

SPRING GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
 May 15 • Eat & Greet 5:30-6:00 p.m., Meeting at 6 p.m.
 New Covenant Church, 7500 Germantown Ave., Phila, PA. Founder's Hall, Room B-10

AGENDA: Food Samples from Weavers Way & Vendors • Meet the Board Candidates **Business Meeting**—6:00-6:15 • Approval of Fall 2010 General Membership Minutes • President's Report • Introduction of the Board Candidates • By-law Amendment Explanation **Featured Presentation: Philadelphia Green**—6:15-7:00 • Speaker: Drew Becher, President, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society • Topic: Improving Our Environment and Building Community • Questions for the Speaker **Committee Showcase**—7:00-7:15 • What the Member Committees are doing **General Manager's Report**—7:15-7:30 • Cake & Conversation—7:30-7:50 • Q & A • Voting Results: Elections & By-Law Amendment—7:50- 8:00

Celebrate!
 West Oak Lane
 Sunday Re-opening:
 Sunday, March 13
 1 to 4 p.m.

Food Sampling
GRILLING *cake*
SMOOTHIES **MUSIC**
 DETAILS ON PAGE 22



The Shuttle

March 2011 Vol. 40 No. 3

A Cooperative Grocer Serving the Northwest Community Since 1973

WWCP Honored for Role in Regional Food Plan

by Mira Rabin, member WWCP Board of Governors

ON FEBRUARY 10, The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVR-PC) unveiled its comprehensive plan to strengthen the regional food system, and recognized Weavers Way Community Programs as an integral part of that plan. WWCP, along with six other area groups committed to a “robust, sustainable, secure and equitable food system,” was honored with a grant and a “Plate of Distinction.”

DVRPC’s plan is based on six core values: farming and sustainable agriculture; ecological stewardship and conservation; economic development; health; fairness; and collaboration. Using funds from the William Penn Foundation and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the plan is the result of a two year collaborative effort with a stakeholder committee of farmers, anti-hunger advocates, farmland preservation experts, public officials, small business owners and others. The

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DVRPC Executive Director Barry Seymour (left) handing WWCP executive director Rachel Milenbach a “Plate of Distinction” while Montgomery County Commissioner, and DVRPC board chair Joe Hoeffel, announces the names of the winners.

photo by Bob Noble

Henry Got Crops Silent Auction

Fundraiser Event to Provide Local Food to Local Families

HENRY GOT Crops!, a “community supported agriculture” (CSA) farm partnership between Weavers Way and Saul High School, invites you to our “local food for local families” fundraiser, March 20, from 3 to 5:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Society of Germantown, 6511 Lincoln Drive in Mt. Airy.

This silent auction will raise funds to bring delicious, locally grown food to Philadelphia families. Money from the event will be used to offer reduced-price memberships to our 2011 vegetable shares. The event will include food, music and bidding on items donated by businesses and individuals in our community.

For more information, contact Nina Berryman at nberryman@weaversway.coop.

A Virtual Tour of WW West Oak Lane

by Jennifer Kulb, West Oak Lane Store Manager

FOR THOSE of you who have not yet visited the new and improved Weavers Way Co-op in West Oak Lane, I invite you to follow me on a poetic virtual tour of this incredible store.

Walking in you see to your left gentle steam rising from the antique-looking soup kettles filled with locally homemade soups. Each day the selection changes; there is always a vegan option and the non-vegan soups are made with no hormone or antibiotic meats. The smell of fresh herbs will warm your heart and whet your appetite. Next up is the amazing grab and go case filled with raw food items like seaweed and cucumber salads, local sandwiches, hummus, pitas, and of course, the

(continued on page 22)



Weavers Way West Oak Lane staffers with some of the local members who wrote in to voice their support for the store. See LETTERS, page,

photo by Jonathan McGoran

Vegan Fest at WW Mt. Airy

by Jonathan McGoran, Shuttle Editor

JOIN WEAVERS Way Mt. Airy for Vegan Fest, a celebration of all things vegan, with product samplings, demos, and information from a variety of national and local vegan food producers. Among the highlights will be vegan products from Bhaggya’s Kitchen, Jyoti, Moshe’s, Fresh Tofu, Helen’s Pure Foods, as well as an assortment of great vegan products from Weavers Way Mt. Airy’s Prepared Foods Department. As always, there will also be plenty of fresh produce.

The event will take place from noon to 4 p.m., Sunday, March 20, at our Mt. Airy store, 559 Carpenter Lane.

Weavers Way Cooperative Association
 559 Carpenter Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19119
www.weaversway.coop

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Editor’s Note



by Jonathan McGoran,
Shuttle Editor

ONE BIG food story these days is the de-regulation of genetically modified (GMO) alfalfa and sugar beets (alfalfa is special because it is fed to cows, and deregulation would make it impossible to keep it out of the organic dairy supply).

Ironically, one of the other big stories is that food prices have skyrocketed around the world, in some places leading to riots and instability. This is ironic because GMO crops were supposed to bring huge increases in crop yields. But on average, GMO yields are lower than non-GMO yields, and now that we have 142 million acres planted with GMO crops in the U.S., we have shortages.

Irony, in fact, is the one thing that GMOs have delivered in abundance (maybe they are fortified with irony?). There is the surreal irony of Monsanto arguing their GMOs wouldn’t contaminate other crops, and then suing farmers whose crops were contaminated by those GMOs (they hadn’t paid a licensing fee, get it?).

Then there is the sad irony of farmers who switched to Monsanto’s herbicide-resistant GMO crops so they could stop using dangerous herbicides. Now that the weeds are resistant, too, the farmers are planting the GMO crops, and using the dangerous chemicals anyway. (Dow is working on GMO crops resistant to the chemical 2,4-D, used in Agent Orange, so farmers can spray that on their crops, too.)

More recently, critics of a plan to regulate GMO alfalfa argued the plan would undermine Washington’s efforts to persuade other countries to accept genetically modified crops (only slightly ironic, but too good not to mention).

The cream of the ironic crop, however, is the crazy-bizarre, utterly oblivious irony of Keith Menchey of the National Cotton Council of America. After decades of arguments (largely borne out) that de-regulating GMO crops would be irreversible, uncontrollable, and would have unforeseeable consequences, Menchey argued against restrictions on GMO alfalfa because such restrictions might be extended to corn, soybeans, and cotton, almost all of which are already genetically engineered. “It’s like,” he said, “a Pandora’s box.” Now *that’s* ironic.

The Shuttle is published by Weavers Way Co-op Deadlines for each issue are the first of the preceding month, e.g. December 1 for the January issue.

For information about advertising, contact advertising@weaversway.coop, or call 215-843-2350, ext. 135

Statement of Policy

Articles should be under 500 words and can be submitted neatly typed, on disk, or by e-mail to editor@weaversway.coop. Be sure to include your name, phone number, and membership number. Drop them off by the deadline to the Shuttle mailbox on the second floor of the Mt. Airy 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 have the right to edit all articles. Ad rates are available upon request, in the advertising mailbox on the second floor, or at www.weaversway.coop. All ads must be submitted electronically, or camera-ready with prior arrangement, and should be submitted with payment. Products or services advertised in this paper should not in any way be construed to be endorsed by Weavers Way Co-op.



The Shuttle is printed on 100% recycled paper

Farm Report

by Nicole Sugerman, Weavers Way Mort Brooks Farm Manager

DURING THE month of March, I really start to feel spring’s presence on the farm. We start spending more time outside as we prune our berries, prepare the first of our beds, and, near the end of the month, start to plant our first field crops. Onions, lettuce, cooking greens, and broccoli are planted out from our greenhouse, and we will direct seed our first field turnips, radishes, salad greens, and beets. We are even harvesting the first of our crops from our hoopouses; over the winter, we planted spinach, arugula, pea shoots, salad mix, scallions, bok choy, kale, and more, which we will begin to bring into the stores weekly and sell at the Rittenhouse farmers market every other Saturday.

Even though spring is apparent in the warming days, melting snow, and increased bustle as we prepare for the main season, spring does not officially begin until the equinox on March 20. On the equinox, the day and the night are approximately the same length and the sun is at its midpoint in the sky. From this point forward, the days will get longer and longer, one of the most exciting things to me about March. I love eating dinner on my porch in the last of the sunlight, a luxury almost forgotten over a long winter of dark evenings. March is a happy month because I remember that working outside

is a privilege, and I feel thankful after several months spent mostly indoors as Nina and I finished up the paperwork from last fall and extensively planned for this season.

Early last March, I participated in what I hope to make a new tradition to welcome the spring. Nina and I traveled up to Nina’s hometown in Vermont to catch the first of the maple sugar harvest. The contrast of warming days and cold nights starts the sap flowing, first to the trees’ branches in the warmth, then back to the roots in the cold. In each sugar maple tree, we drilled one, two or three holes, depending on each tree’s diameter, and put in a small metal spout, or tap, from which we hung a small bucket (or in our case, sometimes a sawed-off plastic milk carton—our infrastructure was rustic). After collecting sap from twelve sugar maple trees for a weekend, we boiled it down on her stove, eventually obtaining three cups of maple syrup from almost eight gallons of sap! Experiencing the trees’ return to life after a winter of dormancy was a meaningful way for me to mark my own return to food production and outdoor ac-



photo by Jonathan McGroan

Pea shoots, pea scores!

tivity. The intensely sweet syrup I tasted at the end of the weekend was a celebration of renewing spring vigor. Every time I ate that syrup on my pancakes throughout the spring, I remembered the feelings of anticipation and activity that the early spring represents.

In a month or two, I will already feel a little jaded about working outside, the sun hot and already ordinary in my routine. But for now, I savor the excitement of being outside again in the farm’s fields, watching a new season on its way.

Marketplace Team Spotlight: Our Mother of Consolation School

by Carly Chelder, Marketplace Coordinator

SHOW ME a school with excited students, motivated instructors and supportive administration and I will show you a successful Marketplace team. Such is the case with Our Mother of Consolation, a parochial elementary school in Chestnut Hill. Principal Bruce Hagy initially contacted me about a partnership with Weavers Way Community Programs and I knew from our first meeting that we would work well together. Maybe it was the greenhouse that gave it away, but I knew things were going to work out nicely.

Parent cooperators are an essential aspect of the OMC team. Joseph Pisoni, father of team member Mary, contributes by making the Marketplace deliveries from the Weavers Way warehouse to the school the day before each scheduled sale. Denise Carroll, parent of Kelly, Molly and Gracie, helps implement each sale. She also happens to run the hot lunch program on select days. Having an adult who is familiar with the kitchen, maintenance routines, school layout, and inner workings is beneficial for building a strong team. The team meets Mondays after school, the day before the sale, to pack and take inventory.

We initially formed the group last April, providing four lessons from the Marketplace 101 curriculum, as well as

several sales, but we decided to hold off on the end-of-year donation. The team consensus was that one larger donation at the end of this school year would be more helpful than a small donation earned from a few sales. The team is currently tossing around donation ideas, and expressed an interest in helping to rebuild the school greenhouse that unfortunately came upon hard times through heavy snow and ice. If anyone reading this article wants to help with the greenhouse, I’m sure the school would greatly appreciate your support.

The OMC sale takes place in two locations simultaneously to accommodate the customer flow and school schedule. So far, Marketplace has been well received by the OMC school community with sales and customer appreciation growing each time. Knudsen fruit juice spritzers appear



photo by Carly Chelder

Our Mother of Consolation students (left to right) Kelly Carroll, Sara Murray, and Molly Carroll manage the first floor Marketplace sale

to be the most popular items, with yogurt-covered pretzels coming in at a close second.

I challenge the school community to eat more produce. It’s good for you! And don’t be afraid of the blood orange; I promise it is an entirely vegetarian piece of produce. Share your experiences with your friends and family, and stay open to trying new foods.

Henry Got Crops! Fundraiser at Trolley Car Diner & Deli

FROM MARCH 7 through 13, Henry Got Crops! CSA will be holding an important fundraising event at Mt. Airy’s Trolley Car Diner & Deli, 7619 Germantown Avenue. As part of its Helping Hands Week fundraising program, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. Monday – Friday and 3 to 9 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, the Diner will donate 15 percent of the revenue from supporters towards our “Share a Share” program. This fundraiser will raise funds to bring delicious, locally grown food to

Philadelphia families. Money from the event will be used to offer reduced price memberships to our 2011 vegetable shares.

Show your support by bringing your friends and family for a delicious and fun dining experience at Trolley Car Diner & Deli. Contact Nina Berryman at henrygotcrops@weaversway.coop to request a coupon for this fundraiser. For directions or more information about Trolley Car Diner & Deli, call 215-753-1500 or go to www.trolleycardiner.com.

Chestnut Hill Grocery News

by Brittany Baird, Chestnut Hill Grocery Manager

THIS WILL be my first article for the *Shuttle* since starting at the Co-op nearly a year ago. It seems like yesterday that Kim and I were typing away on our laptops, hunkered down in the basement of Mt. Airy, preparing for the opening of Chestnut Hill. It has been such an amazing experience to see the new store evolve from the shell of Caruso’s market to a hustling, bustling community center in Chestnut Hill. It is such a trip to look out upon our aisles jammed with carts, strollers, and people packed shoulder to shoulder. Sometimes I think I can hear a small voice in my head whisper “If you build it, they will come.” It has been an exciting challenge keeping up with our ever-increasing sales. It’s amazing to think that we started out with six employees in the grocery department – we have now expanded to thirteen.

Opening a new store has its triumphs and challenges. One of the biggest challenges for our department has been the serious lack of back-stock space. No one ever imagined our sales would be as high as they are, and the receiving space was designed for much lower volume. In a kind of ironic twist, we now have the opposite space problem of Mt. Airy. For years, members and employees have danced, shimmied, and side-stepped their way through the congested isles of Mt. Airy. Now, the employees at Chestnut Hill are trying to fine-tune the sometimes complicated ballet of back-room operations. I’d like to personally thank all of the co-operators who have battled giant pallets, stacks of boxes, and cramped conditions while working their hours.

In the short amount of time we have been open, the grocery department has undergone a host of changes. I am still working hard to perfect our product mix and to

bring in items that may have been overlooked in our initial set. We hope to offer a range of options for shoppers. Ideally, this means that you can get the finest organic local product, sometimes at a higher price, or choose a cheaper more conventional alternative. Suggestions and feedback are always welcome! We are constantly on the lookout for interesting new products and better ways to organize the store. “Gluten-Free Day” was such a success that we decided to designate a whole shelf in the bakery section for locally-baked Gluten-Free goodies. My personal favorite are the brownies from The Little Bakery.

By the time this is published, we should have a new bulk station from a local cleaning product company, Sun & Earth. You can bring in your own containers and refill them with laundry soap, all-purpose cleaner, glass cleaner, and dish soap. This is a great way to get low prices on non-toxic cleaners while eliminating plastic from our landfills. Don’t forget you can always bring in your own containers for items from our bulk section. Before filling them, they need to be taken to the register to have the tare calculated, which the cashier will later subtract from your total. Feel free to ask any grocery employee for assistance. We ask for your patience as everyone becomes familiar with this process. Sometime soon, pending zoning approval, we will also be carrying honey from neighborhood beekeeper Ben Brown. This honey is about as local as you can get: his hives are only a block away from WW-Chestnut Hill! Keep an eye out for signs that say “*New*” on the shelf to let you know when we have added a new product.

Mt. Airy Grocery News

by Chris Switky, Mt. Airy Grocery Buyer

HOWDY, SHOPPERS. The winter has been rough, and it’s been a few months since my last *Shuttle* column. It’s good to be back in the “writer’s chair” (beats the heck out of being behind a snow shovel!).

There are several new items on WW-MA’s grocery shelves to tell you about.

On the beverage shelf (across from the cheese case), we’ve added Blue Diamond unsweetened almond beverage. Many shoppers have requested an unsweetened almond drink, so if you try this product, please let us know if it fits the bill. Also, don’t make the mistake of calling it “almond milk.” Norman Weiss will correct you; as he said to me the other day, “You cannot get milk from an almond. It is not a mammal.” Nothing slips by Norman.

In the soup and broth area, you’ll find Better Than Bouillon organic mushroom base, again, brought in by shoppers’ requests. On the Asian cooking shelves (above the potatoes), we’ve added Organicville chili sauce. It has mostly organic ingredients, is sweetened with agave, and is gluten-free and sugar-free. This item replaces Kikkoman chili sauce, which lists sugar as its first ingredient. In the tea sec-



photo by Jonathan McGoran

Emu eggs in the beverage case—pop open a cold one!

tion, you’ll find three new flavors: Choice organic Irish Breakfast, and two from Twinings: Lady Grey and Chai French Vanilla. Enjoy, and let us know if you like these choices.

In the dairy case, we’ve added two new items. One is Organic Valley heavy cream, which we had during the November/December holidays and now plan on carrying year-round. The other is Earth Balance Buttery Sticks, a vegan butter substitute in stick form. Please note that the Kefir has moved out of the dairy case and is now displayed in the cold drinks case near the freezer, where the refrigerated breads used to be. The refrigerated breads (Shiloh bread, Food for Life sprouted bread, and Food for Life brown rice bread) are now displayed in the freezer, on the bottom right.

(continued on page 6)

Beat the Winter Blues

With Weavers Way West Oak Lane’s Expanded Wellness/Health and Beauty Aid Section!

by Cara Raboteau



photo by Jonathan McGoran

Weavers Way West Oak Lane assistant store manager Ayana Kumarroy (left) and store manager Jennifer Kulb (right) in front of the store’s expanded Health and Beauty section.

WEAVERS WAY West Oak Lane store has added several new vitamins, supplements, herbs, homeopathic formulas, and medicinal teas to help you shake that cold, defeat that flu, and strengthen your immunity in preparation for the upcoming allergy season. Build up your body’s natural defenses with DEVA vegan vitamins and New Chapter organic and whole food supplements, including Women’s and Men’s Daily One vitamins, and All-Flora probiotic formula. Combat illness with Herb Pharm organic liquid herbal extracts, and Traditional Medicinal teas, including

Gypsy Cold Care, Echinacea Plus, and Throat Coat. As spring approaches, boost your energy with Plantfusion protein powder, and detoxify your body and mind with Noni Pacific Noni Juice, Amazing Grass Green Superfood, and World Organics Liquid Chlorophyll.

Overcome the effects of cabin fever—stiffness, aches and pains, and low/subdued energy levels—with our new self-pampering health and beauty aids.

(continued on page 8)

Hooked Atlantic Mackerel

by Noel Bielaczyc, Meat, Fish and Poultry Department.

WE ARE excited to formally announce a new arrival to our list of regular seafood offerings at Weavers Way in Mt. Airy. After much searching, we have finally found a supplier of high quality Atlantic mackerel. It seems surprising that tracking down such a common, inexpensive fish would be difficult, but the appeal of Atlantic mackerel has apparently yet to catch on in the U.S., where we still favor relatively bland fillets of tilapia and farm-raised salmon. Happily, we can now offer you this healthy, flavorful, and sustainable option on a consistent basis.

Atlantic mackerel are pelagic fish, meaning that they travel the open ocean in large, dense shoals, or schools, feeding voraciously on krill in mid-water. They are fast-moving fish (cousins to bonitos and tuna), migrating huge distances in search of food. The result of this lifestyle is rich, firm meat loaded with high-energy fat reserves. This is especially true during the autumn months, when mackerel are fattening up for spring spawning and can contain up to 30 percent fat. This makes mackerel one of the best sources of healthy omega-3 fatty acids as well as vitamin D and B12. And because mackerel



photo by Noel Bielaczyc

is a small, fast-maturing fish that feeds primarily at the bottom of the food chain, there are no issues with mercury or PCB accumulation often associated other fatty fishes.

Our mackerel comes from a well-managed, MSC-certified fishery in Norway that uses low impact fishing methods like purse seines and handlines. Mackerels’ pelagic habits mean there’s very little by-catch of untargeted species. Once caught, they are sorted by size and flash frozen whole to ensure peak freshness (Left unfrozen, mackerel spoils rapidly). This product is so “fresh” it is known as *saba* in Japan, and is eaten as sashimi or sushi. Another advantage of flash freezing is that you can enjoy the richest fall mackerel year around, when these fish other-

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New Face in Mt. Airy Prepared Foods Dept.

by Nancy Lieb, Weavers Way Mt. Airy Prepared Foods Manager



photo by Jonathan McGoran

Nancy Lieb

HELLO Mt. Airy!

My name is Nancy Lieb and I wanted to introduce myself as the new Prepared Foods Chef and Manager. My professional background is mostly in catering and I have been cooking for well over twenty five years. I have worked with a number of respectable catering companies such as Gordon Keith Wagner, Culinary Concepts, and Catering by Design. I also owned a restaurant named The Hungry Heart in Elkins Park for a couple of years.

Now, that I've properly introduced myself, I'd like to share with all of you exactly what I've been thinking about lately. SPRING! Can you blame me with all this snow and ice? Hopefully you've been thinking of spring, too! Thinking of spring reminds me that Passover is right around the corner! In honor of this holiday I have designed a list of prepared dishes that we will be offering this year to you and your family.

- Gefilte Fish
- Chopped Chicken Liver
- Homemade Charoses
- Sedar Plate Complete
- Matzoh Stuffing
- A Variety of Kugels: Yukon gold potato, Sweet potato, Vegetable, and/or Apple

(See our ad on pages 16 -17)

If you have any questions, or if you would like to discuss anything else you may be craving, please don't hesitate to stop by our kitchen. I would love to meet you and hear your suggestions.

I am glad to be a part of the Weavers Way family. Last, but not least, I'd just like to say how we love our cooperators.

Thank You and don't forget to *think spring!*

A Chef's Table: The Conundrum

by Bonnie Shuman, Weavers Way Chestnut Hill Prepared Foods Manager

ONE OF the most frequent questions asked of me is do I cook dinner when I go home after a long day of cooking. I must admit, I used to cook when I went home, but now it all seems too much. First and foremost, I am too tired to cook when I get home. Secondly, I don't find much that piques my appetite after cooking an array of foods all day.

So... What to do? Some nights it's toast at 10 p.m., the time my appetite finally kicks in. I recall in the throws of opening the Chestnut Hill store, calling home and asking my partner about dinner and declaring "I can't eat toast again tonight!"

Certainly things have calmed down since then, but, still, I find it is a challenge to put a meal together.

The other thing I find myself moving away from is meat as the prime candidate on my dinner plate. Often, a salad will satisfy me with great delight. (See a few of my favorite salad recipes below).

We also have a few favorite places to eat out, though we do so infrequently. Just around the corner from Weavers Way Chestnut Hill is the bakery and restaurant Cake. Cake, owned by Grey Heck, has become a go-to spot for us. At the helm of the stove, my dear friend and long-time colleague Joan Gigliotti wows our pallets from start to finish. We often start with a cheese plate and Joanie's soup du jour. Our favorite salad is mixed greens with gorgonzola and candied walnuts. As for entrees, I am stuck on the almond crusted trout with horseradish sauce. On a recent visit, the scallops in a buerre blanc sauce was the hit at our table. Mmmm... Cake... it's what's for dinner! (Dinner at Cake Thursday and Friday Nights only)

I am also very lucky to have a girlfriend who is an excellent cook. She is a devout carnivore, so her creations usually involve meat. Last night she made roast chicken with mashed potatoes, gravy, and

Bonnie's Favorite Salad

Arugula, Fennel and Grapefruit
With Goat Cheese and Toasted Pine Nuts

4 handfuls of arugula

½ bulb of fennel, core removed

½ grapefruit peeled and cut into segments

3 oz. goat cheese

1 oz. pine nut, toast on stove top or in oven

2 oz. red onion

Dressing:

½ cup hazelnut oil

¼ cup white balsamic

1 tsp. Dijon mustard

Salt and pepper to taste.

I like to lay my salads out flat on the plate as opposed to mixing all the ingredients in a bowl. This serves four, so have each plate ready to place the salad on. It makes a beautiful presentation.

Lay arugula on each plate and top with remaining ingredients of salad. Place all dressing ingredients in a bowl and whisk until dressing emulsifies. Drizzle dressing over each plate and serve to your very happy guests!

haricot verts. I usually don't eat full meals like that, however, after a strenuous work out at the gym, paired with the *awful* February weather, it was absolutely perfect.

Like you, I also take great advantage of all the options available from our hot bar, salad bar, and service case. In most cases, I will choose something that I myself didn't make, like our vegetarian enchiladas from the hot bar. So, to answer your question, those are a few of my dinner options. It's still hard, though, so I'll bring the wine. What time should I come to your house for dinner?

~ *bonnie@weaversway.coop*



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Chestnut Hill Update

Kim Spelman-Hall

IT'S HARD to believe our Chestnut Hill store has been open for eight months. Time has passed so quickly, I thought I had better take a moment in the New Year to reflect and update the membership on how things are going. I am thrilled to report I couldn't be happier with our sales volume, my staff, and overall daily operations. We are not perfect, but we are always striving to be the best we can and welcome member feedback. On a larger scale, we have created a buzz in the co-op world as a co-op that has achieved enormous success in a less-than-perfect economy.

Membership has flourished and Weavers Way has added 1,200 new households since May of 2010. Every week we have a higher percentage of member shoppers than we did the week before. Member Appreciation Week was a big hit at all locations, with over 165 new members signing up in January. I have been impressed with how quickly the community has embraced the co-op philosophy and spirit. I encourage all new members to become working members. The 5 percent discount really adds up over a year's time.

Some members have been concerned with the changes Weavers Way has been going through. Some are concerned we are "going corporate" and that in the process we could potentially lose our core values. This is understandable considering the long history of the Co-op and how it has evolved over close to 40 years. I thought it would be important to share my point of view and where I am coming from.



photo by Lawrence Goldfarb

Wheat-Free / Gluten-Free Day at Weavers Way Chestnut Hill

I was raised on natural foods during the '70s, when most children's foods were loaded with sugar, artificial color and flavors. At 22 I became a working member for the co-op I belonged to in North Carolina. I liked it so much I became their youngest board member and eventually their Grocery Manager. I also had my daughter in a childcare co-op while in North Carolina. So I have always been invested in the co-op philosophy.

I classify what we are going thru as growing pains. In a very short time, the Co-op has doubled, as we expect to do over \$14 million this year alone. You can't have that type of growth without some

major changes taking place. The great news is that in doing so we are able to provide our quality foods, services, education and philosophy to a greater population. This is a crucial service that is wanted and needed in the greater Philadelphia region. We have also been creating more jobs in the community, and we are able to support more local farmers and businesses.

One of the changes I frequently hear about is the product selection in Chestnut Hill. I would like to address a comment I hear often that is simply not true – "prices are higher in Chestnut Hill for the same product." We use a networked POS (cash registers) system for all three locations

that share the same database. It is impossible for the same item to have more than one price in our system. What differs is the product selections in our three stores. Often people are comparing organic vs. non-organic items without realizing it. Most often an organic item is going to be more expensive. Old members, new members and non-members are buying those items in Chestnut Hill. We are reacting to what the majority of our shoppers want, and judging from our sales volume we are doing so successfully. I think it is important to celebrate the differences in our stores and trust we wouldn't be effectively serving our communities if we all carried the exact same products. That said, it is our job to continuously listen to requests and bring in the items most frequently asked for. Unfortunately we do not have room for everything, but there is a method to the madness. If you don't see your requested item please be assured we are not ignoring you; we have to make decisions based on the demand. We are able to special order for our members items that we don't carry. Please contact our department managers to place an order.

Brittany Baird, Grocery Manager, brittany@weaversway.coop
Bonnie Shuman, Prepared Foods/Deli Manager, bonnie@weaversway.coop
Mike Herbst, Produce Manager, mherbst@weaversway.coop
Marykate Brown, Meat & Seafood Manager, mbrown@weaversway.coop
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Manager’s Corner

Tell Us What You Think in Our 2011 Member Survey

by Glenn Bergman, Weavers Way General Manager

Member Survey

TWO YEARS ago we conducted an extensive member survey that was helpful to our expansion and direction at that time. It is time once again to conduct our member survey. Over the next month, you might receive a customer survey form by e-mail or in the mail. Please take the time to fill it out and send it back as quickly as possible.

This year I am going to ask the survey committee to also survey some of our non-member shoppers, so we can find out more about our non-member shoppers as well. Over the past year, we have added almost 2,000 new members. Of these new members only 35-40 percent are signing up to be working members. The total working member group is just under 50 percent of the total population of member owners. It is important for the Co-op to understand what this group thinks and how we can improve our service for working members, nonworking members, and nonmember shoppers.

We welcome any input you may have as we move forward on this customer survey process. If you have any input for the committee please address them to outreach@weaversway.coop.

Commodity Prices at Record Levels

A few weeks ago, Norman Weiss, Purchasing Director, moved his office into the 555 building. We now share an office together. Lately, I have been questioning the decision to bring him into my office. It is not that Norman gives off an odor or plays music from the internet all the time (though that is trying at times). No, it is when I hear Norman cry out, “Oh, s—!!” I turn and ask him what is up. He shows me the prices of a product line increasing substantially, like nuts, grains, dairy, etc. Recently, in other parts of the world, commodity prices have been increasing to record levels. There have been major social upheavals in Northern Africa, and riots in Thailand, Indonesia, and many other nations, all over the price of commodity grains.

As I write this, the wheat harvest in China for 2011 is not going to be great. China produces 18 percent of the world’s wheat. Last year, Russian farms had one of their worst years, caused by draught and fires (you might have read about the fires outside of Moscow last year). This, along with the price of oil increasing to nearly \$100 a barrel, will make it difficult to keep food prices down in 2011-12.

Look for nut prices to be very high – if they are not already. Conventional nut prices will go up, but not by as much as organic pricing. Buyers at the Co-op are going to have to address these increases and we will look to maintain margin in other areas to keep prices within reach of our members.

One of the important discussions that I have asked Norman to address in the *Shuttle* is the importance of moving away from an animal-based diet. I like the texture of different forms of animal-based products, but I know that the carbon foot print of eating animal protein (and fat) along with the cost factor, is going to drive many shoppers towards either less expensive processed animal products or to a greater percentage of vegetable/grain based foods. The Co-op needs to be ready for this increase over the next few years, and to help our shoppers learn to cook with these products.

Another area that we are going to examine very closely is moving towards a larger bulk food department. For example, bulk grains, legumes, oils, vinegars, nuts, snacks, detergents, soaps, syrups (maple, honey, sorghum, etc), and spreads will be much less expensive in bulk than packaged and branded. After looking at the size of bulk departments at Honest Weight Co-op in Albany, Brattelboro Co-op in Vermont, and many others, I am convinced that we need to move towards a greater bulk area in Mt. Airy when we do the re-set of the store in 2012-13. We also need to look at this in our other two stores, and examine how to increase bulk product. We need to keep a competitive edge in pricing while maintaining our costs of labor (which are purposely high).

Mt. Airy Grocery

(continued from page 3)

More good news By the time you read these words, emu eggs should be back in stock, in the cold drinks case near the onions. Fact: emus do not lay eggs year-round. According to Co-op member and emu rancher Marcus Bass, these birds are “cold weather layers,” producing eggs November through April. When January came around and I still had not heard from Marcus about a new crop of eggs, I called him to ask why. “These birds are getting older,” he informed me. Aren’t we all.

What else is new The location of Norman Weiss’s desk, for one thing. After sharing an office with Norman for about the past 15 years, our cozy arrangement came to an end when the “powers that be” informed Norman that his workspace would be moved to the new administrative wing, in the 555 Carpenter Building. Is the office different without Norman? Most definitely; less weird music, fewer dirty towels. With Norman at his new desk at 555, there’s a solid brick wall between us, and I can’t see or hear him from the old office. Still, I call him on intercom a few times a day, and ask him to please turn the music down, and clean up yesterday’s orange rinds. Old habits die hard.

And who will move in to Norman’s old space in old office? None other than Steve Hebden, our esteemed Repair and Maintenance Czar and Co-op employee of 30+ years. More importantly, Steve is the one person who tells worse jokes than I do, and more frequently. If you enjoy bad jokes and head-shaker puns, please stop by the office when Steve and I are both in. It won’t take long, because if we’re both here, you won’t want to stay that long. Trust me.

~ christopher@weaversway.coop

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What Are Board Members Thinking?

The Co-op Board Is Sending Itself To School ...

...And there's one class in particular I want us to take

by Chris Hill, Board Treasurer

In this column, Chris Hill shares his individual thoughts and ideas and is not speaking on behalf of the Board

BECAUSE ONE of the key jobs of the Co-op Board is to anticipate and envision the future of the Co-op in this world, the Board has recently revised its annual calendar to set aside 35 percent of its time each year for self-education. The idea here is to educate ourselves about topics that are already—or may be in the future—related to the long-term goals of the Co-op, which we on the Board call the Co-op's "Ends."

We are, for example, thinking about inviting the Executive Director of the Sustainable Business Network to talk with us about a broader understanding of sustainability within the region. Or, are there cooperative ventures, other than food-related, that we may want to support or encourage? To that end, we'd like to meet with the leaders of other cooperative enterprises in the region.

One idea I'm particularly keen to investigate with my fellow board members is the idea of investing financially in local businesses. I know the power of \$30 a year that, multiplied by 4,500 households, has supported an institution that makes a huge difference in the quality of life of the community I live in... my own Co-op. The multiplying impact of that \$30 and the groceries I buy each week has flowered into local farms, healthier local businesses, and a hundred other improvements in the community I call home.

Let's say I set aside \$70 a week to

invest in a mutual fund retirement account. All that money goes to businesses located God knows where. And the return on investment has been *soooo* good that I'm just now getting back to the amount I had in my fund eleven years ago. But I do it because, well, what other choice do I have?

Now let's say there was a mechanism for allowing me to take a portion of that money I'm setting aside each week and invest it, with others, in local companies of all sizes and shapes. I can't imagine it would be much worse than my current investment return. So, if I invested half my annual money in this local market fund, around \$1,500, and 1,000 other Co-op members did the same, that would result in \$1.5 million available to support, grow and strengthen local companies.

As it turns out, lots of people have been thinking about this issue and, unfortunately, things aren't as simple as I'd like them to be. One person who has written extensively on local stock exchanges is Michael Shuman, author of *The Small-Mart Revolution: How Local Businesses Are Beating the Global Competition*.

I saw Shuman speak on the topic at a cooperative grocers' conference last year, and he has also blogged about it on his web site, at <http://small-mart.org/home>. While local investing may not happen—for a number of reasons—in

the short-term, it's worth educating ourselves about and advocating for. And it turns out that a cooperative strategy may be one of the first steps to success.

Here's the problem: While sole proprietorships (like my own small business) are three times more profitable than large corporations, according to Shuman, and while they represent about one-half of the total private economy in the country, they are essentially cut out of any investment from pension funds, mutual funds, and venture funds. This is not because they're bad investments. It's because the Securities and Exchange Commission has effectively banned local stock exchanges and small public offerings.

As Shuman says, "Existing laws place huge restrictions on the investment choices of small, 'unaccredited' investors—a category in SEC vernacular that includes all but the richest two percent of Americans. The regulations prohibit the average American from investing in any small business, unless the firm is willing to spend \$50,000 to \$100,000 on lawyers to prepare private placement memorandum or public offering—thick documents

with microscopic, ALL CAPS PRINT that no human being has ever been observed actually reading."

In the article on his web site, Shuman outlines a variety of very simple regulatory reforms that would open the way for safe, low-risk local public offerings. One of them is the cooperative strategy I mentioned earlier: Co-op Investment Funds. Shuman proposes allowing cooperatives to "set up investment funds empowered to make local investments on behalf of their members." Love the idea. Fits in perfectly with one of the primary goals of the co-op, which is to support the local economy. What better way than through direct investment in local businesses?

If you're interested in exploring these ideas and opportunities together, perhaps as a Co-op member study group, please send me an e-mail. I'd also welcome any ideas you have for topics you think the Board should study in preparing itself to envision the Co-op's expanding role as it moves into the future.

You can reach me at chris@chrishill-media.com.

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photo courtesy of Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

Proudly displaying the award from the DVRPC are (l to r) Weavers Way General Manager Glenn Bergman, Weavers Way Community Programs (WWCP) Executive Director Rachel Milenbach, and WWCP Board President Bob Noble.

WWCP Honored

(continued from page 1)

group identified the following top recommendations:

- Maintain affordable land for farmers through a range of potential innovations and new business models.
- Develop technical assistance programs or market-based solutions that enable farmers to protect natural resources.
- Create or expand new and specialized training and loan programs to reduce barriers for new food entrepreneurs and new, beginning, and minority farmers, and encourage value-added activities.
- Promote the use of new technology and community-based communications by all partners, including government, private sector and nonprofits, to educate people about healthy food.
- Integrate all aspects of Farm-to-School programs into a robust and comprehensive education program.

The presentation took place at Reading Terminal Market and was attended by people from the farming, business development and non-profit communities, as well as the press. In his comments, DVRPC Executive Director Barry Seymour noted that 300,000 regional jobs, 15 per-

cent of trips on area roads and 20 percent of the regional economy can be attributed to the production, distribution, sale, and consumption of food, making it clear that choices we make about how we package, transport, and distribute food are significant factors in the health of our economy, our environment, and our community. He then turned the podium over to Montgomery County Commissioner, and DVRPC board chair Joe Hoeffel, who announced the groups receiving grants and “Plates of Distinction”: The Common Market; Fair Food; Greensgrow Farms; Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Nutritional Alliance (MANNA); Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA); SHARE; and WWCP.

WWCP will use its \$35,000 grant to create a strategic plan to expand the Hope Garden, a community garden project at Stenton Family Manor, a homeless shelter. WWCP Executive Director Rachel Milenbach accepted the check and award, noting that “most of the food we grow goes into the [Stenton Family Manor] kitchen. Some of it goes to area farm stands to go to people in the neighborhoods of Northwest Philadelphia.”

To read the full DVRPC plan, go to www.dvrpc.org/food. To learn more about WWCP, or to volunteer, contact Rachel Milenbach at Rachel@weaversway.coop.

Winter Blahs

(continued from page 3)


For sore joints and muscles, try Hyland’s homeopathic Arnica formula or Tiger Balm—a world-renowned Chinese analgesic ointment. Also, check out our new Soothing Touch product line for aches and pains, including Muscle Comfort Ayurvedic bath and body oil, and Narayan oil—a special formula for soothing sore muscles used by yogis for centuries. Promote a peaceful state of mind with Aura Cacia aromatherapy essential oils, Queen Helene mineral bath, and good old-fashioned Aaron Epsom Salts. Give your skin a sweet exfoliating treat with Soothing Touch Desert Blossom Brown Sugar Scrub.

As a person who suffers from dry skin and hair during the winter months, I am particularly excited about our new Nubian Heritage and Alaffia product lines, equipped with oodles of nourishing and moisturizing formulas. Besides the fact that the names of Nubian Heritage soap, cream, lotion, and body wash combos make me really hungry (i.e. Honey & Blackseed, Coconut & Papaya, Goat’s Milk & Chai, Mango Butter, and Raw Shea w/Myrrh, to name a few), I really dig what their company is about. What began as a small stand on a sidewalk in Harlem—run by Richelieu Dennis and Nyema Tubman—has grown into Sundial Creations: a business conglomerate that today is 100 percent minority-owned and produces natural and organic health and beauty products from its 50,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility, with many ingredients purchased directly from women’s cooperatives and indigenous farmers in Africa. They work with ECOSERVE and AFRICARE to protect the integrity of their products and ensure sustainable harvests. Their partner-

ships with The Liberian Education Fund and Toddee Mission have contributed to building schools and improving education for impoverished girls in Africa as well.

Alaffia Sustainable Skin Care—a West African cooperative—is another great organization that works toward creating high quality products and promotes community empowerment. On our shelves, you will find hand-crafted, fair trade shea butter products, including raw shea butter, and Everyday Shea body lotion. Know that your dollars will be contributing both to your own health and also to community empowerment projects: Alaffia’s Bicycles for Education has collected over 3,000 used bicycles for students in Togo to get to and from school; Maternal Health has provided pre- and post-natal care for 70 women in central Togo; School Supplies and Repairs donates metal roofs, seats and school supplies to schools in rural Togo; and Reforestation and Environment helps to combat effects of climate change and deforestation by planting trees and building home biogas units.

Oh, and back to hair! If, like mine, your hair texture is somewhere within the multifarious spectrum of curly to kinky, look for Aubrey Organics Honeysuckle Rose Shampoo and Conditioner for dry hair, Alaffia Everyday Shea Shampoo and Conditioner for all hair types, and Alaffia Shea and Virgin Coconut Enriching Shampoo and Hair Lotion for curly hair and locks. In need of styling aids? Search no more. Try Weleda Rosemary Hair Oil, Desert Essence Jojoba oil, and Alaffia Shea Butter Curl Defining Gel. For owners of luscious locks, enjoy beeswax cakes made by Sunbeam Candles, a solar-powered candle-making company located in the countryside of the Finger Lakes region of New York State.



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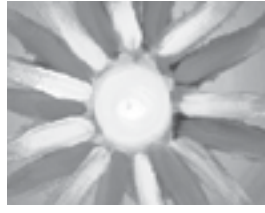
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The deadline for comments on proposed Pennsylvania legislation on gas drilling is March 15.

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March is Restaurant Month in Chestnut Hill

It's TIME to put the winter blahs behind us, get out of the house, and celebrate spring. That will be fun to do now that March is Restaurant Month in Chestnut Hill.

Chestnut Hill restaurants, including Bruno's, Cafette, Chestnut Grill, Cin Cin, Drake's Gourmet Foods, McNally's Tavern, Roller's Restaurant at the Flying Fish, and Tavern on the Hill, will be offering a variety of specials, including buy one, get one free meals, special *prix fixe* dinners, and complimentary appetizers. The Little Treehouse Play Café will be introducing their new menu and offering a special discount to anyone ordering from that menu and mentioning "restaurant month." And, to add to the excitement, two new restaurants are planning to open in March—Thai Kuu at the Top of the Hill Plaza, and Mica, Chip Roman's new restaurant, at 8609 Germantown Avenue.

Complete details on Restaurant Month can be found at the Chestnut Hill web site—www.chestnuthillpa.com or by calling 215-247-6696.

CH Home & Garden Festival Recruiting Vendors

THE CHESTNUT Hill Business Association is soliciting vendors for its 15th Annual Chestnut Hill Home & Garden Festival, scheduled for Sunday, May 1, 2011. Businesses wishing to participate as vendors should have products geared to the home or garden. In addition, a select number of artists and/or crafters will also be selected to exhibit at the event.

Highlighted this year will be Eco-Alley, featuring vendors that specialize in environmentally friendly or sustainable products. Businesses or individuals wishing to take part in the festival can download an application from the Chestnut Hill web site at www.chestnuthillpa.com or call the Business Association office at 215-247-6696.

The Chestnut Hill Home & Garden Festival attracts thousands of visitors each year and is eagerly anticipated by residents and visitors alike.

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MLK Day of Service with Global Thinkers, Acting Locally

by Barbara Sheehan

“30 EMERGENCY winter kits assembled, 60 quarts of soup made, 20 bags of trash collected, 1,800 letters stuffed for bulk mailing, 1,000 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches made, assembled into bag lunches and delivered, 100 winter coats collected...” These were just a few of the tangible results of the Martin Luther King Day of Service event held at the Unitarian Society of Germantown (USG) this year.

I SIGNED up to volunteer through the USG as a way of celebrating the holiday. The MLK Day of Service organization was founded in 1996 in Philadelphia by Todd Bernstein, who had served as Executive Assistant to Harris Wofford when Wofford was the Secretary of Labor for Pennsylvania in 1988. When Wofford later served as U.S. senator for Pennsylvania, he and Congressman John Lewis coauthored the King Holiday and Service Act to transform the King Holiday into a nationwide call to citizen action. The act was signed into law in 1994, setting aside the holiday as a national day of service.

Philadelphia still boasts the biggest participation in the event nationally. Reverend Nate Walker, of the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia, reminded us of Philadelphia’s pivotal role while he gave us a pep talk to start the day for volunteers. “If you want a remedy to depression, help someone! If you want a remedy to loneliness and despair, help somebody else,” Reverend Walker told the crowd of about 400, mostly students and their families. The Unitarian Society of Germantown, along with a committee of representatives from Unitarian Universalist congregations in the area, organized a full day of activities, which included an opening service, free breakfast, lunch and snacks, film and discussion, sing along, and a host of service projects in which one could participate.

Outfitted in T-shirts proclaiming us “Global Citizens,” we volunteers were very efficiently broken up into 24 teams, each with a leader and a bag of snacks. I chose to visit residents in a local nursing home, the Cliveden Convalescent Center on Greene Street in Germantown. Our team of about 15 was led by Lynne Kalish, an Abington resident and longtime member of UGS. Two couples attended with their pre-school children, who were favorites among the residents, and others included retired folks, young adults, and everything in between. There were about an equal number of nursing home

residents to the number of volunteers, and we passed the time playing games, talking, sharing refreshments, and listening to live music. Some of the young children entertained us by energetic dancing, as Elisa Lang and Jansen Wendell of the group “Meadowlark” played traditional jigs and reels on fiddle, autoharp, banjo, and mandolin.

Our assignments seemed relatively easy compared to the group working one floor below painting a long hallway in the basement. Using extension poles and rollers, they put up two coats of yellow paint during the two and a half hours we were there. At lunch, I spoke with some Villanova students who were assigned to clean up the business district sidewalks on Cheltenham Avenue. It was a cold day, about 21 degrees in the morning, so their labor was a bit more difficult than ours.

Other projects included a huge assembly line that made 1,000 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to be given out to local food pantries and soup kitchens. Two advocacy projects ran simultaneously, one to highlight LGBT issues and the other to advocate for housing resources for low-income people in our area.

But everything counts. As volunteers, we were cheered, entertained, and fed. The USG should be recognized and applauded for their ability to organize this large-scale event, which enlisted the aid of other area Unitarian Churches for staff support and material donations. We walked away with T-shirts, full stomachs, and a general spirit of camaraderie. Some even took home some extra oranges or peanut butter sandwiches. As a volunteer, I wonder, what is the net effect of a day like this? Will this experience encourage us to volunteer or provide service on a longer term basis? Does it need to?

Roxborough resident Anne Bower, a member of both Weavers Way and USG, participates annually in the MLK day of service along with her son Jacob. Jacob, who is nine, actually chose their project for this year, joining our group at the nursing home. He brought along a metal box containing games of chess, checkers, and cards to share with the residents. A former Peace Corps volunteer in Sierra Leone, Anne is now a professor at Philadelphia University. She also serves on the board of the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education. She considers volunteering important “as a way of giving back.” She feels “it is important to stay engaged



photo by Barbara Sheehan

Anne Bower (right) visits with resident Juanita Deburst at the Cliveden Convalescent Center during the Martin Luther King Day of Service this year.

and connected to your community.” The Bower family is especially service-oriented. Her son Jacob attends the USG youth program, which sponsors services projects at least once per month. Her husband Dave works for the City of Philadelphia, recruiting and coordinating volunteers for the park area around the Wissahickon Watershed.

The Greater Philadelphia Martin Luther King Day of Service reported that this year there were more than 1,200 service projects planned city-wide with almost 70 in Chestnut Hill and Mt. Airy alone. In an interview for the Philadelphia Inquirer (January 18, 2011), Todd Bernstein said that he considers the King Day as “a springboard to a lifetime of service.” He noted that “Dr. King was a man of action 365 days of the year.” It would be interesting to see how this one day off/on plays out in neighborhoods and community organizations in the Northwest.

Reverend Kent Matthies, minister for USG and Cochair of the Organizing Committee for the MLK Day of Service, says that his congregation makes this day a priority each year. According to Reverend Matthies, “the sky is the limit” in terms of the amount human resources they will dedicate towards the project. He finds that fundraising for the MLK Day of Service is “easy because everyone wants to help.” The MLK Day of service fits very closely with the mission of his congregation, which is to build partnerships and work together for the good of the community. The day is specifically designed for families who want to spend quality time together doing something meaningful. He

also suggested that it would be “a great choice for what to do on a first date!” Volunteers are energized, he says, by helping with tangible projects where they feel they have made a difference. The USG’s considerable experience with community organizing helps to make the event successful. The number of volunteers increased from 300 last year to 450 this year.

If you’d like to dip your toe in the waters of volunteerism, here are several local clearinghouses for volunteers in the region. Greater Philadelphia Cares (www.gpcares.com) supports volunteers and nonprofit organizations by providing volunteer opportunities that fit into busy schedules. They offer many choices in all neighborhoods of the city, and volunteer assignments can be as short as one hour, one time, or a regular weekly or monthly commitment. The other Philadelphia-based resource for volunteer opportunities is Global Citizen, which in addition to organizing the city-wide MLK Day of Service, also started the MLK635 Initiative. It helps individuals and organizations volunteer in one-time or on-going service projects. You can visit their web site at www.globalcitizen.us.com or call 215-665-2655 for more information.

I am curious about the role of volunteerism in our community and in the lives of our membership and would like to continue to explore this issue in future issues of The Shuttle.

Feel free to contact me with your suggestions and comments at sheebarb@yahoo.com

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Weavers Way is Not the Only Co-op Expanding in Philadelphia

Mariposa Co-op Expanding to New Location

by Scott Robinson

THE MARIPOSA Co-op has been a fixture in the Cedar Park neighborhood of West Philadelphia for decades. By this summer, the store will be moved out of its current space at 4726 Baltimore Avenue, and into the landmark Belmont Trust Company Building, which most recently served as the home of Beulah Tabernacle Church. Only a block away from the current store, the new space will offer five times the retail space.

So why in the world do they need five times the space they have now?

“It was definitely demand,” says Mariposa’s Capital Campaign Coordinator Leah Pillsbury. “People were buying more, and we were also getting a lot more memberships. We couldn’t keep the shelves stocked for as much as we were selling with such a small store.”

Pillsbury attributes the surge in interest to two main factors.

“It’s a combination (of) people being much more interested in organic and local food,” she says, “and the neighborhood changing.” As Baltimore Avenue becomes more developed, “there (are) more businesses here that people are taking seriously.”

Mariposa plans to capitalize on neighborhood interest by expanding their membership rules along with their space.

“We will have working member, non-working members and guest shoppers, so anybody from the neighborhood can just come in and shop,” says Pillsbury. “There are plenty of people in the neighborhood who’d like to shop, but they don’t necessarily want to be members.”

“We’ve been an institution in the neighborhood for a while,” she adds, but the expansion will help them become “more accessible and open.”

Accessibility is key, in a neighborhood in which many people do not own cars.

“We’re right on a trolley line, so that’s helpful,” says Pillsbury, “but most of our membership lives within ten blocks or so.” That ten-block area is currently home to some seven hundred member households, which works out to a total of around one thousand members.

And the number keeps going up. Membership increased twelve percent between 2009 and 2010, on the heels of a sixteen-percent increase the previous year. This kind of growth makes Mariposa Co-op confident about the success of their expansion.

“We’ve had consultants do marketing and feasibility studies,” says Pillsbury, “that say within the first year of our store being opened, our sales will double, at least.”

The fact that there will be abundant space doesn’t mean that it will be used inefficiently. For one thing, the roof will become a garden.

“Part of the importance of a rooftop garden is to collect storm water,” says Pillsbury, “so it’s a green roof. Green roofs keep buildings cooler in the summertime, so we’re able to use less energy on cooling... But (the roof garden) also allows us to grow some of our own food,” she adds, “and as an educational tool—to have members work directly with some of the food.”

Education and community events will also take place in the parts of the large second floor that are not dedicated to office space.

“Upstairs, Mariposa and the membership will sometimes sponsor community events or movie nights. We would like to do more of that.” Like Weavers Way, Mariposa hosts events like this already, but not in its own location.

“We’ve always had to use other spaces in the neighborhood,” Pillsbury explains. “So (the new building) will become a space where we can not only have our own events, but host neighborhood events, too.” Like Weavers Way, the Mariposa Co-op is owned and controlled by its members, who will make the programming decisions for the new space.

Mariposa began as a neighborhood buying club in the 1970s. The unprecedented growth in membership over the last decade attracted the interest of a number of investment partners, including The Merchant’s Fund, University City District,



photo courtesy of Mariposa Co-op

Photo mock-up of Mariposa Co-op’s new home

The Reinvestment Fund, Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation, Wharton Small Business Development Center, Fresh Food Financing Initiative, CDS Consulting Co-op, North Country Cooperative Development Fund, The Community Design Collaborative, and Re:Vision Architecture.

“Mariposa has been a part of the fabric of West Philadelphia for decades,” said Monica Allison, president of Cedar Park Neighbors. “We are thrilled to support them as they make their move to this new, gorgeous home.”

~ scottrobinson@earthlink.net



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The Simplicity Dividend

The Kids Are ... Retired!

by Betsy Teutsch

MY RECENT Sandwich Generation Tour of the West Coast to visit elderly as well as brand-new family members reflects the unique life we find in the twenty-first century: four generation families. An extra decade or more of longevity has blessed many with longer life spans. Living independent, productive lives into one's 80's and 90's has become commonplace. We visited with my husband's 101-year-old uncle and then our niece's eight-month-old baby—kin an entire century apart in age. Astonishing!

Both my husband and I come from smallish families, but the small numbers seem obscured by the long lives of many of our relatives. Pete, a first cousin, is about to celebrate his 75th birthday. While not an uncommon milestone, certainly not to be counted upon, what is especially remarkable is that he is the full-time care provider for his 99-year-old mother.

Spending time with a great-grandparent no longer means visiting a barely-aware elder in a nursing home. My cousin's aunt routinely baby-sits and runs after her toddler great-grandson, even though she is 86 years older than the little fellow. Spending time with my mother-in-law, niece (her granddaughter), and two little great-nephews, the conversations are mirrored. Walking ability, declining for one, increasing for the other—strollers versus walkers. Sleeping quality—how many times did Great Grandma and the baby wake up at night? When in human history did families span four generations? If the newest generation lives as long, they will link seven generations.

The internet has also created connection opportunities for families through genealogical research, sharing of photos and videos, and Skyping with video in real time. Local Rabbis Phyllis Berman and Arthur Waskow recently lit the Hanukkah

candles with their Chicago grandchildren - via Skype. (I know this since I read about it on Facebook.) The Friedman-Ferlegers often have their bubbie with them at the Sabbath dinner table even though she is too frail to be there in person. She sits at the table via laptop, participating in the meal via webcam and Skype, bestowing blessings on her descendants. This is a new world!

Much has been written about baby boomer grand-parenting, more hands-on than previous generations. BB grandparents are healthy, well-educated, and interested in direct involvement. It is not uncommon to hear of high-powered professional grandmas and grandpas blocking time out in their schedule to spend afternoons or whole days with their little grand-kids, something they likely did not do with their own children. How lucky these little grandchildren are, to have a rich network of people who care for and

nurture them, and how fortunate their moms and dads are, to share the challenges and delights of parenting with their own parents. And the grandparents seem to enjoy being intimately linked to their grand-kids through soccer games, pickups at day care, and all kinds of quality time.

What has this to do with simplicity? It takes time and patience to spend time with people at different stages of life, as well as in investment of travel and planning. In our splintered world, with families often far-flung and relatively unfamiliar with one another, making an effort to maintain ongoing connection is grounding. Using our time-affluence and resources to build stronger families is good for everyone's souls! And with luck, it might provide a good excuse for winter visits to warmer climes....

Betsy blogs at www.MoneyChangesThings.blogspot.com and teaches blogging at MALT.

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Pennsylvania Company Has Epiphany About Sustainable Clean Water

by Annette Aloe, Weavers Way Designer and Cousin of Tommy

IN MY hometown of New Castle, Pennsylvania you will find an ordinary industrial building with a modest sign reading, "New Castle Candy Company." But when you walk inside, what you will find is anything but ordinary.

This building houses my cousins' three businesses. On the first floor is the candy-making business, established in 1993 under the original name Fairfield Confectionery. The second floor is reserved for Uncle Jimmy's Brand Products, which produces treats for the equestrian and chicken markets with product names like "Licky Thing" and "Pecker Recker" (more on this in a future *Shuttle* issue). What is being produced on the third floor, though, is even more extraordinary. Here is the home of Epiphany Solar Water Systems.

Epiphany SWS began in 2005 when Tom Joseph Jr. first conceived of a simple and inexpensive method of distilling water with concentrated solar energy. After receiving seed funding from Innovation Works (a PA Ben Franklin Technology Partner) in 2009, a team of diverse and highly skilled individuals was secured to undertake the project. Among them are experts in solar energy, design, manufacturing, marketing, and business management.

According to the World Health Organization, more than 2 billion people in the world live without access to adequate clean water, and that number is expected to more than double by 2025. As rapidly developing countries like India and China add millions to the ranks of the middle class each year, their existing water and power infrastructure struggles to keep pace. This problem becomes especially acute in the develop-

ing world where a large part of the population live in rural areas, far away from any type of formal water infrastructure. It has long been apparent that desalination is a viable solution but conventional desalination technologies, such as reverse osmosis and multi-effect distillation, are expensive, energy-intensive, and unsustainable. Moreover, due to the centralized nature of conventional desalination plants, immense infrastructure projects are required to provide energy to the desalination plants and to distribute the clean water to consumers.

What is unique about Epiphany's system is that the unit is very simple, easy to maintain, and affordable. It has been developed to both purify and desalinate water, and most importantly, the unit is powered 100 percent by solar energy. Therefore, people who are most in need of clean drinking water are not bound by the need for electricity, which is likely either unavailable or unaffordable. The idea here is basically to convert concentrated sunlight into intense heat, using the heat as a power source to power the distillation unit. In fact, the unit can distill any water-based liquid, including salt water, which up until now, has been an extremely costly endeavor. That ability, combined with the green energy supply, is what puts this technology on the cutting edge.

Epiphany's non-profit arm, Project Eviive, was started in 2009 to partner with universities and other organizations to educate the public about the global water shortage and the advantage of Epiphany's low cost technology as an immediate solution. Project Eviive's goal is to join forces with individuals and corporations to spon-



photo courtesy of Epiphany

An array of solar powered water purifiers on the roof of Epiphany's headquarters in New Castle, PA

sor water purification systems here in the United States, while simultaneously reaching underserved communities around the world.

The idea is to encourage student awareness and participation on a grassroots level. The plan is to seek private and corporate endorsement for installation of units on college campuses right here in the United States. Each time a university secures a unit, one is delivered to a needy village in Africa, South America, Asia, India, Middle East, etc. It's a one for one. From there, the students will have a self-sustaining goal to donate, by swiping their meal cards to refill their re-usable water containers. Each time the funds reach a specified dollar amount, another unit is donated to a needy village.

Eventually, the dream is to have a network of units around the globe that students can track, study, travel to and become a real part of solving the world's water shortage.

Just this week, Project Eviive and Epiphany Solar Water Systems are proud to announce that they have an opportunity to team up with the Albert Schweitzer Hospital in Haiti to provide clean drinking water to the citizens of Haiti. The goal of this three way cooperative effort is to

deliver and install several solar powered water purification units, each capable of providing up to 500 gallons per day of pharmaceutically pure water for use at the Albert Schweitzer Hospital and several of its outpost facilities. This project will not only provide a reliable source of clean water for the people of Haiti, but it will also afford Epiphany an opportunity to promote its game changing technology and Project Eviive's mission to provide safe drinking water to people around the world who suffer from inadequate access to clean water.

This project will be administered and carried out by Project Eviive. Their goal is to partner with universities and other organizations to educate the public about the global water shortage and take advantage of Epiphany's low cost technology as an immediate solution. Epiphany Solar Water Systems breakthrough technology is the means by which the project will be realized. The delivery location and beneficiary of the project will be the Albert Schweitzer Hospital.

The hospital was founded in 1956 by members of the Mellon family to provide medical care and community health and development programs to 300,000 improv-

(continued on page 16)

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Community Supported Apiculture in Philadelphia

by Daniel Duffy

A GROUP of Philadelphia beekeepers and urban farmers, together with the community greening non-profit UC Green have begun raising money to start the city’s first community honeybee farm, which will host the first-of-its-kind urban apiary-to-farmstand youth beekeeping program.

Among the groups partnering with UC Green are the Philadelphia Beekeepers Guild, The Enterprise Center Community Development Corporation, the Woodlands Cemetery, and Philly Rooted, the organization that started the Walnut Hill Community Farm. The bee farm, or apiary, will be housed on the cemetery’s grounds.

“A community apiary has the potential to be an incubator for education in sustainability, new ideas and fresh approaches to beekeeping,” said Daniel Duffy, Philadelphia Beekeepers Guild board member and volunteer beekeeper for UC Green.

Duffy will help lead a structured curriculum of workdays that will help high school students from underserved communities to manage part of the apiary and sell their honey and pollen at farmers markets. They intend to work with youth towards eliminating barriers to employment while also addressing the threats pollinators face.

The program builds on UC Green’s summer internship program, in which high school students become active tree tenders of the urban forest. That program has been active for five years.

“The bee yard will provide a unique opportunity to help students develop widely-applicable jobs skills and entrepreneurial savvy,” said UC Green director Sue Pringle. UC Green cites a few small donors, but says that it wants to fund much of the project with shares in a Community Supported Apiculture (CSA) program. When the student beekeepers market their product, they will package some to be set

aside for individuals who donate to the project before the season starts.

More information on the fundraising drive and CSA can be found at www.woodlandsapiary.wordpress.com.

Chestnut Hill Rotary Chili Cook-Off

Please join us to taste and judge the best chili in the region on March 27, 2011 from 2-6 p.m. at the Lutheran Seminary Brossman Center. Delicious chili, fabulous micro brewery, face painting for kids and fun for the whole family!

All-you-can-eat chili tickets are just \$10- kids under 5 are free! For more information, or to buy tickets, visit www.chestnuthillrotary.org. Proceeds benefit Chestnut Hill Rotary local and international projects like distributing dictionaries to area schools, supporting Fresh Artists, scholarships at Germantown High, aid to an orphanage in Guyana and more.



Holiday Specials

AVAILABLE AT THREE LOCATIONS

Passover Specials

Passover begins at sundown April 18.

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Empire Turkeys 16-20 lbs	\$4.20/lb
Empire Boneless Breasts	\$7.58/lb
Empire Whole Chickens	\$3.74/lb
Empire Cut-up Chickens	\$3.78/lb
Natural Acres Beef Briskets	\$4.22/lb
Esposito's Beef Brisket	\$6.84/lb
**Meyer All Natural Angus Humane Raised Brisket	\$5.99/lb
**All Natural Boneless Leg of Lamb	\$6.60/lb
<i>**Available for order and pick in Chestnut Hill Only</i>	

Essentials

Parsley and Romaine	Egg Matzoh	Macaroons
Fresh Horseradish	White Flour Matzoh	Fruit Slices
Apples and Nuts	Gefilte Fish	Honey Cakes



Easter Specials

Easter—April 24

PRE-ORDER FAVORITES

Esposito Boneless Leg of Lamb	\$8.60/lb.
Esposito Bone-in Leg of Lamb	\$5.90/lb
Esposito Lamb Roast Wrapped in Bacon	\$10.68/lb
Garrett County Spiral Cut Ham	\$5.82/lb
Natural Acres Roasts	market price
Anything from the Sea including Organic Farm Raised Salmon	\$12.61/lb
Boneless Shad Filet	market price
Shad Roe Sets	market price
Meadow Run Boneless Smoked Ham comes frozen	market price



Order Meat & Seafood Specials at all three locations:

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We would like at least one week notice on holiday pre-orders, but will fill last minute orders whenever possible.

Bakery Specials

Pre-orders slips are in the bakery dept.

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Plain Pound Cake Loaf	\$4.25	Chocolate covered macaroons-	\$34.50/ 5lbs
Lemon Sponge Loaf	\$4.25	Chocolate Chip macaroons	
Jewish Apple Loaf	\$4.50	Chocolate macaroons	
8" Round Jewish Apple	\$13.50	French almond	
8" Round Sponge Cake	\$13.50	Coconut	All \$25.60/ 5lbs
Sponge Jelly Roll	\$7.00		
Mocha & Chocolate Roll	\$7.00		
<i>*Items for pre-order:</i>		LE BUS	
10" Round Jewish Apple	\$21.00	Pre order snowflake, multi-grain, and pumpkin rolls	
Flourless Choc. 8" Round	\$14.00		
Flourless Choc 10" Round	\$22.00		

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March Garden Notes

by Mark Goodman, The Neighborhood Gardener

OK, GANG - it's March. Time to get ready to rock 'n roll in the garden. Too cold, you say? Not for the early cold-tolerant vegetables. As soon as the ground can be worked, you can plant seeds for spinach, lettuce, peas, parsley, and mustard greens. For those of you who have the time, patience, and inclination, you can start seeds indoors in peat pots in late March for tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants.

We don't usually think of March as a time for flowering plants other than spring bulbs. However, vernal (spring) witch hazel shrubs have been blooming since February, and you can still find some ready to bloom. Pieris japonica shrubs are decorating the neighborhood with pendulous white flowers. And thanks to the wonders of hybridization, Philadelphians can now grow more varieties of camellias, some of which bloom in March. Camellias do better in a partially shaded spot with some protection from a wall or fence. Their blooms are large, colorful, and sometimes aromatic, and will help to dispel any lingering winter doldrums.

Early flowering perennials such as English daisy, primrose, and hellebore can bloom in March if the weather is mild and the winter hasn't been too severe. If you buy new plants this month, monitor the weather before you plant them. If the plants were kept indoors at the nursery, you should "harden them off" for a week or so. "Hardening off" means that you keep the plants outside during the day but take them in at night, ideally in an unheat-

ed room. This allows the plants to gradually acclimate to the chilly weather. This same technique is recommended for seedlings that you have started indoors. Annuals for nippy March? Nothing beats winter pansies for cold hardiness and colorful varieties.

Seed Catalogs. March ushers in spring, and that means longer days, daffodils and crocuses, robins, spring training baseball games, and seed catalogs. If you're an avid gardener, by now you've pored over a half dozen or more seed catalogs and have ordered your old favorites, along with new varieties. Some catalogs, such as WhiteFlower Farm or Johnny's Selected Seeds, are quite informative about their products and garden techniques. Others, such as Wayside, have exceptional photographs.

The Landreth Seed Company has assembled a unique catalog that features the African American Heritage Collection. This collection, recommended by historian Michael Twitty, is comprised of seeds carried by emancipated slaves to their new homes throughout the South and into the

North and West. Many of the seeds originated in Africa or the West Indies. Varieties include Louisiana Long Green Eggplant, Southern Giant Curled Mustard, West Indian Burr Gherkin, and Brown Crowder Cow Peas.

The catalog also contains illustrations from previous Landreth catalogs dating back to the late 1880's and early 1900's, when the company was located in Philadelphia. To order a catalog, or seeds, write to D. Landreth Seed Company, 60 East High Street, #4, New Freedom, PA 17349, or visit their web site at www.landrethseeds.com.

Of course you can also get your seeds right here at Weavers Way. We have a great selection of quality seeds from Botanical Interests (www.botanicalinterests.com) and High Mowing Seeds (www.highmowingseeds.com).

Whether you get your seeds through catalogs or buy them at the Co-op, it's almost time to get busy in the garden.

~ earthcraft@comcast.net



Epiphany

(continued from page 13)

erished people in central Haiti. After the devastating earthquake and subsequent hurricane that struck Haiti's already impoverished population in 2010, a cholera epidemic broke out and continues unabated, spreading through the country via waterways. The UN has warned that over 650,000 Haitians are likely to suffer from this epidemic. Dr. Ian Rawson, Managing Director of the Albert Schweitzer Hospital believes that Epiphany's technology can make a significant impact in their ongoing battle against cholera by using the water purification systems to purify polluted wells and water courses, both on their main hospital campus and at the hospital's out-post facilities.

The project will be completed over the course of two phases. Epiphany has already secured one half of the funding from its seed investment partner, Innovation Works, and is seeking the balance of the funding from individual and corporate sponsorship. The commitment from Innovation Works is contingent upon the raising of the remainder of the funding needed to execute the plan. Innovation Works is a PA Ben Franklin Technology Partner and has already invested dollars into Epiphany's product development since 2009. Their additional commitment represents a show of faith based on Epiphany's successful development of the technical aspects of their system, which is now ready for introduction to the international marketplace.

To understand the concept better and to see the unit in action, view the video on Epiphany's web site, www.epiphanysws.com and to learn more about Project Eviive visit www.projecteviive.org.

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Transition Cheltenham to Host Official Launch Party

by Beverly Milestone Maisey

TRANSITION CHELTENHAM is launching and everyone is invited to the party. On Sunday, March 13, 4 to 8 p.m., Transition Cheltenham is hosting a potluck dinner celebration at Cheltenham High School. The cafeteria will abound with food, music, information, and fun to mark the launch. The potluck party is the official beginning of a process of envisioning what the community will look like as we institute the best practices to transition away from our fossil-fuel-propelled lives into renewable and sustainable ones, fostering a healthy, resilient community.

Along with the feast and entertainment, guests will have an opportunity to meet members in Transition Cheltenham’s action groups: energy/lean building, garden/food, heart and soul, education, health, transportation, local government, and local economy. Each group has already begun taking steps toward the ultimate goal. The energy group has written an energy conservation handout available free under “Resources” on the Transition Cheltenham web site, <http://www.TransitionCheltenham.org>. The Health Group offers Golden Breath Tai Chi classes four times a week (see the web site calendar), the Food Group has hosted local food events and put together a local food resource guide. The Local Government Group has co-hosted a Democracy School and will be hosting a second one in April. The Transportation Group has kept us apprised of local Septa issues and has begun working on a map of safe biking routes in Cheltenham. The Heart and Soul Group held a series of “Sustainability Salons” at the Cheltenham libraries in January and February.

As you can see, there is a lot going on. All of it can be found on our web site. Residents are encouraged to join in, whatever your passion may be. Your ideas and input are sought. After the “Launch,” the action groups will help write an Energy Descent Plan that will be a guide for a truly sustainable community.

The Transition movement began in Ireland and quickly spread throughout the world. There are currently over 75 official transition towns in the U.S., with more than twice that number unofficial or “mulling.”

If you are currently involved in a group or activity of any sort that promotes sustainability, Transition Cheltenham asks that you please connect with them. The goal of connecting community is also part of the process of transition.

For more information about Transition Cheltenham, visit the web site at TransitionCheltenham.org or contact Beverly Maisey at bmaisey@gmail.com.

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Simple Poached Mackerel

For two Atlantic mackerel fillets (6-8oz each)

Poaching liquid:

½ cup white or red wine vinegar	½ cup water or white wine
1 small red onion, thinly sliced	2 bay leaves
1 fresh sprig of thyme	1 tbsp whole peppercorns

Directions Combine ingredients for poaching liquid in a wide, shallow pan large enough for the fillets. Bring to a boil. Carefully place the mackerel fillets into the poaching liquid, turn off the heat and let cool for 30 minutes partially covered. (Note: Fish can be stored in the poaching liquid and refrigerated for up to two days.)

When cool, use your (clean) hands to peel off the skin and gently flake the mackerel into nice big chunks. There is a row of pin-bones running down the middle of the fillet that can easily be felt and removed.

Enjoy This makes a great snack with rye crisps and whole grain mustard. I like it best served on a salad of bib lettuce with capers, cherry tomatoes, and homemade creamy dressing. This recipe also works beautifully with fresh albacore tuna. Don’t be afraid to improvise!

Mackerel

(continued from page 3)

wise tend to be much leaner.

Mackerel is a universal favorite throughout much of the rest of the world and can be adapted to a wide variety of culinary applications. It can be found in the spicy tangines of North Africa, grilled with teriyaki in Japan, and fried with a sour cream sauce in Norway. Its richness and full flavor lend it to broiling and grill-

ing as well as smoking, salt curing, and pickling. It can stand alone with a simple squeeze of lemon or hold its own in a bold curry. My favorite way to enjoy mackerel is marinated in freshly made Jamaican jerk paste and then pan roasted.

Atlantic mackerel will be available filleted in the fish case on a day-to-day basis. Whole fish can be ordered thawed and cleaned or still frozen (if you’re up to the task of cleaning it at home...). Pre-orders and special requests are welcome. Happy cooking!

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The Drama Group Presents Wendy Wasserstein’s Final Play

by Robert Bauer

THE DRAMA Group’s spring show will be “Third” by Wendy Wasserstein. Performances are Friday and Saturday evenings, March 18 to April 2, at 8 p.m., in Pilling Hall at The First United Methodist Church of Germantown, 6001 Germantown Ave., between High Street and Walnut Lane.

Is it possible that college student Woodson Bull III (call him “Third”), a conservative jock, actually wrote the intelligent, insightful and analytical essay on “King Lear” that he’s passing off as his own? Professor Laurie Jameson doesn’t think so. But is her accusation justified? Or is she incapable of seeing “Third” as anything more than, as she describes him, a “walking red state”?

Liberals and conservatives alike, are targets of Wendy Wasserstein’s insightful wit in “Third,” her final play.

The cast of “Third” includes Zac Anderson, Colleen Bracken, Julie Chen, Marjorie Goldman, and Wayne Snover. “Third” is being directed by Robert Bauer, assisted by Marc C. Johnson.

Tickets for “Third” are \$15 and can be purchased at the door. On opening night, Friday, March 18, every ticket purchased will admit two people. A post-show discussion will be held following the performance on Friday, March 25.

For more information about “Third” or to learn more about The Drama Group’s proud, thirty-year history of presenting outstanding non-professional theatre in Northwest Philadelphia, visit www.thedramagroup.org.

Kid Stuff Give-Away!

by Genie Ravital

PIGGYBACKING ON the well-loved Women’s Clothing Give-Away, Germantown Jewish Centre (GJC) will host the second annual Kids Stuff Give Away on Sunday, April 3. This event will benefit the American Jewish World Service (AJWS) Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund. (http://ajws.org/who_we_are/news/haiti_emergency.html).

Clean out your clutter, take items new to your kids, help Haitians cope with rebuilding, and keep stuff circulating and out of landfills. Drop off your gently used kids clothes, books, toys, games, equipment, etc. to Germantown Jewish Centre, 400 W. Ellet St., from Sunday, March 27 to Friday, April 1. (No clothing with tears or holes; no toys or equipment that are broken.)

Come back to GJC on Sunday, April 3, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., with \$20 for AJWS Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund. Checks are preferred, but cash is fine, too. Then just start “shopping.” Bring home as

much as you like from our very large communal collection. At the end of the day, all leftover stuff will be donated to Whosoever Gospel Mission in Germantown.

Volunteers are needed to make this event run well, sorting donations into categories, helping “shoppers” find what they’re looking for, and packing up the leftover donations at the end of the event.

The three volunteer shifts we’re looking to fill on Sunday, April 3 are: 8:30 to 11 a.m.; 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; and 2 to 4 p.m. If you are available to volunteer, or if you have any questions about the event, please contact Genie Ravital: geniebud@gmail.com or 267-977-3008. For more information about AJWS and the group’s efforts in Haiti, visit http://ajws.org/who_we_are/news/haiti_emergency.html. For information about Whosoever Gospel Mission, visit www.whosoevergospel.org.

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The Importance of Commercial Corridors

by Jack Kitchen, OARC President & CEO

OARC WAS originally formed in 1983 by a group of concerned residents in West Oak Lane, led by newly-elected State Representative Dwight Evans. Its mission was to acquire and renovate the Ogontz Plaza Shopping Center, hence the name Ogontz Avenue Revitalization Corporation. Over the years OARC has grown well past that initiative and today trades as OARC.

OARC believes it necessary to implement many strategies in a holistic approach to economic development. These strategies include: Housing and Economic Development, Business Development, Education and Community Relations, Cleaning and Greening, and Arts and Culture.

At the core of OARC's holistic implementation has been the revitalization of the Ogontz Commercial Corridor. While it is only a part of OARC's overall mission, it is an issue affecting nearly every part of Philadelphia.

If commercial corridors have deteriorated or are failing, it can be a strong indicator that cities themselves are failing. With sound planning and implementation, commercial corridors can be revitalized and turned into attractive and safe parts of the community.

In the 19th and early 20th century, commercial corridors were developed along public transportation lines. (In Philadelphia, trolley, bus and train routes). Today the trolleys are gone, bus routes have

changed, and our population has become much more mobile. Many of these corridors were constructed based on heavy use of the public transportation systems. Parking for a mobile population was not a major consideration. Today one of the biggest challenges in revamping corridors is not attracting the businesses, but supporting their patrons with adequate parking.

Design of a cohesive commercial corridor can be difficult since stores and lots have different owners. This is where a strong Community Development Corporation (CDC) or Business Association can make a difference. When a CDC buys up a critical mass of real estate along a commercial corridor, it gains control and is able to implement a cohesive strategy. A CDC may implement a strategy that is not all about the bottom line and may structure rents to attract and grow businesses, a strategy that may one day resell the real estate to the very business it has helped to grow. This not only creates stability but creates a business owner that is then vested in the corridor. This does not mean that CDC's don't have a financial responsibility, only that they can be more flexible with new or growing businesses. Unfortunately in most instances CDC's are formed only after a collapse or major decline has occurred. OARC was formed to revitalize a failed commercial corridor and a rapidly failing neighborhood. Through its 27-year existence, the OARC initiative has seen many highs and lows, but has been there

to help steer the corridor and community through them.

The economic impact can be immense. Today, in the midst of one of the worst economic times most of us have seen, the Ogontz Corridor is alive and thriving. It is true that OARC currently owns and controls a great deal of the real estate, but it is important to note that rent collections from the variety of tenants remain very strong. The businesses employ workers, workers who pay taxes. The businesses pay rent and support the real estate that OARC owns that in turns pays real estate taxes.

A strong business association can accomplish a great deal by becoming its gatekeeper, mobilizing and convincing stakeholders that working cohesively to improve the tenant mix and create parking will impact all in a positive manner. The business association can also serve as a task force to deal with city zoning and code violations that may affect neighboring businesses or residents. A strong business association with dues-paying members can be the catalyst for providing

regional marketing initiatives as well as public events that will attract visitors and shoppers to a corridor.

Zoning overlay is another strategy that can be initiated by business associations working with local and regional politicians.

The flashpoint occurs when the economy takes a sharp downward trend and vacancies begin to occur in large numbers in a tight geographical area. Much of the real estate in a commercial corridor is investor-owned, and as the investors begin to suffer vacancies their willingness to lease to the first business that will pay the rent greatly increases. While this may be a short term success for the investor, it will ultimately lead to a corridor with undesirable tenants, a mix that will not attract foot traffic or continue the environment that previously supported upscale shops and restaurants. Better to be proactive than reactive.

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Volunteers to provide sleeping space in their homes for out-of-town attendees of the 1-day Mid-Atlantic Food Co-op Startup Conference to be held in Philadelphia on Sat April 16. More information on this conference will appear in the April *Shuttle*. Anyone interested in helping should contact Chris Hill, chris@chrishillmedia.com.

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Drive Collects Hundreds of Coats



photo by Stephanie Johnson

Weavers Way held a coat drive in partnership with Grace United Methodist Church of West Oak Lane and Face-to-Face of Germantown, a human services organization located at 109 Price Street that is mainly known for their weekend dining room, which gives away 600 three-course meals each weekend. The drive collected more than 600 hundred coats, a well as many blankets and new socks. Pictured here collecting the coats from Weavers Way West Oak Lane are Timothy Bates Jr., Youth Director Betty Lockwood, and Shamari Hudson of Grace Church, Weavers Way West Oak Lane assistant store manager Michael Conley, and Outreach Chair Robynne McCollum and Taylor Smith, also from Grace Church.

Developing the Human Voice

by Eileen Flanagan

Internationally acclaimed vocal teacher Richard Armstrong will offer a workshop in Philadelphia called “The Human Voice.” Emphasizing good use of breath, body alignment, and physical grounding, the workshop will explore the connection between the voice and the personality of each participant. Armstrong’s teaching is rooted in his mentor Roy Hart’s belief that the voice is a manifestation of the psyche, a potential key to often hidden areas of personality and spirit.

Armstrong has taught for theatre companies, universities and opera schools around the world and serves on the fac-

ulty of the Banff Centre and New York University’s Experimental Theatre Wing at the Tisch School of the Arts. His upcoming Philadelphia workshop is relevant for singers, actors, dancers, composers, playwrights, and voice teachers. He will adapt the training to the individual needs of the participants, who will be limited to twelve. The workshop costs \$350 and will be held at the Arts Bank on South Broad Street, Saturday and Sunday, April 2 and 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For more information visit www.gas-andelectricarts.org or call Gas & Electric Arts, the sponsoring organization, at 215-407-0556.

Explore the Wissahickon

by Denise Larrabee

TRAIL AMBAS-SADORS from the Friends of the Wis-sahickon (FOW) are offering free nature walks in Wissa-hickon Valley Park this spring. The Trail Ambassador program was launched in 2008 in partner-ship with Fairmount Park. These vol-unteers share their knowledge of the Wissahickon with park users and report any problems they see to Fairmount Park Rangers.

Unless other-wise specified, Trail Ambassador hikes use rocky, rugged trails that may be wet and slippery. Please wear sturdy shoes or boots with socks. Long pants are recommended for protec-tion against occasional poison ivy and possible ticks. Bring water and a snack if desired. Children over seven are welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult. Walks are cancelled in heavy rain or icy conditions. Registration is not required, but is recommended so that FOW can in-form you of weather or other emergency cancellations.

Founded in 1924, the Friends of the

Free Nature Walks in Wissahickon Valley

Meanderings in the Wissahickon with Shelly Brick Saturdays, March 12, April 9, and April 23

Three Mile Hike with Kimberly Quinn Sundays, March 6 and Sunday, April 10

Lower Wissahickon Park with Scott Quitel Saturday, March 5

Vernal Equinox Hike with Don Simon Sunday, March 20

Geology Hike with Sarah West Saturday, March 26

Spirit & Science of Water in the Wissahickon with Bruce Wagner & Diane Garvey Sunday, March 27

Lower Forbidden Drive with Sarah West Sunday, April 3

Spring in the Park with Scott Quitel Saturday, April 9

Horses and History with Diane Garvey Saturday, April 16

For more information, visit www.fow.org or call 215-247-0417. To register, contact Heather Davis-Jones at davisjones@fow.org.

Wissahickon is a non-profit organization dedicated to maintaining Wissahickon Valley Park as a non-profit partner with Philadelphia Parks and Recreation. FOW restores historical structures throughout the park, eliminates invasive plant species, partners with multiple local organizations to monitor watershed management issues, and is working on a multi-year plan to restore trails throughout the park system. Their work protects the Wissahickon watershed and preserves the natural and his-torical features of this spectacular urban wilderness for future generations.



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Series: Food in Uncertain Times

by Roland Wall, Director Academy of Natural Sciences Center for Environmental Policy

AS WE enter a new decade, both our planet and our society are facing major challenges. Water shortages, climate change, loss of forests and soil, and demands of growing populations are all real issues that call for imagination and persistence from people around the world.

Agriculture and food production play a central role in many of these fundamental questions of sustainability. Availability of food is a deciding factor in the quality of life for individuals and communities, and no single aspect of human life is as tied to the earth's natural systems. Availability of food impacts every element of lives and livelihoods; the interplay of agriculture and the environment is one of the central issues of our time.

The Academy of Natural Sciences and the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture will be presenting a three-part series of forums this spring highlighting cutting-edge issues on food and farming. The series, “Feeding the Future: Food, Agriculture and Land Use In Uncertain Times,” will run from March to May, with panel discussions linking food and food production to environmental and economic sustainability. The program will consider aspects of food production that are especially important for the citizen's of Pennsylvania. Whether it's balancing the needs for food and energy, finding new ways to grow more with less, or just getting safe, sustainable food on the table, agriculture faces a brave new world.

March 22: Impacts of Marcellus Shale Drilling on PA Agriculture Drilling for natural gas in the Marcellus Shale formation has become one of the hottest environmental issues in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Is it a new and potentially enormous energy resource right under our feet, or a new threat to en-

vironments and communities? Farmers, scientists, and other experts will discuss how Marcellus Shale drilling may affect—and is already affecting—Pennsylvania agriculture.

April 28: Innovative Agriculture for the 21st Century Modern agriculture techniques have produced huge amounts of food but they also use huge amounts of water, energy, and chemicals, as well as having uncertain impacts on long term soil fertility and the health of both humans and the environment. In response to this, some growers are practicing cutting-edge techniques that incorporate ecological principles to improve harvests and minimize impacts. This program will include discussions of organic and sustainable agriculture, the comprehensive technique known as permaculture, and the rapid expansion of urban farming.

May 23: Local Food - Safe Food: Bringing it to Market Many people support the idea of purchasing local, sustainably grown food, but the current system for distributing and regulating food production makes it difficult for local growers to get their products out to the public. Safety regulations, in particular, do not address the issues of local, sustainable food. Experts in agriculture, health, and food policy will consider the best ways to increase availability of local food while still ensuring consumer safety.

Programs are free and open to the public and will be held in the Auditorium at the Academy of Natural Sciences, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Programs will start with a reception and information exchange at 6 p.m., followed by the presentation at 6:30 p.m. For more information, please call 215-299-1108 or visit ansp.org/environmental.

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Virtual Tour of WW West Oak Lane

(continued from page 1)

best prepared foods from Weavers Way Mt. Airy.

The adorable wooden bread rack cradles locally baked breads that arrive three times a week, and local muffins that fly off the shelf. The most popular is the bran muffin. It is prepared using raisins to create a naturally sweet and moist breakfast treat with lots of fiber. Next up is the bulk section, offering six self-service bins and the best selection of packaged bulk foods I have seen, including papaya, mango, raw organic goji, cacao squares, organic almonds, organic brazil nuts, macadamia, trail mixes... and my favorite dark chocolate almonds, to name a few. It is no mystery why these are sampled every day. Rice, beans, nutritional yeast, seeds (including chia) and so much more complete this section. When you see the bulk, you feel like a kid in a penny candy store. Buying in bulk literally costs you pennies on the dollar.

Turn around and whoa! Floor to ceiling vitamins, herbs (bulk and bottled) medicinal teas, Noni juice, liquid chlorophyll, arnica...everything you need to stay well. Cara from the MA store recently expanded our health and beauty section (see the article on page 3). She also filled two other seven-foot-tall shelves with local soaps, hair products, shea butters, carefully chosen dental-care products, shampoos, moisturizers, and, of course oils for aromatherapy to use while bathing in Epson salts, every kind of incense and candles.

Behind door number one of the four-door cold case is the coolest selection of drinks: kombuchas, mineral waters, local soda, coconut water, ginseng up, to name a few. Door number two has every kind of cheese for cooking or entertaining including brie, feta, an array of local and raw cheeses, olives, peppers and a satisfying vegan/vegetarian section of tofu, field roast sausages and lunchmeats, seitan, tempeh and more. Next are three kinds of eggs: local organic, free range, or conventional—it's your wallet and your choice. We have Merrymead local dairy products, Pequea Valley and Greek yogurts, O.J., and you know the rest.

While talking about the last door, the meat and seafood case, I must mention Dale, the meat department manager at MA. Because she is so good at her job, I am able to stock local chicken, poultry, beef, and seafood that is untreated. I am vegan: however I proudly show each shopper the beautiful and diverse selection of meats that we get three times a week. I don't use fancy science to explain to shoppers the benefit of meat that is free of hormones or antibiotics, I simply say, "Smell this fish; what does it smell like?" They say, "Nothing." And I say, "Exactly!"

Grocery is adorable and highly diverse, covering all bases and adding items not sold at the other two stores. Organic mung bean pasta is a big seller. It has 20 grams of protein and does not bloat your belly like traditional pasta, and it tastes great. The chip and soda section is a rainbow of goodies. At least one of every snack imaginable is represented in a variety of flavors.

Produce-aahhhhhh-I have a love af-



photo by John Barone

A full house enjoying a lecture on Raw/Vegan Food at WOL Co-op, speaker Sister Beverly, owner of All the Way Live cafe. (caption for the lecture.)

fair with produce. Sweet blood oranges (2/\$1.00), organic grapefruit (.89 each), creamy organic avocados (\$1.09), organic cabbages (.99/lb.), organic sweet potatoes (.89/lb). Check out these prices too: organic kale, collards, dandelion greens, which we have lovingly bagged and wash, ready to cook, juice or make a salad: \$1.99 each, everyday! How do we keep our prices so affordable? I buy what sells, and by decreasing waste you can decrease mark-up.

The freezer has turkey burger, wild-caught salmon burgers, frozen veggies and fruits, and a massive selection of ice cream: Basset's rum raisin, butter pecan, etc., as well as coconut ice cream, waffles, and more. While you shop you may choose to order a freshly made green smoothie as you find yourself humming to the musi-

cal sounds of Anita Baker, Smokey Robinson, or Indie Arie streaming from the speakers. Our impulse section will seduce even the most disciplined shopper. So how are we doing financially? This past Saturday (Feb. 12), I did a little happy dance when I tallied up the sales for the week. We are about \$2,400 shy of becoming sustainable. Since the September reset, sales have increased by 140 percent. We are building a counter for made-to-order juices, salads and wraps, using crisp romaine or tender collards instead of bread. This store is exploding, with new members signing up daily – more than a 300-percent increase.

Join us in creating food justice, not just for the people in MA or CH, but also for beautiful and diverse residents of West Oak Lane and beyond!



Celebrate!

**West Oak Lane Sunday Re-opening:
Sunday, March 13
1 to 4 p.m.**



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L • E • T • T • E • R • S

LETTERS POLICY The Weavers Way Shuttle welcomes letters about issues relevant to the Co-op or other topics. Letters to the editor should be marked as such and can be sent to editor@weaversway.coop, placed in the Shuttle Editor mailbox on the second floor of our Mt. Airy store, or mailed to: Weavers Way Shuttle, 559 Carpenter Lane, Phila., PA 19119. Letters to the editor express only the views of the writer and not those of Weavers Way’s staff, management, membership, or board of directors, unless identified as such. Letters may be edited or rejected if deemed offensive, and should not include personal attacks or derogatory language. The Shuttle tries to print all letters received. In case of multiple letters on a similar topic, a representative sample may be selected. Letters may be withheld or delayed if submitted by writers who have recently had letters published in The Shuttle. Letters to the editor should be no more than 300 words.

Readers Respond to “Ogontz Store Should Go” letter in February Shuttle

I’m Stewart, a senior in high school. I have learned so much at Weavers Way Ogontz. I have been volunteering at the location since December of 2010 and so far, it’s been such an amazing experience. I’ve also learned that detail is a very important thing while running a store. Making sure that everything looks good is key to a store’s success, and Jen makes sure that everything looks the best that it can. At Weavers Way, the customers have a bond with the employees; it adds sort of a home-like feeling to the store, almost like visiting a relative. I love this store, and all of the customers love it too. It’s a great place to shop, talk, and volunteer. I am very happy that I decided to volunteer here, and I look forward to witnessing the oncoming success of the store in the future.

~ Stewart Scott

It’s a Saturday afternoon. I have just come back to my home and decided to enjoy my turkey chili and vegetable dumplings from the Weavers Way Ogontz store while reading the February edition of *The Shuttle*. While looking through this edition, my eyes focus on a letter entitled, “Ogontz Store Should Go.” Lawrence Geller stated that the store should close since it is a liability to the Weavers Way organization due to poor management, over-priced items, inferior produce, and failing store quotas since its inception.

I have been a Co-op member since August 2009 when I moved into the neighborhood. I was aware of the Weavers Way organization, but didn’t shop regularly or become a member because of the distance of the Mt. Airy store from my home. I was excited to shop at the Ogontz store because of its good reputation. However, I was disappointed to find that the Ogontz store had a limited variety of meats and produce, a large amount of items being sold past the expiration date, and over-priced items compared to the major food supermarket in the area. I also couldn’t understand that “my store” in “my neighborhood” didn’t have the items I wanted; moreover, I had to order what I wanted from the Mt. Airy store. I decided that the Ogontz store was being treated as a “stepchild” to the organization. I am in total agreement with Mr. Geller and can confirm his points about the Ogontz store if we are looking at its history.

I stopped shopping at the Ogontz store for a while until I walked in one day and met Jennifer Kulb, Ogontz’s current manager. The first thing that impressed me about Jennifer was that she made me feel that the Ogontz store was here for me and her personal commitment to create a positive atmosphere for healthy choices for the community. As a result of that first encounter, I decided to become a “working member” and support the store, thus supporting my community by providing an alternative for having healthy choices, which aren’t always found in communities of color.

After fulfilling my yearly household hours, I continued my involvement with “my store” by volunteering weekly to assist Jennifer in making the store viable. As I volunteered, I saw the new direction it was going in reaching the community. I began to see fresher produce, more meat choices, and an expanded variety of items offered at the Mt. Airy store. Moreover, the other important evidence of the hard work being done at the store was an increased number of shoppers. There was a new “vibe” in the store. The interior was given a facelift, which made those from the community take pride in their store. Also, a new corps of volunteers, including myself, began to support Jen as she moved the store forward.

Ayana Kumarroy, the store’s assistant manager, described it perfectly when she said that “Our shoppers are loyal and happy because they appreciate all the love we put into making organic, local and fresh produce, meats and baked goods accessible and affordable. Eating well is a right. It shouldn’t be something that someone has to travel far to get, or spend a whole paycheck to do.” (February edition of *The Shuttle*). I increased my shopping at the store as I began to witness the change that was taking place before my eyes. Also, the new manager understood that eating healthy doesn’t have to always be expensive, although in this country, it’s unfortunate reality. There are items, compare to Shop-Rite, that I can purchase knowing I am helping my body, supporting the community and aiding the co-op organization. Jennifer does her best to find out what the customer wants and how to make it affordable.

Mr. Geller raises some good points when looking back at how the Ogontz store struggled in its beginnings. However, there has been significant progress made in all facets of this store’s operation that need to be listed, celebrated and understood. The Ogontz store should never be compared to the Mt. Airy or Chestnut Hill stores because of various elements that have made those sites more successful for the Weavers Way organization profit margin. I don’t know why this store had a rough start, but I know where it is now and where it is going.

Therefore, before there is any discussion about closing this store in “my community,” there needs to be realistic goals for quotas, a location that has better visibility, involvement from those members in the neighborhood who would be affected, and a stronger commitment from the Weavers Way organization that this store will be successful. Therefore, I strongly disagree with Mr. Geller’s observations that the store will not make it. This store isn’t just a “good intention” for a so called “underserved population,” it is a caring and strong entity with great potential for a variety of people who are entitled to become the recipients of the store’s new slogan, “Eating well is a right, not a privilege! Exercise your right.”

~ George Van Norton, Jr.

I was very surprised by Mr. Geller’s recent letter to the editor about the Ogontz store. He takes issue with Glenn Bergman’s assertion that the “customers continue to thank us everyday” ...He states that the “overwhelming majority of the population” in the West Oak Lane community is saying something entirely different. I’m not exactly sure what he thinks he heard because I shop in the Ogontz Store nearly every day and I love it. I also interact with neighbors and shoppers who praise the store for the variety and freshness of the fruits and vegetables and other healthy items that they find difficult to locate in the area. Just last week two women entered the store to order cases of Kombucha. I agree that there were serious management issues and lack of attention to the quality of merchandise when the store first opened. I have watched the new manger Jennifer – a human dynamo – breathe new life and energy into the store and turn it around. There are often lines of customers waiting for her homemade berry/kale smoothies. Pulling the plug on the store in the midst of a turnaround – now that would be a public relations disaster.

~ Kimberly Turner

First of all I do not feel *The Shuttle* should be a forum for debate, but everyone here at the West Oak Lane store has been put in a situation where we have to defend ourselves, our store, and this community.

The statement that “It would take the entire community of West Oak Lane in order to make 8,000 dollars a week,” is very ignorant all by itself. Why would an entire community shopping at one store only amount to 8,000 dollars?

The letter as a whole does touch on some points that were once correct about this store, but no longer. Assumptions that this community does not appreciate this store are ridiculous to say the least.

Does this person assume everyone in West Oak Lane is poor and not interested in eating healthy food? It pains me that this opinion is shared by others involved in this organization and it has to stop.

It would seem it was written out of frustration to ideas/complaints to the general manager not telling him what he wanted to hear. I have heard about other things being published that shed a negative light on the WOL store and I really do not get it. As a new member of Weavers Way, a new resident to Philadelphia, and one of the new managers in this awesome store, I am shocked that so many people involved in this organization feel so negatively about it. It needs positivity and support, not stale opinions from privileged, biased people who have no idea what is going on here right now.

I honestly think the West Oak Lane store is the best thing Weavers Way has going for it right now. Philadelphia does not need any more exclusive feeling co-op clones that many people don’t feel comfortable or welcome in. This organization has made money off of this place (in other ways), even when it was a poorly managed mess. Even if we were not \$2,400 away from being sustainable (and we are), I believe that the circumstances that led to this store opening, Weavers Way now owes this community this store. I truly feel that our G.M. and most of the higher-ups know this and others are coming around as they see this store succeeding.

I will just end with this, I am proud to be a part of this store. I am not as proud to be a member of the same co-op as these negative people, who are obviously in denial that this store is succeeding. Different opinions are important in a democratic organization such as this. But if you have something negative to say about the West Oak Lane store (or any of them), please do your research first and get your facts straight because people actually read the words you write, and they have a powerful effect. Anyone knows (especially an ex-journalist) that when you blindly write a negative letter, you are just making yourself look foolish. But more importantly, you are hurting this community more than you know.

~ Michael Conley
Weavers Way West Oak Lane Assistant Store Manager

Why was the letter “Ogontz Store Should Go” even printed in *The Shuttle*?

But more importantly: Why was it followed with a “response” that referred to the store IN THE PAST TENSE? Basically saying “We’ve done our good deed; now we can quit & focus on the more important issue of making money” and sounds like he has already decided to close the store without even giving the wonderful new management and staff a chance.

Why was there not a response from someone with accurate, current details about: how much the West Oak Lane WW store has grown & improved in the past five months?

Why not a response from someone who works there; lives in the neighborhood; shops there regularly and sees the new and different products that are being introduced in the last few months.

I live in West Oak Lane; I shop at the WOL WW store three or four times a week and my work takes me in there often; The store always is busy, beautiful & friendly! The produce (conventional & organic) looks & tastes great, it’s consistently fresh & reasonably priced. They also sell produce from the MLK School farm. There is a wonderful selection of bulk foods, prepared food and groceries (conventional and organic); The greatest vegan soups, healthy snacks.....

L • E • T • T • E • R • S

(continued from page 23)

The West Oak Lane store today is NOT the same store it was six months ago! It is really a much needed and appreciated addition to our community! We need to encourage people to shop at WOL WW; We don’t need to read complaints about how bad or unsuccessful it might have been a year ago.

~ Carl Ermentrout
Weavers Way Staff Person

I work at the Mt. Airy store and have for some twenty years or so and have family, church members and friends that live near West Oak Lane and shop in the Ogontz store. They are well off and highly educated and some (not all) have special needs. I wish Lawrence Geller would come talk to me and see how his letter in the Feb. *Shuttle* makes me feel—like it was attack on my family. I’m here every day from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; I would love to have the chance to talk to him in person.

~ Stephanie L Johnson,
Weavers Way Staff Person

There are several reasons that I have been a long-time supporter and member of Weavers Way Co-op. When I started my business in West Oak Lane, I found it necessary to travel many miles and visit numerous stores to collect ingredients to complete my special recipes.

My daughter and I frequently shopped at the Carpenter Lane store, but discovered there were times that we made several trips to the store in one week. I pursued my search for a better way to shop, more convenient. When the Ogontz store opened we were delighted, finally more product choices. My daughter began to volunteer, as I began to shop regularly. It is important for us to shop locally and organically. I thought I should encourage my family, friends and neighbors to try items at the co-op. Before long we found the Co-op to be a good place in the community to: shop for personal and household items, to share recipes, to learn new and improved information, to grow local, fresh herbs and produce, last but not least to eat to live.

By the way my daughter, who loved to volunteer at the Ogontz store, now loves going to work every day at the Ogontz store. In addition to finding all the ingredients I need for special recipes, I may also see an old friend or meet a new friend. Welcome to West Oak Lane Weavers Way!

Michele Kumarray
Cooking with Honey
Event Planner/Caribbean Caterer
Co-op Member, shopper, and resident of West Oak Lane



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Summit Childrens Program Celebrates Summer

by Tina Harris, Director, Summit After Care

Summit Children’s Program, located at 6757 Greene Street just a block from Lincoln Drive in the heart of West Mount Airy, is a Child Care Early Learning Center with a school age after-school and summer camp program. When children are out of school, it is an excellent time for them to experience the outdoor environment, express their individual creativity, enhance their physical abilities and make new friends. Children and their families have two months where they can fulfill their needs for a complete and exciting summer while feeling safe and having fun.

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for children to get their individual needs met. Weekly activities include swimming, tennis, outdoor/indoor sports, interactive games, cooking, nature exploration, barbecues, and field trips. We have a big open space backyard, a large gymnasium, our own indoor air-conditioned space with enrichment centers which are personalized for each child’s choice and involvement. Breakfast, lunch, and snacks are served daily.

If you are looking for a camp where children do not feel like they are back in the classroom, where they feel special in a small group setting, and have a voice in planning weekly activities, call 215-848-4451 or e-mail summittina@yahoo.com.

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For more info, contact outreach@weaversway.coop

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Suggestions

(continued from page 28)

to learn it might be a buying decision. I would sooner stick needles in my eyes (as do the multinationals) than purchase Chiquita / Dole / Delmonte. I love the FT bananas—ripe or otherwise. They only take a couple of days to ripen if purchased green. Please reconsider this decision- *very* disappointing. You must support this (FT/org) market. Thank you.

r: (Jean MA) We'll return to Fair Trade bananas when I can get a reliable supply of disease-free bananas that are ACTUALLY, not just *theoretically* Fair Trade. That has been the case for several months.

s: "Please get Pepper Dog salsa back... sooo good mixed w/ sour cream!"

r: (Chris MA) We'll look into making shelf space to bring this item back. Thanks for writing!

s: "Could you offer the grated soy (vegan) mozzarella in the deli section again? I like it because it was hassle-free, a relatively small amount per container, and Weavers Way apportioned. Thanks!"

r: (Jeanyne MA) We brought it back but decided to go the prepacked, 8 oz. version because it's a more informative package and wasn't much more money. We stock it in MA & CH; it's become a popular item.

s: "What is *up* with Pequea Goat cheese? I haven't seen it in *ages* and I miss it a lot."

r: (Jeanyne MA) Pequea Goat cheese is not always available from our vendor. I get it when I can.

s: "Broccolini or broccollette. Much sweeter and tenderer than broccoli, and available organic."

r: (Jean MA) Ordered for tomorrow, \$3.49/bunch organically. I agree re: sweet/tender, but that's a lot to pay. I'll be counting on you to help sales this week!.

s: "Fresh ginger all the way from China? I love China and appreciate every chance I get to support their economy, but lately have been feeling bad for those American farmers..."

r: (Jean MA) Our sign must be wrong- ginger is from Peru currently- that's a little closer than China- and has been from Peru for a few weeks. (Norman) Glad to hear you support China's economy. It is important step in embracing diversity as a value to support economies other than America's. I hope you continue in this vein and support other economies and cultures in need of support: India, France, Vietnam, Haiti, Iran, Inuit, Native American (whoops, too late), etc.

s: "Health Valley no-salt BB soup? Are we getting it anymore?"

r: (Chris) Due to the small shelf space, the flavors of H.V. soups on display "rotate," and we don't have all the flavors on the shelf at any given time. If "BB soup" isn't on the shelf, please ask a grocery staffer to get you some from backstock. We're happy to do that.

s: "Would it be possible to get conventional cooking greens (kale, collards, etc.)? The price of the organic keeps me from buying them at all. Thanks!"

r: (Jean MA) It's not likely we could bring in non-organic greens—mostly display space issues, but also low demand. But, our West Oak Lane store—only a couple of miles from here—carries non-organic greens. (Norman) FYI, greens are on the Environmental Working Groups list of "Dirty Dozen" produce items, that are so high in pesticide residue that they consider buying organic well worth the extra money. There is also a list of the "Clean 15," produce items that are not high in pesticide residue, so you can save the difference on these items (<http://www.foodnews.org>). One thing I do when making this kind of decision is to ask myself how much money is really involved here, i.e., if you eat two bunches of greens a week, buying organic cost you about \$3 a week

more, really not that much money when weighed against all the all the downside of non-organic consumption (think environmental regulation and clean up cost, farm-worker safety, toxins going in to your body, etc.). Sometimes I think Americans need "values therapy" when it comes to food choices, which I am happy to provide—and for free no less!

s: "I think it would be great if the Co-op did not offer ketchup with high fructose corn syrup. I know Heinz does make a variety sweetened with regular sugar, or better yet, Annie's makes some sweetened with Agave nectar. "HFCS" is not healthy for us or out children!!

r: (Chris MA) I personally am not for HFCS, but the Co-op does not have a policy about not stocking foods that contain it... and we do offer two other ketchups: Muir Glen organic, and Maya Kamel spicy, and our CH store also stocks the Annie's brand, cane-sugar-sweetened. All three are more expensive, and I'm guessing that some of our shoppers might be looking for a cheaper ketchup. They certainly are buying it: in the MA store, Heinz outsells both other brands two to one. You raise an excellent point, I'm just sharing with you some of the other considerations I figure in as a purchaser. I will try to find an inexpensive replacement for out Heinz

ketchup. (Norman) I suspect ketchup preferences are more a function of flavor expectation than price, although in my opinion (as an uncertified Food Values Therapist, but then again I think I'm the first one so there is no Board of Certification yet), this is a good example of another item that is worth buying organic. If you look at the price per pound difference between Heinz and Muir Glen it's only \$.41/lb., less than 2 cents per serving difference, probably insignificant for most households. Since tomatoes are one of the highly sprayed crops, and if you add in the sweetener issue, this seems like organic is a good choice, assuming of course you find the flavor acceptable.

s: "Taco sauce please, to go with the taco shells we carry!"

r: (Chris MA) We've added Frontera Taco Sauce.

s: "Can we e-mail suggestions instead of writing them in book and on cards?"

r: (Norman) What's "e-mail"?" Never heard of it. Sure, my e-mail is normanb@weaversway.coop. You can also find an e-mail directory of staff on our web site. It's good to put something in subject line like "WW suggestion," which lessens the chance the e-mail ends up in a spam folder.

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Efforts to Recycle Make Powerful Learning Experience Possible

by Sarah Crofts, Wissahickon Charter School, Volunteer

AT WISSAHICKON Charter School, each grade focuses on a yearlong topic or theme as part of the school’s sustainable environmental curriculum. These topics include community, waste, agriculture, animals, water, habitats, and energy. Each class develops action projects related to their theme that meet service-learning standards.

The seventh grade participates in an exciting program with Outward Bound throughout the year, during which they revisit all the themes they have covered from kindergarten through sixth grade. This prepares them to embark on an Individual Action Project during their eighth grade capstone year. This winter, the seventh graders are not letting the cold and snow interfere with using the outdoors as an extended classroom. In early February, they participated in their third Outward Bound Insight Day of the year, a day-long interactive learning experience facilitated by Outward Bound instructors. This day focused on the themes of community and waste. Students worked in small groups during lessons and activities that included discussing the concept of “Leave No Trace,” map reading skills, and using a compass to orienteer through the snow-covered Fern Hill park environment, across the street from the school.

Later in February, seventh graders put these orienteering skills to use as they navigated the city of Philadelphia, on a quest to learn more about several of the beautiful Mural Arts Projects. The stu-

dents showed their continued understanding of what “teamwork” really means. The murals presented a wonderful window into learning more about the city community that these students are all a part of.

The Outward Bound instructors are highly trained and experienced at working with students, and they provide programs that the school feels are worth their high price tag. In order to secure funding for these programs, Wissahickon Charter School applied for a grant from Recycle-Bank’s Green Schools program. Recycle-Bank® is a rewards program that motivates people to recycle and take greener actions. The importance and power of community presented itself in force in January when the school earned \$4,000 because of the amazing generosity of many RecycleBank participants. During a set period of weeks, any RecycleBank participant could donate their rewards points they earned from recycling materials at home to the school, which then were converted into dollars by RecycleBank to be given to the school. Many school families made sure to sign up with RecycleBank during this time if they were not already active in this program, but it is also clear that people not directly connected with the school also helped out, and the school is very appreciative.

At the end of the Insight Day that took place in early February, the Outward Bound instructors gathered their small groups in circles, bracing against the cold, brisk air, and asked the students to reflect on the day. One instructor pushed the stu-



photo courtesy of Wissahickon Charter School

WCS students work with an Outward Bound instructor to reflect on their Insight Day.

dents to answer the following questions: “How are you like a compass? What do you want to point towards in life? What can push you off the path that your compass is pointing towards.” The answers were telling. One girl said she’s working towards getting an A grade in her academic subjects. Another girl said she wants to go to a good high school, which will help her go to a good college. Another instructor asked a different group to share things that went well and things that might not have, and students seemed to have “gotten” the point of the day, that teamwork takes work and is not always easy for 12- and 13-year-olds. They shared that they needed to listen to one another and the instructor and be positive with each other in

order to achieve their goals.

Thanks to RecycleBank and community involvement, the seventh grade have two more Insight Days to look forward to this spring, which will include backpacking, farm volunteer work, and canoeing.

Wissahickon Charter School is a K-8 public charter school with a mission that focuses on the environment as an integrating theme for instruction, as well as parental involvement, service learning, and peace and conflict resolution. To find out more about enrollment or how you can get involved, contact Kristi Littell, Co-CEO, at 267-338-1020 or littell@wissahickon-charter.org.

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Good Food, Good People at Wine Thief Bistro

by Paula M. Riley



photo by Kim Soles

Sophie and Chris Simpson, owners of the Wine Thief, with their two daughters Stella (far left) and Ruby (far right)

“YOU DON’T have to go to Center City for a place with good atmosphere, good food and good people,” says Wine Thief Bistro owner Chris Simpson. He and his wife Sophie opened the cozy neighborhood restaurant in June of 2009 and have been welcoming locals and visitors ever since.

From the décor featuring local artisans to the friendly staff and diverse entrée options, every aspect of the Wine Thief Bistro contributes to its warm and inviting atmosphere. “We worked to create a place you can come for special occasions or somewhere to go when you just want to hang out.”

With a subtle division between the bar and dining room, the bistro offers various dining experiences. Patrons enjoy meals at the bar or at candlelit tables. Though the menu can be categorized as American fare, it features Asian, European, and Latin American dishes as well. Favorites include Steak Au Poivre, Scallop Risotto, Thai Curry Mussels, and Beef Roll. Starters and entrees are prepared fresh daily and all sauces, mayonnaise, and dressings are homemade.

As the name implies, wine is the focus behind the food at the Wine Thief Bistro. “We offer wine at a good price,” explains Chris who, after decades as a bartender, has learned to appreciate a nice glass of wine. What he has also learned is that

good wine doesn’t have to be expensive!

Chris special-orders all his wine, and considers it a personal quest to find good wine at reasonable prices. Customers at the Wine Thief Bistro enjoy wines not typically found in Pennsylvania liquor stores, for an average price of \$7 a glass. Chris is proud of the restaurant’s minimal wine mark-up, explaining, “We give our customers such great wine at such a great price they are stealing wine!”

Sophie and Chris invite those who haven’t visited the bistro to stop in for weekday and Saturday Happy Hour, 4-6 p.m., for a taste of the Chateau La Patache (2006 Bordeaux from Medoc Region) or Arbonta (2007 Rioja). Their invitation couldn’t be more sincere. The couple, who grew up in the area, chose Mt. Airy as their home after living in New York City. Today they are fully immersed in the Mt. Airy community, where their daughters attend The Waldorf School and Sophie owns Blue Banyan Yoga.

“We are very family- and community-orientated,” says Chris. Though families are specially welcomed on Wednesdays, where kids under 11 eat free from 11:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Chris emphasizes that the entire community is invited to the bistro, “No matter when or why you come, you will be warmly welcomed at The Wine Thief.”

Open House Explains ‘What is Pilates?’

by Jeff Smith, Owner, Pilates in Germantown

WHAT IS Pilates? There are several studios in northwest Philadelphia area where you can practice Pilates using mat and equipment, but how much do you know about the training concept? How does it compare to yoga? You can learn more about Pilates training at an open house offered by Pilates in Germantown on Saturday, March 19, between noon and 2 p.m.

The benefits of Pilates and yoga are extraordinary. They are both known to support the development of long, strong, graceful bodies that move efficiently without creating bulky muscles. Both disciplines are integrative; associated with stress reduction and increased well-being. Both yoga and Pilates are used as rehabilitative systems. They can be adjusted for a wide range of people and fitness levels, and both support the achievement of very high levels of body/mind/spirit fitness.

Joseph Pilates studied yoga and meditation. It is clear from his writing, and the principles infused in his work, that he in-

tended his method to be a vehicle for the enhancement of body, mind, and spirit. Many Pilates practitioners do find their lives enhanced, well beyond physical fitness, through Pilates.

When people think of yoga and Pilates, they sometimes think that yoga is “spiritual” and Pilates is not. Hatha Yoga does offer a long history of being associated with spiritual practice, or of being a spiritual path unto itself. Undeniably, the spiritual aspect of yoga is much more overt, and directive as a spiritual path, than what one finds in Pilates. However, while one is unlikely to find meditation or chanting in a Pilates class, Pilates is a body/mind/spirit discipline.

If you would like to see how the Pilates Reformer works and how it can be part of a plan to condition your body, plan to attend the open house. The studio is located at 5904 Greene Street in Germantown, at Rittenhouse Street. Light, healthy refreshments will be served. For more information call 215-848-3275.

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Suggestions

by Norman Weiss
Purchasing Manager

GREETINGS AND thanks for writing. As usual, suggestions and responses may have been edited for brevity, clarity, and or comedy. Since we now have shopper comments/suggestions and staff responses from three stores, I’ve started including the initials of the store of the staffer responding so readers know which store the comment refers to. If no store is listed it means the response applies to all stores.

In food news lately the buzz is about the USDA allowing genetically engineered alfalfa to be planted, despite the risks to non-gmo alfalfa (meaning there is a threat to organic milk because cows are fed organic alfalfa). In addition, the USDA also is allowing planting of GMO sugar beets without anyone studying the results of an environmental impact study. Some people are accusing President Obama of caving in to business interests. According to the Organic Consumer Association newsletter, “There is more than enough science to show that GMO foods are risky to human, animal and plant health and the environment. The

use of toxic, synthetic herbicides has increased by nearly 400 million pounds due to GMO agriculture, and superweeds are already becoming resistant to Monsanto’s Roundup, the primary herbicide used in GMO agriculture. Because of that, GMO farmers are now being advised to use even more toxic herbicides.” Personally I think people are over-reacting. Scientists like to experiment, and people have been hybridizing and playing around with plants and animals for centuries. True it has never been done by trying to directly manipulate genes at the genetic level, but humans are so clever and driven to find shortcuts it’s hard to stop. Of course, playing around with the food supply can be dangerous, but there are up sides too. If something goes horribly wrong and our global food supply is affected and results in shortages, the bright side is maybe we’ll have some relief from the obesity epidemic we are plagued by, and we won’t have to suffer through as many dumb food ads, and we’ll spend lots of time in food lines, which can build both community and companionship.

Suggestions and Responses:

- s: “Raw Sauerkraut would be good!! Good for your health.”
- r: (Norman) We tried it, was a very slow seller, maybe because it was almost \$16/lb. You can special order it by the case, call Norman at ext. 133.
- s: “Have been wondering what happened to the Fair Trade bananas. Assumed it was a temporary supply issue. Horrified

(continued on page 25)



vegan fest



Sunday, March 20
Noon to 4 p.m.
Weavers Way Co-op - Mt. Airy
559 Carpenters Lane

Join Weavers Way Mt. Airy for Vegan Fest, a celebration of all things vegan, with product samplings, demos, and information from a variety of national and local vegan food producers. Among the highlights will be vegan products from Bhaggya’s Kitchen, Jyoti, Moshe’s, Fresh Tofu, Helen’s Pure Foods, as well as an assortment of great vegan products from Weavers Way Mt. Airy’s Prepared Foods Department. As always, there will also be plenty of fresh produce.

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What is Weavers Way Co-op?



Weavers Way is a Food Co-op, a grocery store that is owned by its members—the people who shop here.

Because our owners are our shoppers, we don’t try to make a profit selling unhealthful food at high prices. Instead, we sell the food our shoppers want us to sell—healthful, natural, and local foods, some grown and prepared right in our own neighborhoods. We buy local, we support fair trade, and we are committed to our community, because we are owned by our community. The dollars you spend here stay here, either invested in the co-op and the community, or distributed right back to the members who support us.

Although we are owned by our members—and membership is important to what we do—we are very much open to the public: everyone is welcome to shop, and everyone is welcome to join.

You can learn more about Weavers Way at www.weaversway.coop, contact Membership Coordinator, Kirsten Bernal at member@weaversway.coop, or better yet, stop in for a shop, or just to look around, at our stores in West Mt. Airy, West Oak Lane, and Chestnut Hill.



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We encourage all new or prospective members to attend an orientation meeting, where they can learn all about our co-op, our stores and our member work program. If you have not already joined, you can do so at the meeting, and you will also learn more about Weavers Way and all that your co-op has to offer, including member benefits and our Working Member program.

Orientation dates are listed below and are also posted on our web site at www.weaversway.coop. Please complete the form below and return it to any of our stores, so we will know which meeting you will attend. Meetings last approximately forty-five minutes to an hour and will include a brief store tour. We look forward to seeing you there!

Chestnut Hill Center for Enrichment/Chestnut Hill
8431 Germantown Ave. (parking entrance on E. Highland Ave.)
• **Weds., Mar. 23, & Apr. 20 at 6:45 p.m.**

Weavers Way - West Oak Lane
2129 72nd Ave. (intersection of Ogontz Ave., Walnut Lane & 72nd Ave.)
• **Sat., Mar. 26, & Apr. 23 at 10:45 a.m.**

Weavers Way Co-op Offices/Mt. Airy
555 W. Carpenter Lane
• **Weds., Mar. 9, & Apr. 13 at 6:45 p.m.**

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