

Weavers Way Completes Purchase in Chestnut Hill

by Glenn Bergman, General Manager

Expansion

Well, it is official: we now own 8418 Germantown Avenue, the property that formerly housed Caruso's Market in Chestnut Hill. We are working quickly to get this project underway so we can open early this fall. Thanks to all of you who have written, called, or stopped me in the store or on the street to let me know your opinion. I have tried to respond to every e-mail received. Please keep your thoughts coming as we move forward (and please go to our website at www.weaversway.coop and sign up for our e-mail newsletters to stay informed about member meetings and other developments).

Many members have asked me what can they do to help? Well, here are a few ways:

1. Financing is always a challenge on a project like this. If your membership equity is not up to the \$400 level, please bring it up to the \$400 level today. Cash in the bank is a big help during an expansion. And while \$400 is the lifetime maximum for your annual equity investment, you are free to increase your equity above that level. If you have the means to do this, we would appreciate the vote of confidence in this expansion.

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Gathering here in front of Weavers Way's new property in Chestnut Hill are (l to r): Bob Elfant of Elfant Wissahickon; Weavers Way Board President Nancy Weinman; Weavers Way Board members Bob Noble, Chris Hill, and Sylvia Carter; Weavers Way General Manager Glenn Bergman; Chestnut Hill Business Association Main Street Manager Fran O'Donnell; Weavers Way Board member David Woo; and Weavers Way Communications Director Jonathan McGoran.

Proposal to Change Co-op Work Rules

by Glenn Bergman, General Manager

Overview

The membership requirement has served Weavers Way well over these last 35 years. It has provided for very strong member involvement in the operations of the store through actual store work, committee work, and outside work (farm, special events, Shuttle, etc). The present system of investment and a work requirement has both a positive and negative impact on the Co-op.

After many hours of discussion among members, other General Managers, consultants, and Weavers Way management, I have presented to an ad hoc committee of the board a proposal that we change the requirements for membership at Weavers Way Co-op. Management is convinced that the work "requirement" should be changed to a work "option" for the members. Our suggestions for changing the work requirement to an optional system will provide for added sales, easier administration, and continued member involvement in many aspects of the Co-op. We strongly suggest that by making work an "option" rather than a "requirement," we will be perceived

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Member Loan Program

by Hillary McAndrew

If you have circled the block looking for a parking spot, wedged your way into the store to find you have just cut into the line for check-out, or wondered why those women standing between you and the ground turkey think it's okay to discuss their kids' college application process all afternoon, you must be happy that Weavers Way will be opening another location.

As you may have heard, Weavers Way will be opening an additional location this fall. We have purchased 8418 Germantown Ave., the former site of Caruso's grocery in Chestnut Hill. This is an opportunity to grow our business in a healthy and sustainable way and better serve our member-owners and our communities. It also allows us to expand the cooperative model, providing good jobs and good food while enriching our community and helping us to achieve our goals for the future. In order to assure success, Weavers Way is asking members to participate in a member loan campaign.

Stu Katz, Chair of the Member Loan Committee, explains, "The purchase of this location happened quickly. Weavers Way needed to make an offer on the property or risk losing it to another bidder." There was no time to raise money through the

member-owners beforehand. Instead, Weavers Way took out loans at the current commercial interest rate of around 7%.

"We want to pay these loans off quickly, reducing the costs of borrowing," says Katz. "To do so, we are offering a loan program to our membership." This offer will be made to all members who are in good standing and whose principal residence is in Pennsylvania. The loan program is not intended to be used as an investment opportunity, but rather, as a way to help your co-op and your community.

Members will be receiving a letter explaining the first phase of the \$1 million member loan program. For our 3,500 active member households, the loan level will be \$285.71 each. This "equal" share loan program offering is allowed through a provision of the Pennsylvania Securities Law. If we are not able to collect the money that way, the Member Loan Committee will move to seek larger loans from members interested in supporting this effort.

Terms & Conditions of Loan Offering

The loans will bear interest at a rate to be specified by the member, within a range

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Luis Cruz Demonstrates Healthy Cooking at MLK Health Fair



Co-op staffer Luis Cruz (standing) demonstrates healthy alternatives for cooking greens at the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Health Fair.

by Jonathan McGoran

This past Martin Luther King Jr., Day, January 19, Co-op staffer Luis Cruz conducted a series of healthy cooking demonstrations as part of the Healthy Body-Healthy Mind-Healthy Community Health Fair at Martin Luther King High School, sponsored by State Representative Dwight Evans. Conducted in three sessions over the course of the morning, the demonstrations included three recipes offering healthier alternatives for cooking greens. All three groups were impressed, not just by the

healthfulness of Luis's recipes, but by the deliciousness of the finished dishes.

A self-taught chef, Luis has worked for more than 20 years in the restaurant business, including as executive chef at the former Café Organica in Ardmore. More recently, Luis served as store manager at Weavers Way's Ogontz store, guiding the store through the crucial first few months, and helping to establish the store's reputation for quality foods and excellent customer service.

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And of course... scads more

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★ SPECIAL ★ Membership Meeting

Tuesday, March 17 7 - 9 PM

Expansion • Member Loans
Work Requirement &
By-law Changes

Location: Summit Church Parlor
Greene & Westview Sts.

Editor’s Note

by Jonathan McGoran

When I was a kid, reading about food in the newspaper was a lot like looking through a cook book: recipes, serving suggestions, maybe some nutritional information. Granted, a lot of it was meatloaf and casseroles featuring Campbell’s Cream of Mushroom soup, but still, it was food. These days, food news reads more like genre fiction. And while I’m partial to genre fiction, I wouldn’t want to put it in my mouth.

This month’s crime story involves the fraudulent sale of nonorganic fertilizer as organic. One company was doing it for seven years, affecting up to 60 percent of the nation’s organic produce. Oops.

You can’t blame the farmers, either; I’ve seen some of that fake “organic fertilizer” in novelty stores, and it looks pretty realistic. *Hilarious!* The problem goes both ways, too: the inability to correctly identify “organic fertilizer” has been a chronic problem, particularly in Washington, D. C.

In the science fiction aisle, we’ve had GMO crops, cloned meat, irradiation—it makes artificial growth hormones seem downright quaint. I’m shocked we’re not already being overrun with giant ants.

The latest story isn’t technically about food, it’s about medicine: the first approved drug from genetically altered animals—goats implanted with human genes. Among the dangers this presents is the possibility of these animals getting loose and mingling with others. GMO plants have proven capable of spreading in unintended ways, and they can’t even chew through their leashes (at least, not until the next round of genetic manipulations).

On the other hand, the healing effect of pets has already been noted; why stop there? As I write this, I have the flu, and while the puppy sitting next to me is making me feel a little better, I can’t help thinking it would be pretty cool if we could just splice her little puppy genes to make me *all* better. Being man’s best friend is not without its downsides.

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Deadlines for each issue are the first of the preceding month.
e.g. April 1 for the May issue

Statement of Policy

Articles should be under 500 words and can be submitted neatly typed, on disk, or e-mailed to editor@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 submitted electronically, or camera-ready with prior arrangement, and should be 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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Northwest Sustainability Coalition, USDA Explore Increasing Urban Farming Partnerships With Weavers Way

by Rachel Milenbach, WWCP Executive Director

Several weeks ago, Sam High drove up to the Weavers Way Farm from Chester County to meet with us and explore ways that the USDA could support our urban farming initiatives. Sam is a District Conservationist in the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). We toured the farm fields and the newly constructed high tunnel before sitting at the picnic tables on a beautiful spring-like day in February to talk.

This first of two scheduled meetings with the USDA was initiated by one of our new partners, Maisha Jackson, coordinator of the Northwest Sustainability Coalition (NSC). NSC is a project of G*Town Restoration, a non-profit community development corporation operating in Germantown. It is sponsored by State Representative John Myers.

The high tunnel in the photograph is the result of a partnership between Weavers Way Farm and Penn State Cooperative Extension’s Philadelphia office. Penn State donated the material and expertise and the tunnel was constructed by Penn



In the high tunnel at Weavers Way Farm, February 11, 2009. (Left to Right) Maisha Jackson, Coordinator of NW Sustainability Coalition, Sam High, District Conservationist, USDA, and David Zelov, Weavers Way Farm Manager

State and Weavers Way staff, with help from many volunteers.

Weavers Way farm is using the tunnel for growing seedlings and season extension. The tunnel will also serve as an educa-

tion/demonstration site by the Penn State Cooperative Extension, further supporting our respective Weavers Way farm and non-profit missions to provide education for the larger community.

Weavers Way, Saul High School Announce CSA Farm

by David Zelov, Farm Manager

Weavers Way Co-op Farm and W.B. Saul High School of Agricultural Sciences are collaborating on a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm to be located on the grounds of Saul High School on Henry Avenue in Roxborough. The farm, called “Henry Got Crops!” will be run by Weavers Way staff working closely with Saul’s agroecology program and the school as a whole to design a farm that not only brings food to the community, but also serves as an educational opportunity for students at Saul. The farm will be located right on campus, and teachers and their classes are invited to learn about and partake in small scale, organic vegetable growing. This will be one of the first high school-based CSAs in the country. There will be many different opportunities for student involvement, ranging from hands-on work in the fields, to helping with community outreach, to doing applied research, budgeting, planning, and newsletter writing. As the busiest time of

year for farming coincides with the high school’s summer vacation, the farm plans to hire students for summer work opportunities, thereby providing job training experience and job placement right on school grounds. The construction of season-extension infrastructure, such as hoophouses, will allow continuation of a strong program during the colder months, when school is in session.

Weavers Way has enjoyed working with Saul teachers and students on a handful of recent projects. In late 2007 and early 2008, farm staff worked with Jessica Naugle’s Agroecology class to refurbish and cover



Weavers Way Farm Educator David Siller (fifth from right) with Saul students at Saul High School

an existing hoophouse frame with plastic. Throughout the spring, we worked together to plant, maintain and harvest vegetables and herbs that were then sold at Weavers Way Co-op and the Headhouse Farmers

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Gimme 5! And Help Keep #5 Plastics Out of the Landfill

by Priscilla Becroft, Environment Committee

This spring, the WW Environment Committee will start a monthly collection for #5 plastics, which are not included in the City’s recycling program. This category includes yogurt cups, sour cream containers, hummus tubs, some medicine bottles, and more. It is currently difficult to find a reliable way to recycle #5 plastics in this region, and this new project aims to fill that void.

The collected #5 plastics will be sent to Gimme 5, a program recently set up by Recycline—a Massachusetts company that makes the Preserve line of products from 100% recycled materials—to enable people to recycle their Preserve toothbrushes and other #5 plastics. I learned from Recycline’s Elissa Rehm that Gimme 5 operates a collection site in Cortland, New York, where our recyclables will be checked to make sure they are clean and really are #5s. From

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Coming Soon!

GIMME 5

#5 Plastics Recycling Project



Start saving your yogurt cups, sour cream containers and hummus tubs. **NOW** for the new monthly #5 plastics collection.

Saturdays, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

April 18

May 16

June 20

Drop-off location:

610 Carpenter Lane

(next door to the pet store)

Donation: 75¢ – to help defray the ground shipping costs (see article)

Recyclables must be **clean and dry**, with no paper, screws or other number plastics attached.

Sponsored by the Weavers Way Environment Committee

Cool New Products on the Second Floor!

by Martha Fuller, Wellness, Personal Care & General Merchandise Manager

Calling all foodies and aspiring cooks: we now carry the PrepTaxi Measuring Scoop from Chef’s Planet. It is a handy measuring device that helps to make cooking a breeze. The PrepTaxi precisely measures chopped veggies, herbs, cheeses, and more. It holds up to two cups of prepped food and is dishwasher safe. It is designed to simply scoop, measure and pour into a bowl or pan.

While we are reminding you that we already have wonderful personal care items for new mothers, babies and infants, we will also be carrying new lines and exciting new products. We will profile them in future *Shuttle* articles.

PlantFusion shoppers have asked for a protein powder that avoids dairy, soy, animal products, and gluten—we have it and it is PlantFusion! They have a proprietary blend that is formulated to provide a complete protein with an optimized amino acid profile, infused with Branched Chain Amino Acids and L-Glutamine to support muscle strength and connective tissue health. In addition, PlantFusion contains a proprietary enzyme blend which supports easy and maximum absorption. It is a Non-GMO product and seems to mix easily—a plus for protein powders! We are carrying two types, Unflavored and Vanilla Bean.



Prep Taxi

Both are in the one-pound size. Let us know what you think.

FAQs We Hear On the Second Floor and a Reminder:

“Can I re-use my coffee bag when I purchase bulk coffee?” Yes indeedy! It’s a terrific way to recycle. I find that I can re-use my bag for up to five refills. Sometimes I cannot use them that often—perhaps some last for three refills. I keep my extra coffee bag, along with my plastic bags for veggies and fruits, in my Weavers Way boat bag which accompanies me on my shopping trips. When the Equal Exchange bags are worn out, simply remove the tin tie at the top and recycle the bag with your mixed paper. The bags that hold the bulk teas have a plastic lining and cannot be recycled with mixed paper. Perhaps you have another use for them?

While we are on the subject of coffee: a reminder—only coffee purchased here at Weavers Way should be ground in our grinders. Please do not grind coffee beans from any other store here in our grinders! We appreciate your adherence to the written guideline and contract we have signed with the company who lends us the grinders. Please do not ask us to make ex-

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#3 PVC: World’s Most Dangerous Plastic Not Wanted at Weavers Way

by Bonnie Hay for the Environment Committee

Plastics can be hazardous in their manufacture and use. By far the most dangerous are plastics containing polyvinyl chloride (PVC). According to the Center for Health Environment and Justice (founded by Lois Gibbs of Love Canal fame) “PVC is dangerous to human health and the environment throughout its entire life cycle, at the factory, in our homes, and in the trash. Our bodies are contaminated with poisonous chemicals released during the PVC life-cycle, such as mercury, dioxins, and phthalates, which may pose irreversible life-long health threats. When produced or burned, PVC plastic releases dioxins, a group of the most potent synthetic chemicals ever tested, which can cause cancer and harm the immune and reproductive systems.”

PVC is found in items as diverse as yoga mats, credit cards, toys, diaper covers, construction materials, computers, cars, shampoos, shower curtains, #3 plastic bottles, and food wrap.

Food wrap! PVC food wrap contains phthalates, which accumulate in body tissues and lead to health problems, especially endocrine problems. Phthalates are freely given off by plastics in which they occur. Because phthalates are fat soluble, they are found in meats and cheeses wrapped in PVC packaging. Although phthalates show almost no toxicity in adult humans in acute (short term) exposures, even at high doses, phthalate will accumulate in the body over a long period of time and can cause adverse health effects. Infants are at greater risk of harm from phthalates (as they are from all toxins), especially to the male reproductive system.

Weavers Way has long carried a safer, PVC-free, food wrap, Natural Value, which can be purchased to use at home—both

Glad and Saran also make PVC-free wrap (check the boxes). Unfortunately, food wrap for large scale use, as WW needs to package cheese, meat, and chicken, is not widely available. So, WW has up-to-now used wrap which likely contained PVC. After much searching, Norm Weiss has found an alternative to the store’s use of the PVC wrap and it is now in use at WW.

Here are some actions you can take:

1. Take plastic wrapped food out of the wrap. You can scrape off the outer layer of cheese to remove some of the absorbed phthalates. Then store the food in safer containers—made of glass, lead-free ceramic, or stainless steel.
2. Never microwave food in any type of plastic. Even “microwave safe” plastics may have components which can migrate into food and heating accelerates this process.
3. Let Norm Weiss or Glenn Bergman know you appreciate WW moving towards healthier packaging.
4. Become more informed about the adverse impact of many plastics on human health and the environment. An excellent website which covers all aspects of the issue in an easily accessible format is the Center for Health, Environment, and Justice (CHEJ) website: www.besafenet.com/pvc
- There you can download Pass Up the Poison Plastic: The PVC-Free Guide for Your Family & Home. This is a comprehensive resource on safer products as well as those to avoid—specific as to brand. It also has many links to more information on PVC and other plastics.
5. Advocate for a U.S. ban on most PVC products—there are alternatives in most instances. PVC production is a health, environmental, and social justice issue.

Unhidden Treasures in the Deli



Due to increasing food prices I have decided to focus this months hidden treasure section on the hidden low priced items in the deli. There are many products found in the deli that are still under \$5.00 per pound.

~ Margie Felton, Deli Manager

Cheese		Meats	
Colby Longhorn	\$4.89/lb.	Corned beef	\$4.11/lb.
Cream cheese	\$3.05/lb.	D&W Bologna	\$4.02/lb.
Neufchatel	\$3.50/lb.	Liverwurst	\$2.48/lb.
Domestic Feta	\$4.97/lb.	Dark Meat Turkey	
Muenster	\$4.81/lb.	Pastrami	\$4.02/lb.
Cooper Sharp		Chicken nuggets	\$4.25/lb.
American	\$4.95/lb.		
American	\$3.69/lb.		
Mozzarella part skim	\$3.95/lb.		
Mozzarella shredded	\$4.66/lb.		
Chihuahua	\$4.91/lb.		
Monterey Jack	\$4.52/lb.		

In addition to the above regular prices, for the month of March, the following items will be on sale.

Kunzler Deli Meats

Wood Smoked Ham	\$4.99/lb. was \$5.31/lb.
Turkey Ham	\$4.99/lb. was \$5.49/lb.
French Feta	\$7.00/lb. was \$8.91/lb.

Tofu Products

Yves Veggie Dogs	\$4.73/lb \$3.55/12 oz.
Organic tofu	\$1.65/lb
Pillow tofu	\$.30/each

Other

Giant Beans in Vinaigrette	\$3.55/lb.
Roasted red peppers	\$4.33/lb.
Yellow peppers	\$4.94/lb.



Fun Dinner Idea

by Margie Felton, Deli Manager

Homemade Pizza makes a great inexpensive meal. The pre-made pizza dough sold in the deli costs \$1.85. Pizza sauce in the grocery department is \$2.39. Top with your favorite cheeses, meats and vegetable. A medium cheese pizza would cost approximately \$6.50 to make.

A few hints: Bring the pizza dough to room temperature before trying to roll it out. I have the best luck using flour and a rolling pin but some people prefer using olive oil and hand stretching. Children usually like to be involved in pizza making so making dinner can also be a fun kid activity.

~ margie@weaversway.coop



The Pet Story

by Kirsten Bernal, Pet Store Manager

I would like to address some changes in the product line at the pet store starting with Dogswell jerky strips. It has recently come to my attention that Dogswell is producing these very popular treats in China. This is not new, nor was it a secret; it is posted on the back of their packaging albeit in very small print. I was somewhat disappointed that I missed this fact as I relied on the good reputation of the company.

I have been in touch with Dogswell and our rep, and also discussed the matter with other trusted reps less invested in Dogswell’s success. All have assured me that the treats and the production plant are safe. Dogswell stands behind the quality of their products.

The jerky treats and veggie life treats are their only products being produced in China. Their canned food and kibble is processed in a facility in Western New York and, in fact, the chicken is being sourced from Central Pennsylvania. Dogswell reports that their Chinese facility follows the strictest of guidelines and they do not deal

with any of the suppliers connected to the recalls. They claim to have “in-depth knowledge” of their supply chain. The products are tested at a third-party laboratory in Tennessee for 42 contaminants and have never been found to contain any. They assure us that they are utilizing premium ingredients that are cage-free and humanely raised, as well as naturally fed and free of hormones and antibiotics. Ultimately we must choose whether or not we trust the integrity of this company. Beyond that, in light of our commitment to supporting local economies, where do we stand on a treat being sourced and manufactured in China? The Dogswell jerky treats are one of the top sellers at the pet store. Currently, I am looking into alternatives. Primal, whose jerky is USA sourced and produced, is nearly twice the price of the Dogswell treats. Cloud Star has recently added tender jerky strips to their line as well as Farmstand products that are similar to the Dogswell Veggie Life. All Cloud Star ingredients are grown and sourced in the

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Member Loan Program

Help your co-op and your community!

These are exciting times at Weavers Way and we look forward to a bright future. Our Chestnut Hill expansion is an opportunity to grow our business in a healthy and sustainable way and better serve our member-owners and our communities.

Your financial support will help us on our path to success.

Look for notices in the store, articles in the Shuttle and E-newsletters and other updates on our expansion activities.

To find out how you can get involved, visit us online at www.weaversway.coop

Member Loan Campaign
(continued from 1)

of between 0% and 4%. The term of each loan will be specified by the member (from 4 to 7 years). Interest will be paid on an annual basis at maturity when the loan is repaid in full. The interest rate is fixed until the loan's maturity and accrues on a simple (not compounded) basis. Funds received during the loan-offering period will be deposited into a separate account at Valley Green Bank.

The Co-op seeks to raise at least \$1 million total from member loans within 90 days, beginning March 1, 2009. The Co-op may extend the offering period as necessary, to reach its goals. The identity of individual lenders and the terms of their loans

will be kept strictly confidential.

Look for notices in the store, articles in the *Shuttle* and e-newsletters and other updates on our expansion activities. These are exciting times at Weavers Way and we look forward to a vibrant future.

Other Ways to Support This Effort

If you are not interested in going through the loan process, please consider increasing your equity to the \$400 maximum or above. Your current equity level is noted on your membership card. Please contact Robin Cannicle at member@weaversway.coop about increasing this amount, or ask a cashier about it when you check out.

CreekSide Co-op

by Jonathan McGoran, Weavers Way Communications Director and CreekSide Co-op Board Member

At their last public meeting on Dec. 18, 2008, the CreekSide Co-op board announced goals of raising \$150,000 and 750 members before signing a lease with their developers, Brinton Housing Partners. There is good news to report on a number of fronts.

The original deadline was Jan. 31, 2009—the original closing date for the acquisition of 7909 High School Road in Elkins Park. Since then, that closing date has been extended to March 15 in order to allow Brinton Housing Partners and the seller more time to prepare. This allows CreekSide Co-op more time to increase membership and member equity investments to show just how committed the community is to opening CreekSide Co-op. This also gives more prospective members the chance to become Keystone Members; joining before this deadline gives members the chance to say they were there at the beginning, when their co-op needed them most.

The original goal of 750 household members and \$150,000 in membership equity contributions was necessary to validate CreekSide Co-op's projected sales targets and to prove to the banks and developers that there will be sufficient demand from members to succeed. The great news is that as of Feb 19, CreekSide Co-op had 832 member households and had raised over \$132,000 in member equity alone. This is great news on a number of fronts:

- The more money CreekSide can raise up front, the stronger their position is going forward.
- Being able to show strong member support demonstrates to investors, grantors and our developers that CreekSide Co-op is viable and will thrive.
- It demonstrates to prospective members that this venture is going to succeed, and it makes sense for them to get on board.
- This means that CreekSide has surpassed its initial membership goal and have almost reached its original membership equity goal.

One crucial part of this success has been a series of house parties. By early February, 22 members of CreekSide Co-op had

opened their homes and invited their friends and neighbors to help grow and support their new co-op. In addition to providing neighbors the chance to meet and interact in a way that CreekSide Co-op itself will provide once opened, these house parties have been invaluable in getting the word out about CreekSide Co-op; giving prospective members a chance to meet one on one with members of the CreekSide Board of Directors and ask any questions they might have; and, of course, give people a chance to join CreekSide Co-op right there on the spot. Oh, yeah, and they're also a heck of a lot of fun.

The Board of Directors of CreekSide Co-op have been diligently seeking the required funding from both non-profit organizations (in the form of grants) and from lending institutions (in the form of loans). To date, none of the initial four grant applications have been approved, but they are having initial success on obtaining the necessary funding from a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) federally-guaranteed loan program (similar to the Small Business Administration) that assists organizations that are creating jobs in the agriculture and food industries. This opportunity was discovered by CreekSide's development partner, Brinton Housing Partners.

The "eligibility" application is almost complete for submission to the USDA for review and approval. This loan program could provide 100% of our start-up and working capital requirements, eliminating the need to institute a "Member Loan" program at this early juncture. The USDA turnaround time is very quick, so the Board should know by early March of 2009 if the funding has been approved.

Another part of CreekSide Co-op's success so far has been the active involvement of its member volunteers. Dozens of volunteers have helped out on a number of fronts, including 60 volunteers who distributed over 4,000 doortags to let their neighbors know about CreekSide Co-op.

And that, as much as anything else, bodes very well for CreekSide Co-op's future.

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Chris Hale-Sills, Class of '07
Emily Hale-Sills, Class of '03

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-Emily, Smith College '11

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Weavers Way Presentation: The Women of Darfur

by Larry Schofer

Mt. Airy participated in a nationally coordinated set of meetings in coordination with the Save Darfur coalition on Feb. 11. The Weavers Way Education Committee joined with the social action committee of the Germantown Jewish Centre to host the session, which drew more than 60 people from several areas of the city and from suburbs as far away as Lansdale, Abington, and Lower Merion.

The focus of the evening was on the suffering women of Darfur, who have been subjected to rape as a matter of policy. It seems that the government in Sudan's capital, Khartoum, has worked in conjunction with raiding bands to destroy what it considers as opposition in the Western Sudanese province of Darfur. In this Muslim society, rape, particularly in front of other family members, is particularly destructive to family structure. Together with the burning of villages, this policy has resulted in massive social disruption and in large numbers of refugees.

The government forces and the raiding bands have essentially emptied the province of men. Men have been systematically killed, or else have gravitated to opposition movements, leaving large numbers of women concentrated in camps. To make their situation worse, women who become pregnant as a result of these rapes are os-

tracized by their society and at times have even been imprisoned for violating Islamic law against premarital sex.

The two speakers for the evening were Fatimah Haroun, originally from Darfur and now working as a social worker in Philadelphia, and Lou Ann Merckle, a local woman who has become a passionate advocate for the victimized women of Darfur. They first showed a film based on news reports and other recordings of what has happened in Darfur. One of the women speaking in the film is Fatimah Faroun herself.

Ms. Merckle is a passionate believer in involving the audience in a program and in calling for particular measures for people to follow. The audience was at first encouraged to discuss in small groups what they had heard, and this period of discussion was followed by questions directed to the speakers. At the end of the discussion, several specific actions were suggested: 1) A petition to President Obama was circulated, calling for increased pressure on the Sudanese government to stop the depredations; 2) People in the audience with cell phones were encouraged right at the moment to make phone calls that would be put through to Darfur so that the women still in the camps will know that someone in the outside world cares for them; 3) An explanation was given of solar cookers, sim-



Fatimah Haroun (l) and Lou Ann Merckle

ple devices that help women in the refugee camps cook without searching for scarce firewood and without having to leave the safety of the camps. Donations can be made directly to purchase such cookers (\$30 for two stoves).

Further information on all of this ma-

terial is available at www.savedarfur.org.

The regular film series sponsored by the Education Committee of Weavers Way will resume on Wednesday, March 7, with a showing of two films from the ACLU regarding civil liberties in the United States.



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New Member Work Hour Proposal
(continued from 1)

as a more accepting and more open community institution. This concept of a work option is presented by the management team as a system that we would like to see in place, and one that we believe to be more efficient while allowing those that want to work the opportunity to participate at that level of ownership.

Membership Requirements

In most “retail” co-ops (REI, food, bicycle, etc.), members and non-members can both shop. There are, however, a few retail co-ops that are restricted to members only (Park Slope, Mariposa); the non-member community is not invited in to try out the services or to financially support the co-op in any manner. One cannot say which is better from a financial perspective or a community-building perspective; they are both possible and they both can work. Brattleboro Co-op is just as lively and community-focused as the Park Slope Co-op or Weavers Way. So are Honest Weight, Peoples Co-op, Willy Street, etc.

I propose a bylaw change to eliminate the work requirement and instead have in place an “optional” work opportunity. Members and non-members will be allowed to shop at the co-op, and a variety of services and benefits will only be available to members. Working members would complete their hours during the assigned cycle (similar to the present system) and a discount would be determined each year.

Advantages of a Work Option
Instead of a Work Requirement

For years, management has attempted to do their best at managing a “low-time staff” of 5,000 members on a daily basis, scheduled for two-hour shifts, seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. During the period of a work week many of these shifts work out with very little intervention by

New Member and Non-Members Program Difference			
	Non-Member	Member	Working Member
Shopping Privileges	Yes	Yes	Yes
Membership Equity	No	Yes (\$30/yr to \$400)	Yes (\$30/yr to \$400)
Work schedule	Not required	Not required	Would be completed during the scheduled cycle period as it is now. The hours would be determined by project and store needs.
Retail price	Shelf price (higher than present Mt Airy Pricing to be determined)	Shelf price less a discount to be determined every July 1st.	Shelf price discounted upon completion of hours. Discount to be to determined.
Patronage Rebate	No	Yes, based on purchases of the household as a percentage of total membership patronage.	Yes, based on the retail purchase price and not the discount price.
Ownership Control	No	Yes (one vote per household)	Yes (one vote per household)
Shuttle-newspaper	No	Yes	Yes
Check Cashing	No	Yes	Yes
CAP Specials	Yes	Yes	Yes
Special Member Prices	No	Yes	Yes, plus working member discount.
Special Discount Coupon good for one full shop once a month	No	Yes. Coupon appears in <i>The Shuttle</i> and would be clipped out and redeemed at the time of the purchase.	Yes. Same as Non-working member.

management; however, there are many issues that do arise of which the members are unaware Some of these issues are:

1. It takes time to remind members that their work cycle is almost over and they have not completed their hours. This takes hours to do and is completed early in the morning on cards. It requires the membership department to constantly review records and send each household one reminder before the cycle is over, a reminder at the end of the cycle, a reminder after the cycle is finished if the hours are not completed, and then a reminder that the household is no longer active because the required

- household hours have not been completed (even though many of the hours might have been). This costs the Co-op at least \$30,000 in staff time each year, plus the paper and postage.
2. Households sign up to do hours, but do not show and are told they have had their “Shopping Privileges Suspended.” We have lost them as a customer, though they might have had a good reason. This happens often and leaves a negative comment on their card and a negative impression on a member.
3. Too often, a member of the household is sent in who really does not want to be there and their work level is poor at best.
4. Every two hours, a staff person must train a new person or at least give them directions. Often these people know what to do when they are told, but it is not easy to constantly have to be thinking about what has to be done and what work can be found. Often, the person managing the “cooperator” is not a management or supervisory person and there is at times an interaction that is not positive. As a staff person, it is not easy to constantly keep someone else busy. It is easier to just have a full time person in the position who is trained to do the job and requires minimal super-

(continued on page 7)



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New Member Work Proposal
(continued from 6)

- vision.
5. People forget that they are working and sometimes wander off to speak to a neighbor, which we love to see, but not when the broccoli needs to be filled.

The positive aspects of the member work involvement are:

1. Members become involved in the operational aspects of the Co-op and it builds ownership.
2. Members help to defray some of the costs.
3. The volunteer work at the farm is wonderful and very helpful to the farm production and the education program.
4. Hours given via committees have a positive return to the Co-op.
5. Volunteering to help a community group or assist with an event helps us a great deal.

If there was a work-option program, the management team believes the quality of member workers would improve and we would have fewer “no shows.” The volunteer worker members who do show up would still be the people who want to be part of the Co-op at a greater participation level. A work option program would allow community members to join the Co-op, invest in the equity of the business, and still shop at the Co-op and receive special discounts from the buyer’s specials, coupons, and members-only specials, even though they do not have to do hours.

The management team believes that sales would increase and that our mission and product philosophy would be strengthened by having tiered levels of Non-member, Member, and Working Member.

Members tell us what they want

In business, there are a few critical points related to customer retention that correlate directly to the health of the business. It is more expensive to get new customers than to keep current ones, and obviously expensive to lose customers. At Weavers Way, we conduct exit surveys. We get a sampling back in a stamped return addressed envelop. The three main reasons for members leaving are: moving away; the member work requirement and an inability to fulfill it; and overcrowding. We can not keep members from moving, but we can do

something about the work requirement and the crowds. Opening up new stores in other areas of our market area will help to reduce the stress on the store. Making the work requirement optional will also improve the retention of Co-op members.

How the new system might work
Non-member:

When non-member shoppers come into the store, they will see posters about the mission, product philosophy, and principles of the Co-op. They will look at products and read shelf prices. They will see CAP specials that they are able to receive, but they will also see special member pricing on a few weekly products and perhaps wonder how they can participate in these special offers.

When they check out, they will be asked if they are a member, and when they say no, they will be charged the shelf price and asked if they are interested in becoming a member. If so, we will explain the Co-op’s policy give them a brochure and/or suggest that they go online to learn more about the benefits of being a member and supporting the Co-op’s mission.

Members:

Shoppers who have paid their investment will be able to shop as a member in good standing. When they enter the store, they will see the CAP specials, the “member specials” that are buyer specials, and they might have their *Shuttle* member coupon, good for one discounted shop during that month.

When they pay, they will receive a discount. They might also be asked if they want their rebate or if they wish to donate their cash portion.

Working member:

Same as above, except the member’s hours were completed during their cycle. When they check out, they receive a discount on top of their member discount. If the “working member” did not finish their hours during the designated time (cycle), when they get to the register, instead of the system saying “Sorry, you are not active you can not shop,” the system will register them as overdue for their hours and they can shop but will not receive the added working member discount. If there is any question about this it can be taken up with the Membership Director and if appropriate, the discount can be credited to their account.

How a member signs up to work under the new system

Non-working members wanting to become working members must request a cycle. They can circle a first, second and third choice that works for them, but they need to be set up in the system as being a working member. A check by the Membership Department will determine how many hours are required by the household. Once that review is completed, they will receive an e-mail that signs them up with a user name and password. New working members sign in to our website and confirm all of the important information (address, household names, birthdays, telephone numbers, etc). Once their records are completed, they will be asked to read through a brief tutorial covering safety, how to sign in, what they are responsible for doing and what WW staff are responsible for providing to make the work experience as rewarding as possible for both parties. Following the tutorial, they will take a short quiz on the important items. Any errors will be reviewed by the computer with the member. All household members will need to sign in and must take the quiz.

If the member wants to hire someone to do their hours, we will have them pay for this service ahead of time through a Paypal account system and this will be an income credit on the Casual Labor line. Weavers Way will hire a pool of high school/college students to do these hours or give them to a staff member.

Once a person signs up they will receive an e mail reminder of their shift right after they sign up and then 24 hours before their scheduled shift. Cancellations are accepted on line but must be done more than 24 hours before the start of the shift.

If a member does not show, they will automatically lose their working member discount the next day. To reinstate, they need to call the Membership Director who

will override the system after instructing the member of the importance of showing up. The member can pay for the replacement paid person or wait for their next shift to get their hours.

If a member has not completed their hours during their cycle they will fall back to a non working member status—non-working member—and their discount will be removed by the computer system automatically.

Members will not have their shopping privileges terminated, no one will be made inactive, nor will any pieces of paper have to be sent out reminding the person to do their hours or telling them they are no longer “active” members. They can only become inactive when they have not paid their membership dues on time.

~ gbergman@weaversway.coop

Co-op Nursery Puppet Show
by Karen Rufino

The Cooperative Nursery School at the Unitarian Society of Germantown, a part of the Mt.Airy/Germantown community for over 40 years, presents a Winter Variety Show and Silent Auction. In what promises to be another popular Co-op Nursery-sponsored event, the entertainment will feature a Puppet Show with the Six Hands Puppet Troupe, Dramatic Storytelling with Miss Kala (formerly of the Please Touch Museum), and a children’s sing-a-long with local folksinger Michael Mabry. This fun-filled event will be held on Sat., March 7 from 11-1 p.m. Admission is \$5 per child one-year or older, or \$15 per family.

All proceeds to benefit the Cooperative Nursery School. The show will be held at the Unitarian Church on 6511 Lincoln Drive. Entrance and parking on Johnson Street. For more information, please call the school at 215-844-5770.

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Saul School CSA

(continued from 2)

Market. Profits were split 50/50 with the school and each made about \$400.

In late spring, Ms. Naugle's class had a field trip to work on the Weavers Way Farm. Over the summer, Weavers Way was privileged to have two Saul students at Weavers Way Farm as summer interns through the Business Mentoring Youth program. There is a history of food from Saul being sold through Weavers Way going back to Doc Dannenberg bringing eggs and baby spinach to sell in the store on Carpenter Lane.

Building upon an already successful urban farming model, Weavers Way seeks to continue to increase access to local, organic food and offer agricultural education to a greater population. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a popular approach to farming and food distribution that serves these two goals. CSA involves a group of consumers who become "shareholders" in a farm by paying a lump sum to a farm at the beginning of the year, when a farmer most needs money to cover start-up expenses. Shareholders then receive a basket of diversified products produced by the farm each week throughout the growing season.

Correction

The January *Shuttle* article on the fall membership meeting incorrectly states that Sylvia Carter "urged members committed to co-op principles to run for the board in the Spring election." It was Leadership Committee member Sylvia Gentry—not Sylvia Carter.

Through this model, CSA members share the risks and benefits of food production. CSA ensures that farmers have a consistent market for their product. By eliminating middlemen, consumers feel more directly connected to the farm on which their food is grown and also receive fresh, local food at a fair price.

CSAs strengthen communities, offer nutritious food options, and support the local economy. Currently, there is only one other CSA based in Philadelphia and there are waiting lists for those located in nearby rural or suburban areas. Weavers Way has already committed to hiring two full-time staff members to run a CSA farm and to begin selling shares for the 2009 season.

The mission of W. B. Saul High School is to develop in students an understanding of and appreciation for the career opportunities that are available to them in the many fields of agriculture.

Founded in 1943 as the Wissahickon Farm School, Roxborough's Wissahickon Valley has always served as home to the school's farm. In 1966, the School District renamed the school to honor Walter Biddle Saul, a prominent attorney and former president of the Board of Education in Philadelphia who served as a patron for the school during its early years.

The school has evolved through the years, expanding programs and facilities. Today there are eight buildings covering 150 acres and students are offered 15 major agricultural classes. W. B. Saul is the largest agricultural high school in America and is home to the largest single-school Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter in the world.

~ farmer@weaversway.coop

Strategic Plan Underway for Weavers Way Farm Programs

by Rick Morris, Temple University's Fox School of Business

Weavers Way has contracted with Temple University's Fox School of Business to conduct an in-depth survey of its farming operations and to develop a comprehensive long-term strategic plan for the expansion of this important new component of the Co-op's business. Building on the success of the two-year-old farm at Awbury Arboretum, as well as the new CSA agreement with W.B. Saul High School of Agricultural Sciences, the Weavers Way Farm wants to ensure that it is fully prepared to meet the growing needs of the Northwest Philadelphia "locavores."

The Temple study is being conducted in two phases: a Research Report, and a Business Plan. The first of the two having been completed in December, the Research Report capped off a several-month-long assessment of the farm operations from the standpoint of:

- A comprehensive customer segmentation analysis (that is, who are our most likely customers and what do they need)
- A detailed industry analysis that considered the impact of other choices consumers have for gaining access to excellent, local produce
- An in-depth distribution analysis that evaluated the advantages and pitfalls of selling local produce via all distribution channels, including retail outlets, farmers markets, and restaurants

The second phase, to be concluded this spring, will conclude with a detailed business plan for expanding current operations over a five-year period, as well as recommendations regarding the optimal blend of go-to-market strategies for its products. As



PHOTO COURTESY OF RICK MORRIS

Working on the farm's strategic plan are (l to r) Reed Wilmerding, Jia-Ling Tsai, Mamatha Nadig, and Luke Urban

part of this analysis, several Weavers Way managers and Board members recently met with a group from Temple and formulated a Five-Year End State Vision of the farming operation. This vision, which will serve as the framework for the creation of the business plan, has yielded some extremely exciting and intriguing opportunities for Weavers Way to expand its mission to offer the region its outstanding agricultural and educational services and products.

The Temple project is being supported with the direct collaboration of several Weavers Way Co-op associates including David Zelov, David Siller, Nina Berryman, Nicole Sugarman, Rachel Milenbach, Susan Beetle, Glenn Bergman, and Chris Hill from our Board.

The Temple project is sponsored by the Fox School of Business's General and Strategic Management Department. The team is comprised of four MBA graduate students—Mamatha Nadig, Jia-Ling Tsai, Luke Urban, and Reed Wilmerding—and supported by Temple faculty T. L. Hill and Rick Morris.

A stylized graphic of a wheel or sun with rays, rendered in a geometric, low-poly style.

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Expansion

(continued from page 1)

2. Member Loan Campaign As part of the financing mix for this expansion, Weavers Way is seeking loans from our members. This is a common method by which cooperatives raise financing in a way that is more favorable than bank loans. We have enjoyed great success with member loans during previous expansions, and we hope to do so again with this one. It is a great way for members to invest in an institution that they can support with their purchases and govern through their participation in committees, elections and even the board. It is also an opporstunity to make an investment they can see at work in their own neighborhood. You can read more about the start of the member loan campaign elsewhere in this issue of the *Shuttle*.

Project Director

It became pretty clear to us that even though we have support from the National Cooperative Business Association (NCGA) to assist us with this project, we needed someone on the ground in Chestnut Hill and Mt Airy to provide guidance and to act as a communication conduit between WW and the architect and General Contractor. So, in late January I asked long term Co-op member Bob Kaufman if he would act as our “Owner’s Rep”/Project Director. Bob and his partner, Co-op member Ken Weinstein, own Brinton Housing Partners, a real estate company that owns a number of

buildings in Mt. Airy. They are also working on the CreekSide Co-op acquisition in Elkins Park. Bob also was involved with the development of Mishkon Shalom. Bob immediately said yes, and quickly got to work. He will direct our construction project and will assist with reporting on progress to our members and board.

Architect

I am not sure which there are more of in Mt. Airy—lawyers, health professionals, or architects—but I know that if you ever need an architect, this neighborhood is the place to live. It has been six years since Dick Winston started working on our expansion at 608/610 Carpenter Lane. We looked at a number of architects, both members and non-members, to assist us with a long-term plan for the Mt Airy store. When we purchased our new building in Chestnut Hill, we decided to go with Dick due to his years of working with our staff on planning. He has walked through all of the sites in Chestnut Hill that we were interested in acquiring and he completed an extensive engineering review of the Caruso’s site for us back in October. Dick has already started with drawings and working with the staff on planning out the new store.

Timeline

The timeline right now is to get the drawings and permits together as soon as possible, approximately eight weeks, while at the same time hiring a General Contractor and getting them started as soon as possible. That will probably take until May, and if we can start construction soon after that, we could be open in the early fall.

~ gbergman@weaversway.coop

Rhyme and Reason, Down on the Farm

by David Zelov, Weavers Way Farmer

March is the time on the farm when the restless-ness of winter starts to subside and we can spend some time in warm luscious green-houses and then, towards the end of the month, starting to work the soil outside. This year, with the beginning of our CSA at Saul High School, we’ll be working the soil on almost double the acreage. But not to worry – our farm apprentices from 2008, Nina Berryman and Nicole Sugerman (you may have seen them working in the store over the winter), will be coordinating this project with a whole new set of apprentices and interns – including much help from the students at Saul. The students from the Agroecology class have already helped to design the CSA brochure and pick out the crop varieties. So tell your friends across the Wissahickon in Roxborough and Manayunk to get in touch with us if they are interested in being shareholders or just lending a hand. Continue to look for farm produce from the hoophouses at Awbury and Saul in the Co-op this month. And please enjoy our limericks...

There once was a farm in Mt Airy
We produced too many veggies to carry
Conditions were rough
But cooperators stayed tough
And now all the farmers are merry
The compost we make is not stinky.



Pea shoots growing in the hoophouse at Wyncote Academy

Through the season the pile starts to shrinky
We put it on beds
With the soil it weds
Now so soft you could plough with your pinky.

Have you beard there’s an Ag school in Philly?
Some people might think this is silly
It produced lots of fruit
The kids had a hoot
They’ll play in the dirt till it’s chilly.

From Nicole Sugerman ...

The winter is getting quite old
I’m ready for spring, truth be told
with the ground really frozen
the life that we’ve chosen
is not quite as fun in the cold.

there are about 20 pages of tomatoes
do we want red, yellow, or purple potatoes?
we’re ordering seeds
there are so many breeds
how will they turn out? I cant wait-o.

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Greater Philadelphia Preservation Alliance Holding 2009 Old House Fair

by Patrick J. Hauck

The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia is pleased to announce the 2009 Old House Fair on Saturday, March 28, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Germantown Friends School, 31 West Coulter Street, Philadelphia.

The one-day fair in the heart of historic Germantown is one of the longest-running restoration-themed fairs on the East Coast.

The event is designed to connect owners of older and historic homes contemplating anything from major restoration to a weekend repair or decorating project with the appropriate professional resources. Thousands have attended the Alliance's past Old House Fairs. Ninety percent of past fair attendees were actively planning or in the process of restoration work on their homes. The Alliance anticipates over 1,200 people will attend the Old House Fair which provides attendees with a special opportunity to interact directly with business and trade professionals operating in the greater Philadelphia area.

Event Features:

- Over 70 booths of professional vendors, consultants, and specialists, marketing preservation-related products and services, as well as representatives of regional and local preservation and design organizations.
- Participating professionals will provide demonstrations and presentations about the products, skills or services that they offer in a centrally designated demonstration area, or in one of the



The 2008 Old House Fair was a big success.

- lecture/presentation rooms in active use throughout the day.
 - Free 15-minute consultations with old house professionals will be available at the fair's Ask The Experts areas.
 - Free 15-minute exterior paint color consultations with "The Color Doctor," John Crosby Freeman, featured in the Old House Journal.
 - Presentation of the 2009 Homeowner Awards to private homeowners who have shown exemplary stewardship in historic preservation through renovation and maintenance of their property.
- The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia actively promotes the appreciation, protection, and revitalization of the Philadelphia region's historic buildings, communities, and landscapes. A 501c3 non-profit membership organization, the Alliance leads in setting the agenda for preservation issues of regional importance and advocates strong public preservation policies.

For more info visit www.preservationaliance.com.

Gimme 5 Recycling

(continued from 2)

there they will be shipped to the company's processing plant in Massachusetts, where they will be melted down, sterilized and formed into pellets, then re-melted and molded into new products.

You may well ask whether it makes better environmental sense to throw #5s into the trash rather than mail them out of state. Recycline has analyzed this question using a single factor Life Cycle Assessment. Their website (www.preserveproducts.com) includes a statement that "(t)he results showed that the benefits of keeping #5 plastics out of landfills and remaking them into new products outweigh the environmental impacts of shipping them back to us." Ms. Rehm also pointed out that while the Gimme 5 system is not perfect, our #5 recyclables are shipped somewhere no matter what – to the landfill if not to Cortland, New York.


Collection days for #5 plastics will be on the third Saturday of the month – slipping easily into the schedule of Weavers Way's recently-retired monthly recycling program, which may still be imprinted on

your body clock. The collection location will be 610 Carpenter Lane, next door to the WW pet store. The project will be conducted on a pilot basis for three months, after which the Environment Committee will determine whether or not to continue.


So start saving your #5 plastics now and mark April 18, the first collection date, on your calendar. Your recyclables must be *clean and dry* to be accepted. Check to make sure there are no other materials (paper, screws, other number plastics) on the items you bring in. Impurities of any kind compromise the recycling process and usually lead to the discarding of an entire batch. Exclude any lids unless they are clearly marked #5. (Most lids from #5 containers are #4 plastic, but this is not a hard-and-fast rule. I'm looking at a tube of hair-styling gel that has a #4 body and a #5 lid.)


A small donation (75¢ suggested) is requested with each drop-off of recyclables to help cover the cost of ground shipping. This amount will be adjusted once the exact shipping costs have been determined.

Clip the box on page two and post it on your refrigerator as a reminder.



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Ethical Electronics Recycling Event to Protect World’s Waterways

by Sarah RobbGrieco

Next spring, Massachusetts resident Christopher Swain will dive into the Atlantic Ocean in Gloucester, Massachusetts, and begin a 1000-mile swim to Washington, DC, in an effort to plead the case for protecting the world’s oceans.

But first, he’ll visit Philadelphia and Montgomery County Schools with the Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership (TTF).

The 40-year-old father of two puts it this way: “We live on a water planet. If we want to live healthy lives, we need to go the distance to protect and restore the waters that we all depend on. I’ve decided to do just that: go the distance—all the way to Washington to plead the case of the oceans. Along the way, I want to help schoolchildren find ways to make our water planet a healthier place to live.”

The ocean swim is part of Christopher Swain’s TOXTOUR™ project, an ongoing campaign to collect and recycle, ethically, one billion pounds of used electronics. Discarded computers, TVs, telephones, etc., commonly known as “e-waste,” are full of toxic chemicals and heavy metals that are fouling the world’s waterways and ecosystems.

Swain, an environmental educator, was the first person in history to swim the entire lengths of several dirty waterways including the Columbia River, the Charles River, the Hudson River, and Lake Champlain—all in support of clean water.

Last December, the Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership (TTF)

collaborated with Swain to collect over 10,500 pounds of e-waste at their ethical electronics recycling event™ at Cheltenham Middle School.

TTF Executive Director, Sarah Robb-Grieco, explains, “We are a local organization but we recognize that protecting and restoring our water resources is a global challenge. Capturing toxic chemicals and heavy metals before they pollute our waterways is just one of the ways we can help.”

In addition to collecting e-waste, TTF runs dozens of programs and workshops designed to connect residents to their local creeks, rivers and streams—from rain barrel workshops and stream clean-ups, to their model neighborhood project, combining neighborhood beautification with stormwater management and watershed education.

Since 2007, Swain has led carbon-neutral, ethical electronics recycling events, and cross-curricular projects in schools throughout the Northeast. Upon his return to Montgomery County, he will work with students at schools in Abington, Cheltenham, Jenkintown, and Philadelphia.

During his school visits, Swain will report on last year’s ethical electronics recycling event and discuss his upcoming ocean swim. And in small groups, Swain will work with students to problem-solve ways to make their everyday activities and purchases more ocean-friendly.

Karen Shaffran, a science teacher at Cedarbrook Middle School, says “We teach our students that there are a variety of



PHOTO COURTESY OF SARAH ROBBGRIECO

Residents wait in line to ethically recycle their used electronics

threats to the world’s oceans, but that two of the biggest are global warming and toxic pollution.”

On Saturday and Sunday, March 28 and 29, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., rain or shine, TTF will host an ethical electronics recycling event at Cedarbrook Middle School at 300 Longfellow Road in Wyncote, PA. Members of the public can recycle their used electronics for a fee of \$1 per pound.

Items that will be accepted at the event include: televisions, computers, monitors, keyboards, drives, cables, cords, peripherals, copiers, printers, cartridges, fax machines, scanners, laptops, stereo equipment, speakers, CD & DVD players, telephones, remote controls, VCR’s, projectors, digital cameras, PDAs, speakers, radios, answering machines, camcorders, electric typewriters, video game systems, pagers, microwaves, toasters, ink cartridges, USB media, and

magnetic media like zip disks, audio tapes, and floppy diskettes.

Nothing collected at the event will be tipped into landfills, incinerated as solid waste, or dumped in developing countries. That’s what the majority of the fee ensures.

Net proceeds will benefit the Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership’s environmental programs in local schools.

“Borders and labels aside,” Swain says, “We are one people sharing one watershed. We are islanders, surrounded by ocean. In the end, every choice we make affects our entire world.”

For more information please contact: Christopher Swain, TOXTOUR™ team leader at: www.toxtour.org or 617-233-4120, or Sarah RobbGrieco at sarah@ttfwatershed.org.

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Pet Store News

(continued from 3)

United States and have a more comparable price. I am interested to know where our members stand on this issue and would like to hear from you.

One addition I am happy to report is that of Blue Buffalo cat and dog formulas. The Blue Buffalo Company has recently teamed up with Best Friend, who supplies us with Innova and California Natural. There has been some interest in this line as well as very positive feedback from members who have used Blue. Like most of the quality lines we stock at the pet store, Blue is recommended by The Whole Dog Journal and made with the finest ingredients. Blue Buffalo is unique in that it “cold-forms” the antioxidants, nutrients, and vitamins in order to maximize the benefits your pet receives. Blue calls these the LifeSource Bits which consist of 17 antioxidants, nutrients, and vitamins including Vitamins C, A, and E, Beta-Carotene, Kelp, Barley Grass, Parsley, Omega 3 and 6, and Flax Seed. This process is meant to support your pet’s immune system and guard against environmental toxins. The Blue Buffalo Co. is committed to pet cancer research and devotes a percentage of

its resources to that cause. I think this line will be a good fit for our pet store. In order to make the best use of our inventory, we will be refining it somewhat. As a result we will be dropping some items, including Artemis, which does not sell as well. It will still be available by pre-order. Among the feline formulas to go will be Felidae, and some of the Purina formulas, as well as the full line of Sensible Choice, which has been discontinued by the manufacturer.

Lastly, I would like to pass along some sound economic advice from our favorite pet store member, Emily Woodruff. Emily treats her lovely kitties well by feeding them the very best, including Wellness canned food. She had been pre-ordering cases of Wellness 5.5 oz cans. Recently, when Wellness prices went up, we discovered that by purchasing the same food in the 12.5 oz. cans she was able to save a significant amount. We thought it was worth mentioning to make the point that there are several ways to go about your pet store purchases. If, like Emily, you need many cans, you may save by pre-ordering larger ones. Pre-ordering also insures that you will be able to get what you need whether you’re feeding a crowd or simply stocking up.

~ petstore@weaversway.coop

The Simplicity Dividend

Frugal Is In: It’s Clothing Swap Season!

by Betsy Teutsch

At a recent program I presented on “Greening Our Lives” an elder reminisced about growing up during The Depression. “Which one!?” chimed in one of her peers. For baby boomers, this is all new territory, as it is for younger people as well. I asked the group, “How many of you think things will get back to the way they were economically?” and not one raised a hand. Hopefully the stimulus, smart strategies, and responsible behavior will reboot our financial system, but in the meantime, there is a lot of adjusting to do. There is a green lining to that silver lining in the proverbial cloud. As economic activity slumps, so do carbon emissions. We have a little breather.

When our culture is in 24/7 hyper-consumer mode, frugal habits are roundly ridiculed. However, we’re in for a new order, where declining consumption will be the norm.

What do we call this behavior? Pick your favorite:

- Frugal
- Careful
- Resourceful
- Green
- Cheap
- Intelligently non-wasteful
- Thrifty
- Penny-Pinching
- Prudent
- Down-sizing
- Conservative/ Resource Preserving (as in conservation)

No matter what you call it, those of us who have made a pot of tea from each

teabag (much to the amusement of our high consumption peers who find this quaint) will seem less aberrant now that long-dormant recession-era skills are being resurrected. Perhaps we can rebrand them, but I’ve yet to see a descriptor which doesn’t have a negative valence. Maybe we should just go with common sense?

For all you resourceful consumers: On Sunday, March 29, Germantown Jewish Centre will host our 4th Annual Women’s Clothing Swap from 11-3 at the synagogue’s refurbished, post-fire building at 400 West Ellet Street. This event has grown in popularity each year, and we hope 2009 will attract droves of frustrated shoppers, thrilled to be filling up bags of great finds costing next to nothing. You may donate your lightly worn clothing, accessories, shoes, and bags, though you don’t need to donate anything at all. You can help yourself to as many items as you wish. The suggested charge is a \$20 donation to Darfur Alert Coalition. Please come, bring your friends, your family, your mother, your sister, your daughter, your neighbor... It’s a great opportunity to clean your closets as the season changes. All leftover clothing (generally a half a truck full, believe it or not) is donated to PlanetAid and we’ve raised at least \$1,200 for Darfur relief each year. (Hopefully, along with our new administration will come a resolution to this humanitarian crisis.) For questions, or to volunteer, contact Genie Ravital at geniebud@gmail.com.

Betsy blogs at moneychangesthings.blogspot.com.

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Food:The Universal Language

by Pat Piro, Prepared Foods Department

I am writing this during January where we have experienced the worst of the month in terms of the weather and the best of the month witnessing history with the inauguration of Barack Obama. Not only did we witness this incredible moment either through watching it on TV (thanks Maureen) or actually being there in Washington, but along with his becoming president we felt we were released from a dark tunnel where there is now a shining light, hope and once again an overall concern and belief that we can be better and do better for ourselves and others.

On my many visits I have had with my Aunt who lived in a nursing home, our conversations would always revolve around food and politics. She sadly passed away in December so she didn't have the opportunity to see the inauguration (or in her case hear it due to the fact that she was legally blind). She couldn't wait until he was elected because she believed that he could and would do better. She was funny and smart and fairly liberal for someone of her generation. She was an exceptional cook and during these long and cold winter months I

have found myself going back in time to those wonderful meals we had at my grandmother's home - comfort food at its best. This was not only a meal of good food, but a gathering of all of the aunts and uncles and cousins, and neighbors. I remember the homemade ravioli that she and my grandmother would make on the kitchen table, the wonderful aromas of the gravy simmering on the stove. There was course after course and our dinners usually lasted for hours and hours. Food then was pure and fresh and whole. Meat from a butcher and vegetables from the garden or from a local farmer's market. The idea of anything less never was part of our family's vocabulary. Surely this tradition of cooking came with them from their country of origin, Italy, as

they entered Ellis Island in New York. Food and family were always imprinted in my brain as two very important concepts of life. For a child, this can be more or less like a security blanket—for an adult, a sense of continuity. Every morsel of food was made with love and passion.

As I think about Jan. 20 and the emotions that were awakened watching Obama and his family, I can't help but believe that people have reconnected somehow to others that have been estranged from their lives; that we are thinking about making some sacrifices that should have been asked of us eight years ago. Living in these stressful times, given the financial conditions so delicate and volatile, food is probably the only tangible thing that we can still hold on

to and afford and always be comforted by. The simplest of foods can be the most delicious, and certainly can be affordable to anyone. And sharing it with our family of friends (as Bonnie did on New Year's Eve) gives us even more memories to cherish as adults.

I know my family didn't have much, but they made the most of what they had to provide their family with love, a sense of tradition and wonderful food. My Aunt never complained about being legally blind or having to live in a nursing home. The only thing she complained about was the food – that was important to her and I know she always enjoyed my visits as we laughed, talked about the past and shared some good food.




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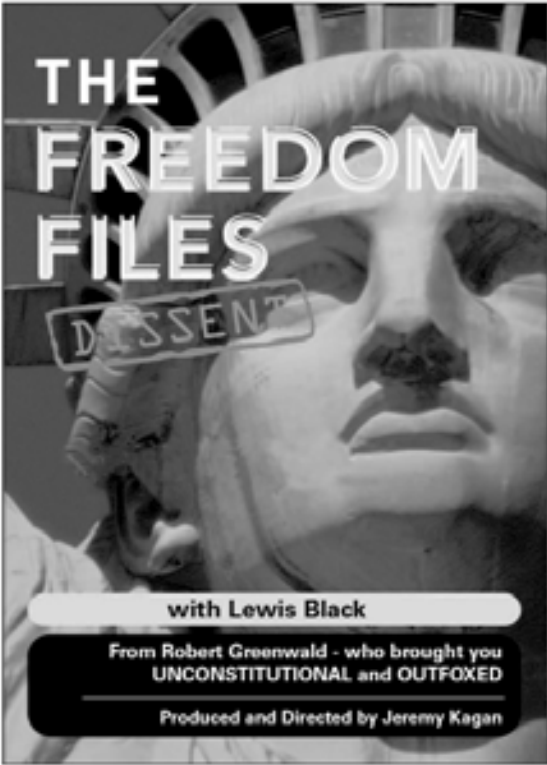
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Devastating White Nose Syndrome Confirmed in Bats in PA & NJ

by Brenda Malinics

Last week the dreaded White Nose Syndrome (WNS) that has killed over half a million bats in the Northeast over the past two winters, was confirmed in Pennsylvania—one week after being confirmed in New Jersey. WNS was identified in a cave near Albany, NY the winter of 2006-2007 and has been called by international researchers and scientists “the gravest threat to bats ever seen in recorded history.” They report that they have never seen any new disease spread and kill as quickly as WNS. Because bats are mammals, scientists do not know whether WNS will transfer to other mammals, including humans.

While bats are often more feared than appreciated, they play a vital role in everyone’s life as protectors of crops and as the cornerstone of a healthy environment. Bats are a vital part of the ecosystem and without them there will be serious environmental and economic implications.

Bats are the vacuum cleaners of the night’s sky, a time when most agricultural insects are actively damaging our crops and when mosquitoes, who can carry deadly West Nile Virus, become most aggressive.

Bats can eat up to 100 percent of their body weight in insects each evening. Without bats, there will be more insects, more mosquitoes and more use of pesticides. Mosquito spraying by cities and towns have already killed many of the harmless and beneficial insects that are vital to birds.

All the dead bats suspected of WNS have a white circle on their faces that look like their noses were dipped in flour. The fungus has been identified as cold-loving and has never before been cataloged by researchers. Scientists are trying to determine if the fungus always has existed in caves and mines where bats hibernate or if it has been imported from another part of the world and bats in the Northeast area are not immune to its effects.

Researchers report that the WNS bats appear to starve to death and have almost no body fat. Some die during hibernation and others leave the caves in the middle of



Bats Suffering from White Nose Syndrome

winter while there is still snow and ice on the ground and obviously no bugs to eat. Emaciated bats have been seen flying erratically in freezing temperatures during the day and due to the weakened condition, are vulnerable to predators. Bats are landing on the outsides of homes, are falling to the ground and are trying to find warmth inside homes. Scientists have said that it seems like the bats internal survival mechanism has been scrambled in a way similar to how bees have been affected by the Honey Bee Collapse Syndrome.

Humans have no need to fear bats found in their homes or on the ground. However, precautions should always be tak-


en when handling bats, who, like any mammal, including you and me, can carry rabies. Grounded bats should never be handled without gloves. Bats in a home should never be chased down or hit with objects.

It is not uncommon to find a single healthy bat in one’s attic during winter. Such a bat is usually a young bat that did not follow other bats to hibernating sites when the weather turned cold. If you leave the bat alone, it will leave in the spring, or you can call the numbers below for advice. It is more imperative than ever before that we save every bat we find so that bats do not become extinct in our lifetime.


Check out the following web sites for more information about bats and about WNS. For bat facts and bat houses, go to: www.BatWorldSanctuary.org and www.Bat-Con.org. For WNS: www.fws.gov/northeast/whitenosemessage.html.

If you find an injured bat, you can call me at 215-482-4356 or 215-707-7652; the Schuylkill Wildlife Rehab Center (Roxborough) 215-482-8217 or Diamond Rock Rehab (Malvern) 610-240-0883.

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Toni Ann Flanigan



Care and Feeding of Your Brain

Why You Want Omega 3 and Why You Want to Avoid Factory Farmed Animals

by Sandy Folzer

Your brain has about 100 billion neurons and another 3 trillion support cells, give or take a few trillion. But don't get cocky. It's easy to waste this magnificent resource.

Insuring that your brain still works as you age takes some planning. Even if your genes suggest you are at risk for Alzheimer's or Parkinson's, you can decrease those odds, according to Environmental Threats to Healthy Aging (www.age-healthy.org).

Aside from physical and mental exercise and a good social network, two factors stand out: pollution and diet.

Probably one of the most important precautions is to stay away from pesticides, herbicides and other types of pollutants. While we can't avoid living and breathing in our tainted environment, we can avoid using toxic cleaning solutions and applying herbicides or pesticides. Remember pesticides are neurotoxins, designed to poison the nervous systems of pests and other living things.

Sometimes pollutants may be in the food we eat. For example, aluminum, an additive to many processed foods, has been shown to increase the risk of Alzheimer's. Most baking powders contain aluminum. (Rumford is an exception.) The highest levels have been found in pancake and waffle mixes.

What you eat does matter to reduce your risk for Alzheimer's or Parkinson's. You want to increase the amount of Omega 3 you eat and reduce the amount of Omega 6. While both are needed by the body, most Americans eat far too much Omega 6, because it is

found in saturated oils and processed foods. There are many studies which show that cognitive decline is two or three times more likely with a diet rich in Omega 6, while Omega 3 reduces the risk. Eating Omega 6 without Omega 3 doubled the risk of dementia. Any learning impairment with Omega 3 deficiency improved only when Omega 3 was given and the amount of Omega 6 reduced. Without reducing the Omega 6, learning problems persisted.

Eating a predominantly plant based diet is important, as fresh fruits and vegetables contain Omega 3. Other sources of Omega 3 are flax seed, walnuts, canola oil, and fish.

The problem with fish, however, is that many large fish are high in mercury, which is extremely harmful to brain cells. Cod, haddock, pollock and Wild Alaskan salmon are supposed to have less mercury. If you prefer fish oil pills, be sure they have been distilled to remove toxicants.

Omega 3 has anti clotting and anti inflammatory properties, both important for a healthy brain. Remember, any risk factors for cardiovascular disease are also

risks for cognitive decline. Without a healthy supply of blood, the brain can't function adequately.

A deficiency of omega 3 has been linked to other problems as well, like insulin resistance, Rheumatoid Arthritis and depression. Incidentally, depression doubled the risk of Alzheimer's.

Studies have shown Omega 3 to improve learning and memory in rats. Older rats given Omega 3 had an improved memory. In a study in Minneapolis of 2200 older people, Omega 3 was associated with less decline in verbal fluency. It also helped with mild Alzheimer's.

What I found most fascinating about Omega 3 is that you can get it from meat *if that animal has been allowed to graze*. The animal absorbs the Omega 3 from the plants into its meat. However, almost all the meat that we eat comes from factory farmed animals. Fed grain, the meat from factory farm animals is converted to Omega 6, not Omega 3. Also, factory raised animals have an increased level of saturated fat because they are overfed. A 2006 USDA report found a significant reduction in protein, calcium and other nutrients in the meat from factory farmed animals. Another reason to eat organic, grass-fed meat.

In order to protect yourself against Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases you want to avoid pollution as much as possible. Avoid consuming aluminum. Exercise both mentally and physically. Have friends. Be sure to get Omega 3 in your diet. Avoid Omega 6 by not eating animals from factory farms and saturated fats.

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Watching the Inauguration at New Covenant Church

by Mark Goodman

The crowd! The anticipation! The cheering! No, this was not the World Series, the Oscar festivities, or the Olympics. This was the inauguration of Barack Obama on Jan. 20, 2009.

I chose to watch the Inauguration at the New Covenant Church, where Bishop C. Milton Grannum and Reverend Hyacinth Bobb Grannum graciously opened their church on Germantown Avenue to the community.

Three large-screen televisions at the front of the main auditorium assured that each of the 1,200 or so audience members could see and hear the inaugural ceremony. Someone behind the scenes masterfully switched channels between CNN, MSNBC, and CBS to give the audience maximum inauguration coverage.

The audience was a montage of church members, neighborhood residents, activists, and school students. Some of the organizations represented were Northwest Inter-faith Movement (NIM), M.A.R.C.H. for Change (Mt. Airy, Roxborough, Chestnut Hill), and Mt. Airy 2.0, a group that uses the Internet to advocate for social change.

The audience began cheering when Michelle Obama appeared on the screen for the first time. The partisan nature of the crowd emerged when a smattering of boos greeted Dick Cheney.

One observer commented, “I’m not booing the wheelchair; I’m booing Cheney.”

More cheers welcomed Vice President-elect Joseph Biden and prominent Democrats such as former Presidents Carter and Clinton, as well as Al Gore and Hillary Clinton. Polite applause arose for former President George H. W. Bush and his wife Barbara. Outgoing President George W. Bush received a mixture of boos and polite applause. The Obama children, Sasha and Malia, were greeted warmly by the crowd.

Of course, a loud cheer rang out when Barack Obama walked down the path to the inaugural podium. Many people rose from their seats as Obama hugged Representative John Lewis, a veteran of the Civil Rights Movement.

When Reverend Rick Warren was introduced to give the invocation, there was some applause and also some expressions of dissatisfaction with the choice of the controversial minister. When he began his invocation with, “We thank thee Heavenly Father...,” a woman from the audience added, “...and Mother.”

One of the speakers asked the audience in Washington, D.C. to rise for the induction of Joseph Biden as Vice President, and the audience in the church rose as well. For a few minutes, it was as if we were all in Washington, “except warmer,” according to Jennifer Weitz, NIM Youth Coordinator.

The Mt. Airy crowd joined in the tumultuous celebration when Obama was inducted. Chants of O-ba-ma rang throughout the church in unison with the throng in Washington. The new President’s speech drew applause when he stated that we need to strengthen our policies of health care, education, and environmental protection. His encouragement of U.S. citizens to face our daunting problems resolutely was also well received. The comment that “We will restore science to its rightful place” elicited cheers, as did his pledge that the U.S. will not compromise its ideals in the fight against terrorism.

The inaugural ceremony ended with a hardy “Amen!” to the inspiring benediction by Reverend Joseph E. Lowery, a veteran of the Civil Rights Movement, and a hearty singing of The Star Spangled Banner. The event at the church concluded with comments from Rabbi George Stern, Executive Director of NIM, and by Bishop Grannum.

I enjoyed sharing the momentous, historic occasion with such a wonderful audience. I felt proud to be a resident of Mt. Airy, a Philadelphian, a U.S. citizen, and a member of the world family.

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The Constellation of James Rosenthal

by Anne Johnson

Co-op member James Rosenthal was born 1956 in Massachusetts, grew up with guitar in hand in New Orleans and Atlanta, later formed a new-wave band, The Suburbans, which played in New Jersey and New York, earned a BFA in Painting at RISD and an MFA from Syracuse University, made Brit Pop and Conceptual Art in London, and now teaches Art History at University of the Arts. Now living in East Mt. Airy, James will be busting loose March 7 into Chestnut Hill’s Mermaid Inn with his Alt-Folk-Country outfit, Clarksville.

When I entered the first floor studio in James’ home, there was music spinning on an actual turntable— you know, with an arm and a needle— playing a record from his fairly recent collection of theme music from James Bond to Batman, along with Easy Listening music with orchestras playing rock and roll, Bacharach and Beatles.

There were boxes everywhere, filled



James Rosenthal

with collected text-printed material (recycled old/new art postcards, calendars, posters, stickers, vinyl lettering) to be cut and assembled onto oversized rag paper laying flat on the floor. Individual letters of different shapes and sizes were strung together into words and phrases, waiting to find just the right spot before being anchored down with collage medium (or perhaps perfected into a song lyric).

“I like to make a pun out of some recent news. There is a certain joke aspect in

the connection between the words, Shlock and Aura,” says James. “It becomes Art about Art, with a little bit more depth than you might first think. I like to make things a little obscure, so you can’t just come up to read it and walk by. Something is going to hang you there and even if you do read it, you wonder what’s the connection with the actual visual?”

James didn’t always make text-based work, but he has always written songs.

Although his leaning has been towards rock, he enjoys the irony and humor of country music. He borrows from country music, taking a simple premise and twisting the words a little bit. “They are not really deep and can get a little sardonic.” Whatever the case, his songs are accessible, with lyrics that I could relate to. “I’ve been up and I’ve been down, I’ve been walking on the other side of town.” His voice carries natural nuances that sound familiar and simply deliver the truth, so much that I found myself singing the song several days after hearing it.

In addition to songs, collages and videos, James has written art criticism for the last ten years and has recently started writing a novel.

Past exhibitions include “Famous Last Words: Works on Paper, Video and Installation” at Rebekah Templeton Contemporary Art in Philadelphia.

A live radio broadcast in early February on NEXUSradio 1650-AM, spoofs a cultural art discussion. He has an upcoming installation included in a group show, Snippets Samplings Static, curated by Cora Cohen, March 4-April 10 in New York City at the Ernest Rubenstein Gallery.

Don’t miss him at the Mermaid Inn, Saturday night, March 7, 9 p.m. www.myspace.com/clarksvilleusa

PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMES ROSENTHAL

New Film Series at Sedgwick Theater

by Sara Zia Ebrahimi

The Flickering Light is a dynamic new monthly independent film screening series on the first Saturday of each month. The screenings will be held at the Sedgwick Theater, Mt. Airy’s historic art deco theater that has been out of use for several years.

The first program, “East Looks West Looks East: A Few Films from the Iranian Diaspora,” takes place on Saturday March 7, 2009 at 7 p.m. at 7137 Germantown Ave. The next program, “MIXed Up in Philly: The Best of the MIX, New York’s LGBT Experimental Film Festival,” will take place on Sat., April 4, 2009 at the same time and location.

The following films by filmmakers of Iranian descent will be screened as part of the “East Looks West Looks East” program: *Hybridity* (by Shagha Ariannia), *Your Our Their Story* (by Fari Bradly), *Love Iranian-American Style* (by Tanaz Eshaghian), *Conversations With My Aunt* (by Aghigh Ebrahimi Bazaz), *Cusps* (Sara Zia Ebrahimi), and *My Lichen* (Niknaz Tavakolian).

The monthly screenings are taking place at the historic Sedgwick Theater at 7137 Germantown Ave. The theater was built in 1928 and designed by architect William Harold Lee. It is one of the few remaining theaters which he designed. It stayed in operation until 1966, after which it was used as a warehouse. In the mid-1990s it was purchased by David and Betty Ann Fellner, who held cultural events in the space, until a few years ago. In 2008 Ebrahimi, charmed by the theater, approached David Fellner with the idea for the Flickering Light.

For more information about Flickering light film series, visit flickeringfilms.com.

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Help Start the Weavers Way Bicycle Cooperative!

by Nicole Sugarmen, Weavers Way Farmer

For a couple of months now, members of Weavers Way’s environment committee have been brainstorming ways to start a program to promote bicycle transportation in the Co-op community. Such a project could take many different forms: a bike share program, construction of bicycle technologies and trailers, bicycle safety and maintenance programs for kids, etc. All of these are exciting and feasible ideas.

A bike repair co-operative, however, is one of the simplest ideas to implement, and may also be one of the most accessible and useful. Modeled after successful models in many cities, including the Neighborhood Bike Works’ “bike church” in West Philly, a bike repair cooperative involves a space with tools and supplies available for community members to fix or build a bicycle. The space could be open several nights a week during specified times. One can come to fix one’s bike on one’s own, utilizing the space, tools, and

opportunities for socialization with fellow bicyclists, or one can learn how to fix one’s bike with the assistance of volunteer staffers or other bike cooperative participants. Such a venture can be successfully maintained financially from voluntary, sliding-scale donations from those using the space, and from small fees for parts that participants use, most of which can be gleaned from used bicycles donated by community members. Weavers Way currently has an abundance of unused space; the co-operative can start in the garage across from the Co-op, which is an ideal space for working on bicycles.

We can start small. With only a small investment for basic supplies and a bit of energy from volunteers, we can start opening the space one day a week, when community members can come to learn about or perform routine bi-

(continued on page 21)

You Can Help the Bike Co-op Get Started

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- usable bike tubes
- bike stands
- allen wrenches/hex keys
- money

FDA Approves First Medication from DNA-altered Animals

by Chris Kaiser

Goats give us a variety of milk products such as cheese and yogurt, as well as soap and the occasional anachronistic goatskin wine sack. Now, we can depend on a particular genetically modified breed for anti-blood clotting medication.

It’s not unusual for medicines to be made from animal products. Heparin, another blood thinner used to prevent clots, is derived partly from materials taken from pig intestines. What makes this new product, ATryn, interesting is that it is the first biological product produced from genetically engineered animals to be approved by the FDA.

The drug is derived from the milk of goats whose genes have been spliced with instructions to produce human antithrombin in their milk. Antithrombin is a protein that naturally occurs in healthy individuals and helps to keep blood from clotting. Some people (1 in 5,000), however, are af-

flicted with a rare disease known as hereditary antithrombin deficiency. ATryn is approved for use in these people.

People with the hereditary disease are at high risk of blood clots during medical interventions, such as surgery, and before, during and after childbirth. About half of all people diagnosed with the disease suffer a thrombosis before age 25. One wonders if eating genetically modified goat cheese would work as well as the injectible solution. Might make the medicine go down a bit easier.

The government based its approval on two studies that looked at 31 patients—some pregnant, some surgical—with the rare hereditary disease. Only one of the 31 patients treated with ATryn developed a thromboemboli, or clot. All were at high risk of developing clots. The FDA also evaluated seven generations of goats at the

(continued on page 23)

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Valley Green Bank First Thursdays Spotlight the Community

by Lesley Seitchik

Spotlighting the vitality of the community, Valley Green Bank will host special events in their lobbies on the First Thursday of each month. On March 5, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. students from the Weavers Way Marketplace Program will set up shop in the branch lobbies giving out delicious samplings of some of the local food sold in the schools.

The Jenks School Marketplace Program will “be in business” at the Chestnut Hill branch, 23 W. Highland Ave., and Houston School’s Marketplace will be operating out of Valley Green Bank’s Mt. Airy branch, 7226 Germantown Ave. Friends and neighbors are encouraged to stop by during the lunch hour and sample local delights such as Merrymead Farm’s chocolate milk and apple cider, South Philly’s Cacia’s cheese bread, and S and C pickles from Camden, NJ.

“There are some amazingly talented people in our community. The First Thursdays will be good opportunities for these people to show off their skills and expertise...and for our neighbors to enjoy these diverse experiences” commented Jay Goldstein, president and CEO of Valley Green



At the Feb. 5 kick-off of Valley Green Bank’s First Thursday Community Spotlight, Bredenbeck’s Bakery helped bank customers decorate their own cookies right in the lobby! Pictured here (l to r) is Karen Boyd, owner of Bredenbeck’s Bakery; bank customer Brian Ames; Bredenbeck’s staff member Liz Delorey; and Valley Green Bank President and CEO Jay Goldstein.

Bank. “Weavers Way’s Marketplace Program is an excellent project that exemplifies the positive outcome of community partnerships...and provides an excellent product, as well!” Goldstein added.

For April’s First Thursday, on April 2, plans are in the works to showcase Weavers Way’s farm. Weavers Way’s farmers will be on hand to celebrate spring and gardening. With the farmers’ assistance, participants can plant seeds for their gardens. Other lobby events will include chair massages, breakfast and lunch snacks provided by local chefs, cooking lessons using local foods, cheese tastings, car advice, and much more.

Chestnut Hill Business Assoc. Collects Used Clothes, Other Items for Charity

by Gina Smith

Your gently used furniture, clothing, books and household items can feed hungry children. During the week of March 16-20, Impact Thrift Stores is coming to Chestnut Hill, giving you an opportunity to clean out your bedroom, closets and basement, and donate merchandise to an organization that will turn these items into cash for local needy charities.

Impact Thrift Stores, Inc. was organized in the spring of 2001 by a small group of business professionals who felt a calling to use their business experience, talents and financial resources in a significant way. In December of 2001, the first store was opened in Hatboro. There are now two other stores, as well.

Impact Thrift Stores Inc. is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization whose primary mission is to financially support local charities on a monthly basis through the net proceeds generated by thrift stores’ operations. Impact Thrift currently supports 14 local charities that aid the blind, feed the hungry, help the homeless and assist families and children in need. Impact Thrift’s contributions to these charities have totalled almost \$700,000 since 2003.

Partnership with Impact Thrift Stores gives the Chestnut Hill community the opportunity to financially support local charities without writing a check. Partnering with Impact will help our community to convey a “green” message by recycling our unneeded merchandise back into service.

This is not a time to get rid of your junk but to donate your gently-used furniture, clothing and household items. Gently unused items could be described as items

you would give your child to use in their apartment-home: perfect working order, all pieces accounted for, no rips, stains or threadbare areas.

A special thank you to Bowman Properties for allowing the community to store these donated items in one of the empty Bowman Properties until March 20. Without the use of this space, this event would not be able to take place. All items can be dropped off at Lemons and Limes, 8133 Germantown Ave., 215-242-3080. If you have large items to donate, such as furniture or appliances, call Impact at 215-957-6131 to schedule a free pick up of these items. Impact offers a tax deductible receipt for all merchandise donations. To learn more about Impact Thrift, visit their website at www.impactthrift.org

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Study Says ‘Sustainable’ Companies Outperform Peers During Financial Crisis

by Sustainable Food News

While President Obama’s green policies will certainly boost innovation in certain areas, many in industry still believe that there is a fundamental conflict between “sustainable” and “affordable.”

But companies looking for ways to survive in the current economic climate should think twice before cutting back on sustainable initiatives.

In 16 out of 18 industries, companies with a commitment to sustainability were the clear leaders in the financial markets.

The findings are the result of a study recently released by consulting firm A.T. Kearney, Inc., titled “Green Winners: The Performance of Sustainability-focused Companies in the Financial Crisis.”

The study looked at 99 companies identified as having a strong commitment to sustainability and compared their performance with industry averages.

The 99 companies were defined by the Sustainability Index and the Goldman Sachs Sustain Focus List.

The analysis found that in 16 of the 18 industries studied, companies committed to sustainability outperformed industry averages by 15 percent over the six months from May through November 2008.

From a market capitalization perspective, this superior performance averages out to \$650 million in protected market capitalization per company.

“Our study indicates that the market rewards specific companies,” said Daniel Mahler, author of the study. “We find common characteristics among the leading

companies that show that sustainability goes far beyond the narrow definition of being environmentally friendly.”

These characteristics include a focus on long-term strategy, not just short-term gains; strong corporate governance; sound risk-management practices; and a history of investment in green innovations.

The study contains discussions of each of the 18 industries studied, as well as examples of best practices from a variety of industries. Together with the macro analysis, these case studies provide a map for companies looking to be proactive in terms of protecting their market capitalization.

While green measures that produce immediate cost-savings such as reducing packaging material and decreasing fuel use will become increasingly common in a cash-strapped economy, “Sustainability and the Financial Crisis” suggests that investing in sustainability for the long term may be the best way to protect a company’s value through the months—and years—ahead.

New Products on the Second Floor (continued from page 3)

ceptions to this.

“Which laundry detergents are suitable for my High Efficiency (HE) Washer?” All the products that we have on the 2nd Floor are A-OK for your HE washer! You may see a symbol that says “HE” (it’s that little symbol that often appears on products) or the label will say, on the front or in the directions, “suitable for high efficiency washers.” If you do not have a front loader/HE washer, it is still good news: these are very concentrated products and thus, it takes a small amount to do a load of laundry. It means that, in addition to helping the planet, it is a great way to save money.

“I have problems with swallowing pills and/or vitamins. How can I handle this?” Many folks have this situation. We sell adult chewable multi-vitamins and that may be the total solution. In the general world of vitamins, tablets can be more challenging to swallow as they tend to be more dense. Capsules or soft gels are often easier as they are softer and have rounded “corners” or edges. You may want to look for a product that has a serving size of two or three a

day: a smaller quantity of ingredients per pill or capsule will make for less to swallow at one time. Some of the children’s chewables can be used for adults too. Verify your vitamin needs on the labels before you choose to use a child’s product for an adult.

“Vitamin D3? What makes D3 different than D2?” Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) is considered to be a more efficacious form of Vitamin D. The type of D in our Weavers Way vitamins (manufactured by Reliance) is sourced from lanolin, is an easy-to-swallow softgel, and is gluten free. There has been much recent research on Vitamin D, and studies have shown that it helps to support bone health and normal, healthy cell growth.

Reminder: Please continue to send us e-mails with your ideas for kitchen gadgets and parchment paper. In the January Shuttle, we asked you to tell us your favorite uses for parchment paper and any additional uses you have for your kitchen gadgets. If you have not contacted us yet, please do so at martha@weaversway.coop. Use the topics line for “parchment paper” or “kitchen gadgets” when you e-mail us.

~ martha@weaversway.coop

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PRIMEX

OTA Urges ‘National Solution’ to Organic Fertilizer Fraud

by Sustainable Food News

The Organic Trade Association (OTA) explained this week why a “national solution” is needed to keep California’s largest organic food producers from accidentally using synthetic fertilizers on their farms.

“The word organic on a fertilizer does not mean that a fertilizer product is acceptable for use on an organic farm, and this situation is very confusing for farmers and consumers alike,” the OTA said in a revised statement.

The latest hot topic in the \$23.6 billion organic food industry heated up after federal agents last week raided a California distributor of organic liquid fertilizer, looking for evidence the company used cheaper, synthetic compounds in their mix.

The investigation into Port Organics Products Ltd. ran on the heels of news last month that another major supplier of organic liquid fertilizer, California Liquid Fertilizer, of Gonzales, Calif., had sold synthetic fertilizer as organic for seven years.

While no farms were penalized or lost their certification for unknowingly using the fertilizer, some of California’s 2006 organic produce harvest—about 60 percent of the country’s total—may not have been organic.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has told Sustainable Food News it is investigating the actions of California

regulators who took two and a half years to prohibit the fertilizer made with synthetic nitrogen that was being used by some of the state’s largest organic farms.

The OTA said the problem in sourcing authentic, organic fertilizer is that there’s really no way of knowing whether the product is or isn’t.

“Fertilizer labeling, however, is regulated on a state-by-state basis, and is not compatible with organic food labeling,” the OTA said.

OTA spokesperson Barbara Haumann told Sustainable Food News that a “national solution” is needed to fix the situation.

The trade group has been helping its members harmonize fertilizer product labels “for nearly a decade.”

So, just how long before regulators can deploy that “national solution”?

“No idea,” Haumann said. She then referenced the rust-inducing, snail’s pace, policy-recommendation process of the National Organic Standards Board. “You’ve seen how long these things can take.”

News of the raid and possible contamination of organic crops in California has been kept surprisingly far from mainstream media. The OTA, for its part, has kept its statements to an as-needed basis, and off its web site.

Bicycle Cooperative

(continued from page 18)

cycle maintenance, like cleaning and greasing their bicycles, or tightening a bike’s brakes, or small repairs, like patching a flat tire, or replacing a broken spoke or worn brake pads. After the cooperative makes a little money, we could decide to invest in more advanced bicycle equipment that can allow members to true a wheel, or weld a bike frame.

Please contact us if you are interested in getting involved! I know many of you Co-op members are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about bicycles. We need your expertise! Contact us even if you do not consider yourself particularly knowledgeable—we can learn together! If you are interested in biking, fundraising, visioning, building things, researching, organizing, etc., we can use your help. Co-op members could also do their Co-op hours working on this project!

We can ultimately make this into as big or small a project as we want it to be. At the very least, it will serve as a space for bike-ophiles to hang out together, a place for aspiring bike-ophiles to learn about bicycles, and a conduit to increased bicycle confidence and safety as well as a space to foster

mechanical empowerment. At the most, who knows? Perhaps we can power all of the Northwest by bike...

You can contact the Weavers Way Bike Cooperative at bicycle@weaversway.coop or call 203-858-1875. Even better, attend our first meeting, April 1 at 6:30 p.m., 610 Carpenter Lane.

Here are some links to websites of other community bicycle programs (looking at these pages can inspire us to think about what we could eventually become!) If you don’t have internet access but would like to know about some of these programs, contact me (nicole.sugerman@gmail.com) and I can get you print-outs of information:

- Neighborhood Bike Works in West Philadelphia: www.neighborhoodbikeworks.org/about/index.html
- Bike Works in Seattle: www.bikeworks.org/
- Sopo bicycle cooperative in Atlanta: www.sopobikes.org/section/about
- Bikes not Bombs in Boston: www.bikesnotbombs.org/
- Bike Collective Starter Kit (in-depth resource): www.bikecollectives.org/wiki/index.php?title=Bike_Collective_Starter_Kit

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Product Spotlight: Nordic Reflections

by Elana Hollo

Think locally grown apples are the extent of Weavers Way’s commitment to local products? Well, think again. In fact, don’t even think about food at all.

Products created by local artisans, many of whom are coop members, are offered for sale on the second floor of the main Carpenter Lane store. I’ve started this column as a way to introduce our local vendors to the shopping public in order to highlight their products and help each of us recognize the positive role our shopping choices can make in supporting our local community.

In each *Shuttle* issue, I will focus on a particular vendor. The first profile will be Nordic Reflections, a line of greeting cards by a local company owned by Finnish artist (and my husband) Juha Hollo. One of the two card displays on the second floor is devoted strictly to local vendors, and each artist has his or her cards labeled, so you can see exactly whose cards you are buying.

All of the Nordic Reflections art is Juha’s, and he started the company in 2006 in order to sell his fine art prints. After selling the fine art prints at local art shows, he noticed that people were looking for smaller images to share, or even to keep for themselves but not hang on their wall. Additionally, Juha also got numerous requests to create contemporary Judaic cards.

“My art work reflects my fascination with the mystical side of the natural world. I use my art as a way to reveal the hidden side of nature you can’t see with the naked eye,” says Juha. When Juha was applying to universities in Europe, all of the photography programs had a documentary orientation.

“I have always seen myself as a visual artist, with photography as my medium, so I decided to apply to art schools in the United States” Juha explained. The University of the Arts, in Philadelphia, is where Juha came to study in 1988. While volunteering at the Painted Bride art center he met Elana Hollo (yes, I am the author of this column) and the two later married and

have remained in the Philadelphia area.

Juha recalls that for seven years they lived on Carpenter Lane, just several houses down from the Co-op, and joined the Co-op the day they moved in. Juha’s moved out of Mt. Airy, but he’s still a regular shopper. After leaving the art world to pursue IT work, Juha ultimately decided to stop working in the computer world in order to realize his dream of working fulltime as an artist. “I think my work, with its environmental emphasis fits very well with the mindset of many coop shoppers” Juha explains. “Much of my art is based on photos shot in the Wissahickon, Morris Arboretum, or Fairmount Park” and locals often recognize the landscape in the art” according to Juha.

Juha’s Judaic art combines natural imagery with biblical text for an unusual Nordic-meets-Jewish fusion. To see the Nordic Reflections cards, along with cards by other local artists, stop by the local vendor card display on the second floor; it’s to the right at the top of the stairs. To see more Nordic Reflections art, stop by www.nordicreflections.com. To suggest a local artist to be featured in this column, contact me directly at elana@nordicreflections.com.



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Suggestions

by Norman Weiss

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

This month I came across a product just begging for comment; it showed up on my desk as a mispick, and after I spent the requisite time ignoring it (my policy is that anything that appears on my desk must first be ignored for at least two weeks, especially if it requires urgent attention or is perishable), I looked at and read the label. The product is “Heritage Products Rose Petals Rosewater” which contains “...water that has been vortexed and magnetized to raise the energy to a higher vibration that we believe to be more beneficial...”. Also, it can be used as “a perfume or body splash, add to your hair rinse or bath water, or try as a gourmet flavoring.” The good news is that we found out about vortexing and magnetizing water in time to incorporate the concept into our Caruso expansion plans. I have now submitted a capital budget request for a full store vortexer, as one way to attract customers away from our competition, who don’t have vortexers, or even know what they are. (FYI- in the trade, distinguishing yourself from your competition is known as a “point of differentiation”). Our vortexer might result in some shoppers getting a little dizzy, so we will be sure to get shopping carts with extra large bumpers. Not sure yet about the magnetizer, although it might be fun to see who attracts who and who repels who. What if you repelled your kids? Or attracted you mother-in-law? What if you got so vortexed and magnetized that you thought you could then use your mother-in-law as a gourmet flavoring? This would make for

interesting conversation at the next family function.

Suggestion and Responses:

s: “Love the Israeli basil, thanks so much for carrying it.”
r: (Jean) I love my job.

s: “Basil from a non-apartheid country, I’d love some fresh basil but can’t morally justify buying from an apartheid state. So I bought cilantro instead.”
r: (Jean) I love my job.

s: “Vegan marshmallows. I think there is a brand called Sarabeth.”
r: (Chris) None of our distributors seem to have “Sarabeth” or any other vegan marshmallows... but I’ll keep my eye out for it!

s: “Confusing that two cocoa powders are with baking products and one is in the Deli. This happens sometimes in the Co-op and it’s more helpful for shoppers when all of one product are in the same place!”
r: (Margie) Because of our lack of space items sometimes only fit in weird places. I sell gourmet nuts, chocolate espresso beans, etc. in the Deli and wanted to make the fantastic Fair Trade hot cocoa available to our shoppers. The cocoa fit in physically and kind of went with the chocolate covered stuff. When we expand, hopefully we can display things in a way that makes sense and is easier for shoppers.

s: “I have been shopping here for years and we still have never resolved the issue of people with one to three items who must wait in line behind the ever-irritable Co-op shoppers who prefer not to have any one cut in front of them. Especially during long pre-holiday lines. Can’t we do something besides having the shopper ask each and every person if they can go ahead?”
r: (Norman) We have never resolved this issue because so far there has been no clear resolution. It is to some extent a question of resource deployment. If we dedicate a staffer and cash register station to serving people with a few items, it means the people with more items will wait even longer, since there will be one less cashier available. We have discussed using a portable device for this, something we can set up without taking up much space, but it has

(continued inside on page 23)

Orientations at Ogontz

Weavers Way now holds regular monthly meetings in West Oak Lane to discuss with members of the community how they can become owners and members of the Co-op. The meetings take place at 10:30 a.m. on the third Saturday of each month at Grace United Methodist Church, 7101 N. 20th St., in West Oak Lane, unless there is a conflict with church events.. Weavers Way also looks forward to hosting workshops and cooking demonstrations at the church.

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Welcome to Weavers Way
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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, at Church of the Annunciation (CA), Carpenter Lane and Lincoln Drive, and at Grace United Methodist Church (GU), 7101 N. 20th St, in West Oak Lane. Upcoming Orientation Meetings are on the following dates:

DAY	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Wednesday	Mar. 4, 2009	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Saturday	Mar. 21, 2009	10:30 a.m.	GU
Wednesday	Apr. 1, 2009	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Saturday	Apr. 18, 2009	10:30 a.m.	GU
Saturday	May 2, 2009	10:30 a.m.	CA
Saturday	May 16, 2009	10:30 a.m.	GU

Meetings start promptly and last about 1¼ hours. Latecomers cannot be admitted. Written reservations are required, so please fill out the tear-off sheet below and return it to the store. At the close of the orientation meeting, you will be expected to pay your initial \$30 annual investment (check or cash). We look forward to seeing you and welcoming you into the Co-op.

Robin Cannicle, Membership Manager

PLEASE RETURN THIS PORTION TO WEAVERS WAY

Someone from my household will attend the orientation meeting on _____

Name (please print) _____

Phone Number _____

Address (including ZIP code) _____
