

the Shuttle

Manager's Corner

Buying from Independent America

by Glenn Bergman

"Sustainable Mt. Airy"
You know the sign on Lincoln Drive in front of the Unitarian Church that announces this area is a "Nuclear-free zone?" What if we got a sign that says, "Mt. Airy is a 'Green Community'?" It would tell people this a community that recycles, has a central community composting center for food scraps, has co-housing to allow for people of different ages to live together, does not allow pesticides to be used on lawns by residents and landscapers, teaches our residents to grow their own vegetables in their front yards as well as their back yards, has a community taxi service to assist people to food shopping and a free bicycle program, encourages retailers to sell "green" products, has people available to assist residents with retrofitting their homes to be more energy efficient, a community tool and garden sharing program in different areas

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Spring Harvest Begins in Earnest

by David Zelov

Summer is coming and so are the weeds. It's too bad we don't have a market for all of them at the Co-op; the farm would be making a profit in no time. Its been an exciting spring, full of tilling, bed-forming and planting, and beginning on the first of May, harvesting. The produce race results are in. The first crop to make it out of the ground and into the Co-op was the baby bok choy, beating out all others by at least a week. Next up, we had a tie for second place between the Tom Thumb baby bibb lettuce and the mesclun mix. The pea shoots and radishes battled it out for third and fourth respectively. All in all, the Co-op farm is off to a good start.

As the spring harvest starts to come in, it's already time to start planting the summer crops in the ground. The average last frost in our area is April 20, but most people wait until around Mother's Day to plant cold sensitive crops like



PHOTO BY JONATHAN MCCORMAN

DAVE ZELOV DELIVERS THE FIRST PRODUCE OF THE SEASON FROM THE CO-OP FARM.

tomatoes, peppers, eggplants and squash. We at Weavers Way Farm are pushing the limits a little bit with the help of some black plastic and floating row covers.

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Film Series Features Gar Alperovitz in April

by Larry Schofer

In a replay of a speech made at the Weavers Way membership meeting in the spring of 2006, Gar Alperovitz looked at the audience and asked, "What do you want?"

In Gar's eyes, liberalism has lost its ideological basis, and true conservatism has as well. An incredible maldistribution of wealth in the United States has led to inordinate power concentrated in the hands of a few.

The group gathered at the Little Theater at Video Library saw Gar on the big screen making his point that local groups have the potential to create the foundations of change in our society. The showing was part of the Weavers Way education committee's Wednesday night film series (second Wednesday of each month). The speaker described himself as a "prudent historical optimist," one convinced that societies do change and will change, but not

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Much Accomplished, But Much Work Remains at Ned Wolf Park



PHOTO BY RONDA THRONE-MURRAY

NEIGHBORS GETTING DIRTY WITH NEIGHBORS AT NED WOLF PARK

by Ronda Throne-Murray

Some people who heard me talking about Ned Wolf Park put it on their radar and went to check it out. They came back to me to ask, "This is what all the fuss is about?"

No, renovating the park is not the only thing happening with the Ned Wolf Park Project. There is much more. While

we clean up the long-standing debris and dangerous eyesores, we are increasing real estate values. By creating a safer more pleasant place to convene, more neighbors are getting to know each other. A week before soil prep day, Bruce, Syd, Steve, and I had the pleasure to work with two of the long-term caretakers of the

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New Playground at Henry School Courtesy of Boxer Bernard Hopkins

by Kimberly Newman

Joined by students, teachers, local politicians, and community members, Philadelphia light heavyweight boxing great Bernard Hopkins cut the ribbon for the new playground he sponsored at the Henry School, which he attended as a youth. Hopkins used funds from his newly established foundation, The Bernard and Shirley Hopkins Make A Way Foundation.

"I couldn't think of a better place to start than my elementary school," said Hopkins. "My mother raised me in this area and it's a great honor to memorialize her with something in the neighborhood."

Hopkins established the Bernard and Shirley Hopkins Make A Way Foundation in 2006 in honor of his late mother Shirley. Its mission is to raise awareness and money to help "make a way" for the city's underprivileged youth to flourish academically, socially, and athletically and will implement its mission by rebuilding playgrounds and recreation centers throughout Philadelphia.



PHOTO BY EVELYN BOCK

HENRY SCHOOL ALUMNUS BERNARD HOPKINS, AND A FEW CLOSE FRIENDS

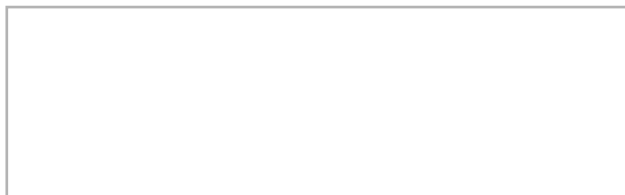
The Henry School students and community members are thrilled with this beautiful new playground, and are grateful to Bernard Hopkins for making this donation.

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And of course... scads more

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Board Election Results!

See results of the Board Elections from the Spring General Membership Meeting at
www.weaversway.coop

Editor’s Note

by Jonathan McGoran

It is pretty much accepted around here that locally-produced food is better than that which is produced on a national scale. There are plenty of reasons for this, and they all seem pretty valid. Something else I have noticed is that the same thing is usually true of the *news* about food. Locally, the news about food is good: the Co-op farm, Paradise Organics, artisanal cheeses, Solebury apple sauce. Happy, happy.

Nationally, the news is not quite so cheery. The recall of pet food has been expanded to include human food and... What’s that? Oh, right, only the actual chemical *contamination* has been expanded to involve human food. As of press time, the FDA has maintained that a recall of the contaminated people food is unnecessary. (They’re just *people*.)

Even more depressing is an effort by candy manufacturers like Hershey to remove rules that require candies labeled “chocolate” to contain the actual ingredients that make up “chocolate.” I was shocked to hear that Hershey wanted to stop using these ingredients; having tasted their candy, I assumed they’d stopped using the real stuff years ago.

I guess it’s not all bad news, although it’s hard to get too excited when what passes for good news is a report that we might not be forced to eat clones, after all. The FDA is having second thoughts about allowing cloned animals in the food supply after receiving 130,000 public comments against it.

It is reassuring that there were so many comments opposed to it. With such an overwhelming response, it seemed as if the American people had finally come to their senses about the food we eat. But the more I thought about it, the more I started to wonder... would that many people really be proactive enough to post an FDA comment? And if it wasn’t concerned consumers posting all those comments, who was it? Who would have such an interest in preventing the eating of clones? That’s right... *clones*. Thousands of them

And this could be just the beginning. With their single-minded discipline, clones could become more and more powerful while the rest of us are trying to build consensus. What if they lent their support to the bad chocolate lobby?

Maybe we should eat them after all.

The *Shuttle* is published by Weavers Way Co-op and is mailed to all members.
Deadline for the next issue is:
June 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 number. 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 articles.

Ad rates are available upon request, in the advertising mailbox on the second floor, or at www.weaversway.coop. All ads must be camera-ready 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.



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Co-op Helps Install New Signs in Carpenter’s Woods

by Louise Hayes

On April 22, members of the Co-op and the community installed three new notice boards in Carpenter’s Woods. The notice boards will be used for posting news about Carpenter’s Woods, such as community meetings and service days, bird and vegetation sightings, lost pets, and park rules. The boards are located at key entrances to the woods: at the Wayne Ave. bus stop; at the corner of Greene St. and S. Mt. Pleasant Rd.; and at the confluence of the paths leading into the woods from Ellet and Sherman Sts. The Friends of Carpenter’s Woods, which spearheaded the project, will maintain the signs.

Almost half the funds for the notice boards were raised by over a dozen Co-op members and Weavers Way itself, with the Co-op matching members’ donations. Other donors making the boards possible included Carpenter Lane Garage, Elfant Wissahickon, Prudential Fox & Roach, and many other individuals.

The notice boards were designed and built by local carpenter James McCoy, using mostly wood salvaged from the Wissahickon and donated by the Friends of the Wissahickon. The posts are black locust wood, which is particularly tough and resistant to fire and rot: James reports that the signs may last 50 or 60 years. He adds that we may even see sprouts growing from the unseasoned posts.

Installing the notice boards was just one project among many during the Friends of Carpenter’s Woods service event honoring Earth Day. With the guidance of David Bower, Fairmount Park volunteer coordinator, participants cleared a fallen tree from the main path, planted a new oak tree, removed trash, and re-groomed berms to prevent soil erosion on the paths.

At noon, about 35 people gathered at the Wayne Ave. bus stop to tap their toes to the sounds of The 80% Old-Time String Band and to await the unveiling of one of the new signs. Local artist Louise Barteau created the perfect ribbon for cutting (or rather, lopping): a garland made of invasive ivy vines.

Nancy Goldenberg, coordinator of the Friends of Carpenter’s Woods, thanked everyone for their support and hard work, not-



PHOTO BY TERRY FOSS

AMONG VOLUNTEERS AT THE CARPENTER’S WOODS EARTH DAY SERVICE EVENT WERE TOMMY HANSEN, JOHN SCHUPPERT, MIKE MCCLEARY, JOANNE GREEN, LOUISE HAYES, CONNIE FALCONE

ing that the day’s volunteers found everything from an old bowling ball to \$20 in cash. She reminded everyone that, “We have a piece of heaven right here in our community and it is our responsibility to care for it.”

Echoing her comments was Pete Hoskins, president of the Greater Philadelphia Parks Alliance and former executive director of the Fairmount Park Commission. “You all are to be congratulated for your work on behalf of our parks. Let’s make every day Earth Day.”

The Friends of Carpenter’s Woods will next meet on June 21 at 7:00 p.m. in the Co-op meeting room at 610 Carpenter Lane. To learn about future service days and meetings of Friends of Carpenter’s Woods, contact Nancy Goldenberg at ngoldenberg@centercityphila.org. Or keep an eye out for notices on our new signs

Ned Wolf Park

(continued from page 1)

park. Literally, while we were digging in and tilling the soil, we planted the seeds of relationships, teamwork and community in the old-fashioned way. Neighbors are banding together and I have to say that it feels like magic to me. Not only are neighbors and business owners donating time, materials, money and personal energy, but they are connecting with each other as well.

The Soil Preparation Day (“Come Get Dirty with Your Neighbors”) was a smashing success. We had 23 volunteers combine to do 111 hours of labor in eight hours. We had the help of a few teens performing community service who were polite and enthusiastic; they earned our respect as well as the title of “most valuable workers.” With the help of others from near and not so near, we completed soil prep of the entire front island and much of the rear areas in the park. We removed 12 decrepit bushes, two overcrowded trees and eight stumps. In addition, one tree was planted and one bush was moved to the back of the property. Some people left us cash donations as they passed by and they, too, are now part of the project’s successes. We also had the pleasure of meeting Flora and Caryl Wolf, some of Ned’s family. Soil prep was a lot of hard work, but we all had fun gaining a sense of community while enjoying the rewards that come from sharing the work with a team.

We appreciate everyone’s continuing interest in the project. We hope some part of it will get you interested enough to become involved. Planting The Future Day was held on Saturday, May 19. We planted shade-loving perennials that were donated by neighbors and purchased by the Mt. Airy Garden Club with funds from Philadelphia Green, Weavers Way Environmental Committee, and donations.

We can still make good use of your donations of plants (please check with Ronda for a plant list and time to deliver them) or cash that will support us in many ways.

Overall, we will be promoting the park project and the gatherings and coordinating with the city over a couple of years. As much as we would like to complete the park renovations by the end of the year, we are working on a shoestring, so we can only work on the plan as resources become available. Things like lighting, signage, wall and sidewalk repair remain significant challenges that we are not certain can

be resolved this year. Do you know how to help us with any of this?

Two more work days will be planned for this year; bulb planting and leaf clearing will be the tasks at hand. Additionally, there will be a celebration in the park to serve as a reopening and celebration of Ned Wolf and the park named for him. Please stay tuned.

There will be plenty of beautiful improvements to see as this year progresses. We hope you will visit and enjoy the results of the community growing together



PHOTO BY RONDA THRONE-MURRAY

VOLUNTEERS ON SOIL PREPARATION DAY WERE JOINED AT NED WOLF PARK BY (L-R) CARYL AND FLORA WOLF, NED WOLF’S STEPMOTHER AND WIDOW.

in support of the Ned Wolf Park Project. I hope that you now see that the Ned Wolf Park Project is about more than just renovating a park and creating gardens. It is a place where participants and supporters will put down roots and blossom as a community.

For more information about work days at Ned Wolf Park, to join the Mt. Airy Garden Club, or to make a donation, contact Ronda Throne-Murray at 215-848-422 or rondazmail@verizon.net

Deli News

by Margie Felton

Thanks to Josh Giblin, the deli cheese case has a bright new look Josh painted the case and created new signs. The cheeses have been rearranged slightly so you may have to read the signs to find your favorites. We added **Asiago** and **Manchego** to our regular inventory because we had many requests for these items. We are no longer carrying **Italian Table Cheese** because it has been out of stock from our distributors for a few weeks. If it becomes available again we will sell it from the specialty case from time to time.

Don't forget to check out the specialty cheeses on the bottom shelf of the prepared foods case. We have many different cheeses from Philadelphia (Claudio's smoked mozzarella) and around the world. My new favorites include **Purple Haze**, an artisan goat cheese from Cyprus Grove Co., California, and **Rochetta**, a creamy blend of cow, goat, and sheep milk from Italy. If there are any cheeses you would like us to sell, please tell the deli staff or write your request in the suggestion book .



Produce News

by Jean MacKenzie

Fair Trade Bananas At Last

We've had Fair Trade organic bananas now since mid-April, after months of trying to find a reliable supply. Most of you have told me how happy you are to have Fair Trade produce, but some of you are unhappy about the price — which is quite low for organic bananas, but higher than conventional bananas.

Conventional bananas have been priced at \$0.56/lb; organic Fair Trade bananas \$0.79/lb. If you buy three pounds per week, your grocery budget will increase by \$0.69, or \$36 over the year.

Now, I realize that if all your produce increased by that kind of margin, your grocery bill would skyrocket.

But you know what? Most of the produce we sell isn't going up in price. Most of it isn't organic, or sustainable, or local, and none of it except bananas is Fair Trade. Most of it is grown and harvested on a scale you can hardly imagine, and it comes to you after passing through layers and layers of agribusiness infrastructure — and it's still cheap after all that, so you can imagine what farmers and agricultural workers are getting paid.

By contrast, Fair Trade deals directly with growers, and guarantees a price that will cover the cost of production, provide good wages, and support safe working conditions.

To me it's a no-brainer. These bananas are a bargain.

Farm Visits

I have a confession to make. Even though I make my living selling produce, even though I grew up in the richest farm county in Illinois, I am agriculturally and botanically challenged. I don't know one plant from another. My farming expertise begins and ends with being able to distinguish a mature cornfield from a mature alfalfa field. The only green thing that reliably grows for me is that nasty stuff on the shower curtain. Around 30 years ago, my friend Ed Nowak had to rescue a tiny kalanchoe from my desk — it was completely flaccid, draped (melodramatically, I thought) over the side of its pot. Within

Grocery News

by Chris Switky

CHAPTER ONE: Food from Far Away.

A few months ago, Prepared Foods manager Bonnie Shuman asked me if I had a source for “forbidden rice.” I replied, “Yes, but I can't really talk about it. That's the forbidden part. Please stop asking.” Actually, I didn't really say that... but I did order some Chinese black “forbidden” rice for Bonnie and the prep foods chefs, and a few days later, we were tasting a delicious black rice dish, with nuts and vegetables. A great recipe, a fabulous rice

This got my brain-gears turning (always risky, and Norman complains about the noise) about bringing some lesser known but delicious types of rice into our fair co-op. The result is an expansion of the rice selection in the Asian cooking section: Chinese forbidden black rice, rich in iron, with soft texture and a nutty taste; Kalijira rice from Bengal (it's like a “baby basmati” rice), great plain or in pilafs; and



PHOTO BY SOL LEV

NOT ELVES... DAVES

weeks of living with Ed, it was big and vibrant, so enthusiastically tossing kalanchoe babies (“kalanchettes?”) into neighboring pots that it had to be isolated in a separate room. I think it was featured on Oprah last week, in a show about near-death experiences.

Now, Farmer Dave (Zelov) thinks he knows something about growing things — a bunch of complicated theories about water and sunlight and soil composition and so forth. But I know, from years of experience and repeated failure, that actually, tiny elves come in the night and replace seeds with seedlings, seedlings with young plants, young plants with mature harvest. It's all about the elves, and trust me: those elves hate me.

Which is why I was reluctant to spend much time at the Weavers Way Farm. The Co-op has put a lot of time, energy and money into developing the farm, and if the elves suspect I am involved in any way — well, I shudder to think. But I have started visiting weekly, to discuss harvests and quantities with Dave, and it's obvious that he knows a thing or two about appeasing elves, because the farm is just lovely. I'm not the only one impressed by the beauty of the farm; there are a couple of groundhogs there who think they've died and gone to organic, sustainable heaven (an outcome which most farmers would like to hasten), and the bird population is varied and thriving. It's pretty amazing to see dirt and heroic but unlikely-looking seedlings turn into salad. I suggested to Dave that he post tour hours, because as word gets out, everyone will want to visit, and he'll never be able to get any work done. Once those tour hours are posted, head on over.

Just don't tell the elves I sent you.

Bhutanese red rice, grown at 8,000 feet elevation, rich in minerals, great taste and beautiful red color.

And there's more, rice fans. We've added three types of jasmine rice, brought to us by the Alter Eco Company, which supports small rice farmers in Thailand and promotes environmental farming methods: white jasmine, ruby red, and coral red. All are Fair Trade certified. (Lots more info found on the web, altereco-usa.com)

CHAPTER TWO: Food from Around Here.

Finally, a locally made ketchup: **Wills Valley Ketchup**, made by Anne Bock, on Wills Valley Farm in Kutztown, PA. Anne uses allspice, cloves and cinnamon in her tasty ketchup, and it is quite good. We've also brought in **Solebury Orchards Applesauce**, made at the apple orchard on Creamery Road, in Solebury, Bucks County. Please give these items a try, and support local farmers and food producers.



Pet Food Recall Affects Weavers Way

by Kirsten Bernal

I am sure that by now you are all aware of the recent recalls of many brands of pet food. While we here at the pet store were not affected by the initial recall, as the weeks have gone on more and more products have been added to the list. Just this past week we have been informed that several types of Sensible Choice canine food (a part of the Royal Canin line), that we stock have been recalled. The company states that the recall is both voluntary and precautionary and that there have been no “confirmed” cases of pet illness related to this food. The experience, however, has raised some important concerns and requires that we take a closer look at what we are really feeding our pets, who is making it, and how it can be improved upon. Every day, I meet members who are concerned with the confusing information that is circulating regarding the recalls. People are questioning the brands that they previously trusted but in which they are no longer feeling confident, in light of the recall. Can they be secure in choosing a product from a line that is associated with the recall? Generally speaking, our members would like to make informed decisions about what they are going to feed their pets.

As the purchaser for the pet store, I am committed to making the best-quality products available to our members while continuing to meet their needs. In response to having some of our product recalled I feel inclined to explore other options and perhaps expand into better, higher-quality foods.

As a pet owner I have to admit that, before taking over here at the pet store, I was guilty of having fed my cats with the most economical commercial option, not paying much attention to the content. Since coming on here I have definitely made a switch and have seen the results. After receiving a sample of a great-quality holistic food, I immediately noticed a change in the overall health of my old kitties. I was sure I could not go back to feeding them a substandard food. As for the increased cost, I am choosing to view

CHAPTER THREE: Coda.

The word “coda” is Italian for “other changes in the grocery department”, so here they are: We've added Green & Black chocolate bars with ginger to the candy section, due to popular demand. (This replaces the Green & Black white chocolate, a slower seller, probably because the three colors in the name confused people...plus, if we were losing money on it, then we'd have to say that Green & Black white chocolate put us “in the red”...) (...which saddened us, therefore, “blue”).

Also new, in the baking goods section, **Panko Japanese-style bread crumbs**, which many shoppers have requested. Finally, as fresh summer fruits start rolling in, don't forget that the Co-op sells pectin, displayed on the window sill to the right of the flour/sugar/panko shelf. It's a three inch square box, displayed on a two inch window sill. You can't miss it. Display innovations like these are why I like working here, and probably why you like shopping here, which is definitely why I say to you, “I'll be running into you...in the grocery aisles.”



it as a preventative measure, an investment in their health which will hopefully contribute to avoiding a host of illnesses that are quite prevalent in pets today. I also find that they need less of the better-quality food, which I attribute to better nutrition.

So in moving forward, I have begun to contact some other companies to learn more about their products which may potentially be a better fit for us. The first of these is a brand that a member has been recommending to us for a long time called Annamaet which means “to give spirit and support to, to give life to.” It is a high-quality food for both cats and dogs that provides optimum nutrition with natural ingredients. It is produced by a small local company in Sellersville PA. Annamaet uses human-grade chicken and farm-raised catfish and venison. It is produced without soy products, chemical preservatives, animal by-products, dyes, or artificial flavors. To learn more about this company and its products go to Annamaet.com.

Another option I am exploring is O+M Pet Products based in Connecticut. This company sent me a sample, and as I've mentioned, I was very pleased with their product. O+M foods are described as “holistic, biosynergistic, all natural dog and cat foods.” They use only natural wholesome ingredients including hormone and antibiotic-free chicken and turkey meal and quality whole grains. The only preservatives used are vitamins C and E, and rosemary. Nothing is artificial and there are no additives. I was interested to learn that a product may be labeled “all natural” but does not have to report on the label that artificial preservatives were used in the preparation of the meat and grains included in the product. O+M does not use raw materials that have been preserved prior to cooking. Included in

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Down on the Farm
(continued from page 1)

The black plastic will warm the soil faster and the floating row covers keep heat in and will protect the crops in the case of a late spring frost (remember that April 20 date is just average). The row covers also protect against those pesky insects, always trying to eat the vegetables before we do. The covers let light and water in, but keep bugs out. Covers are removed when it becomes too warm for them (in the case of broccoli and other cool season crops) or when they are flowering and need to be pollinated (as is the case with squash and cucumbers).

Most of the summer crops are being planted in the new half acre at Awbury, taking advantage of more sunlight and a south facing slope. After removing multiple stumps and vines, we were able to bring a tractor and tiller in to work the soil. A cover crop of spring oats and white clover was sown to keep the soil in

place until we were ready to plant in it. But the soil in this area still needs a bit of TLC. It's amazing to see the difference a little compost can make. The soil in the established area is much darker (due to the higher organic matter content), deeper, more fertile and easier to work. A big thank you to the farm committee, Emily, and all the folks that worked that land before me, for making my job easier. But with a little fertilizer, a lot of compost and dedicated staff and cooperators, I'm confident this new piece of land will produce lots of tasty vegetables for all of us to enjoy.

During June, look for more baby bok choy, baby head lettuce, spring mix, pea shoots and radishes, and the addition of carrots, turnips, beets, snow and snap peas, spring onions, kohlrabi and broccoli. Provided, of course, we can keep all of this away from the four hungry groundhogs that inhabit the perimeter of the farm.

Manager's Corner
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of the community, and much more.

On March 19, tucked away in a small room at the Lutheran Seminary, a group of fifteen East and West Mt. Airy residents representing a number of community organizations (i.e., EMAN, WMAN, NIM, SBN, and others) met to discuss and dream about a Mt. Airy that built on the recent article in *Natural Home Magazine* (Jan/Feb, 2007) that rated our area one of America's top ten of Eco-Neighborhoods. The article stated that Mt. Airy is "a Northwest neighborhood known for racial diversity... a strong community." It won the top ten spot because of: a food co-op and farmer's market; lots of green space with pocket parks; community garden and local arboretum; easy access to public transportation and to Philly Car Share program; community recycling; and more. The meeting was entitled "Sustainable Mt. Airy." The meeting went on for two hours of brainstorming and planning future direction related to this concept of sustainability.

The meeting was chaired by Steve Weinberg from the Sustainable Business Network and Laura Siena from WMAN.

I was a little skeptical prior to the meeting that night, but the more I think

about it, the first step of meeting and dreaming was very exciting. If any neighborhood can make the concept of a green community actually happen, I think Mt. Airy would be a good bet. We have plenty of developers, architects, city planners, grant writers, community organizers, environmentalists, a co-op with a strong membership, a local bank that has a strong community attachment, and an educated community.

I know the Co-op would favor the continued discussion and work on this concept for our community. A sustainable Mt. Airy must include residents of all ages, economic levels, and political leanings. Think of a community that works together to help our older residents to live in their homes, perhaps with another person who can assist them and work on their homes for a small rent. Think of our children educated in a way that teaches them how to live in a truly sustainable community.

I now look forward to the continued meetings of "A Sustainable Mt Airy." There is much work to do, but the future can be one that is sustainable. In the words of the draft vision statement of this group: a community "in which the present needs of all of our citizens are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs."

Baby, the Weavers Way Baby Bok Choy (Choi) is Out of This World...



GLENN BERGMAN (R) INTERCEPTS FARMER DAVE ZELOV IN THE WALK-IN FOR AN ADVANCE LOOK AT THE SEASON'S FIRST PRODUCE FROM THE WEAVERS WAY FARM

by Glenn Bergman

A recent report on NPR's Science Friday states that the average fruit or vegetable travels 1,300 miles from its location of harvest to our mouth. We have all heard these reports. The distance and fossil fuel use is one important item, but the quality lost in those miles is clearly evident when you put the product up against a locally grown product.

In the early morning on May 2, I had the honor of being in the store when Farmer Dave came through the doors with two boxes of baby bok choy (BBC) from the Weavers Way Farm at Awbury. It was the most beautiful product I had ever seen in the store: fresh, still dripping from the morning dew, and each plant was perfect in size and quality. This product had only traveled two miles — 1,298 miles less than the average....now *that's* making a dent in lowering our carbon footprint.

Two nights later, as I was leaving the store I picked up three small heads (\$1.96) and went home to cook them. I almost could hear them say, "Don't cook us, we are too beautiful."

Dinner that night was special and a great treat of lemon chicken, basmati rice with cardamen, and sautéed BBC.

So, here is one simple recipe to enjoy. With this product you want to keep the cooking simple and let the delicate product come through in texture and taste.

Simple & Delicious Baby Bok Choy

Olive oil — as you like
3 heads of Baby Bok Choy
½ Vidalia onion, julienned
2 cloves garlic, crushed & chopped
Water
Salt and pepper to taste

Cut the bottom off the bok choy (about ¼ - ½ inch). Cut off stalks so you have long pieces. Clean in cold water to eliminate any dirt (this is very important).

Heat wok or large sauté pan, pour in 1-2 Tbs. of olive oil. When hot, sauté julienne onions over high heat until slightly browned on the edges. Lower temperature and sauté for a few more minutes. Remove from pan.

Raise temperature of pan. Add olive oil until hot. Add ginger and garlic, toss once, add Baby Bok Choy. Immediately toss until the edges of the leaves are wilted. Add onions back to pan, toss. Add one to two Tbs. water — toss and cover for one minute or less.

Turn off, add salt and pepper to taste and remove from pan at once. Serve at once.

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Co-op Staffer to Debut Play at Fringe

by Grace Maselli

Lovers of invention will be drawn to Weavers Way’s own playwright, Kristoff Stone. A floor staff member by day, Kristoff’s birthright the rest of the time is storytelling. The founder of Snowflake Productions Company in Philadelphia, his first production *Snowflake Falls*, has been accepted into this year’s Philadelphia Fringe Festival, running from Aug. 31 through Sept. 15. As of this writing, *Snowflake Falls* has three confirmed performance dates at Big Blue Marble bookstore on Aug. 31, Sept. 9, and Sept. 15.

The play’s conceit is a unique one, designed as it is to be performed in bars, lounges, and cafes. (If you haven’t been inside yet, Big Blue Marble has a cozy café space on its second floor.)

“When I started writing, I thought to myself, ‘How can I keep the production as low budget as possible?’” Kristoff offers. “And then it occurred to me that I could use a social setting rather than renting out a space. So I figured, why not write directly for the setting.” The actors require no costumes or special makeup.

The play’s structure consists of two acts detailing the events of two nights in the lives of five individuals “that will be changed for better and certainly for the worst,” Kristoff writes in his submission to the Fringe Festival committee. “It’s a story of unfortunate choices and missed opportunities.”

Drawn to writing dialogue in particular, Kristoff situates *Snowflake Falls*’ five characters directly inside the physical spaces where people typically congregate. “Everyone’s been to a bar or restaurant at one time and overheard the too-loud conversations of people nearby. That’s a show in and of itself,” Kristoff says of the common experience that jump-started his idea. “The difference with this play is that there’s real dialogue and a plot line.” To pull the audience into the play’s first scene, Kristoff has an actor deliver a public proclamation: “I have a special announcement to share,” and with that, the entertainment gets underway.



PHOTO BY JONATHAN MCGLOTHLIN

CO-OP STAFFER AND PLAYWRIGHT KRISTOFF STONE

As of this writing, he is in negotiations for a total of six to seven performances of the play, some which will likely take place in Philadelphia’s Old City.

When he’s not writing plays, Kristoff can often be found at Weavers Way, working the cash register or stocking dry goods: cans, packed goods, “anything that’s not produce or dairy,” he says of the work he’s done for the past seven months since his hire date. In management at Trader Joe’s for some years before coming to Weavers Way, Kristoff says it got to the point there “where you’d begin to see customers as dollar bills when they walk through the store.” Conversely, the Co-op model of people working together, taking ownership of their store, being invested in it economically and socially, is a refreshing one for him.

“When it comes to basic things like food, I think it’s a wonderful thing for people to work together. Not only does it lower prices, but it adheres to the principle that when people join efforts they work more efficiently, with better economic results,” Kristoff says. “I enjoy my time on the floor.”

He also takes pleasure in his creative process. “My friends and I love to just hang out and do ridiculous improv,” he says of their extemporaneous inventions. “I’m really looking forward to getting the productions of *Snowflake Falls* underway. We’re all just trying to have fun.”

How to Brew the Perfect Cup

The experts at Equal Exchange reveals the secrets behind the perfect cup of coffee

Water

Coffee is 99 percent water. Use only the cleanest, freshest water available. It’s best not to use distilled water in which the natural minerals have been removed because coffee interacts with these minerals to naturally enhance the taste. Bottled spring water or filtered tap water is ideal.

Water Temperature

The perfect temperature to brew coffee is between 195° and 205°F. Since many automatic drip brewers average only 850 watts of power, it’s important to make sure that your brewer’s capacity is at least 1,000 watts as this is required to bring the water temperature up to the proper range. When brewing manually with a French press or filter cone, remove your kettle of boiling water from its heat source and let it sit two minutes before pouring over your ground coffee.

Grind

When you purchase whole bean coffee, it’s best to grind your coffee right before brewing, although it’s perfectly acceptable to grind your coffee when you buy it. Your goal is to achieve the right grind for the right brewing method:

- Coarse grind for French press brewing
- Medium-coarse for automatic drip brewers
- Medium grind for filter cone method
- Fine grind when making espresso

You may also purchase Equal Exchange drip grind coffee ground and vacuum-sealed to preserve freshness for automatic drip brewers and filter cones.

Brewing & Storing

Coffee-to-Water ratio

Whatever method of brewing you use, the general standard is one to two tablespoons of coffee for every six ounces of water. For the French press, use two table-

spoons per six ounces of water. Automatic drip brewers, on the other hand, tend to produce a desirable brew when using as little as one tablespoons per six ounces of water. You’ll want to experiment and adjust depending on whether you prefer a stronger or milder brew.

Brewing Time

Once your coffee finishes brewing, the flavor and quality begins to deteriorate. In the case of the French press, after it’s brewed three to five minutes and the coffee grounds have been pushed down to the bottom of the glass vessel, we recommend that you transport the coffee into a thermos, or serve it immediately; if left in the press, the coffee will continue to brew and become bitter. In general, we recommend that you transfer coffee from any method of brewing into a stainless steel thermos or an insulated carafe to keep it hot for the next cup.

Storing Your Coffee

Storing your coffee in an airtight glass or ceramic canister is optimal. Properly stored coffee can stay fresh up to two weeks and should not be refrigerated, nor is it necessary to keep it in the freezer. For maximum freshness, we recommend purchasing only as much coffee as you will consume in one and a half to two weeks.

For more on the perfect cup, visit www.equalexchange.com.

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Corn for Ethanol: Less Food, Higher Prices, Harmful to the Environment

by Sandra Folzer, Environment Committee Chair

Most Americans would rather drive than take a train and prefer not to use less heat or air conditioning. We want convenience and comfort, so we wish to create more fuel rather than consume less.

What Americans do not see is that we might inadvertently be contributing to starvation elsewhere when we fail to alter our lifestyle.

When we import corn from poorer countries, more arable land is dedicated to corn, causing a shortage in food supplies. The price of corn has risen 55 percent, making it less affordable. Food supplies in China, Mexico and India have already been affected. Ultimately everyone will pay more for all food as corn/corn syrup is in many foods.

Taxpayers are subsidizing oil companies and others 51 cents per gallon of ethanol. Corn ethanol absorbs water so it must be transported carefully, or it would corrode pipelines and engines. Any contaminants reduce efficiency in combustion. Some estimate the cost could reach \$6 a gallon though ethanol delivers 30% less energy than oil.

Personally, I stopped growing corn long ago because it requires pesticides and herbicides, which harm our environment. Also, ethanol increases methane gases and produces formaldehyde and acetaldehyde, both carcinogens.

There are alternatives. Ethanol could be produced from switchgrass, mustard seeds, or cellulosic waste from wood pulp, corn and sugar cane, which is presently discarded. Using the waste costs nothing but remains a challenge since converting cellulose to sugar is more complicated, requiring several enzymes.

Ethanol is costly, harmful to the environment, depletes food supplies and raises food prices. The optimal solution would be for the U.S. to withdraw from its energy addiction, which means giving up some of our comfort.

Major Manufacturers Want to Take Chocolate Out of Chocolate

by Jonathan McGoran

The good news is: Hershey has announced plans to stop making inferior chocolate. The bad news is: they want to do it by removing cocoa solids and cocoa butter from their product and replacing it with vegetable fats, including hydrogenated and trans fats. The really bad news is they want to be able to still call it chocolate. Hershey and other manufacturers such as Nestle and Archer Daniels Midland have petitioned the FDA to change

the legal definition of chocolate so that cocoa solids and cocoa butter are no longer required. Currently, products that do not include those ingredients are known by the industry term “not chocolate.”

The FDA has extended until June 25 their period for public comment about these changes, so if you agree that chocolate should still be chocolate, you can comment via the link on the Co-op’s website, www.weaversway.coop.

Pet Food

(continued from page 3)

their information packet were a great many testimonials of people who have used this product and love it. They attest to the overall health and even curative results of using O+M pet food. For more info, check out www.ompetsproducts.com. These are just a few examples of some alternative food choices; we will keep you informed of any new product lines that may be filling our shelves. In the meantime, we do have some great products in the store now. The Innova and California Natural lines are excellent products that have not been affected by the recent recalls. They are both produced by a reputable company (Natura) committed to producing quality natural food. The ingredients are simple and human grade and the cost is fairly economical.

Petguard is another line we carry that is concerned with producing a good-quality natural food. This product is a good value.

Another great option is Wellness products. This is a line of food formulated for optimum health which uses premium proteins, fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and filtered water. Left out are the rendered ingredients like animal fats, allergens such as wheat, corn, soy, and white rice, artificial colors, flavors, and chemical preservatives. Wellness pet products are devoted to the health and well-being of our pets.

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Debbie Ansell
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Another good option on the organic end of the spectrum is Newman’s Own made with organic grains and vegetables. It is free of hormones, antibiotics, pesticides, herbicides, and chemical additives. Newman’s Own is preserved naturally with vitamin E and produced without wheat or corn. The chicken they use is Bell and Evans — the very same chicken we sell here at the Co-op.

Currently we carry a variety of Merrick canned dog food and treats, like Snozzles pork chews, lamb squares, and stuffed Hoofers. This is a family-owned and -operated company based in Texas that is committed to quality natural ingredients. They have been manufacturing unique pet products for more than fifteen years and remain dedicated to creating the best products with integrity. They feature a great line of gourmet dog and cat foods and a large variety of dog treats. I have been interested in this line since I took over as purchaser and have considered adding more of it to the inventory. The re-examination of our product line may provide the perfect opportunity to expand Merrick products, particularly with some of the cat foods and dry foods. Look for these in the future.

In closing, while the idea may not necessarily be to stop carrying the products that people are used to and committed to altogether, it is, perhaps, to become more aware of what we are buying and where it comes from. In this way, we are giving people options and the ability to make educated decisions about what to feed their pets. I would love to hear from anyone who has information to share or suggestions of any kind concerning products you may know about, things you simply can’t do without, or general knowledge you’d like to share. Certainly as new information becomes available we will keep you informed. Thanks for all the great feedback and support



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Melamine-Tainted Chicken Released into Human Food Supply

USDA, FDA defend decision not to recall 3 million chickens, pork

by Sustainable Food News

Two of the nation’s top food officials recently reiterated their position that issuing a recall of products from the three million or so broiler chickens and 6,000 hogs processed and distributed after eating contaminated feed is not needed.

In a teleconference with reporters Tuesday, Dr. David Acheson, now the Assistant Commissioner for Food Protection with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and Dr. Kenneth Petersen, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service’s assistant administrator for field operations, continued to claim that risk to human health was “very, very low.”

“We believe the likelihood of illness to humans, including infants, is extremely small, that there really is no likelihood of a problem,” Acheson said. “It’s not the same as feeding it to a cat or a dog. We know that’s a problem.”

About nine billion broiler chickens are processed in the United States annually, Peterson said.

The two federal agencies responsible for protecting the nation’s food supply said that contaminated wheat gluten from China was used in chicken feed on about 30 Indiana poultry farms and that all the broilers fed contaminated pet food have since been processed.

As part of their ongoing investigation into imported rice protein concentrate and wheat gluten that have been found to contain melamine, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said the byproducts from pet food manufactured

with contaminated wheat gluten imported from China were also used in chicken feed on eight breeder poultry farms in the state.

Melamine is a cheap protein additive Chinese farmers use, and is blamed for a rash of deaths among pets in the United States. The poultry operations received contaminated feed in early February and fed it to poultry within days of receiving it, the agencies said.

The USDA and FDA said last week that several hundred of the 6,000 hogs that may have eaten contaminated pet food are believed to have entered the food supply for humans.

As with exposure from hogs fed contaminated product, the agencies reiterated their stance that the likelihood of illness after eating chicken fed the contaminated product is very low, and that no recall of poultry products processed from these animals is being issued.

“USDA and FDA continue to conduct a full, comprehensive examination to protect the nation’s food supply and will provide updates as new information is confirmed,” the agencies said in a joint statement. “If any evidence surfaces to indicate there is harm to humans, the appropriate action will be taken.”

Meanwhile, the breeders that were fed the contaminated product in Indiana are under voluntary hold by the flock owners.

USDA is offering compensation for depopulation and disposal of both swine and poultry that have been fed contaminated products.

Gar Alperovitz Film

(continued from page 1)

in any preconceived direction. It is up to people today to lay out new directions.

He pointed to unexpected and unpredicted changes in American history, like the rise of feminism, “the greatest cultural revolution of our time.” He also brought up the civil rights movement and the environmental movement, both of which emerged as total surprises on the scene. For Gar, the true heroes of the civil rights movement were those who labored throughout the 1930s and 1940s in the South to create what became one of the defining issues of our society.

The speaker is interested not only in co-ops, but also in actions by state and local governments that hearken back to the “municipal socialism” of an earlier area. The state of Ohio, for example, has many worker-owned businesses that were formed to keep them from closing down or moving out of state. Gar contrasted the so-called tax incentive plans to bring employers into a state, plans that cost about \$100,000 per job created, with the worker-owned businesses, which cost about \$500 per job created.

The audience at the film revisited some of these issues, and asked where Weavers Way fits into all of this.

Bob Noble, moderator of the evening, explained that one discussion group of the several that were started last spring survives. This group has turned into a kind of book club, studying the various chapters of Gar Alperovitz’s *America Beyond Capitalism*, using it as a jumping-off point for discussing policy issues as well. The suggestion was made that the group start a

monthly column in the *Shuttle* reviewing the points made in the meetings.

The issue of “politics” also arose. Can and should Weavers Way get involved in politics? Gar Alperovitz thinks it should, but not necessarily in the form of electing this or that politician. Weavers Way as an institution has stayed away from political candidates, but from time to time has moved into the arena of issues, such as in the grape boycott and in the discussion of a proposed boycott of products from Israel (defeated at a Co-op town-hall type meeting).

Until now, the Weavers Way board of directors and committees have stayed away from “politics,” but there has been no policy statement as such. Several suggestions were made along those lines, including a proposal by one audience member to consider no longer selling bottled water because of the corporate control of water, an issue that will be the subject of another film that will be shown in the film series this fall.

Gar Alperovitz is associated with Community Wealth, a nonprofit organization devoted to bringing about democratic change in the United States. Information is available at www.community-wealth.org.

The next film in the series, “Who Killed the Electric Car?” was shown on May 9. Next up is Al Gore’s “An Inconvenient Truth,” on Wednesday, June 13, at 7 p.m.

Members are urged to make suggestions for the film program, including volunteering to show their own, self-made films. It is important to note that many films carry a copyright fee for showing to a public audience, and Weavers Way cannot afford to show these. Suggestions may be sent to Larry Shofer, chair of the Weavers Way Education Committee, at lawrence.schofer@comcast.net.



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FDA Receives 130,000 Comments Opposing Food from Clones

by Sustainable Food News

A coalition of consumer, environmental, and animal welfare organizations have submitted to the Food and Drug Administration more than 130,000 comments from consumers opposing the agency’s proposed plan to introduce food from cloned animals into the U.S. food supply.

The announcement comes hours before the public comment period expires that began in January in response to FDA’s proposal to allow products from cloned animals into the food supply unlabeled.

The Center for Food Safety, Consumers Union, Food and Water Watch, The Humane Society of the United States, the American Anti-Vivisection Society, the Consumer Federation of America and the Organic Consumers Association joined together to send a strong, unified message to the FDA that the public opposes the introduction of cloned animals in food.

A December poll by the Pew Initiative found that nearly two-thirds of U.S. consumers were uncomfortable with animal cloning.

“Food from cloned animals has no place on our supermarket shelves or on our dinner tables,” said Andrew Kimbrell, executive director of the Center for Food Safety. “FDA needs to heed consumer concerns and ban animal clones in food.”

Another controversial aspect of FDA’s

plan is that labeling of any kind on meat or milk products from clones or their offspring would not be required. This would rob Americans of their right to choose what they eat and feed their families.

“More than 130,000 people have said ‘No’ to unlabeled food from clones,” said Ronnie Cummins of the Organic Consumers Association. “People are tired of the biotech industry meddling in the food system, tired of government rubber-stamping approvals, and tired of not having the right to choose what they eat and feed to their families.”

Citing animal welfare concerns, The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and the American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) have also asked the FDA to block sales of products from cloned farm animals and their offspring.

“American consumers are increasingly concerned about the treatment of animals raised and slaughtered for food,” said Wayne Pacelle, President and CEO of The Humane Society of the United States. “Considering the numerous studies that have shown that animals in cloning research can and do suffer, the FDA must disallow cloned animals and their progeny and surrogate mothers in food production industries.”

The FDA is likely to make a decision on food from cloned animals by the end of the year.

Morris Arboretum Celebrates Garden Railway’s 10th Anniversary

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the summer Garden Railway Display at the Morris Arboretum. The Garden Railway has proven so popular that the display will open with the unofficial start of summer on Memorial Day weekend, Saturday, May 26 and run through Oct. 8.

Set within the beauty of the Arboretum’s summer gardens, the Garden Railway has grown to include a quarter mile of track featuring seven loops and tunnels with 12 different rail lines, two cable cars, and nine bridges (including a trestle bridge you can walk under). The 2007 theme is Great American Train Stations, featuring replicas of some of our country’s original railroad stations, including Gettysburg, where Lincoln arrived to deliver the Gettysburg Address.

Visitors of all ages will once again be wowed by the bustling G-scale model trains running through a summer landscape that combines plants and flowers with buildings made of natural materials — bark, leaves, twigs, hollow logs, mosses, acorns, dried flowers, seeds and stones. The result is a perfectly proportioned miniature landscape complete with rivers and waterfalls. Each building, while an exact replica of the original, is unique in its design. Philadelphia-area landmarks such as a masterpiece replica of Independence Hall are made using pinecone seeds for shingles, acorns as finials and twigs as downspouts.

Each year, the Arboretum’s Garden Railway designer, Paul Busse, works with Arboretum horticulturists to design an ever-changing display that will delight

visitors both young and old. A landscape architect and garden railway designer, Busse has designed and created exhibits nationwide from The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) to the Bellagio Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Special activities on opening day will include conductor-hat making, popcorn and snow cones, and free coloring books (while supplies last). Plus, kids will create cards to celebrate the Garden Railway’s 10th birthday.

The display is open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on weekends through early fall. Thursday evenings the Arboretum is open until 8:00 p.m. in June, July and August. The display is free with regular admission (\$10 adults, \$8 Seniors, \$5 Students and Youth (3-18), under age 3 is free). Lunch is available daily at the Morris Arboretum Café from 11:00 a.m. — 2:30 p.m., and dinner is available on Thursday evenings until 7:30 p.m. through Aug. 31. For more information, please call 215-247-5777, or visit www.morrisarboretum.org.

The Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania is located at 100 Northwestern Avenue in Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania. The 92-acre horticultural display garden features a spectacular collection of mature trees in a Victorian landscape. The Arboretum features numerous picturesque spots such as the formal rose garden, Japanese gardens, swan pond, meadows, and the elegant Fernery. The Morris Arboretum is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is the official arboretum of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



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Valley Green Bank Celebrates “Teach Children to Save Day”

by Jay Goldstein, President & CEO, Valley Green Bank

In a world in which kids are constantly bombarded with images of mobile phones, luxury cars, \$150 sneakers, laptop computers, and flat screen TVs, it's increasingly difficult to raise financially responsible children. This is particularly true when as parents in this country we are collectively saving at an all low.

With April 24, 2007 designated as National Teach Children to Save Day, what is more important than teaching the next generation to be responsible with money; to understand the critical need to save, budget, and remain debt-free?

But most schools today don't teach kids about personal financial responsibility. It's largely left to parents to show our children how interest on savings makes money grow; that there is a difference between wanting and needing certain purchases; and that budgeting is essential to financial well-being.

There are several key ways to teach children to be financially responsible:

- Talk to your children about your family's financial habits. Include them as part of the budgeting process. Let them weigh in on some of your buying and saving decisions. Pick a project together and plan accordingly. For example, together plan and budget a trip and set savings goals for every family member, so that all can contribute.
- Show the importance of saving. Actively encourage your children to save money. Give them an allowance or pay for chores around the house. Help them to line up small jobs in the neighborhood.

Let your children visibly see the efforts of their saving by using a piggy bank or clear jar to watch their money grow. Set a financial goal with your children and when that goal is met, give a reward such as buying them something special or matching your child's savings with a contribution of your own.

- Open savings accounts for your children. Since its opening 15 months ago, Valley Green Bank has actively encouraged families and young people to open “Kids Savings Accounts.” Your children can take money that they have earned and saved and make regular deposits at the Bank. Help your children read the bank statements so that they understand and follow the interest earned.

- Save some, spend some. How we use our savings is a very personal decision based on needs and values. Bestselling author and family finance advisor Neal Godfrey recommends allocating saved money using this guideline: 10% designated for charity; 30% for cash; 30% for medium term savings (for up to 6 months) to purchase something; and 30% for long-term savings.

Valley Green Bank is committed to encouraging kids of all ages to start saving money.

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Co-ops Caught Crunching Crispy Crackers!

by Peter Samuel

I have a deep love of crunch. I can't help it. That's part of the reason I must eat crackers, and why I make sure that I am never without a package or box of them in my cupboard. I love the crispy snap they make between my teeth, and the way they provide the perfect platform for foods like cheese, smoked fish, dips, butter, hummus, peanut butter and all kinds of things. Variety is good too. Before dinner I will often switch between matzo, Ak-maks, Triscuits, flat breads or who knows what else, all in one glorious snack riot — crunch, crunch, crunch.

It seems I am not alone in my crazed crunching habit. There are many Co-op shoppers who are also fond of the cracker. You know who you are. That may be why our favorite store keeps us well-supplied and stocks over thirty brands of crunchy goodness. While many of these are made in places like Brooklyn or the woods of Vermont, there are also items from as far-away as Spain, Australia, Canada, Sweden, England and Scotland, i.e. it's a world-wide craze

The great selection is partly due to the fact that there are two people involved with ordering crackers for the Co-op; Chris Switky, the grocery manager, and Margie Felton, the deli manager. Deli crackers are found next to the cheese and across from the deli case. And all the rest are above the bagels. According to the two managers, Co-op shoppers crunch close to 750 packages per week.

Apparently it is only in the last ten years that so many bakers got into the commercial cracker business and the shelves began to swell. When I was a kid there wasn't much beyond Saltines, Wheat Thins and Triscuits, and maybe the occasional water biscuit. Saltines were what we ate when we got sick, to be consumed with chicken broth and ginger ale. Some people love to crumble Saltines into their soup like a thickener.

People claim that the word "cracker" originated in New England in the 1800's when a Massachusetts baker, Josiah Bent, burnt a batch of biscuits in his brick oven. The crackling noise that emanated from the singed biscuits inspired the name "crackers." Bent went on to perfect his water biscuits made of flour and water that would not deteriorate during long sea voyages. His company later sold this hardtack to troops during the Civil War.

Bent didn't actually invent hardtack. People have been making some kind of

crunchy food for soldiers since Roman times. Food historians say that small hard biscuits were probably first made by the ancient peoples of Mesopotamia. These foods were practical, because they were filling, easily transported, and able to withstand adverse weather conditions. Unlike puffy bread, they never got moldy. The word biscuit actually means twice baked, and it was this double baking process that made the bread so durable. Baked hard, it would keep for years as long as it was kept dry.

Hardtack is a name that derives from the British seamen's slang for food: "tack." If the crackers got too old and dry they would be almost impossible to chew. This hard food was also known as "tooth dullers," "sheet iron," or "molar breakers." They were so rock-like that they had the added advantage of being impervious to insects.

Hardtack was also a staple all along the coast of New England and in the Maritime Provinces of Canada, where villagers had problems finding fresh flour. It was a preservation technique. During the Civil War, large factories in the North baked hundreds of hardtack crackers every day, packed them in wooden crates and shipped them out by wagon or rail. If the hardtack was received soon after leaving the factory, they were quite edible and even tasty. Soldiers would crumble them into coffee or soften them in water and fry the hardtack with some bacon grease. Dunking it in chowder was another way to make hardtack edible.

Remember that bread is one of the oldest prepared foods, dating back to the Neolithic era. The first breads produced were probably cooked versions of a grain-paste, made from ground cereal and water, and may have been developed by accident. These were really the first "flat breads" and they eventually formed a staple in the diet of many early civilizations. The Sumerians ate a type of barley flat cake, and the 12th century Egyptians had a flat bread called ta.

Many flatbreads are unleavened — made without yeast or sourdough culture — but those that rise are still quite flat. There are at least 16 different countries that continue to produce some kind of flat bread as a dietary staple, most of which you may have heard of and many you eat regularly, like: pappadums, tortillas, lavash, focaccia, pita, crispbread, matzo, naan, paratha, and oatcakes. And

even pizza could be put in this category. These are true descendants of those early breads. Other crunchy bread-like foods that are twice-baked include the Italian biscotti, the German zwieback, and the English rusk.

Margie tells me that in the deli section the NY Flatbreads are one of the hottest cracker items. "Some days they fly off the shelves," she said. Also the Doctor Cracker and Z brands are very popular. "Dr. Cracker's product may be the healthiest," she allowed. "They have all sorts of seeds and whole grains, even spelt."

Speaking of health: more than half of the Co-op's cracker selections are made from organic whole wheat, some are gluten-free, and many claim to be healthful additions to your diet. The popular Triscuit actually has one of the highest fiber contents, claiming three grams of fiber in every ten crackers.

Chris Switky says that one of the most popular crackers in his lineup is the Ry-Vita. This is a traditional "crisp bread," which is a very flat and dry Nordic cracker. Traditional crisp bread was invented about 500 years ago and even then consisted of just rye flour, salt and water. According to some sources, crisp bread accompanied the Vikings on their first voyages to North America.

Edward & Sons Brown Rice Snaps, made from organic brown rice flour, say they are good for wheat-free, gluten-free, macrobiotic, kosher, sodium restricted, low fat and vegetarian or vegan diets. What other food will do all of that? Why not try something that pushes the cracker envelope like: pretzel crisps, cheese sticks, or bagel crisps (but not if you are on one of those diets)

The bread vs. cracker debate rages on. Chris says that he would rather spend his hard earned money on a good loaf of bread, and will only eat crackers when he is at a party. Now Margie is a real cracker aficionado, and very knowledgeable in the



cracker field. One of her favorites is the Rosali Crustini (rosemary flavored). She also samples most of the other brands, and often makes available different crackers for people who are trying a new cheese selection. I'm sure she always has crackers in her cupboard at home.

Our co-op is the store for crunchy cracker-lovers. Next time you are there, make sure you pick up a box from the multitudinous variety of snap-loving fun. You will be a happier person for it.

If you want to try making your own crackers you could refer to: Anne Lannigan's *The Cookie and Cracker Cookbook: 150 Unusual and Mouth-watering Temptations*. Or try this simple recipe:

Oat Crackers

- 1 1/2 cup Rolled oats
- 1 cup Flour
- 1/2 cup Wheat germ
- 1/2 tsp Salt
- 1/3 cup Oil
- 2/3 cup Water

Mix dry and wet ingredients separately. Then combine them together. Roll out dough 1/8 inch thick onto an oiled cookie sheet. Score and bake at 325°F for 25 to 30 minutes. Then bake them again if you want them extra crunchy!



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Prius Envy!

by Betsy Teutsch

Mt. Airy, affluent and socially conscious, has become a Prius parking lot. People around here were early adopters of hybrid technology and by now it's very common to see hybrids everywhere. From the beginning, Prius owners raved about their new cars. "I love never going to the gas station anymore" was one of the hyperbolic claims.

There are debates in the financial/business sector whether the premium is worth it when buying a hybrid. For some there are tax benefits to consider, but I think these arguments miss the point. What hybrids offer is an investment in minimizing one's ecological footprint. If you can afford it, it's a great thing to do for yourself, and also you are serving as a role model and helping to create demand for mass production of fuel efficient cars. In fact that is exactly what has happened. Now Toyota is advertising Priuses. We put a deposit in on one — back then there was an 18-month wait, no doubt adding to the car's cachet — but in the end we decided

against a new car at all.

Priuses, while incredibly fuel-efficient, are actually very large cars. I mostly need a car for just myself, having passed the car-pool and family outing stage, so I am waiting for the teensy Smart Cars to come to Mt. Airy, maybe an electric car. But I have noted what folks love about their Priuses. Some of it is practical. They are roomy and well-designed, with peppy engines. It's fun when the engine stops when you stop, giving the driver an immediate feeling of making a positive contribution to the environment. (And distracting you from the fact that you're driving...) Even more gratifying is the MPG gauge which continually feeds back, instantly training you to drive even more efficiently. This Virtue Meter is a fun challenge. Prius owners swap pointers on how to improve their mileage. The read-out also keeps you company, patting you on the back, telling you how environmentally responsible you are. It is possible to install such a gauge in a conventional car, but since what it would feed back to is so depressing, such as the

16 mpg on my Subaru, it would be a negative reinforcer, so this idea hasn't caught on.

People like the no-key electronic entry system of the Prius, though a few friends warn that if you lose the key, the results are very, very expensive. Have a copy made from the get-go. Do not wait until your key is one location and your car is at the airport parking lot, for example.

The major reason I decided against a new, more efficient car is that while I would like all to see that I am not a Gas-Guzzling Global Warming Emitter driving around in my mini-van, I have instead focused on driving less. I keep a daily log and hope this year to come in under 2,500 miles, nicely lower than the average American's 12,000 miles a year. I work at home, a major mileage-lowering fact, but in addition I have relocated many of my goods and services to walking distance in the neighborhood: doctor, haircuts, bank, coffee place, and of course, Co-op. Having no children to tote around is another major contributor to independence from driving. I bike a bit, walk a lot, take mass transit, and carpool, each of which cuts out a few miles of driving. It's tempting to mooch rides, allowing my own numbers to stay low, so I try to make sure I also of-



fer rides. And of course, even if the miles are driven, with passengers they are driven more efficiently, and I might add, more pleasantly.

I am tickled that hybrids have taken off, but do remember that while it is better to drive a hybrid than a conventional car, it is even better to get your car off the road. Keep a daily log of your miles driven and many of the benefits of a fairly costly hybrid are yours, and the planet's, for free. I'd love to hear about your efforts to minimize your miles driven. Please share your strategies.

Check out Betsy Teutsch's blog at www.moneychangesthings.blogspot.com

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Common Market Co-op Enjoys Quadrupled Size

by Sarah Leberz, General Manager,
Common Market Co-op, Frederick, MD
reprinted from Cooperative Grocer Magazine

Some people thought Common Market Co-op was crazy to go from a 4,000-square-foot store to an 18,000-square-foot store. It definitely took a lot of courage from all levels of our organization. We just knew we could do it. Now that we have gotten through it, opening the doors on May 17, 2006, I can say that we shouldn't have gone any smaller.

From initial concept to completed project, our expansion took about seven years, and it was seven years well-spent on developing both physically and organizationally. Sales at our store were just about \$5.5 million prior to our move and we had enjoyed many years of profitability.

The need to expand had become extremely evident to our staff and our customers. We served 500 customers per day and the aisles were narrow, the floor was falling apart, equipment was dated, the shelving was horrible, and the front door was user unfriendly. Staff were stressed by the lack of workspace both in the stock room and the aisles. The kitchen that was intended for grab-and-go deli prep was also used for bulk bagging, cheese cutting, and produce prep. We had two registers, which was a nightmare during the holidays and worse if one of them broke

down. The office trailer we rented to create more office space also was unbearably cramped.

We were afraid to do any active advertising, concerned that bringing in new customers would stress our operations even further. Basically, we ran a very successful store out of a hole in the wall, and our customers patiently awaited our move.

Physical plans

Making this expansion successful started with planning for the physical move. One of the first steps we took was to bring in Bill Gessner of Cooperative Development Services (CDS) to talk to the board of directors about expansion. Bill's experience and advice motivated the board and management to hire Pete Davis of CDS to perform a market study. This report became the backbone of our project. We realized from the market study that the majority of our sales (51 percent) were coming from outside of our trade area. We looked for a site in the 10,000 to 15,000 square-foot range, and we knew we needed to be highly accessible to the

highways, given that many of our customers traveled some distance to get to our store.

In addition, the results of a customer survey we had conducted showed that our customers wanted a more full-service store with fresh meat and seafood, fresh cut cheese, more local products, a community room, and an expanded food service department with indoor and outdoor seating

Once we had about five or six sites identified, we brought Pete Davis back to review the sites and help identify a preferred site. One site was in a shopping center across the street with ample parking and a fitness center moving in next door. The site was 18,000 square feet, and mostly a shell needing significant construction to meet our needs. Given the expanded needs of the customers, the board voted unanimously in support of

the site. We then met with PJ Hoffman to help design the store plan using the results of the survey and industry trends.

Raising the capital

Financing our expansion occurred in two phases. The first step occurred when we changed from our annual dues system to an equity structure, another recommendation by Bill Gessner. We had been operating under a \$15 and \$30/year dues structure, but in 2002 our owners approved an equity structure with a share cost of \$200. In addition to many other benefits, this allowed us to raise significant funds for our expansion; coupled with our savings from previous years profits, we had \$1 million to put towards the project.

Prior to construction we finalized our financing with National Cooperative

(continued on page 15)

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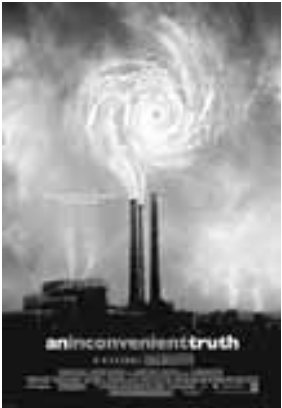
WMAN Announces Annual Meeting and Election

West Mt. Airy Neighbors will hold its Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 12, 2007 in Hagan Hall at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. There will be a reception beginning at 6:30 pm, and the meeting will follow at 7:00 pm. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

At the Annual Meeting, WMAN will recognize individuals and groups who have distinguished themselves as “Partners in Progress” throughout the year. In addition, students from J.R. Masterman High School will present “Triumph and Tragedy: A History of Racial Integration in Mt. Airy,” the result of their award-winning history project. Finally, WMAN members will elect officers and directors for year beginning July 1, 2007.

For more information, contact Laura Morris Siena, Executive Director, at 215-438-6022 or 215-438-4484.

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Maine Bill Would Make GMO Seed Manufacturers Liable for Cross Contamination

by Jonathan McGoran

Lawmakers in Maine are taking on the issue of who exactly is legally and financially responsible when genetically engineered crops contaminate produce on organic farms. Organic farmers are pushing a bill (LD 1650) that would place some of the responsibility for cross-contamination with the manufacturers of genetically engineered seed. Organic farmers can be at risk of losing organic certification in cases of cross-contamination.

Maine’s Department of Agriculture is opposed to the bill, and some farmers have expressed concerns that manufac-

turers like Monsanto will simply stop selling their seeds in the state of Maine, but supporters of the bill argue that Maine’s \$10 million organic farming sector — the state’s largest agricultural segment — needs to be protected from the potential damage caused by cross contamination.

A similar measure was recently passed in Vermont, only to be vetoed by the governor. Several other states are also looking into this issue.

Some information for this article came from the Bangor Daily News.

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Common Market Co-op
(continued from page 13)

Bank, and we ran a short member loan campaign that raised \$225,000. This fell short of our goal, but we had ample funds internally and didn't want to delay. Construction began in October of 2005 and ran about six weeks longer than expected, but the site was completed about four weeks before our planned opening.

Organizational changes

Early on, we started looking at our staff structure and making modifications to support a larger operation. One significant hire was a marketing and owner services manager. This position was very instrumental in bringing a brand awareness to our store that was consistent with our customer survey results, helping support the introduction of a new logo and improving our publications and events. Next we added the position of a merchandising manager. This position also brought us to the next level with our promotions, category management and vendor relations. Finally, nine months prior to our move we hired a human resources manager to begin plans for the big hire for the new store and the training needs. This position was also very supportive in helping with staff communications.

We also went through a considerable culture change consisting of policy revisions and more layers of leadership. For years our co-op struggled with familiar

co-op issues. We had a culture of laxity on productivity issues, we weren't savvy with profit margin or category management, and some members of our organization thought profit was a dirty word. We ran a profitable store with healthy sales growth, but we weren't challenging ourselves to reach the next level.

Our leadership team, consisting of all of the managers, met every other week and sometimes weekly. We soaked up as much as we could from the resources that were out there. We also hired a local facilitator and consultant that helped us work together as a team and get through the tough stuff, and we did have our share. We tried to anticipate and prepare staff for the upcoming operational changes, but at times, having never been through the experience ourselves, we didn't have all the answers. We just tried to be honest and empowered staff to make decisions for themselves if they were ready for what was ahead.

Opening

Leading up to our opening day, we continued to ensure that the operations at the existing store never faltered. We closed the store for three days to set up inventory at the new store. We had also installed a new POS system at the new store, a major undertaking with transferring our product files and learning the new system. It was one of the greatest challenges of our opening, but we knew it

was better to have the new system instead of investing money in an old one that wouldn't meet our needs.

Opening day was amazing. Customers jaws dropped when they walked in the front door. Some of them clapped. It was hard to take a breath because we were immediately getting slammed with \$45,000 in sales for the day. Since then, our sales have climbed to \$190,000 per week. With projected first year sales of \$8 million, we are currently running 17 percent over projections.

Our grand opening was another big day. We offered free goodie bags to the first 500 customers and we ran out in about 30 minutes. Our biggest day yet was our Owner Appreciation Day on Aug. 17

that brought sales of \$61,000. We are now gearing up for the holidays and are excited about each new opportunity we experience in our expanded site.

I am excited by the fact that we serve so much more of our community with the expanded store. Every day I see new customers who are just becoming interested in natural foods and I am thrilled that we have created a welcome environment for them. Some afternoons, when I look out my office window onto the store floor, I can see people eating in the café or enjoying a meal sitting outside on our patio and I think that this is just what we wanted and then I start thinking about what will be our next project.

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PHOTO BY EUGENE MARTIN



PHOTO BY JONATHAN MCCOY

WEAVERS WAY CO-OP’S DREAMS OF EXPANDING TO A SECOND LOCATION HAVE COME TO FRUITION, FOR ONE DAY AT LEAST. WEAVERS WAY ALWAYS HAS A TABLE AT MT. AIRY DAY, HANDING OUT FREE SAMPLES ALONG WITH INFORMATION ABOUT THE CO-OP (LEFT). THIS YEAR, HOWEVER, WE HAD A SECOND LOCATION, AS WELL, DOING A BRISK TRADE SELLING PLANTS (RIGHT). WITH EXPERT HELP FROM HIS SON ANDREW (L), CO-OP GM GLENN BERGMAN (CENTER) HELPED STAFF THE PLANT SALE.

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Suggestions

(continued from page 20)

a little-know fact that when the ancient Hebrews were leaving Egypt, not only did they not have time to let their bread dough rise, they also struggled with how to prevent their chocolate-covered macaroons from melting in the sun. Some families refused to leave Egypt, preferring a life of toil over having their chocolate macaroons melt. In hindsight this may have been a good choice since the Hebrews that left spent 40 years wandering in the desert, which is a long time to go without chocolate-covered macaroons. This is what gave rise to the whole “what price freedom?” philosophical debate.

s: “For bulk items that we bag here—such as raisins, sesame sticks, etc. do we use separate scoops that are designated ‘nut free’? And/or -- if we do not -- do we or can we add notes to the label indicating that there may be trace amounts of nuts? Here is my more simple question: if there is no note indicating that there may be trace nut amounts on our bulk items -- can we assume that care has been taken to avoid it? Thank you ”

r: (Chris) We do instruct our coopera-

tors to wash and dry scoops, when one bulk item is finished and they’re about to start packing another. Good question, and we’ll adjust our labels since there might be trace amounts of nuts due to a cooperator not washing a scoop or even just from being packed in the same room at the same time as nuts.

s: “Can we get the Stephen Colbert flavor of Ben & Jerry’s? Not sure of the exact name but I love mixing politics and ice cream ”

r: (Chris) All of us at W.W. love to mix politics and ice cream, but, in accordance with our written mission statement, we lean towards local politics. Therefore, we’re planning to wait for the results of this fall’s eighth district council elections (maybe a Co-op member will win) and then we’ll start making an ice cream in-house, named after the new council-person. We’re also considering creating ice cream flavors named after certain well-known co-op managers, for instance: Bergman’s Vanilla Bean Balsamic Swirl, Broccoli-Cashew-Pickle “a la Weiss,” Rick’s “Health Food Can Wait” Triple Fudge Treat, and Margie’s personal favorite: Pistachio Tamari Vidalia Fudge Cherry. Yum

Kutztown Folk Festival Worth the Trip

by Margie Felton

Looking for something different to do this summer? Celebrate Pennsylvania’s German heritage by attending the Kutztown Folk Festival, which takes place every summer in Kutztown, PA.

This week-long festival honors the culture of the Pennsylvania Dutch through food, music, dance, and crafts. You can watch Sauerkraut being made while sipping Sarsaparilla, pet a few goats, or make your own candle. Other activities include glass-blowing demonstrations, live music and dancers throughout the day, and a children’s stage. You can also participate in an Amish wedding.

Shopping opportunities include a large assortment of handmade arts and crafts as well as antiques and packaged food items such as the sauerkraut you watched being made, German sausages and meats, and six packs of sarsaparilla. The shopping and viewing highlight is the Quilt show and sale which is said to be the largest in the nation.

The most important part of the festival for me, of course, is the food. The festival sells a large variety of Pennsylvania Dutch treats throughout the fairgrounds. For meat-eaters, there is an ox roast (an event unto itself, as well as lunch), German sausages with sauerkraut, roasted chicken, and other treats. For non meat-eaters and everyone else, they sell corn fritters (large flat corn pancakes that should not be missed), potato pancakes, corn pies, apple dumplings with ice cream, funnel cakes and much more. To

quench your thirst there is lemonada, birch beer, sarsaparilla, and a beer garden.

For those who want to sit down and eat a meal, the Zion’s UCC church cooks meals for an average of 1,000 people a day during the festival. The dinner is served family-style and is all you can eat. The menu is a traditional Pennsylvania Dutch meal of baked ham, fried chicken, potato filling, corn, green beans, chicken pot pie, Schnitz un knepp, chow chow, pepper cabbage, pickles, apple butter, celery and carrots, shoo fly pie, milk tart, ice cream, ice tea, lemonade, milk, tea and coffee. Having been raised on this kind of food (I am Pennsylvania Dutch, but not Amish) I enjoy the meal but actually prefer to eat from the different vendors outside the big dinner tent. If you are very hungry or want to sit down to eat, this is the way to go.

So I hope some of you take the trip to the festival this summer. It is only a little over an hour outside the city and is worth the drive. This year, the festival runs from June 30 through July 8, 2007. For directions and more information visit their website at www.kutztownfestival.com.

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Artista, New Gallery in Mt. Airy

by Andrea Abrams-Herbert

This past April, Mt. Airy's newest retail venue opened at 7151½ Germantown Avenue, directly across the street from McMenamin's Tavern.

Three local women artists, Kathy Robinson, Andrea Abrams-Herbert and, Mary Lui Yoder have partnered to open Artista Gallery, presenting an elegant array of locally produced and beautifully constructed jewelry, wearable art, hand bound books, wedding attire for Mothers and Grandmothers, baby clothes, collage art, photography, and other fine crafts. Artista is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11-6 and on First Fridays until 8 p.m.

Kathy Robinson Batiks is a collection of silk, velvet, and wool batik and hand-painted jackets, scarves, wraps, purses, men's ties, and accessories. Kathy creates feminine, bohemian and eclectic pieces, all done using the traditional batik tjnanting to outline the designs before they are painted. They are then waxed and dyed several times. Her designs are carried in galleries and shops across the country.

Andrea Abrams-Herbert Jewelry Designs are handcrafted from silver, copper and brass, often combining semi-precious stones, found objects, and miniature figures. Construction involves designing, butting, forming and soldering components of a single piece together. "I use patinas and torch-fired enamelling to achieve organic and colorful effects. Because my stones and objects are often one-of-a-kind, shapes and coloration can vary."

Mary Lui Yoder makes hand-bound photo albums covered in decorative papers, coasters in decorative boxes, blank card sets and scrapbooks. A graduate of the University of the Arts in Industrial Design, Yoder was formerly a partner in Top Spin Design, which designed and manufactured an extensive product line that was available in Crate and Barrel, Bed



PHOTO COURTESY OF ARTISTA GALLERY

ARTISTA PARTNERS MARY LUI YODER, KATHY ROBINSON, ANDREA ABRAMS-HERBERT

Bath and Beyond, and other retail locations across the country.

Other Artists currently represented at Artista are:

- Sol and Judy Levy Photography
- Tom Herbert Collages
- Renattoni Children's Clothing by Maribel Beas
- Susanna Pilay Infant Wear
- Sandy Bell Urban Decor
- Bernadette Stillo Ceramics
- Natalie Wieters Ceramics
- Kris Kolo Pottery
- Carol Allen Pottery
- La Belle Recycled Polar Fleece Hats
- Ginny McKenna Hand Carved Home Products
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L • E • T • T • E • R • S

This letter is in response to Mark Goodman's article, from the April 2007 issue of the Shuttle.

In the April issue of the Shuttle, Mark Goodman discussed the big three groundcovers -- English ivy, pachysandra and vinca -- stating that they were all "good choices." Not so.

What he failed to mention was that English ivy is on the invasive species plant list, to be eradicated rather than encouraged. The Philadelphia Inquirer (Friday, April 6), devoted part of an article on vines to this very reason not to grow it. One has only to look at how English ivy has carpeted parts of Carpenter's Woods, to the detriment of our native flora. There are many other groundcovers that will grow in shade and provide greater interest. One suggestion: try the native pachysandra with its lovely mottled foliage. Any good gardening book has many other suggestions, such as ajuga, the epimediums, European and native gingers, liriopse, etc. The Natural Shade Garden by Ken Druse devotes a whole chapter to groundcovers. Let's be responsible gardeners and discourage the use of invasive species.

Hope Punnett

Mark Goodman Responds:

None of the alternative suggestions are evergreen, which is highly desirable in Northwest gardens, and ajuga isn't reliably perennial. Yes, ivy can be rampant, but as I mentioned in the article, that can be a positive if someone wants to cover an area quickly. If ivy is left untended, it can flower and produce berries, which birds eat, leading to ivy in Carpenter's Woods. However, I think that ivy's benefits outweigh the negatives.

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Financial Report: Quarter Ending March 31, 2007

by Lou Dobkin, Finance Manager

The Co-op enjoyed improved profitability this quarter. Hurray.

Net income for the quarter was \$74,956 on sales of \$1,722,792. This compares with \$71,225 on sales of \$1,562,237 for the same quarter last year. Year to date, we have a net income of \$213,432 on sales of \$5,056,668, compared to \$177,561 on \$4,636,545 of sales last year. This represents a 10.3 percent increase in sales for the quarter and 9.0 percent for the year-to-date over last year’s sales and 5.9 percent over budget for the quarter and 3.3 percent over budget year-to-date.

Labor took a bad turn for the quarter, coming in at 4.1 percent over budget. Even after fac-toring out the payroll of Weavers Way Community Programs (WWCP), payroll is still over budget by 1.9 percent. (We will go into more detail about WWCP when we discuss the ever popular “Other Income” line on the financial statements.) The personnel cost for the year is under budget by 1.6 percent. Labor as a percent of sales is 23.86 percent, which is an improve-ment over last year of 0.37 percent. The ratio of labor as a percent of sales is within the range of our peer group of Large Co-ops. We believe that labor will continue to exceed budget due to the effect of unbudgeted positions (farmer, outreach coordinator and merchandiser) com-bined with increased training costs being expended in anticipation of expansion.

The good news that had us break out the Champagne (actually it was soy milk) was the turnaround in the margin this quarter. The margin was 34.52 percent this quarter, compared to 33.17 percent last quarter. That’s an annual rate of 33.89 percent compared to 33.82 percent last year. We went back to the fundamentals to try to turn it around and it seems to have worked.

Administrative expenses continue to rise as we use consultants to help with our expansion planning.

Other Income (unusual or non-operating income) continues to grow at a rapid rate. It added \$46,485 to our bottom line in this quarter. Other income includes rental income, inter-est, visitor fees, NCGA signing bonus, and the somewhat new Weavers Way Community Pro-grams (WWCP) reimbursements.

WWCP is a new component of the Mt. Airy Services Corp., a § 501(c)(3) Exempt Organi-zation. Also under the umbrella of the Mt. Airy Services Corp. are Mt. Airy Learning Tree, Mt Airy Baseball and Mt Airy Community Computer Center. WWCP will now handle our School Marketplace program, the Co-op farm and the environment committee activities. The envi-ronment committee is self-sustaining, taking in income from the monthly recycling program (3rd Saturday of the month) and giving the proceeds out as environmental grants.

The Marketplace program and the Farm will have expenses paid out of funds raised (grants, donations, and the sale of baby bok choy and other delicious goodies) and will reim-burse Weavers Way for payroll and payroll-related expenses. WWCP is still new and does not have human resources or benefit programs, so it makes sense for the Co-op to do the payroll for them. Thus, we have the new item of WWCP reimbursements. Except that at this time “the program has run ahead of the fundraising.” Those in the nonprofit world are familiar with this phrase. As of March 31, the two programs had \$8,534 due to Weavers Way. We have several proposals out for grants and are hopeful that least some of these costs can be recaptured or that over time, program income (sale of produce) will reimburse the Co-op.

	31-Mar 2007	%	31-Mar 2006	%
Balance Sheet				
Assets				
Current Assets (ex Inventory & Cash)	49,266	2.44%	40,640	2.33%
Cash	702,747	34.81%	436,592	25.07%
Inventory	270,385	13.39%	303,578	17.43%
Fixed Assets	927,623	45.95%	906,078	52.02%
Other Assets	68,837	3.41%	54,950	3.15%
Total Assets	2,018,878	100.00%	1,741,839	100.00%
Liabilities & Equity				
Current Liabilities (ex Accounts Payable)	194,123	9.62%	170,994	9.82%
Accounts Payable	175,660	8.70%	235,195	13.50%
Long Term Liabilities	327,365	16.22%	318,313	18.27%
Total Liabilities	697,148	34.53%	724,501	41.59%
Member Equity	542,555	26.87%	472,449	27.12%
Retained Earnings	565,744	28.02%	387,328	21.09%
Year to Date Income	213,432	10.57%	177,561	10.19%
Total Equity	1,321,731	65.47%	1,017,338	58.41%
Total Liabilities and Equity	2,018,878	100.00%	1,741,839	100.00%
Income Statement				
Sales	5,056,668	100.00%	4,636,545	100.00%
Cost of Goods Sold	3,343,179	66.11%	3,068,670	66.18%
Gross Profit Margin	1,713,489	33.89%	1,567,874	33.82%
Expenses				
Personnel	1,221,790	24.16%	1,131,658	24.41%
Occupancy	114,854	2.27%	107,108	2.31%
Depreciation & Amortization	44,281	0.88%	43,565	0.94%
Operating Expenses	48,886	0.97%	48,090	1.04%
Administrative Expenses	123,996	2.45%	85,848	1.85%
Governance Expense	14,419	0.29%	12,341	0.27%
Promotional Expense	38,511	0.76%	33,433	0.72%
Total Operating Expense	1,606,736	31.77%	1,462,043	31.53%
Operating Profit	106,753	2.11%	105,832	2.28%
Other Income	121,656	2.41%	88,094	1.90%
Other Expense	14,977	0.30%	16,365	0.35%
Total Other Income & Expense	106,679	2.11%	71,729	1.55%
Net Income	213,432	4.22%	177,561	3.83%

C O - O P I N F O R M A T I O N		
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Weavers Way
Recycling
New Courtland Elder Service

6959 Germantown Ave.
(Enter from Carpenter Lane)
9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.,
3rd Sat./month.



Suggestions

by Norman Weiss

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

Expansion, expansion, expansion... what should we do? Should there be a second store? Where should it be? What should it sell? Should there be a work requirement for members? Should we be like other co-ops and have non-working members that pay more than working members? Should we look at Chestnut Hill for a location? Central Mt. Airy? Germantown? East Falls? Roxborough? planet Gliese 581? All of them in sequence?

While it is hard to figure out what to do, Chestnut Hill has the advantage of ongoing drama. It is interesting reading the *Chestnut Hill Local* stories about dollar stores, banks, Snowden properties, the Wawa, the Community Association’s financial woes and letters from board members, controversies about editorial control, etc. Other neighborhoods seem dull by comparison. Another interesting thing about Chestnut Hill is how retail space there commands premium rents, to the point that a number of stores are vacant and a number of businesses, including chains that have been successful most other places, have pulled out. Except of course, banks, which I think are up to 11. While many residents bemoan this trend, I’m thinking they have it backwards, Chestnut Hill needs more banks. I’m talking about a lot more, like one bank

per household. This would achieve new heights in customer service. No lines, the tellers would know their customers, probably wouldn’t even require i.d. when you make withdrawals.

suggestions and responses:

s: “What happened to \$0.99 apple days?”
r: (Glenn) Will be back next year

s: “Could we stock Organic Valley cultured butter? (salted if they have it)
r: (Chris) We carry Organic Valley cultured butter when it is on CAP special, which seems to be every third month. April is one of these months... maybe stock up while it’s available (and cheap), put a bunch in your freezer?

s: “The Co-op’s basmati rice doesn’t seem much like basmati — it doesn’t have much of the taste or aroma of the rice I get in Indian groceries — and it doesn’t have the same long, thin shape. Any chance we could get the real stuff?”
r: (Chris) I would guess that the rice at an Indian store is imported from overseas, whereas our basmati rice is USA-grown. This is the first complaint we’ve gotten about our basmati rice, so we’ll consider switching sources if we get several complaints.

s: “I made this suggestion before and perhaps it got lost... Can we get Green & Black’s Dark Chocolate w/crystallized ginger bits — it’s their best combo ”
r: (Chris) We’ve had several requests for this, and we made room by deleting the Green & Black’s white bar, which didn’t sell that well. We also have chocolate-covered ginger and chocolate-covered coffee beans in the deli (although not organic like Green & Black).

s: “When visiting co-ops in Vermont, we found a product we wish Weavers Way would carry: Fruta Bu — organic smooshed fruit. Been missing the organic Fruit Leathers WW used to carry. Might these be a good alternative? Very yummy flavors, all smooshed.”
r: (Norman) We have recently added

the “Fruta Bu.” For some unknown reason Stretch Island first stopped making organic fruit leathers, than came out with the “Fruta Bu” line of organic fruit leathers, but they were packaged in pouches and sold in multipack box, so you couldn’t buy just one. The boxes didn’t fit our display rack (which was supplied by Stretch Island), so we had no way to add them. Recently Stretch Island started producing Fruta Bu in flats again, so we are stocking them. Makes you wonder why companies do things like this. Probably it was the advice of a marketing person, well known as a group that violates the “if it isn’t broken don’t fix it” axiom.

s: “Rose’s Lime juice, staple of many, lush and non. Please? Don’t make me shop elsewhere.”
r: (Chris) I’ll look for display space for this item, but the earliest I could bring it in would be mid-May. See Chris or Norman about pre-ordering a case (if you use a lot of it...).

s: “Thanks for getting the Almond milk ”
r: (Norman) I wish people would stop calling this stuff milk (soymilk, rice milk and almond milk). Milk comes from female mammals. Almonds, soybeans, oats and rice cannot produce milk. Grains, beans and nuts do not nurse their young. So what to call these things? Almond juice? Ridiculous because almonds have no juice. However, there are traditional names for almond and soy milks, from Wikipedia: “historically, almond milk was also called amygdalate. It was consumed over a region stretching from the Iberian Peninsula to East Asia”. Soymilk in Chinese is “Dòu jiang (lit. bean juice)”. I am convinced oat milk and rice milk have no traditional names because they were inventions of the Aseptic Packaging Council, a marketing group for a packaging process, who went looking for products that could be put in their containers.

What’s next, peanut milk? Wheat germ milk? Oh yeah, and for those old enough, remember “ice milk”? I wish the FDA would crack down on this.
s: “Can we get Amy’s Southwest Burritos?”
r: (Chris) Yes. I was looking for a replacement item for the “Breakfast Burrito”, which has gone to slow sales. Look for Southwest by the end of April...

s: “Not a suggestion, just a huge thank you for the most delicious thing I’ve ever eaten: dark chocolate-covered macaroons. I’m looking forward to seeing them next Passover.”
r: (Margie) Thank you (Norman) It is
(continued on page 17)

You're picking up a case of Green Magma Organic Powdered Barley Grass Juice?



"It's an herb to take on an empty stomach first thing in the morning to cleanse the colon. Colon cancer is prevalent among Blacks."

~ Grace Euell

QUESTION AND PHOTO BY BRIAN RUDNICK

Green Electricity Coming to the Co-op

by Steve Herbden

Weavers Way has begun to purchase renewable green electricity from Native Energy. We will still pay part of our electric bill to PECO, but will pay a bit extra towards climate friendly methods of electricity generation: manure digesters located on the Schrack family dairy farm near Loganton, PA. You’re right—that’s electricity from cow poop
A representative from NativeEnergy

will be available at the General Membership Meeting on Saturday, May 19 to answer questions. We have tentatively agreed to become an “affinity partner” with NativeEnergy, which will allow Weavers Way to benefit when our members choose one of NativeEnergy’s renewable energy products.
Learn more about Native Energy at www.nativeenergy.com.

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	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Wednesday	Jun. 6, 2007	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Wednesday	Jul. 11, 2007	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Wednesday	Aug. 1, 2007	6:45 p.m.	GJC

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 Cannick, Membership Manager+

Equal Exchange

Coffees of the Month



Organic Bolivian

Mild and mellow, simple, with a subtle chocolate finish

\$7.75/lb.


Reg. \$8.75/lb

Organic Midnight Sun

A bold, syrupy body, and striking acidity. The zesty nature of this coffee is highlighted by the roast – our unique 'East Coast style' French roast.

\$7.49/lb.

Reg. \$8.99/lb



PLEASE RETURN THIS PORTION TO WEAVERS WAY

Someone from my household will attend the orientation meeting on _____

Name (please print) _____

Phone Number _____

Address (including zip code) _____
