



Rabb to be Featured Speaker at Virtual Spring GMM

by Whitney Lingle, Weavers Way At-Large Board Director

THE WEAVERS WAY SPRING GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING is right around the corner on Sunday, May 2 at 4 p.m. Like last fall's GMM, the meeting will take place virtually. In addition to an update from General Manager Jon Roesser, the event will feature a talk from Pennsylvania State Representative Chris Rabb and the

announcement of the results of this year's Board elections. This past winter, Rep. Rabb spoke about reparations and cooperative culture at one of the Co-op's Food Justice Committee meetings. His talk inspired the FJC to check out one of the books he recommended, "Collective Courage: A History of African-American Cooperative

(Continued on Page 5)



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The Shuttle

MAY 2021

Since 1973 | The Newspaper of Weavers Way Co-op

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Our Farm Market is Back (with Changes) for Pandemic Year Two

by Lauren Todd, Weavers Way Farm Market Manager



Top left, lettuce starts at Henry Got Crops Farm that may end up in bags of salad greens. Bottom left, a sampling of the Weavers Way and other locally-grown produce available at the farm market. At right, Farm Market Manager Lauren Todd, readies the Open sign for this season.



THIS MONTH, HENRY GOT CROPS Farm Market, the Co-op's on-farm market in Roxborough, reopens for the 2021 season. While planning for this year, we found ourselves making significant changes, yet again, in the context of a pandemic that won't quit. We are bracing for another busy season and designing a safe market experience that can best serve our members and community.

If you supported us last season by placing an online order or visiting our site as a walk-up shopper, thank you for your business (and patience!) as we navigated new and untested processes. Unrelenting

community and Co-op support, dedicated volunteers, a hard-working farm team and spirited new market staffers contributed to our success.

A year ago, weeks before we were slated to open, coronavirus forced us to pivot to a different model of operating our two farms, farm market and CSA program. With a robust farm events calendar cancelled, multi-family picnicking discouraged, one-on-one interactions limited and distanced and pandemic-induced anxiety-turned-malaise, it felt different at the farm.

(Continued on Page 22)

Shoppers Happy to Be Back to In-Person Co-op Visits

by Betsy Teutsch, for the Shuttle

WHO IN THEIR WILDEST DREAMS could imagine many Weavers Way members halting in-person shopping for one year? While the Co-op deftly adopted in-store COVID protocols to allow many to continue in-person shopping, those seeking more complete distancing pivoted to delivery or curbside pickups.

Given the coziness of the Mt. Airy location, some folks opted for forays into the more spacious Ambler store weekly, or even monthly, where social distancing is easy.

But now, formerly remote shoppers who have now been fully vaccinated are resuming in-person trips to the Co-op, like cicadas with tote bags emerging from hibernation. This naturally occurring experiment — not setting foot in the Co-op for a year — forced lots of people to use new technologies and has provided insights into what we value about Weavers Way.

We learned that utilizing a shopping service is a skill. No shopper, no matter how specific your directions are, can replicate your own brain's decision-making process. Naomi Klayman of Mt. Airy, for instance, missed being inspired in the moment by produce she didn't expect to see or other items that make her think about making unplanned dishes.

"Then there are bulk items that I buy by sight and don't really know the volume or weight, so it's hard to tell a shopper how much to get," she added. She is happy to be done with the awkwardness



photo by Karen Plourde

Co-op member Naomi Klayman prepares to enter the Mt. Airy store after a year-long absence.

of remote shopping, but pleased to know that if she needs a shopper in the future, the service will be available.

Shopping online requires shopping from memory, and many of us discovered that we relied on what products looked like and had no idea of their specific names. Stacia Friedman also of Mt. Airy,

(Continued on Page 6)

VIRTUAL

WEAVERS WAY SPRING
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

SUNDAY, MAY 2 at 4 PM

Online voting ends that day at 3 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Pennsylvania State Representative Chris Rabb



Please visit www.weaversway.coop/event for the link and to register.

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Editor’s Note

by Karen Plourde, Editor,
Weavers Way Shuttle



FOR THOSE WHO STILL GET A PAPER copy of the Shuttle mailed to your home, when has the paper been arriving the last few months? We’ve gotten some crazy stories via email; the topper has to be the two members who recently received copies of the November 2020 Shuttle. Around the time I was getting the May pages to our proofers, a few people reported they’d just gotten their April issue. Ugh.

To be sure, we’re not alone in our troubles with the Post Office. But no matter when the paper shows up, we still pay close to \$3,000 in postage per issue. To do that while dealing with a COVID-related dip in advertising and have the paper arrive so late is incredibly frustrating. If I could hold back on that expense (or some of it, at least) until USPS has its act together, I’d do it. If I could realistically deliver those copies myself (to the five-county area only, maybe South Jersey, too), I would. Bet I’d still get your paper to you inside of a week.

Anyway, I’d appreciate any suggestions you may have on our plight, or any U.S. Mail horror stories (or positive ones) you’d like to share; email me at editor@weaversway.coop or kplourde@weaversway.coop. I don’t usually get much reader response from my columns, so look for an eNews post about this in the near future. Thanks as always for your engagement and feedback.

Speaking of feedback, I only got one response (a negative one) to the online Shuttle moving to the Issuu platform. In the course of investigating that reader’s complaint, I realized that if you download the issue (by clicking on the arrow with the line in the upper left corner), you’ll be able to scroll through and read articles comfortably while viewing the whole page, rather than zooming in on one article. Consider that my tech tip to help us all better navigate the digital landscape.

Catch you in the pages next month.

The Shuttle is published by
Weavers Way Cooperative
Association.

Statement of Policy

The purpose of the Shuttle is to provide information about co-ops, healthful food and other matters of interest to Weavers Way members as consumers and citizens.

Weavers Way members are welcome to submit articles (about 500 words) and letters to the editor (200 words) on subjects of interest to the Co-op community.

No anonymous material will be published; all submissions must include an email or phone number for verification. The Shuttle retains the right to edit or refuse any article or letter. Submit to **editor@weaversway.coop**. Articles and letters express the views of the writers and not those of the Shuttle, the Co-op or its Board, unless identified as such.

Advertising

Advertising for each issue is due the 1st of the preceding month, e.g., Dec. 1 for January. Ad rates are online at www.weaversway.coop/shuttle, or call 215-843-2350, ext. 314, or email advertising@weaversway.coop. Advertised products or services may not be construed as endorsed by Weavers Way Co-op.

The Hyperlocal Green You Can Harvest From Your Lawn

by Dianne Dillman, Shuttle contributor, food writer, professional chef and Weavers Way working member

IT’S DANDELION SEASON, AND THOSE PESKY LAWN WEEDS are fully edible. The flowers make good wine, the roasted chopped roots are a coffee substitute and the young, tender leaves can be eaten raw as a salad green or when older, are best braised like collards. They are an excellent source of Vitamins A, C, E and K; folate, iron, calcium, magnesium and potassium.

BRAISED DANDELION GREENS

Ingredients

- 1-gallon plastic bag full of dandelion leaves, buds and crowns
- 1-3 Tbs. canned coconut milk or 1Tbs. smoky bacon fat
- 1 cup vegetable or chicken stock, or water
- 1/2 tsp. fine sea salt

Optional additions: chopped onions, minced garlic, curry powder, smoked paprika, hot sauce

Directions

Wash the greens thoroughly, cutting off any roots and picking through to remove any other weeds or pine needles you collected. It’s good to include the crown, the center where the buds emerge. I leave it all whole, but you can roughly chop them if you like.

Throw everything in a heavy-bottomed pot with a lid; I use a Dutch oven. Bring the liquid they’re in to a boil over medium heat, then immediately turn the heat down to very low and put on the lid. You will need to stir it about every 20 minutes and, if it’s running dry, add more liquid. If you’re cooking them in the oven, make sure to cover the pot; you will only need to stir them a couple of times. They will need to cook for two to three hours to remove the bitterness of the greens.

The dandelions are finished when they’re cooked down and are tender and mellow. I drain them, cook down the liquid until it’s thick and creamy, and add it to the cooked greens. You can skip this step if it’s a bother.

One of my favorite ways to eat dandelion greens is on an open-faced sandwich with cheddar or feta cheese, the greens, and a fried or poached egg on top.

For this recipe, use the leaves and any unopened buds. Like other tender greens, they will cook down a great deal, so you want to harvest a mess of them — about four times as much as you want to serve. It’s worth doing a lot so you can freeze some for later.





SLICE IT DICE IT SERVE IT

Root for
Radishes

by Kieran McCourt, Weavers Way Ambler

Another cruciferous vegetable known for their crunchy texture and peppery bite.

Finely diced or chunkier varieties can give a chicken or tuna salad a fresh face.

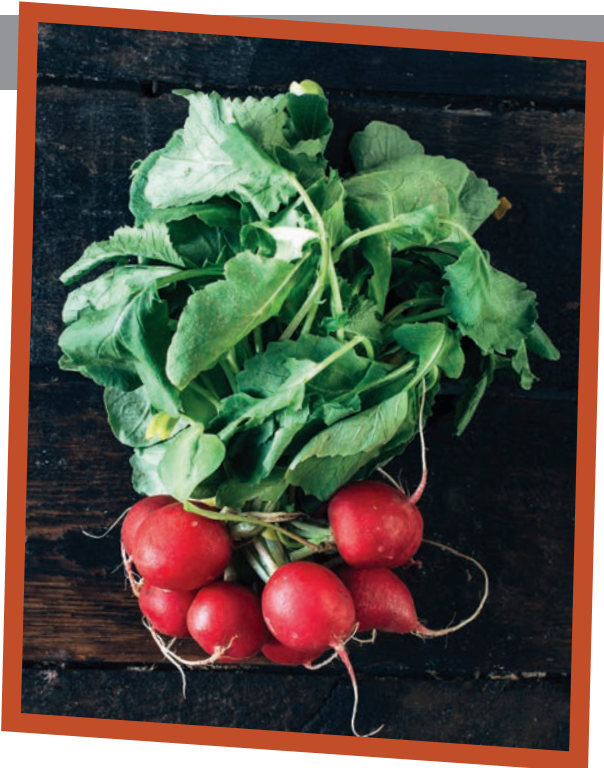
Add to creamy or oil-based dressings for extra bite, or try it in a chicken salad-style preparation with chickpeas.

Cooking radishes mellows out some of their flavor, making them taste more like turnips. Halve and saute’ them until the cut side is golden and the radishes are fork tender. Spice and season them to your liking — they’re delightful with a bit of butter mixed with miso.

When sautéing, don’t toss the greens — throw them in during the last few moments of cooking and cover the pan to let the greens wilt.

Radishes are great grilled. It’s best to give them a quick blanch or even a quick dunk in a covered bowl with water in the microwave until tender. Skewer them for easier handling and grill until you get some nice charred marks.

Not surprisingly, they’re perfect for home preserving, from a vinegar pickle to full-tilt lacto-fermentation.



Whole or sliced fermented and pickled radishes can add an extra kick. They’re perfect for snacking, as a side unto themselves or for sprucing up sandwiches, burgers and tacos.

A Guide to Making the Switch from Processed to Real Foods

by Alma Hypolite, for the Shuttle

WE LIVE IN A SOCIETY IN WHICH MAKING healthy food choices is often a burden. In the past 50 years, driven largely by promises of innovation and convenience, American food culture drastically shifted from real foods to processed foods. As a result, processed foods have taken root in the fabric of American culture, achieving a nostalgic status with billion-dollar soda, snack and fast food brands becoming iconic household names.

Identifying healthy foods is often perplexing, due to loose food label regulations. In addition, there is a false sense that preparing natural foods is difficult due to declining confidence in our cooking skills. Lastly, healthy foods are relatively costly compared to the subsidized low-quality ingredients used in processed foods.

But there is hope for the future. Though the damage is entrenched, the efforts of health food activists and their ability to exploit the internet to communicate and educate society is making inroads, increasing awareness and reaching decision makers.

It is evident that the long-term negative health effects of processed foods greatly outweigh the short-sighted benefits championed by their proponents. In the past year, as Americans adjusted to home confinement, cooking family meals has become one of the few good things that happened as a result of the pandemic. Hopefully, this trend has become the new normal.

What is Real Food?

Real foods include animals and plants produced by nature and sustainably grown or humanely raised. They are minimally processed to keep a dense nutrient profile and are free of chemical additives, antibiotics and growth hormones. Ever wonder why you have never seen a commercial for a sweet potato or an apple? Because real food does not need advertising dollars to promote its benefits.

Real foods are superior to processed foods because most processed foods do not contain enough nutrients for the body to function optimally. Real whole foods are low in sugar, high in fiber and provide the vitamins, minerals



and beneficial nutrients your body needs.

Even though some fruits are high in sugar, these natural sugars are low glycemic. Fruit is also packed with vitamins, minerals, water and fiber, making them much healthier than processed foods containing refined sugars.

Consuming naturally occurring fiber through whole foods encourages better quality food choices and should be preferred to taking a supplement or eating processed food with added fiber. Whole plant food like vegetables, fruits, nuts, whole grains and legumes contain compounds that help fight free radicals, which are linked to multiple illnesses, including diabetes and cancer. These compounds include vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

We should also consider the environmental and local economic impact of our actions. When you purchase produce, meat, and dairy from farmers markets and co-ops, you directly support the people who grow food in your community.

Making the Whole Food Switch

Here are five simple steps you can take to start eating more real food:

1. Rather than focusing on what to take out of your diet, work on supplementing your meals with fruit, veggies, legumes and whole grains. Add sliced apple and wal-

nuts to your oatmeal, or a salad to your slice of pizza.

2. Drink more water and cut back on sugar-sweetened drinks. Many products labeled “sugar free” and/or “light” are actually sweetened with fruit juice concentrates and artificial sweeteners.
3. Eat smaller portions and reduce consumption of processed meats like bacon and hot dogs.
4. Read ingredient labels. Avoid MSG, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, aspartame, artificial coloring, hydrogenated oils, sodium phosphate and anything you can’t easily pronounce.
5. Meal planning is essential to enjoying the real food lifestyle. There are many templates, guides, apps and meal planning service options available online. Here is an example of a basic plan:

- Write a menu for the week based on the current contents of your fridge, freezer and pantry.
- Use your menu to create a grocery list and shop for what you need.
- Set aside a couple of hours on your day off (some call it “The Sunday Ritual”) to cook and prep your meats, grains and veggies to last for a few meals. If you do not like prepping meals in advance, setting aside 30 minutes in the morning to get the ingredients recipe ready for the day’s meals will save a lot of time.

Cooking is easier than most people think. You have control over the ingredients you use, and in the long run, making real whole foods part of your lifestyle will help you stay healthy and reduce your risk of disease.

Alma Hypolite is a certified holistic health coach. She takes a whole-body approach to lifestyle-related chronic health issues and focuses on teaching clients to listen to their body’s language and to advocate for their own health. Email her at info@almamamacoach.com. Her website is www.almamamacoach.com.

Plant-Based Philly Picks

Keepwell Vinegar Soy Sauce and White Rose Miso (Currently available only at Henry Got Crops Farm Market)

SARAH CONEZIO AND ISIAH BILLINGTON, THE TEAM behind York County’s Keepwell Vinegar, are fiercely committed to invigorating a robust circular local food system and pushing the possibilities of fermented foods. In that spirit, they’ve launched a line of White Rose miso pastes, and have added soy sauces to their ferments lineup.

The sight of their gochujang, white soy sauce and farro miso on our shelves will surely make the hearts of serious at-home chefs and umami addicts go pitter patter. Their misos deviate in most aspects from the “traditional” process, ingredients and texture of typical grocery store misos. With respect to the culinary history and cultural relevance of traditional Japanese miso, they playfully explore the possibilities of the paste by incorporating unconventional ingredients. Rather than mixing fermented imported soybeans with salt and koji (a mold used to make sake, mirin and soy sauce), they swap in farro grains sustainably farmed by their local mid-Atlantic farmer.

For a comforting sweet and richly flavored drink, I love sipping white miso dissolved into warm water. But don’t assume it’s limited to broths and soup — try it in sauces, dips, marinades and vinaigrettes. If you’re an umami addict, or are adventurous in the kitchen, substitute miso in place of salty seasonings in dishes that call for a sweet and savory punch. Or



if you’re seeking a more delicate salty bite, opt for a splash of their white soy sauce. Like Keepwell’s gourmet and everyday vinegars, the culinary possibilities of their miso pastes and soy sauces are endless, and are a delicious way to celebrate local agriculture.

— Lauren Todd

HENRY GOT CROPS FARM MARKET

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FOOD MOXIE

We dig what we eat.

Tips, Inspiration and a Call to Action

by Lisa Mosca, Food Moxie Executive Director

THE GROWING SEASON IS IN FULL SWING, AND BY MAY 15, Philadelphia should be frost free. This is a time of year relished by many gardeners and growers, because tomatoes, peppers and eggplants can safely be planted in the ground for harvests starting in July and August.

Important tips for the ever-popular tomatoes include knowing that they are adventitious rooters, so you can actually bury part of the stem in the ground to get a strong root system. If you like having tomatoes through early October, you may also want to choose a few varieties to plant, including one that is resistant to late blight and a cherry tomato for earlier harvests.

This is also a great time of year to succession plant cucumbers and summer squash every month. A great organic protection for these cucurbit family crops is kaolinite clay; transplants can be dipped in it, and emerging plants can be sprayed with it. This clay acts like a barrier of crushed glass for insects but is not harmful to other living things and washes off at harvest.

If you end up with a bounty of vegetables, as many gardeners do, you can share some of it with your family, friends and local food cupboards. I have found gardeners to be some of the most generous people I know. Find a local emergency food provider to donate through the Philly Food Finder Tool at <https://phillyfoodfinder.org/> by zip code.

Add Your Input to the Philadelphia Urban Agriculture Plan

The comment period for Philadelphia’s Urban Agriculture Plan is open through May 15. You can visit the planning site at:

<https://sites.google.com/view/phillyagplan> to see past presentations and discussions and share your comments by clicking on the link to the second public meeting.

I always like to share with visitors to our Food Moxie gardens the potential power of local food production to support equitable access to fresh produce. A 2008 University of Pennsylvania Harvest Report’s findings included the following powerful statements, even if they’re somewhat dated now:

“Overall, we estimate that community and squatter gardens in Philadelphia produced some \$4.9 million worth of summer vegetables (a figure that does not include spring and fall plantings or the harvest from fruit trees and berry bushes). That is more food than all of the city’s farmers markets and urban farms combined sold in 2008... Although community gardeners engage in relatively little sale of their harvest, they employ a wide variety of distribution strategies, many of which specifically aim to improve fresh food access... Cumulatively, these patterns constitute the most direct form of fresh food production and distribution in cities.”

We need help to continue delivering fresh produce and growing supplies to our students so they can grow. We are still looking for volunteers interested in earning Co-op work hours by delivering growing and cooking supplies to students in mid-May. You can find shifts under Food Moxie in the Member Center. Thank you!



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FOOD MOXIE



Clockwise from top left, filled grow bags designated for students in Food Moxie programming; raised beds behind Martin Luther King High in East Germantown; bags planted with greens for student families, and grow bags full of soil headed to the homes of student families.

THANKS TO...

- Elissa Goldberg and the 2021 Drexel Medical School volunteers: Jessica Barnett, Sara Furukawa, Lee Man and Nataliya Melnyk
- Linda and David Glickstein and the Lida Foundation
- Penn Charter Center for Public Purpose volunteers
- Villanova University Campus Outreach volunteers
- All our recent individual donors, sustainers, High Five members and volunteers
- All our partners, their staff and teachers
- The Food Moxie board and staff
- Weavers Way Co-op staff and members
- All the Co-op members who have been helping with our workdays and deliveries

For Their Support!

Rabb to be Featured Speaker at Virtual Spring GMM

(Continued from Page 1)

“Economic Thought and Practice” by Jessica Gordon Nembhard. The book is a 10-year project dedicated to explaining the role of cooperatives in Black history and is a great introduction to the history of Black people and the cooperative movement. In the book, Nembhard writes:

“...African Americans, as well as other people of color and low-income people, have benefited greatly from cooperative ownership and democratic participation throughout the history of the United States, much like their counterparts around the world.”

All too often, conversations around food security and food justice are centered around white voices and experiences. Many Co-op stakeholders, including the FJC, are dedicated to breaking this pattern by centering the voices of Blacks, Indigenous people and other people of color as we work to build a better food system.

The FJC is excited that committee member and Co-op Board member Danielle Duckett is one of Rep. Rabb’s staff members and was able to connect us. We look forward to “seeing” you at the GMM. To register, look for the link on the Co-op’s online events calendar.

Pick up a Weavers Way sandwich loyalty card from the deli.

Buy 10 and the 11th is on the Co-op!
See card for details.

Looking for Board Election results?

Check your inbox on May 2 for our email blast announcing the winners!

Why shop the Co-op?

LET’S COUNT THE WAYS.

2 MEMBER BENEFITS.

3 BULK FOODS.

4 CO-OP BASICS.

5 SUSTAINABLE MEAT & SEAFOOD.

6 PRODUCE.

1 CATERING.

L.E.T.T.E.R.S

Thank You, Moffat

SIX MONTHS INTO THE PANDEMIC, I was diagnosed with leukemia. Unable to shop in-person at the Co-op, I started using your home delivery service.

As a low-income senior, delivery fees were waived. Each week, I placed my order and looked forward to receiving a call from Chestnut Hill Co-op staff member Moffat Welsh on the morning of delivery.

Although we never met in person, Moffat became my virtual friend. We laughed over delivery mishaps such as when a request for “mild” barbeque sauce resulted in my being sent one that would set off a seven-alarm blaze. Knowing my health challenges, Moffat offered to drop off a replacement at my door on her way home. Who does that?

While the Co-op’s high quality, organic foods continue to be an important part of my long-term recovery, it is the cheerful demeanor and compassion of team members like Moffat that make Weavers Way integral to my well-being.

Linda F.

SHUTTLE LETTERS POLICY

The Shuttle welcomes letters of interest to the Weavers Way community. Send to editor@weaversway.coop. The deadline is the 10th of the month prior to publication. Include a name and email address or phone number for verification; no anonymous letters will be published. Letters should be 200 words or less and may be edited. The Shuttle reserves the right to decline to publish any letter.

CORRECTION

A SHARP-EYED READER POINTED OUT that the amount of baking powder in the Sweet Potato Biscuits recipe in the April Shuttle was incorrect. Here is the correct ingredient list. You can view the complete recipe on our website: weaversway.coop/recipes.

SWEET POTATO BISCUITS

Makes about 16 two-inch square biscuits

- 1 10 oz. sweet potato (the orange kind) baked and peeled
- 6 Tbsp. cold unsalted butter
- 1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbs. light brown sugar
- 2 1/2 tsps. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 cup whole milk or cream, chilled
- 2 Tbsp. (28 g), salted butter, melted

IN “A TRIO OF WOMEN WHO Stepped Forward to Effect Change” in the April Shuttle, the current name of the American Library Association’s Gay Task Force is incorrect. The correct name is the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Round Table.

The Shuttle regrets the error.

They’re Happy to Be Back to Shopping in Person

(Continued from Page 1)

found that “permitting substitutions” expanded her repertoire.

“I learned that when I shopped in-person pre-pandemic, I stuck to brands I knew,” she said via Facebook. “But when using home delivery, I was introduced to many terrific products I never purchased before, including Field Day organic pasta sauce, Solebury Orchards applesauce, and Bill’s Best honey barbeque sauce.”

For many, reverting to shopping for a few items, rather than generating a methodical weekly list, is something to celebrate.

“I am thrilled to be back at the Co-op for the first time in a year, and will buy my produce and last-minute items there,” said Nancy Kreimer. As for staples, it will be many, many months before we run out of those #EagleScoutintheHouse.”

I really missed being able to use my own bags and packaging. COVID has generated extra mountains of packing trash; hurrah for the return to bulk and backpacks. Like others, I enjoy the visual inspiration of seeing in-season produce and creating meals based on what’s in the store — and taking advantage of specials, of course.

Weavers Way is a true Third Place, neither home nor work. This past year, most casual interactions vanished. Returning to in-person shopping means running into old friends. Once taken for

granted, these encounters in the aisles are big; we realize how wonderful it is to see one another.

I feel like some of our Co-op’s products are old friends, too. My shopping lists were generated from recipes I planned to make, foods I knew we would reliably consume, and staples. This got the job done, but became monotonous.

I was tickled to encounter old food friends I had forgotten about still stacked on the shelf. Hello, coconut-covered dates — great to see you! But there is loss involved. My favorite Michele’s sesame dressing (which I ordered many times and never received) is gone from its spot in the refrigerator case. This is a serious bummer.

Carrie Eisenhandler, an Ambler mainstay, recently visited the store for the first time since March 12, 2020 and discovered a new item in the process.

“While we so appreciated the many curbside orders, it was so nice to shop in person,” she said via Facebook. “It was lovely to see familiar store faces. But why the heck didn’t anyone tell me about the fresh personal pizzas available at the Ambler store?!!!”

Betsy Teutsch is one of the moderators of the Buy Nothing West Mt. Airy Facebook group and a longtime working member of Weavers Way.

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MEDICAL BILLING

Part 1 of 2

An Intro to the Big Pandemic that’s not COVID and has a Cure

by Elise C. Rivers, for the Shuttle

HOPEFULLY, TALK OF COVID-19 MAY FINALLY be on the wane. We’ve got vaccines now, and it seems there’s a light at the end of this tunnel. Now let’s get to work on the other, much bigger pandemic our culture has been avoiding for decades.

The Big Pandemic

As you’ve no doubt not heard, there’s another pandemic that’s happening. I’ll refer to it as the Big Pandemic, because it kills more people every year than the little one and has for years. Dr. Michael Greger, an infectious disease specialist and the founder of nutritionfacts.org, spoke in 2008 about an ever-growing series of emerging pandemics due to our relationship to animals; that video is now available on the Nutrition Facts website. COVID-19, an animal-to-human transmitted pandemic, is just the latest, and is unlikely to be the last. Without addressing the underlying cause, the next one could be even more swift and deadly.

COVID-19 killed over 500,000 Americans in the last year; all of us have been in some way touched by this tragedy. But keep in mind, the Big Pandemic that killed more than that number during 2020 was never even mentioned in the news. It killed a greater number the year before, and the year before that, and the year before that, and it will kill the same number, or more, next year.

Lots of Diseases or One Big Pandemic?

One of the challenges with the Big Pandemic is that we’ve been identifying it as a lot of different diseases, instead of talking about the one big cause. We call it hypertension or heart disease, cancer or diabetes, Alzheimer’s, arthritis or even obesity. But when you look at the source of many of these chronic diseases, they have a common cause. It’s not a virus, as is the case with COVID-19, but these diseases originate from a source so pervasive, we’ve been ignoring it all these years.

COVID-19 made it clear that most of these diseases put people more at risk of becoming extremely ill or dying if they contract the virus, so we know they significantly decrease our vitality and increase our vulnerability. And even though we’ve developed vaccines to protect us from this virus, unless we wake up to the cause of what’s at the root of these other diseases — living the Standard American Lifestyle — we will continue

to suffer and remain vulnerable to the ever-present Big Pandemic.

The good news is we don’t need a vaccine for the Big Pandemic. We already know the cure, but it’s not popular or widely discussed. The bad news is, you are likely to already have the symptoms of this other pandemic, and so do your children.

Studies have revealed that by age 10, most children are showing measurable signs of early-stage heart disease in their arteries. Type 2 diabetes is now considered a worldwide pandemic by the Centers for Disease Control. There are more obese American children (and adults) now than ever before, with their decreased lifespans and quality of life. And it’s not about lack of exercise — it’s the food, it’s the food, it’s the food.

Acute vs Chronic?

Unlike a virus, which we experience as an acute, immediate illness, the Big Pandemic has a chronic disease pathology. Like the frog in the slowly heated pot of water, it takes longer to notice your body becoming inflamed, then overweight, then obese. That’s the problem with chronic disease: Even though it lowers your quality of life, impacts your ability to function, and can even cause you daily physical pain, Western medicine (whose strength is in dealing with acute conditions), normalizes our increasing disability, and “manages” our conditions with surgeries, pain killers and other medications that address the symptoms. It’s what they’re trained to do; prevention and reversal are not commonly discussed, let alone prioritized.

The result of only managing chronic disease is that it allows the cause to go unidentified and unaddressed except by medication, even as hypertension, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and obesity have reached Big Pandemic proportions. And since so much of the population has already slipped down this slippery slope, you may have come to think that being 20 pounds overweight, or breathless while going up stairs, having achy joints, or even becoming pre-diabetic, is to be expected and comes with aging.

Perhaps COVID-19 may have helped by getting us in the groove of change. Since we were willing to physically distance for over a year, change the way we did our

daily business and wore masks to avoid being part of the little pandemic, it’s clear when we grasp the danger we are in we are willing to take necessary measures, even if they are inconvenient. Therefore, I hope you are willing to do what you need to do to avoid becoming yet another victim of the Big Pandemic.

To put COVID-19 in perspective, heart disease alone killed at least 1,300,000 people in the last two years, according to the CDC; Type 2 diabetes killed close to 160,000. Add cancer deaths, and the torment of living and dying with obesity and arthritis — most cases of which are preventable and/or reversible — and you can start to see how senseless it is to ignore this big danger.

The Big Cure

Unlike COVID-19, which has no known cure, there is a cure for the Big Pandemic. But it is not something you can depend on the medical establishment to fix for you for two reasons. First, with chronic diseases, Western medicine’s focus is likely to be, as mentioned, management, not cure. Second, because its cause is something you are participating in every day, it’s you who has to become your own primary care chronic disease physician to avoid the Big Pandemic.

Because of the slow-moving nature of chronic diseases, in most cases they are not only curable, but preventable and even reversible with a plant-based lifestyle. For some time now, we have had a science-based answer to preventing and reversing these chronic diseases. The science is there; the first thing you need to do is to wake up to this larger reality.

In the June issue, I’ll present the science-based next steps as to what you can do. And if you’re inspired to get started right away to build immunity from the Big Pandemic, visit <http://PBMA.info#HealThySelf>.

Elise C. Rivers is an acupuncturist and “nutritarian” who has studied for the last nine years with progressive medical doctors Michael Greger, Michael Klaper and Neal Barnard, who promote the benefits of a whole foods plant-based diet based on scientific evidence. She is also a graduate of the Moving Medicine Forward Initiative and Cornell University’s Center for Nutrition Studies in plant-based nutrition.



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Play is Pivotal to Keeping Mind and Body Healthy

by Dan Vidal, Weavers Way Wellness Team

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU ACTUALLY had fun exercising? I mean real fun, like the kind you had when you were a kid — laughing, your heart racing, fully engaged and connected with the world around you.

One of the gifts that being a new father brings is the opportunity to once again experience moments like these on a daily basis. I feel such freedom and joy when my daughter and I chase each other around the backyard, laughing in the sun. It’s moments like these that make us feel completely safe, alive and fulfilled, and there is a good physiological reason for it.

Play literally allows you to enter into a more receptive state, where you become interactive with your environment rather than reactive. This is a state regulated by the ventral vagal branch of your parasympathetic nervous system — the part of your nervous system that allows for healthy social engagement.

Being in a playful state not only optimizes your ability to adapt and learn, but to connect with yourself and others. It is an evolutionary marvel that allows you to properly regulate the lower, more primitive threat-response functions of your autonomic nervous system, and ensure that all of your vital functions stay chugging along in perfect harmony.

When you perceive your environment as threatening in some way, your nervous system’s default response is to go into fight or flight mode. In this state you become mobilized, aggressive, anxious, and tend to feel out of sync and antagonistic toward others.

If this response pattern fails to make you feel safe, you then switch into the shutdown response. This is the most ancient threat response pattern that your body has at its disposal. In this state, you feel withdrawn, foggy, numb and disconnected. It is the equivalent of giving up and playing dead.

Both of these physiological states are designed for emergency use only, which is why they begin to take a huge toll on the body when activated too frequently for too long.

Unfortunately, many of us spend the majority of our lives oscillating wildly between these two states while spending far too lit-



tle time in the restorative ventral vagal state of play. This is a good recipe for developing chronic muscle tension, pain, health conditions and a general lack of joy and engagement with the outside world.

By allowing yourself to engage in play, you can help regulate your nervous system, promote good health and actually become more effective at your everyday tasks.

Exercise, for example, no longer remains a dreadful chore that you have to drag your body through kicking and screaming simply to placate your ego. Instead, it becomes something to be curious about and have fun with. In other words, it becomes a game.

When you access the state of play, your body begins to solve problems for you. Play allows your nervous system to properly respond to the demands of the moment, and to adapt accordingly. This is the most efficient way to learn and practice just about anything, which is exactly why children spend all day doing it. This is also why elite athletes learn how to get into “the zone” — which is essentially a focused ventral vagal state of play. In this state, you foster a collaborative relationship with your body rather than an antagonistic one. You free yourself of the crippling self-judgment and shame that breeds rigidity, sabotages performance and squashes joy.

In order to access the ventral vagal state on your own, try to think of ways to make your workouts fun again. For example, the next time you go for a hike in the woods, try creating an obstacle course for yourself. You can even alter it and make it slightly more challenging each time. Stay curious; your body will thank you.

Dan Vidal is a licensed massage therapist, certified neurosomatic pain treatment specialist and owner of Paragon Pain Solutions in Chestnut Hill. He helps clients alleviate pain and dysfunction by assessing their posture and creating personalized treatment plans of targeted massage and mindful movement practice.

Hilltop Books Turns a Page, Opens for Browsing on the Hill

by Karen Plourde, Editor, Weavers Way Shuttle



Friends of Chestnut Hill Library Executive Director Amy Wilson

IF YOU’VE MISSED BROWSING THE STACKS AT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY branch or independent bookstore during the pandemic, heal thyself: Hilltop Books, the used bookstore launched by the Friends of Chestnut Hill Library to provide a needed source of funding, is now open for walk-up business six days a week.

“It feels like every weekend we’re kind of picking up, and we’ve added more hours,” said Amy Wilson, executive director of the Friends of Chestnut Hill Library.

The store, located at 84 Bethlehem Pike in Chestnut Hill, opened for visits by appointment for three weekends in February, after more than a year of planning. Last October, the Friends began accepting donations of used books from the community, and the response was so overwhelming that the shop’s shelves, along with assorted baskets and containers on the floor, are now filled to capacity. As a result, the group is temporarily holding off on accepting more books, although Wilson said that may change later in the spring.

“We have had volunteers restart sorting across the street, where we have donations that don’t fit in the store, essentially,” Wilson said. “... when we [are accepting] donations, we’ll list those hours on our website and put out a callout on our email list and on social media.”

Hilltop’s stock, which is spread throughout four rooms, is divided into numerous sections — everything from fiction (including a large separate mystery section) to Black, Native American and gender studies to cookbooks and architecture. Books are priced at one-third of list price; some are priced separately. In the near future, the store plans to offer rentals on board games and puzzles.

(continued on next page)

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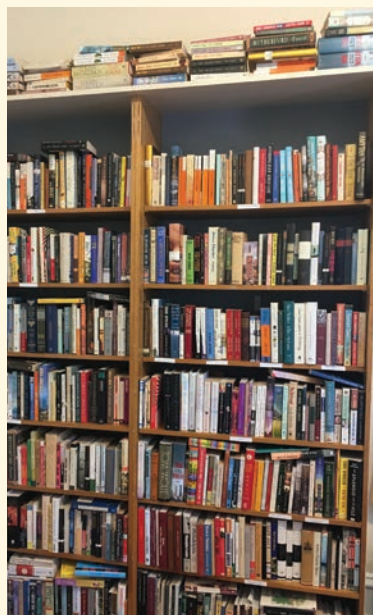
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(Continued from previous page)

Wilson wants to ensure that members of the community, including volunteers, board members, neighbors and others are engaged in the life of the store, and hopes to do that through a variety of activities. “We could do book exchanges or we could do reviews from your neighbor and integrate that kind of community ethos into displays and events,” she said.

Further down the line, the Friends are looking to develop an outdoor patio space where visitors can read and play board games. “That’s not happening this season, and it will entail fundraising for it,” Wilson added.

Hilltop Books is currently open noon to 5 p.m. every day but Monday. More information is available on the Chestnut Hill Library Friends website: chlibraryfriends.org/hilltop-books-1.



photos by Karen Plourde

Top left and above right, some of the shelves packed with used books at Hilltop Books in Chestnut Hill; above left, workers working on the building’s exterior last month.

The Bigger Picture: Shopping the Co-op Over Conventional Grocery Stores

by Coleman Poses, Weavers Way New Economy Incubator Committee

ARE CO-OPS WORTH THE PRICES THAT we pay? We’ve read the arguments in the Shuttle and discussed the issue among ourselves. As Weavers Way becomes a servant of many masters – a living wage, sustainability, fair trade, and slave-free and local commodities – how much money should we spend on our altruism?

This question could easily be followed by another question: Are the Co-op purchases we make truly altruistic? There are many ways in which our purchases serve our own self-interest, and it would be interesting to consider a few.

- **Cooperatives are local:** One of the traits that worker, consumer and producer co-ops have in common is that they are owned and operated by members residing within a certain locality. Members may move, but the co-op stays fixed, demonstrating commitment to a particular place and its residents.

This commitment is not just hypothetical. A 2018 report conducted by the ICA Group for the National Cooperative Grocers Association found that every dollar spent at a local food co-op generated \$1.60 of activity in the local economy. In comparison, spending that dollar at a conventional grocery generated only \$1.36 worth. In addition, shoppers are more likely to find more local produce and value-added commodities from local manufacturers than what they would expect to find at conventional markets.

- **A more level playing field:** Research from the Democracy at Work Institute and Virginie Perotin, a professor of economics at the University of Leeds Business School in the U.K. suggests that the income and wealth gaps between management and labor is narrower in worker cooperatives than in conventional enterprises in similar industries. Cooperatives also appear to have longer life spans and weather recessions better than their more traditional counterparts. Given that poverty and unemployment have been linked to crime and disease,



it appears that supporting cooperatives contributes to employee well-being, which can be beneficial to the larger community.

- **Better care of the Earth:** There is evidence that, at least in the food sector, cooperatives display superior environmental stewardship over conventional stores. According to NCG, co-op shoppers purchase more organic foods (42% of purchases) than customers at conventional groceries (5%). Co-op News also contends that co-ops are better at recycling plastics (81% for co-ops vs. 29% for conventional grocers), and food wastes (74% for co-ops vs. 36% for conventional grocers). According to NCG, in 2016 the average cooperative donated about 24,100 pounds of food to local food pantries, while conventional grocery stores donated about half as much.

Finally, according to Co-op News, co-ops outperform more traditional groceries in energy efficiency, particularly in the area of refrigeration. According to the Environmental Protection Agency’s Energy Star program, refrigeration at cooperatives earned an average rating of 82 (out of a perfect 100), while the conventional average was 50.

When all these factors are considered, a bag of groceries purchased at the Co-op has much more value than one purchased at the local supermarket. By supporting the Co-op, the money you spend goes further to make your community a safer, more vibrant and enjoyable place to live.

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Community Legal Services Settles Suit with USDA; Scores Extra Benefits for Neediest SNAP Recipients

by Megan McCrea, Weavers Way Food Justice Committee

PHILADELPHIA’S COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES, in partnership with the law firm of Morgan Lewis, recently settled a lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture which will ensure that approximately 650,000 of Pennsylvania’s neediest residents will receive an extra \$712 million in emergency SNAP benefits.

In March of last year, Congress passed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, which contained a provision allowing SNAP benefits recipients to receive additional emergency benefits during the pandemic. FFCRA also charged the USDA with interpreting this provision and providing guidance on its application. The department subsequently interpreted this provision as bringing all SNAP households up to the maximum benefit amount, but did not allow for any household already receiving the maximum to receive any additional benefits.

The amount of SNAP benefits a household receives is based primarily on income; the poorest households have the lowest income and therefore receive the maximum benefit. Under the USDA guidance, the poorest households would receive no additional emergency benefits because they were already receiving the maximum.

CLS attorneys and Weavers Way members Louise Hayes and Amy Hirsch, along with fellow attorney Liz Soltan, quickly recognized the paradoxical and inequitable effect of the USDA’s interpretation and guidance. Convinced that the department had misinterpreted the FFCRA provision pertaining to emergency allotments, CLS partnered with Morgan Lewis to challenge the USDA guidance.

In July of last year, CLS and Morgan Lewis filed a class action (Gilliam v. USDA), in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, challenging the USDA’s interpretation. The lawsuit was filed on behalf of low-income Pennsylvania residents who were unable to receive emergency SNAP allotments due to the USDA’s cap on these allotments at the maximum monthly benefit amount.

CLS and Morgan Lewis also petitioned for an injunction seeking to enjoin USDA from implementing its guidance (and thereby denying emergency SNAP benefits to the lowest income SNAP recipients) while the litigation was ongoing. The judge assigned to the case, John Milton Young, agreed with CLS and in September of last year ordered that USDA stop denying emergency SNAP benefits to the lowest income SNAP recipients while the lawsuit was pending. Last October, the USDA appealed Young’s decision to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

USDA also challenged CLS’ right to bring the lawsuit, because FFCRA requires the individual states to

request the emergency allotments. CLS was able to secure the Commonwealth’s cooperation, and the Commonwealth requested these emergency allotments for its poorest SNAP recipients.

USDA advised the Commonwealth that should the department win on appeal, it would demand repayment of all funds previously allotted to and disbursed for the benefit of Pennsylvania’s lowest income SNAP recipients. As a result, Pennsylvania requested (and USDA approved), emergency allotments in the amount of 50% of the maximum allotment for their household size. Pennsylvania received funds for approximately seven and a half months (from Sept. 11 of last year through the end of April), but due to the prospect of having to repay the funds if USDA won its appeal, had yet to disburse any emergency funds to SNAP recipients.

New Administration, New Approach

While the appeal was pending, Joe Biden was inaugurated president. One of his first executive orders – signed on January 22, 2021 -- instructed the USDA to revisit its guidance pertaining to emergency allotments of SNAP benefits.

Given Biden’s directive, CLS, Morgan Lewis and the USDA entered into settlement negotiations and on March 31 entered into an agreement that settled Gilliam v. USDA. As part of the agreement, all funds allocated to Pennsylvania under the injunction -- \$712 million – will be available for Pennsylvania SNAP recipients, the Gilliam lawsuit will be discontinued and, perhaps most importantly, the USDA agreed that it will not seek to recoup any amounts previously disbursed to the Commonwealth.

The Gilliam lawsuit has national repercussions because it benefits the nation’s lowest income SNAP recipients, not just those residing in Pennsylvania. On April 1, the USDA issued a press release indicating it would be providing up to one billion dollars per month in additional assistance to an estimated 25 million of the lowest-income SNAP recipients.

Under the new guidance, there is now a \$95 per month minimum emergency allotment and an allowance for higher allotments based on income.

Pennsylvania’s Department of Human Services is currently working to distribute the \$712 million in retroactive SNAP benefits to Pennsylvania’s lowest income SNAP recipients. The April emergency allotments for the poorest SNAP households – totaling \$101 million – were scheduled to be issued in the latter half of April. The remaining \$611 million in retroactive benefits will be issued later – probably sometime this month. These benefits do not have to be used immediately and can remain on a SNAP recipient’s card indefinitely as long as the

card is used at least once every three months. Going forward, Pennsylvania SNAP recipients will receive at least \$95 per month in emergency benefits.

Currently, maximum benefit amounts range from \$234 per month for a single person to \$929 for a five-person household. Thanks to the Gilliam lawsuit, SNAP recipients will get a \$95 emergency allotment (beginning in May) plus an additional seven and a half months of retroactive emergency allotments that are equal to 50% of the maximum allotment for the recipient’s household size that the state requested. In addition, recipients will receive USDA-approved emergency allotments for this group in the amount of 50% of the maximum allotment for their household size.

These emergency allotments could continue at least through 2021. For allotments to continue, two circumstances must be met: There must be a declaration of a federal health emergency and a state declaration of emergency.

Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf has made such a declaration. However, how long the state’s declaration of emergency will continue is uncertain, since the General Assembly has placed two constitutional amendments on this month’s ballot. The first relates to the termination or extension of emergency declarations; the second deals with disaster emergency declaration and management.

These proposed amendments substantially restrict the governor’s emergency powers. If passed, new sections would be added to Pennsylvania’s Constitution to:

- Address disaster emergencies, public health emergencies, natural disasters, and other types of emergencies
- Define the governor’s power to use executive orders and proclamations to declare emergencies
- Provide that the state legislature shall pass laws related to how disaster emergencies must be managed; and
- Limit the governor’s declaration to 21 days, unless the legislature votes on a concurrent resolution to extend the order.

If the emergency declarations amendments pass, it’s by no means clear that the General Assembly would continue Wolf’s emergency declaration.

Many thanks to Louise Hayes, Esq., CLS attorney and Co-op member, for her contribution to this article.



Molly Kellogg, LCSW, LDN

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Upper Gwynedd Mill Offers a View into Early American Industry

by Steve Blubaugh, Head Miller, Wissahickon Trails

NEAR THE GENTLE HEADWATERS OF the Wissahickon Creek sits a monument to the industrial revolution in America. The Evans-Mumbower Mill, located at the junction of Swedesford and Township Line roads in Upper Gwynedd, is a wonderful example of an 18th century automated water mill.

The development of the highly efficient overshot waterwheel, combined with the innovative use of simple machines, enabled the concept of continuous operation, which greatly increased productivity.

The first mill in the Wissahickon Valley was built in 1688. Eventually, more than 50 mills clustered along the banks of the 21-mile Wissahickon Creek. They produced such items as paper, textiles, lumber and flour, were powerful economic engines for the emerging country and generated great wealth for their owners.

The site of the Evans-Mumbower Mill was part of an original land grant given to Thomas Evans in 1698. His grandson, Abraham, built a sawmill there in 1744. The current structure was built in 1835 by John and Elisa Keefe, who placed a namestone in the front wall.

Henry Mumbower bought the mill in 1856 and worked it until his death in

1892. He was described in his obituary as an honest miller and a most excellent and popular citizen. His son, David, ran the mill until it closed in 1930.

The abandoned building fell into disrepair and was on the verge of collapse when Wissahickon Trails took ownership of it in 1987. Restoration was made possible thanks to the dedicated efforts of Wissahickon Trails, many volunteers and a generous grant from John and Claire Betz. In 2008, the mill was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In addition to open house tours, the mill has found new life as the location of educational programs for local fourth grade students to learn about simple machines and how factories perform work.

The next public open house program will take place Sunday, June 27 at 1p.m. Tours are free, but advance registration is requested at wissahickontrails.org. Visitors will have the opportunity to experience the sights and sounds of falling water powering 2,500-pound stones to grind corn into flour. Next to the mill, stop by the operational blacksmith shop for a demonstration. And while you're there, be sure to check out the nearby 12.6-mile Green Ribbon Trail that follows the Wissahickon Creek.



photos by David Freed

Left, The exterior of the Evans-Mumbower Mill in Upper Gwynedd.

Above, local student visitors get a hands-on lesson in the workings of hand-powered grinding machines; below, visitors to the mill watch the overshot waterwheel in action.

Note: These photos were taken prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.







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Online Event Will Feature Van Rossum, Delaware Riverkeeper Founder and Activist

by Victoria Valadao Napier, Weavers Way Plastics Reduction Task Force

THE NEXT ONLINE EVENT ON DECK for the Weavers Way Plastic Reduction Task Force is a presentation on May 13 from 6:30-8 p.m. by Maya K. Van Rossum, founder of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network and the Green Amendment movement.

Van Rossum is a dynamic speaker who has presented at TEDx events, is a regular contributor to the BBC World Service program “Business Matters” and has appeared on “Midday on WNYC.” Her talk is bound to be exciting and informative. This event is open to the public.



Maya K. Van Rossum

Voice of the Delaware River” as its riverkeeper, protecting the watershed that runs through Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Delaware.

In 2012, the Riverkeeper Network and seven municipalities took on powerful shale gas extraction drilling or fracking companies who were given the right to drill in every part of the state through the Pennsylvania Oil and Gas Act. Using the Green Amendment to the state constitution, the state Supreme Court in December 2013 struck down the potential law, which overwhelmingly favored fracking.

Van Rossum is the author of the recent book, “The Green Amendment: Securing our Right to a Healthy Environment,” which was chosen as the 2018 Living Now Evergreen Awards Gold Winner in the nature conservation category. An environmental attorney and activist for over 25 years, Van Rossum says her work for the Green Amendment movement is the culmination of everything she has done until now.

What is a Green Amendment? Many may not know about it, but Pennsylvania has one. Originally authored by former Deputy Attorney General and State Legislator Franklin Kury in 1971, it seeks to protect the rights of the commonwealth’s citizens to pure water, clean air, a stable climate and a healthy environment through an amendment to the state constitution.

According to Van Rossum, most environmental laws are designed to accommodate polluters rather than to protect citizens and their state’s unique natural resources and treasures. As a result, people feel powerless when it comes to preserving the quality of their water, air, public parks, and special wild and natural spaces. But at a

time when citizens are rallying around rights granted by our constitution, the Green Amendment movement seeks to expand the rights of citizens to pure water, clean air, a stable climate and a healthy environment.

So far, Pennsylvania and Montana are the only states to have these protections; New Jersey, New York, Maryland and West Virginia are on their way, according to the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators. The goal is to have amendments in place in every state in the Union.

Van Rossum’s love of the environment came from growing up and playing in Ithan Creek in Delaware County. She also credits her parents for putting their environmental values to practice; they composted leaves instead of putting them in plastic bags like their neighbors and used cloth bags for food shopping. She also considers her mother a role model, someone who always stood up for others.

Van Rossum eventually became a lawyer, founding the Beasley Environmental Law Clinic at Temple University in the process. For 26 years she has been “the

As Van Rossum explained in an interview in June 2014 with Women’s Voices for the Earth, “In striking down elements of the law as unconstitutional, the court ruled that the right to pure water, clean air and a healthy environment are inherent and inalienable rights that are protected by the Pennsylvania Constitution and that they are rights that belong to present and future generations.” The list of victories has grown since then. In Montana, for example, its Green Amendment stopped the issuing of gold mining permits near Yellowstone National Park in 2018.

During the event, Van Rossum will discuss the Green Amendment movement and how it has proven to fight big polluters in both Pennsylvania and Montana. Through her work with her organization For the Generations, she hopes to help spread the Green Amendment movement throughout the country.

The event is being cohosted by the Neighborhood Networks Waste Working Group. A Q & A session will follow Van Rossum’s presentation. Register for the event on the Co-op’s website under Calendar of Events.

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Committee Cofounders Detail Their Inspiration and Goals

by Brittany Barbato, Roz Dutton and Rosa Lewis, for the Shuttle

THE RACIAL DIVERSITY, Equity, and Inclusion Committee is a dynamic group of individuals with different personal identities. They represent all the roles that comprise Weavers Way’s structure, including employees from each store, and the administration, shopper/members from each store and three members from the Board of Directors.

The committee works with employees to expand diversity, equity and inclusion at all levels of the Co-op, including the Board, management, staff, members, customers and vendors. Their efforts include:

- Collaborating with staff on an initiative to increase the number of vendors who are people of color
- Encouraging training for staff and the committee
- Writing articles for the Shuttle and the eNews to highlight stories and resources focused on diversity

The committee was cofounded by Roz Dutton and Rosa Lewis in 2018. Dutton is a retired psychotherapist and has shopped at the Mt. Airy store since the late 1970s. Lewis is a retired urban planner and educator and has been involved with the Co-op since its inception.

Dutton was inspired to start the committee after 10 years of examining white identity and white privilege with a group of whites in the community. Four years ago, a friend who is a Black employee at the Co-op told her about exchanges she had with her white supervisor that were racist.

“As a member of the Co-op for many years, I decided to speak out,” she recalled. “I spoke with Jon Roesser, the general manager, and the president of the Board at that time, Chris Hill. Jon suggested I form a committee, and we have been active for three years now.”

In the process of organizing the committee, Dutton reached out to Lewis, who quickly agreed to get on board.

“I am a Black woman living within a European-defined system that lessens and controls, at differing levels, all those who are not like them,” she said. “I advocate for Black people, who are at the bottom of this system which kidnapped and enslaved my ancestors.

“Too many people do not see this as a problem; they don’t get that the problem is something they created,” she continued. “Because they don’t get it, they label it with disapproving phrases, in just one or two words. Using this modus operandi means not looking at the genesis of the problem. The problem is not examined, and it’s not talked about. That’s the problem we’re working to solve.”

Lewis has noticed tht the way shoppers are asked about their membership status at checkout as one instance of bias at the Co-op.



Roz Dutton



Rosa Lewis



“Depending on the shopper, they may say ‘What’s your member number?’ or ‘Do you have a member number?’” she said. “Do you hear the difference between the two? There is an assumption — conscious or unconscious — that if you’re white then you’re a member and if you’re Black then you might not be.”

Dutton hopes the committee can bring about changes in behaviors and attitudes that lead to lasting change at Weavers Way. She’s encouraged by the diversity within the group and its interactions thus far.

“We respect and learn from each other,” she said. “We are intergenerational, multiracial and multi-talented. We work hard and well together, doing our part to work to increase racial harmony in our community. I always leave our meetings inspired, humbled and energized.

“I want to help the Co-op be its best self,” she continued. “I believe in the Co-op’s mission and the people involved in it. Since we are all owners in the Co-op, I want to be even more proud of being an owner.”

For her part, Lewis has realized her commitment to the committee and its mission runs far deeper than she first realized — and that’s OK.

“When I first joined, I thought ‘Roz and I will set up a couple of trainings for maybe a year or two and then I’ll get back to doing other projects and activities,’” she said. “What I (and Roz, too) quickly realized is ‘equality’ is something I’ll be doing ’til my last breath, ’til the wheels fall off.

“I want for everyone what I want for myself: peace, prosperity and health,” she continued. “I want this because a society that is well does not behave like the one we have. When we are well, the world operates from a place of peace. What a wonderful world we can create. I say, ‘Let’s start by being kind.’ And of course, my definition of kindness includes equity.”

Working Definitions and Examples of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

DIVERSITY

The ways people differ, both visibly and less visibly.

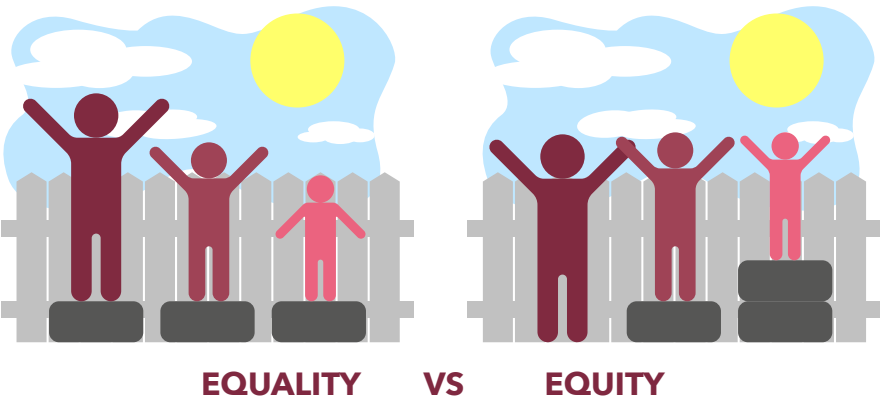


EQUALITY

Everyone gets the same thing.

EQUITY

A positive experience of fairness for all people regardless of who they are and what they look like. This may require giving different treatment to different people to ensure everyone has what they need.

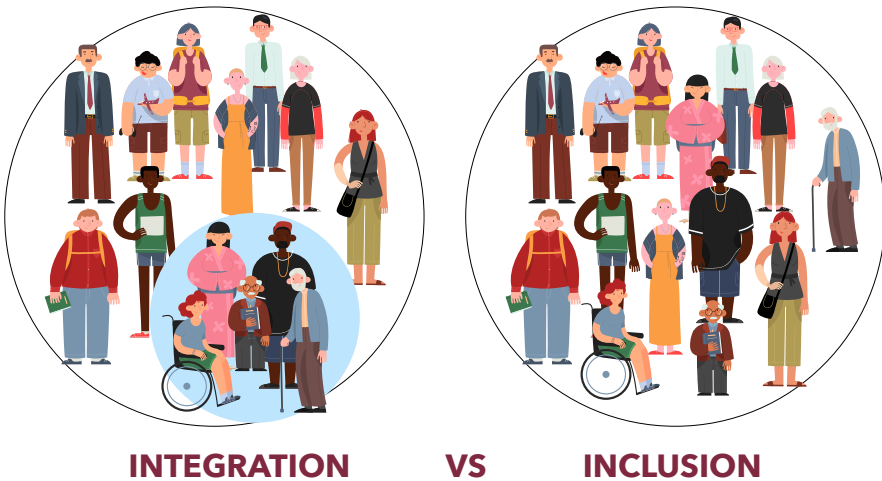


INTEGRATION

Bringing people together in a way that doesn’t make everyone feel they are truly wanted or welcome. People may feel this way because they were forced to be together by a law or policy.

INCLUSION

A sense of belonging and being a full member of a community with access to all its privileges and experiences.



Note: Sometimes people use the words equality, equity, and fairness in ways that cause confusion. Equality is one strategy that a business or department can use to deliver fairness. However, the business outgrows this strategy as it becomes more diverse. Thus, it is essential to focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Diversity in isolation from inclusion will lead to inequitable experiences.

All Hail the Mighty Oak, a Rockstar Supporter of Biodiversity

by Mike Weilbacher, Executive Director, Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education

AS A SHUTTLE READER, YOU LIKELY NEED LITTLE convincing about the importance of planting trees. But what you might not know is that of all the trees you might plant at your home or help plant elsewhere, oaks may be the most important of all. Let’s consider all the ways oaks work their special wonders.

To start, oaks support more biological diversity than any other local tree. Their leaves are the necessary food source for 511 species of Pennsylvania moths and butterflies alone. In other words, 511 adult moths and butterflies seek out oaks to lay their eggs on their leaves. Oaks host nearly 100 more species of moths and butterflies than the number two tree on the list, native cherries like black cherry.

It likely surprises you that there are more than 500 species of moths and butterflies locally (it did me, and I teach this stuff). “No other tree genus supports so much life,” writes University of Delaware entomologist and best-selling author Doug Tallamy in his newest book, “The Nature of Oaks.”

Caterpillars in turn are critical food for even seed-eating birds like song sparrows and goldfinches, who busily stuff caterpillars down the craws of demanding nestling babies after they hatch. These insects give baby birds the protein packets they need to mature. Caterpillars are a hugely important food for nestling birds; since the caterpillars don’t yet have the exoskeleton of their adults, they are more readily digested.

It’s a simple equation: If there are more oaks, there are more bugs. And if there are more bugs, there are more birds.

Acorns, the nut produced by oaks, provide food for dozens of species of birds, mammals, insects and more. While the birds include nuthatches, woodpeckers, titmice, towhees, crows and more, blue jays have a special relationship with oaks: A jay will carry an acorn up



to a mile away to cache it underground, storing it for the winter ahead. An industrious jay buries 4,500 acorns every fall and either can’t use them all, forgets where some are planted or perishes during the winter. Leftover acorns buried underground then sprout. So jay populations are supported by oaks, but jays in turn are essential dispersers of oak trees.

Acorns also make up almost 75% of a deer’s late fall diet, and you’ve likely dodged gray squirrels crossing streets to bury acorns like the jays do. But flying squirrels, opossums, raccoons, white-footed mice, chipmunks, rabbits and even that black bear that crossed the Wissahickon a few years back all eat acorns, too.

Lots of you are likely worried about climate change and know that trees sequester carbon. Of all their peers, oaks are among the best at this. As long-lived trees, oaks sequester carbon for centuries, and as trees with densely packed cells, which makes oak the wood we love so much, they store more carbon than most. Their deep and extensive root system, which features a huge mycorrhizae network, also pushes carbon underground, where it is stored for hundreds, some think thousands, of years. “Simply put,” writes Tallamy, “every oak you plant and nurture helps to moderate our rapidly deteriorating climate better than the overwhelming majority of plant species.”

The huge leaf network of mature oaks, along with their roots, is also excellent for capturing stormwater, another one of the signature environmental threats of the day. An oak tree’s leaves, one study showed, held onto 3,000 gallons of water that evaporated before it reached the ground.

On top of all this, oaks, like all trees, filter smog from air, cool the air in the summer, shade our homes, block excessive winds and more.

An old Chinese proverb says, “The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best time is now.” That’s why the Schuylkill Center planted seven trees on Earth Day — five in our new Earth Day Forest, one at our Wildlife Clinic and another at the 21st Ward ball-field near us.

This year, all those trees were oaks, the essential tree in Pennsylvania forests.

We hope you’ll join us in planting oaks across the region.

Note: The Schuylkill Center is selling live native oaks, along with numerous other trees and plants, during its online Native Plant Sale; visit them at www.schuylkillcenter.org.



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Let’s Talk About the How and Where of Restrooms in the Park

by Vivian Lehrer Stadlin, for the Shuttle

AT FRIENDS OF THE WISSAHICKON, we spend a lot of time talking about trails, trash and toilets. Restroom facilities in Wissahickon Valley Park have been a long-standing and complex topic of discussion. How many permanent and seasonal bathrooms should we have for a park of this size, which averages two million visitors per year and whose number of visitors is growing? Where should the facilities be located, and what type should they be, considering the constraints of the landscape?

Lack of adequate bathrooms in the Wissahickon is integrally related to the park user experience, and even keeps some people, like older adults or families with children, away. Philadelphia Parks and Recreation arranges for portable toilet setup and service in the park at high traffic areas during the summer every year. But many park visitors often find these seasonal units unappealing due to service challenges like the terrain of the park, as well as access issues related to overcrowded lots and roads. Ultimately, year-round access to available, well-maintained facilities protects the trails and quality of the Wissahickon Creek, where a third of Philadelphians get their drinking water. For all these reasons, FOW is working on a Restroom Facili-



ties Master Plan partnership with PPR, with funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Here’s where you come in. Wissahickon Valley Park is your park, so we want to hear from you about what you need in the way of restrooms. From April through October this year, FOW is conducting an online survey about visitor park use and access — where you would like to see permanent facilities, the type of amenities you want included in them and more. This study will help FOW plan projects over the next 10 years and secure funding for needed restrooms and the staff required to maintain them. User counts through trail counters positioned throughout the park will also inform the plan.

The survey should take less than five minutes to fill out, and everyone who



photo by Friends of the Wissahickon

Composting toilet on Forbidden Drive near the Kitchens Lane entrance to Wissahickon Valley Park.

completes a survey will be eligible for a chance to win an FOW swag bag. Access the survey at fow.org/parksurvey.

We understand that all visitors want accessible, clean and open restrooms when they visit the park. Your survey an-

swers will help improve these much-needed services. Thank you for participating.

FOW will be offering opportunities for public input on this important topic in the fall. We anticipate that the project will be completed by the end of the year.



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Liberate Your Lawn & Garden

A Hidden Wild Lawn Offers a Dash of Spring Magic, and a Message

by Sarah Endriss, for the Shuttle

“Oh wow... that is stunning!”

WE WERE AT TYLER ARBORETUM IN MEDIA TO brainstorm, but the unexpected bonus of the visit was coming upon a large expanse of lawn punctuated by two magnificent old native trees. Yes, the trees were amazing. But honestly, it was the native wild lawn that lay beneath them that took our breath away.

This was no modern American lawn. This was a magic carpet — a magic native carpet! There were no large swaths of tulips, daffodils or crocus; nor was it uniform or bright green. No, this carpet was a delicate mass of dainty, star-shaped light pink flowers hovering two to three inches above the ground, with accents of purple and yellow dancing in between.

A true harbinger of Pennsylvania’s spring, *Claytonia virginica* (Spring Beauty) is an ephemeral wildflower that arrives in early spring (March and April) before trees leaf out, and then disappears completely by June. Each plant bears a single pair of leaves with one stem supporting a loose cluster of flowers. Growing in light shade, in good, acidic moist soil, this spring wildflower was once prolific throughout our woodlands and along the shoulder slopes of stream banks. Today you need a keen eye to find it.

At Tyler, we were delighted to find it spread out in front of us across a small floodplain and throughout the historic front lawn that is home to the arboretum’s Painter Collection of historic trees. It was glorious!

The magic we found at Tyler Arboretum was not the grand display of its magnificent flowering trees and shrubs (yes, they are amazing) or the swaths of native cultivars planted along walks, beckoning us to return for a future show. It’s this naturally occurring, intact native ecology of a large shaded area beneath a 200-year-



old red maple (*Acer rubrum*) and white oak (*Quercus alba*) trees. And *Claytonia* was not the only happy native plant!

As we crouched down to get closer look, we found a half dozen native herbaceous plant species happily thriving: *Luzula echinata* (common woodrush), *Erythronium americanum* (yellow trout lily), violets, *Oxalis corniculata* (creeping wood sorrel), *Danthonia spica-*


ta (poverty oat grass) and more than a couple varieties of moss. The matrix was diverse, dense and healthy with minimal invasive plants, including the dreaded lesser celandine! So how is that possible?

First, it should be noted that a light layer of leaf litter remained. Leaf litter protects the soil and plants, increases soil moisture and returns vital nutrients back to the land over time.

Second, in an effort to protect the trees, Tyler protects the soil. While browsing the arboretum’s blogs, I came across an article that talks about restricting the use of chemicals and pedestrian traffic within and around the Painter Collection. They do this to limit compaction, allowing the tree roots ample access to air and water. Although focused on the health of the trees, it is clear that they have also protected the soil ecosystem and the unique native perennials that can, if allowed, thrive. There’s a lesson for all of us.


Native plants and gardens require different care from the traditional American lawn. Perhaps the key to appreciating the beauty of these naturally occurring ecosystems is acknowledging how rare they have become. Therefore, I urge you to consider that the magic of spring may not be the bold, audacious displays of non-native generalist plants but the sublime beauty of unique native ecosystems. With a little respect, what might be possible for your yard?

Sarah Endriss is principal of Asarum LandDesign Group, adjunct faculty at Jefferson University and a restoration design consultant for WildLawn, an ecological native grass alternative to traditional lawns. Sarah can be reached at Sarah@asarumlanddesign.com For more information on WildLawn, visit www.WildLawn.com



“OH, NO, I FORGOT TO SAVE THE EARTH!”

BYO BAG WHEN YOU SHOP THE CO-OP.



Locally Grown

Illustration by Allt Katz

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It’s Past Time to Get Loud About the Dangers of Noise Pollution

by Sandra Folzer, Weavers Way Environment Committee

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT POLLUTION, noise is not the first type that comes to mind. Yet it can be a silent killer, ravaging your mind and body. The U.S. Noise Control Act in 1972 stated “...noise presents a growing danger to the health and welfare of the nation’s population...” Ten years later, the EPA under President Ronald Reagan defunded it. Since then Congress has done little to regulate noise, leaving that up to the states. Few have tried.

The Health Effects of Noise

Since we don’t see the damage, we tend to ignore the dangers of loud noise, which triggers a stress response in our brain’s amygdala. This releases cortisol, a stress hormone, which increases blood pressure and decreases gastrointestinal activity and sex hormones. Over time this stress response can be toxic, causing higher levels of hypertension and cholesterol. The ongoing stress causes loss of sleep, which may lead to diabetes, obesity and heart disease.

Noise also affects cognitive functions. The World Health Organization analyzed 34 studies that linked noise to poorer reading comprehension and long-term memory retention in children. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 12.5% of children ages six to 19 have already suffered some hearing damage.

Even if you think you’re getting used to noise from a nearby highway or a loud TV, it still may be affecting you and causing hearing loss.

Are EPA Regulations on Noise Too Lax?

While the Environmental Protection Agency says noise below 70 decibels over a 24-hour period is safe, European Environment Agency recommendations are much lower. They limit noise levels to 40 decibels at night and 50 during the day. In Paris, a “sound map” has been used to identify the loudest part of the city where residents suffered tinnitus, sleep disturbance, heart disease, obesity, diabetes and cognitive impairment in children. Philadelphia also has a sound map, although I found it difficult to decipher.

Delphia also has a sound map, although I found it difficult to decipher.

Decibels are logarithmic, meaning that 100 decibels is not twice as intense as 50; it is 100,000 times more intense. A nearby car horn emits 100 decibels; a siren, 120-130. Even your kitchen blender emits 85.

The common household offenders that are the worst in terms of noise include your lawn mower and snow blower (90 decibels). Leaf blowers are especially harmful; I plan to write a separate article on them.

Typical sound levels are 100 decibels for a sporting event and 110-120 for a rock concert. Because these occur over an extended time, they can cause permanent hearing loss. Even a noisy restaurant may reach 70 decibels. According to an April 2018 Stateline article published by the Pew Charitable Trusts, people drank more alcohol when in a place where the music was loud. If you have to raise your voice to speak to someone next to you, the noise level may be hazardous.

Animals Feel the Effects of Noise Stress

According to a January 2018 article in High Country News, Birds near natural gas compressors experience symptoms similar to PTSD. Their hormone levels show they suffer stress and are hypervigilant, because the noise muffles cues they rely on to identify predators. Mother birds might spend more time on the nest for protection rather than searching for food. In the noisiest places, nestlings were smaller and had reduced feather development, reducing their chances for survival.

Scientist Jesse Barber in 2015 built a phantom road in the wilderness to mimic the sounds of a highway. Bird populations there declined by 28% and those that stayed lost weight, which would affect their ability to migrate.

Noise may be even more devastating for marine animals because sound travels five times faster underwater. Tzoh-Hao Lin, a research fellow at the Biodiversity Research Center in Taipei, Taiwan found last year that noise injured marine animals by interfering with their feeding, mating and communication. Air guns searching for underwater oil and gas are the worst. Sonar Naval exercises and large ships cause whales to stop foraging; they sometimes bolt toward the surface, causing injury or death from decompression.

iversity Research Center in Taipei, Taiwan found last year that noise injured marine animals by interfering with their feeding, mating and communication. Air guns searching for underwater oil and gas are the worst. Sonar Naval exercises and large ships cause whales to stop foraging; they sometimes bolt toward the surface, causing injury or death from decompression.

The Racial Divide of Noise

It is no surprise that poorer neighborhoods are the noisiest. Nationwide, areas made up of 75% of Black residents had a median nighttime noise level of 46.3 decibels, four decibels louder than non-Black neighborhoods, according to a July 2017 study published in UC Berkeley News. Even nighttime noise can be harmful, since hearing is a sense which remains active even during sleep.

Think about those who live near airports, industry or major highways. It is no accident that they are located in poor areas because those in power make decisions beneficial to themselves.

I think about prisons, where the noise can be deafening and inescapable, increasing feelings of stress and aggression. Prisons are mainly comprised of people of color and the poor. Even those who are innocent may be imprisoned for years before their trials because they cannot afford bail.

Noise on the Road and in the Workplace

Most of the noise on highways comes from tires, since traditional concrete has grooves running across the road to drain water. Making grooves in the same direction as traffic reduces noise by about 70%, according to Emily Black, spokesperson for the Texas Department of Transportation. In Phoenix in 2017, 200 miles of highway were replaced with a mixture containing used tires to dampen the sound; more than 6,000 tires were used in every mile of a four-lane highway.

If the workplace is noisy, employers should provide protection to their employees.



employees. According to the CDC, hearing loss is the third most common chronic condition after hypertension and arthritis; about 12% of working adults have hearing problems. Certain chemicals also make people more susceptible to hearing loss, including

toluene, found in paint spray and thinners, nail polish remover and glues. Styrene, used in pesticides, is another.

Wearing hearing protection when mowing or using a snow blower should be as common as wearing seat belts. Earplugs should be worn at concerts and sporting events. Don’t hesitate because others don’t care. Which is more important, fitting in or losing your hearing permanently?

Not only are there federal laws against noise, but there is also a Philadelphia code ordinance which states, “Noise and excessive vibration degrade the environment of the City to a degree which is harmful and detrimental to the health, welfare and safety of its inhabitants ...” There are penalties for violations starting at \$100.

As with other common health issues, keeping the public informed is key to bringing about change.

“It took decades to educate people on the dangers of secondhand smoke,” anti-noise advocate Bradley Vite was quoted as saying in the Pew Trust Stateline article, “We may need decades to show the impact of secondhand noise.”

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Suggestions

by Norman Weiss, Weavers Way
Purchasing Manager

GREETINGS AND THANKS FOR WRIT- ing. Email suggestions to sugges- tions4norman@weaversway.coop. As usual, suggestions and responses may have been edited for brevity, clarity and/ or comedy. In addition, no idea, con- cept, issue, remark, phrase, description of event, word or word string should be tak- en seriously. This also applies to the pre- vious sentence.

In the world of certified organic food, a U.S. District Court judge for the Northern District recently ruled that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's organ- ic certification program can include crops grown hydroponically and in contain- ers. Many in the organic industry object to this, since part of the original intent of early organic farmers was not just avoid- ing the synthetic chemicals that ended up on the crop; it was also to improve soil health, which was getting degraded by the chemicals used in conventional farming.

The Organic Food Production Act, passed in 1990 as part of that year's Farm Bill, contains this language about soil: "An organic plan shall contain provisions designed to foster soil fertility, primarily through the management of the organic content of the soil through proper tillage, crop rotation and manuring." Apparent- ly, the way the Act was written allows for some interpretation of some of the rules, and hydroponic growers have fought off the interpretation that being grown in soil is a requirement for USDA organic certification.




So what might be grown without soil? The list includes berries, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, mushrooms, leafy greens, herbs, sprouts and microgreens. Often these are large-scale operations.

Hydroponics has some advantag- es from a grower's perspective; for in- stance, weather and bugs are less of a fac- tor. In addition, water can be reused, there are more options for farm locations and yields are more predictable. These days, lots of industry people seem to like hi- tech innovation in agriculture and inves- tors also seem to like soil-less farms.

Does soil-less growing have a place in a healthy food system? If it does or doesn't, what are the determining fac- tors? Size? Energy of inputs and outputs? Labor use? Food quality? Sustainability? Level of technology?

Our own farms have no plans for hy- droponics on the horizon. Our farmers have their hands and feet in the dirt and use mostly low-tech tools; no artificial lighting or circulating pumps. It's dirty work, but someone has to do it.

(continued on next page)

**Norman Says:**

EMAIL YOUR SUGGESTIONS TO
suggestions4norman@weaversway.coop

Read SUGGESTIONS
by Purchasing Manager
Norman Weiss every
month in the Shuttle.

International Co-op Principles

1 Voluntary and Open Membership

2 Democratic Member- Owner Control

3 Member-Owner Economic Participation

4 Autonomy and Independence

5 Education, Training and Information

6 Cooperation Among Cooperatives

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(Continued from previous page)

At the other end of the spectrum from farms is the retail food biz, in which food brands and distributors sometimes play games to gain market share. One of the games is display contests. This happens mostly in grocery and produce departments but can also be found in wellness and in deli.

Typically, a store enters by sending pictures of displays and data that shows resulting sales increases. Prizes to staff and stores that participate may include free products, trips, consumer goods and one of the apparent darlings of modern life, an Amazon gift card. Are display games part of a healthy food system? Are consumers being manipulated against their best interest by these kinds of programs? Should co-ops participate? (They do.) Should co-ops adopt the attitude of “The Wire’s” Omar Little “...all in the game yo, all in the game?”

Another recent fad in food trade press and brand marketing is people referring to new products and companies as “disruptors”, as if disruption is an inherently good attribute for a food product or company. A recent example I saw is by a plant-based seafood company announcing a partnership with some venture capital firms: “... [They] can only sharpen our ability to positively disrupt a nascent industry with our innovative portfolio of Good Catch products. As demand for plant-based seafood continues to rise, we look forward to further collaboration with LDC to create breakthrough opportunities.”

What I find disruptive is the oxymoronic use of language like “plant-based seafood” to refer to things like laboratory-concocted food made to resemble animal-based food. Why did “disruptive” become a fad word? Will it last? Will shoppers come in and ask “where can I find that plant-based seafood jawn?”

suggestions and responses:

- s:** “During much of COVID, I shopped at the Ambler store and loved their chicken salad with orange zest and cranberries. Now that I’m back at the Mt. Airy store I miss that in the Prepared Food area. Could that be carried at the Mt. Airy store, too?”
- r:** (Norman) Should be possible. Bonnie sent the recipe over to Mt. Airy; stay tuned.

“
**Does soil-less
growing have a
place in a healthy
food system?**
”


- s:** “Do you currently carry Barn Cat vegan cheese made by Conscious Cultures Creamery in Philadelphia? Or do you have plans to carry the brand in the future? They are mentioned in a feature article in today’s New York Times.
- r:** (Norman) We don’t carry it, although it is available through our supplier. We do have their Maverick cheese in our Chestnut Hill and Ambler stores. Chestnut Hill also has their fresh mozzarella and Ambler has their cream cheese. Barn Cat comes in two-pound and five-pound blocks; we can see about stocking it in our delis.
- s:** “The ad in the Shuttle says that the Mercantile wants ‘mid-century furniture’ but doesn’t specify which century. Please advise.”
- r:** (Norman) It can be any century, as long as it’s in the middle of that century. Early and late-century furniture was excluded because of extremism, which can be a plague on society. So as a safety measure, we avoid the extremes of the centuries.
- s:** “You used to carry Mull cheddar cheese and Tipper-

- ary cheddar cheese as well as others. Recently I have not found those, but the American- made Sartori — with an Italian name for an English cheese — is very good. The much-promoted Vermont Cabot is Ok, but disappointing. However, the Australian cheddar that I bought at the last visit is flavorless, bland and not at all crumbly —sort of like the orange-colored American cheese used to make macaroni and cheese for kids who have no idea what good cheese tastes like; awful. But the Mull was a great cheddar and I am sorry not to see it on your shelves. The Tipperary was also good, but not as outstanding as the Mull. P.S. I just love coming to the Chestnut Hill Store. Thanks.
- r:** (Ann Marie, CH) We haven’t discontinued any of these cheddars; we’ll make sure you can find them in the future. As far as Australian cheddar, it’s one of our most inexpensive cheddars and, as you mentioned, it’s suitable for children of less discerning palates. It is something we offer for our more price-conscious shoppers, and it does make great macaroni and cheese. Thanks for the compliment about Chestnut Hill!
- s:** “I’ve been hearing a lot about climate change in the news lately. I generally take a “what, me worry?” approach to things in the news that don’t immediately affect me, but since I’m planning to live at least another 30 or 40 years, I’m starting to wonder about what the food supply will look like then if we keep on the same path.”
- r:** (Norman) It’s hard to predict the future of food other than it’s likely the future will be different. Self-sufficiency should always be a consideration. What is already in your local environment that you could eat? How are your gardening skills? Do you know how to forage for edible mushrooms and other edible plants? Can you dig a well in your backyard? Can you kill a squirrel with a slingshot? Build a fire without matches? Are you willing to eat bugs? The Boy Scouts have a Wilderness Survival merit badge; it might be time to enroll.



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WEAVERS WAY ENDS

Weavers Way Cooperative Association exists to provide commercial and community services for the greater good of its members and community, to champion the cooperative model and to strengthen the local economy.

AS A RESULT OF ALL WE DO:

END 1 There will be a thriving and sustainable local economy providing meaningful jobs, goods and services to our members and the community.

END 2 Our community will have access to high quality, reasonably priced food, with an emphasis on local, minimally processed and ethically produced goods.

END 3 There will be active collaborative relationships with a wide variety of organizations in the community to achieve common goals.

END 4 Members and shoppers will be informed about cooperative principles and values; relevant environmental, food and consumer issues; and the Co-op’s long-term vision.

END 5 Members and shoppers will actively participate in the life of the Co-op and community.

END 6 The local environment will be protected and restored.

END 7 Weavers Way will have a welcoming culture that values diversity, inclusiveness, and respect.

The Backyard Beet

Three of the Many Reasons to Grow Food in a Raised Bed

by Chris Mattingly, for the Shuttle

LAST WEEK I HAD THE PLEASURE OF VISITING one of our new garden build sites and meeting our new client and soon-to-be vegetable gardener. Norman is in his later years and lives in a house he had shared with his late wife. After so many of his neighbors built gardens with Backyard Eats, he decided he would do that, too. He wanted a way to bring his community together and increase opportunities for social interaction and connection, so he footed the bill for his own “community garden,” which he now shares with his friends and family of choice. He and his friends will work the garden and will soon harvest their first yields from spring crops planted by our team.

Norman said he had an interesting conversation with one of his community garden partners, who is also his doctor. They discussed whether Norman would pay the bill for our maintenance services or if they would split it. He told me the discussion focused mainly on who would pay for all the weeding that would need to be done. I proudly replied, “I doubt we’ll find a single weed in your garden this year!” I would still recommend our outstanding maintenance service, but you won’t get any bills for time spent weeding.

Here’s to Eliminating Weeds!

One chief advantage of the raised bed that everyone can celebrate is the near elimination of weeds. A newly built raised bed contains soil that is free of weeds and weed seeds, so there’s nothing to pop up and compete with your intended crops. What’s more, encroachment of weeds from the surrounding area is impossible due to the clearly defined vertical divider between the garden bed and the outside world.

But why do I say “almost” no weeding? It’s still possible for weed seeds to blow in from the outside. That will surely happen over the course of the year, and become evident next spring. Depending on the height of the beds, some weeds will appear over time.

I’ve also seen an entire raised bed garden growing nothing but weeds in the beds and in the paths — tall grass, to be specific. When a garden goes untended, it only takes a few summer weeks for grasses and other weeds to grow tall and spread seed far and wide.

It’s been said that the best fertilizer is the gardener’s shadow. If you don’t have enough time to cast as much of your shadow on your garden as you should, here’s a tip that will help anywhere in your lawn or garden: Train your eye to identify weeds that are flowering, or going to seed. Flowering is often the first sign that seeds are coming. When you see signs, focus your little time and attention on pulling or cutting those weeds to prevent them from becoming an apocalyptic mess.



Getting Ahead of Soil Issues

A raised bed starts with new soil. Right off the bat, you’re able to avoid so many potential problems related to bad soil, including:

- Poor drainage
- Soil that is wet, clay-bound, rocky, nutrient-poor, high or low-pH, lead- or heavy metal-contaminated or too hard
- Soil with an array of endemic bacterial, viral and fungal diseases established over years of growing without rotating crops
- Soil with high numbers of insect eggs and pupa waiting for their season to destroy their favorite crops
- Soil with lots of weeds and weed seeds

These problems are “easily” avoided with a raised bed. I say “easily” because it’s not “easy” to fill a large box with new soil; I know this because I’m currently building and filling my own new beds at home. In trying to save a buck on soil, I’ve scraped good garden dirt from my perennial beds, which were stacked too high with topsoil and mulch in the first place. While I was able to fill one of ten beds, the labor to remove and haul soil from one place to another was much more than I bargained for.

Last spring, upon moving to a new area, I connected

with a horse owner who had a massive pile of horse dung mixed with sawdust. The woman who gifted me this fine poo was also an avid gardener. She gave me a quick tour of her muddy little in-ground garden, about 50 feet from the manure pile. It was the perfect material, which I happily hauled away in my minivan for free. I spread the composted manure across my new beds and smiled with satisfaction, but there was trouble brewing.

In June, when the soil was fully warm and my summer plants were in their first stages of establishment and growth, there emerged from my fresh new soil an army of cucumber-melon beetles. I killed hundreds of them on a weekly basis, tossed out sticky traps coated with their bodies, and made multiple daily visits to see and care for my sick and dying cucumber plants. The watermelon and cantaloupe died almost immediately, but I was eventually able to restore a handful of cucumbers to life. Even my pumpkins and squash were badly affected! It was a really hard spring to be a cucurbit.

I hope this story helps demonstrate the importance of good soil, and the value of a source for new, clean, reliable soil.

A Productive, Peaceful Growing Space

Raised beds make gardening more convenient and pleasurable. It’s not just about being able to reach the plants because of the additional height (though for some that is the only reason they need). The borders separate bed space from walking space, which means it’s easier to browse the garden without having to step through muddy areas. With clean walkways and a pleasantly built environment, the garden becomes an extension of the kitchen.

Raised beds make it easy to create a productive yet peaceful place. Suddenly, your garden pulls triple duty as an entertaining space on the weekends, a calming area for work breaks, and an exciting way to engage children in shared duties like preparing dinner.

In the end, gardening is about creating the life you want for yourself, your family, and community. Norman understood this intuitively, and soon will have the experience, like so many others, of the life-changing magic of homegrown food.

If you would like help achieving your garden goals, we have a team of brilliant gardeners and builders for that purpose. To learn more, visit our website and book a consult online.

Chris Mattingly is the founder of Backyard Eats, a full-service food gardening business with an array of offerings in the greater Philadelphia area. Email him at chris@backyard-eats.com or visit www.backyard-eats.com.

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Artists in Our Aisles

Nina Gordon & Sonia Gordon-Walinsky

Nina and Sonia are a mother-daughter artist team. Nina is a potter (you can find her mugs, bowls and more at Weavers Way Mercantile) and Sonia is a calligrapher and watercolor artist. They combine their art forms to create ceramic blessing and mindfulness bowls and sculptures.



Artists' Statement:

The inspiration for this bowl grew out of our desire to have a physical object to hold our prayers for long and fulfilling life.

In this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, we experience grounding and connection by using this bowl for a mindfulness practice at home. We set an intention for good health and well-being and pour water over our hands, filling the bowl with our prayers.

The words "Gam Ze Yaavor/This Too Shall Pass" are an eternally relevant message of the temporary nature of the human condition that is particularly potent during the pandemic. To all who are struggling or suffering, it is intended as a reassuring statement –This too shall pass.

Dimensions and medium:
Bowl: 7.5" diameter x 3" tall. Wheel thrown, hand carved stoneware
This Too Shall Pass: 10"x 8" ink and watercolor on paper

Website: PasukArt.etsy.com



We want to feature your art in the Shuttle!

Please submit the following to Richard Metz (thembones2@hotmail.com):

- (Two) 4"x 6" high-resolution images (300 dpi)
 - A short statement about the work • A short bio
 - A head shot • A link to a website if you have one
- Thanks. We're looking forward to your creations.

Making Strides Toward a Community Fridge in Ambler

STUDENTS AT GERMANTOWN Academy have been working on improving food security in their community and recently approached Weavers Way Ambler about a community fridge project.

Community fridges are a recent trend in food justice and are popping up across the country; they're open for anyone to donate food items and take them as needed. It's an equitable model that minimizes stigma and other barriers to entry.

The students are donating the fridge and its shelter, which will live outside the Ambler store. GA students will help stock and maintain the fridge in cooperation with the Co-op's Food Justice Committee and staff. We will also need donations and help from community volunteers. Stay tuned for opportunities to get involved!

—Whitney Lingle, Weavers Way Food Justice Committee



(Left) A GA student approves the design of the Ambler community fridge housing. (Above) A sampling of the 1,000 magnets made by kindergarten through 12th grade students that will decorate the fridge.

Weavers Words

MAGNOLIA TREE

Velvet stars
exploding
on calm black branches
only for a week

— Suzanne Kalbach

YES, OF COURSE, BUT...

For four long years each conversation circled back to him.
We drowned in incredulity, though we knew how to swim:
"I can't believe.." or "Did you hear?" or "Now what did he do?"
Oh, sure, it was exhausting, but exhilarating, too.
We wallowed in our righteousness. Admit it: it was fun.
It all changed in November when, at last, the good team won.
It's hard to go on Xanax when you're used to taking meth:
I'm nine-tenths quite elated, yet I'm one-tenth bored to death...

— Bill Dingfelder

SKELETAL CLOUDS

Skeletal clouds
A column of vertebrae, ribs attached
Scattered bones now morphing to languid hair
Today, a glistening sun the sky shouting blue
I speak to the mockingbird and he doesn't fly.

—Patty Brotman

We're running low on poems.
Please send more!

Feeling Inspired? Here Are Our Guidelines:

1. Poems must be written by you and can contain no more than eight lines.
2. The Shuttle editor has the final say as to whether a poem is suitable for publication.
3. The number of poems in an issue is determined by the amount of space available.
4. Members and nonmembers are welcome to submit.
5. Email your submissions to editor@weaversway.coop and put "Poetry submission for Shuttle" in the subject line.
6. Preference for publishing will be given to those whose work has yet to appear in the paper.

Thanks. We're looking forward to your creation!

Our Farm Market is Back (with Changes) for Pandemic Year Two

(Continued from Page 1)

Even so, the spirit of our HGC community was not diminished — like our farm’s weeds, we are resilient! Despite all of the hardship, we felt gratitude for the changing seasons, ate incredible seasonal and locally sourced food and celebrated bountiful harvests from both Co-op farms. Though our smiles were concealed behind masks, there was much laughter and joy. Many of us soaked up the moments we could temporarily escape quarantine, be social (albeit distant) with humans outside of our immediate households and be out in nature.

A Bumper Crop of Shopper Responses

As we trudged through last season, I received plenty of feedback about our COVID-related operational changes, but I wanted to cast a wider net for data that would aid in planning for 2021. This past February, a farm market survey published in the eNews and in the Farm Market eNewsletter yielded almost 200 responses. I thank those who took the time to answer survey questions honestly and thoroughly; it helped guide the decision-making process.

Respondents were asked about their experiences with shopping at the market in 2020 (either online or as a walk-up shopper), how their shopping habits changed during the pandemic and how they anticipated their shopping habits at the market would change in 2021. The data provided some interesting takeaways.

Most respondents felt that the newly developed processes for online ordering and walk-up shopping were easy to navigate and that the twice-weekly Farm Market eNewsletter was a valuable informational resource. Nearly all experienced a high level of safety at our site and felt that our COVID safety protocols were adequate.

When respondents were asked if they would feel safe shopping for themselves inside the market building with a strict customer cap, the majority agreed. The survey also included an open-ended section where respondents could recommend new local products. You'll find some of these items stocked on our shelves this season, including more vegan options.

Throughout the coming months, I'll be spotlighting a few of these products here in the Shuttle and in my

Farm Market eNewsletter. First to take the stage in the new “Plant-Based Picks” column is Keepwell Vinegar’s soy sauces and miso pastes made exclusively from locally grown ingredients, p. 3.

Finally, survey respondents were generous with their praise for our essential, hard work during a tumultuous time. They were thankful that we were able to be open when many businesses were closed. We loved reading the positive feedback, because last season was rough.

This season will undoubtedly have its own set of challenges. But by being able to look back on our successes, growing pains and missteps of 2020, we at least have an idea of what may be up the pike in Pandemic Year Two. I'm optimistic that in the coming months we'll experience flashes of normalcy at our site, but we are planning for another uncertain season in which we'll need to be flexible to adapt to COVID curveballs.

The farm market survey shed light on what worked in 2020 and how we could improve. We'll continue enforcing these safety practices and policies established last season to protect our shoppers and our staff: mandatory masks, social distancing and no entry to the premises if someone is displaying symptoms of COVID-19.

A hand-washing station, disposable gloves and hand sanitizer will always be available for public and staff use. High-touch surfaces will be sanitized frequently, doors and windows will stay open and additional fans will increase air circulation. To allow for social distancing inside the market building, we've expanded our sales area so that you can comfortably shop with over six feet of personal space.

One change to the 2021 farm market experience that isn't new, but is different from last year, is the return of in-person shopping. With this change we'll introduce low customer caps inside the market building to allow for social distancing. Gone are the online ordering option and limited hours for walk-up shoppers, so shop like it's 2019 (with some restrictions)!

While there was support for preserving online ordering, survey respondents clearly favored being able to shop for themselves inside the building. It was a difficult

decision to abandon our online ordering program, since there was a small and passionate portion of respondents who wanted it to continue. However, it took a herculean effort to develop and maintain this feature, and for many reasons, it proved unsustainable in the long term for our operation. For Co-op members who primarily order their groceries online, our three main locations continue to offer this option. Plus, they can deliver!

New for 2021: An Extra Market Day and Longer Hours

Perhaps the most exciting change this year is that we'll be expanding our hours. On Tuesdays and Fridays we will be open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We hope that with a 57% bump-up in hours, accessibility to our market will increase and we will be able to spread out crowds to prevent long lines for entry.

The first hour of the Tuesday market day will be reserved for higher-risk shoppers. During this hour the customer cap will be lowered to allow for maximum social distancing. Please be aware that our staff and volunteers will not be screening shoppers who identify as “higher risk”; we’ll rely on shoppers to use the honor system.

To stay in the know about our farm's weekly harvests, seasonal produce from other local farms, sales or other important announcements, subscribe to the Farm Market eNewsletter. I include pictures from our farm, local product and vendor highlights and recipe ideas for our homegrown produce. You'll find the link on the farm market page on the Co-op's website.

If you are a working member in need of hours, look for volunteer shifts posted in the Member Center this season. We'll rely on volunteers to help us enforce safety protocols and customer caps, and orient our shoppers to this season's operational changes. When you visit the market in upcoming weeks and months, don't forget your mask — and allow a few extra minutes to take a breath and enjoy our beautiful farm.

WEAVERS WAY

Virtual

WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

To register, visit www.weaversway.coop/events



Helping Your New Rescue Dog Adapt

Tuesday, May 4, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., with CJ Hazel

Mindfulness for Everyday Inner Peace

Wednesdays in May starting May 5, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., with Michael Carson

Get to Know Medicare

Thursday, May 6, 1 - 3 p.m., with Joan Adler

Learn How to Make Healthy Homemade Chocolates

Saturday, May 8, 11 a.m. - 12 p.m., with Nicole Schillinger

The Green Amendment: Protecting PA against Extraction and Pollution

May 13, 6:30 - 8 p.m., Plastic Reductions Task Force with Guest Speaker Maya Von Rossum

Mix Up Your Meal Prep: How to Make Indian Keema

Thursday, May 20, 7 - 8 p.m., with Seema Vaidyanathan

Protecting Yourself from Medicare Fraud and Abuse

Tuesday, May 18, 1 - 3 p.m., with Joan Adler

MORE INFO & TO RSVP: www.weaversway.coop/events or email outreach@weaversway.coop

STAFF CELEBRITY SPOTLIGHT

Kyier Cupid

Job: Bulk clerk, Weavers Way Ambler

Since when: February 2020

Age: 20

Where's he's from and lives now: Ambler, with his mom, Chen, and younger twin brothers Kier and Kevin.

Education: He graduated from Wissahickon High in 2019 and enrolled at Montgomery Community College, studying web design. He left after a semester because that major wasn't working out for him.

How he got to the Co-op: He worked on the front end and in produce at McCaffrey's Food Market in Blue Bell for two years, starting in high school. "I never knew a co-op was like a grocery store...I wanted to check this out and see how this was."

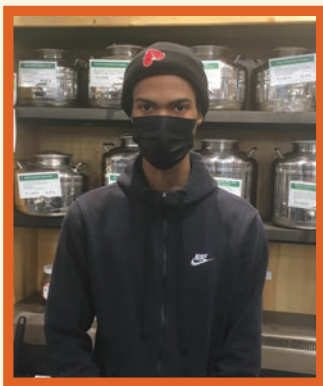
What it's been like working during the pandemic: "I don't even remember what it used to be like. There were a lot more shifts for the cooperators to work... Initially, not a lot of people liked the changes, because we had bulk closed off for a good portion of it."

Favorite Co-op product: Dried mango slices

Outside pursuits: He's been teaching himself graphic design in his spare time through Adobe Illustrator and watching YouTube videos.

Thoughts on the Co-op: "I enjoy working here. It's definitely different than what I had to do at McCaffrey's. Having the cooperators...helps out a lot, especially now. It definitely makes it easier to get the stuff packed and out here for other people."

—Karen Plourde



How the CONTAINER REFUND PROGRAM Works



1. Look for products with the CRP shelf label.
2. When you buy CRP products, the deposit for the container is automatically added at checkout.
3. The next time you shop, bring your washed container back to the Co-op and your deposit will be refunded. The Co-op will sanitize the container for safe reuse.
4. Help spread the word to family and friends about how to be a more sustainable grocery shopper!



\$2 DEPOSIT REFUNDED
UPON RETURN OF THE GLASS JAR.

> > > Please handle with care. < < <

What's What & Who's Who at Weavers Way

Weavers Way Board

The Weavers Way Board of Directors represents members' interests in the operation of the stores and the broader vision of the Co-op.

The Board's regular monthly meeting is held on the first Tuesday of the month. Meetings are taking place online during the COVID-19 crisis. Check the Co-op's Calendar of Events for the date of the next meeting.

For more information about Board governance and policies, visit www.weaversway.coop/board. Board members' email addresses are at www.weaversway.coop/board-directors, or contact the Board Administrator at boardadmin@weaversway.coop or 215-843-2350, ext. 118.

2020-2021 Weavers Way Board

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Vice President: Esther Wyss-Flamm

Treasurer: Michael Hogan

Secretary: Sarah Mitteldorf

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Weavers Way Mt. Airy

559 Carpenter Lane

8 a.m.-8 p.m.

215-843-2350

Weavers Way Across the Way

610 Carpenter Lane

8 a.m.-8 p.m.

215-843-2350, ext. 6

Weavers Way Chestnut Hill

8424 Germantown Ave.

8 a.m.-8 p.m.

215-866-9150

Weavers Way Ambler

217 E. Butler Ave.

8 a.m.-8 p.m.

215-302-5550

Weavers Way Next Door

8426 Germantown Ave.

9 a.m.-8 p.m.

215-866-9150, ext. 221/222

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DID YOU KNOW?

You can read the Shuttle online.

www.weaversway.coop/shuttle-online



VIRTUAL NEW MEMBER ORIENTATIONS

Friday, May 14, 1 - 2 p.m.

Tuesday, May 25, 7 - 8 p.m.

To register visit: www.weaversway.coop/events

Become a Member

Want to play a role in shaping your grocery store? Just complete a membership form in any store or online, make an equity investment, and you're good to go! We ask new members to attend an orientation meeting to learn about our cooperative model. You'll receive two hours of work credit for attending. We look forward to meeting you!

Co-op Grown Specialty

Tulip Bunches



\$14.99/bunch

**Grown in front of Weavers Way Ambler
Chemical Free**



Varieties include: Parrots, Doubles,
La Belle Epoque, Renown Unique
and a Philly Pastel Mix!