

the Shuttle

Manager's Corner

Looking Back and Looking Ahead

by Glenn Bergman, General Manager

I am writing this column in December thinking about the tasks started and completed, and goals for the New Year as it relates to the Co-op. Depending on how you look at the year, it was both successful and not so successful. Yes, we are clearly a sustainable business netting a solid three percent profit (before taxes) on sales. While that may not sound like much money (three cents profit on every dollar in revenue) it is very good as a standard grocery profit. Members received a rebate and the staff received a little extra for their hard work and dedication to customer service.

Important goals not completed in 2007

The one most important goal I had set for this year was to secure a second home for the Co-op. We had completed a market study of locations, set a strategy, had a few board retreats with outside co-op consultants, and thought we would sign a purchase/lease agreement to get the proj-

(continued on page 17)

Winter Arrives Down on the Farm

by David Zelov



PHOTO BY SOL LEVY

THE VEGGIES ARE NESTLED ALL SNUG IN THEIR RAISED BEDS.

At last, winter has come to the farm. All of the tomato stakes are pulled and the irrigation rolled up and put away. Those few hardy crops that cling to life during this cold, dark period are mulched or covered. A cover of rye or oats blankets most of the beds, protecting them over the winter. The garlic bulbs have tentatively poked a leaf up from the soil and await the spring thaw to continue reaching towards

the sun. The farm is quiet; hibernating. But the farmer is not.

Though I will be spending two weeks unwinding in Guatemala this month, perhaps visiting a finca or two, there is much planning to do for next year. I am working on a report detailing the farm's income and expenditures, trials and tribulations,

(continued on page 6)

Weavers Way Board Elections in the Spring

by Jeni Howe

With Weavers Way spring board elections a few short months away and the buzz of campaigning in the air, now is the perfect time to consider your own involvement in community leadership. The Co-op's board of directors is seeking visionary members to fill several At-Large seats that will open this spring. During this pivotal time of Co-op growth and change, what better way to demonstrate your commitment to Co-op philosophies and policies than to serve on the board?

Like many other co-ops, the Weavers Way board operates under a policy governance model, whereby the board evaluates members' interests and needs, as well as community and economic factors, in order to create, revise, and monitor policies dedicated to continued growth and success. Policies fall under two categories: Ends and Limitations. Ends are akin to vision statements and goals, and Limitations constrain the operations and actions of the board and of the general manager,

(continued on page 2)

Carpenters Woods Town Watch Goes into Forward Gear

by Kaela Farber

Word spread quickly via e-mails on our safety listserv in late September: a neighbor over on Westview Street had gone out to walk his dog one evening and encountered two armed youths who asked for money. Learning that he had none, they broke his nose with a handgun and shot and killed his dog. Messages of sorrow and outrage flew. The listserv pondered: What can we do?

A few days later, Carpenters Woods Town Watch (CWTW)—the group that had generated the listserv 10 months before—held its monthly meeting, and instead of the usual handful of active participants, about 60 people filled the room. They were upset and energized and ready to move from “eyes-and-ears” monitoring to active patrolling. Police Officer Calvin Johns, the Fourteenth District's community relations officer, stepped forward and invited the group to join him the following night outside C. W. Henry School and take a first step toward Town Watch patrolling.

On October 10, Jaasu Burgee of Town Watch Integrated Services trained a roomful of people in the use of police walkie-talkies and proper procedures for Town Watch patrolling. On October 16, he returned to train us in ways to observe rele-



PHOTO BY KAELE FARBER

THESE MAGNETIC CAR SIGNS MARK TOWNWATCH PATROLS

vant details and to report to 911 effectively to combat crime in our neighborhood.

Meanwhile, a new leadership committee has emerged to pilot the group as it becomes more active. New president Heather Pierce patrolled regularly for several years with the earlier Mt. Airy Town Watch group and has professional experience in marketing. She has lived in West Mt. Airy all her life, attending Henry School, like her boys, and because she remembers the close-knit community of her childhood, she understands the importance of grassroots action. Vice president Dean Karavite has been active in CWTW for over a year, working hard to provide research and insights into local crime and sharing information on prevention and awareness. Technical advisor Andrew Jas-

(continued on page 4)

An Evening of Earthy Delights

by Josh Giblin

On one of the last pleasant evenings of October, when you could still sit outside in short sleeves, I found myself among a couple of dozen folks attending the Weavers Way Beer and Cheese Tasting. Drawing on the talent, tastes and experience of our staff, deli manager Margie Felton hosted an evening of delightful flavors and heady brews. Our largest vendor for specialty cheese, International, provided the cheese, as well as the expertise of Emilio Companioni. Co-op staffers Joe Black and Keith Kelleher were our beer tour guides, having paired and purchased the beer for the evening. The setting was an expansive local roof-top deck, complete with candlelit tables and intimate, vine-wrapped benches.

After grabbing our tasting plates and finding our seats, Emilio began the evening with an introduction to each of the cheeses we would be tasting, arranged around our plates in modest nuggets. Emilio clearly cares deeply about his products and spoke with affection for many of them. The cheeses were a mix of domestic and imported varieties, ranging from young and creamy to more aged and

(continued on page 2)



PHOTO BY JOSH GIBLIN

PROVIDING BEER, CHEESE, AND EXPERTISE AT THE TASTING EVENT ARE (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) CO-OP STAFFERS KEITH KELLEHER AND JOE BLACK, CHEESE EXPERT EMILIO COMPANIONI, AND DELI MANAGER MARGIE FELTON.

Inside:

Product News	3
Carpenters Woods Mystery	5
Letters	22
Suggestions	24

And of course... scads more

Weavers Way Cooperative Association
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Monthly Expansion Discussion Meetings.

Jan. 17 • Feb. 21 • Mar. 20

Weavers Way is hosting a series of expansion meetings where members can discuss their concerns and share their ideas. Meetings will be held in the parlor room at Summt Church and will begin at 7 p.m.

Editor’s Note

by Jonathan McGoran

When I first read that meat producers were treating their beef with carbon monoxide, I was shocked. I mean, if anyone should know that a steak was already dead, it’s the people that killed it in the first place. It turned out this CO treatment was not some new humane (if somewhat melancholic) method of slaughter, but a treatment to make meat appear redder and stay redder longer. This might seem a like a good idea, but a five-month-old steak just isn’t meant to look fresh. That sort of deceitful misrepresentation should be left to internet dating sites, where it belongs.

Elsewhere in deceptive food news, Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Dennis Wolff recently announced a new policy making it illegal for dairy producers to say on their labels that they don’t use milk from cows treated with artificial growth hormones like rBGH.

His reasoning, as I understand it, is that labels advertising that a product doesn’t contain something imply that there is something wrong with products that do contain it, and since he is pretty sure there is nothing wrong with milk from cows treated with rBGH, advertising that milk is not from cows treated with rBGH is misleading. He says these labels could confuse consumers (especially if they read the labels while listening to his explanation). Wolff announced the policy after a closed-door meeting with a bunch of “experts” whose names he refuses to disclose. Apparently that could confuse us as well. Luckily, Gov. Rendell put the policy on hold while he takes a closer look, but that doesn’t mean he disagrees with it; it might just mean that he’s trying to figure out what the heck it means.

But Wolff has got a point about those labels being confusing. When I picked up some milk labeled “rBGH Free,” not only did they charge me for it, but as far as I could tell, there was no rBGH in it at all. I’m still confused.

Another policy surrounded by confusion is the new requirment that raw almonds be pasteurized with heat or fumigation. This is another law that has a lot of people really steamed. It’s lucky for them, too, because the alternative is fumigation with toxic gas.

The *Shuttle* is published by Weavers Way Co-op and is mailed to all members.

Deadlines for each issue are the first of the preceding month.

e.g. January 1 for February issue

Statement of Policy

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

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

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



The *Shuttle* is printed on 100% recycled paper



Spring Board Elections

(continued from page 1)

who enacts Co-op policies during everyday store activities, tasks, and events, all subsequently monitored by the board.

This governance process is best carried out by Co-op members who enjoy analyzing issues in their context while bearing in mind “the big picture” of both the Co-op and the Mt. Airy community; members who appreciate the concept of member ownership and are engaged with others’ opinions and values regarding Weavers Way’s evolution; members who speak out on behalf of their own opinions and principles while cooperating with and respecting diverse viewpoints; and members who comfortably assume leadership responsibility as well as delegate authority when appropriate.

If you’re thinking, “That’s me!”, then now is the time to consider nominating yourself as a candidate. And if you’re thinking, “That’s almost me,” that’s great too. The traits described, as well as the financial and organizational structure and policy governance, are reviewed in training workshops for new board members.

The board meets monthly (except for August) to discuss policies and Co-op by-laws, and you might attend various committee meetings and other meetings that address specific issues that arise, such as expansion. Members are expected to be familiar with policies and Co-op developments, and participate fully in all board activities.

Whether you are considering campaigning for a spot or not, these elections involve all of us: The board is responsible for policies that reflect both the Co-op goals as well as any limitations in how the general manager achieves those goals in everyday store life and as situations arise. The board is accountable to all of you. By campaigning for a position on the board, or encouraging a friend or family member whom you think would be a great candidate, and by voting, you ensure that the Co-op remains a fantastic store, a unique meeting place, and a thriving community.

Board of directors candidates will submit self-statements addressing Leadership Committee questions to the *Shuttle*, and Co-op members will vote accordingly. The deadline for submitting names to the Leadership Committee will be late February (exact date to be determined). For more information or to suggest a Co-op member you think would be an ideal candidate on the spring ballot, contact the leadership committee chair, Bob Noble, at 215-843-5647 or bob-noble@msn.com.

HELP WANTED

Floral Assistant

Part-time Cashier

(Sat., Mon., Tues.)

Please pick up an application at the register today! In the future look to the website, www.weaversway.coop, for more current openings, job descriptions, online application, and other job related resources. If you have any questions, see Rick about job openings, or e-mail rick@weaversway.coop.

Thank You

Weavers Way Members have so far donated over \$6,400 of their cash rebates back to Weavers Way Community Programs (WWCP).

Your donations will help WWCP continue the work of the Weavers Way Environment Committee, the educational programs of the Mort Brooks Memorial Farm, and the Marketplace Program.

We would like to thank each one of you by name but we can’t (because we forgot to ask your permission), so instead we are extending one big thanks, to all of you.

Thank You

Beer and Cheese

(continued from page 1)

granular. Flavors were mild and sweet, sharp and nutty; one cheese had bits of mushroom mixed in, another was marbled with Irish porter. All in all there were seven cheeses to sample and an equal number of beers to sip.

As we worked our way around our cheese “clocks,” Keith and Joe would in turn pour our drinks and expound upon their virtues. Keith’s knowledge of beer and brewery history was impressive, while Joe was able to shed light on how the ingredients and process of beer-making can yield such a variety of flavors. Most of their choices were from relatively local breweries, including Troeg’s, from Harrisburg, and Lancaster Brewing Company, from the heart of the city that shares its name. Lancaster Brewing Company provided the distinctive Milk Stout of the evening, which is sweetened with lactose. Unlike sugar, lactose does not ferment in the brewing process, and this beer was rich and creamy with chocolate undertones. Wonderful!

Three of the cheeses featured were from Wisconsin dairies, a recent area of focus for International. The Wisconsin

area has made a surprisingly sophisticated array of cheeses available; these cheeses are worth your time. You may already have seen the Carr Valley Applewood Cheddar gracing our cheese case recently with its sweet and striking take on the traditional smoked cheese. We also sampled a Wisconsin Gruyere-style cheese that was

great. For me though, the most surprising and flavorful cheese of the evening, also from Wisconsin was a dense, creamy blue called Ader Kase. After having sat out the evening on the edge of my plate it simply melted in my mouth, providing a perfect balance with the Octoberfest beer washing over it.

This evening was a rare treat. The atmosphere was relaxed, and I

learned some really interesting things about both cheese and beer, leaving with a warm feeling in my heart and in my head. It was clear that more events like this are in order, so keep your eyes open for the next opportunity to get up close and personal with our staff and the food that they love.

Beer and Cheese Pairings

Roth’s Private Reserve

with *Smuttynose IPA*

Championon

with *Sly Fox Pilsner*

Carr Valley Applewood Cheddar

with *Buffalo Bill’s Pumpkin Ale*

Beemster X.O.

with *Troeg Pale Ale*

Cahill Porter

with *Lancaster Brewing Co. Milk Stout*

Morbier

with *Saison Dupont*

Ader Kase

with *Penn Brewery Octoberfest*

No CO in Co-op Meat

by Dale Kinley, Fresh Foods Manager

It has been reported in the news lately that some meat packers are using carbon monoxide to keep meats pink and fresh-looking for extended periods of time. Even though these processors claim there is no public health risk, consumer groups are concerned, arguing that the practice is unsafe because consumers use color as a prime indicator of spoilage and this process can make meats appear fresh up to a year.

Weavers Way has three sources of meats and none of them use the carbon monoxide process. Natural Acres and

Meadow Run Farms are small, local farms located in Lancaster County. They are committed to sustainability and humane treatment of animals and their animals are pasture-raised. There are never any antibiotics or preservatives added to their beef. Esposito, located on Ninth Street in the Italian Market, uses a more commercial beef. It is raised in the Midwest with USDA Choice and very good quality. They do their own aging and cutting.

As always, Weavers Way is dedicated to providing our members with only the highest quality of meats.

January in the Deli

by Margie Felton, Deli Manager

On a gray Saturday in November a friend and I headed out to northern Montgomery County in search of Hendricks Farms and Dairy. I had heard about the farm from one of my deli cooperators and hoped to find some interesting local cheeses to sell at Weavers Way. I also wanted to buy local products for my own use. As we left the city the sun came out and we had a beautiful drive through the countryside.

We arrived at the farm, entered the store, and introduced ourselves to the manager. She talked to us about the cheeses and other products and gave us a taste of each cheese. The cheeses were well-made and delicious. All the cheeses are made of raw milk produced on the farm by Ayrshire cows. The cows are 100 percent grass-fed and spend part of each day in the pasture. We discussed all the details involved in selling the cheese at Weavers Way and then moved behind the scenes and into the cheese-aging room.

As we entered the cheese-aging room we had to be careful not to step on the toys the children had left on the floor. This is truly a family-run farm and the children play in the store and other areas of the farm. The manager, Laura Seemens, told us that in the summer, the cheese-aging room is the coolest room on the farm and the children’s favorite place to play. This room consisted of many wooden shelves filled with large wheels of cheese. The wheels are turned once a week by hand.

We then proceeded to the barn to meet the cows. Hendricks Farms uses a unique milking method, which you can read about in February’s *Shuttle*. We then returned to the store to complete our shopping. In addition to cheeses, Hendricks Farms sells meats, fair trade coffee, raw milk products (milk, butter, yogurt, etc.), a little produce, soaps, jams, breads (from a local bakery), raw goat milk (from another local farm), and eggs. We bought many of these products and were pleased with all our purchases.

Hendricks Farms and Dairy was started as a way for the family to eat the healthiest foods possible. When one of their daughters developed an allergy to



dairy, they started using only raw milk products, which did not have any negative effects on their daughter. Today, all of their dairy products are made with raw milk.

Hendricks Farm and Dairy is open to the public Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m.–6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Ask to meet the cows and see the milking process. It is very interesting. For more information, visit their web site at www.hendricksfarm-sanddairy.com.

Henricks Farms raw milk artisan cheeses are now available in the specialty cheese area. Give them a try and let us know what you think.

January Hidden Treasure



Honey Cup Honey Mustard

Hidden just above eye level (depending on your height of course) on the shelf next to the Deli meat case. This mustard is sweet tangy and extremely flavorful. It is a great dip for pretzels or on a Brie sandwich. Karen of the Deli and Prep Foods departments uses it as a glaze for chicken wings. She thins it a bit with water, then brushes it onto cooked chicken wings. She then bakes the wings for 10 additional minutes until they are golden brown. Scrumptious!

Grocery News

by Chris Switky, Grocery Manager

Howdy, shoppers. Here it is, January 2008, which means basically one thing here in the grocery department: the “to-furkey holidays” are over. I refer, of course, to Thanksgiving and Christmas, holidays for which a small but determined group of the Co-op shoppers purchase a frozen meal called “the tofurkey,” a tofu-based, turkey-like (I’ve heard rumor that it’s even turkey-shaped?) dish. It comes frozen; you buy it and cook it up, et voilà, a vegetarian holiday meal.

Even though it is January, I’m hoping that we might still have some “tofu holidays” ahead of us. If the Thanksgiving-to-furkey is turkey-shaped, how about one that’s groundhog-shaped for Groundhog Day? The “tofoodchuck.” If you’d rather that winter end sooner, buy the one that comes with dark glasses and a cane.

For Valentine’s Day, a heart-shaped tofu dish... “for the meatless romance.” OK, the catch line might need reworking.

For the Ides of March, picture a huge block of smoked tofu, like a sheet cake, with a street map of ancient Rome etched

across the top. Inscribed on each side, these words: “Et tu, Tofu?” Or, if you really want to splurge, you could have a tofu dish sculpted to replicate the Coliseum. Both of these will be made “in-house”; I’m getting the maps and blueprints to the Prepared Foods departmentthis week.

What else is new in the grocery department? Not much, just Chris and Norman, trying to communicate. Presymbolic sounds and nonverbal approaches have been working pretty well lately: groaning, growling, smirking. When Norman does lapse into spoken English, it’s rare that I understand what he says, and I must ask him, “I’m sorry, but could you try mumbling a little more clearly?” Mostly, Norman looks for affirmation that his jokes are funny. After some surreal mind-bending quip, he’ll ask, “Am I funny, or what?” Reply: “If those are the choices, let’s go with ‘what.’”

As always, thanks for reading. And remember: the more time I spend talking to Norman, the more I’d rather run into you... in the grocery aisles.

Stories from the Second Story

by Martha Fuller, Second Floor Manager

Happy 2008 to you and yours! Although you are reading this *Shuttle* issue in January 2008, it’s early December for me as I sit at my desk and think about 2007. What’s been new and different about this year?

What’s changed? As my grandmother would say and as I will say for our product lines, “Who came and went?”

In May 2006, I began to train for the job of Weavers Way nonfoods manager and purchaser. It was apparent that this would be a multi-layered job. As purchasers, we aim for the following: to be mindful of what our shoppers want, to remember the conversations we have with shoppers and the importance of those conversations, and to process the details of the information that you share with us. Your feedback is important and we consider it as much as we can when we make our purchasing decisions.

The second floor request notebook contains many of your ideas and we pay attention to them when we are contemplating new products and companies.

The sections of this notebook include Housewares, Health and Beauty Products, Vitamins and Supplements, Toys, Calendars, and General Ideas.

Here are just a few of the ideas and requests that: 1) you gave us; and that (2) we acted upon in 2007: more Badger products; more New Wave Enviro products, including stainless steel water bottles (how great to have a stainless steel bottle that does not have plastic lining!); more vegan products; Rainbow Light Pre-Natal One Vitamins; Maggie’s Organic Cotton Tights; Ecover Rinse Aid; Nag Champa incense in larger, more economical boxes; more calendars and calendar books; contact lens solution; and more bamboo products, including Melita Bamboo coffee filters in size two and size four.

We expanded the product lines of many companies, including Aubrey Organics, Casabella cleaning products, Gourmac (love those onion savers!), Baggallini, World of Good, Rhodia, and Weavers Way Vitamins.

We carried new products lines including Lunchopolis Lunch Bags and Fit and Fresh lunch containers for those of us who carry our own lunches to school and work.

Pet Store News

by Chris Switky, Grocery Manager

It has been a satisfying experience to be a part of the many transformations at the pet store. Sales are great, preorders have increased, and more and more members are using the store for all their pet needs. I am so pleased with these results and am very grateful to all of the members who contribute to this success by choosing to shop here. In the last month I have had several great experiences with people who have discovered the Co-op through their search for quality pet food. These opportunities were very encouraging and evidence that the pet store can become another avenue for introducing the Co-op to the community. The pet store has truly developed into a convenient source of superior products for the pets we all love and a great alternative to what is commercially accessible.



Our fellow staff members Angela and Chris deserve rounds of applause for their purchasing and display work with toys (Angela) and greeting cards, boxed notecards, holiday cards, and wrapping paper (Chris). Many thanks to you both.

Companies expand their product offerings while deleting lines or products that no longer sell well or are available to them. As a purchaser who is responsible for the second floor, I have to make those decisions as well—at some future time, I’ll discuss the review of sales and product movement so I can keep our shelf space filled with as many things as will keep you happy. For now, let’s mention a few of our 2007 good-byes, some of which have been mentioned in prior *Shuttle* columns:

Burt’s Bees Toothpastes, etc.: The company nixed all three toothpastes (much to the dismay of our shoppers), as well as several other products. They have been purchased by Clorox, so we’ll see what other changes are in store.

Neem Citronella Incense Sticks: While it has been a fave of Weavers Way members, apparently the product did not sell well for the company and as of this fall, they ceased production of them.)

Tom’s Toothpastes: All the gel liquids were discontinued as well as some long-time fave products.

Sympathical Formula products: This company seems to have fallen off the face of the planet. No more wonderful skin lotions from them—boo hiss.)

OxyFresh products: This line stopped selling at a pace that justified their inclusion on our shelves.

Equal Exchange Sumatran and Costa Rican coffees: The nonorganic Costa Rican did not sell quickly for us (we’re geeky for fresh coffee beans). I was planning to delete it from our selection, and don’t you know that Equal Exchange did that for me: Costa Rican beans did not sell quickly enough for them either and they discontinued it.

Due to natural disasters and domestic turmoil, the supply of fine Sumatran coffee has been severely limited. Equal Exchange hopes it will be back again and if it is, we’ll try to carry it again.

Heather’s Cleaning Powder was recently discontinued by its manufacturer.



(continued on page 9)

Carpenters Woods Town Watch
(continued from page 1)

tremsky has also worked since the beginning, creating crime maps designed to show patterns of criminal activity, and developing an increasingly useful website, www.cwtownwatch.org. New treasurer Kaela Farber has lived in the neighborhood for 30 years and raised her family here, also through Henry School. New secretary Sarah Halley recently stepped down as volunteer president of an international nonprofit organization, for which she organized meetings and conducted business both online and in person.

This group has accomplished a lot in six short weeks.

We have held two training sessions for over 60 volunteers (and more planned in the next few months as others join the momentum); each member received a photo ID badge, cap, and vest, and the police have supplied CWTW with rechargeable two-way radios for patrolling. There are also new signs posted.

New administrative policies have created a united leadership core, and we have shifted our emphasis from anonymous cyber-contacts to person-to-person connections. Of course, e-mails are important for

alerts, and the web serves as a bulletin board for scheduling and information on demand. But active phone communications now confirm membership and patrols. With each turn at patrolling, we are getting to know one another.

Our much-expanded website at www.cwtownwatch.org now offers many new features: forms to report suspicious activity locally and to submit information to the police; links to government, state and local police; crime statistics; curfew information; neighborhood organizations and watchdog sites; up-to-date crime maps; calendar of events; contacts; and ways to join. A new active-members-only field with detailed meeting minutes and patrol sign-up schedules is in the works.

We have had several weeks so far of active neighborhood patrolling, and many more will follow. We have had monthly meetings every first Wednesday. Our first social gathering was in December and a possible new group of weight-reducing watchful walkers is in the planning stages.

What is it like to patrol? It is a mix: a little excitement, a little banter, lots of walking (some patrollers ride in cars and on bikes), and always the feeling of doing good for the neighborhood. Patrollers move in pairs. They do not enter private

property, and they are trained to never put their own safety at risk—so outside lights really make a difference! When something seems amiss, we radio it in to the base dispatcher, who logs it, and when appropriate, calls it in to the police (or another agency). Here are some examples:

Our first night out patrolling was Mischievous Night. We did spot some teenagers being mischievous. Unfortunately they threw rocks and broke a lantern outside someone's home. The homeowner called 911 and chased the kids in her vehicle, and one of them ran right into CWTW members. The kid was stopped, his parents were called and the homeowner and parent agreed to resolve the issue before the police actually arrived.


Halloween Night was a very busy night, with over 300 kids around the Henry School area. Town Watch patrollers helped redirect traffic during the Halloween parade. One lost child was reunited with her mother within five minutes. We experienced no major problems other than 30 to 40 teenagers hanging in the street around Henry School and on Carpenter Lane. They were loud, but they were respectful when approached. They were overheard saying "Town Watch is everywhere!" This was music to our ears.

When a patroller radioed that there was a strong smell of gas at the corner of Sherman Street and Carpenter Lane, the

gas company was called and responded before our shift ended. At 9:50 in the evening, nine teenagers were still trick-or-treating. When asked why they were out so late, they responded, "Our curfew is not up yet," and we were glad to hear they were aware of curfew limits.

Other patrols since then have been quiet as well. Patrollers have reported the darkest locations on various blocks; have met trains arriving at Upsal Street, Carpenter, and Allens Lane stations; and have escorted participants leaving a gathering at Germantown Jewish Center. One by one as neighbors walk home in the dark feeling safer, they call out "Thank you! I'm glad you are out tonight!"


We want many, many more people to exclaim "Town Watch is everywhere!" That is the best thing we can do as a community to fend off the potential perpetrators of crime. But of the dozens of people trained, few typically step forward to patrol. The way to achieve our goal is to bring together members from every block in our West Mt. Airy sector. We are looking for people who want to keep our community safe and livable. If you think this might be you, we invite you to join us. You can volunteer for as little as two hours a week. Peruse our website, www.cwtownwatch.org; bring a friend and come to a meeting; be trained; and get active!!!



Michael Pollan author of
The Omnivore's Dilemma and
In Defense of Food
Thursday, January 10

Michael Pollan's bestseller The Omnivore's Dilemma was named one of the ten best books of 2006 by the New York Times and the Washington Post. In his new book, In Defense of Food, Pollan offers well-considered answers to questions about what to eat —"Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants"— and how to think about health in our increasingly industrialized and nutritionally muddled world—"Don't eat anything your great-great-grandmother wouldn't recognize as food."

White Dog Cafe
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www.whitedog.com



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A Mystery In Carpenters Woods

by Cliff Henc

There is something strange going on in Carpenters Woods, one of Philadelphia’s favorite birding spots, and it’s a lot deeper than the usual mystery in the park, “What was that warbler that just whizzed by?”

Carpenters Woods is a section of Philadelphia’s Fairmount Park system, located in the Mt. Airy section of the city. It was added to the park system in the 1920s largely through the efforts of the principal of the local Henry Houston School, who hoped it would become a bird sanctuary. Although that didn’t happen, it has become an important stopover spot for birds during the spring and fall migration. The habitat is a unique collection of white and northern red oaks, tulip trees, beech, maple and sassafras. There are also numerous sycamores along the small stream that flows through the park. These trees provide an important resource for local and migrating birds. However, the birds don’t come for the trees, they are really there to feed on the insects that are hatching out to feed on the buds and leaves of the trees. The birds, which have often flown all night, arrive very hungry and do us a great service by eating a large percentage of these insects.

However, according to local naturalist Keith Russell, over the past 20 years the magnificent oaks that dominate this patch of woods are dying off at an alarming rate and no one seems to know why. The trees are estimated to be about 100 and 150 years old, which may seem old, but oaks are very long-lasting trees that take hundreds of years just to reach maturity. An

oak tree located in Windsor, England, is estimated to be over 800 years old. So these trees are dying while they are still just teenagers. Russell estimates that 50 percent of the trees will be gone in the next 20 years.

Why Are These Oaks Dying?

There are a number of theories as to why the oaks are dying and not reproducing. One of the most relevant seems to be that like most urban parks, Carpenters Woods has been used as a dumping ground for landscape waste for many years. This has led to an invasion of exotic plants and trees. Numerous nonnative species have been identified by a recent study of the area, the most tenacious of which is the Norway maple.

This extremely hardy tree was introduced to North America in the 1750s and became a popular shade and street tree. However, it has a strong tendency to crowd out all other species, creating its own monoculture. Because it is an import, it does not have native insect predators. While that might sound like a good thing, in fact it means local bird species do not use it for feeding or nesting purposes.

While many people may think that birds use trees mainly for perching and nesting, trees are really important food sources, especially for the insect eaters. Birds that use oaks and sycamores etc. are really nesting in their local supermarket. They are close to their source of insects, insect eggs or larvae, or in some cases, seeds or fruit. This can be a decided advantage for raising their young.

The park has also been impacted by its



PHOTO BY CLIFF HENCE

THIS INFORMATION CENTER IS PART OF A BROADER EFFORT BY THE FRIENDS OF CARPENTERS WOODS TO DEAL WITH THE COMPLEX ISSUES FACING THE PARK.

popularity. While birders know the park during migration, numerous people use the park year-round for walking—with and without their dogs. This leads to compaction of the soil in many areas. This compaction of the soil affects the runoff from rain. The water drains quickly and does not get a chance to be absorbed into the soil where it would be available for use by the local plants and trees. This situation negatively affects trees that need a lot of water, like the oaks, and favors plants and trees that prefer drier habitats, like the Norway maple.

Friends Of Carpenters Woods

Recently an organization called “The Friends of Carpenters Woods” was formed

to work on ways to reverse these negative impacts on Carpenters Woods. The Friends have begun a campaign to address some of the complex issues facing the park. They have placed kiosks in the park to disseminate information. They have also planned workdays for various projects in the park, like invasive removal and tree plantings. They have also started a campaign not only to discourage dumping, but also to provide information on how to report landscapers who dump in the park.

If you would like to get involved with the Friends of Carpenters Woods, contact coordinator Nancy Goldenberg at ngoldenberg@centercityphila.org.



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Down on the Farm
(continued from page 1)

for the 2007 season. A little less kohlrabi this spring (although I think we've created some die-hard fans—Jon), less eggplant, more lettuce and leafy greens. It was difficult to gauge quantities to plant for 2007—after all, we didn't think we'd be selling to markets other than the Co-op. We enter into 2008 a little older and wiser.

As we do not yet have a hoop house/high tunnel (simple, unheated greenhouse) on the farm but are eager to begin experimenting with season extension, Weavers Way Farm is partnering with Saul High School's agro-ecology class. An older set of hoops at Saul—previously covered with shade cloth and used to grow perennials—is being retrofitted with plastic and some rich soil for beds. Ken Kolodziej, the perennial grower, was kind enough to offer up the space he was using, and help get the project off the ground (or maybe into the ground). Jessica Naugle and her class of 10 students along with Co-op member Dr. Jim Dannenberg, have joined me out there to form beds and cover the structure with plastic. We will seed spinach in there and a couple other crops not appealing to the resident groundhog, and soon you will see it on the shelves of the Co-op, complete with personalized labels from the class. Come early spring, we will get a jump on the season with the planting of some warm season crops.

Believe it or not, there is one crop still

being harvested from the farm. Jerusalem artichokes, aka sunchokes, can be dug anytime between the first frost of fall and when they start growing again in April, as long as the ground is not frozen. The sunchoke is actually native to the central areas of North America and was cultivated by several Native American Tribes, who referred to it as girosol. The plant is a close relative of the sunflower, cultivated for its tuberous root. When eaten raw, the taste and texture is similar to a water chestnut and can be substituted for them or for jicama in any recipe. When cooked they are more like a potato but with a slightly nuttier flavor, some might say reminiscent of an artichoke heart. When preparing, scrub them well but they do not need to be peeled as the skins contain much of the nutrients and flavor. Sunchokes actually become sweeter the longer they are stored in the ground, as the inulin (not insulin) is converted to fructose.

These plants are quite easy to grow, almost too easy. You should select a site carefully when planting as you may be growing sunchokes there for a long time, whether you want to or not. It's also a good idea to plant them in an area that is isolated from the rest of your vegetable garden. The plants are attractive though, growing upwards of 10 feet tall and bearing a yellow flower approximately two inches in diameter, not unlike a small sunflower. You can start your own patch in late fall or early spring by planting whole tubers of pieces of tubers no less than two ounces and with three prominent buds.

Weavers Way Film Series
Continues with China Blue

by Larry Schofer

It was another full house for the Weavers Way showing of the film *China Blue* on November 14.

The film is based on the experiences of a 16-year old farm girl who makes her way to the big city to help her family survive economically. She is hired by a clothing factory, where she lives in a workers dormitory with many other young girls. They work extremely long hours, often with forced overtime (some 15- to 20-hour workdays), enduring months with delayed paychecks, arbitrary fines, and many other practices familiar to us from the early decades of the 20th century in the clothing industry in the United States and Europe.

The free-wheeling capitalist owner is presented not so much as a devil enforcing terrible working conditions—which in some senses he is—but as a hard-driving, sometimes self-pitying man on the make. He in turn is subject to the pressure of foreign firms demanding lower and lower prices. The only dealer identified by name is Walmart, but it is clear that many firms participate in the charade of demanding good working conditions at their suppliers.

What distinguishes the film from oth-



er muckraking pieces is the very human nature of the story it tells of the teenager in the dorm—her diary, her hopes, her friends, her homesickness. It is a very touching story.

December's film was *Amandla: A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony*, a story about the role of music in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. Look for more on that showing in the February *Shuttle*.

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Weavers Way Film Series
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The Little Theater at Video Library, Germantown Ave. between Durham St. and Mt. Airy Ave. Films start at 7 p.m., on a theater-size screen with theater-style seating, and are followed by a discussion. There is no charge for admission, although seating is limited.

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Sustainable Food News: Getting the Word Out on Issues of Sustainability

by John Ascenzi

Low-carbon diets. Food miles. Biodegradable packaging. Those are just a few of the themes that Dan McGovern covers in *Sustainable Food News* (SFN), the online news service he started in August 2006.

McGovern says his readership consists of supermarket executives, restaurant owners, managers of institutional food services in colleges and hospitals, and even celebrity chefs. Not to mention the staff of food co-ops like Weavers Way; you'll see articles supplied by *SFN* in the *Shuttle*.

"It's part of the changing landscape of the food business," says McGovern, 39, originally from Wilmington, DE., but now based in Portland, ME. "There's a slowly growing consumer movement toward choosing foods that reflect values like sustainability, fair trade, and social justice."

Sustainable practices are ones that harvest food without depleting the environment, so that the resource will continue to be available in the future. McGovern gives the example of fishing practices that avoid over-fishing an area—in contrast to the highly mechanized over-fishing that has largely destroyed cod stocks off New England and Newfoundland.

Food buyers and consumers can support sustainable and other socially conscious practices by looking for labels from certifying organizations, such as the Rainforest Alliance, based in New York, or the Food Alliance, an Oregon-based organization that verifies environmental, animal welfare and farm labor practices.

For seafood, McGovern refers to the

blue label of the Marine Stewardship Council, or MSC, an international non-profit certifying organization with its U.S. office in Seattle. Some fish certified with the MSC label are caught by small-scale hook-and-line fishermen; others are supplied by large-scale fisheries.

If McGovern is quick to refer to sustainable fishing, it reflects his background in the seafood industry. He started writing for trade magazines aimed at the seafood business in the early 1990s. Much of his work gradually moved to online publications, and then in 2002 his employer was bought up by NHST, a Norwegian company that concentrated on fishing, shipping, and energy issues. He became the North American editor for their daily news service, *Intrafish*, before striking off on his own in 2006.

Today he offers two other news services in addition to SFN, one focused on ocean-related business news, the other on sustainable tourism. All three operate under McGovern's Triton News Corp.

McGovern covers more than eco-friendly food suppliers. Many consumers and suppliers look at a broader context of food production: fair trade practices for

producers, animal welfare, and organic agriculture. According to the market research firm Packaged Facts, U.S. retail sales of grocery products making some form of ethical claim totaled nearly \$33 billion in 2006 and are projected to surpass \$57 billion by 2011.

"There's a triple bottom line," says McGovern. "That includes good environmental practices, social justice, and the traditional profits that allow a company to stay in business."

If it sounds a little complicated for everyday grocery shoppers, that's because sometimes it is. Some Co-op shoppers may know about "food miles"—the distances and associated transportation costs involved in moving food from a farm to the market shelf. But, says

McGovern, "food miles alone aren't necessarily the most correct measure of environmental impact, because they're only part of the picture." Another factor to consider is the fossil fuels and greenhouse emissions involved in producing and transporting feed, plus raising, transporting and processing animals, so that ultimately, eating beef may impose a heavier environmental impact than eating chicken or pork.



DAN MCGOVERN, THE MAN BEHIND SUSTAINABLE FOOD NEWS

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A Strong End-Of-Year Finish for Ned Wolf Park

by Ronda Throne-Murray

The community project at Ned Wolf Park ended the first year with a flourish by accomplishing several major renovations before winter and the holidays arrived.

Thanks to a generous \$2,000 donation from an anonymous institutional donor, we were able to fund several of the much-needed items on our “to do” list. The first item was to fix the dilapidated wooden retaining wall, so that it is no longer falling down. We did our homework and consulted with several specialists, including a civil engineer and storm water management experts who planned the work, which was then completed by our intrepid volunteers.

On November 3, we gathered a team of 17 volunteers who put in a combined 94 hours of labor. Park volunteer Scott O’Barr, an architect, spent the day overseeing and laboring to take down and rebuild the retaining wall. The task required Scott and others to assess the condition of the wood, cut and discard some of it, dig the soil out from behind and beneath the wall, and finally rebuild the wall, making sure that it is level. It was a tough and dirty job but one that was done very well!

Another job well done that day was the cleaning of the long drainage grate on the McCallum Street side of the property, which over 30 years had filled with two to four feet of well-composted soil (that was recycled) and debris. We were also able to dig the asphalt out from one of the garden beds, which had lain empty since July. A truckload of debris was removed from the

park with the help of a neighbor who owns a truck; this debris consisted of stuff that the city’s streets department would not take away. We even dug up an artifact from the park’s previous life as a gas station that now stands in the front island bed as a piece of sculpture as well as a reminder of the past. The final job completed on November 3 consisted of weeding and grading the soil behind the wooden retaining wall to help prevent soil erosion and manage water run off.

The following week, on November 10, 15 volunteers arrived on-site to put in 90 hours of labor. Among the tasks that day were laying down an eco-friendly erosion blanket behind the wooden retaining wall; planting 225 perennial plants and 13 bushes (some of which were donated by Meadowbrook Farms Nursery); and spreading seven cubic yards of mulch. When the day’s work was finished, we stopped and assembled for a small party to celebrate the First Anniversary of the Ned Wolf Park Project with some of our near neighbors.

Over a two-week period, some of the project’s coordinators returned to plant approximately 250 spring bulbs. Also, if you happen by the park at night you may notice an additional set of spotlights with a light sensor that was installed as well.

To summarize this year’s effort to rehabilitate Ned Wolf Park: many volunteers have put in approximately 1440 volunteer hours, planting approximately 1425 perennial plants, 280 bulbs, 19 bushes, and 3 trees. Among other accomplish-

ments were the repair of the dilapidated wooden retaining wall and the decrepit inlaid brick areas of the park. We also removed several dangerous eyesores within the park boundaries and added a park sign and some lighting. In other words, an incredible amount of work was done by some very talented and hard-working people who got together for the common good while experiencing community the old fashioned way; by getting together and giving.

Approximately 100 local households have given to the project by donating time, plants, garage space, money, and utilities in the form of bathrooms, electricity, and water as well as the loan of trucks and tools. Grants of food, money, plants, gardening supplies, and raffle items were given by Weavers Way Co-op, Philadelphia Green, West Mt. Airy Neighbors, Sav-a-tree, Meadowbrook Farms Nursery, Home Depot, the Please Touch Museum, Whole Foods, Trader Joes and Jack Larimore for the park sign. We want to extend a hearty “thank you” to all of those who have come to work as well as to the many supporters of our various events throughout this year.

While things are looking good, there are still a few more issues that need to be addressed. Therefore, we will continue to apply for grants and ask for donations to continue the good work in 2008.

I am asking for volunteer help planning and providing the neighborhood



SYD CARPENTER, OUR GARDEN DESIGNER (ON RIGHT) & JANET NOVAK, OUR PROJECT BOTANIST.

with ways that they can use the park for quiet enjoyment. The goal is to respect the neighbors who live nearby. Some of my thoughts are to encourage small groups such as a tai chi class, acoustical music performances, chess club activities, and maybe an annual gathering.

I hope you will stay tuned and perhaps would like to make an end-of-year, tax-deductible donation of money to the project.

I’ll look forward to seeing you in the park.

To make a tax-deductible donation as many neighbors have, please send your check to WMAN (with “Ned Wolf Park” in the memo section), 6703 Germantown Ave., Ste.# 200, Phila, PA 19119. If you would like to plan and work on an event, purchase a shirt, or join our group of really great volunteers who help in the park, contact Ronda Throne-Murray at (215) 848-4222 or at rondazmail@verizon.net

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It Could Be Gluten

by Lis Bass

This article is part thank-you note, part warning, and part suggestion. I’ve never written a thank-you note to a store, but Weavers Way is, of course, not just a store. My family has been members for over two decades, but recently the Co-op’s significance really hit. My daughter was diagnosed with celiac disease and in the rush of searching the Internet for safe foods and diet information, I took a trip to the Co-op and found some of the specialty items right here. It felt like coming home.

Research suggests that 1 out of 133 people have celiac—97 percent undiagnosed! Years of wrong diagnoses seem a common denominator in discovering a wheat sensitivity or celiac disease. The symptoms are so disparate that I almost feel sorry for the doctors (almost). For my daughter it was years of “it’s irritable bowel syndrome (IBS); it’s all in your head; try not to be so stressed.” It was years of excruciating stomach aches, fatigue, lower immunities, and every cold and flu that came to town; of useless antibiotics and barbiturates. Then, when we finally got a definitive diagnosis for her, we did as suggested and shook the celiac’s family tree. I fell out and found a way to end decades of migraines.

Here’s the good news/bad news: Good—100-percent cure is possible with no pharmaceuticals and no surgery (you don’t even have to exercise). The bad news: the way you eat needs to be—must be—forever changed. For a celiac, gluten is like a poison and avoiding it is like dancing in a minefield. One is forced into a kind of activism, gently demanding the right not to be poisoned in restaurants, or even harder, trying to

avoid the same in your family and friends’ homes.

Because gluten reduces the ability of the body to absorb nutrients, the variety of symptoms is weirdly different: loose bowels or constipation, weight loss or weight gain, stained dental enamel or not, a rash or not, stomach pain or not, migraines or not. Also, doctors have not been trained adequately. I even took my daughter to a local nutritionist who said it couldn’t be celiac (which led to another six months of pain). Everyone who gets a diagnosis of IBS should get a celiac workup. Anybody that suddenly develops lactose intolerance after an illness, pregnancy, or a life-altering event should consider celiac testing. The first step is a blood test, though an endoscopy is the gold standard for diagnosis. Or just go 100-percent gluten free and see if your symptoms abate (no wheat, rye, spelt, or oats, directly or as additives).

And now, my suggestion. Would anyone be interested in forming a gluten-free workgroup? We could come up with ideas to help make ourselves and our co-op a safe place for “glutards.” The Co-op already has many gluten-free items: gluten free cereals, pasta, crackers, and power bars! Should we create little GF stickers? Maybe we could share a case of gluten-free pretzels, gluten-free soy sauce packets, or develop a relation with Mr. Ritt’s for fresh gluten-free baked goods (maybe the Co-op kitchen could be persuaded to make a Weavers Way gluten-free baking flour, frozen for easy use). There is so much we could do.

Interested? Please email me, Lis Bass, at LisBass@comcast.net.

Pet Store News

(continued from page 3)

pet’s health and well being without undermining their nutrition.

Unfortunately, many commercially available treats for pets are laden with undesirable or substandard ingredients. These are basically the “junk food” of pet treats. A treat of this nature contains artificial preservatives, colors, and sweeteners. Just as in humans, these additives can be harmful or even deadly to a pet, causing a host of medical issues like obesity, cancer, and diabetes.

WDJ uses specific criteria for choosing quality products. Most important, the treat should be made of healthy beneficial ingredients. The product should contain whole food ingredients including whole meat, organ, or meat meal. When feeding a treat containing grains, the grains should be whole and unprocessed. Fresh fruits and vegetables are a welcome addition and organic ingredients always top the list. Any preservatives should be natural, such as vitamins C and E (mixed tocopherols). Lastly, natural food-based sweeteners are preferable. WDJ does not endorse sweeteners in pet food, but does allow for natural sweeteners like applesauce, molasses, and honey in treats that are not given in excess.

Reading the labels on your pet’s treats is the best way to evaluate a product’s nutritional value. Red flags include low-quality protein and fat such as by-products and generic or unidentified sources such as “animal fat” or “animal protein.” Artificial colors are simply unnecessary. I think we would all agree that your pets do not particularly care what color their food is as long as it tastes great. Artificial or low-quality palatability enhancers are also undesirable. WDJ recommends avoiding salt, sweeteners like corn syrup and sucrose, and artificial flavoring like barbeque flavoring or artificial smoke flavor. Many commercially available chewy treats contain preservatives like BHA, BHT, and ethoxyquin, ingredients your pet does not need.

With these guidelines in mind, pet owners can feel confident about how they choose to reward their pet. Fortunately, there are a multitude of options available beyond the supermarkets and large retail pet stores. Selecting several high quality treats of different shapes, sizes, and textures, designed to peak your pet’s interest, ensures that your pet will stay happy and healthy.

WDJ features an expansive list of su-

perior products, many of which can be found in the pet store. Wellness Wellbars made the list of biscuit-style treats. We offer these in a fruit and yogurt flavor and fish and sweet potato formula. Recommended meat-based jerky treats include Dogswell, which come in a variety of flavors dedicated to different conditions like Happy Hips, Mellow Mutt, and Breathies. Zukes treats for dogs are available in a Hip Action formula in two flavors and Z filets beef treat. The feedback I have gotten from members about these treats has been very good. New to our inventory and suggested by WDJ are Wellness Pure Rewards and Wellbites. Among the cookie-style treats recommended are Cloud Star Buddy Biscuits with a variety of offerings from “itty bitty” size treats and Tricky Trainers perfect for training to new organic formulas. Mother Nature natural dog biscuits, Newman’s Own premium dog treats, and Old Mother Hubbard dog biscuits are a few more excellent options.

Another great product we are featuring at the pet store is Bo’s Bones. This is a top-quality product created by a small independent company in New York. They lovingly hand cut their biscuits, which are made from a simple recipe using the finest organic ingredients. The company’s founder began her enterprise as an answer to her dog Bo, a Hungarian Vizsla, and his cohorts’ demand for snacks of high quality and “superb flavor.” The eight-ounce packages come in a variety of fun shapes and designs and are guaranteed to please.

Unfortunately for cat lovers, the options for treating our furry friends are not as varied. While you may not be able to entice your feline friend to offer his paw or sit up and beg, they certainly deserve to be treated to something special. We stock Zukes for felines in three varieties, including a Hip Action formula that has gotten great member feedback. Kitty Kissers are a good option, consisting solely of freeze-dried chicken liver. Why not sample Wellness’s new pouch entrees, Healthy Indulgence, the only wheat gluten-free pouch available? These three-ounce meals come in four different flavors and are perfect for a special treat or for a kitty with a dainty appetite. I brought these home to my cats and the only sound to be heard was the smacking of little kitty lips. They were a big hit! I continue to watch out for quality cat treats.

Happily, there are so many options at the pet store that you are sure to find the perfect treat to reward your pets and keep them satisfied. Have fun experimenting—your pet will thank you for it!




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Mandate to Fumigate, Steam Raw Almonds Likely Headed to Federal Court

by Will Fantle, Cornucopia Institute Research Director

The Almond Board of California discussed a proposal from The Cornucopia Institute to modify the almond pasteurization mandate at its November meeting. Cornucopia's proposal called for placement of a warning or advisory label on unpasteurized almonds, alerting consumers to the difference. The proposal would have allowed for the continued availability of raw almonds in the marketplace, while alerting consumers such as pregnant women, immune suppressed individuals, and raw almond enthusiasts that there might be some, theoretical, increased risk of pathogenic disease from eating the untreated nuts.

Cornucopia's compromise proposal was in response to the new USDA mandate that requires all almonds to be "pasteurized" using either a toxic fumigant or steam-heating process. Many almond growers and consumers highly object, not only to the fact that these almonds will still be, deceptively, labeled as "raw," but also to the near-secrecy of the USDA's new rulemaking process.

The Almond Board rejected Cornucopia's proposal. The board's CEO, Richard Waycott, told Cornucopia that they do not have the authority to make such a decision and that only the FDA has

the power to do so. While Waycott may be technically correct, the Almond Board's support for such a plan would have carried considerable weight with federal regulators. Furthermore, Waycott indicated that the pasteurization effort was proceeding smoothly with few objections.

Such positive thinking differs markedly from what Cornucopia is hearing from organic and family-scale farmers. A number of these growers have reported unexpected increases in processing and transportation costs related to the requirement that they treat their nuts with either a fumigant or steam. And the expenses the growers are experiencing are well above the costs initially estimated by the Almond Board in their economic analysis of the rule's impact on farmers. In fact, one organic almond farmer told Cornucopia that he has lost \$450,000 in sales due to the new rule.

In late November, staff from Cornucopia were in Washington, D.C. One goal of the visit was to deliver more than 1500 individually signed proxy-letters to the USDA calling for suspension of and a full public review of the pasteurization rule, and input from all stakeholders that should have taken place initially. The proxies were in addition to thousands of

other petition signatures, e-mails and postal comments submitted to the agriculture secretary's office.

While in Washington, Cornucopia staff also appeared before the National Organic Standards Board, urging them to clarify that the toxic fumigant, propylene oxide, will not be used to treat organic almonds, something that remains unclear at this time.

Should USDA officials remain unmoved, Cornucopia expects to head into federal court seeking a judicial remedy; staff, along with their legal team, are currently doing associated research. The court option, because of its expense, has

been the last choice all along, but it may soon be the only option left to preserve market opportunities for small and organic farmers and the right of consumers to eat truly raw almonds grown in the United States.

Consumers and industry participants can add their voices to this debate by visiting Cornucopia's website (www.cornucopia.org) and downloading a proxy-letter to mail back to Cornucopia—additional proxies will be hand-delivered to the USDA. A proxy-letter, along with other background materials, can be found by clicking on the Authentic Almond Project link.

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Rendell Temporarily Blocks PA Ban on “rBGH Free” labelling

by Sustainable Food News

A controversial decision by Pennsylvania’s Department of Agriculture to crack down on what it viewed as misleading labels on dairy products has been blocked by Governor Ed Rendell.

Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff made a decision in October to ban the state’s 16 dairies selling milk in the state from claiming that their milk is made from cows not treated with artificial growth hormones.

Chuck Ardo, Rendell’s press secretary, told *Sustainable Food News* (SFN) that the governor took the decision under review after a strong public backlash, not only from industry, but also from consumers and their elected officials. Ardo told *SFN* that date will be delayed “at least” one month.

Dozens of groups—from dairy farmers to public health, animal protection and environmental organizations to food processors and retailers—wrote to Rendell to protest the decision made by Wolff, who owns a dairy farm, after he formed the Food Labeling Advisory Committee, which had its only meeting October 5.

Starting January 1, the rule would ban the state’s 16 milk-producing dairies from claiming that their milk is hormone-free or “rBST-free” (rBST stands for “recombinant bovine somatotropin,” an artificial hormone that increases milk production from cows by about 15 percent).

Or it could get scrapped altogether.

“The [Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture] action interferes with consumers’ right-to-know about the foods they eat,” said Joseph Mendelson, legal director at the Washington, D.C.-based Center for Food Safety, one of the 65 groups protesting the move. “Many consumers prefer to buy milk produced by cows not treated with artificial hormones, as evidenced by the success in stores across the country of such milk.”

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) rejected in July Monsanto Corp.’s petition to change existing procedures and take action to limit dairies’ ability to label products free of rBST, also known as rBGH (recombinant bovine growth hormone).

In April, Monsanto asked the FTC and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to investigate what it alleged were false

and misleading advertising claims made by many dairies, including claims that there are health and safety risks associated with milk from cows treated with rBST.

But the FTC said in an August 21 letter to Monsanto that the agrochemical giant’s allegations were a bit thin.

“We have determined that formal investigation and enforcement action is not warranted at this time,” the letter read.

The FDA told Monsanto in June it did not have the resources to change existing procedures.

The FDA approved the use of the synthetic hormone in 1994. Some consumers

fear the synthetic hormones cause cancer or premature development in children. Some countries have banned the use of such hormones, but primarily because of their effect on cows.

Many dairies now say their milk comes from cows not treated with rBST, and have seen their sales rise.

In its original letter to the FDA, Monsanto states: “For years now, deceptive milk labeling practices have misled consumers about the quality, safety, or value of milk and milk products from cows supplemented with recombinant bovine somatotropin.”

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Defend Yourself Against the Onslaught ...of Junk Mail

by Tom Laskawy

Of all holiday marketing onslaughts, the stacks of mail-order catalogs that come pouring into our houses every day are perhaps the hardest to ignore. Some of these catalogs are from retailers from whom we've ordered in the past, but dozens more are sent as "prospecting" efforts by companies that have purchased our personal information from others. The sheer volume of catalogs we receive is explained by the fact that the companies themselves expect you to ignore their mailings almost 99 percent of the time.

Yet this isn't simply a problem of clutter in our mailboxes (not to mention our living rooms, kitchens, bedrooms, bathrooms, cars, and wherever else those pesky catalogs end up). There's a much better reason to act. Or rather 53 million reasons. For that's the number of trees required every year to supply the paper for the 19 billion catalogs mailed annually to consumers. That's like destroying 2,000 Central Parks. Every year.

To put those figures in further perspective, Environmental Defense's Paper Calculator website estimates that the natural resources used in catalog production are equivalent to the energy required to power 1.2 million homes (38 trillion BTUs) for one year, or 5.2 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions (the annual emissions of 2 million cars).

As a result, it's hard to take seriously assurances from the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) that catalog shopping has a positive environmental impact by reducing mall trips and thus eliminating (according to their calculations) 35,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions. If you do the math, you'll see that this theoretical

reduction in mall trips is 0.007 percent of the equivalent emissions produced in the creation of the catalogs in the first place.

But nobody is advocating that we totally eliminate paper catalogs — after all, they save all those mall trips! Rather it's a matter of addressing the unsustainability of a practice that occurs with no consumer choice and significant environmental impact, and all for the sake of a 1.5-percent chance that someone will respond to an unsolicited catalog by actually buying something.

Making matters worse, it has historically been time-consuming and inconvenient for an individual consumer to opt out of receiving catalogs. Most companies don't have a publicized process. As Daniel Katz, chairman and co-founder of the Rainforest Alliance and environmental director of the Overbrook Foundation, put it, "if you want to get a catalog, it'll take you a couple of seconds, no problem. But, unfortunately, to get off of a catalog mailing list it takes quite a long time. It's arduous."

In response to this problem, Katz, through the Overbrook Foundation, helped finance the creation of Catalog Choice (www.catalogchoice.org), a website that allows you to opt out of just about any catalog you currently receive, for free.

Catalog Choice, a collaboration of the National Wildlife Foundation, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the National Wildlife Foundation, Forest Ethics, the Ecology Center, and the Center for the New American Dream, was launched in October 2007 and features an easy-to-use website from which you can quickly browse a "database" of catalogs and select catalogs to discontinue.

Once you've registered with the website, you need to choose a set of catalogs and enter your name exactly as it appears printed on the catalog (and, optionally, your customer number). Catalog Choice handles the rest of the transaction, and estimates that within 10 weeks (possibly less now that the holiday season is behind us), all of the catalogs you have selected will stop clogging up your mailbox.

They certainly seem to have tapped into significant pent-up demand, if the media coverage they have received is any indication: NPR, Bill Moyers, CNN, the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* have all reported on the web site. In fact, according to the Catalog Choice website, over 250,000 people have opted out of 2.5 million catalogs in the first month of the service's operation.

Catalog Choice has also introduced a program for catalog merchants. To date, only about 60 merchants, including L.L. Bean, Lands End, Gardeners' Supply, REI, and Lillian Vernon have signed up for this merchant program in which participants receive large batches of opt-out requests directly from the Catalog Choice website.

In the coming months, Catalog Choice will also release a set of "Best Practices" for mail-order catalog companies to make the entire business more sustainable. As April Smith, the Catalog Choice project manager, says, "We're not anti-catalog at all. We recognize the environmental benefit [of catalog and online shopping]." The goal, instead, is "smarter mailing." With the rise



in postage and fuel costs (it already costs an average of \$0.70 to produce and mail a single catalog), more and more companies will likely realize the benefits of such a program and get behind Catalog Choice.

One current shortcoming of Catalog Choice, however, is its inability to address future mailings in a blanket fashion. After all, canceling the catalogs you currently receive will not stop new companies from buying your information and reopening the floodgates. Compounding the problem is the absence of a Do Not Mail equivalent to the federal and state-level Do Not Call lists, although 15 states (not including Pennsylvania) are currently considering Do Not Mail legislation.

The options are relatively limited. There are several sites that offer to reduce your junk mail generally, such as www.stopthejunkmail.com or www.proquo.com. But most charge as much as \$19.95 per year for the service, and all are for-profit services. In the case of proquo.com, their opt-out service is free, but in the future, they plan to make mon-

(continued on page 13)



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Catalogues
(continued from page 12)

ey by charging direct mail companies for access to a consumer’s list of “opt-in” mail choices—no word on what would happen to their opt-out service if merchants pass on their opt-in offering.

But unlike using Catalog Choice, which is both free and not-for-profit, using these other services requires an annual payment for a process that should be free (it’s your personal information that’s being bought and sold, after all) and prompts worries about what might be done with your personal data.

According to Smith, Catalog Choice is currently “in discussions with merchants and other organizations about how we can expand the service to meet a variety of needs.” Whether this means Catalog Choice will become a one-stop shop for junk mail reduction remains to be seen. For now, the options remain relatively limited.

Perhaps the least-worst option for fighting noncatalog junk mail involves participating in the DMAbn km ’s “Mail Preference Service.” While it fights tooth and nail to prevent Do Not Mail bills from becoming law, the DMA does offer this blanket opt-out list to which its members must adhere. This feature is available online at www.dmachoice.org in the Consumer Assistance section. The DMA charges \$1 for this service (presumably to prevent “pranksters” from opting out millions of Americans, thus destroying American commerce as we know it), and it points out that only DMA members par-

ticipate in this program. Nevertheless, you should see a reduction in your junk mail.

If even that doesn’t feel like enough of a blow against unwanted mail, you can use the major credit reporting agencies’ free opt-out service for eliminating those “pre-approved” credit card and insurance offers. By calling (888) 5OPT-OUT (no online option is available) and following the automated instructions, you can add the names of all members of a household to the credit reporting services’ do-not-mail list. Not all credit card and insurance companies use information from credit agencies to construct their mailing lists, but most major credit card and insurance companies do.

The final step you can take in your quest to reduce unsolicited mail is to ensure that you never give out your phone number to any merchant if you can possibly resist it. In particular, chain supermarket and pharmacy “discount card” programs are notorious for acting as massive data collection services: your buying habits being at least as valuable as your name and address. One easy solution to this particular problem, of course, is to do all your shopping at Weavers Way.

In the end, however, it’s clear that the one thing you absolutely cannot do is eliminate the root cause of this mass of useless, unwanted, and wasteful mail. The roaring trade in consumers’ names, addresses, telephone numbers, and buying habits is a practice that feeds the monumental marketing machines of U.S. businesses. And that, it seems, is as American as apple pie.

The Simplicity Dividend
Wheels on the Bus Go Green Green Green!

by Betsy Teutsch

Philadelphia is blessed with an enormously underused asset: our mass transit system. Folks who grew up here and used the bus system as students have internalized the random route patterns of SEPTA, but for us immigrants to Philadelphia, they are a complete mystery. For over 20 years, I have walked by the sign by my nearest transit stop, which simply says “H”. There is no clue as to what this means, how much bus fare is, when the bus might come, where it goes to, or what is along the route. Just “H.” The message is that if I don’t know where the H goes to, in either direction, I just don’t belong to the secret H society, and I probably have no business thinking about taking it.

Hopefully this will all change as we wean ourselves off car dependency. We might be doing this because we’ve embarked on an ecological footprint diet, because gas is \$10 a gallon and we don’t want to sit in traffic burning up our time and our money, because we no longer own a car, or because it is expensive and stressful to find parking spots at our destination. Sustainable Mt. Airy, a consortium of local groups including Weavers Way, has been working together to create a shared, expanded vision of life in our eco-hamlet. We’ve generated lots of great ideas

to collectively lower our energy consumption, and one of them is educating locals about mass transit and promoting ridership. The Trolley Car Diner, with mass transit in its DNA, graciously agreed to partner with us on our first concrete project, a local transit map placemat. So the next time you eat at The Trolley Car, be sure to ask for one. Kids receive them automatically—one side has games and activities, and the other side features a detailed local map with our buses, train routes, and PhillyCarShare pods. All kinds of transportation possibilities become visible. For example, did you know you can take the #R1 straight to the airport from Wayne Junction in Germantown? None of us did! The map is posted online at <http://www.sustainablemtairy.org/MtAirySEPTA.pdf>.

Thanks go to David Kanthor of Center City District (CCD) and MAGNet, Steve Spindler of Steve Spindler Cartography, and the folks at the Trolley Car Diner. The project was conceived and coordinated by Meenal Raval and myself, members of the Sustainable Mt. Airy taskforce. See you on the bus. I’ll be the one reading a good book, instead of sitting in a single-occupancy vehicle inching along in a traffic jam, staring at the car in front of me!

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UK Study Says Organic Is Healthier

by Sustainable Food News

The Organic Trade Association (OTA) has hailed initial findings of a four-year European Union study indicating organic foods are more nutritional than their nonorganic counterparts.

“This study may be the breakthrough that helps prove what many in the organic sector believe to be true about food grown using organic practices,” said Caren Wilcox, OTA’s executive director.

Patrick Holden, director of the Soil Association, Britain’s leading organic certification body and trade advocate, echoed that sentiment Monday in a statement.

“For the past 60 years, the Soil Association has sought on the basis of practical observation, underpinned where available by sound science, to show the benefits of sustainable, organic farming to the health of people and the planet. On a far larger scale, with much greater resources and more precise, modern analytical methods, this EU-funded project builds on what our founder Lady Eve Balfour sought to do on just 200 acres and with a shoestring budget back in 1939.”

The OTA study was released by professor Carlo Leifert of the Tesco Centre for Organic Agriculture based at Newcastle University in the United Kingdom.

Preliminary results from this study, which is part of the EU-funded Quality Low Input Food (QLIF) Project, show organic fruit and vegetables have up to 40 percent more antioxidants than non-organically grown produce, and organic milk contains up to 60 to 80 percent more antioxidants than conventionally produced milk in the summer, and 50- to 60-percent higher levels in the winter.

Organic milk was also found to contain higher levels of vitamin E.

In announcing the preliminary results, Leifert said such benefits suggest that eating organic food would be equivalent to eating an extra portion of fruit and vegetables a day.

The research team, led by Leifert, has been raising fruits, vegetables, and cows both organically and non-organically on sites on a 725-acre farm near Newcastle University.

The QLIF Project, set up in March 2004, is funded with a grant of \$25.8 million from the EU. The research program involves 31 research centers, companies, and universities in Europe and elsewhere.

Final results from the study are expected to be published during the next year.

Organic Milk May Prevent Asthma, Excema

by Jonathan McGoran

According to an article in the U.K.’s *Guardian* newspaper, new results from a Dutch study show a much lower incidence of eczema, asthma and related allergies among babies whose mothers drank organic milk during pregnancy and while breastfeeding. The study showed similar benefit among children who drink organic milk themselves. Researchers conclude that “the consumption of organic dairy products, within the context of an organic diet, is associated with the ... reduced incidence of eczema.”

This is especially important amid concerns of dramatically increased frequency of those conditions, with some estimates claiming that as many one-third of all children in western societies exhibiting symptoms.

The study, called the Koala Study (a Dutch acronym for Child, Parent and Health: Lifestyle and Genetic Constitution), suggests the breastmilk from mothers who consumed organic milk provides some protection or immunity against allergens. They measured organic food consumption, eczema, and wheeze in infants until the age of two, using repeated questionnaires completed by their parents at key dates. Diet was defined as conventional (less than 50 percent organic), moderately organic (50-90 percent), or strictly organic (more than 90 percent).

They also acknowledged earlier studies showing eczema, allergies, and asthma are lower in children from families that eat organic food, that use few antibiotics and aspirin, and where children are breastfed for longer.

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Feeding Your Brain

by Peter Samuel

Sometimes it takes a traumatic event to get us focused on something that we haven't thought about before. That was the case two years ago when I fell off a seven-foot cliff in the Grand Canyon and knocked myself unconscious. The fall caused a concussion—an injury to the brain—in which the jarring of the brain against my skull caused it to bleed. "You have a subdural hematoma," said the doctor who performed the CT scan on my head a few days later.

According to the Brain Injury Association, someone in the United States sustains a traumatic brain injury every 15 seconds. Vehicle crashes, falls, and sports injuries are the three leading causes. These injuries can leave victims with temporary or permanent cognitive and emotional problems, including memory loss, speech impairments, fatigue, and impulsive behavior. Mine caused severe headaches, extreme lethargy, and an inability to speak clearly or use words correctly in a sentence for almost a month, with lingering effects for another six months. Yes, it's scary. What this incident made me realize was how much I take my brain for granted. Perhaps I, like many people, assume that my brain will continue to function and take care of things while I go out and act

crazy and fall off cliffs in the middle of the night. Not necessarily.

The combination of my confusion caused by the concussion, and my usual imperfect memory—possibly a symptom of the aging process—got me to thinking (at least I am still capable of that) about whether I need to baby and nurture my brain more. Besides doing a crossword puzzle everyday to keep the synapses popping, I started to wonder if I really need to get more focused on keeping my brain healthy and feeding it better.

Seeing that the Co-op does not have a special "brain food" section, and frustrated by the lack of details in the Frankenstein movie where the Doctor is keeping many brains alive in large beakers in his lab, I decided that I would need to find out what foods my brain really needs to keep in shape and what it craves.

The average adult brain weighs about three pounds, representing between two to three percent of a person's total body weight. It is the most vital part of your body and by far the most complex, using the most energy. A healthy adult brain has 100 billion nerve cells, or neurons, with long branching extensions connected at 100 trillion points. At these connections, or synapses, information flows in tiny chemical pulses. Different patterns of signals move constantly through the brain's circuits, creating the cellular basis of memories and thoughts. The brain uses from 20 to 25 percent of all the oxygen the body requires, and in the meantime controls all your body functions from life support systems like respiration and circulation, to seeing, hearing, decision-making, emotions, conversation, and learning.

Have you ever noticed that a high-carbohydrate lunch can make you feel sluggish, while a high-protein meal in the

Important foods for keeping your brain healthy

Vitamin B1 (Thiamine)—essential for healthy brain and nerve cells. It is found in whole grain and enriched grain products like bread, rice, pasta, and fortified cereals, pasta, as well as pork.

Vitamin B5 (Pantothenic acid)—forms a coenzyme that helps in transmission of nerve impulses. It can be found in meat, poultry, fish, whole-grain cereals, legumes, milk, vegetables, and fruit.

Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine)—helps convert tryptophan into serotonin, a brain chemical. It can be found in chicken, fish, pork, liver, and kidney, as well as whole grain cereals, nuts, and legumes.

Vitamin B12 (Cyanocobalamin)—helps maintain healthy nervous tissue. It is found in eggs, meat, fish, poultry, and milk and dairy products.

Folic acid—essential for metabolism of long-chain fatty acids in the brain. It is found in bananas, orange juice, fortified cereals, lemons, strawberry, cantaloupe, leafy vegetables, dried beans and peas. It is especially important for pregnant women because low levels increase the risk of neural tube defects in newborns.

The following minerals play a role in nerve function:

Magnesium—found in whole grains, legumes, nuts, and green vegetables.

Potassium—found in apricots, avocados, bananas, cantaloupe, grapefruit, honeydew, kiwi, oranges, prunes, strawberries, potatoes, meat, and fish.

Calcium—found in milk and milk products such as cheese, yogurt, calcium-fortified foods, and fish with edible bones.

middle of the day can make you more alert into the afternoon? Brain cells communicate with one another via neurotransmitters, which are made of amino acids, the building blocks of protein. What you eat affects which nerve chemicals will be dominant in your brain.

Carbohydrates can make you feel tired because they increase the brain's level of the amino acid tryptophan, which in turn spurs the brain to make the calming neurotransmitter serotonin. Serotonin is important for normal sleep patterns, learning, blood pressure, and appetite, among many other functions.

Eating protein raises the levels of another amino acid called tyrosine, which prompts the brain to manufacture norepi-

nephine and dopamine, other kinds of chemical messengers in the brain. These can help keep you energized because they promote alertness and activity.

In the aftermath of a concussion you will experience symptoms similar to those of a disorder of the brain known as dementia, such as loss of memory, inability to generate coherent speech or understand written language, an incapacity to carry out complex tasks, or an inability to process visual information. The main difference is that dementia is irreversible. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of this, accounting for 50 to 70 percent of the cases. Thirteen percent of people over 65 have the disease and nearly

(continued on page 16)




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Brain Food

(continued from page 15)

half of people over age 85 have it. Currently it affects 4.9 million Americans over age 65 and another half million younger than that. In another 40 years it is estimated that possibly 16 million people in the United States will be diagnosed with Alzheimer’s. What to do?

At the Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University they have discovered that if a person consumes fruits and vegetables with a high ORAC (oxygen radical absorbance capacity) value, they may be able to slow the aging process in both body and brain. These are foods that have the ability to subdue oxygen free radicals in your blood. While they have been studying the impacts of these foods on rats, they have drawn many conclusions that are applicable to humans. Their research suggests that diminished brain function associated with aging and Alzheimer’s disease could be due to increased vulnerability to those free radicals.

They found that by giving aging rats a daily dose of spinach extract they were able to prevent loss of long-term memory and learning ability. James Joseph from Tufts University said “the findings, so far, suggest that nutritional intervention with fruits and vegetables may play an important role in preventing the long-term ef-

fects of oxidative stress on brain function.” See accompanying chart of antioxidants.

Another substance that has been discovered to aid in the function of brain cells is omega-3 fatty acids. This is probably because brains are around 60 per cent fat and the cells must constantly refresh themselves with a new supply of fatty acids. Studies have found that they also help to counteract free radicals and help improve the efficiency of nerve signal transmissions at the synapses. Fatty acids are mostly found in cold water fish such as salmon, cod, mackerel, tuna, sardines, and anchovies. Or if you don’t eat fish, these fatty acids can be found in flax seeds, walnuts, and cooked soybeans. It is recommended that you eat one of these fatty acids at least two to three times per week.

Other foods that are good for the brain include cruciferous vegetables (such as broccoli and cauliflower), which have proven to slow down age-related declines in memory; and green leafy vegetables (I already mentioned spinach, but don’t forget kale, collards, and Swiss chard), which contain lots of folates that help prevent strokes—strokes are the cause of 25 percent of dementia cases.

The fruit that gets the most kudos for brain protection is blueberries. They have more antioxidant power than 50 other fresh fruits and vegetables. They also combat inflammation. Dr Jean Mayer at Tufts

says “inflammation and oxidative stress are the evil Gemini twins of aging.” If you look at the chart you will see that most of the fruits and vegetables are very deeply colored; we know this is the result of high levels of beta-carotene, which is a known antioxidant powerhouse.

One other substance that can help your brain, but is not available at the Co-op, is alcohol. New research suggests that moderate drinking (about one glass per day) may help the brain by boosting blood flow and reducing the risk of tiny strokes. Red wine is especially good.

And for those of you hooked on caffeine—the world’s most popular drug—the latest research out of Austria says that people who received caffeine in their testing had significantly greater activation in parts of the prefrontal lobe, known as the anterior cingulate. This is the area involved in short-term memory, attention, concentration, planning, and monitoring. “Caffeine modulates a higher brain function through its effects on distinct areas of the brain,” explains Dr. Florian Koppelstätter

Foods High in Antioxidants

(listed from most to lesser amounts)

Fruits	Vegetables
Prunes	Kale
Raisins	Spinach
Blueberries	Brussels sprouts
Blackberries	Alfalfa sprouts
Strawberries	Broccoli florets
Raspberries	Beets
Plums	Red bell peppers
Oranges	Onions
Red grapes	Corn
Cherries	Eggplant

(really, I didn’t make up that name!).

And in what quantities should you eat these foods? The latest recommendation is to make protein 15 percent of your total calories, carbohydrates 55 to 65 percent and fat intake 20 to 30 percent."

Now that I have promised myself not to step off any more cliffs and to be diligent about avoiding other traumatic injuries to my brain, I will be busy attempting to keep my 1 trillion brain cells well fed and thriving—more blueberries, salmon, and spinach for me!

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Manager's Corner
(continued from page 1)

ect off the ground. While this did not happen, I am reminded that this is an institutional learning process and it may take a little longer.

Norman did not get a movie contract and did not move to Hollywood, or Bollywood. Computerization of the membership work calendar and membership management of their records and sign up did not get completed. We made good progress, and I hope we will see this rolled out in the first half of 2008. This system will allow members to update their records online (address, phone numbers, household members, etc) and to sign up for hours online from home, if they want, and to be reminded by e-mail.

Things started or completed in 2007

Weavers Way Community Programs (WWCP) got off the ground with a dedicated board of directors headed up by Bob Noble and help from Mt. Airy Community Srrvices Corporation (MACSC), the 501(c)3 nonprofit of which it is a part. WWCP was able to secure funds for

Weavers Way's community nonprofit programs. Funding started to come in for programs from foundations, members, and others. This to me is one of the important initiatives for us as a way to meet our Ends goals and our "triple bottom line" mission.

My understanding of member values has increased. I had for a number of years focused on the financial bottom line along with the social bottom line without thinking about the future planning for a second site from a standpoint of values. I think I get it now after our last General Membership Meeting. If I do not get it, I am sure members will let me know.

Weavers Way Farm started in January and by the end of December had netted not only two wonderful farmers (David and David), but also over \$45,000 in product. Our farmers educated hundreds of children, adults, and volunteers at the Weavers Way farm at Awbury. We also became an important force in urban agriculture working in conjunction with City Harvest, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society programs, the Saul School, Awbury, Penn State Extension Services, and the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA).

Benefits improved a little more for the staff and we hope to increase that in 2008.

The Shuttle went monthly in January 2007, and Jon rolled out the monthly e-mail newsletter. He continued to upgrade the website with more content and attempted to keep this octopus of a site up to date; not as easy as we thought it would be.

The Education Committee expanded

their programs to a monthly movie at the Video Library screening room. These movies have been cosponsored by other committees at times and they usually have excellent attendance.

Weavers Way secured a Pennsylvania energy matching grant of over \$50,000 to install solar panels on the roof of the store. The total cost of the project will be just over \$100,000. Steve Hebden, working with one of our members, wrote a proposal to make this happen and we hope that we can move forward soon with this project.

What to expect for 2008

We are looking at opening a small store (700 square feet) in Ogontz at 72nd and Walnut Street. In November, the Ogontz Avenue Revitalization Corporation (OARC) approached Weavers Way and with the Business Center at New Covenant and requested that we look at assisting them with opening a storefront that would sell quality local produce in that community. The board and the management team have reviewed the program and we are now looking at reopening a closed store in February.

We also want to find and secure a second larger location near the Co-op that allows for greater product selection, loading dock, production kitchen, service area, large community room, etc.

We hope to expand the farm at Awbury or other locations.

We also hope to expand the Marketplace program from the current five middle schools to additional middle or high schools.

We hope to see the rebirth of the nonprofit group, Education for Alternative Economics (EAE), a nonprofit whose mission is to educate the community about cooperative businesses. We receive at least one call a week asking us to open a store in the area of the caller. Communities want to grow stronger; one way is through cooperative development.

And of course, the Phillies will win the World Series, Norman will get his contract for a Hollywood movie, and Joe and Keith will open a cooperative brew pub.

For the entire Weavers Way staff, we thank you for your input and hard work to the Co-op and look forward to working with you in 2008.

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Dare I Compare Thee, Dairy Case?

by Josh Giblin

By now, you’ve probably encountered our brand spankin’ new dairy case and I’m sure you’re very excited. It seems like a good time, then, to let you know how our recent dairy price comparison work turned out. I wish I could report major savings at Weavers Way, but unfortunately, Whole Foods is spanking us on price on many of our national brand items. Buying one of each of the 34 items, you would spend an extra \$6.09 at Weavers Way. The biggest difference is on butter; our Cabot brand is about a dollar more expensive than their in-house brand (365), so perhaps this is a slightly unfair comparison. Many other items are about 25¢ less at Whole Foods, so in general, we’re not so far off. Lactaid buyers will be happy to know they pay 59¢ less for their quarts here.

Big Milk Savings at Weavers Way

What is conspicuously absent from our comparison chart is straight-up Milk, which we get from Merrymead Farm, a local dairy. You will not find Merrymead’s products anywhere else in such variety and quantity, let alone a huge store like Whole Foods. This is a great local product and is the foundation of our dairy case. Buying one each of comparable “365” milks at Whole Foods (their buttermilk is Sealtest) would actually cost you \$3.32 more! Oh, they also don’t carry chocolate milk pints, which are a favorite of our shoppers. You are getting a great savings on a major staple of your fridge.

Another great local product not stocked at our large competitor is Pequa Valley yogurt, and many of you know about the superior qualities of this item. Other products you won’t find at Whole Foods include Stonyfield Smoothies, Willow Run Soybean Margarine, and Just Pik’t Grapefruit Juice.

Dairy Price Comparison, Pt. 2			
September 27, 2007			
	Weavers Way Merrymead	Whole Foods “365” Brand	Price Difference
Milk, Non-Organic			
Fat Free Skim Milk, Gallon	4.25	5.49	1.24
Fat Free Skim Milk, 1/2 Gallon	2.27	2.09	(0.18)
Fat Free Skim Milk, Quart	1.19	1.29	0.10
1% Low Fat Milk, Gallon	4.35	5.49	1.14
2% Milk, 1/2 Gallon	2.35	2.09	(0.26)
2% Milk, Quart	1.26	1.29	0.03
Whole Milk, Quart	1.31	1.29	(0.02)
Whole Milk, Pint	0.80	0.79	(0.01)
Half & Half, Pint	1.23	1.79	0.56
Heavy Cream, 1/2 Pint	1.30	1.69	0.39
Whole Milk Buttermilk, Quart	1.66	1.99	0.33

Prices shown may not reflect most current prices at these stores.

Dairy Products Price Comparison				
September 27, 2007				
Brand	Description	Weavers Way	Whole Foods	Price Difference
Milk				
Natural by	Fat Free Skim Milk, 1/2 Gal.	3.80	3.49	(0.31)
Nature	1% Low Fat Milk, 1/2 Gal.	3.80	3.49	(0.31)
	Whole Milk, 1/2 Gal.	3.80	3.49	(0.31)
Organic	Lactose Free Lowfat Milk, 1/2 Gal.	4.01	4.39	0.38
Valley	Lactose Free Lowfat Milk	2.51	2.19	(0.32)
	Organic Half & Half, Pint	1.97	1.69	(0.28)
Silk	Organic Soymilk, 1/2 Gal.	3.84	3.49	(0.35)
	Organic Soymilk, Quart	2.26	1.99	(0.27)
	Creamer, Plain, Pint	1.47	1.59	0.12
Meyenberg	Goat Milk, Quart	4.10	3.49	(0.61)
Lactaid	100% Lactose Free Fat Free Milk, Quart	1.90	2.49	0.59
Yogurt				
Stonyfield	All Natural Fat Free Plain	0.90	0.99	0.09
Farm	All Natural Fat Free Flavored	0.90	0.99	0.09
	Organic FF, LF or WM, Quart	3.73	3.39	(0.34)
	Organic Flavored, 6 oz.	0.90	0.99	0.09
	Yo Baby Organic Whole Milk, 6 Pk	3.50	3.29	(0.21)
Brown Cow	All Natural Nonfat Flavored	1.04	0.89	(0.15)
	All Natural Low Fat Flavored	1.04	0.89	(0.15)
	All Natural Cream Top Flavored	1.04	0.89	(0.15)
Redwood Hill	Goat Milk Yogurt, Plain	2.09	1.89	(0.20)
Erivan	Acidophilus Yogurt, Plain	2.08	1.79	(0.29)
	Yogurt with Granola, Raisin Almond	1.34	1.09	(0.25)
Seven Stars	Organic Plain, Original or Lowfat	3.35	3.19	(0.16)
	Organic Vanilla or Lowfat Maple	3.95	3.89	(0.06)
Miscellaneous				
Cabot	Salted Butter AA	4.25	3.19	(1.06)
	Unsalted Butter AA	4.25	3.29	(0.96)
Organic Valley	Organic Lowfat Sour Cream	2.95	2.89	(0.06)
Organic Valley	Organic Lowfat Cottage Cheese	4.35	3.29	(1.06)
Friendship	All Natural Low Fat Cottage Cheese	2.71	2.49	(0.22)
Biazzo	Whole Milk Ricotta	2.94	2.69	(0.25)
Nature's Yoke	All Natural Grade A Large Eggs, Dz.	1.98	1.99	0.01
Nature's Yoke	Organic Grade A Extra Large Eggs, Dz.	2.95	2.89	(0.06)
Sealtest	Premium Orange Juice	3.95	3.99	0.04
Just Pik't	Fresh Frozen Orange Juice	2.91	2.99	0.08

Prices shown may not reflect most current prices at these stores.

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Book Review

Ghosh by Gosh!

by Larry Schofer

I have become accustomed to seeing interesting, sometimes outstanding novels come from writers from India—Arundathi Roy, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri—these come to mind, but I was totally unprepared for the brilliance of Amitav Ghosh’s *The Hungry Tide* (published 2005).

Some of these writers are describing ethnic groups in America coming to terms with a society different from that of their parents, but for Ghosh this is only a jump-ing-off point.

Here the setting is Bengal, both in Bangladesh and in India. The main characters are a young American cetologist (you’ll have to look that one up yourself) of Bengali parentage and a translator living in New Delhi. As the cetologist tracks dol-phins, a whole segment of society opens in front of her (and the reader). She meets accommodating people in everyday life; she runs up against a suspicious govern-ment and corrupt, cruel, macho govern-ment agents. And she meets people on the islands along the shores of Bangladesh that change her whole way of looking at the world. Her whole life is tied up with her scientific pursuits and making her way in what is usually a man’s world. She is suc-cessful enough in her own eyes, but she achieves her success at the cost of not hav-ing any very close personal relationships.

In the meantime, the translator pur-sues her as an attractive woman. Initially, he is just a man on the make, but he too is changed as together they meet the terrible poverty of the coastal islands and the gritty

determination of a few people to change their own lives. The lives of these two for a short time become entwined with that of a married couple, one a nurse bent on im-proving her station in life, the other a man satisfied with an impoverished existence as a fisherman.

The cast of supporting characters is also quite inter-esting. The translator learns about his family from his aunt, a social crusader who still works in the islands, and he learns about the mystical experiences of his uncle, who had to hide his private life from his wife. Meanwhile, the cetologist arouses jealousy in the wife of the poor fisher-man who so entrances her.

This is not a book about social reform masquerading as a novel. It is a powerful story that grabs the reader and won’t let go, while at the same time painting the picture of an entire world contained in the microcosm of a small is-land subject to the vagaries of sea storms. The main characters mature very quickly as they meet overwhelming experiences on the water and in the water.

Ghosh, a journalist and novelist, takes quite another approach in *Glass Palace*, which is a historical novel in an older vein, that of a family novel. There is no single hero; there are two interrelated families, moving from Burma in the early 20th cen-tury down to the Japanese bombing and invasion in World War II. The characters

start young and grow old. The teak planta-tions make some people rich and others sensitive to the world around them.

All the while Burma and India were changing, and the characters have children who change with the world. This book is reminiscent of some of the impressive family novels about Eastern Europe that I have read, in particular I. B. Singer’s *The Family Carnovsky* and I. J. Singer’s *The Brothers Ashke-nazi*. All these books share the virtue of painting a picture of an age while at the same time giving believable, developing characters.

I knew nothing of the king of Burma before I read this book. I knew nothing of teak. I knew nothing of the Japan-ese in Burma during World War II, and I knew nothing of the moral dilemmas of native Indians who had grown up in the British army, who then found themselves in agony at the end of World War II—do they stay faithful to their oaths and train-ing as British soldiers, or do they become anti-British Indian nationalists? It is easy to make a broad-brush judgment that one should be “anti-colonialist,” but Ghosh brings this moral decision down to the personal level. It wasn’t such a simple task.

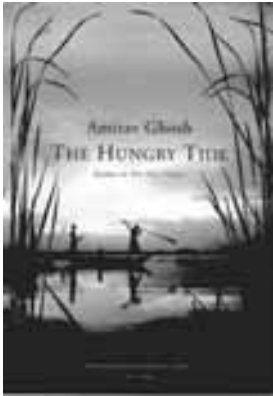
Glass Palace begins with the rarified atmosphere of the royal court of Burma. Eventually, the British colonial adminis-tration decides that the royal family is in

the way, and the solution is to move the entire court to a backwater far off in India. A small group of attendants go with the court, and it is one of those attendants who becomes a major figure in the novel. In a series of coincidences worthy of Charles Dickens, a once homeless boy turned timber entrepreneur manages to get to the site of the Burmese court dias-pora. He convinces a young lady whom he had glimpsed once as a child to return with him to Burma, where they go on to create a small industrial dynasty.

Other families become intertwined with the timber merchant, and this small group of Bengalis living in Burma become the center of momentous changes in world history, culminating in the destruc-tion of British rule in south Asia.

And if you want to know something of Indian intellectuals, of turmoil in India, of Kashmir, of the assassination of Indira Gandhi, of right-wing Hindu nationalists and of upright people protecting the in-nocent, read Ghosh’s series of journalistic essays in *Incendiary Circumstances: A Chronicle of the Turmoil of Our Time*, which also takes the reader to the tsunامي in the Pacific, the Khmer Rouge in Cam-bodia, and to Vietnam.

Just as I finished writing this, I got a li-brary notice that Ghosh’s *Calcutta Chro-mosome* had arrived. I tore open the book to find a completely different genre, but one very appealing nevertheless. To read Ghosh is a revelation—this is a writer and journalist for our times!





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Made in China Means... Organic?

by Grant Alger

The summer pleasures of fresh produce and outdoor living were sullied this year by regular reports of potentially poisonous products making their way to U.S. stores from China, from dog food to toys. Yet there are also signs that China is making progress toward producing healthier products for both domestic and international consumption.

One trend worth highlighting is the steady growth of an organic foods movement in China. While walking around Shanghai this summer, I visited the Health Organic food store on Luban Street, which its proprietor declares is that city’s first store devoted to organic products. This is quite a claim for a city of over 20 million people, and one that I’m not prepared to verify. However, my conversation with the owner, Lu Zhenhong, and my survey of his small shop’s offerings provided a lesson in some of the contradictions that are now commonplace in China as a result of the country’s radical market reforms over the last 20 years.

On the one hand, China’s process of “opening up” and economic deregulation has invited corner-cutting by domestic manufacturers and U.S. multinationals that has often led to miserable working conditions and weak quality control in the country’s production plants. On the other hand, the reforms are succeeding in making China wealthier and in turn stimulating a demand from the expanding middle class for more sustainable production methods and more “green” products, including organic foods.

China’s citizens are just as worried as Americans about pesticides and heavy metals in their food. Lu Zhenhong told me he turned to organic products because of chronic health problems he suffered, especially the discomfort that resulted

from eating dairy products. Sounding like a true salesman, he insisted with a smile that since going organic his longstanding health issues have completely disappeared.

The Health Organic store contains an array of products all labeled “organic,” including fresh produce, dairy products, crackers and snacks, bottled juices, and even organic wine and beer. On the Saturday afternoon when I visited, it was not particularly crowded and Lu hinted that he was still getting off the ground. The cost of his items may be an issue for many would-be customers. While the staff did not look favorably upon my attempts to take notes on the cost of various items, Li offered that his prices were generally 15 to 50 percent higher than those found in regular markets. This is a large premium for a city where the average monthly income is around \$230.

But China exhibits great extremes of wealth and poverty. In Shanghai you can enjoy a filling dinner for less than \$3 at a family-owned eatery or spend over \$100 and walk away hungry in one of the city’s ultra chic restaurants for the new rich. So there is no question Shanghai and other cities already have a large potential audience for pricier organic food. This audience is interested in “organic” not only for its health advantages, but also for its international cachet. Foreign-branded premium goods are always attractive to status-conscious Chinese, and the idea of eating organic fits in with the desire for Chinese to be “international” in their consumption habits.

While Lu is one of China’s organic pioneers, he also has the support of the Chinese government and a growing, multi-million dollar domestic industry. This August, no doubt to counteract all the nega-

tive reports from China about food safety, the official Xinhua news agency issued a White Paper that announced “China among world’s top ten in green food farming” with over 2 million hectares of land producing “certified organic products.” (This comprises about one percent of China’s cultivatable land). The organic food industry reportedly has been growing nearly 50 percent a year over the past few years, mostly from exports. Among the more than \$300 million in organic foods that China exported last year were some products found at the Co-op, such as the organic edamame beans sold in the freezer case. Thanks to the efforts of people like Lu Zhenhong, however, the domestic market is expanding as well.

The Chinese government and its citizens know that the rapid, even revolutionary, economic development of their country cannot be sustained if the destruction of the country’s air, water, and land continues at its current pace. The moves to build an organic food industry reflect an encouraging effort to grapple with this issue. It’s also a hard-nosed effort to find a new export market for China to dominate and a profitable way to keep farmers on the land and not joining the population of poor laborers migrating into the cities.

The government’s promotion of green food production may also be a small way to ease the burden on the overcrowded coastal metropolitan areas, since the land surrounding these areas is too polluted to support organic practices. Organic producers are instead looking to more remote

areas in China to set up operations. Last year, there was even a food fair in Beijing that promoted green foods produced in the “Great Northern Wilderness” like the far northeastern province of Heilongjiang. Many of the products at Health Organic were shipped from Inner Mongolia.

The question for U.S. consumers is, given the prevalence of piracy and poor quality control in China, can we trust that something is “organic” when it is also “made in China”? There is no easy answer for this question. China has a diverse array of food certification levels, from “pollution-free” to “green” to “organic.” Furthermore, as recently reported by *Business Week*, there are 21 different agencies in China authorized to certify food as organic, but only one is accredited by the Germany-based International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements. As you would expect, there have been cases of “certified” organic products from China being discovered to have pesticide contamination. The key when buying organic from China is to choose products from a company brand that you trust. The best companies know that they need to go to China, inspect the fields and the processing plants, and verify that the products they sell meet the proper standards. So don’t automatically worry about organic products from China. The country is engaged in an honest effort to produce safer and higher quality food. But don’t automatically trust them either—get to know the trustworthiness of the American middleman as well.

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Learn More About Nutritional Health, Food Production and the Environment

Course Materials Online for Free

by Pam Rhubart

Interested in food and sustainability issues? Thought about taking a course about it but just don't have the time—or money? Lecture materials from a graduate level course called “Nutritional Health, Food Production and the Environment,” taught at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (down in Baltimore, MD), are available for free through the school's Open Courseware program. You can download (*for free!*) the MP3 files of audio and the powerpoint slides from lectures along with the list of recommended readings. No assignments and no tuition. The drawback, of course, is no interaction with the faculty. But if you are curious about these issues—or want to know more about a certain topic—this is a terrific resource.

The course is taught by faculty from the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future. Guest faculty are renowned experts in their field, including many agriculture and food experts from around the country, such as:

- Fred Kirschenmann, distinguished fellow and former director of the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University
- Brother Dave Andrews, former executive director of the National Catholic

Rural Life conference

- Michael Heller, farmer and political advisor for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Sid Mintz, anthropologist and author of *Sweetness and Power* and *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*
- Carole Morison, poultry contract farmer and executive director of the Del-MarVa Poultry Justice Alliance
- Wayne Roberts, coordinator of the Toronto Food Policy Council.

Modules include:

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- An Ecological Perspective: Food Production and the Environment
- Public Health Implications of Industrial Animal Production
- Food Production: Social, Economic and Policy Considerations
- Food Consumption: Cultural and Political Considerations
- Sustainable Alternatives to Current Food Systems.

You can access the course material at <http://ocw.jhsph.edu/courses/nutritional-healthfoodproductionandenvironment/> or use the “food and sustainability course materials” link at www.weaversway.coop.

GFS Supports “Buy Fresh, Buy Local”



TERRY BUTLER (LEFT), FOOD SERVICE DIRECTOR AT GERMANTOWN FRIENDS SCHOOL, ACCEPTS A DELIVERY OF LOCALLY-GROWN PRODUCE FROM SAM FINNEY OF FLAT ROCK FARM

by Jean Tickell

Terry Butler, food service director at Germantown Friends School (GFS), is always cooking up good ideas. This fall, he has introduced new sustainable ways of bringing healthy food to students while being kind to the environment. He now orders produce from Flat Rock Farm in Roxborough, in keeping with the “buy fresh, buy local” initiative. He also saves boxes from deliveries rather than discarding them. When Sam Finney, proprietor of the farm, delivers the produce each week, he picks up the boxes for reuse. Finney graduated from GFS in 1980 and now has a child at the school.

Butler recently attended a seminar on sustainability at the George School and came away with other new practices that he intends to implement. For instance, the trans-fat-free oil that has been used to

cook certain foods will be recycled as bio-fuel. GFS also collects vegetable scraps as compost, which may be used by the Lower School Environmental Action group in its gardening projects on campus. “This is the right thing to do for the planet,” says Butler. As a Quaker school committed to the testimony of stewardship, GFS believes it's the right thing to do, too.



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L • E • T • T • E • R • S

To the editor:

I was at the General Meeting on November 10 to talk about locating a new Weavers Way store in East Falls. I wanted to provide some additional information because I did not have the opportunity at the meeting.

Weavers Way in East Falls would not simply be a natural foods alternative in a competitive marketplace. East Falls presents an opportunity for Weavers Way to meet socially-minded goals. We are an economically diverse neighborhood—there are two subsidized housing communities as well as moderate and upper income housing. We have a way to reduce risk because the families with higher incomes and thousands of commuters who drive through the neighborhood or our arterial streets can sustain a store, while a new store would provide everyone with a great selection of healthy foods that they want. A Weavers Way in East Falls would be racially diverse as well.

People in East Falls are enthusiastic about community building and the community focus of Weavers Way. I asked people by e-mail what they thought of Weavers Way, and in just a few days received numerous messages supporting it. People have stopped me in the neighborhood and have even told the local bank that they are looking for Weavers Way to move in to East Falls. We have heard from current members, former members who left Weavers Way because of the inconvenient location, and people who want to become new members in an East Falls store. Neighbors are attracted to the community focus of Weavers Way. The East Falls Development Corporation is dedicated to community-based economic development. We are a nonprofit organization that focuses on economic revitalization. Based on community input, we are eager to work with Weavers Way. Weavers Way in East Falls would be part of a community partnership and would be community-based.

Right now, there is no equivalent full service store in East Falls. People drive for miles to shop. You often see people (many on fixed incomes) shop for “groceries” at the drug-stores and gas stations.

Because East Falls is a transitional business district, local rents and real estate rates are moderate and could be affordable. We welcome an opportunity to explain possible locations of commercial potential. This is a prime opportunity to invest, both to cover the market niche and to achieve a good price.

I also wanted to comment about the Weavers Way market study. During the market study, I volunteered to speak with the consultant. Often, we have found that our neighborhood boundaries on maps and databases are incorrect. I wanted to provide the consultant with accurate information about the neighborhood and explain the new projects and development taking place. There are many things going on that are not visible to the casual visitor. Although I was told I would be contacted, I did not get the opportunity.

It is clear to me from the meetings and the articles in the *Shuttle* that this is a complex process to which the board is dedicated and attends through hard work and diligence. Members are very concerned as well. Thank you for digging in and caring so deeply. As a Weavers Way member, and regardless of what the decision is, I very much appreciate everyone’s efforts and care.

Gina Snyder, JD, MS
Executive Director
East Falls Development Corporation

Dear Glenn:

I very much enjoyed reading your vision of the future for the Co-op and the community in the recent *Shuttle*. You created a very desirable potential reality. The piece was particularly enjoyable for that very reason—it allows us to imagine the *possible* rather than entertaining us with a farfetched fantasy.

While I have come to appreciate the philosophy, food offerings and kind and generous staff of Weavers Way, I can’t help but wish that it was bigger and better.

I fully support and applaud your plans for expansion as a major first step in making it so. I don’t know anything about business development and the financial risks inherent in the new Weavers Way you propose, but I can speak a bit to the fears of some members of changing the community spirit of the Co-op and of compromising the intimacy of the small neighborhood store. I can certainly see why longtime co-op members, particularly those within walking distance of Weavers Way, would treasure the oasis in their midst. If Weavers Way truly values diversity and inclusiveness, then Weavers Way must be more accessible to those who are disabled, to those with small children, and, indeed, more welcoming to more people beyond its familiar and tightknit community. If Weavers Way values wise energy-use practices, then it must be located close to a public transportation corridor.

And if Weavers Way truly believes in its business model, philosophy, and offerings, then it is time to “spread the news” to more and more people in the greater Philadelphia community and beyond. You can’t change the world if you don’t leave your house!!

Thanks, Glenn, for thinking big. I support you in your dream and can’t wait to step inside that new co-op you describe.

Best regards,
Anne Dubuisson Anderson

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Suggestions

(continued from page 24)

s: “Love to see new things, but I hate to tell you this new fridge for yogurt is not good. No, that is putting it mildly. It hurts your hand when you try to get some things, and can’t get what I want easily.”

r: (Norman) We’re aware the new dairy case requires extra effort to shop from, and getting some items is difficult, requiring you to position your hand “just so” while you navigate the item off the shelf and out the sliding door. When replacing our old case (which I think we got around 1976) we wanted to avoid open cases (like the meat and produce case) because we learned they use about 30 percent more energy than closed cases. So that left us looking at cases with doors, and we judged we didn’t have enough room for swing doors. That left us looking for a case like our old one, with sliding doors. Turns out not too many of these are made anymore, we could only find the one you’re struggling with, and we had to buy it sight unseen because it was not a stock item and we could only see one if we ordered one. Open cases are the darlings of the supermarket industry because they are easy to shop from and display a lot of product. However, they are huge energy hogs (ever feel cold in those aisles?); the 30-percent efficiency loss is even worse when you consider that in winter additional energy is used to heat the store more to compensate for the cold that spills out of these cases. In a new store, we now know to leave room for swing doors, or will pay to have a customized sliding door case to our specs. Or maybe just have a root cellar.

s: “I really miss the San Pellegrino, both for the larger size and the fact that it

is made of glass. We use enough plastic (the bags) as it is, I’d rather have something I can recycle weekly/daily. Thank you.”

r: (Chris) We replaced San Pellegrino with Mountain Valley, also glass bottles, although they are smaller, and I’ve been told that the taste is a bit different. We switched because Mountain Valley is from Arkansas, San Pellegrino from Italy, so less fuel is burned to transport Mountain Valley. If you prefer San Pellegrino, it is easy and cheap to order a case, ask Chris or Norman for details. (Norman) For even more local water look in any building built or renovated since the 1870s, most have faucets.

s: “How about giving out deli meats in ziplock bags?”

r: (Margie) We have looked into it due to a number of requests and found that the bags cost four times more than what we use now and would take the deli staff much longer to close, which is an issue when it is very busy.

s: “What happened to the Celestial Seasonings peppermint tea? The new type is more expensive per bag, and no better.”

r: (Chris) We cut back on our selection of Celestial Seasonings teas, and expanded our selection of Choice teas, because Choice is a smaller company producing organic, fair trade teas, whereas Celestial Seasonings is part of a huge grocery conglomerate (Hain-Celestial) that has dropped all of its organic tea production. Celestial Seasoning is still available as a preorder, ask Chris or Norman for details.

s: “Could you get good caramels? Thanks.”

r: (Norman) We’ve been looking for good caramels but they are very hard to

find. Caramels are born in sin, and most prefer to continue on in the sinful life, lacking the inclination and willpower to overcome their base instincts and become good caramels. We do have a search listing for good caramels on Craig’s List.

s: “The French onion soup was delicious. The cheese and croutons next to it were a lovely touch. Again! Encore!”

r: (Margie) Thank you for the feedback. The soup is from a new company and we will have it again.

s: “Unsalted Bearitos Tortilla Chips bought on 11/10/07 were inedible. Very, very oily and not crisp. this has happened occasionally before but not as bad as this.”

r: (Chris) Yes, there was a bad batch that came through, sorry you got one of those bags. Be sure to get a refund if you didn’t already. We threw out all of the other bags from that batch... (Norman) For some reason, unsalted Bearitos have problems from time to time. We recently had some other bags that were rancid two months before the sell-by date. Generally, this means there was a problem with the oil used in manufacture. What is interesting is that the salted variety seems unaffected. If it keeps up, we’ll have to find a different unsalted chip.

s: “Could we have pepperjack cheese? Also, what happened to the shredded cheddar?”

r: (Margie) I will order pepperjack and see how it sells. Look in Prep Food case cheese basket. Shredded cheddar doesn’t sell well enough to have all the time.

s: “Would Weavers Way ever consider getting a soda machine for dispensing seltzer to shoppers who bring in their own bottles?”

r: (Norman) Haven’t ever seen this, let us know if you see one anywhere. Probably don’t have room in this store, but maybe would in expanded store. You’d think with all the CO₂ in the air, someone could invent a gadget to pluck it out of the air and insert it into a glass of water. Maybe someone should tell Al Gore.

s:”We must stop using plastic bags. They are ‘ungreen’!”

r: (Jon) The plastic bags are indeed “ungreen” so in fact they’re clear. (Steve) Actually, we do sell “green” plastic bags! They are called “Evert Fresh,” they’re on the side of the organic produce display and upstairs, \$5.20 for a package of 10 and like any plastic bag, they’re reusable. They work better than polyethylene plastic bags because they contain a mineral form of Zeolite that absorbs the ethylene gas released by produce, thus helping your food stay fresher longer. Plus, they’re actually green. But really, I know what you meant. A ban of all plastic bags would be hard to champion, but City Councilman Frank DiCicco is planning on introducing a bill that would restrict the use of plastic shopping bags. San Francisco banned plastic bags in large grocery stores last month and in large pharmacies by April. Up to 100 billion are used each year in this country but they choke wildlife, create litter, and overload dumps for generations to come. It takes 12 million barrels of oil to make a year’s supply. Most of the bags taken to be recycled at supermarkets are incinerated or buried in landfills overseas. Our co-op used to give a 2¢ discount for reusing bags. So our options right now are either reuse the bags we supply and lobby for reinstating the discount, or use small cloth mesh bags. And support a citywide ban of plastic bags to encourage using your own bags.

C O - O P I N F O R M A T I O N		
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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. I wasn't sure what to write about for this month's opening paragraph, but was rescued by Pennsylvania's pending adoption of a regulation making it illegal for a Pennsylvania producer of milk products to label their product as not containing (or having come from cows treated with) pesticides, artificial hormones and/or antibiotics. The claim is that milk from treated cows is no different then untreated cows. From what I understand, while no milk actually contains appreciable quantities of these substances, conscientious dairy farmers don't use these treatments and consumers choose not to buy milk products from treated cows is because of the treatments' deleterious effect on the cows and the farm environment. There is some fear that there are no long-term studies about consuming treated milk products, but as far as scientific measurement is concerned, these substances do not end up in the milk. This is probably why these products are banned in Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and all European Union countries. I believe Pennsylvania is the first and only state to do this. By the time you read this, the regulation will already be in place (although check the web, it might get delayed due to consumer feedback; if so, add yours). No longer will dairies like Merrymeade be able to state on their label that their cows are not treated with artificial hormones and antibiotics. Supposedly, our state has done this to avoid confusing consumers, since milk is milk and statements like "produced without antibiotics or rBGH" on some bottles implies that bottles without such labels were produced using antibiotics and rBGH, which although true, also implies that using antibiotics and rBGH is therefore bad. However, less we leave the poor Pennsylvania consumer unconfused, remember we also have the federal USDA Certified Organic label program, so Pennsylvania producers of certified organic milk can state that no antibiotics or artificial growth hormones are used since such treatment is banned under the USDA Certified Organic standard.

I wonder if stores can post signs stating how milk (and other products) were grown. The regulation doesn't seem to prevent that, so maybe that's what will happen. Glenn recently bought 30 copies of Michael Pollen's "An Omnivore's Dilemma" for staff to read. It is a great book about food and how it is produced in this country (hint: mostly by growing corn and making it into other things and also feeding it to cows, chickens, pigs and now even fish). One point the book makes is that we've lost connection with

how our food is produced. One way to restore that connection, and be pretty sure how your food is grown (and also obviating labeling issues) is to buy food directly from farmers. Farmers you actually meet and whose farms you can visit and see for yourself how food is produced. Some of us can do this by joining CSA's, or patronizing farmer's markets, shopping at the Reading Terminal, etc. Some of us just can't do this though and depend on stores and store buyers to carry out this task. As more regulations like Pennsylvania's milk labeling one take effect, the role of store buyer takes on a little more of the role of investigative reporter. Maybe one day we'll have shows like Access Hollywood, except the stars will be sustainable agriculture farmers.

suggestions and responses:

s: "Thanks so much for carrying the clear conscience multipurpose contact solution!! It's the only clean, natural contact solution on the market and Weavers sells it for less than \$10!! Whole Foods sells it for \$14!! My eyes thank you!!"

r: (Jon) Oops. We thought your eyes were saying something else. (Martha) Thank you for your feedback! We appreciate your comments.

s: "Please, please, please bring back Italian Table cheese. It's the best cheese we carry and can be used in a variety of ways I used to buy it every week. Thanks.

r: (Margie) I removed the slot for the Italian Table cheese because it wasn't available for a while. We can now purchase it on a regular basis so I am going to return its slot in the cheese case. Until then, we almost always carry it in the specialty cheese case or as the cheese of the week. (Jon) Shoppers will be relieved to note that, in order to save paper and lessen our impact on the environment, we no longer require that "please" be submitted in triplicate.

s: "In summer I got a small utterly delicious loaf of whole wheat bread—haven't seen it since. Will I?"

r: (Jon) Unfortunately, it's probably stale by now. Perhaps Nancy can help you find a similar one. (Nancy) I need more info: what bakery? What is the name they use on the loaf? We get many different whole-wheat loaves.

s: "Where oh where has the pet store price list binder gone? The food has shelf info, the cat litter has only the barcode label (that I've been able to find). Also, is it really appropriate to carry litter made from whole kernel corn and wheat? Should we be tending our cats with FOOD, or a potential food crop as the case may be?"

r: (Kirsten) The price list can be found in a file holder directly above the Cedarific cat litter, next to the door. There is also a very handy litter price cheat sheet listing the price of each litter, as the shelf tags located along the shelf can be difficult to see. I guess the idea behind the corn and wheat litters is that they are biodegradable and a better, earth-friendly alternative than clay litters. We also carry pine and recycled paper litters. We like to offer a variety of options that hopefully may meet your needs.

s: "Could we have some packages of meat, chicken, and fish in single serving sizes? I hate leftovers. Thanks."

r: (Dale) We try to do so- we'll try

harder. (Norman) Here's a tip you should know about, use a knife to cut just the portion you want and refrigerate or freeze the rest. This option is available because so far Pennsylvania has not passed a regulation requiring consumers to cook entire packages of meat they buy upon opening.

s: "Give Ian a raise, he's cute."

r: (Norman) After consultation with Dave Tukey, our Human Resources department, we've decided to modify our performance reviews and raise criteria to include looks and popularity, as rated by members via the Suggestion Book. Although at first glance this may seem unfair to staffers that work hard and provide great service but weren't blessed with the looks and/or personality of an Ian, the reality is that much of the society we live in is shallow and image counts more than substance and our co-op should reflect that reality. You could say this is what natural selection has "evolved" into. I myself am going to adapt to this new environment by coming to work wearing a Brad Pitt mask.

s: "The only organic fruit I can find today is grapes, apples, and pears. I really want to do all of my grocery shopping here this winter, but in order to do that I need more organic fruit choices. I know

it's awful to ship food long distances just to get organic, but fruit is one of the few healthy foods I can get my kids to eat. Thank you.


r: (Jean) On that day we also had organic bananas, persimmons, kiwi and dates (also lemons and limes, but they probably don't count for kid food). Today we also have strawberries (\$\$\$), and satsuma tangerines. Please let me know what else you hope to find. (Norman) Also, just as a reminder, there are also always some organic frozen fruit and dried fruit.

s: "Why is there no date on the bread? It sometimes seems stale. We date other food."

r: (Norman) Please don't tell anyone we date other food, our spouses are already suspicious about the four nights a week we spend "food shopping." (Nancy) Our price stickers do have a date—both the labels with ingredients that we add, and the small red price stickers have the date it was received. Our fresh-baked loaves from Metropolitan and LeBus are fresh everyday, so we do not date them. They are reduced by 15 percent every night. Bagels and rolls in the bins are also fresh everyday and reduced 15 percent the next day.

(continued inside on page 23)

Equal Exchange



December Coffees of the Month

Organic Midnight Sun

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

\$6.99/lb.


Reg. \$8.99/lb.

Organic Espresso

Caramel sweet flavor with a touch of blueberry, a bit of dark chocolate, vibrant body and a "kick-in-the-pants" wake-up call for a finish.

\$7.75/lb.

Reg. \$8.75/lb.



Welcome to Weavers Way Cooperative Association

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

DAY	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Saturday	Jan 5, 2008	10:30 a.m.	CA
Wednesday	Feb. 6, 2008	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Wednesday	Mar. 5, 2008	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Wednesday	Apr. 21, 2008	6:45 p.m.	GJC

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

Robin Cannick, Membership Manager+

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) _____
