any high-fructose corn syrup at the farmer's market; you also won't find food harvested long ago and far away.
- 5. Pay more, eat less. The American food system has for a century devoted its energies and policies to increasing quantity and reducing price, not to improving quality. There's no escaping the fact that better food measured by taste or nutritional quality (which often correspond) costs more, because it has been grown or raised less intensively and with more care. "Eat less" is the most unwelcome advice of all, but in fact the scientific case for eating a lot less than we currently do is compelling. "Calorie restriction" has repeatedly been shown to slow aging in animals, and many researchers (including Walter Willett, the Harvard epidemiologist) believe it offers the single strongest link between diet and cancer prevention.
- 6. Eat mostly plants, especially leaves. Scientists may disagree on what's so good about plants the antioxidants? Fiber? Omega-3s? but they do agree that they're probably really good for you and certainly can't hurt. Also, by eating a plant-based diet, you'll be consuming far fewer calories, since plant foods (except seeds) are typically less "energy dense" than the other things you might eat. Vegetarians are healthier than carnivores, but near vegetarians ("flexitarians") are as healthy as vegetarians.
- 7. Eat more like the French. Or the Japanese. Or the Italians. Or the Greeks. Confounding factors aside, people who eat according to the rules of a traditional food culture are generally healthier than we are. Let culture be your guide, not science.
 - 8. Cook. And if you can, plant a garden.
- Eat like an omnivore. Try to add new species, not just new foods, to your diet. The
 greater the diversity of species you eat, the more likely you are to cover all your nutritional
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MACCC

(continued from page 1)

board are hoping that that will soon change.

As the area's only not-for-profit computer training center, MACCC has a unique commitment to serving the needs of disadvantaged residents. One example is "Computers for Ex-Offenders," a program where MACCC implements training for men and women recently released from prison who participated in the jobs program while incarcerated. After training has commenced at MACCC's headquarters, MACCC goes the extra distance of installing computers in participants' homes, and continuing at-home training for participants and their children.

Again, because it is a non-profit organization, MACCC is able to offer computer training for small businesses or organizations at greatly reduced costs. Last month staffers at Weavers Way received 14 hours of training spread over seven classes, training which Glenn Bergman describes as "incredibly helpful to the entire organization."

What Angel noticed about Weavers' staff was the same thing she has seen in numerous organizations she has worked with: while everyone has some level of computer competency, different individuals are lacking skills in different aspects, so that the entire group isn't working together or communicating as effectively as they could be. MACCC's training sessions can correct this by identifying and working with individual needs.

This attention to working closely with individuals comes naturally to Angel, whose success in the business world has always been tempered by a desire to do service. Born and raised in Philadelphia (with just a brief stint in Pittsburgh during high school), Angel says her mother always taught her that "we are in this world to serve others." While she was attending the Fox School of Business at Temple University ("a wonderful program"), she became involved with Inroads, an organization that places minority students in summer business internships. It was through her internships that Angel says she acquired her technological skills, and upon graduation she went to work for M&M/Mars Corporation as their "Regional Applications Support Analyst." Although she says that M&M/Mars was "a great company to work for," she soon realized that "corporate culture wasn't for me."

After a year, she left the corporate world and began investing in real estate while simultaneously looking for ways to do meaningful, community-oriented work. With two friends she founded a non-profit called "Enhancing Lives Through Action," which started by simply delivering food and clothing to homeless people, and has grown to include financial empowerment workshops, and most recently, a two-year contract with the Philadelphia School District to facilitate workshops for high school students on non-traditional occupation choices. When I asked her how she's been able to achieve so much so quickly, she said, "There's no secret to it — you just pound the pavement, talk and follow the leads to the resources that are out there."

It was precisely that energy and commitment to doing whatever's necessary that made Angel the ideal candidate for

the MACCC director position. For her part, Angel is thrilled to have found a job that allows her to combine her commitment to community development with her technological savvy. One of Angel's first implementations as director was a free computer training session in conjunction with "Black Family Technology Awareness Week," held on Feb. 17. In addition to the training provided at the session, one computer was given away as part of a raffle.

Needless to say, all of this requires volunteers, equipment, and money. Although MACCC has been quietly offering its services since 2000, now is a critical time for MACCC. The Mt. Airy Learning Tree provides a steady stream of income for the Center through the classes it holds at MACCC, but Angel and the board are committed to sustaining and expanding their outreach to all who need MACCC's invaluable resources. MACCC is actively looking for more local businesses and organizations to take advantage of their space and training sessions such as the course just completed by Weavers Way staff. They are also happy to accept donations of computers, time and talent, or money. The board's goal is to be able to provide free training sessions to the public at least once a month. As Angel says, "Developing computer skills can make tangible, positive changes in a person's life." She cites a participant from a training session held on Martin Luther King Day, a 50something woman who had been out of work for several years and desperately needed to develop her skills to become competitive in the job market again. But more importantly than the skills themselves, says Angel, is the "inspiration" that comes from overcoming a fear of computers — from bridging that digital divide.

If you would like to take advantage of MACCC's services, or to volunteer or make a donation, you may reach MACCC at 215-247-0870.

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<u>Soup – Part II</u> "Eats Like A Meal"

by Peter Samuel

Some days at lunch I go across the street and get a cup of soup from our local deli in downtown Philly. It's funny that there are no restaurants devoted just to soup in our city. There are a number of Pho restaurants (a piquant beef and noodle soup from Vietnam) and a branch of the New England Soup Factory on the Camden riverfront, but otherwise we have not been party to the madness that hit New York City in the mid-nineties and carries through to today.

In 1995, some of you will recall a popular episode of the hit show 'Seinfeld' that portrayed someone they called "the Soup Nazi." That was based roughly on a man, Al Yegeneh, who ran a busy soup store in Manhattan - Soup Kitchen International – and where he had a number of strict rules about ordering your soup. Within a few years there were many soup-only restaurants — the Daily Soup, Soup Nutsy, Souper Dog, Souper Man — and it didn't take long for most of those to fold.



Hale & Hearty Soups was successful and now has 17 locations in New York. Al Yegeneh has teamed up with a smart business partner and is promoting The Original Soup Man, with plans to launch 1000 outlets within five years. He now wants to be the 'Starbucks' of soup – his characterization on Seinfeld didn't hurt.

A few entrepreneurs are taking advantage of the Internet. If you order from Daily Soup you can purchase the day's special on the web and choose a place to pick it up in either New York or New Jersey. They advertise themselves as representing dozens of cultures, with their soups "originating in trattorias, bistros, chili parlors, Cajun backwoods, West In-

(continued on page 17)



Ingredients:

- 1 pound carrots, cut into chunks
- 2 small potatoes, cut into chunks
- 1 large onion, cut into chunks
- 5 garlic cloves, peeled
- 2 to 4 tablespoons olive oil
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 hefty thyme sprigs
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 quart Vegetable Stock, or water
- ½ cup light cream
- 2 to 3 tablespoons crème fraiche or sour cream, stirred with a fork until loosened
- 2 teaspoons minced parsley

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Toss the vegetables with the olive oil and season with 1/2 teaspoon salt and some pepper. Put them in a large baking dish with the thyme and bay leaf and roast until tender and glazed, about 1 hour, turning them 2 or 3 times.

Transfer the vegetables to a soup pot, add the stock, and bring to a boil. Simmer until the carrots are soft, about 20 minutes, then puree until smooth. Return the puree to the pot, taste for salt, and season with pepper. Stir in the cream.

Ladle the soup into bowls, swirl a spoonful of crème fraiche into each, add a little minced parsley, and serve.

Recipe for Vegetarian Stock

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion quartered 1 large carrots coarsely chopped
- 2 celery stalks (including leaves),
 - coarsely chopped
- 2 quarts water
- 6 garlic cloves crushed
- 8 parsley sprigs with stems
- 6 thyme sprigs or ½ teaspoon dried
- 2 bay leaves
- Other various vegetable trimmings and herbs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1. Heat the oil in a stockpot over medium heat. Add the onion, carrot, and celery, cover and cook, stirring a few times, until softened, about 10 minutes. Remove the lid and stir in the water and the remaining ingredients.
- 2. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer slowly, partially covered. Cook this for at least 30 minute or longer.
- 3. Strain the stock through a sieve into a large bowl or pot, pressing against the solids with the back of a spoon. The stock can be used now, or cooled and refrigerated for up to 3 or 4 days, or portioned and frozen for up to a month.

Recipes from Vegetable Soups from Deborah Madison's Kitchen, Broadway Books, 2006. courtesy of Deborah Madison

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Liz Schlesinger, Ph.D. Donna Allender, M. Ed. Soup Part II

(continued from page 16)

dies roadside stands, southern-style diners and New England wharf-side chowder fests." Another group called "The Impromptu Gourmet" sells frozen soups over the internet sent by fed-ex and packed on dry ice.

We are a far cry from the first soup that was made thousands of years ago before people even had a pot to cook it in. Those primeval chefs would pour water and other ingredients into a hole in the ground and then insert stones heated up over a fire (the original stone soup?) to bring the water to a boil. By adding a fresh hot stone every few minutes these cooks could make a delicious mélange of meat and grains that would provide sustenance. It was not until the Bronze Age, around 3600 BCE that our ancestors had a cauldron they could put over an open

fire, and make a decent modern bowl of gruel.

When cooks in the Middle Ages spoke of "soup," what they meant was a dish comprised of a piece of bread or toast soaked in a liquid or over which a liquid had been poured. The bread or toast was an important, even vital, part of this dish. It was a means by which a diner could consume the liquid efficiently by sopping it up. The bread or toast was, in effect, an alternative to using a spoon.

When I was a kid my mother occasionally made homemade soup. The few soups in her repertoire — a hearty vegetable soup always served with Jewish rye bread, a tomato soup made only in the summer from fresh garden tomatoes and served with homemade croutons, and a cold cucumber soup assembled when there were too many cucumbers in the garden and served up with fresh picked dill — continue to resonate in my taste memory.

My family has at least half a dozen cookbooks devoted entirely to soup making. The one I would recommend for omnivores and vegetarians alike is Vegetable Soups from Deborah Madison's Kitchen. Whereas some soup cookbooks basically tell how to doctor up ready made 'stock' with a variety of vegetables and meat, her book really gets at the essence of soups and she explains that many soups don't even require stock, such as lentils, split peas, and black-eyed peas. Her recipe for vegetarian stock is ideal (see sidebar on p. 16). Her rule of thumb is one tablespoon of oil and one teaspoon of salt per quart of soup. That seems pretty rational.

Although thousands of recipes for soup exist from all over the world, most soups fall into one of two categories — stock soup or cream soup. Stock soups are made with one or more of the following ingredients simmered in water to extract flavor into the liquid — vegetables, meats, poultry, fish. Cream soups use milk, cream, or yogurt as a large part of the liquid.

Theoretically, a soup can be any combination of vegetables, meat or fish cooked in a liquid. It may be thick (like

gumbo), thin (such as a consommé), smooth (like a bisque) or chunky (chowder or bouillabaisse). Though most soups are hot, some, like vichyssoise and many fruit soups, are served cold. They can be served as a first course or as a meal, in which case they're often accompanied by a sandwich or salad.

Wintertime is an excellent time to serve soup. Bean soups like lentil and split pea can be made thick and hearty and can usually be ready in less than two hours. If you sauté onion, celery, hot pepper and throw in the rinsed beans to sizzle a little just before you add the water, you can make a soup that needs no additional broth, and little salt. I sometimes add grated sharp cheese for extra flavor, potatoes to thicken it more, and carrots for color and crunch. Sometimes we add tiny chunks of fresh ginger to a lentil soup for a surprising savory zing.

While some colonial Americans didn't think much of soup, most evidence indicates that it was an important culinary component of the meals of both upper and lower classes in the United States. The

(continued on page 18)

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(continued from page 17)

first cookbook in America in 1742 included recipes for things like: Pease Soop, Craw Fish Soop, Brooth, Soop with Teel, Green Peas Soop, and several bisques.

Many of us have heard of the traditional chicken soup referred to as "Jewish Penicillin," and the health benefits of chicken soup have been proven in the world by a variety of cultures. While western scientists have only recently begun to admit that chicken soup has curative properties, the Chinese have been treating illnesses with chicken soup for centuries.

A recent joint study by Thailand's Kasetsart University and Japan's Kyoto and Kinki Universities has found that the ingredients in Tom Yum Gung soup, a

hot-and-sour soup with shrimp and herbal ingredients like coriander, lemon grass, lime leaves, galangal roots and a variety of chilies, is 100 times more effective at inhibiting cancerous tumor growth than other foods. Scientists are seeking to extract the chemical compounds from soup ingredients. Well-controlled research studies say chicken soup may contain a number of substances, including an anti-inflammatory compound that could ease the symptoms of upper respiratory tract infections.

Various diet plans love to promote soup. According to research from the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, overweight men and women who were told to lose weight by eating soup every day preferred this method to being told to reduce

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calories. Soup offers a plethora of sensory stimulations (aroma, taste, warmth, visual interest from all sorts of different ingredients), and the more sensory stimulation you get from a food, the more satisfying it is. Because of its high water content it has a relatively high volume and this activates the stomach's stretch receptors, which send messages of satiety to your brain.

So remember, soup: Is nutritious; Can be created from almost any food, including leftovers; Can use less expensive cuts of meats; Requires no precise measuring; Makes as little — or as much — as you like; Is easy to serve; Freezes well, in most cases; Adds more vegetables to your diet.

If you are still putting off making your

own soup, go to the co-op and buy either a can of chicken stock, some bouillon cubes (either vegan or organic) or one of three kinds of stock that comes as a paste and is available in the deli section. then add veggies, noodles or rice. Or you could start with some Miso — this is a salty soybean paste that has been a mainstay of Japanese cooking for hundreds of years, made by mixing cooked soybeans, salt, a grain (usually barley or rice), and a fermenting agent called koji — add some tofu, a few sprigs of parsley and scallions and you have yourself a soothing concoction. Whatever you decide to do, remember soup "eats like a meal."



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R

We are owners of a magnificent neighborhood market in a pleasant neighborhood. Fifty years ago, millions of mom-and-pop grocers served America's cities and towns. During recent years, Weavers Way has a become rare grocer, since most are 5-20 times larger, extracting wealth by remote control. Today Weavers Way is nearly unique among surviving small stores because we neighbors run it ourselves, helped by excellent staff we hire. And it feeds us more than food.

Members, staff and board agree we're a social movement, significantly a social space for people who care about community ownership, social justice and diversity, personal and environmental health. Weavers Way has planted its own farm, has sparked a local retail revival, will soon incubate related nonprofit organizations, and boosts our property values. Through this shop we find friends, lovers and political allies. Our kids enjoy a sense of place.

These distinctions have made our little store a popular regional magnet. Our narrow aisles are often so packed that we have to cooperate just to navigate them. Naturally, then, we have thought to grow.

Some believe we could expand sufficiently by removing the wall next door. Others prefer to open a second store, with wider aisles and more goods.

The consultant hired by Weavers Way (\$11,000) believes the current space is so small and so nowhere that it should be closed. He laments that lack of parking forces people to walk "hundreds of feet' to enter, for which his only solutions are a parking lot and new store. He would relocate the store where everyone can see it, in a whiter neighborhood.

Let's assume instead that WW decides to grow so we retain both our friendly corner and open a larger store that strengthens our political commitments.

Without broader purposes, we might as well shop at Super Fresh.

Since WW is so important to so many we should, I believe, soon declare explicit policy regarding purpose, location, product line, member labor, prices, communications and community, before larger retail pressures dilute our standards. I raise these considerations now because I've seen another small, good-natured food co-op outgrow its mission and its members in a race to maximize market share and meet "industry standards." Though we are decent people who can be trusted, written guarantees and remedies will assure good feelings.

Weavers Way has the opportunity to define its larger market with standards so outstanding, and community so united, that Whole Foods and Trader Joe's can't compete. Therefore, before proceeding further, I suggest we answer the following:

PURPOSE: For what reasons will we expand? Foremost, do we want greater ease of shopping? Do we need more product choices? Do we want more revenue, and if so, for which aims?

LOCATION: Will we locate our larger store far away enough to protect the current store? How far? The consultant says Carpenter/Green sales will decline 11 percent when the new store opens. What effect will that have on the long-range viability of the current store? What distinct niche will the current store fill? Will we follow the consultant's advice to put our new store farther from black neighbors? The predominantly African-American neighborhood of East Liberty in Pittsburgh supports a 37,000 sq. ft Whole Foods (2002) and a Trader Joe's (2006).

PRODUCT LINE: When MegaWeavers opens, financial necessity will require filling thousands of additional feet of shelves. There will be pressure to sell virtually anything anyone requests. Guidelines are essential.

Will we sell cigarettes? Will we sell sodas that cause diabetes and childhood obesity? Will we sell products some of whose ingredients cause cancer and birth defects? (We already do.)

The organic and natural foods markets are changing: Will we sell brands whose sales enrich companies like Monsanto, Exxon Mobil, Halliburton, Citicorp, Wal-Mart and McDonalds, and weapons makers like Boeing and Raytheon? (We already do.) Will we give preferred shelf space to local in every category? Will we prefer independent brands and promote the difference?

Will we sell products whose manufacture relies on prison labor, slave labor, or child labor? Will we sell products whose manufacture and distribution make us more dependent on dwindling oil and the wars that flow therefrom?

There are superior alternate brands. When clear policy is made, the larger store could thrive as a regional resource for those who understand that shopping is voting, and who want their children to inherit a healthier world.

MEMBER LABOR: The most fundamental cooperative principle is pooling labor to get good food cheap. Park Slope Co-op in Brooklyn requires members to work 2.75 hours/month. Some work "squads" have been together 15 years, and are very capable. The maximum markup is 20 percent.

Higher volume stores require greater operating efficiency. Might we instead regard member workers as so inefficient that many will be replaced by paid staff? At another food co-op, with 110 staff, there are now so few member worker slots that members must compete to cooperate.

Will working no longer be required of members at all? What effect would that

have on our sense of ownership? Might we prefer maximum market share to maximum human sharing? Could we achieve both?

PRICES: What policy will guide our restraint of markup? With greater capital expense, larger debt load, and higher salaries and benefits for expanded staff, will we maintain low prices? To serve lowincome shoppers, will we provide certain staple foods at cost, or as loss leaders?

COMMUNICATIONS: Will The Shuttle continue as a dynamic platform for the broadest range of store and social concerns, or might it become a cautious sales sheet catering to a wider public? Will members guide editorial policy? Will the larger staff be welcome to organize to seek redress? By what mechanisms will members effectively guide the board, and the board guide management?

COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY: Weavers Way has proven fine dedication to investing in community programs. Will the priority to plow money into expansion enhance broader aims or distract from them? What extent of grant commitments will be made? Will we become a New Age convenience store or continue as a powerful engine of community renewal?

For each of the above, clear language needs be drafted and considered by members, enacted by the board, and facilitated by staff. We will then be more able to weave successful commerce with community, lifestyle and love. The board and managers should not be required to decide these policies without the chance to hear from us.

~ Paul Glover

Paul Glover consults for grassroots economic development and ecological urban design. He is founder of Ithaca HOURS local currency, the Ithaca Health Alliance, PhilaHealthia, and the Philly Orchard Project.

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Co-op Meetings

Board: 1st Tues., 7:00 p.m. • Education: 3rd Wed., 7:30 p.m. Environment: 1st Wed., 7:30 p.m. • Finance: 3rd Thurs., 7:30 p.m. Diversity:3rd Tues., 7:15 p.m.

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, e-mail boardadmin@weaversway.coop or call the store.

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Suggestions

by Norman Weiss

Greetings and thanks for writing. As usual, suggestions and responses may have been edited for brevity, clarity, and/or comedy.

suggestions and responses:

- s: "Why do we double-package meats that are already vacuum-sealed? I'm a new member, so probably there's already been discussion about this, but it seems very wasteful to add a layer of Styrofoam and plastic wrap to meat that's already cryogenically sealed in plastic."
- r: (Jon) I believe you meant to say "cryovac," which is a method for vacuum sealing. If so, see Dale's response, which follows. "Cryogenics," or more accurately, "cryonics," refers to the study of materials at temperatures below -300° Fahrenheit, and is commonly used to refer to the practice of freezing people at such temperatures in hopes that they might one day be revived. (You know, like Ted Williams.) So if you did see something cryogenically preserved in the meat case, it's understandable that it might be double wrapped. Wouldn't you want to be? The good news is, if it was cryonically preserved, it should qualify for our 50 percent off frozen discount (Dale) Double packaging is for display purposes, and it also contains any leaking due to handling by customers. Thanks for your
- s: "What happened to the large bottles of Palestinian olive oil?"
- r: They were unavailable for a while, should be back by the time you read this.
- s: "Bring back the escarole. It was almost a staple in our house- it goes great with whole wheat pasta, chickpeas, garlic and hot peppers (and parmesan cheese)"
- r: (Jean) ASAP. Or, more precisely ASA available at a reasonable price. It sells slowly here- perhaps you could write up a slightly more specific recipe that I can post with the escarole to encourage people to buy it.

- s: "Why don't we put simple instructions on the bulk grains & beans? i.e. "cook in 2 parts water for 45 mins." I talked to Glenn about this, but I still don't see it."
- r: (Josh) Many cooking instructions are listed on the placards hanging with the beans and grains. Those not listed can also be looked up in the cookbooks in the store. You can ask a staffer for help finding them.
- s: "Any chance we can find a way to limit shopping carts to those who need them? Folks wandering thru the aisles are feeling pretty crowded. Thanks."
- r: (Rick) We will post a sign encouraging parents with small children to use the carts, which may deter others from using them. Most members want us to increase the number of carts due to their convenience and ease it provides to their shopping experience. It's one of those things that we try to balance within our current constraints. Thanks for the feedback.
- s: "Occasionally I will buy a pound of coffee elsewhere. Why cannot I use the coffee grinder in the Co-op to grind the beans? Thank you."
- r: (Norman) Two reasons: 1. The grinders are not ours, they are provided by Equal Exchange, and their contract states the grinders are provided to grind coffee we sell. 2. We've had a couple grinders damaged by foreign objects being ground with beans. Limiting grinding to only what comes off our shelves/bins helps reduce the possibility of this kind of damage since the beans we sell are screened by our suppliers. You can buy a coffee grinder for under \$20, and they are useful for grinding things like flax seeds and spices too.
- s: "Time to ditch the Lactaid 70% lactose-reduced The Organic Valley lactose-free hits more targets: organic *and* lactose-free. The Lactaid was always a goofy, useless option: who in tarnation is 70% lactose-intolerant anyway? How about getting the organic lactose-free milk in something larger than a quart-you can use the shelf freed up from that Lactaid."
- r: (Chris) There are shoppers who buy and like the 70% lactose-free milk. I'm not sure why. I've never been to "Tarnation" to ask them. But seriously, your comments are intelligent and appreciated. We'll reconsider our Lactaid situation.
 - s: "Organic salted/unsalted butter?"
- r: (Norman) We do stock these items, in our freezer. When we first began

Book & Show

Co-op member Rob Cardillo has a new book out, A Guide to the Great Gardens of the Philadelphia Region. For more information, visit www.phillygardenguide.com. You can see an exhibit of photographs from the book in their upstairs gallery at Morris Arboretum through May 13.

Third Annual Brewers' Plate

Tickets are now on sale for the 3rd Annual Brewer's Plate Fundraiser to benefit the White Dog Café Foundation's Fair Food Project Once again, this craft beer and gourmet food showcase will match 18 Philadelphia area craft breweries with 18 Philadelphia area restaurants to create exquisite collaborative food/beer pairings. The event takes place Sunday, April 1, 2007, 5 – 8 p.m. at Reading Terminal Market, 12th and Arch Streets, Philadelphia. Tickets are available online at www.whitedogcafefoundation.org



The **Brewer's Plate** highlights gourmet food from independent restaurants and craft beers from local, artisinal brewers and support Fair Food – a program of the 501c3 nonprofit, White Dog Café Foundation, which works to cultivate a sustainable local food system in the Philadelphia region.

stocking organic butter we found it seemed to deteriorate quickly and selling it frozen solved that problem. It's been there ever since.

- s: "You are *frequently* out of Metropolitan Whole Wheat sandwich breads even when I come earlier in the day (2:00pm). The others are *not* as good, and their 'whole wheat' often lists 'wheat' (white flour) before 'whole wheat.' Metropolitan is the *best* please get more "
- r: (Nancy) I will increase our order, it does seem to be selling out.
- s: "I am missing the Le Bus multigrain rolls which were not here yesterday or today. I buy them everyday."
- r: (Nancy) Le Bus has had a problem producing these particular rolls, hopefully they will be back soon.
- s: "I suggest Weavers Way sponsor a contestant at Wing Bowl."
- r: (Norman) We tried but, for ethical reasons, we insisted they eat Unchicken Nuggets, and Wing Bowl officials would have none of it, stating that Wing Bowl is about wings. I pointed out that chicken wings do not really function as wings since chickens don't really fly much, therefore their so called "wings" are really just bent arms with feathers. Wing Bowl officials were not persuaded by this argument. In researching this I was shocked to learn that entering eating contests is an actual profession for some people. There are professional eaters that have their own association (International Federation of Competitive Eating), and they train, tour, compete, win prizes, and have eating contest standards. I wrote to the Federation suggesting it would be a good public relations move to hold contests in countries where malnutrition is a popular pastime. So far no response.
- s: "As someone who has done floor clean up a few times recently, I have to wonder if it's possible to raise money to replace the incredibly dingy tile floors

(on the first floor of the building). It would make a huge visual impact and give a much cleaner impression as opposed to the current grandma's-basement-look. Modest display cases, boxes with racks would look brighter with an even, neutral colored floor. It's just a bummer to keep vacuuming and sweeping and never feel like it's actually clean. Bake sale, anyone?"

r: (Steve) You're right, the store would look better. I've included a line item in our capital budget for next year for floor replacement. Replacement would be costly and would probably require that we close the store for a few days. We'll review all the potential projects for the upcoming year, but this one might wait until we've got that swing space. (Yes, the Co-op does have line item veto...)

"What do you look for in a pear?"



"Oh my goodness, that's profound! I usually look for good color and nice shape. I was actually drawn to these little ones because I thought they would be great for a still life painting. They were so cute and had nice tones of reds and greens. I did manage to do a quick drawing of them. but then ended up eating them throughout the week."

~ Chris Walinski

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:

DAY	DAIE	<u>TIME</u>	LOCATION
Wednesday	Mar. 7, 2007	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Wednesday	Apr. 11, 2007	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Saturday	May 2, 2007	10:30 a.m.	CA

Meetings start promptly and last about 1¼ 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.

Robin Cannicle, Membership Manager+

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