

Help Us Celebrate THE OPENING OF OUR GERMANTOWN STORE

Community and Leaders Officially Welcome New Store

by Karen Plourde, Editor, Weavers Way Shuttle

A CROWD OF ABOUT 125 GATHERED UNDER CLOUDY SKIES in the parking lot of 328 W. Chelton Ave. on May 17 to celebrate the culmination of three years of planning and preparation — the Co-op’s fourth store, Weavers Way Germantown, which opened two days before.

“This project simply could not have happened without the support of our elected officials at the local, state and federal level, without our financial partners and our community partners, and without the dedication of the Weavers Way staff,” said Jon Roesser, the Co-op’s general manager, who kicked off

(Continued on back page)

SATURDAY, JUNE 15

NOON - 4 PM

SUNDAY, JUNE 16

1 AM - 2 PM



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The Shuttle

JUNE 2024

Since 1973 | The Newspaper of Weavers Way Co-op

Vol. 52 | No. 5

Board Welcomes One New Face; Three Vets Will Return

by the Weavers Way Leadership Committee



Cheryl Croxton



Jason Henschen



Gail McFadden Roberts



Ellen Badger

THE 2024 WEAVERS WAY BOARD of Directors election concluded at the Spring General Membership Meeting on May 18, the day after the ribbon cutting for our Germantown store. It was an affirmation that the Board plays a critical role in decision making on policy, finance and the direction of our Co-op, which is why participating in the elections for the Board is so important.

Not all the concerns of the board are as impactful as those dealing with expansion. However, serving on our board requires taking on several responsibilities — along with the time, focus and commitment to fulfill them — generally for a term of three years. If re-elected, board members can serve for two consecutive three-year terms.

(Continued on Page 6)

Rainy Forecast Leads to Virtual GMM; Updates on Financials, Germantown

by Barbara Sheehan, for the Shuttle



Photo by Amber Johnston

The group of local officials, Co-op staffers and others present for the Weavers Way Germantown ribbon cutting on May 17. Store manager James Mitchell is in the back row at left; General Manager Jon Roesser is to his right. Board President Cheryl Croxton is on the far right, back row.

RAINY WEATHER FOILED PLANS FOR an outdoor spring General Membership Meeting at Awbury Arboretum. So on May 18, instead of socializing at a happy hour with bites and beverages, approximately 80 members logged in via Zoom to hear the latest news about the Co-op from the Board of Directors and General Manager Jon Roesser.

Recently re-elected Board Secretary Jason Henschen opened the meeting by praising the opening of Weavers Way Germantown on May 15. He encouraged everyone to “come out and visit your brand new store.”

The bulk of the meeting was dedicated to General Manager Jon Roesser’s

mid-fiscal year review, which covered the unaudited numbers from July to Dec. 2023. He shared seven slides, in a format similar to the 2023 Annual Report for Members that was included in the May issue of the Shuttle.

Financials & Local Industry News

Roesser reported the net Co-op sales are strong at \$18,668,097, with gross profit (the amount left over after purchases from vendors) of about 35.52%. Operating expenses were high during this period due to the expansion, but net income after taxes was \$537,424.

Along with the numbers, Roesser shared news from the grocery industry,

(Continued on Page 6)

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Editor's Note



by Karen Plourde, Editor, Weavers Way Shuttle

I'VE BEEN HOBBLING BY A KNEE INJURY since Memorial Day and don't go anywhere these days without crutches or my knee walker. It's tough to have your wings clipped at this time of year, when you want to be out and about in the warmth and sunshine, and I want to dig and plant. [Sigh] This, too, shall pass...

One of the places I can get to and move around pretty easily (more so than in my house, TBH) is our new store in Germantown. The same would hold true in Ambler, but Germantown's way closer. Having done the Mt. Airy shopper dance often on two healthy legs (as many of you no doubt have done), it's a relief to be able to have a nearby spot where I can replenish my Co-op faves without inconveniencing others or having to do some pretty tricky steering.

If you missed the ribbon cutting event at Gtown on May 17, you can read all about it on our front page. And if you didn't Zoom into our virtual General Membership Meeting the next day, you can catch all the news from that on the same page.

On page 12, Eleonora Bartoli's article on Northwest Mutual Aid Collective offers a view into this Germantown organization that formed during the pandemic. NWMAC continues to hustle to provide their clients with food, much of it fresh. In addition, they share food with a network of local organizations and community fridges, which maximizes their impact.

While we're talking food, on p. 14, Peter Johnson dives into "organic" and what that means when it comes to what you buy in the store. Since buying organic is important to many of our shoppers, it might be helpful to familiarize yourself with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's standards.

We're at that time of the year when we at the Shuttle slow down and retool. So savor the articles; there won't be another set for a while.

Here's to a safe, fun summer. Catch you in the pages in August.

Check It Out!

by Karen Plourde, Editor, Weavers Way Shuttle

With all the excitement leading up to the opening of our Germantown store, folks may not be aware that our Henry Got Crops Farm Market in Roxborough is now open four days a week: Tuesdays and Fridays from noon to 7 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. So if you're looking to pick up fresh, local fruit and veggies and small-batch fare but don't have time during the week or on Saturday, we got you.

Whichever day you decide to come by the farm market, here are some new items to check out:

Saint Bernard Seedlings — Planting will take a pause after this month, so if you have some spots in your yard to fill, now's the time. This West Philly-based grower is partly owned by Nicole Karsch, a former member of our Farm Team. They offer perennials, annuals and herbs from the greenhouse in their side yard. Two-inch pots are \$3.25 each and four-inch pots are \$4.50.



Irievada Spices — The market currently carries three blends from this West Chester-based purveyor: Jovial Jerk, West Indies Curry and Karma Shawarma. Their facility is dedicated gluten and allergy-free, and their products are organic, Fair Trade and kosher.



Salty Acres — Plain, solar evaporated Atlantic sea salt from Cape May, NJ packaged in a glass bottle. Refill pouches are also available.



Oasis Creamery — Amish-owned and operated creamery based in Ronks, Lancaster County. Their products come from small, grass-fed herds made up mainly of heritage-bred dairy cows. The market currently carries their butter, cottage cheese, creamline milk and raw milk. In addition, shoppers can return their empty glass bottles to the market and get their deposit returned.



I did my first close tour of the

Germantown store earlier this month, looking for items we carry in the new store that we don't in our other stores. I barely scratched the surface, but here are a few items worth mentioning (with more to come):

- Produce — **Bolthouse** juices (15.2 oz. and 32 oz.); **Natalie's** margarita mix
- Bakery — Mt. Airy's own **High Point Café** scones (love the ginger ones), gluten-free scones, biscuits, coffee cake (love this, too) and savory brioche



- Bulk — **Win Win** packaged coffee, which is based in Spring Garden and works directly with African coffee growers. On the bulk side, Gtown is now the second Co-op source for bulk beans from Bridesburg's **Rival Bros.** and Kensington's **Caphe** Roasters (Mt. Airy is the other one).



- Meat — **Al-Maedah** zabiha halal chicken (whole chickens, bone-in and boneless thighs, boneless breasts, etc.) from South Fallsburg, NY; Hereford halal beef.



- Deli — **Creminelli** artisan salami snack packs with cheese or cheese and crackers. All their products are made from humanely raised pork raised in open living conditions. They contain no added nitrates and no antibiotics ever.



- Grocery — **Sfoglino** organic, slow-dried pasta from West Coxsackie, NY. Their products are made from grains grown on North American farms and are always milled in the United States.



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.

6 YEARS

SLICE IT

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The Beets Go On

by Kieran McCourt, Weavers Way Ambler



"Beetroots" are often considered a fall vegetable but can be sown during a cool spring and harvested in the late spring and early summer, before temperatures rise.

They're versatile, earthy and nearly candy-sweet, and can be enjoyed crunchy and raw or cooked until tender. From their leafy tops down to the taproot, the whole plant is edible and there are endless ways to make them delectable.

Raw beets can be shaved on a mandolin into thin disks, grated or even spiralized. They can be added to a salad; the earthy sweetness pairs well with arugula, bitter frisse, or even mixed into a slaw.

They can be roasted, steamed, pressure cooked or grilled. Cooking times can vary on their size, especially if you're keeping them whole; halve or quarter larger ones for faster results. If you're grilling them, slice them first

and start them in indirect heat, since they will take more time than most other vegetables.

Cooked beets are great to prepare ahead of time and freeze. They can be blitzed into a chilled or warm soup, tossed into a salad, or thawed and warmed for a side. Their natural sweetness pairs well with lemon juice and vinegars, ginger, mustard, horseradish or fresh herbs.

While the difference in flavor between red and golden beets is minimal, the difference in staining is not. Red beets can and will dye skin, cutting boards, clothing and even the rest of your dish a lovely purplish red. While that's easy to remove, golden beets don't stain at all.

the word on wellness

Unplug to Recharge: The Importance of Digital Detox

by Karen Palmer, Weavers Way Ambler Wellness Buyer

I AM IN THE PROCESS OF RECOVERING FROM MY iPhone.

A couple of months ago, I acknowledged that I had signs of device addiction and began the 12-step process toward recovery. It was much harder than I imagined, so I wondered if this was something others might need help with.

In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to become ensnared in the endless cycle of digital devices and screen time. From smartphones to laptops, we are constantly connected, often at the expense of our mental and physical well-being. That's where a digital detox comes in – it encourages us to unplug from technology and reconnect with the world around us. Pairing it with grounding techniques can have profound benefits for our overall health and vitality.

Why Digital Detox?

The average person spends hours each day staring at screens — whether for work, entertainment or socializing. This constant exposure can lead to digital eye strain, disrupted sleep patterns, increased stress levels and a sense of being constantly "switched on."

By stepping away from our devices, we allow ourselves the opportunity to engage in real-world experiences, connect with nature and foster deeper connections with others. Whether it's taking a walk in the neighborhood or local park, reading a book, or having face-to-face conversations, a digital detox can help us re-center and recharge mentally and emotionally.

I realized that I needed a detox when I kept losing my iPhone. I would lose it, panic, find it and lose it again shortly thereafter. This endless circle of frustration caused me to yell "Get yourself together!" to myself.

Except I didn't know what "together" looked like. I could only think about the little black box and what I was missing. I was embarrassed. How did I get here and how do I get out?

So I did what most people in my situation would do: I googled "How can I stop relying on my device?" using my device! That's when I learned about Internet Addicts Anonymous, who recommended a digital detox. In addition to their tips and tricks, they recognize the power of grounding to help get centered.

The Power of Grounding

Grounding, also known as earthing, is the practice of connecting the human body to the Earth's natural electrical charge. It is a self-soothing technique that can help you reconnect with the Earth and reorient yourself to the present when you need it.

Here are some ideas for getting grounded:

- Routinely walk barefoot outdoors on dirt, grass or sand.
- Stand in humid dirt or sand with bare feet.
- Press your bare hands into the grass or earth.
- Sit on a chair, bench or wheelchair with your bare feet set flat on the earth.

I ground in the morning with my coffee and watch the day take shape before everyone is awake. I imagine the pulse of the Earth powering up my body for the day, providing me with a shield of protection as I embark on whatever adventure life has in store for me. In the evening, I ground with my chamomile tea and practice gratitude for the day and all the blessings that came my way.

Here are some tips for a thorough digital cleanse:

Reduce/remove harmful apps from your device.

If an app's content causes you to feel outrage or discomfort, it may be harmful and result in increased cortisol levels. There are serious negative health effects to constantly pushing out cortisol, including increased blood sugar levels, a suppressed immune system, weight gain, digestive problems and heart disease.

Schedule regular digital detox days in which you limit your screen time and engage in offline activities.

I am device-free on Sundays. It wasn't easy at first, but now I really look forward to it. I had to re-learn how to do the things that my phone does, like play music. I've learned that I would rather play records on the turntable instead of streaming Spotify through my device. It's a lovely life improvement that I previously didn't consider, because my device did the work.

Spend time outdoors and connect with nature without your device (books, however, are encouraged).

Take a walk in the park, practice yoga in the grass or sit under a tree. Take a book or magazine and relish the opportunity to just "be" outside of your device. Examining the world around you can provide enough of a mental break to feel a thorough sense of calm.

It also helps to create a designated tech-free zone in your home where you can unwind and relax without the distractions of screens. My primary bedroom is my tech-free sanctuary. My salt lamp constantly purifies the air, so any time that I need to feel centered, this is my go-to room.

Device addiction, like all addictions, can be hard to beat on your own. Internet and technology addiction can affect adults and children. Like other addictions, it does not discriminate based on age, educational level, race or ethnicity. By damaging our potential, sense of self and quality of life, addiction can impair our lives. By contributing to depression, suicidal tendencies and other mental health issues, addiction can be life-threatening. Reaching out to family or a close friend for help may offer the support that you need.

By embracing the principles of digital detox and grounding, we can cultivate a healthier relationship with technology, reconnect with ourselves and the world around us, and foster a greater sense of well-being.

Let's unplug, step outside and feel the rejuvenating power of nature. After all, it's summer and time to chase those fireflies!

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Some Co-op Members Have Pledged to ‘Never Vanguard’

by Eileen Flanagan, for the Shuttle

FOR MORE THAN TWO AND A HALF years, several Weavers Way members have been part of a global campaign to pressure Vanguard to take climate change seriously. Based in Malvern, Vanguard is the world’s #1 investor in fossil fuels, deforestation and other industries that drive climate chaos. Its bonds help to finance new fossil fuel expansion projects, and the asset manager has failed to use its shareholder power to nudge its portfolio companies in a more sustainable direction. Last year, it only voted for 2% of shareholder resolutions on environmental and social issues — much lower than its closest competitors.

To get Vanguard to change, we’ve written letters, made phone calls, delivered petitions and asked company leadership to meet with us to hear our concerns. Some have even gotten arrested at their headquarters and prayed outside the home of their CEO, Mortimer “Tim” Buckley.

Last summer, in the face of their inaction, we decided it was time for those with Vanguard accounts or funds to move our money. Rather than doing this quietly as individual acts of conscience, we chose to do so collectively, making sure they knew that we are the tip of the iceberg when it comes to customers concerned about climate change.

We announced the Never Vanguard pledge last June in Chester, where many polluting industries are part of their portfolio, including companies that are hoping to build a new liquid natural gas plant



Photo by Laran Kaplan.

Members of the Elders Action Network protest outside the Malvern headquarters of Vanguard. Rabbi Arthur Waskow of the Shalom Center, a Weavers Way member, is seated in the middle of the group.

there. Chester residents, local college students, and members of Earth Quaker Action Team wrote postcards to Vanguard, which EQAT delivered a few weeks later when we announced that we had moved \$17 million in our first round of money moving.

Since then, EQAT has offered ongoing webinars and resources for those wondering where to move their money on its website, eqat.org. Elders Action Network, led locally by Co-op member Lynne Iser, held a joint action with EQAT last September for Grandparents Day.

We have now moved \$34 million and

counting. We know it is not a lot compared to the trillions managed by Vanguard, but we are encouraged by the memory of the United Farm Workers grape boycott, which started in California but gradually spread nationally.

We hope more Co-op members will sign the Never Vanguard pledge, which includes several ways for those who are not customers to stand against corporate greed. For example, area college students have been pledging not to work for Vanguard as long as it remains a laggard on climate. For a company that once prided itself on innovation, losing a new genera-

tion of potential employees and investors should help to motivate change, along with the fact that climate change poses serious economic risks.

If you have already moved money out of Vanguard or its funds due to environmental or climate concerns, please let us know through the pledge so we can count you as part of our collective total. If you want to join us in person, we will be staging a major action on the afternoon of Wednesday, July 3. Visit eqat.org for more information on both.

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

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

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Germantown Art Project Focuses on Gun Violence

CULTURAL HISTORIAN AND ARTIST CASSANDRA Gunkel is engaging with children of all ages in Northwest Philly through October via her “Remember the Children” project on gun violence at the Concord Schoolhouse and Upper Burying Ground in Germantown.

Gunkel, Concord Schoolhouse artist-in-residence, will lead participants in such art processes as screen- and book-making and creating signs, posters and small books. The first event took place on May 11; subsequent workshops will take place from noon to 3 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month through October. Gunkel will also conduct workshops on Juneteenth (celebrated on June 15); Fourth of July; a Back-to-School event on Aug. 24, and Oct. 5 in conjunction with the annual commemoration of the Battle of Germantown.

All ages are welcome for all workshops. Children under age 7 should be accompanied by an adult or older sibling. Registration is not necessary. All supplies will be provided.



Photo courtesy of Cassandra Gunkel

Cassandra Gunkel with her print “Ode to Trayvon IV” which was exhibited in 2019 at the International Print Center in New York City.

Projects will include:

- Anti-gun posters that children and families can distribute in their homes and schools.
- Textile memorials to children in Philadelphia who were killed by guns. These will be part of an art installation at the Upper Burying Ground. The children will also make paper memorials to take home.
- Handmade books complementing the memorials and posters, which will accompany events, beginning with the Back-to-School event.

The Concord Schoolhouse and Upper Burying Ground of Germantown are located at 6309 Germantown Ave. For more information on the Remember the Children Project, go to www.concordschoolhouse.org.

Masquerades and Merriment in the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN FESTIVALS HAVE BEEN TRACED TO THE 17TH century and emanated from the religious traditions of their European colonizers. During festivals, participants wore masquerades, which enabled merriment to transpire without the stigma of comingling out of a person’s social group.

Festival reveries are energetic and animated. They feature music, parading, eating, drinking, dancing etc. Carousing is heightened on “Fat Tuesday” (French for Mardi Gras) in preparation for self-reflecting and fasting during Lent.

Canboulay, one of the earliest Afro-Caribbean festivals, began as a celebration parallel to the Trinidad and Tobago Carnival, which enslaved Africans were barred from. It began in

the late 18th century as a protest: Slaves intentionally set fire to the colonizers’ profitable sugar cane crop. Calypso music originated from this celebration.

Here are a few other examples of Caribbean festivals:

- Crop Over (Barbados), 1780s
- Carnaval de Santiago de Cuba — combines African, Catholic and indigenous traditions, 17th century
- Reggae Sumfest (Jamaica) — world’s largest reggae festival, 1993



As part of the Co-op’s efforts to reduce our use of single-use plastic, customers can purchase certain items in reusable containers.

There are a variety of containers available, with different deposits required.

Total Containers by Department (June 1, 2024)

Store	Prep	Deli	Bulk	Produce	Beauty & Topical Remedies	Grand Total
Ambler	4,791	1,023	1,712	2,800	0	10,326
Chestnut Hill	5,493	1,488	1,471	0	11	8,463
Mt. Airy	2,783	1,608	2,693	0	0	7,084
Totals Sold	8,276	3,096	4,164	0	11	25,873
Deposits Refunded						16,509
Return Rate						64%

How the Container Refund Program Works

1. Look for labels with a CRP logo on our shelves.
2. Buy the item – the cost of the container is tied to the product.
3. Once it’s empty, wash the returnable item and take it to the Co-op; you’ll get the cost of the container refunded. All CRP lids and containers must be returned food residue-free, fully prewashed.
4. Return containers in a timely fashion to prevent the Co-op from needing to keep buying more stock, and please do not write on or sticker CRP items.
5. Spread the word to family and friends, so they can help save the Earth, too!



A program run by Echo Systems with support from the Weavers Way Plastic Reduction Task Force



DISCOVER NORTHWEST PHILLY



WHY I LOVE This Area in June!



I’ve always adored Northwest Philly—it’s where I grew up and where I still love to spend my time. June is a special month here, filled with exciting activities and vibrant community events. Here are just a few local events happening this June:

- Mt. Airy Supper Sessions | June 12th, 5:00pm
- Pastorius Park Summer Concerts | June 19th, 7:30pm
- Friends of Wissahickon Thursday Stewardship | June 27th, 9:00am

I can help you find the perfect place to start your next chapter. Reach out today to start your journey!



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Rainy Forecast Leads to Virtual GMM

(Continued from Page 1)

including the purchase of Philly-born coffee roaster La Colombe by Chobani for \$900 million last December. Weavers Way was the first wholesale customer of La Colombe.

Discount grocery Aldi plans to open 800 stores nationwide in the next five years. Meanwhile, Dollar Tree is closing six stores in the Philadelphia area (mostly in low-income areas), stemming from its merger with Family Dollar.

Whole Foods is phasing out bulk departments due to problems with theft of product, coupled with high labor costs. In contrast, the Co-op has doubled down on its bulk sections, including installing a large section in the Germantown store. "It's a major differentiator for us," Roesser said.

In local supermarket news, the Acme in Andorra closed in March with no verified information about what will take its place; the buzz on social media is that it will be converted into a Giant. Meanwhile, the Federal Trade Commission is challenging the merger of Kroger and Albertsons, which owns Acme, among other grocery chains.

Roesser reported "an incredible spike in food costs during 2022," but added that they have declined significantly over the past year. However, a dramatic decline in prices is not expected anytime soon.

The average growth in sales over the three stores is 5.54%, with the Ambler store topping the pool at 9.5%, compared to the industry average of 4 or 4.5%. The dramatic increase in membership in the last year is partly responsible for the higher sales numbers at the Co-op. As of the meeting date, the Co-op has 12,181 members.

The Co-op's current cash reserve is \$4,129, 233, the highest since 2020.

Entry-level wages are currently \$16/hour; in 2018 the entry level rate was \$10.50/hour.

Germantown is Open!

The official ribbon cutting for Weavers Way Germantown took place on May 17; a grand opening celebration is planned for June 16-17. Final project costs are pending, but Roesser estimated a cost of \$8 million to cover the building purchase, equipment, renovation, legal and accounting costs, etc. He will present a full analysis at the fall membership meeting.

The parking lot at the new store is small, but there is free parking on nearby side streets and paid parking on Chelton Avenue east of Morris Street. Solar panels, funded by members of the Clean Energy Co-op, may be installed on the roof by the end of the year.

Members had questions about the Co-op's assets (mostly real estate, equipment and inventory); wax coatings on produce (to be explored); the price of La Colombe products in the wake of its being purchased (there will be no decrease as far as we know); when fair trade products are made available in Co-op stores (we choose fair trade products when there is an option); the benefit of Weavers Way over discount grocers (serving the needs of members vs. increasing profits to shareholders); and the return of weekly \$4 dinners at the Ambler store (Roesser hopes to have them back by the end of the year).

And the Winners Are...

Hillary Baum, chair of the Leadership Committee, announced the results of this year's Board election. The returning members are Gail McFadden Roberts, Jason Henschen and Cheryl Croxton; Ellen Badger was elected to her first term on the board.

Baum congratulated those who were elected and thanked all the candidates. The meeting was adjourned at 6 p.m.

Board Welcomes One New Face; Three Vets Will Return

(Continued from Page 1)

We had seven candidates this year for four seats on our 11-person board. Thank you to all the candidates, to the three incumbents who were re-elected (Cheryl Croxton, Jason Henschen and Gail McFadden-Roberts), and to our newest member, Ellen Badger.

Ellen formerly served as board chair of the Chestnut Hill Local and has many years of experience as a management consultant, specializing in serving mission-driven organizations.

At the June 4 Board of Directors meeting, we welcomed the new and returning 2024 directors and said goodbye to Esther Wyss-Flamm, our former chair. Esther provided leadership and guidance into our expansion and more, and she will be missed.

Many thanks to Weavers Way staff in Communications and IT, to the Leadership Committee, and especially to the seven candidates for this election. This

year, the mandated 10% of member households that needed to vote to validate the election was comfortably surpassed; we finished with over 12 % of members voting, which represented 1,490 households. When the election closed on May 18, our membership was at 12,182.

All members are invited to attend the monthly board meetings as guests. Please contact Margret Funderburg, board administrator, (boardadmin@weaversway.coop), in advance.

If you are interested in joining the Leadership Committee, a committee of Co-op members and board representatives that assists management in the recruitment and preparation of candidates for election to the Board, helps with outreach, the promotion of elections and more, please contact leadershipcommittee@weaversway.coop.

Please Note:

Effective immediately, Wholesome Dairy is no longer taking back their glass yogurt jars for recycling.

Please stop bringing their jars back to our store.

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The Co-op's Product Philosophy? It's Complicated, and Here's Why

by Jon Roesser, Weavers Way General Manager

WE GET ASKED ABOUT THE CO-OP'S PRODUCT philosophy a lot, and it's a hard question to answer. But it's that way for good reason. Our cooperative model compels us to think longer and harder about these things than anyone else who sells groceries.

Like the British constitution, the Co-op's product philosophy is uncoded. While over the years the issue has been discussed and debated, there is no single document, no time-honored parchment that bears the signatures of the Co-op's founders, that serves as our guide.

Instead, we look to a variety of resources: the Co-op's Ends, our mission statement, the International Co-operative Principles, and decades of precedent, custom and member patronage.

From all this, management has developed guidelines that assist buyers as they make product decisions. Broadly speaking, this means that the Co-op has predominantly been a "natural food" store but has also carried a variety of conventional product to meet the needs of our members.

The lack of a defined, ironclad product philosophy opens the door to contradiction, and occasional accusations of hypocrisy. How can the same Co-op sell only Fairtrade, organic bananas while also selling conventional avocados? How can we sell only chocolate that's Fair Trade certified, but also Pepperidge Farm cookies? We carry grass-fed, humanely raised beef from Stryker's, but also Taylor pork roll?

All of these are products we have sold for decades.

As time has passed, priorities have evolved, and the Co-op has attempted to adapt to them. In recent years, for example, high inflation has put a greater emphasis on affordability, elevating the importance of the conventional products we sell. At the same time, many of the natural and organic products traditionally exclusive to places like the Co-op are now much more widely available.

The most recent source for informing product decisions comes from the mountain of data gathered in the development of our most recent Strategic Plan, rolled out late last year. As we interviewed key stakeholder groups, two often contradictory priorities were frequently mentioned: an interest in supporting local, and concerns about affordability.



As time has passed, priorities have evolved.



By linking local growers and food producers with our values-driven customers, the Co-op's commitment to local food is increasingly important. No one does it better, and for many, the critical role Weavers Way plays in the local food system is a source of pride that should be expanded.

Nevertheless, price matters, and food that is local, or organic, or Fair Trade certified all comes at a higher price point. To avoid becoming an exclusive club for the affluent, the Co-op must, as it has always done, continue to offer good quality conventional products. It is why you see pints of conventional blueberries next to pints of organic blueberries, why Thomas' English Muffins share shelf space with Merzbacher's Philly Muffins, and why Dietz & Watson bacon sits side by side with bacon from Garrett Valley. Our recent expansion to larger stores (Ambler and Germantown) gives us additional flexibility in this regard.

So, while there remains no single Product Philosophy document, buyers have been given the following guidance, as outlined in the new Strategic Plan:

- **Ingredient Integrity** The Co-op should prioritize products that are all-natural, organic, non-GMO, contain no artificial colors and flavors, etc.

- **Environmental Prioritize** products that are made with organic ingredients and use a minimum amount of unsustainable packaging.
- **Local Prioritize** products that are grown or produced in the Philadelphia Food Shed (150 miles or less from City Hall).
- **Diversity** Prioritize products grown or produced by farms and businesses owned by historically marginalized groups (women-owned, Black-owned, LGBTQIA+-owned, etc.).
- **Price Prioritize** products that are more affordable, including quality conventional products.
- **Animal Welfare** Prioritize products that certify animals are treated humanely (meat, seafood, dairy, etc.).
- **Treatment of Workers** Prioritize products that are Fair Trade certified or otherwise come from businesses that are open and transparent about their labor practices.

This is all done in the spirit of cooperative ownership. A privately-owned grocer, like Mom's Organics or Kimberton Whole Foods, can establish a product philosophy based on the owner's personal values. A publicly traded grocer, like Whole Foods or Giant, establishes a product philosophy aligned with its brand to maximize shareholder value.

But as a consumer cooperative, our product philosophy must be about meeting the needs of our members. A four-store grocery cooperative, with an increasingly diverse ownership of over 12,500 member households, serving a marketplace that spans from North Philadelphia to Lower Gwynedd, is necessarily pluralistic in nature, and no two of us could possibly agree on every single product we carry (or don't carry).

This is cooperative economics. It requires each of us to accept and embrace the idea that to own a store with our neighbors requires us to sell products that might not necessarily align with our personal values.

It is a complicated, imperfect balancing act, and it's better than anything else out there.

See you around the Co-op.



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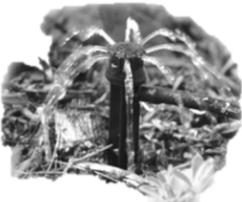
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Watsu Therapy Offers Deep Relaxation, Other Benefits

by Julie Angel, for the Shuttle

EVERY SUMMER, I OFFER WATSU AQUATIC THERAPY in my warm backyard pool. Its name is derived from water shiatsu, and it originated in the hot spring pools in California, where the modality that merges bodywork with gentle, passive movements in water was birthed.

I first became aware of Watsu in the mid '90s while working as a certified massage therapist. As a seasoned bodyworker and somatic process healer, I recognized the potential that sessions in warm water offer: deep relaxation; stretches that go beyond those on land; an expanded sense of self as we lose our skin boundary in body-temperature water; a deep resetting of the nervous system and altered states of consciousness similar to deep meditation.

The act of allowing yourself to be floated by another requires trust and letting go —experiences we don't often have in everyday life. And for those healing after trauma or abuse, restoring trust on a somatic level is essential.

A Watsu session begins with an intake discussion to share applicable health history and create a connection of safety and compassion. The client is then welcomed into my warm, above-ground therapy pool, which has a five-step ladder. It is maintained at 95°F by a combination of solar and electric heating.

Since our bodies lose heat in water that's below body temperature, regular swimming pools are never warm enough, so Watsu practitioners create dedicated pools for their sessions. This is my third pool; I had an indoor swim spa for 20 years before moisture issues forced me to close that one.

The client, or receiver, is given optional earplugs and floatation cuffs to assist their legs. They are then gently lifted into my arms to begin a session that lasts approximately 75 minutes. I sync my breathing with theirs and focus on staying grounded as I support the client floating at the surface. I start the movements slowly — swaying their legs, stretching and folding the body, massaging



Photo courtesy of Julie Angel.

Julie Angel in her pool with a Watsu client.

along the spine — while paying attention to facial expressions, areas of resistance and breathing patterns. As a dancer, I appreciate using the resistance and buoyancy of the water in this unfolding water ballet of sorts.

Watsu offers a new set of sensations that can feel deeply nurturing as well as vulnerable. It sometimes triggers emotions, as clients allow the sense of freedom and support. People often report a sense of flying or being danced, feeling playful and weightless as they are floated.

Some clients tap into prenatal memories and others report profound spiritual insights.

For many, the relief from chronic pain or stress is also profound. I have worked with clients who experienced near-drowning episodes as children, and created a new and safe relationship with water through a single

session. I've also had the bittersweet experience of working with hospice patients in the water, offering them a sense of relief and release as they prepare to exit their bodies.

People sometimes contact me after having Watsu sessions at spas or resorts, mostly in the western United States or in Europe; they're amazed to find a local practitioner! I'm one of only a handful on the East Coast. My pool in Wyndmoor is open mid-May to mid-September, and is surrounded by my pollinator-friendly gardens.

Consider treating yourself to a new experience this summer! For more info, see my website: www.Watsu-Woman.com. My email is watsuwoman1@gmail.com

For general info on Watsu go to www.Watsu.com
Julie Angel is a longtime Weavers Way member and has been a certified Watsu practitioner since 1998.



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Watsu, Bodywork, and Somatic Healing

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Zone Stewards Take Caring for the Wissahickon Up a Notch

by Ruffian Tittmann, Executive Director, Friends of the Wissahickon

THE WISSAHICKON IS HOME TO OVER 2,000 ACRES of wetlands, forests and meadows, 50 access points, 50-plus miles of trails, 24 miles of waterways and a vast landscape to conserve. We're proud to have stewarded this fantastic urban park for a century, but we certainly have not done it alone.

Friends of the Wissahickon relies on our broad base of volunteers to tackle the essential work required to conserve and beautify a park for our over two million annual visitors and the native habitat. Over 1,500 volunteers help us annually with everything from litter cleanups to trail re-routes.

Our trail ambassadors help us improve the visitor experience by working as our park docents. Crew leaders expand our capacity for stewardship by assisting at volunteer days, and a specially trained group of volunteers even help us remove downed trees from the trails!

Two years ago, the scope of our volunteer work grew even wider. In 2022, after we recruited a particularly large group of crew leaders, Shawn Green, our director of field stewardship, was able to fulfill his dream of creating the Zone Stewards program.

"We welcomed 20 Crew Leaders in 2022, the largest class we'd had up until that point," Shawn recalled. "They are trained in everything that makes up the park: fauna, geology, the watershed and how to protect it. With such a large group of trusted volunteers, it felt like the perfect time to split up the park and assign them a section to look after."

A Day in the Life Of a Zone Steward

Stewards work independently to organize their own volunteer days with fellow FOW volunteers, neighbors and friends. Their slate of regular tasks includes cutting back sightlines to mitigate user conflict, pulling out invasives, and reporting larger issues like erosion to our field team in their designated 100-acre section of the park. The program has proven to be an effective way to reach and care for some lesser-traveled sections of the park.

Andrew Cronin, zone steward for sections 13, 14 and 15, said that once a steward knows the details of what needs to be done to care for the park, all they can see are problems.

"The volume can seem overwhelming," he said. "But the Zone Stewards Program helps to re-frame the work into segments, creating stewardship areas that [contribute] to the park's environment through regular attention from small groups of volunteers."

In the program's first year, the zone stewards focused their efforts on the park's eastern side; the next year, they switched to the western side. This year, each zone steward



Photos courtesy of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation

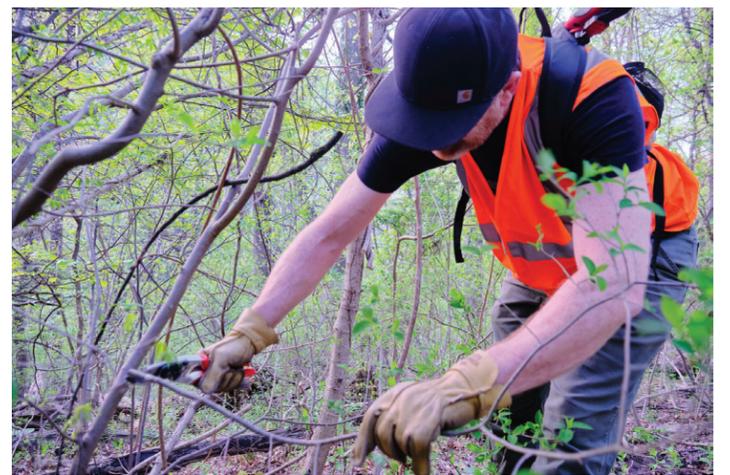
ard has a primary zone that they survey first. If there's no work to be done, they cross the creek to their secondary zone to do the same work.

We hope that one day soon, we'll have enough zone stewards for each park section of the Wissahickon, so each zone has consistent and comprehensive care. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers and their constructive feedback, we're adjusting to the ever-changing needs of the park more effectively than ever before. In 2023, our zone stewards improved 32-plus miles of trail!

The program, which is now required for first-year crew leaders, furthers their development as trained volunteers, serves as an introduction to land conservation, and teaches crew leaders how to independently identify and resolve problems in the park.

"The Wissahickon is home to some of the finest urban trails in America, but they don't stay in pristine shape on their own," said Aaron Aleiner, zone steward for sections 14, 15 and 16. "It takes a lot of hard work from some very dedicated and skilled people."

We're no strangers to hard work; we've been in the park conservation game for 100 years now! We're excited that more people are becoming connected to the Wissahickon, but as the number of visitors increases, our capacity for care must grow so we can ensure the park is a place we all want to visit.



"It's rewarding to see the impact this approach can have," Aaron continued. "Trails that were trash-strewn, overgrown or washed out when we started have been transformed, becoming more welcoming and ecologically healthy every time we go out. Together, we can restore and preserve the grandeur of the Wissahickon for generations to come."

Want to make a meaningful impact? Get involved with our volunteer corps. Find out how at fow.org/volunteering. For more information about our 100th anniversary, visit our website: fow.org/100years.



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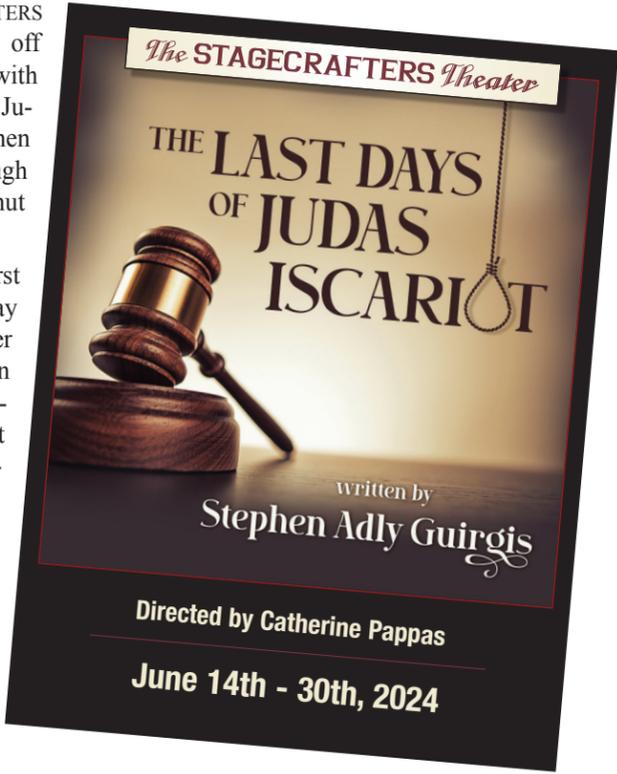
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Stagecrafters Closes Out Season with "Last Days of Judas Iscariot"

THE STAGECRAFTERS Theater caps off its 2023-24 season with "The Last Days of Judas Iscariot" by Stephen Adly Guirgis through June 30 in Chestnut Hill.

The play, first staged off Broadway at the Public Theater in March 2005, is an imagined court hearing in Purgatory at which the fate of Judas will be determined. A large cast of characters, including Satan, Sigmund Freud, St. Teresa of Calcutta and others, present evidence in a series of monologues throughout the play.

Performances are Friday, June 14, 21 and 28 at 8 p.m. and Saturday, June 15, 22 and 29 at 8 p.m. Matinees are Sunday, June 16, 23 and 30 at 2 p.m. Ticket prices are \$27.50 each online and \$30 each at the door. For tickets, visit www.thestagecrafters.org.



Did You KNOW?

The Majestic Home of a Former State Official

**Lt. Governor John Morgan Davis
Residence (c. 1895)
349 Pelham Rd., Mt. Airy
Architectural Style: Georgian Revival**

THIS HOME WAS NICKNAMED "The White House" for its wide portico, which was supported by massive Corinthian columns. The home was once owned by John Morgan Davis (1906-1984) who was the lieutenant governor of Pennsylvania from 1959 to 1963 and was a judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania between 1964 and 1984.

A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, Davis received a recess appointment to federal judge from President Lyndon Johnson on January 7, 1964 to a seat vacated by Thomas Eagan. He assumed senior status on May 6, 1974, and served in that capacity until his death at age 77 on March 8, 1984.

For more information contact wmanhpi@gmail.com.

—Adrienne Carpenter



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How Two Black Housekeepers of Centuries Past Rescued National Treasures

by Constance Garcia-Barrio, for the Shuttle

MANY OF MY FOREMOTHERS SCRAPED TOGETHER a living by cleaning white people's homes, cooking their food, and sometimes giving their children a moral compass, among other acts of disparaged heroism. Two such women, born into slavery and later freed, saved priceless national treasures.

Dinah (c.1725-1805), whose surname remains unknown, was the housekeeper at Stenton, a mansion built in 1730 by James Logan and located at 4601 N. 18th Street, east of Wayne Junction. Logan was William Penn's secretary, a rich merchant and the architect of the infamous Walking Purchase that swindled the Lenape people.

Dinah helped care for Stenton's sumptuous fabrics and elegant furniture, which was the height of 1700s luxury. The Logans freed her in 1776 at her request, and she began working for them for wages. Dinah may have stayed at Stenton because her grandson, Cyrus, who was enslaved until he was 21, lived there.

According to Logan family lore, after the British defeated Washington's troops at the Battle of Germantown on October 4, 1777, a pair of British soldiers knocked on Stenton's door and told Dinah, who was home alone, that they meant to burn down the mansion. When they asked for fuel, she sent them to the barn for straw. Meanwhile, some British officers rode up to the home.

"Have you seen any deserters?" they asked Dinah.

"There's two of them in the barn," she said.

The officers carted off the "deserters," thereby saving Stenton. A 1912 plaque honors Dinah as "the faithful colored caretaker of Stenton," but the mansion's staff and the surrounding community felt that didn't do her justice. On April 20 of this year, a new memorial was unveiled. According to Dennius Pickeral, Stenton's executive director, it is the first monument in Philadelphia dedicated to a formerly enslaved woman.

Other details at Stenton also echo Dinah's presence.

"We planted grape hyacinth here because the seed heads were used as a bluing agent to help whiten clothes," said Carol Rush, chair of Stenton's garden and landscape committee. "Dinah's duties probably included washing clothes."

Selina Gray and Washington's Tent

"Witness to Revolution: The Unlikely Travels of Washington's Tent," an exhibition at the Museum of the American Revolution in Old City, traces the life of George Washington's sleeping and office tent — now almost 250 years old — including the roles of Black Americans who cared for it.

The tent still exists, thanks in great measure to Selina Gray (1823-1901), a Black woman born into slavery at Arlington House, once the home of Confederate General Robert E. Lee and his wife, Mary Anna Custis Lee. Mary Anna, a great-granddaughter of Martha Washington, inherited the tent and other Revolutionary War mementos.

The Lees lived in Arlington House, which is now in charge of Arlington National Cemetery and is across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. When the Civil War broke out in the spring of 1861, Lee took to the battlefield and Mary Anna moved to Richmond, VA, the Confederate capital. According to Adrienne Whaley, director of education and community engagement at MoAR, Mary Anna left Selina Gray, her personal maid and the head housekeeper, in charge. The Lees would never return to their former home.

The U.S. Army soon occupied Arlington House, with its excellent view of the strategic Potomac River. Gray noticed that soldiers had begun stealing things, such as doorknobs and dishes, as souvenirs. She wrote to Gen. Irvin McDowell, commander of the U.S. troops, and emphasized the importance of the heirlooms. McDowell had the remaining items, including the tent, taken to the U.S. Patent Office for safekeeping.

In a letter to Mary Anna years after the war, Gray wrote, "I had to undergo a lot to stay at Arlington House." (She and other enslaved Black people at Arlington were taught to read and write because the family considered it a religious duty). A mural in the exhibition, which is open through Jan. 5, 2025, shows Gray with two of her daughters on Arlington lands.



Photo courtesy of the Museum of the American Revolution.

An educator from the Museum of the American Revolution talks about Selina Gray. Middle, a stereograph of Gray and two of her daughters. Bottom, a stereograph of George Washington's tent and camp outfit.



Image courtesy of Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial. Bottom image courtesy of Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

A stereograph of Gray and two of her daughters.

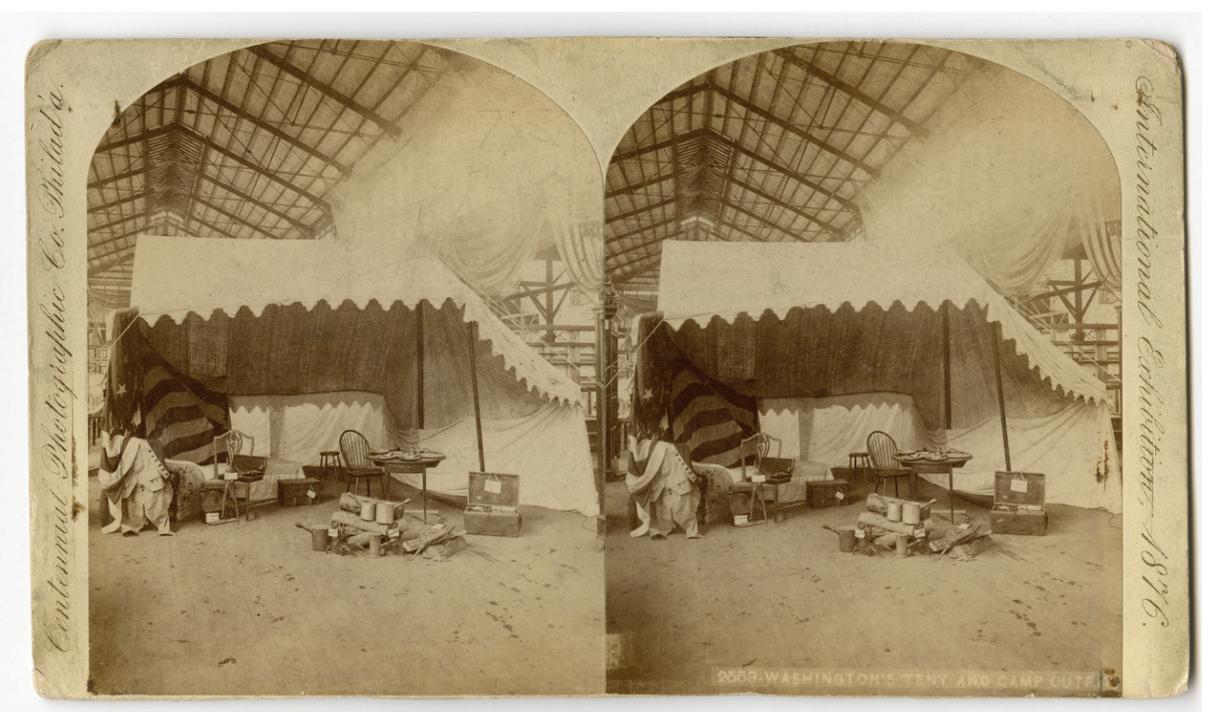


Image courtesy of Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

A stereograph of George Washington's tent and camp outfit.

Because Dinah and Selina Gray used their motherwit, all Americans have a national heritage deepened by irreplaceable objects. They took clear actions, but some mystery remains.

"History is full of people whose motivations we don't know, because the records don't tell us," Whaley

said. "We may never know exactly why Gray helped to save George Washington's tent, or which emotional or strategic considerations might have led Dinah to save Stenton. Asking the question allows us to consider these women in all their complicated humanity. It enriches our understanding of history."

Mutual Aid Collective is a Happy Place for a Working Member

by Eleonora Bartoli, for the Shuttle

AS A FAMILY, WE HAVE BEEN WORKING MEMBERS of Weavers Way for almost two decades. One of the changes I've appreciated over the years has been the increased number of collaborations that the Co-op has developed.

Last summer, one volunteer opportunity caught my eye: Northwest Mutual Aid Collective. If certain words could heal the world, "mutual" and "collective" would be among them! I couldn't resist; knowing nothing more about it, I signed up for two shifts.

I arrived at the NWMAC warehouse on a sunny Friday in August. I was warmly greeted by the collective's Executive Director, Linda Rivera, who introduced me to Nick Rivera (NWMAC vice president), Anthony James (communications and outreach manager), and the other volunteers. Linda then asked if I needed anything to drink or eat. Even before she said a single word about NWMAC or the work to be done, I could feel already what they meant by "mutual": Everyone's well-being matters to them. Everyone is treated like a family member and enveloped by love, enthusiasm and the fierce determination to stand in solidarity with each other.

As we got down to business, I noticed that NWMAC's warehouse was full of both shelf-stable and fresh foods, including fruits and vegetables, bread, eggs and various meats. I had never seen that in a food pantry before. Distributing fresh food is a big deal!

When the delivery truck arrived, food was stored on shelves and in fridges, but produce got the most attention. We carefully sorted it, following the rule that if you wouldn't buy and eat it yourself, it's not fit for NWMAC clients. Sometimes there is quite a bit of sorting to do, but it is always accompanied by laughter, chatting and caring.

I soon discovered what they meant by "collective": NWMAC receives and shares food with several local organizations and community fridges. They exchange raw ingredients for homemade meals. They continuously do outreach to create an efficient and effective web of interconnected, mutually beneficial relationships that maximize impact and minimize food waste.

NWMAC's annual gathering for donors and volunteers makes us feel valued and close to each other. So



NWMAC Executive Director Linda Rivera and Vice President Nick Rivera.



A NWMAC Board member and volunteer bag donated groceries.

while they deliver food for 60 families three times a week, they also contribute to a network that impacts up to 10,000 clients a month! It has been brilliant to watch.

I fell in love with NWMAC. Once I finished my Co-op hours, I signed up to volunteer regularly, including helping unload the delivery truck at 6:45 a.m. on Saturdays. That day marks the end of a hectic, always eventful, never-without-hiccups workweek for Linda and Nick; yet, their warmth, care, focus, kindness, authenticity and unyielding "yes, we can" energy are unwavering. In a time of intense struggles and divisions in our society, I never imagined that a food warehouse would become one of my happy places!

While NWMAC's operations might appear seamless — like gymnasts who make their double back flips look easy — the work behind each bag of food is endless. It takes courage, vision, leadership, determination, resilience and plenty of funding. Having served on the boards of non-governmental organizations before, I know that every donation is a matter of survival. While

most of the work needs to go into putting food on people's tables, fundraising is an essential component of any NGO and takes an enormous amount of energy. This is why sustaining members are what keep things as steady as possible.

You can be part of this impactful and uplifting organization by becoming a monthly donor (no donation is too small!) and inviting others to do so. Every penny will be invested in making our community more equitable, connected and resilient. It's a simple and magnificent way to spread goodness and love in a time where both are needed.

This sentence from NWMAC's website sums up their thinking: "We believe that people at a transitional point in their lives need a hand up and not a handout, and we strive to be that support." If you want to donate, or know of a disabled or elderly person in Northwest Philly who is in need of food assistance, go to www.northwestmutualaidcollective.org.



WEAVERS WAY EVENTS

Help Us Celebrate the Opening of our Germantown Store!

Saturday, June 15 Noon-4 p.m.
Sunday, June 16 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
328 W. Cheltenham Ave.

Please join us to mark the opening of our Germantown store! You'll meet some of the local vendors and community groups that make us who we are. Our Saturday event will focus on Juneteenth and feature Black vendors. On Sunday, the emphasis will be on family fun! We will have activities for kids, raffle prizes and giveaways during our celebration.

How to Stay Safe Around Dogs You Know

Thursday, June 20 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Did you know any dog can bite? Yes, even the sweet ones. And most bites are preventable! According to the Centers for Disease Control, half of the people seeking medical treatment for dog bites each year in the United States are children. Approximately 75% are bitten while interacting with familiar dogs, such as the family dog or a friend's dog. Learn how to interact with our pups safely and respectfully so we can enjoy each other's company and live together peacefully.

This event is geared toward children, but the content is equally valuable to adults. This is an

online event, and you will receive a Zoom link to join the workshop after you register.

"I" Scream to Chill the Summer Heat

Saturday, June 23 1-2 p.m.

Henry Got Crops
7095 Henry Ave., Roxborough

Become a pro at all treats frozen! We will use a champion juicer and gluten-free soft serve. No added sugar or any processed ingredients will be used. Be prepared to wow your family and friends with cool, satisfying and delicious desserts and snacks. We will be making renditions of whipped up fruit that will put a smile on everyone's face, chocolate or carob covered bananas on a stick and more. Bring an appetite for sampling. This is a free workshop, and all ages are welcome. This event will be set up right next to the farm market building.

Dorothy Bauer, a longtime Weavers Way member, brings decades of nutrition experience to all her community offerings.

Virtual New Member Orientation

Tuesday, June 25 6:30-8 p.m.

We encourage all new members to attend a member orientation. Our virtual orientation will include an overview of membership at the Co-op, how it works and why it's valuable. We'll explore our online Member Center, discuss the

benefits of membership and help you decide if working membership is right for you! You will receive two hours working member credit. The orientation lasts approximately 1.5 hours. You will receive a Zoom link by email prior to the meeting. Please sign up at the Member Center.

How to Stay Safe Around Dogs You Don't Know

Thursday, June 27 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Dogs are all around us, so let's be ready to interact with them in a safe and respectful manner. Learn how to ask a dog's permission to pet them and how to tell if they are enjoying it. Also learn what to do if approached by a strange dog or one that might be jumping on you.

This event is geared toward children, but the content is equally valuable to adults. This is an online event, and you will receive a Zoom link to join the workshop after you register.

Membership Office and Notary Hours

Mt Airy: 555 Carpenter Lane
Membership and Notary Services
Monday - Friday
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

EVENTS ARE FREE

For more info: www.weaversway.coop/events

Last Fall's Tweaks Led to Surprises and a New Early Season Crop

by Brigitte Shackerman, for the Shuttle

THE FIRST PEEK UNDER OUR OVER-wintering silage tarp earlier this spring revealed something fruitful: a crop of ghostly white dandelion. For many a green lawn tender, this would be a sore sight. But I was overwhelmed with excitement that one of our first farm tasks at Mort Brooks Farm this season was digging up these gnarly rooted medicinals.

Conventional and tilling organic farms may treat a field of stubborn weeds by taking to the tractor and turning over the soil to reveal fresh under-soil. Sometimes, we also must utilize these methods for the quick turn over of a bed to stay on track with planting. In doing so, however, the complex networks of microbiology in the soil are disturbed. As a result, the structure of the soil is destroyed, which creates apt conditions for erosion and runoff. Turning over the soil can also stimulate the loss of organic carbon, which is released into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide.

As a low-till farm, we try to use silage tarps to fry weeds in the summer and protect bare soil from cold temperatures in the winter, which keeps the microbiological activity beneath the surface active, warm and damp. However, sometimes plants will persist under the seemingly impossible circumstances of being covered by black plastic. In removing the dandelion from our beds, weeding and harvesting became synonymous. Thoughts of roasted dandelion root tea pulled me out of my seasonal hibernation.

Ideally, we don't rely on silage tarps in the winter to cover bare soil. Living ground cover is the most ideal scenario, which is why many farms will cover-crop in fallow beds during the off season. This past winter, we experimented with growing many successions of what could be considered a harvestable cover crop of winter spinach.

By sowing seeds as late as early December, we were able to give the seedlings a short head start before they cozied up in the warm ground. They were alive but grew only infinitesimally until the first warm days offered them a chance to express their potential energy into leafing out. We found that the seeds we sowed



Above, part of the crop of dandelion that grew under the tarps at Mort Brooks Memorial Farm over the winter. Above right, "cabbage rabe" that grew from last year's cabbage stumps.



Photos by Brigitte Shackerman

in December, versus those seeded in November and even October, performed better for early spring harvest. The benefit of having the seeds germinate in the still-warm soils of our late fall beds allowed for the plants to focus on leafing out the first chance they got in the early spring.

The Cabbage Stalks Experiment

This year, we also experimented with leaving harvested cabbage stalks in our beds to use as ground cover. Our beautiful fall cabbages were mostly harvested by December, but by leaving the stalks and outer leaves in the fields, we created our own living "mulch." The roots held nutrients in the soil and the leaves acted as a physical barrier, protecting it from the cut of harsh temperatures and heavy rain and snow. Some of the forgotten cabbages from the fall grew sweeter through the many frosts and freezes and we were able to enjoy them in February and March.

Most exciting, though, was the new crop we harvested from the cabbage stumps: cabbage rabe. Many of our early season harvest days included a walk through the old cabbage beds, during which we snapped off spindly, young broccolini-type rabe that you may have seen in the markets earlier this year. Roasting it yielded a tender stem and crispy outer leaves, creating a delicious mix of flavors and textures all from one harvest.

As our growing season extends on either side due to our warming climate, we are adapting our growing methods. Traditionally, especially in the Northeast, diversified vegetable farms will take a winter hiatus for rest and planning for the season ahead. The seasonality of farming works in many ways, balancing hard, long hours harvesting in the summer with rest and reduced harvests in the winter.

We're beginning to extend our growing time into the shoulder seasons, and so our work is evening out, which can be more sustainable for our farmers and customers. Last year, we introduced a more official fall CSA that extended our season by six weeks. Before the holidays, we worked with farm market staff to put together dried flower bouquets and wreaths, which you may have seen in our farm market.

As the CSA season begins and summer peeks out from around the bend, I'm motivated by the resourcefulness and creativity of our team, which works to make farming a viable and sustainable way of life. This knowledge will help me move through the season with patience and grace.

Brigitte Shackerman is assistant farm manager for the Co-op's Mort Brooks Memorial Farm at Awbury Arboretum.

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Masquerades and Merriment in the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN FESTIVALS HAVE BEEN TRACED TO the 17th century and emanated from the religious traditions of their European colonizers. During festivals, participants wore masquerades, which enabled merriment to transpire without the stigma of comingling out of a person's social group.

Festival reveries are energetic and animated. They feature music, parading, eating, drinking, dancing etc. Carousing is heightened on "Fat Tuesday" (French for Mardi Gras) in preparation for self-reflecting and fasting during Lent.

Canboulay, one of the earliest Afro-Caribbean festivals, began as a celebration parallel to the Trinidad and Tobago Carnival, which enslaved Africans were barred from. It began in the late 18th century as

a protest: Slaves intentionally set fire to the colonizers' profitable sugar cane crop. Calypso music originated from this celebration.

Here are a few other examples of Caribbean festivals:

- Crop Over (Barbados), 1780s
- Carnaval de Santiago de Cuba — combines African, Catholic and indigenous traditions, 17th century
- Reggae Sumfest (Jamaica) — world's largest reggae festival, 1993



When It Comes to “Organic”, the Devil is in the Details

by Peter M. Johnson, for the Shuttle

AMERICAN SALES OF ORGANIC FRESH PRODUCE neared \$10 billion in 2023, according to last year’s State of Organic Produce Report. Some families now buy mostly organic. But what’s the intended meaning of that green “organic” symbol on foods?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture oversees this label through strict requirements and monitoring. Organic integrity is protected by law as a registered trademark (the label itself) and with enforceable standards for various foods. Experts conduct regular and unannounced inspections and testing at farms and processing plants. In addition, to combat fraud, certifiers audit farm records and trace farm-to-store supply chains. This elaborate process is shaped by volunteers who make up the National Organic Standards Board.

When buying organic boxed food, you may want to read the fine print. The 2002 edition of the USDA Organic certification is permitted on three different percentages of ingredients: 100%, 95%, and 70%. With the second group, at least 95% of the total ingredients are organic. Excluding water and salt, the other 5% non-organic approved content may include baking soda, carrot juice color, citric acid and “enzymes,” among other ingredients.

The next level down of organic specifies that at least 70% of the product contain certified organic ingredients (excluding salt and water). All these products are authenticated by annual site inspections, residue testing and production requirements. They may not be combined with non-organic products and may not contain growth hormones or synthetic pesticides. Use of sewage sludge and genetically modified organisms is also prohibited.

A final level of organic is represented by products which list some individual organic ingredients. They may not call themselves wholly organic and may not use the official Organic label.

The Practical Application of “Organic”

Basically, the USDA Organic label means that mostly natural ingredients and production methods have been used to produce the product. For dairy, meat and eggs, it ensures that animals are humanely treated, raised on pastureland and contain no growth hormones or antibiotics. Certified organic produce and grain only use natural fertilizers, eco-friendly pest controls, and soil conservation practices. These types of packaged goods should contain no artificial colors, flavors, preservatives or GMOs.

The Environmental Working Group, a consumer advocacy nonprofit formed in 1993, spotlights the health of various products, including foods. Their current list of most-contaminated conventional produce — EWG’s Dirty Dozen — includes (in order of most contaminated) strawberries, spinach, kale, grapes, peaches, pears, nectarines, apples, bell and hot peppers, cherries, blueberries and green beans. You may want to prioritize buying the organic-label versions of these.

Conventional farms that want to pursue organic certification must undergo a rigorous and lengthy process that can be costly. For three transition years, prohibited substances cannot be applied to the land and a certifying agent must approve all substances used. Use of any unapproved substance or an antibiotic for animals, for example, will trigger another three-year waiting period before they can be certified organic.

The USDA also reviews requests from foreign governments for “organic equivalency,” comparing foreign systems with U.S. standards for various foods. Within the same country, some foods may be determined to have organic equivalency, while others may not. Countries that participate in the program are audited regularly. The nations that currently have full organic equivalence are Canada, the European Union, Japan, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Israel.



Imperfections Aplenty

Organic skies are not all rosy. We’re still trying to form a more perfect union, farm a more perfect onion, and form a more perfect farm (system). Food markets are highly competitive and convoluted, and the processes used to determine what is organic are not perfect. Pollen from conventional fields, for instance, may drift and contaminate organic non-GMO fields. The USDA must stay vigilant, up to date and be well funded so it can identify fraud and maintain organic integrity in domestic and global markets.

To be sure, the organic label has limitations. Behind it are rules adopted over the last quarter century that undergo periodic adjustment. For instance, some plant-originated pesticides that have been used by organic agriculture are ripe for reevaluation, since they may possibly be harmful to human health at higher or accumulating doses. Another issue is that some organic agriculture requires more and longer manual labor, and the organic label does not reflect the ethics of production or its carbon footprint.

By its nature, organic food costs may stay higher indefinitely. Organic certification and ongoing maintenance for farms is expensive, and organic agriculture is also more difficult to scale-up as compared to conventional corporate agriculture, with its benefits of scale. But on balance, many consumers feel going more organic seems best — for the health of our environment, as well as their family and community.





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Your Garden To Do List for this Busy Month of Growing

by Sally McCabe, for the Shuttle

JUNE IS A BUSY TIME IN THE GARDEN, WHEN MANY are tending to their vegetable plants in anticipation of summer harvests. Below are some tips to make sure your garden is on track this month.

Cage your tomatoes NOW, before they get too big. Heavy duty cages are best, but if you're using the wimpy kind, attach three together with zip ties so they can support each other. Hammer a stake through one of them for extra stability.

If you want to remember the variety as it matures, attach the labels with duct tape or wire to the top of the cage rather than sticking them in the ground. Once your tomatoes start growing like crazy, you'll be lucky to even find the ground! The cages are also handy to mark the plants, so you know where to water them.

Remove dried up flowers from annuals to keep them blooming. The purpose of plants is to ripen flowers into seeds so they can call it quits. Thwarting that forces them to push out more sets of flowers until either frost kills them or we skip a week deflowering them. When that happens, they win.

Keep a pot and soil handy by your front door, or wherever you know you'll see it and reach for it. Countless times, I've walked around with a gifted or not-so-gifted plant, gotten home, and set it in a "safe" place. Three days later, it's either totally limp or totally crisp (the only exception being a succulent rescued by my youngest and still fine after months in the car's ash tray!). If only I'd had a pot of soil ready, that plant would be flourishing right now.

A plastic bag in the pocket is also a must-have as a temporary safe place. Stocking these materials and keeping them where you know you'll reach for them will help you stay on top of garden and plant maintenance.

Search and spray for aphids in the garden. Aphids are hanging out on the undersides of everything, but haven't started partying yet, so a spray of insecticidal soap should keep them under control for a while. However, don't spray if the aphids are looking pearly grey instead of translucent; that indicates they have been parasitized by tiny wasps and are being controlled from within. Leave those alone to roam the garden and consume little aphid brains to their hearts' content.

Crewcut your chrysanthemums. Mums are fall bloomers but need some special care now for the best results later. Once they get to be six to eight inches around, cut them back by half; when they grow back, do it again. And again. Once Fourth of July rolls around, do it one more time and then quit. Every time you cut the plant back, new growth begins, the branches grow, and so on.

Each branch sets buds when you finally let it do its own thing. This judicious pruning makes for shorter, stockier plants and many, many more flowers come fall.

Start using your herbs. Basil is especially lush right now but is trying to push out flowers and mature. We don't want that, so start clipping the tops off the plants and using them to make pesto! This is one of the joys of the beginning of summer, so start harvesting bits of all your herbs. If you're using fresh ones, it's best to pick them early in the morning, before they start to dry out. Any excess can be chopped and frozen in ice cube trays filled with water.

For drying herbs, the best spot is the dashboard of your car. I spread out paper and cover the dash with fresh herbs; by the time I've spent a day in the sun, everything is dry to a crisp. It's not as fast as a microwave, but there's less risk of them bursting into flame.

Keep ahead of the mosquitoes. Standing water can be a major source of mosquitos. It takes about three days before you can see those larvae wriggling in water in anticipation of crawling out of the primordial ooze.

Be diligent about dumping any standing water — no matter how small an amount — and treating the rest with mosquito dunks or sprinkles. I keep mosquitos under control by introducing cheap goldfish into reservoirs bigger than 30 gallons. I avoid water that sits in direct sunlight (because it gets too hot), and spots where rain-water drops directly, since this can cause the goldfish to get splashed out. I also avoid areas where it's easy for cats to get to them. Marauding heron are rarely a problem in the city, but have been seen stealing larger koi, so stick with the cheap fish.

Side dress with compost and fertilizer. Vegetables are bursting out of the ground, seemingly doubling in size overnight. Annuals are exploding with color after the recent rains. They're getting all that energy from somewhere, and it's limited.

In June, charge your plants' batteries with added fertilizer, especially some well-seasoned compost. Spread it an inch thick around plants on the surface of the soil. Fertilizer should be scratched lightly into the ground along the dripline of a plant, not too close to the stem, where it can burn. Unless you see signs of color change in the leaves of shrubs and trees, these rarely need to be fertilized. But they always benefit from a top dressing of compost.

Do the garden math. By late June it's about four months until our average first frost date. I know it's hard to imagine it ever being cold again, but if you're thinking of planting more warm season stuff in the vegetable



Photo courtesy of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

A gardener and his assistant get ready to tackle chores at Glenwood Community Garden in North Philly.

garden, use this as your timeline; that's about 120 days. Read seed packets for days to maturity. This means no excuses — you can still plant almost any summer crop except sweet potatoes, which generally take all those 120 days.

Sally McCabe is associate director of community education for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.



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Restaurant's 5k Continues Tradition of Support for the Wissahickon

by Lisa Hansell, Senior Development Manager, Wissahickon Trails

A man walks into a bar...

HE WAS A NEIGHBOR AND REGULAR customer of the Tex Mex Connection restaurant in North Wales and a supporter of Wissahickon Trails. Jane Keyes, the owner of Tex Mex Connection, was looking for a worthy organization to be the beneficiary of their 5k race. The loyal patron suggested us. Since this conversation 34 years ago, Tex Mex Connection has generously donated over \$1 million to support our local environment and the trails and waterways of the Wissahickon Valley.

The 34th annual Tex Mex 5k Race for Open Space will take place on June 26. The registration fee includes chip timing, a race finish photo and a t-shirt (while supplies last). After the race, all run-ners and volunteers are invited to enjoy a Tex Mex dinner, one of their famous margaritas or a craft beer, and live music at the Party Under the Stars.

Runners can celebrate the race in the comfort of the Green Ribbon Tent. Those who raise a mini-mum of \$150 for Wissahickon Trails get an upgraded experience

that includes a deluxe buffet, open margarita bar, photo booth and private porta-potties. Get your running group together and party in style!

We're proud to partner with Tex Mex Connection, which is family owned and is a standout in the restaurant industry. In addition to delicious food and drinks, they prioritize respect for staff and customers, community support and environmentalism. In addition to their support of Wissahickon Trails, they donate to dozens of local organizations, including North Wales Police, North Wales Library and the North Penn Valley Boys & Girls Club. Their commitment to the environment is remarkable; they are a certified three-star green restaurant, have full scale recycling and are 100% landfill free.

We are grateful for all that Jane, her family and Tex Mex Connection do for Wissahickon Trails and the community at large. For more information on the race, contact me at lisa@wissahickontrails.org or 215-646-8866.



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lisa@wissahickontrails.org

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Photo by Jack McCoy.

The Tex Mex 5k start.



Photo by David Freed.

A group of runners hams it up in the Green Ribbon tent after the Tex Mex 5k.

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The Latest Nuggets of Good News for the Environment

by Sandra Folzer, Weavers Way Environment Committee

SEVERAL PEOPLE TOLD ME HOW much they appreciated hearing good news during these dystopian political times. It's too easy to dwell on our fears, so here are some beacons of light.

Net-Positive Homes and Housing for the Homeless

A company in Florida, Pearl Homes, is building houses that generate more energy than they consume. They use energy-friendly construction materials and manufacturing practices. Their Florida townhouses withstood Hurricanes Ian and Idalia and didn't lose power, even though homes around them were severely damaged.

Some of their homes are large and have two-car garages, but they also have an apartment complex in Bradenton whose units rent for between \$1,700 and \$2,000 a month; they're within walking distance of shops, restaurants and the Gulf of Mexico. Another complex is even cheaper.

In eastern Ontario, Canada, a community of 67 homes also generates more energy than it consumes. It's unique in that the isolated community is surrounded by forests; yet, the neighborhood is walkable, with groceries and healthcare facilities nearby. The prefab, solar-powered houses were built in small clusters to create neighborhoods.

The design bears in mind the orientation of the building and windows to keep them cool in summer but allow more sun for heat in winter. Community battery systems store energy, rainwater will be collected and stored and there will be a wastewater treatment facility nearby, so the communities are self-sufficient. Parking is on the periphery so that the center of the town is open to pedestrians.

In Indonesia, the need for more housing and better waste management led to a solution that fulfills both needs: a house built of used diapers. Of course, the diapers are washed, sterilized and shredded before they are mixed with mortar and cement. They replace the sand and gravel that are typically used in home construction.

A single home of 36 meters can use two cubic meters of used diapers. The building materials may also include other waste, like husks of rice grain and fly ash. If I owned one of these homes, I might hesitate to mention it was partially made of used diapers.

Office buildings that have stayed empty since the pandemic are now being put to other uses. In Arlington, VA, a former warehouse has become Area 2 Farms

and offers greens, herbs and root vegetables to local residents. In Houston, planners believe office space provides good conditions for agriculture since the offices are heated, cooled and well ventilated.

In Calgary, Alberta, Canada, AgriPlay Ventures transformed office space into one of Canada's largest urban farms. AgriPlay has an installation model that uses AI, thus making it possible for any novice to turn office space into an urban farm. Urban farming can be more efficient than traditional farming; it uses less space, nearly 95% less water and is pest-free.

In New York City, some office buildings have been converted into apartments. Other large cities, including Philadelphia, are exploring the same option.

In Highland Park, MI, six miles north of downtown Detroit, Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries offers housing to homeless veterans in a 60-unit apartment building regardless of their credit score, record of evictions or other typical barriers. Detroit is one of 100 locations that are part of Community Solutions' "Built of Zero" campaign to reduce homelessness.

In the UK, "Invisible Cities" offers unique walking tours that include discussions of such aspects as LGBTQIA+ concerns and crime. Those conducting the tours are formerly homeless persons who have a distinctive perspective. The homeless benefit from a new sense of purpose and an income while their charges learn what tour books omit. Already, 118 homeless persons have been trained to teach others.

Embracing Renewables and a Sun-Fueled Car

- Wind and solar have become our fastest growing sources of energy, while coal usage has declined. Renewable energy now supplies 22% of our electricity, according to a Feb. 6 article in U.S. News & World Report, and that number is expected to increase to 24% this year.

President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act expanded tax credits for building and installing solar panels and wind turbines. His climate goal is to cut emissions in half by 2030 and have 100% carbon-free electricity by 2035. To make this happen, our electric grid needs to transmit from distant solar fields and wind farms to where the electricity is needed. New technology may be able to use existing infrastructure to harness advanced power lines in a process called "reconducting."

- The first utility-scale offshore wind farm

in the country is in New York and can power 70,000 homes on Long Island. South Fork Wind is leading the way for similar projects in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Virginia. Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont are developing regional transmission infrastructure and combining projects, instead of building solo wind farms.

- Penn Medicine plans to cut its greenhouse emissions in half by 2030 as part of the Health Sector Climate Pledge, which was created by Biden's administration in 2022. The administration invited health care organizations to pledge to eliminate their greenhouse gases by 2050.

So far, 130 health care organizations have signed the pledge. Penn plans to use recycled materials in new construction, invest in solar power, reduce medical waste and give employees incentives to use public transportation.

- Efforts are underway to capture the methane from landfills to use as a source of fuel. Since methane is a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, it's important to utilize it.

While some landfills already capture methane to generate electricity, this process uses plasma to provide fuel for airplanes. Since aviation accounts for about 3% of world's emissions, this process would replace jet fuel, reducing overall greenhouse gases. The process doesn't require heat or pressure, meaning it uses less energy. It's a win-win situation, because landfills are a major source of greenhouse gas and this converts the methane to fuel in difficult-to-electrify industries like aviation, which otherwise produce greenhouse gas.

- The Aptera, a three-wheel, two-seater car being developed in Carlsbad, CA, can be totally powered by the sun. It's shaped like a dolphin and contains 34 square feet of solar panels. In a pinch, if there are too many cloudy days, you can plug it in. The car gets 40 miles from one sunny day and its range is 1,000 miles, so you can make quite a few trips to the grocery store. A family of five wouldn't be able to fit in it, but I still want one.

Ordinarily, 60% of fuel is used to push air out of the way, so if you remove air drag, your efficiency increases by 60%. Instead of 200-300 body parts, the Aptera has only four parts to the main structure, which makes it far easier to build. When ready, the company hopes to

eco tip 

Consider Going Waste Free For Summer Celebrations

by Marsha Low, Weavers Way Environment Committee

Summer is here, and that means it's time for lots of outdoor parties, festivals and celebrations. If you plan on organizing one, consider making your event waste free. It's a lot easier than you'd expect and just requires planning.

As you may know, Weavers Way made its General Membership Meetings waste free several years ago. Folks are reminded to bring their own napkins, cutlery and dishes. For those who forget, the Environment Committee rents those for \$1.

I recently attended a folk festival in Barto, Berks County that was waste free. The hosts had a table set up with bowls, plates, cutlery and napkins for attendees to use. (Attendees were asked to bring their own water bottles and mugs.) To one side was a bin to place used plates and cutlery, which volunteers took to an outdoor sink to wash. There was also a container for food left on plates to be scraped into, which would later be put in the compost. Water could be drawn from a big container that was replenished as needed.

So if you're planning an event this summer, consider adding to the cutlery, dishes and napkins you already have and use them for this event and for others you may hold in the future. You can get them for cheap at secondhand stores. The Environment Committee is considering setting up a "dish library" for lending out, but the details haven't been hashed out yet. Stay tuned! And happy (waste-free) summer!


weavers way CO-OP
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produce 10,000 a year. I'm wondering if you need one for each family member.

A possible alternative to the Aptera is the Stella Terra, the solar-powered SUV designed by students in the Netherlands. Another model, the Stella Vita, is a sun-powered mobile home, in which you can shower, watch TV and make coffee. Last October, the students drove a Stella Terra 620 miles across Morocco. Wonder what it would do here?

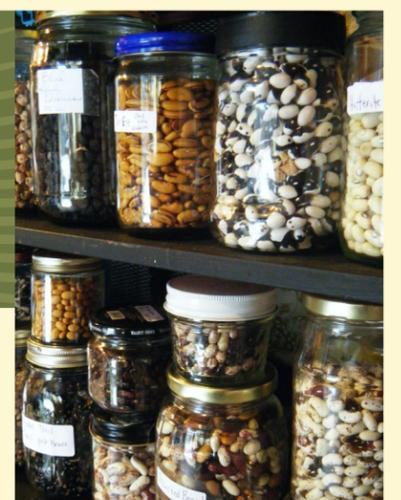
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Suggestions

by Norman Weiss, Weavers Way Purchasing Manager

GREETINGS AND THANKS FOR WRITING. Email suggestions to suggestions4norman@weaversway.coop. As usual, suggestions and responses may have been edited for brevity, clarity and/or comedy. In addition, no idea, concept, issue, remark, phrase, description of event, word or word string should be taken seriously. This also applies to the previous sentence.

What makes 2024 special in the food world? For one thing, Weavers Way opened a store in Germantown. This is interesting for a variety of reasons, but one is historical. In the '70s, I remember there were three co-ops in Germantown; two were buying clubs and one was a store. The buying clubs were at Calvary Church and Germantown Presbyterian Church; the store was first on Germantown Avenue near Penn Street and then moved to Wayne Avenue near Coulter Street. I don't think any of them made it far into the '80s, so there has been about a 40-year gap of food co-ops in Germantown.

The storefront co-op was called Germantown Ecology Co-op. I think it was modeled after Ecology Co-op in West Philly and sold mostly organic and bulk products. It survived from the late '70s into the early '80s. Germantown has a lot of history and from now on, Weavers Way will be part of it.

The other thing that makes 2024 special in the food world is the Farm Bill. Through this legislation, our federal government will spend around \$1.4 trillion on assorted farm-related items ("titles") from 2025-2030. The bill, which is 942 pages long, will need to be finished and passed by Congress soon, so we all have



something to eat a few times a day during the next five years.

The lion's share of Farm Bill money, \$1.1 trillion, goes toward the title "nutrition", which is basically SNAP benefits. The rest goes toward crop insurance, commodity crop price supports, conservation, trade, rural development, research etc. It's a lot of money with a huge impact on our lives that most people know nothing about, and that politicians argue over, with winners and losers, which is just how we like it.

Ironically, when it comes to SNAP, the largest group of employees that receive benefits are food workers, according to a March 13, 2023 article on the Union of Concerned Scientists' website. As far as the retail grocery industry is concerned, income from SNAP sales is basically the same as non-SNAP income; there are no price controls or margin hits (unlike with WIC). So SNAP benefits don't just benefit SNAP recipients; they also help the finances of grocery stores. That's why we see organizations like the National Grocers Association lobbying Congress not to pass SNAP restrictions. Spending \$1.4 trillion can make for interesting bedfellows.

(Continued on Next Page)



“ EMAIL YOUR SUGGESTIONS TO suggestions4norman@weaversway.coop ”

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

Norman Says:

International Co-op Principles

- 1** Voluntary and Open Membership
- 4** Autonomy and Independence
- 2** Democratic Member-Owner Control
- 5** Education, Training and Information
- 3** Member-Owner Economic Participation
- 6** Cooperation Among Cooperatives
- 7** Concern for Community

(Continued from previous page)

suggestions and responses:

s: “Dr. Bronner’s makes delicious chocolate. Mt. Airy used to carry it, but it hasn’t been stocked for weeks. It’ll be Regenerative Organic Certified in short order (the core ingredients are already certified; it’s only a matter of time before it’s an on-pack claim). The Co-op should be promoting this magical product with all its might.”

r: (Keith S. MA) We do carry it; I guess Blue Stripes Chocolate kind of pushed it off the shelf. Also, Dr. Bronner’s had some availability issues. I’ll try and get it back in the set for delivery in a few days. (Norman) The chocolate industry is in some trouble supply-wise, mainly due to cacao swollen shoot virus disease hitting prime chocolate growing areas in West Africa. One of our suppliers has told us to expect price increases of up to 25% soon.

s: “Do you carry the Tandoori Chicken Masala spice by Moji Masala? If not, do you carry other Moji Masala spices?”

r: (Danielle) Thanks for reaching out. I’m a huge fan of Moji Masala (and not just because I handle their account with the Co-op). Tandoori Chicken is only carried in our Ambler location, because our shelf space allows for a larger selection over there. We carry their four highest sellers in our other locations: Aloo Rasedar, Chicken Rasedar, Gobi Masala and Dahl Masala.

s: “Hi! I want to start making tofu and tempeh at home and am hoping to buy my ingredients at the Co-op. Do you carry tempeh starter culture, nigari tofu coagulant or tofu molds at any of the stores? Thanks!”

r: (Danielle) Thanks for reaching out; it’s always inspiring to hear about people’s journeys as they seek to create food from scratch! I love when people can reduce their reliance on packaged products. Unfortunately, we don’t carry any of the products necessary to make tofu or tempeh. The kitchen wares that we do carry are mostly limited to more everyday household items, and historically things like starters (kefir, sourdough, etc.) don’t do well for us. If you want to support a local business, I think that Kitchen Kapers may have tofu presses, but I’m unsure if they have any cultures or starters to make the food itself. I wish you luck. I’d love to hear more about your experience with making tofu if you want to get back in touch.

s: “I’m requesting that green juice be carried at the Mt. Airy store. We love the Pressed brand but are open to others. Thanks!”



The largest group

of employees that

receive benefits



are food workers.

r: (Norman) We’ve tried cold-pressed juices off and on in the past at our Mt. Airy store and none sold well. Currently, we have a couple Natalie’s brand flavors but not a green one; we can see if one is available. We stock the Pressed brand at our Ambler store and will reconsider it for our other stores. Thanks for the suggestion.

s: “I’m wondering who sells you the French feta. We love it and a friend recently asked about where it is produced. I assume locally?”

r: (Jess) Thanks for inquiring about the French feta; it is a top seller for us and is a staple in my house. We get it from one of our specialty cheese vendors, World’s Best. They are bicoastal, but we are serviced by their New York City warehouse weekly. The product itself is from Valbreso in Southern France and made with 100% pure sheep’s milk. Fun fact: Feta was originally made with sheep’s milk in the Mediterranean. Sheep’s milk is naturally higher in fat and protein content, which results in a richer and creamier texture. Cow’s milk feta will never hold a candle to the sheep’s milk varieties!

s: “Why don’t checkout cashiers have chairs like they do in Europe? Thank you.”

r: (Norman) Supposedly it’s because in the United States, cashiers have traditionally bagged items, which is more difficult to do when sitting. Europe has not had a tradi-

tion of customer bagging.

Apparently, this is an outgrowth of how grocery stores evolved in the United States, from full-service clerks who filled orders (and bagged them) to the supermarket model, in which customers select products off shelves. In Europe, the supermarket was less of an evolution from full-service stores and clerks did not bag items.

Interestingly, many states have “right to sit” laws, which state that employers, under many conditions, must allow employees seats and opportunities to sit. Over the years, Weavers Way has experimented with stools and chairs for cashiers, with mixed results. Of course, we have George Costanza to thank for why security guards are not allowed to sit.

s: “I read in a recent issue of the Shuttle that you are considering stocking Soumaya products; please do so if you can. I lived in the Lehigh Valley for many years and regularly shopped at Soumaya or bought their products at other Lehigh Valley locations. I especially love their whole wheat pita, which was a staple in my kitchen. None of the brands of whole wheat pita you currently offer come close, because they are full of additives. I shop at Chestnut Hill and hope to see the Soumaya products there.”

r: (Norman) Stay tuned; we’ve had some initial communication with Soumaya but haven’t set them up as a pita vendor yet. Our retail coordinator, Danielle Mitchell, is working to get them set up, so this should happen soon.

s: “I hear our new Germantown store is going to get solar panels on the roof. I’m concerned that the use of solar panels will jeopardize our future, because they will make the sun wear out that much faster.”

r: (Norman) Scientists tell us not to worry, since local nuclear fusion is on the way to our neighborhoods, electricity will be “too cheap to meter” and we won’t need solar panels much longer. In a fitting approach to recycling, once solar panels are no longer needed, they will be loaded onto rocket ship barges and released within the sun’s gravitational pull, where they will become part of the sun’s fuel and burn up — a zero waste process.



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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

Overcoming Summer Challenges in Your Veggie Garden

by Chris Mattingly, for the Shuttle

OUR MISSION AT BACKYARD EATS IS TO MAKE growing food at home accessible and simple to all. We also want to be a resource for broadening participation in the homegrown food movement for our clients, employees and community.

The summer gardening season is an exciting opportunity to dive into the art of growing your own food. However, with the high temperatures and humidity of summer come challenges associated with watering, pests and disease. We aim to shed light on best practices for managing the challenges of the summer vegetable garden.

Watering Wisdom

Watering your vegetable garden appropriately is essential for success in all seasons. Consistent moisture is key to supporting robust growth and aiding plants in withstanding potential heat stress, especially for young plants. Soil can dry out quickly during summer's heat, heightening the risk of under-watering and accidental overwatering to compensate. Moreover, high temperatures can induce heat stress in plants, leading to wilting and stunted growth. Signs of under-watering include wilting or curling leaves and dry soil that recedes from the container edges.

Adopt efficient watering techniques, such as drip irrigation, to conserve water and simplify your watering routine. While hand watering can supplement irrigation during periods of intense heat, be mindful that excess moisture on plant leaves can foster pest and disease proliferation.

Drip irrigation waters plants deeply and consistently near the roots, reducing the work of hand watering and the risk of fungal diseases caused by wet plant leaves. Drip irrigation systems equipped with timers are particularly useful for raised bed vegetable gardens because they can be programmed to water crops in the morning, when cooler temperatures mean water evaporates less quickly from the soil. Monitor soil moisture levels and adjust watering frequency as needed to ensure that your plants receive the optimal hydration they need to thrive.

Pest Control Strategies

Common pests in summer vegetable gardens include aphids, mites, and beetles, among others. Left unchecked, they can stunt growth, distort leaves and defoliate plants, jeopardizing your garden's vitality.

Implement pest management strategies, such as regular monitoring and organic treatments, to limit populations and maintain a healthy garden ecosystem.

We believe that promoting healthy homegrown food is paramount, so we only suggest use of organic pest control methods as needed. Options like neem oil spray or insecticidal soap are safe and effective for combating pests on edible plants. Companion planting can also confer benefits for pest management and plant health; for example, planting marigolds alongside vegetables can deter nematodes and attract beneficial insects. Additionally, incorporating native annual and perennial plants into the landscape surrounding your raised beds fosters a natural ecosystem that appeals to pollinators.

As with any aspect of garden maintenance, regular interaction with your garden is essential to detecting and treating problems early and developing a personal connection to your growing space. By promptly identifying and addressing pest issues, you can mitigate damage and maintain a thriving garden throughout the summer season. If you encounter a plant that appears "off," numerous online resources are available to aid your learning and growth.

Pruning and Disease

Pruning plays a vital role in preventing fungal disease, especially in plants like cucumbers, squash and tomatoes. Dense foliage can create a canopy that traps heat and moisture, providing a home for fungus and moisture-loving pests. Strategic pruning thins excess foliage, allowing even sunlight penetration and improved air circulation. This will reduce your risk of pests and disease and make it easier to see when your produce is ready to harvest.

Harvesting Best Practices



Regular interaction with your garden will help you learn the optimal timing for harvest-ing various crops, ensuring you enjoy homegrown produce at peak freshness. Proper harvesting practices are also a great way to mitigate pest and disease pressure. Fallen or rotting fruits and vegetables are ideal homes for fungal disease and pest reproduction and can also be a source of "weeds." If 100 cherry tomatoes fall in your garden and volunteer next year, you may be fighting them more than traditional weeds. Fallen or rotting fruits should be disposed of in compost, the trash or fed to hungry animals.

As you navigate the joys and challenges of summer gardening in your raised bed, remember that every action contributes to a rewarding experience. From the satisfaction of harvesting fresh produce to the simple pleasure of nurturing healthy plants, each aspect of garden maintenance deepens your connection to nature and knowledge as a gardener. By embracing regular garden maintenance practices and their benefits, you can create a flourishing homegrown oasis that brings joy and fulfillment throughout the summer season.

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



Scott Spenser

Most of my long life I've been drawing cartoons while supporting myself through a variety of jobs: factory worker, janitor, surgery orderly, nursing assistant. I got a master's in fine arts and in the '80s, I worked as a freelance illustrator for several years. I eventually earned a master's in library science and worked for over 20 years as a librarian for the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging before retiring in 2016. My wife and our two cats live in Roxborough and have been Co-op members since the '90s.

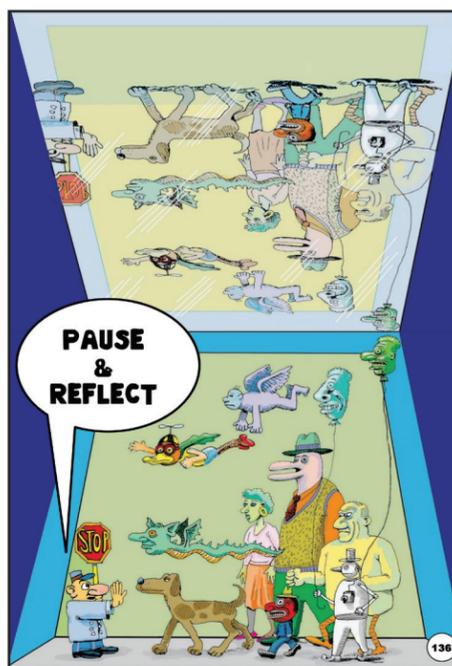
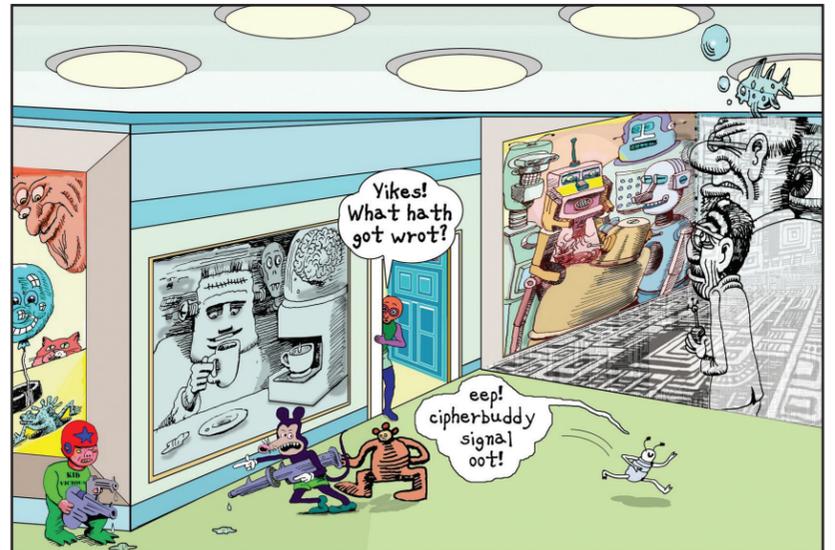


I always wanted to make my own comics. In 2018 I self-published "Multiverse Comics and Stories." This year, after two years of intense effort and with a lot of good advice, I turned my web comic, "Chimera Spoor Comix", into a new, 149-page, full-color, 8.5" x 11" comic book, "Knot in the Looneyverse." It's a breakthrough comic for me because it's complex and simple. It's a love story, a fantasy about parallel universes and a su-perhero comic in which all the action takes place offstage. It's an homage to other cartoonists I admire, living and deceased, and a spiritual pilgrimage, all mixed with a large dose of silliness.

Blog: <https://chimeraspoor.wordpress.com>

Scott's comics can be purchased at:

- Partners & Son, 618 S. 6th St., Society Hill. They sell my book in the store and online.
- Johnny Destructo's Hero Complex, 4327 Main St., Manayunk



SUBMISSIONS NEEDED

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 headshot
- A link to a website if you have one

Weavers Words

Each breeze a breath

Pine tree branches swaying

Earth is alive—listen

—Veronica Bowlan

The Chelsea Hotel

Dylan Thomas on the phone

Room service Poetry

—Veronica Bowlan

GNARLED ROCK, TWISTED PINE

A gnarled rock,
A weathered crag,
A wrinkled face
With no desires.

A twisted pine,
A dry brown leaf,
A silent heart
That's lost its fires.

Is this the sorrowed, wintry age
Of death and joyless passion?
Or silent freedom from a cage
Of screaming, spinning action?

—Chris Robinson

Editor's Note: This poem was written in memory of Weavers Way Mt. Airy staffer Terry Powell, who died on May 15, 2023.

A POEM FOR TERRY - A CO-OP FAVORITE, NOW & FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

To the unkeen eye you were just a friendly face and a kind hello,
To those who knew you though, you could light up the whole room with your hearty laugh,
Your sunny disposition is something else worth a mention,
you never let any of the worldly woes get you down,
or even walk around with a frown,
You listened with compassion and understanding,
making others feel truly heard,
The way you loved was plain to see,
with every pet that crossed your path at Across The Way, as they easily found themselves with a place in your heart,
Your spirit was moved by your love of dance, cheerful music, kittens & puppies,
and it showed in every interaction, meaningful or mundane,
If this poem didn't mention your beloved Bean, then that would just be mean, as she captured your whole world from the very first moment,
Chuck, your hope was infectious,
your smile always beaming with a beautiful glow,
We celebrate your life on the first day of Pride, with a note of what a beacon of resilience and acceptance you were to so many,
For those of us that had the pleasure of your company, family, friend, Co-op or community member
your presence will be greatly missed, by 2 legged & 4 legged folks alike
but we will not dwell in our sorrow, my friend;
we will keep your memory and joyful spirit alive, with every genuine smile and kind hello.

—Tasha Waldrop

Our Revised Submission Guidelines:

1. Original poems must be of a reasonable length. Lengthy poems that are the subject of a reflection will be excerpted.
2. The Shuttle editor has the final say as to whether a poem or reflection is suitable for publication.
3. The number of poems or reflections 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 (or reflection) for Shuttle" in the subject line.



Imagining a World Without Waste

A Changing of the Guard On the Care of Reusables

While ECHO systems will no longer directly service Weavers Way — as the Co-op begins to perform this work in-house — we are optimistic about this new phase and eager to see how the program will expand and improve under Co-op management.

As the Co-op navigates the path of sustainability, it's essential to acknowledge the trailblazers who have anchored the journey toward a greener future. Three years ago, amid the uncertainties of a global pandemic, our co-op courageously ventured into the realm of reuse, which was a testament to environmental stewardship and community health.

Special thanks to General Manager Jon Roesser, who has supported the program, along with Purchasing Director Norman Weiss. Norman's partnership has been pivotal in transforming the vision of reuse into a reality, and his efforts deserve our deepest appreciation.

We also thank the many Co-op staff members whose enthusiasm and understanding have been instrumental in nurturing our reuse initiatives. They grasp the significance of reducing dependency on single-use plastics, which are detrimental to our environment and pose health risks through toxic chemicals that leach into our food.

Our local food system, once heavily reliant on single-use plastics, is witnessing a transformation. Through departments like bulk, deli, Prepared Foods and produce, re-usable alternatives are becoming a viable option. These efforts are in line with our ambitious goal to slash our usage of single-use plastics by 40% by 2028. Achieving this target means that each store must now merchandise at least 167 products in reusable packaging per store every week, a number that must progressively double to meet Co-op objectives.

The role of our members in this endeavor is crucial. You are stewards of our co-op's values, and by holding the Co-op accountable, you ensure that it adheres to and achieves our plastic reduction goals.

As we approach the milestone of nearly 30,000 items sold in reusable containers, we see a promising shift toward sustainable consumer habits. We encourage more members to engage with our Plastic Reduction Task Force and help propel us toward our sustainability targets.

Finally, we invite any business owners or individuals affiliated with institutions that could benefit from implementing a reuse program to contact asharg@ourechosystem.com. Mention "weavers" in your subject line to receive a consultation discount. This initiative is a movement toward a sustainable future. ECHO is enthusiastic and prepared to support our community in expanding reuse options locally.

Thank you to every shopper who has chosen container reuse items. Your choices help shape the impact our co-op aims to achieve and make a difference in our community and our planet. Let's continue to weave sustainability into the fabric of our daily lives.

— Alisa Shargorodsky,
founder and director of ECHO Systems



U.S. Leadership Lacking On Plastic Pollution

The fourth session of the United Nations' Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international, legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, took place in April in Ottawa, Canada. The plastics industry plays an increasingly dominant role in these meetings, and as a result, the United States does not provide the leadership we're looking for. The final negotiation will take place in November in South Korea. You can sign a petition by the Plastic Pollution Coalition that urges the United States to take stronger positions in negotiating the treaty at actionnetwork.org/petitions/global-plastics-treaty-us/.

Germantown Store Opens With Large Bulk Section

The new Germantown store includes a wonderful section for bulk shopping at which you can buy the amount you need of hundreds of items. The department includes a wide selection of coffees, spices, herbs, nuts, seeds, candy, granolas, flours, rice and much more. You'll get 15 cents off any item that you pack in your own container. If you didn't bring a container, there are paper bags available, so you don't need to use plastic. The store also offers jars for sale, and there will soon be a jar library where you can borrow from a collection of donated jars.

—Karen Melton



Bear in Mind These Jar Library Tips

- Tell the bulk staffer on duty when you are dropping off your jars, so they can inspect them to see if they are appropriate for the jar library.
- Drop off clean, dry glass containers only — no plastic containers.
- Remove labels as much as possible. Volunteers maintain the jar library; the more labels there are to remove, the harder their job becomes.
- Larger jars are especially appreciated, e.g. tomato sauce or quart sized. Also, consider if the jar you're donating would be useful.
- If the incoming jar box is full, please do not leave your jars. Currently, there is no place to store surplus jars.
- For any item you buy in bulk using your own container or a container from the jar library, you will receive a 15-cent discount at the register.



Weavers Way Sustainable Packaging Survey

TALK TO US
Please tell us which items you would like to see and/or purchase in non-plastic packing such as glass or paper.



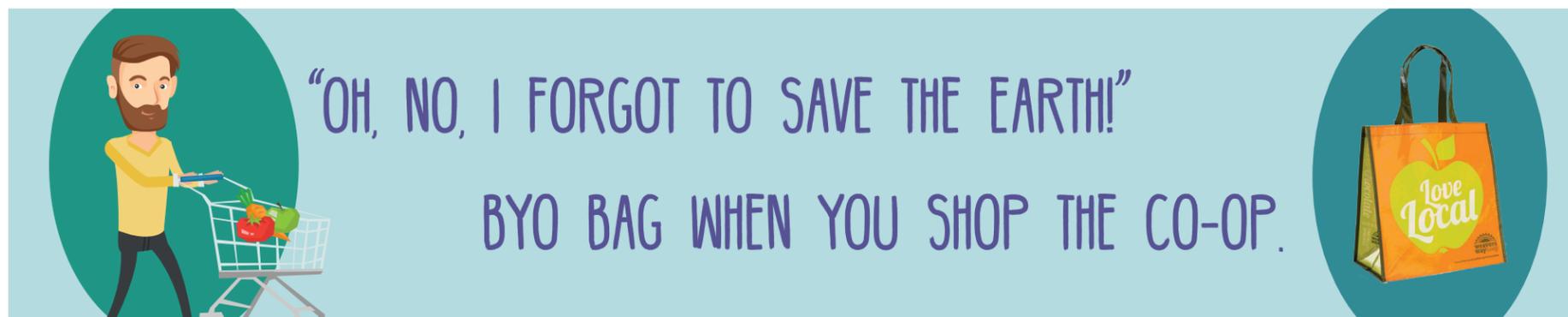




Advocates for Plastic Reduction

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK HERE





CHOOSE TO REUSE



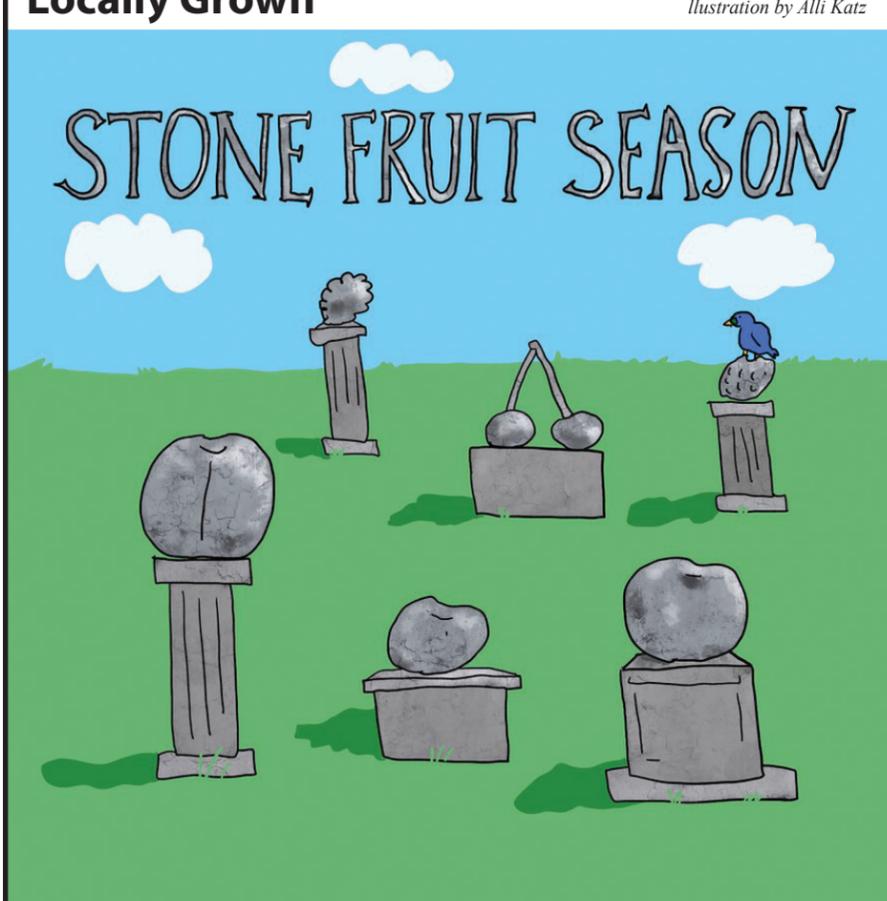
15¢ off every reusable container **every time** you shop bulk!



Locally Grown

Illustration by Alli Katz

STONE FRUIT SEASON




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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 currently taking place online until further notice. 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.

2023-2024 Weavers Way Board of Directors
President: Cheryl Croxton
Vice President: Joshua Bloom
Treasurer: Gail McFadden-Roberts
Secretary: Jason Henschen
At-Large: Hillary Baum, Kristin Haskins-Simms, Benjamin Bartley, Michael Hogan, DeJaniera B. Little, Kacy Manahon, Esther Wyss-Flamm.

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Assistant Store Manager
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kgemmell@weaversway.coop

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 8424 Germantown Ave.
 8 a.m.-8 p.m.
215-866-9150
Store Manager
 Ann Marie Arment, ext. 212
aarment@weaversway.coop
Assistant Store Manager
 Stacy McGinnis

Next Door
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 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
215-866-9150, ext. 220/221
Wellness Manager
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nicolette@weaversway.coop

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 328 W Chelton Ave
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srisinger@weaversway.coop
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ABpreorder@weaversway.coop

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!

DID YOU KNOW?

You can read the Shuttle online.
www.weaversway.coop/shuttle-online



NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Tuesday, June 25 from 6:30-8pm.
 Virtual
 To register visit: www.weaversway.coop/events

Community and Leaders Officially Welcome New Store

the ceremony. “So you are all deserving of our thanks.”

Cheryl Croxton, president of the Co-op’s Board of Directors, congratulated Roesser, Development Director Kathleen Casey and the entire Weavers Way staff and “extended family” on the opening of the Germantown store. “It was a lift, and they did it,” she said. “... With the opening of Germantown, we go one step further in our commitment to be an anchoring and stabilizing force in our community.”

With a work background in law and financial services, Croxton acknowledged that she “believes in profit.” “But our mission is to put our community first, and all other things are in service to that,” she said. “Many grocery stores and conglomerates say this, but you will see that we actually do it.”

Croxton specifically called out fellow board members Jason Henschen and Kristin Haskins-Sims for “their unceasing engagement with their neighbors in Germantown,” and outgoing Board President Esther Wyss-Flamm, who participated in early discussions about the project.

State Sen. Art Haywood, whose district includes three of the four Weavers Way locations, recalled that when he and his wife and newborn child lived at 404 W. Cheltenham, it was sometimes challenging to find fresh food in the neighborhood.

“This store is such an inspiration, such a needed solution for families in this neighborhood, who have always wanted high-quality fresh food, even as we did many years ago,” he said. “In many respects, this is a dream come true.”

Haywood also praised the participation of Co-op members in the member loan campaign that helped fi-

nance the new store. “That shows their commitment not just to this store, but to the community,” he said.

State Rep. Darisha Parker of the 198th legislative district recounted a conversation she had with Congressman Dwight Evans four years ago, when she asked for his advice on what her footprint should be in the district.

“And he said, ‘you need a grocery store,’” she said. Parker said she went along with Evans’ vision, even though she questioned it at first. “Individuals, when they think of politicians, they think we have many meetings,” she said. “That was one meeting, four years ago, and look where we’re standing today.”

Parker said she and a radio colleague had shopped at the store that morning. “The best feeling is when I came home and my husband said, ‘Wait, you spent this, and you got all of this? We gotta go back. We gotta join!’”

State Rep. Stephen Kinsey, who represents the legislative district that includes the Germantown store, formerly worked for JEVS Human Services, which operated a workshop space at 328 W. Cheltenham after the Acme there closed. He also gave a shoutout to Evans, who, as a Pennsylvania state legislator, helped to establish the Fresh Food Financing Initiative, a statewide funding program that helps bring fresh food into communities throughout the state. Kinsey and others in the State House are currently working on legislation to continue the FFFI.

“This would not have taken place had there not been a shared vision, had there not been communication — among the congressmen, among business leaders, among folks who live, work and shop right here in the Northwest — and among folks who have the power of legislation to make things happen,” he said. “...It all starts with you; we serve you. And I hope that we’ve served you well

with helping to finance Weavers Way.”

State Rep. Chris Rabb, who represents the 200th legislative district and is a member of the Co-op, called the new store “a manifestation of what the people want.” “And the fact that it’s owned by the people brings great joy to me, when so often we’re doing the bidding of multinational corporations that don’t care about community,” he said. “Well, we are the community.”

Eighth District City Councilwoman Cindy Bass, who grew up at 17th Street and Lehigh Avenue, recalled walking late at night in the cold with her mother and sister to get groceries at the Penn Fruit near her home.

“Having this matters,” she said. “You don’t get healthy bodies with crappy food. This is an investment in our community, it’s an investment in our neighborhood and I’m glad to be a part of that investment.”

Sam Rose, executive vice president of the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation, who lives nearby and is also a member of the Co-op, said that the Germantown store is an example of PIDC’s mission to take pieces of real estate in the city and turn them into “active assets.”

“It’s a very complicated transaction — there’s a lot of blood, sweat and tears that go together to make this happen,” he said. “But the real group to thank is Weavers Way. Without the leadership from the Board and the staff and the members, this doesn’t happen.”

The event finished up with a multi-scissored ribbon cutting featuring Roesser and the guests of honor. Following the ceremony, attendees enjoyed finger foods and beverages at The Studio event space across the street at 400 W. Cheltenham Ave.



Help Us Celebrate

THE OPENING OF OUR GERMANTOWN STORE

SATURDAY, JUNE 15
NOON - 4 PM

SUNDAY, JUNE 16
11 AM - 2 PM

Please join us to celebrate the opening of our new Germantown store! You’ll meet some of the local vendors and community groups that make us who we are. Our Saturday event will focus on Juneteenth and feature Black vendors. On Sunday, the emphasis will be on family fun!



Weavers Way Germantown, 328 W Cheltenham Ave.

- Food & Drinks
- Kids’ Activities
- Local Vendors
- Community Groups
- Raffle Prizes
- Giveaways

EXTRA
5% OFF

Member
Appreciation

FRI, JUN 14 - SUN, JUN 16
ALL LOCATIONS