

559 Carpenter Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19119 phone: 215-843-2350 · fax: 215-843-6945 www.WeaversWay.coop

# the Shuttle

# Manager's Corner

#### Keep the Eye on the Mission

by Glenn Bergman

There are many things that go on at the Co-op that are different from a regular food store.

While I am here at the Co-op we might have expansions, perhaps a boycott, the viewing of Norman's major role in a motion picture, an urban farm, etc. It is important that you make sure that we stay true to our Co-op Mission and Product Philosophy Principles, and that if you believe we are making a turn away from any of these, you get right up in front of our eyes and make sure we have read them over and over and over again.

If you have never read the Weavers Way Mission and Product Philosophy statements, go ahead and take a look at them on page 18. Members wrote these and approved them as our guiding principles of business at WW. I am convinced that is one of the main reasons for our continued success.

I know we will not always get it right.

(continued on page 18)

#### Ned Wolf Park Needs Our Help



BRUCE MURRAY PRUNING TREES AT NED WOLF PARK by Bruce P. Murray

Everyone who passes through the local area knows the open lot at the corner of McCallum and Ellet Streets, but only those living here when it became a city park might know it has a name: Ned Wolf Park

Ned Wolf served as assistant dstrict attorney and president of West Mt. Airy Neighbors Association (WMAN) in the early 1970s. He was the first person in Philadelphia to respond to President John F. Kennedy's call to provide attorneys to

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#### What's Up Down on the Farm



DAVID ZELOV, DOWN ON THE WEAVERS WAY FARMER by David Zelov

By now most of you know that the Co-op has hired a fulltime farmer, and you may be thinking to yourself, "Well, what has this guy been doing all winter, there are no fields to plow, seeds to sow, tomatoes to pick, etc." So I thought I'd give you a little update on what's been happening "down on the farm."

I started here on Jan. 17, hired to take over Emily's farming duties as well as to head up the expansion of the farm from a quarter acre to three quarters of an acre, and to figure out how to make a profit on that. The answer is, we are going to grow a lot of high value crops and do successive plantings of different crops in the same growing area throughout the season. For

(continued on page 8)

#### Annual Spring General Membership Meeting

and

#### Election of Board of Directors

5 p.m. Saturday, May 19, 2007 Summit Presbyterian Church Auditorium Greene & Westview Streets

Board Positions to be filled for 2-year terms:
• 4 At-Large Directors
• 1 Staff Director

#### Agenda:

- Meet and greet, with light fare for adults and kids
- Report from General Manager
- Report from President of the Board
- Approval of minutes from previous General Membership Meeting
- By-law changes discussed and voted on
- Breakout sessions for member discussion of co-op values and priorities
- Open sharing and discussion following breakouts
- Announcement of Board of Directors Election Winners

Childcare will be available

#### Experience a "Cultural Moment" at Weavers Way

by Jennifer Rellis

Culture is the way of life of a particular society or group. What is a "Cultural Moment"? It is a new initiative at Weavers Way to explore who we are, where we have been, and the values that inspired us to join Weavers Way.

Beginning in May, Weavers Way will explore a different culture each month. We will chose both local and international cultures. Some months our "Cultural Moment" will take us far from Mt. Airy as we learn about the Caribbean, Japan, Panama, Portugal and many other passport destinations through featured products, recipes, and stories from our own members who are familiar with these regions.

In other months the "Cultural Moment" will be a jumping-off point to explore our local community and Co-op. What is our culture? Members join Weavers Way because they share a core set of values including organic, local, environmentally friendly, and just being a good neighbor. Exploring our local community culture will be a way for us to learn about these values that bring us together. We have over 30 years of Co-op history to explore through our core mem-

bers who have been there since the beginning. We will also learn about Mt. Airy and the surrounding community that Weavers Way is part of, including historic houses, churches, schools, and the amazingly creative people who live in this

community. Activism and community involvement are core values as well, and the "Cultural Moment" will be a way to inform members about the important causes community members are campaigning

(continued on page 4)

# The Co-op Culture... Introducing Chester's Community Grocery Co-op

by Robin Cannicle

I had the pleasure of meeting Tina Johnson at our Fall General Membership Meeting where she was a featured speaker. She walked in the Summit Presbyterian Church with some members of the Chester Co-op's steering committee with smiles on their faces, filled with enthusiasm, shaking hands and introducing themselves. Tina shared the vision of Chester's Coop so clearly, and I said to myself, 'This idea is cooperation at its best "So I was thrilled to have the opportunity to interview Tina and share her vision with all of the

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TINA JOHNSON OF CHESTER'S COMMUNITY GROCERY CO-OP

# Inside:

Bylaw Changes? 2Product News 3Financial Update 23

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And of course... scads more

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#### **Bylaw Changes?**

See page 2 to read the bylaw change being voted on at the Spring Membership Meeting

#### Editor's Note

by Jonathan McGoran

First it was pesticides, then it was hormones, cloning and genetic modification, and now, we have news on the increasingly common practice of open field farming of crops that have been genetically modified to produce experimental drugs.

I hate to be reflexively anti anything, and I can even see the appeal of this – especially when I'm forking over a small fortune for prescriptions. Maybe they could create ragweed with built in antihistamines, or garlic with antacids and breath fresheners. Hey, maybe even lettuce with Viagra that never wilts (warning: if you're lettuce stays crisp for four hours, see a doctor). There could be vegetables to treat conditions that we don't even know about yet (restless legume syndrome?). Heck, maybe they could even come up with crops with drugs built in to cure the diseases caused by the pesticides they spray on them.

Still, a tomato that produces drugs to treat high blood pressure might seem like a good idea. Until it cross pollinates with regular tomatoes, that is. And until those tomatoes get eaten by someone who maybe has low blood pressure.

And apart from the health implications, there are other considerations, as well.

Will grocers have to recite disclaimers when recommending the pick of the day? I can see it now:

"Hi, Jean, how's the corn today?"

"It's absolutely delicious. In fact, I recommend you talk to your doctor about corn. Corn may cause drowsiness, fatigue, tiredness, sleepiness, dry mouth, frequent urination, headaches, ear aches, back aches, nose aches, and "stuck-between-the-teeth" syndrome. In rare instances corn has been shown to cause rare but serious side effects including gas. If you experience these symptoms discontinue use, open a window and blame the dog."

Of course, on the most advanced fringes of agro-science, a technique is being perfecting to grow crops containing chemicals that don't just *cure* illnesses, they actually help *prevent* them: oranges packed with vitamins, vegetables brimming with nutrients; grapes that contain miraculous anti-aging chemicals (*see page 16*). They even have a name for this technique.

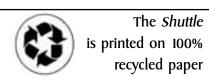
It's called organic.

The Shuttle is published by Weavers Way Coop and is mailed to all members. Deadline for the next issue is: April 1, 2007 Statement of Policy

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

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

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



#### **Looks Could Kill**

# Natural alternatives to killer cosmetics

by Bonnie Hay, For the Environment Committee

Our skin allows more than sensations to pass into our bodies. The average adult in the U.S. slathers nine products on their skin each day and some of this cosmetic soup is absorbed by the skin. Over 1000 chemicals banned for cosmetic use by the European Union (E.U.) are permitted in the U.S. Fortunately, over 500 manufacturers have pledged in the Compact for Global Production of Safe Health & Beauty Products to reformulate their products to meet the E.U. standards in terms of ingredient safety of their products (see www.safecosmetics.org/companies/signers.cfm).

And in the absence of federal oversight, states are beginning to regulate to protect consumers. In January, California passed the California Safe Cosmetics Act which requires disclosure of any product ingredient that is on state or federal lists of chemicals that may cause cancer or birth defects.

Because the over 10,500 ingredients which may be found in cosmetics, shampoos, perfumes, creams, deodorants, etc. are largely unregulated for safety in terms of their potential to cause cancer, hormonal effects, or birth defects, it is prudent for the purchaser to pay attention to ingredients. Ingredient listings are required on most cosmetics and skin care products (an exception is "fragrance," which can encompass myriad unlisted proprietary chemicals).

As luck would have it, there are good watch dog groups, notably the Environmental Working Group's Skin Deep and the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, that are disseminating information on potentially toxic and benign cosmetic ingredients and posting product ratings in terms of safety.

Weavers Way has paid more attention to this matter than does the average marketplace, and carries many cosmetics and skin care products which are rated highly for safety by Skin Deep (see the accompanying list). However, just because a product is on WW shelves doesn't necessarily mean it rates an A+. Even within product lines such as Aubrey Organics and Kiss My Face — which generally rate very well

on ingredient safety
— there are a few losers. Visit the Skin
Deep website to find
out about particular
products using the
easy search tool.

Unfortunately, not all products and brands are evaluated by Skin Deep. For instance, Dr. Hauschka's holistic skin care products, which avoid artificial ingredients, are not rated by Skin Deep. Refer to the

sidebar for hints on what ingredients to avoid, especially in unrated products. Wallet cards are available on the Environmental Working Group website.

I checked out Weavers Way products in the Moisturizer category on the Skin Deep website. The moisturizer "winners" rating 1.5 or less on a 0(best) to 5(worst) scale in terms of product safety are:

Aubrey Organics Rose Mosqueta Hand and Body Lotion Badger Healing Balm Better Botanicals Aryuvedic Oil Burts Bees Milk and Honey Body Lotion

#### **Shoppers Guide to Safe Cosmetics**

From the Environmental Working Group

#### Top 6 Ingredients to Avoid:

Fragrance

Alpha and Beta Hydroxy Acids (AHA's, BHA's. lactic acid, glycolic acid) Parabens (methylparaben & propylparaben)

Triethanolamine

lodopropynyl butylcarbamate

Triclosan

#### In Addition Avoid:

Dark, permanent hair dyes

Hydroquinone and sodium nitrate in skin lighteners Lactic acid, Glycolic acid, AHA, & BHA in anti-aging products Padimate-O & PABA in sunscreen

Dihydroxy acetone & Coumarin in sunless tanning products Dibutyl phthalate, formaldehyde, & toluene in nail polish

> Kiss My Face Honey and Calendula Moisturizer Alba Botanica Jasmine and Vitamin E

Moisturizing Cream Shikai French Vanilla and Cucumber/Melon Hand and Body Lotions To find out more, visit Skin Deep at

www.ewg.org/reports/skindeep/ or go to www.safecosmetics.org/action/materials.cfm

This article contains information from "Should you trust your makeup?" (New York Times, Feb. 15, 2007) and "What you should know about chemicals in your cosmetics" (Consumer Reports Winter 2007)

#### **Co-op Taking Plant Sales Outside**

by Emily Neuman

In addition to the great prices and selection on plants you can find every spring at Weavers Way, this year the Coop will also be selling plants at two community events.

Dave Zelov, Weavers Way's farmer, will join me at Wissahickon Charter School's Earth Day Celebration, April 21, 1-5 p.m.. He will be helping kids transplant vegetables or flowers into containers for their front steps or patios. We will have a variety of environmentally-friendly gardening items available, in addition to plants grown by Philadelphia farms.

And this year at Mt. Airy Day, Weavers Way will offer geraniums and other bedding plants, herbs, vegetable seedlings, and perennials – all grown locally in Pennsylvania. Awbury Arboretum has run the plant sale in the past. We will offer comparable prices on high-quality, locally

grown products. Awbury offered pre-orders on plants, but we will not. We will, however, offer "post-orders." Shoppers who put in a post-order, can pick up their orders at the Co-op Thursday-Saturday following the sale.



Wissahickon Charter
School Earth Day
Celebration
April 21, 1-5 p.m.

Mt.Airy Day, May 5

#### **Produce News**

by Jean MacKenzie, Produce Manager

#### Pesach

Passover begins at sundown on Monday, April 2. We will of course have lots of apples and dates for haroset, and will again give away slices of horseradish and sprigs of parsley for your Seder plate. We'll also carry plenty of parsley and horseradish to buy, too, in both organic and conventional form.

#### New In Produce (Sort of)

Have you noticed the plantains, displayed next to the bananas? I put information and recipe sheets with the display, and I made the plantain soup. My son nearly ate through the bottom of the bowl, so I guess it was good. We have organic red sunchokes, from Wisconsin, displayed with other root crops, and jicama is back (high in Vitamin C, sweet, crunchy, eat raw or cooked).

Escarole isn't new, but it sells slowly here, and I'm guessing maybe people don't have enough recipe ideas. See this delicious and easy one from member Pat Quigley, or, more precisely, from her grandmother:

#### Trends in Retail Produce

I just love the industry publications I read. Recently, in the monthly magazine Produce Merchandising, there was an article – with glossy pictures – about displaying produce in the box it comes in Here I thought we were making the best of a tough situation, and it turns out we're cutting edge.

Apparently another exciting trend in retail produce is that shoppers like tangerines and various hybrid citrus, and – be ready to be shocked – shoppers want a variety of apples. Our new motto: "Weavers Way Produce – Ahead of the Curve."

#### Produce from Your Garden

In January, I suggested that if you are planting garlic in your garden, plant an extra row for the Co-op. Yes, I do – very occasionally – buy some produce from members who have a bumper crop of something interesting, unusual or hard to get. One thing you'll have to do, though, is get your soil tested for lead, and give me a copy of the results. You can get a soil test kit from the Penn State Agricultural County Extension Service – even Philadelphia County has one.

### Nana Rondinella's Bean & Escarole Soup

I bulb garlic, minced

4 12-oz. cans white kidney beans

2 large onions, chopped

hot pepper flakes salt and pepper

grated parmesan cheese

grated parmesan chee olive oil

3 large (or 4 small) heads of ESCA-ROLE, washed very well and chopped

In a very large soup pot, saute minced garlic in olive oil. Add onions and hot pepper flakes to taste. Cover and "sweat" until transparent – about 5-10 minutes. Add escarole and some water; pot will be almost full. Cover and let escarole steam. Stir once or twice to steam evenly. When the escarole is cooked, add beans with liquid, plus no more than one can extra water

Add salt and pepper to taste, stir and simmer on low 45-60 minutes. Serve with some of that delicious Slow Rise bread from the deli, and stand back.

#### **Staff Updates**

by Rick Spalek, Operations Manager

The management team, comprised of salaried staff and department managers, has just gone through a half day on-site customer service training. It was given by Beth Margolis, of Train and Grow, who is well experienced in the retail sector. Although, Beth thought we do a great job treating and relating to our "customerm" we certainly have areas that need improvement. Most of the rest of staff will also be attending one of two half-day sessions on customer service, and please let us know if you notice any difference during your shopping experi-

Also on the training front, we have sent Jean (produce FINAL SHUTTLE PHOTO OF EMILY NEUMAN. MAYBE. manager), Martha (second floor manager), Joe (shift manager), and Kristoff (floor staff) to a well-regarded three-day intensive training program focusing on co-op management called "Rising Stars." This is our first time sending staff to this program, and we hope to be sending more staff in the future.

On a sad note, Emily Neuman will be leaving the Co-op at the end of March, as her husband relocates for his medical residency. Emily has the distinction of being the most photographed staff member in the history of Weavers Way. There was hardly an issue of the Shuttle that her face did not grace. She is also found on the website, and has appeared in most local papers. We wish her well, and congratulations to Nina DaSilva who will be taking over the Floral department after Emily's departure.

Deli News...

#### **Hidden Treasures**

by Margie Felton, Deli Manager

Shortage of space at Weavers Way not only makes for an intimate and cozy shopping experience but sometimes calls for unusual locations of the products we sell. Sometimes this arrangement makes no sense to you, and actually it makes no sense to us, either, beyond that a product physically fits in a particular location; therefore you may not know that a few Indian items are sold in the deli and prepared foods areas.

In the prepared foods case we sell four delicious Indian simmer sauces by Maya Kaimal. These sauces range from mild to slightly spicy and are the key ingredient to a quick Indian dinner. Just



saute chicken, tofu, paneer (an Indian cheese sold next to the sauces), veggies, or whatever you like, add the sauce, simmer and you're finished. Great and easy accompaniments include Hampton chutneys, and Samosas and side dishes from Bhagya's Kitchen (Chestnut Hill Farmers Market). All available on the same shelf in the prepared foods case.

Also sold in the deli area, next to the deli meat case, are pappadums (crisp Indian flat breads), Pataks mango chutneys and garlic relish and Arora Creations spice mixes.

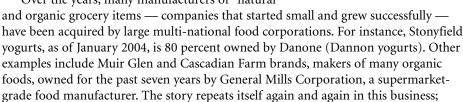
**Grocery News...** 

#### **Brand Disloyalty**

by Chris Switky, Grocery Manager

Howdy, folks. I do have a few product changes in our grocery line to tell you about, but I first want to write a bit about the "who owns who" question in the world of grocery wholesalers.

Over the years, many manufacturers of "natural"



small companies become successful and grow, big food companies see them as desirable money-makers and purchase them, either in whole or in part.

Over the past month, I've had a look at some of the brands that we carry at Weavers Way, and where our money is going when we support these brands. One change that we've made in our frozen foods line is replacing Boca breakfast links with Amy's breakfast patties. The two products are similar (though not identical), but the manufacturers are quite different. Boca is owned by Kraft Foods, which is in turn owned by Philip Morris Inc., a cigarette maker. Amy's Kitchen is a small (well, smaller) family-owned business. By buying Amy's brand, we can support a "little fish" in the big pond, and a company that has from the beginning shown an interest in healthy and organic alternative groceries. I'll be looking to make more of these kinds of brand switches in the coming

months, while (hopefully) still considering Co-op shoppers' choices and preferences. I welcome your input, via the suggestion book, or e-mail me at christopher@weaver-

As promised, a bit of product change news. Say goodbye to Sorrell Ridge fruit spreads, no longer available from any of our distributors. We've used the shelf space to

expand our offerings of Bionature organic fruit spreads, which have no added sugar. The new flavors are blackberry, sour cherry, raspberry and Sicilian orange. (Are Sicilian oranges like Sicilian pizzas, rectangular instead round, therefore easier to stack? Jean, can you address this in your produce column? Jean?

We've also added Pacific brand almond milk to our beverage section, in plain and vanilla flavors, brought in due to shoppers' requests. The almond milk replaces Vruit fruit/veg beverage, which had been selling rather slowly. It is still available as a preorder, case of 12, see Norman or Chris for details.

That's it, folks. Thanks for reading, and remember, it's your co-op, and it's more than a food store, it's often a contact sport. I'll be running into you....in the grocery aisles.



#### What's Up Upstairs

by Martha Fuller, Second Floor Manager

Dr. Ken's Oral Care Products: This new-to-Weavers Way line of products has been met with many positive comments from our shoppers. Dr. Ken's products were developed by a dentist whose mission was to develop a product line that

focused on natural products with maximum benefits. We carry two Dr. Ken toothpastes: Wintergreen Fluoride Free and Spearmint Fluoride Free. Both are whitening toothpastes that are not tested on animals, are safe for diabetics and contain green tea extract with antioxidant properties shown to effectively

improve oral health. The toothpaste's ingredients and their benefits are written clearly on the packages. We also carry Dr. Ken's Antibacterial Mouthwash — it's alcohol-free and is a great tasting product. The Single Use Dental Floss packets, made with green tea extract, are convenient and sanitary and great for a briefcase, purse or suitcase.

Their Breath Strips also travel well – perfect for the briefcase, handbag, desk or suitcase. The strips dissolve easily in your mouth and are considered to be the only all natural breath strips.

Aura Cacia Foam Bath Products for Children: Why use these products for children? I'm glad you asked. These are products that parents, caregivers, and

children can love — they are fun for the kids, gentle and effective for the grownups. This product, sold in 2.5 ounce packets, is paraben-free and does not contain sodium lauryl/laureth sulfate or mono/di/triethanolamine. Our sales rep for Frontier Natural Products, the owner and distributor of of Aura Cacia, has told

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me that a small amount of this product is needed for a child's bath — you do not need to use the entire packet as you might with some other similar prod-

These products contain 100 percent pure, gas chromatography (GC) tested essential oils that provide true aromatherapy benefits. There are

three foam blends: The Calming Foam Bath contains 100 percent pure lavender and citrus essential oils. This soothing and calming blend is a perfect fit for a bedtime routine. Cheering Foaming Bath is uplifting and refreshing, combining tangerine and sweet orange essential oils. Clearing Foam Bath helps to cleanse and also uplift with the ingredients of 100 percent pure eucalyptus and citrus essential oils.

Emergen-C: We are carrying three new Emergen-C products, two for adults and one for children. Our shoppers who are parents and caregivers tell us of the challenges they can face when they give their children vitamins and supplements. Luckily, the products we sell seem to make a difference for you all One product that has a great success rate is Emergen-C Kids Multi-Vitamin. This strawberry-flavored fizzy drink contains a total of 32 active mineral complexes along with B Vitamins, Vitamins A, D, E and K, plus 50 mg of Vitamin C in a non-acidic, stomach-friendly formula. Heart Health is a black cherry-flavored product that is thought to support your heart with plant sterols, lycopene, Vitamin C folic acid and B Vitamins. Bone health is something that all of us, no matter our age, need to consider. At every age we have different needs, and luckily we have many things we can do to support ourselves in our

bone health. We know that a good diet with adequate nutrition and weight bearing exercises help us. Many of us also look to calcium supplements to achieve our need for the proper amount of calcium. Emergen-C Bone Health, in a Mixed Berry flavor, has added Vitamin C, Calcium, and Vitamin D.

April Sales for Equal Exchange Coffees: This company rocks — they are an employee-owned and run organization, the staff is extraordinary and, in case you did not know, both of our coffee grinders are on loan to us from Equal

Exchange. Their coffees are all Fair Trade coffees and most are also organically grown. We know from your feedback that these are both important to our mem-

The two Equal Exchange Coffees that will be on sale in April are Organic French Roast and Organic Decaf Breakfast Blend. The French Roast is dark and delicious with full body and a smooth finish. The Decaf Breakfast Blend is a balanced blend of light and dark roasts and is also full-bodied with a rich flavor and has sweet overtones. The French Roast usually costs \$8.50 per pound and will have an April sale price of \$6.99 per pound. The Decaf Breakfast Blend usually costs \$11.05 and will cost \$10.05 during

April.

Let me take a moment to thank you for: 1) reading Norman's March Shuttle Suggestion Book column and 2) paying attention to the question and answer regarding the use of our grinders for coffees purchased at other stores or via mail-order from businesses inside or outside the United States. The grinders we have for your use are only for coffees you buy here. And the bags we have here are also only for the coffees you purchase here as well. Please do not ask us or expect us to make any exceptions.



#### <u>Tina Johnson</u>

(continued from page 1)

members of Weavers Way.

WW: Chester's Co-op is a new member of the cooperative community. How did you decide that the co-op model was the right one for your community?

TJ: A lot of research went into finding the business structure that would best benefit and serve our community. A traditional supermarket, although a lot less work to develop and to find funding for, was not the right model for the purpose we had in mind for the sort of food store we wanted. We wanted a supermarket that would meet specific needs of the community, be a sustainable business, a socially responsible business partner with the community, and that would empower the people in the community to be selfreliant and foster an economic independence. The co-op model was the perfect fit, especially since it was really left up to us to define our co-op to meet our needs. We have visited other co-ops and found a balance between existing co-ops and start-ups. The seven principles of the cooperative community resonated with our goals. The very fact that our community has come together to open its own grocery store and decided to lead the way towards sustainable economic development that directly impacts our city is wonderful.

WW: What are some characteristics that defines Chester's co-op?

TJ: Chester's co-op is a unique co-op model for a lot of reasons; one being that we are being started in a highly low to

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moderate income community; another is that unlike most U.S. co-ops that were started in the late 60's and 70's, our focus is not on selling solely health food or organics. Our focus is on providing access to healthy nutritional food at a fair price. Healthy means fresh food that still holds a high percentage of its nutritional and health benefits; starting there is huge for our community. Currently in Chester there is no supermarket, which has been the case for 16 years. This has resulted in the members of the community having their health adversely affected because they have limited access to quality nutritional foods. We exist for reasons that encompass traditional co-op ideals but incorporate a new set of ideals. We are definitely a purpose-driven co-op. Chester's co-op is way more than a supermarket.

WW: What impact will this co-op have on the health of the community?

TJ: By establishing a grocery store with the specific needs of the community in mind and that exists for the purpose of its membership is the beginning. Educating our co-op members and the larger community about foods that promote a better diet is a great start. Having a demonstration kitchen that teaches how to prepare the foods we sell in a manner that has the greatest health benefits is another way that we will make an impact. However, we know that it is not easy to change people's eating habits. Education and outreach is a large part of our mission. Most people want to live and eat healthy and if given the opportunity and resources to do so, they do it. We are providing the impetus.

WW: Your store is not open yet. So what has the Co-op done to start things off in the community to promote its mission?

TJ: We had our first General Membership Business Meeting in February. This was a great experience for all of us. It was democracy at its best. Everyone could see how their voice and vote matter. On March 31, we will open our Farm Fresh

Market. We have decided to take advantage of the growing season until we can get into our building. We will be open two days a week, Wednesday and Saturday, selling fresh, locally grown produce (when available) and other great food. We will also have a Family Wellness Fun Day on April 14 for the entire community. Access to food and learning how to live healthy are keys to people living well in a thriving community.

WW: Where is Chester's co-op in it's development process?

TJ: We are in the crucial stages of the development process. We have a growing membership, 155 strong. We have identified a site that is under agreement. And we are now in the final stretch of securing financing. It's important that we have sufficient funding in order to open our doors. Many co-ops, and other businesses, fail because they are way under funded. Securing financing has proven the most difficult because of the ownership structure of coops. Traditional banks are unfamiliar with the structure and cannot fit us into a "box" that they are comfortable with. Even NCB (National Cooperative Bank) is hesitant because we rely on member labor and are a member-only co-op. In order to build our equity investment, not only from member investment, we have started Chester's Coop Loan Program to raise other investment capital. It will be these loans that members and non-members make to our co-op that will help build our case with banking institutions so they will do business with us. Needless to say, we are working and thinking outside the box so we can open our doors.

WW: How crucial is it to the community that Chester's co-op open its doors?

TJ: We formed our steering committee on March 9, 2006, because we felt that it was imperative that something be done to change the reality of our community's lack of access to quality food and to positively impact the health of our children as well as adults. Chester is a city of 37,000 people who do not have a supermarket.

Many residents don't have cars and so must shop at corner stores that offer poor quality food at high prices. The city has been trying for years to attract supermarket operators into the community with no takers and this is still the case today. We have an unhealthy community that cannot wait for someone else to say they want to do business in Chester. We have a 27 percent obesity rate amongst our youth, 40 percent of our adults have stage II diabetes. The health issues go on, many of them due to lack of access to quality food. We are in a race against the clock. It's time that food stop being held hostage from our community and others like it from urban to rural America. So our doors have to open. It truly is a matter of life and death.

WW: Tina, I am inspired by your dedication to your community. To our community...we are all a part of each other. Kudos to you and to the members of the Chester Co-op for taking this on. You all really make a difference

If you are interested in learning more about Chester's Community Grocery Coop visit their website www. chestercoop.com or e-mail the Weavers Way Membership Department at member@weaversway.coop. Please put Cultural Moment in the subject line.

#### <u>Cultural Moment</u>

(continued from page 1)

for and how to get involved.

We will make more details about the "Cultural Moment" initiative available at the upcoming general membership meeting in May. Look for our designated bulletin board at Weavers Way starting in May as well. We look forward to hearing about the cultures you would like to explore with us

If you are interested in learning more or contributing to The Cultural Moment contact the Membership Department by phone 215-843-6552, or e-mail member@weaversway.coop. Please put Cultural Moment in the subject line.

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#### Spring Nature Walks in the Wissahickon

by Denise Larrabee

In 2005, the entire Fairmount Park system was recognized by the National Audubon Society as an Audubon Pennsylvania Important Bird Area (IBA). Philadelphia residents can take advantage of this natural resource right outside their door this spring. The Friends of the Wissahickon (FOW) is sponsoring four Spring Bird Walks in April and May, led by experienced birders: Gary Seagraves and Steve Lawrence, from FOW, and Debbie Carr, David Bower, Trish Fries, and Megan Sgarlat from the Fairmount Park Commission.

"Beginning in mid-April, migrating birds are arriving from the south to nest or rest briefly in the Park before moving on," says Steve Lawrence, Co-chair of FOW's Wildlife Committee. "Some 125 species of birds will migrate through or over the Wissahickon Valley, and some will remain to nest in the varied habitats available here."

We also will also see our old, reliable, permanent residents such as chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, woodpeckers, jays, crows, and cardinals.

By the end of April, wood ducks may already have ducklings in the stream, and summer residents will be seeking nesting sites. These summer residents include: ruby-throated hummingbirds; flickers; phoebes; peewees and crested flycatchers; red-eyed vireos; rough-winged swallows; house wrens; blue-gray gnatcatchers; wood thrushes and veeries; an occasional scarlet tanager or indigo bunting; and many melodious and bright-colored Baltimore orioles.

Lawrence says that approximately 35 species of warblers will come through, some of them very rare or occasional, so only an ardent enthusiast will have a chance of seeing them all. "Many warblers are reasonably common and so

strikingly colorful that they take your breath away if you can spot them during the few seconds they remain still," he says. Particularly memorable are the colorful warblers, such as the parula, magnolia, and American redstart.



BALTIMORE ORIOLE

Three warblers still breed in the Wissahickon in significant numbers: the Louisiana waterthrush; yellow warbler; and common yellowthroat.

During FOW's bird walks, participants are likely to spot vultures, hawks, swallows, and chimney swifts. Along the stream, the "rattling" call of the kingfisher can be heard, while one observes a spotted sandpiper or solitary great blue heron in its great prehistoric grandeur. The turkey vulture and red-tailed hawk also make an appearance on almost every walk, while other springtime possibilities include migrating ospreys and broadwinged hawks, swift flying Cooper's hawks, or sharp-shinned hawks.

Each Spring Bird Walk is free and lasts for two hours – sometimes longer if the day is productive. For additional information call FOW's office at 215-247-0417 or visit <a href="https://www.fow.org">www.fow.org</a>.

Dates, Times, and Locations: Sunday, April 29, 9:00 a.m. Meet at Bell's Mill Road and Forbidden Drive

Wednesday, May 9, 8:00 a.m. Meet at Bell's Mill Road and Forbidden Drive

Friday, May 18, 8:00 a.m. Meet near Carpenters Woods at Wayne Ave. bus

Tuesday, May 22 6:00 p.m. Meet at the Andorra Tree House at 5:30 for light refreshments before the walk, when we will look for bluebirds, nesting warblers, orioles, and owls.

#### Update on Henry School Campus Park Project

by Kaela Farber

What ever happened to the Henry schoolyard regrading project? A kick-off meeting was held on February 5, 2007. The contractor will finish the tot lot behind the kindergarten wing before starting on the upper school yard. Heavy equipment will enter the site through a new gate on Greene Street. They will work from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily. Morning assembly will be in the lower school yard during the project, because the upper school yard will be closed.

Substantial completion, unless spring gets very rainy, will be before school ends. When finished, the upper schoolyard will be nearly level for play, and side slopes will be planted with grass, trees, and shrubs. The new plantings will need watering by volunteers, using a water connection at the school. To be part of this "Horticulture Team," please contact Greg Moore at: hgregmoore@verizon.net.



# Attracting Birds to Your Yard

by Brenda Malinics

My sure sign of spring each year is not the opening of the Philadelphia Flower Show but rather the arrival of those birds that leave us each fall in order to survive in warmer climates. An avid record-keeper, I track when these feathered spring harbingers return each year. The first arrivals back are usually the brown-headed cowbirds, followed by the large and iridescent grackles, and then the wonderful sight and sound of the red-winged blackbirds.

This year, however, the cowbirds returned Feb. 11, one week earlier than last year. Further investigation revealed that they have been arriving one week earlier than the previous year, for the past three years. Soon we may see the colorful and vocal warblers—always a joy to see and hear. Following the arrival of the warblers are the last tiny sky jewels, the hummingbirds.

My yard is full of feeders dispensing different types of seeds attractive to different bird species. I choose to feed throughout the entire year, despite the presence of summer insects and berries. I do reduce the amount of summer feeding, but I never stop entirely. My suet holders bring in the woodpeckers and wrens; a platform feeder attracts the larger birds like robins and mourning doves; I have peanut hearts for the chickadees, titmice and nuthatches, and saffron seed for the cardinals. Throughout the winter,

(continued on page 6)

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#### Attract Birds to Your Yard

(continued from page 5)

I put out bowls of small cat food for the blue jays and crows, whose large crops (stomachs) require a lot of calories and amounts to fill.

My bird baths and water bowls are a chore to keep full at this time as more and more migrants arrive in preparation for nesting and breeding. I am privileged to witness the birds' territorial claims, courtship, nesting and parenting habits. All five of my bird houses were cleaned in the fall and await this year's residents. There is always a bird eating, drinking or bathing in my yard bringing color, song

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**Debbie Ansell** 215-844-2280 and joy to myself and the neighborhood children who stand and stare from the sidewalk at the action in my garden. Although watching the birds is joyous, their presence is beneficial through their effective ecological control of insects, weeds and small rodents. Bats, of course, take care of the insects by night.

When setting up feeders, one needs to remember that birds are more comfortable with natural bush nearby to provide cover if predators arrive. Speaking of predators, if you do have bird feeders, you may see a song bird snagged by a hawk. Coopers and Sharp Shin hawks, who live throughout our area, survive by eating smaller birds. Although it isn't pleasant to see, it is a part of nature and I don't try to stop it or interfere with a hawk after it has caught a songbird. If you interrupt a kill, the hawk will only go somewhere else and find food to feed itself or its offspring. You are then still left with one injured bird and one hungry hawk. This, of course, does not apply to our pets that attack wildlife; that always requires intervention.

Please be mindful of windows, especially large ones, near feeders. Window

strikes kill many songbirds and hawks. One way to prevent this is to place a sticker, sometimes of a predator bird, on the glass to give the bird a visual warning to avoid that area. These stickers are sold at bird and nature stores. If a bird does strike a window and is lucky enough not to break its neck, it will have had (literally) the wind knocked out of it. If it hasn't sustained a concussion, it will remain stunned on the ground for no more than 10 - 15 minutes. If it doesn't fly away within 15 minutes, it needs medical intervention immediately.

It is critically important to prevent disease at your feeders. Salmonellas, tricomoniasis, pox, aspergillosis, and conjunctivitis are all diseases that can affect birds that visit backyard bird feeders. You can minimize the spread of disease by keeping your feeders clean. At least once or twice once a month, clean and disin-

fect feeders by fully immersing them in a 10 percent bleach solution (one part household bleach: nine parts water) for

Giving the bird's ample feeder space also prevents disease. Several feeders at wide intervals will help disperse feathered visitors. Remember to clean up waste under the feeders that can mold and spread disease. Check your feeders for sharp edges or splinters. Even small scratches and cuts will allow bacteria and viruses to enter otherwise healthy birds. Use good food and check the feeder's contents to make sure that it has not gotten wet and growing fungus or mold.

Sick or injured birds, and all native wildlife, can be brought to the Schuylkill Wildlife Clinic at 304 Port Royal Avenue (Roxborough) at 215-482-8217. Care is free and financial donations and volunteers are always needed.

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# Valley Green Bank Kicks Off a Fantastic Offer for Weavers Way

by Leslie Seitchik

Valley Green Bank, a locally owned, community-focused bank headquartered in Mt. Airy, has created an enticing offer especially for Weavers Way members. When a Weavers Way member becomes a new customer at Valley Green Bank, Valley Green Bank will give that member either a \$30 gift certificate to be used at Weavers Way or make a \$50 donation to the Weavers Way Community Programs. As you know, the Weavers Way Community Programs support the school-based Marketplace/Mini-Co-op program operating in five local schools; the recycling program and the Urban Farm Project at Awbury Arboretum. See the attached coupon for further details.

Like Weavers Way, Valley Green Bank is a local institution that believes in supporting the community. Just over a year old, Valley Green Bank has partnered with numerous organizations to support their efforts in building a stronger, healthier community. The bank has supported family events for The Friends of the Wissahickon, hosted receptions for organizations like West Mt. Airy Neighbors and Mt. Airy Baseball, sponsored a Mt. Airy Baseball little league team, and held an essay contest for local middle school students that included a \$2500 higher education scholarship for the winner.

When designing this unique offer for Weavers Way, Valley Green president and Co-op member Jay Goldstein wanted something that would not only encourage members to bank at Valley Green Bank, but also give members an opportunity to give back to Weavers Way. "This is a winwin for the bank and the Co-op. The more members take advantage of this offer, the more money the Co-op receives for its environmental programs. Our goal is to have as many Co-op members as possible to be customers at Valley Green. The more customers the bank has, the more it can promote community development. It's a perfect fit – Weavers Way members understand the value of local businesses supporting the neighborhood and bolstering the local economy."

Consumers can count on high-quality, convenient, personal service from Valley Green Bank. These principles are what differentiate Valley Green from other banking institutions. The Bank offers a favorable mix of deposit accounts, including non-interest and interest-bearing checking accounts, savings, money market and certificate of deposit accounts. It also offers customers individual retirement accounts.

Valley Green Bank, a member of FDIC, is headquartered at 7226 Germantown Avenue in Mt. Airy, was formed by community and business leaders and is owned by many local shareholders. Valley Green Bank is. The Bank is opened Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 6 a.m. and on Saturday from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. For questions call 215-242-3550 or visit the website at www.valleygreenbank.com.

#### Help Us Donate \$50 to Weavers Way's Community Programs! "It feels great to bank with a "I'm the owner of High Point Cafe. As a fan of small businesses, I enjoy excellent, personal service. That's what I get from Valley Green Bank, I encourage Weavers Way members to join me and bank with a You count with us. Plenty of on-site parking 7226 Germantown Avenue 215-242-3550 • Member FDIC www.valleygreenbank.com HOURS: Weekdays 8 to 6 and Saturday 9 to 1 Weavers Way Members... When you open a new checking account at Valley Green Bank\* you can choose between a **Buy Local!** \$30 gift certificate for shopping at Weavers Way or a \$50 contribution to the Weavers Way Community Programs, upon Bank Local! account opening. Come to the Bank for complete details. sorchly ACH transfer from checking (such as a utility or mortgage payment) is required. One coupon per customer, Not valid with other offers I de la

# **Education Committee Film Series Continues in April**

by Larry Schofer

The Weavers Way Education Committee is introducing a new films series at the Screening Room of the Video Library (Germantown Ave. between Durham St. and Mt. Airy Ave.), on a theater-size screen with theater-style seating. The films will all relate to issues of interest to Weavers Way members – for example, the environment, good food and agricultural practices, neighborhood issues, cooperative activity.

The first film, shown on March 14, was "Independent America: The Two-Lane Search for Mom and Pop," an exciting and humorous documentary that featured a husband and wife in search of family-run stores set off on a 6-month road adventure into small-store America.

The next showing, Wednesday, April 11, at 7 p.m., will be "America Beyond Capitalism," a presentation of Gar Alperovitz's important talk at last April's General Membership Meeting.

Gar's rousing speech to the Weavers Way members will be replayed, to be followed by a discussion of how Weavers Way members might move forward on cooperative issues. Come see what all the excitement was about.

Future showings will take place the second Wednesdays of May and June. Titles to be announced. Each film will be followed by a moderated discussion.

Seating is limited; admission is by advance reservation only - \$2 per person, to be paid to a Weavers Way cashier (not through the video library).

There has been a problem with some members not redeeming the cash portion of their patronage rebate. It was surprising that there were about 200 last year. Management and the Board are proposing that subsection "g" be added to Article IX, Section 4 (see **bold underlined text**).

#### Proposed Bylaw Amendment on Patronage Rebates Spring 2007

#### **Article IX - Disposition of Net Savings**

- 4. Written Notice to Members An allocation of patronage rebates shall be evidenced by a written notice within eight months and fifteen days after the end of the fiscal year stating:
  - a. The amount of net savings assigned to that member's reserve capital account as part of the patronage rebate;
  - b. The amount of net savings assigned to that member's regular capital account as part of the patronage rebate;
  - c. The amount of net savings being paid to the member in cash as part of the patronage rebate;
  - d. The total of a, b, and c designated "total patronage rebate";
  - e. The member's total reserve capital account;
  - f. The member's total regular capital account;
  - g. That the cash portion will be assigned to the members' regular capital account if not redeemed within four months of the date of this notice.

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#### Down on the Farm

(contunued from page 1)

instance, in one particular bed, we will plant carrots in the spring, followed by broccoli raab in the summer, followed by salad greens in the fall. Basically, we are going to crowd a lot of plants into a little space and never leave any space unplanted, not even in the winter. Well, maybe a little bit in the winter. The soil, and myself, will need to rest at some point.

With this system in mind, I needed to figure out exactly which crops we would be growing. Of course, this depends on what people want (a farmer must know his market) and what is profitable. It wouldn't make a lot of sense (or cents) for us to grow all feed corn or hay. So I met with produce manager Jean MacKenzie to see what types of produce she had difficulty getting, and which items she didn't sell in great enough quantity to require large, regular deliveries from an outside farm or distributor. The main theme of Jean's requests was "cute." She wants vegetables that are small and unique and not commonly found in produce departments. Things



like baby carrots, colorful radishes, golden beets, patty pan squash, lemon cucumbers, and the like. As it turns out, many of these specialty items fetch a pretty high price at market, so it's a good match. Our main sales outlet will continue to be the Co-op, but depending on how much we can eke out of our subacre plot, we may expand our sales to a local restaurant or two and nearby farmers market.

With a good idea of what we were going to be growing, I hit the seed catalogs, decided on varieti

es and placed the orders. I then got out pencil and paper to map out where everything would fit into the field, and at what time, keeping crop families in mind so that related crops don't follow each other in a particular area. Based on the crop plan, I developed a schedule for planting seeds.

Some crops, like peas and radishes, will be seeded directly into the field, while others, such as tomatoes and peppers, need to be started in a greenhouse. "But wait, I didn't think we had one of those," you might say. And you would be right; we don't have one — at least not yet. At present, we are renting space in a greenhouse owned by Wyncote Academy, a school on Washington Lane, just a couple miles past the farm. We began seeding some of the cool season crops on Feb. 20.

In between crop planning and seed starting, I developed a budget for anticipated farm expenses over the next five years, including seeds, equipment, organic fertilizer, irrigation supplies, labor, etc. After attending a seminar on "Strategic Business Planning" at the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) conference, Emily and I have been working together on a business plan for the entire operation. Necessary supplies for the season have been ordered and are starting to arrive.

Work on the new half acre is progressing nicely. For those of you who have worked out at the farm in the past, I think you will be pleasantly surprised when you see all the work that the folks at Awbury Arboretum have done. They are very excited to have us take over this new piece of land and have been working hard to get it cleared so we can grow on it this season. The process has sparked a redevelopment of the whole Northwest Tract of the arboretum, where the farm is located. They are removing invasive vines and trees, putting gravel down on the road and even creating a small parking lot for the farm. It's all very exciting

As the planting season arrives, I look forward to supplying the Co-op membership again with fresh, local, organically grown (but not certified) produce, as well as working with the farm committee to continue our educational mission in the community. I encourage you all to get involved this year. The sign-up for cooperator shifts is posted and more slots will open up as the weather warms. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions at farmer@weaversway.coop or leave a message at ext. 310 at the store.

#### Safe at Second

by Mark Goodman

With baseball season upon us, I tune into the sports stations, eagerly drinking in news about our stalwart Phillies. However, the other day I heard something unexpected – and refreshing. Chase Utley, the Phillies second baseman, who just signed a seven-year, \$85 million contract, spoke eloquently and passionately about the dangers of global warming.

So what, you say?

Professional athletes traditionally are conservative and rarely speak out for liberal or progressive causes. Part of the reason is that they've been coddled and intellectually sheltered for most of their lives because of their athletic prowess. Also, with their outlandish contracts, they identify with the monied classes. When have we heard an athlete – even one who grew up in poverty – espouse raising the minimum wage? In short, athletes commenting on controversial political or social issues is bad for business.

So to hear Utley speak knowledgeably and forthrightly about an environmental problem, which many conservatives have pretended doesn't exist, is as welcome as a cool breeze on a summer night at the ball park.

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# **Evergreen Groundcovers for Shade:** The Big Three

by Mark Goodman

I've written about ground covers before, but the topic deserves more coverage because it's one of the biggest areas of concern in Northwest Philadelphia, where grass is often hard to grow. Instead, many homeowners and gardeners turn to the Big Three of evergreen shade groundcovers: pachysandra, ivy, and vinca. Let's review the pros and cons of each.

Pachysandra is the most common ground cover in the area. It spreads by underground runners, which makes it the easiest ground cover to rake through, which is important in neighborhoods with many deciduous trees. In addition, it's the cheapest. A 100-plant flat of pachysandra costs about 20 percent less than a flat of ivy (100 plants) or vinca (24-50 plants). Finally, mature pachysandra will bloom white flowers to complement the mass of green.

However, pachysandra is the most vulnerable to heat and drought, often burning out when people neglect the simple rule of watering twice a week during dry spells. Furthermore, the plant is vulnerable to fungus if the soil has poor drainage and stays too wet.

Ivy is a close second in popularity. It is by far the hardiest of the three. Because of its deep root system, it will not dry out easily in droughts. Moreover, it's the quickest spreader, covering large areas both horizontally and vertically. And it will often get reddish highlights when the weather turns colder.

So how come many people want to remove ivy from their gardens? First, it's prolificness is also a drawback. Gardeners tire of cutting back errant ivy vines from flower beds and sidewalks, and off of trees and walls. The danger that ivy poses for stone walls is real, not just an urban legend. Ivy will suck out the moisture from mortar on stone and brick walls, causing holes in the wall and weakening the structure. Advice: if you like to see ivy climbing on walls, go down to Penn.

Ivy is difficult to rake leaves through because rakes get caught in the vines and tear them. In addition, unless the plant is very old and uncut, ivy will not flower, leaving us with a bed of green for most of the year. Finally, ivy – particularly on slopes – is vulnerable to winter-burn from cold winds. The plant usually recovers, but it can be bare and splotchy for months.

Vinca, for many gardeners, is the prize of the three. Also called periwinkle and myrtle, it sports a beautiful purple flower in early spring. In addition, although it too spreads by sending out vines, it is not nearly as invasive as ivy.

However, vinca is the most expensive of the three, and it can get a fungus when planted in poorly drained areas. And, like ivy, it is difficult to rake leaves through.

All three choices have the advantage of eliminating weeds when filled in thickly. And for a splash of brightness, you can usually plant daffodils in a ground cover bed if there are at least four hours of sun. The ground cover foliage will help hide the daffodil leaves once they begin to wither.

There you have it – three good choices for your shady lawn area, bed, or slope. Weigh the pros and cons, and then instead of grass use one of the Big Three. p.s. Happy Earth Day and Arbor Day.

#### **Idyllic Summers at Beachcombers Co-op**

by Nini Engel

For Weavers Way members, the idea of a cooperative swim club should come naturally. Beach-comber Swim Club was started in the 1950s by a group of people who wanted to create a peaceful place where their families could swim, play, relax and enjoy the outdoors. Members cleared underbrush and removed the poison ivy. Other members shared their architectural and engineering expertise in planning and design. Members still contribute actively.

Beachcomber sits on 17 acres in Blue Bell, Pa. From West Mt. Airy, the drive takes between 20- 25 minutes. For those families coming after work, the train station is within a five-minute drive, making it easy to collect Center City commuters. Since the adults make friends, too, it's common to hear, "Can Jacob stay with you while I go pick up Dan at the train?" or, "Can the girls hang out with you while I pick up the pizzas?" The cooperative spirit spills over into a feeling of extended family.

Over time, Beachcomber has evolved into an unusual summer sanctuary. The grounds are wooded and extensive, letting families set up camp for the day under their favorite tree. Children swim, play basketball, volleyball, miniature golf, or check out a board game to play on their blanket. Adults swim laps, read under the trees, play tennis, take painting classes and snooze. There are family sleepover nights and special events for Fourth of July, Memorial Day and Labor Day. Young children make their first independent trip to the snack bar and return grinning with the pleasure of their successful purchase and dripping cherry water ice. At Beachcomber, children can safely have a level of independence that has become increasingly rare.

Swimming lessons for children are available at low cost and private lessons can be arranged with the lifeguards as

needed. Our youngest was shy in the group class, but picked up skills quickly after two sessions with her favorite lifeguard. The energetic pool staff are famously popular with the children.

Our family joined in the early nineties and our daughters spent many summers there. Since we're on an academic schedule, we used Beachcomber as a family camp. All of us could swim, drop in to cooking classes, arts and crafts, or guitar jam sessions. Wednesday afternoons were set in stone, (stoneware actually), since the pottery class was always on Wednesdays in the picnic grove. It's easy to arrange a summer birthday party on the grounds. Guest fees are reasonable and half price on Thursdays.

As the demographics of the club have changed in the past few years, Beach-comber has been actively seeking new members. There are significant discounts for first time members, so that you have the chance to try the experience for a summer. There is an open house scheduled for Sunday, May 6, from 12 to 3 p.m. (rain date Saturday, May 12).

The sunlight falling through the trees in the early evening, families barbecuing and talking in the picnic grove, toddlers showered up and in pajamas for the ride home – when the day ends at Beachcomber, we head home cool, relaxed, and renewed. Come join us in 2007

For more information contact Michael Kolodner, chairperson, at 215-242-5272 or check out Beachcomber's website, www.beachcomberswimclub.org





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#### Oh Yes, I'm a Great Tree Tender!

by Dave Tukey

The Right Tree in the Right Place. That's the well-known advice for urban street trees. But just how do you go about planning to plant a tree along your sidewalks? What trees are good for our urban area? How much area do they need for growth? What about overhead wires and other obstacles? What care do young trees need if they are to thrive? What resources are available to help your neighborhood group plant trees on your block?

While there are great websites with answers to these questions, if you want to be a serious street tree advocate, there's



no substitute for a workshop. We are fortunate to have such a training workshop in our area: the Tree Tenders program. Since 1993, this program has trained more than 1500 volunteers in 100 Philadelphia neighborhoods and has recently expanded to nearby counties in Pennsylvania.

The next Philadelphia Green Tree Tender training series will be held Wednesdays, May 16, 23 and 30, from 5:45pm-8:45pm, at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (100 North 20th Street). There are also workshops planned for Bucks and Montgomery Counties this spring, with more workshops scheduled for the fall. The series is free of charge and snacks are served, but you must register. It's not uncommon for the program to be booked to capacity.

Tree Tender training includes:

- Tree Biology
- Urban Stresses on Trees
- Tree Identification
- Basic Tree Pruning and Root Care
- Tree Planting
- Community Organizing

The workshop series is part of the southeast Pennsylvania "TreeVitalize" initiative of the Commonwealth's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and was developed by staff from PHS and the Penn State Cooperative Extension.

For further information, contact either: Julianne Schieffer (610-489-4315, jxs51@psu.edu) or Mindy Maslin (215-988-8844, mmaslin@pennhort.org). To register on-line, go to www.pennsylvania-horticulturalsociety.org and choose "Tree Tenders Training."

#### Ned Wolf Park

(continued from page 1) represent victims of racial segregation. In response, Ned Wolf created and ran The Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law in 1969, which later became PILCOP (Public Interest Law Center of Phila), which fought to get our city, state and federal governments to do right by the public, especially the most vulnerable citizens, includ-

ing children, people of color, and the disabled. Ned Wolf died of cancer in 1977 at the age of 39. His widow built and dedicated the park in his name in 1979

In November 2006, when the community organized in response to the recent rash of crime near the Co-op, Ronda Throne-Murray became aware of community concern about the condition of the local park; she has dedicated herself to coordinating rehabilitation efforts now officially called the Ned Wolf Park Project. Ronda has had the help of Laura Siena of WMAN and Philadelphia Green, a division of the Philadelphia Horticultural Society that helps neighborhoods and the city's Dept. of Recreation revitalize their parks. Ronda has spoken to contacts in the other city agencies and is exploring what they can accomplish. She wants to do a lot, including removal of dangers and eyesores, installation of new gardens and bushes, repair of the wooden wall, additional lighting and signage consisting of an official park name sign and a plaque about Ned Wolf.

Ronda initially had high hopes for a complete rehabilitation in the coming spring, but the city's help is more likely to come much later in the year. However, the transformation of the park will still get under way this May. Ronda and Syd Carpenter will be gathering local gardeners to form the Mt. Airy Garden Club, who will also become the "Friends of Ned Wolf Park." Together we will work to prepare and plant some new garden beds and plant a number of bushes. A work weekend will be coordinated on Saturday, May 19. (We have also added a soil preparation day to our agenda on April 28. Heavy rain



NED WOLF PARK

dates for both events will be the next day.) Your donations and volunteer efforts are needed.

We are seeking donations of shadeloving perennials that grow 30 inches or less such as ferns, hellabores, lily-of-thevalley, forget-me-not, hardy begonia, chameleon plant, barrenwort, coral bells, variegated monkey grass, variegated brunerra, or blue, yellow or variegated hosta. If you have a roto-tiller, chain saw, stump grinder, or small chipper and are willing to lend them or operate them on May 19, that would be a big help, too. Tax deductible financial donations can be sent to WMAN (6703 Germantown Ave, Ste.# 200, Phila, PA 19119) with Ned Wolf Park in the memo section.

The Department of Recreation said they will do their part to schedule mowing the grass and collecting trash now that they know the neighborhood is "interested." They are looking into removing the rubble, providing benches and repairing the railroad tie wall. A Department of Recreation site survey is pending and we will know what they plan to do before our May work day.

The Weavers Way Environmental Committee has welcomed an application from the Ned Wolf Park Project, and there may be grant money for new bushes to be planted as part of the May event, in addition to donated plants from you and the Garden Club members.

If you want to join the Garden Club, donate money or plant divisions, volunteer or offer assistance, please contact Ronda Throne-Murray at rondazmail@verizon.net, or call 215-848-4222.

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#### Weavers Way: a Modern Watering Hole

By Aviva Perlo

Years ago, people walked to the nearest water source to fill up big jugs for water, cooking, and bathing. We washed our clothes in the river and socialized in the process. The watering hole brought people together. The watering hole became a place of community, connection, and even a place to strike deals and play matchmaker. Today, many of us have our own washing machines plugged into our own homes. Separated by boxes, by convenience and technological advancement. But in spite of our advancement, we have luckily managed to preserve the essence of the water hole, and that sacred place is called Weavers Way. The Co-op is my modern-day watering hole, a place to run into people, say hello, exchange life updates, plug into the latest and greatest community project, from community gardens to social entrepreneurs to free tickets to music concerts, voter registration info, pawning off unwanted furniture, picking up a feng shui consultant, sending faxes for my taxes, and finding umpteen powerful remedies for winter ailments. Of course, Weavers Way also boasts fancy-shmanz organic teas, delectable chocolates, and lox bits for my bagel (food stocked according to Mt Airy cultures). It really doesn't get any better than that, except of course, for all the cute cashiers who ring you up so diligently and calmly. The staff must have been trained in "how to be hip" while also recognizing 14 kinds of zucchini. Just as I ponder how smooth they are, it's time to move

on, and give someone else a chance to draw water with joy on this special street corner. "Next shopper?"

I moved to Mt Airy from the west coast (Eugene, Oregon), so when I first saw Weavers Way, I felt at home. But then I noticed a peculiar thing: there were meat/animal products for sale in Weavers Way. And even some Kosher ones too. Wow, I had belonged to a lot of co-ops and never saw animal products for sale in co-ops before. The East Coast rocks I mused. Soon, I figured out that if I did not have social plans for Friday night Shabbat dinner, I could go into the Co-op late on a Friday afternoon (4 p.m.-ish) and casually run into people with whom I could make plans for dinner. Geez, this co-op was getting better and better. Gathering at communal spaces like watering holes can enhance your social life. Who says the Industrial Revolution made us all individuals? Watch out world, we've got Weavers Way. Sure, the space is tight, and you say 'Excuse me' a hundred times. Sure, your conversation lacks privacy and people can hear you in every direction. But, hey, it's comfy, communal, hip, and downright utilitarian; after all, you can always buy something useful in the Co-op before, during, and after each conversation. At home, we tend to gather in/near the kitchens. In communal space, why not gather in Weavers Way. After all, as they say in event planning, it's better to have a small space filled up versus a large room that's partially filled. Weavers Way promotes community, health, and togetherness in more ways than one.

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#### **Coming Home**

by Mark Goodman

I didn't want to leave Mt. Airy ten years ago, but the move to Elkins Park was best for our family. Now I'm back as a single parent, and I'm thrilled to be reunited with my beloved Mt. Airy, where I had lived for 27 years.

In some ways, I never left. I kept my landscaping business in the neighborhood with two garages and an office, and I shopped at the Co-op whenever I could. I wasn't the only one who felt the pang of loss at leaving Mt. Airy. Shortly after moving, I was invited to an "expatriate" party, attended by former Mt. Airyites who identified with their old neighborhood the way many people identify with their country.

My 13-year-old son Alex and I are very happy to be on the unit block of West Durham Street, a brief stroll away from Mt. Airy's "Golden Block," Germantown Ave. between Mt. Pleasant and Mt. Airy Aves. Restaurants and eateries? Let's see, there's Chinese, Mexican, Middle Eastern, Italian, Southern home cooking, fried chicken, a coffee house, a pizzeria, a night club, and a friendly neighborhood tavern. There is a video store (with ice cream and water ice), a Mom n' Pop store (more ice cream), barber shop, liquor store, spa, cultural center, pharmacy, and stores selling African artifacts, art supplies, and stained glass. And that's only some of the shops One block more in either direction and you have a convenience store and a super market.

For an active teenager who eats like a locust and likes to have fun, this neighborhood is paradise. He's also closer to his school, Project Learn, and his Hebrew school, Mishkan Shalom in Manayunk, which is now holding teen classes at Germantown Jewish Centre.

For me, it's great to be back among familiar sights and sounds, including Weavers Way. You don't know how good it feels to walk into the Co-op and start yakking with old and new friends and neighbors, ex-students and teachers, and customers. I enjoy catching up on the latest news about family, jobs, school, and relationships, or to just chat about books, gardening, and sports. Some days, when I see acquaintances from the past, it's like being on the old TV show, "This Is Your

So it's wonderful to return, and as Alex and I wind our way to friends' houses, Carpenter's Woods, or the shops, the same message seems to resonate from the buildings, the trees, and even the streets and the sidewalks — Welcome Home

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#### Time to Put the Kettle On

by Peter Samuel

Back when I was a kid, my Dad had us all convinced that he had written the infamous song "Tea for Two." Whether that was because it was just about the only song he knew (besides his college football song "If you wanna be a Badger") or whatever the reason, he often broke into the chorus near the end of dinner. It was usually when he thought he wasn't getting enough attention, or he was avoiding some other topic. At any rate, I have only recently found out that the song was written by Youmans and Caesar and became famous when sung in the 1925 musical, "No, No Nanette." Sorry, Dad.

I bet you didn't know I was leading up to talking about the importance of tea in our lives. And when I say 'our,' I mean everyone on the planet. That is because tea in all of its various forms is the second most consumed drink after water, and in our country it is the fourth most popular – that is after water, soft drinks and coffee. The average American drinks 155 cups a year, and that number is steadily increasing. I personally gulp close to 1,000 cups a year so I know I am doing my part statistically.

Real tea comes from the plant Camellia sinensis, which is a perennial evergreen shrub that grows mostly between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. Most tea is produced in Asia or Africa. Last year, I took a tour of a tea plantation in South Carolina on an island near Charleston. It is the only one in the United States and was started by Lipton in the 1960s when they were afraid that the instability of the world markets would devastate tea prices. Now it is owned by Bigelow and their output is quite small, but at least they can claim the only truly American tea.

It was there I learned first hand how the processing of the tiny tea leaves determines what kind of tea they end up with. The least amount of 'oxidation' results in green tea, a little more and they get Oolong, and the most fermentation and oxidation, turns the tea leaves 'black' and thus they call it black tea. There is also white tea, which is not oxidized and is made from immature leaves. But from the start, they are all made from the same plant.

Flavored teas are made by adding ingredients during processing. Tossing jasmine flowers with either black or green tea makes the delicious scented Jasmine tea. Earl Grey is mainly the combination of bergamot oil and a strong black tea. English Breakfast tea is a combination of different black tea leaves from India and Sri Lanka.

Different countries have different tasting teas – Ceylon tea from Sri Lanka, Formosa tea from Taiwan, Assam tea from India. And then there are blends of all these. Affecting the thousands of varieties of tea are variables such as soil, altitude and weather. Some teas crave high mountains and cool mist, while others grow better in lower terrain. The foremost tea regions are in China, Japan, Taiwan, India and Sri Lanka..

In the tea industry, beverages made with herbs or flower parts instead of Camellia sinensis are often referred to as tisanes (pronounced tee-zahn or TEE-san or tih ZAHNS or tee-sahn, depending on which website you go to), or herbal infusions. That covers a pretty wide category. Rooibos (universally pronounced royboss) is becoming more popular with Coop shoppers probably because they have heard about its high level of antioxidants

like superoxide dismutase (SOD), its lack of caffeine, and its very low tannin levels. It is only grown in one province in South Africa and is a member of the legume family.

Yerbe Mate is a tea-like beverage consumed mainly in Argentina, Uruguay,

Paraguay and southern Brazil, but also available at the Co-op of course. It is brewed from the dried leaves and stemlets of the perennial tree Ilex paraguarensis. It is thought to boost immunity, cleanse and detoxify the blood, tone the nervous system, restore youthful hair color, retard aging, combat fatigue, and a whole list of other things.

Chai tea, which has become super popular in the last ten years, actually refers to 'massala chai,' originally an Indian drink made from black tea mixed with a combination of spices like cardamom, cinnamon, black pepper, ginger root, and star anise and usually brewed with milk and some sugar. My sister referred to this as "tilk." Chai is just another name for tea, and in many countries they use the word chai instead of "tea."

Many of you have been up to the second floor of the Co-op in the last few months to see the new display of loose teas. They are arrayed in hand-carved, gravity-fed bins with see through doors. Martha Fuller, the Co-op's second-floor manager, told me that the teas and the fancy bins are from Frontier Natural Products. Frontier is a cooperative tea and herb wholesaler out of Iowa. They claim they are the industry leader in natural and organic packaged goods. The herbs downstairs are also purchased from Frontier. Most of their product is organic and many of them are Fair Trade items.

Martha says the Co-op sells about 30

pounds of loose tea per month, or more. Right now there are 18 kinds of loose tea upstairs (all but two are organic) as well as boxed teas from Traditional Medicinals, Bija and Yogi Tea. Traditional Medicinals are really herbal 'infusions' and each is geared to helping with health issues such as digestion or nerves or menstrual

If you never get upstairs you won't find those really fresh loose teas, but you could discover on the shelves above the onions an explosion of boxed and canned tea options. The most prolific is Republic of Tea with 23 and Celestial Seasons with 22 types. Then there are entries from Choice, Eden, Twinings, Goodearth, Yogi, Tazo and Tetley. In 1953, Tetley launched the tea bag in the U.K. and it was an immediate success. The convenience of the tea bag revolutionized how Britons drank their tea and now the traditional tea pot (even there) has given way to making tea in a cup using a tea bag.

Being one of those people who rarely makes tea in a pot, I was saddened to find that the the tea used in tea bags has an industry name — it is called "fannings" or "dust" and is the waste product produced from the sorting of higher quality loose leaf tea. Tea aficionados say that this method provides an inferior taste and experience. Humph Also, Orange Pekoe, as I'm sure most of you know, has nothing to do with oranges. It is actually a catego-

(continued on page 13)



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#### Put the Kettle On

(continued from page I 2)

ry in the grading of tea leaves – just two steps above the "fannings."

After dinner at our house we often all have tea (except for Colin, age 9). The advantage of tea bags is that everyone can have something different. Sleepy Time from Celestial Seasons seems to be popular with a few of the kids. It has a lot of chamomile in it, which is supposed to relax you – always good for active teenage

If you are thirsty for tea when you enter the Co-op, you should get a cold bottled tea from the cooler over by the walkin. There are two choices, Honest Tea and Tazo; both come in three flavors and are organic. If you have a minute, go to Tazo's web site, it is very cool (and refreshing). We won't even talk about the commercial brands of iced tea and iced tea mix - talk about inferior Lots of those are mostly corn syrup and flavoring. Not much real tea involved, and if there is, it's definitely tea dust.

According to legend, tea was discovered in China over 5,000 years ago when an Emperor who liked to boil water before he drank it accidentally sipped water into which some leaves had fallen. The inquisitive and curious monarch was pleasantly surprised by the brews flavour and its restorative properties.

China then enjoyed tea for centuries before it was introduced to the outside world through trade. It is believed that the Turkish Empire was the first to trade for tea, and then it eventually made its way to Europe via the Portuguese outpost in Macau. Until the mid- 1800's, cargo ships and those carrying tea, usually took

between 12 and 15 months to make passage from ports in the East to those in London.

There have been a lot of claims lately about the health benefits of tea, especially that it is a great source of anti-oxidants, and that it may help in the prevention of heart disease and cancer. Even Coca-Cola came out with "Enviga" which is a teabased drink they claim helps people lose weight. According to the latest health letter from the Center for Science in the Public Interest, none of these claims has been proven or can be. While an extract called Teaflavin was found to lower 'bad' cholesterol levels in humans, it did so at levels equivalent of drinking 35 cups of tea a day.

If you are looking for a new way to start your day and would like to reduce your caffeine intake, you should consider either black tea, with half the caffeine of coffee, or green tea which has half that of black tea. Or check out the many selections of loose tea 'tisanes' upstairs in the Co-op.

In the back of my mind, I can still hear my dad's out-of-pitch warbling of 'Tea for Two' and it once again makes me want to put the kettle on.

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#### Step It Up, Philly!

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by Meenal Raval

As individuals, there's a lot we can do around the homestead to reduce energy consumption - and therefore the carbon emissions that cause global warming. In addition, we can also ask our government to help us do the right thing with appropriate legislation, incentives and subsidies.

Author Bill McKibben and students from Middlebury College in Vermont made such a request last Labor Day weekend. They asked all their candidates for Federal office to support cutting carbon emissions by 80 percent by 2050, based on the Jeffords-Waxman legislation. They began a five-day walk from Middlebury to Burlington, staying overnight with friends. By the time they reached Burlington, their group had swelled to over 1,000 people In Burlington, each of the candidates, one by one, stepped up to support them. Thus ended the first ever march for global warming by raising the bar for our demands as well.

Now, McKibben and students are the command center of a nation-wide action called Step It Up, slated for Saturday, April 14. Almost 800 cities across our nation have heeded their call and are rallying to say: "Step It Up Congress Cut Carbon Emissions by 80 percent by 2050" on this National Day of Climate Action.

McKibben says: "The best science tells us we have ten years to fundamentally transform our economy and lead the world in the same direction or else, in the

words of NASA's Jim



Hansen, we will face a 'totally different planet,' one infinitely sadder and less flourishing." You can read more from McKibben at www.stepitup07.org.

Philly-area residents have stepped up as well to rally at Independence Mall that day from noon till 2 p.m. So, come by train... Come by bicycle... Come on foot...Just come to the Mall with family, friends and neighbors. Come with signs and banners.

Come for the performances by Bill Mettler of Quiet Riot.

Hear the Global Warming Expert from the Center for Global Negotiations as well as Mayoral candidates & celebri-

See exhibits and resources for personal action.

Sign postcards asking Congress to: Step It Up Cut Carbon Emissions by 80 Percent by 2050.

For general inquiries and offers to volunteer, contact Cat Nemen at catdandelion @ gmail.com. If your organization wants to promote the event, contact Meenal Raval at meenal @ mtairygreening.net. Please direct media inquiries to Pamela Tudor at ptudor@comcast.net or our hotline number 267-709-3415. More at www.stepitupphilly.org.

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#### The Perfect Gift

by Betsy Teutsch

My late father-in-law, Eric, was in all matters methodical and measured; no detail was too small for precision and consistency. This is typical of Germany, from which he fled as a young refugee. As a 20-year-old immigrant bereft of parents and lacking education, he brought this attention to detail to his new life, gradually working himself up from warehouse hand to bookkeeper to manager. When it was time for wife-shopping, he looked back to his home community and married a fellow refugee from the same city, now also a new American. The two steadfastly set forth to succeed. Victory would be reinstating the family's status stolen from them by the Nazis. And succeed my in-laws did.

Early on in our married life, my mother-in-law – ever practical and not the slightest bit sentimental - suggested we forgo material gifts for the usual occasions. We happily agreed, and a highly regulated system was set in place. There were checks for us for birthdays and anniversaries, a phone call from them every Saturday evening, and in our salad days, a "mitbring," a check left behind when they visited us to cover any extra expenses we might have incurred on their behalf. For big birthdays and anniversaries, we did give gifts, like their first computer, or a token hostess gift when visiting. But by and large, it was a no-gift universe.

Eric's one indulgence was sweets, particularly Bavarian treats from his youth.

been a happy one, and reminders of that time and place pleased him. His favorite treat was lebkuchen, a crumbly Christmas ginger and citron cookie with a paper-thin sugar wafer crust. Nurnberg is the heart of lebkuchen country, and each year Cousin Friedel from Nurnberg would send a gift tin of these treats. The tins themselves, embossed with scenes of Medieval Germany, are beautiful works of art, making the lebkuchen-eating ritual even more delectable. He would enjoy a morsel of lebkuchen each day, daintily rewrapping the goodies and soberly sealing them up, stretching out the experience for as many weeks as possible. Once I baked lebkuchen from a recipe I tracked down, thinking it would warm his heart. He was polite about it, but let me know there was really no relationship

Up until Kristallnacht his childhood had

Time passed, and Eric retired, aged, and mellowed. A move to a Continuing Care Community coincided with a cancer diagnosis. For three years, he carefully followed a regimen of surgery, radiation, and chemo, but it was clearly a downward spiral. Friedel aged, too, and the lebkuchen stopped coming, a very sad state of affairs for my father-in-law. When we heard about this, it occurred to me that in the 21st century, it should be possible to buy Nurnberger lebkuchen on the net. Ten minutes later I had located them not in Germany, but from the Texas German Deli, and sent two tins off

between my offering and the genuine

to California. Eric was quite tickled, and I was pleased that there was something we could actually send him that he was guaranteed to enjoy.

Last summer, on one of our many visits during his last months, we reminisced about his surprise at receiving lebkuchen again. He allowed as that he had really enjoyed them, but they were not the *best* brand — the ultimate lebkuchen being Haeberlein-Metzger. My husband duly jotted this down. A few months later we had the opportunity to send Eric the very best, and despite a decreased appetite, he still relished them. By then his world had become very small. Hospice nurses visited once or twice weekly; he stopped driving because of frailty and medications; his cronies had passed on. Each day there were four phone calls: each son, his brother, and his sister-in-law. Our daily conversations now included a lebkuchen report and how much he had enjoyed his daily portion. I never recall giving a gift with such

A few weeks later we learned the lebkuchen were finished. My father-inlaw was clearly not going to be around next winter, so - what the hell. I brought up the website and shipped off another two tins. A second batch of lebkuchen

was unthinkable. But,

oh, so much enjoyed. On our next visit a few weeks later, he was still rationing it out at each lunch and savoring each bite. When the subject came up, he said, with alarm: "Don't send any more" And then he told us this second batch was even fresher and better than the first. The whole concept of a second shipment of lebkuchen was very unsettling for a methodical, measured man, but there was glee under his disapproval of our excess.

He stretched his lebkuchen out for three more weeks, each day weaker and in more pain. On Jan. 22, he ate the last of the lebkuchen, and the following morning he awoke unable to move and in unbearable pain. He was transferred to the nursing facility, tended to by devoted hospice staff, and died a week later. He died satisfied he had done the best he possibly could, at age 87. As Eric himself would have said: "Not bad."

Betsy blogs at www.moneychangesthings.blogspot.com

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#### Body Unbound: The Arts to Bloom in April at Springboard Studio

by Caroline Peterson

Springboard Studio, 530 Carpenter Lane, across the street from Weavers Way, will have its first seasonal art show of 2007 with an opening on Friday, April 19, from 5:30-9:00 p.m. The exhibit Body Unbound will continue on Saturday and Sunday, April 20 and 21, from 12-7 p.m.

Body Unbound is the first exhibit of the works of artists and art teachers who have been gathering for a live model figure drawing and painting group for close to a decade at the art studio of Bill Hanson and Liz Greenwood in the 500 block of Carpenter Lane. Though there have been changing members over time, a core group has persisted, at times moving away and back to the group, through the natural rhythms of their lives. The group has benefited from the rich resource in the Philadelphia region of artists' models, some of whom are artists themselves. The Carpenter Lane drawing group is less formal than a traditional art school group, with community oriented dialogue as part of the Sunday afternoon and sometimes Thursday evening sessions. Body Unbound is an exhibit of two and threedimensional figuratively related art works by 11 artists currently participating in the figure-drawing group. Artists exhibiting in the show, many of them Mt. Airy residents, include Glen Benge, Karen Freeman, Liz Greenwood, Gina Gruenberg, Anne Johnson, Marcia Jones, Emme Mc-Dermott, Caroline Peterson, Bob Pistillo, Linda Thompson, Jo Viviani and David

Springboard Studio will offer its first arts-based programming with an Experiential Painting Workshop to be held on Thursday evenings throughout the month of April from 6:30-9:30 p.m. Experiential painting is the opportunity to move from the creative unknown place inside all of us. In a safe, non-judgmental atmosphere, painting instructions will help participants feel their way through the process and orient each participant towards moment-to-moment creative expression. Come play, explore and invent with the energy and curiosity that came so easily as a young child. Each class begins with a short discussion. All materials, including brushes, will be supplied.

The workshop is led by Aileen Gittleman, who is deeply devoted to nurturing the creative process and has been a dedicated student and painter of the Point Zero Painting Process since 2003. She holds a BFA from Washington University and an MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). Ms. Gittleman has taught Jewelry, Art History, Design at



CARPENTER LANE FIGURE DRAWING GROUP, (SEATED L-R) ANNE JOHNSON, EMME McDermott, Jo Viviani (Standing, L-R) Caroline Peterson, David YOUNG, MARCIA JONES, GLEN BENGE, LIZ GREENWOOD, BOB PISTILLO, LINDA THOMPSON, KAREN FREEMAN (NOT SHOWN GINA GRUENBERG)

RISD, Rhode Island College and the Worcester Center for Crafts. She currently teaches in the Art Department at the Baldwin School in Bryn Mawr, Pa. The fee for the four-week session is \$135 or \$35 for an individual class. Pre-registration is required and space is limited. To register call 215-805-1648, or contact alinegittleman@hotmail.com. Springboard Studio is located at 530 Carpenter Lane.

Springboard Studio, a space for mindfulness, creativity and well-being, opened in December 2006 with a winter art exhibit and since January 2007 has been offering an ongoing free program of mindfulness meditation throughout the week. For more information, call 215-528-2138. The studio website is expected to open soon at springboardstudio.net.



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#### Resveratrol: Perhaps the World's First Anti-Aging Medication

by Josh Mitteldorf

Animals that eat less live longer. They're healthier, too, and more active. It's not a stretch to say that eating less slows down the aging process.

But eating is such a pleasurable and socially conditioned part of our lives that we all have trouble subjecting it to strict controls. Most of us would be very happy to see science develop a pill that offers the benefits of the hungry lifestyle without the hunger.

Scientists refer to the low calorie regimen as "Caloric Restriction", or CR, and the technical name for a chemical that produces the effect of CR in a fully fed animal is "CR Mimetic".

Resveratrol is the first solid candidate for a CR mimetic. It's still early in the experimental cycle, and data is thin, just because these experiments take time. But results are so positive that scientists and even some medical people are saying it may not be too early to recommend resveratrol as a general anti-aging tonic.

#### A brief history

The story of resveratrol's discovery begins in the 1990s, when stories first came out about the French paradox: Why is it that with such a rich diet, full of saturated fats, the French have a lower rate of cardiovascular disease than Britain or America? The answer was traced to the French habit of drinking wine with the evening meal, and it was established that something in red wine has a protective effect on the heart.

The first speculation was, maybe it's the alcohol. Could it be that a small

amount of alcohol each day protects the arteries? That turned out not to be true. Five years ago, it was discovered that the active agent in red wine providing cardiovascular protection was resveratrol.

It was David Sinclair (now at Harvard) who made the discovery. As a student, he had been working on the mouse gene called SIR2 under the direction of Leonard Guarente at MIT. Yeast cells may seem a funny place to study aging - what does it mean for a single cell to age? - but it turns out that not only do these cells experience aging, but some of the mechanisms of aging in yeast are closely analogous to aging in flies and worms...and you and me. Yeast responds to food scarcity the same way that higher animals do, slowing the pace of aging. And yeasts use a hormone very close to insulin in structure to regulate their sugar use, and insulin seems related to the rate of aging in living things from yeast on up.

SIR stands for 'Silent Information Regulator.' The gene contains instructions for a protein that wraps itself around DNA, preventing some areas of the DNA from making their own proteins. Apparently these proteins cause an animal (or a cell) to age, because silencing them has an anti-aging effect. The analog of SIR2 in humans is called SIR-T1, and it also plays a roll in transmitting the signal that tells the cell to slow down the rate of aging in response to food shortage.

In 2002, Sinclair discovered that resveratrol stimulates SIR2 (and SIR-T1) in much the same way that a low-calorie diet does. The race was on to discover the

mechanism of action, and to ask whether life can actually be extended with resveratrol. The first animals to be tested were short-lived flies and worms. Resveratrol showed promise, extending life span about 30 percent in both species.

#### Animal studies with resveratrol

An enterprising Italian grad student was working with aging in a short-lived species of African fish, and saw an opportunity to try resveratrol for the first time with a vertebrate species. The plan worked swimmingly, and the resveratroleaters lived 60 percent longer than their brother and sister fish.

Mice are short-lived mammals, but an experiment on mouse lifespan still requires four years. These experiments are in progress, but early results are already coming out, and they are promising. In an article last fall in the British journal Nature, Dr Sinclair and company reported that fat mice on resveratrol had metabolic characteristics of thin mice. They were healthier by a broad range of measures, and we might expect that they are aging more slowly as well. Around the same time, a French research group reported that feeding jumbo doses of resveratrol to lab mice gave them phenomenal athletic endurance – twice that of untreated mice. The boost was traced to a huge increase in the number of mitochondria in muscle cells. Mitochondria are tiny organelles, thousands in a typical cell, which burn sugar to create electrochemical energy, in a form the cell can

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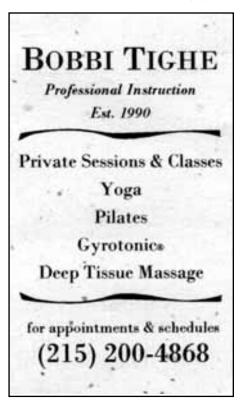
#### Resveratrol in humans?

Just this January, an editorial in the Journal of Molecular and Cellular Cardiology recommended that it may not be too early for doctors to recommend resveratrol to their patients as a general preventative. This judgment wasn't based on a thorough knowledge, but a feeling that the potential benefits are so large that they might warrant taking a risk with side effects that have not yet been delineated.

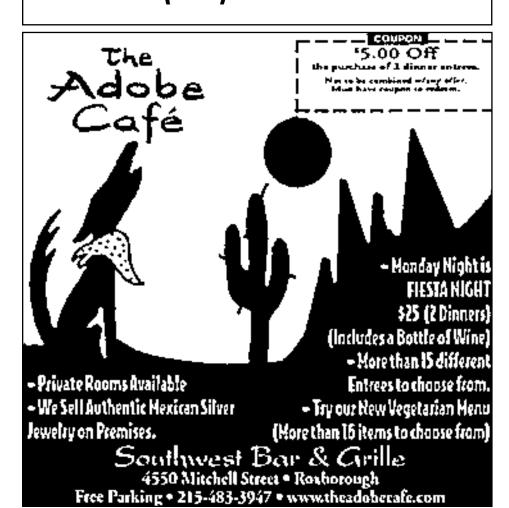
There are no red flags at present, but research is still at such an early stage that it is difficult to know if there will be a serious down side to resveratrol. Rats in a toxicity study experienced kidney damage only after they'd received doses equivalent to half a pound a day in a human scale. The mice in the French experiment were given a human-equivalent dose of about an ounce a day, or several hundred capsules. A colleague of mine, experimenting on himself, reports diarrhea with 3000 mg/day (30 capsules of 100 mg each).

Optimal dosage is still a big question mark. Wine varies widely in its resvera-

(continued on page 17)







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#### Resveratrol

(continued from page 16)

trol content, so that it may take anywhere from two to 50 glasses of wine to obtain 1 mg of resveratrol. There is a glaring gap between the tiny doses from wine that still seem to provide some benefit and the huge doses – thousands of times bigger when scaled for body weight – that make mice into super athletes. Until some long-term studies have been done in humans, people who experiment on themselves will be flying blind.

The first (expensive) pills sold a few years ago contained 40 mg, but the company has recently announced 100 mg capsules at the same price. 250 mg capsules are also available mail order via the Web. Up until last year there was just one supplier and prices were high; recently, several other companies joined the fray, and resveratrol prices have dropped sharply. But is it natural?

Many WW members eat organic food, pursue a 'natural' lifestyle, and shun pills. I'm sympathetic.

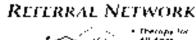
But I also believe that there is one giant limitation to this health strategy, and that is aging. Natural foods are a way to help our bodies do what they were designed by nature to do. But our bodies were never designed to resist aging; in

fact, aging is part of nature's developmental program. We are 'designed' to degrade and lose functionality with age. We are programmed to die.

The aging program is flexible in some diabolical ways. We are programmed to age more quickly when life is comfortable, when we are fat and happy and sedentary. Recommended weight on a doctor's chart is unattainable for many of us, and I would argue that truly ideal weight is lower yet.

It is to tap into the flexibility in nature's aging program that I recommend 'unnatural' interventions. Natural foods are for health maintenance; but to combat aging, we require un-natural treatments and supplements.

My page of suggestions (and references) for a long and healthy life: http://AgingAdvice.org



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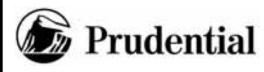
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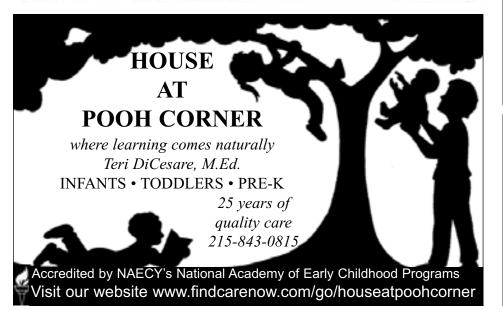
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FILM STUDENTS FROM COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF PHILADELPHIA RECENTLY CHOSE WEAVERS WAY AS THE SUBJECT FOR THEIR FILM CLASS. DIRECTING WAS MARIA PAOLA PARDO (C), WHO WAS HELPED BY KIRK FAKETE (R), AND LAURA GAYLORD (L). WHEN THE FILM IS FINISHED, YOU WIL BE ABLE TO LINK TO IT FROM THE CO-OP'S WEBSITE.



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#### Manager's Corner

(continued from page 1)

I know we will stray without knowing it, or that one member will interpret the mission or product statements differently, and that is good; but we must keep our eye on the mission at all times. I bring this up after reading an article by Marian Burros in the New York Times (2/28/2007, F5), "Is Whole Foods Straying From Its Roots?" (next to this article was a great item about Tom Michaels, a plant pathologist who has successfully grown black truffles in a hazelnut orchard in eastern Tennessee; I couldn't keep my eyes off of that one while reading about Whole Foods). I thought the article spoke to us as members of WW concerned not only about good food, but also about supporting local sustainable business, supporting the environment, and many other ideals.

"There is a segment of shoppers who have moved ahead of Whole Foods," the article states. "They think it is important to have a smaller carbon footprint and to want to help small farmers... Whole Foods is lagging behind."

The article refers to Michael Pollan's recent book, The Omnivores Dilemma (reviewed in the March 2007 Shuttle), and points out that Pollan blasts Whole Foods for purchasing from Earthbound and Cal-Organic, while marketing organic and sustainable values. Yikes We buy from these places, too, while at the same time talking about sustainable and organic. Now, to be fair, we usually only buy from them in the winter. Whenever possible, like in the summer, we purchase from Lancaster, and we have a farm that I hope will supply some of these products. But we can purchase the same product from local farms even in the winter. Why we do not, I can not answer at this time, but here is an area that we must keep an eye on for the future and our Mission Statement and Product Philosophy Statement of Principles makes it very clear that we have to watch this even more and find alternative sources.

(The article also observes that Whole Foods' prices are set at a premium price structure — over 40 percent margin, compared to our 34 percent — and that while the store quality is expected to match that level of pricing, not all of their stores are maintaining that quality.)

So, as an owner, you are empowered to pull something from produce, bakery, etc and go to a store manager or department manager and say, "You know, I do not think this is the right quality level for us," or "Is there any way to purchase this locally, and at what price?" Stay on top of us and keep us on track. Remind us to keep our eye on the "mission"



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#### Weavers Way Mission Statement

It is the mission of Weavers Way Cooperative Association (WW) to operate a grocery-based consumer organization that is owned and governed by its members; and to build community, both within its membership and in the Northwest Philadel-

We do things cooperatively. We encourage each member to contribute to and participate in all activities we undertake as a cooperative. We follow and promote the International Cooperative Principles, support other co-ops and cooperative efforts, and educate our members and our community about consumer issues and the cooperative movement.

We're committed to each other as members. We maintain a welcoming store which operates in an atmosphere of trust and respect. We provide an equitable and rewarding workplace for our member-employees. We offer products and services, which reflect our members' needs, and which balance quality and cost.

We're committed to the community. We support local businesses, wholesalers, community groups and institutions in ways that strengthen our community and benefit our members. We embrace the diversity of Mt. Airy, and seek to reflect that diversity in our membership.

We're committed to the environment. We work to sustain a healthy planet, promote environmentally sound products and practices, encourage and support local and organic farming, and try to act with environmental consciousness in all our endeavors.

#### Weavers Way's Product Philosophy Statement

Weavers Way Co-op strives to uphold a variety of principles in making decisions about what products to purchase for resale to our members. Because we are owned and operated by consumer-members, our product philosophy reflects the diversity of our membership. The philosophy which underlies our buying decisions might best be described as one of healthy eclecticism. While we strive to appeal to the broadest demographic base, our decisions about which products to purchase are also informed and guided by our responsibility to maintain a fiscally sound operation. When and where possible, the following guidelines support our buying decisions at Weavers Way:

We are committed to providing products for which we have full nutrition and source information and to providing this information to our members.

We purchase products which are cooperatively or collectively produced.

We buy products which are locally and/or regionally produced and which support the local economy.

We buy products from independent suppliers and producers and from small busi-

We are committed to buying the freshest products available.

We offer products at cost savings to members.

We provide choices for our members and offer product alternatives (e.g., organic vs. nonorganic, gourmet/specialty vs. value-priced, bulk vs. packaged/processed).

We purchase eco-friendly products which do not adversely affect the environment; we avoid purchasing products which have been proven detrimental to human health or the environment.

We attempt to buy products from businesses which support conditions of shared wealth and which do not exploit workers.



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#### Pharmaceutical Food Crops (In a Field Near You?)

by Karen Perry Stillerman, reprinted from the Puget Sound Cooperative Sound Consumer

Ask the people around you if they think genetically engineered (GE) food crops that produce experimental drugs should be grown in Washington and chances are they'll say no. Then tell them a Canadian biotech company has applied for a permit to grow more than 1,000 acres of drug-producing safflower in eastern Washington this spring.

Production on this scale wouldn't be allowed in the company's home country, but it is here in the United States. In fact, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is seeking public comments on its assessment of the pending permit. Your input is important.

Most of the safflower would be engineered with a gene for carp growth hormone to produce a drug for farmed shrimp. The company also has applied to plant an acre of safflower engineered with a human gene to produce experimental insulin for treating diabetes.

If the USDA approves the 1,000-acre request, it would make Washington home to the biggest planting of pharmaceutical food crops ever allowed in the United States.\*

The company, SemBioSys Genetics, Inc., claims its products will enhance shrimp farming worldwide and lower the cost of insulin. The jury is still out on whether these benefits actually will materialize.

In any case, producing drugs such as insulin and other hormones in food crops — especially in crops grown outdoors —

poses a serious threat to consumers, farmers, food producers and exporters in Washington and elsewhere.

The USDA has released a draft environmental assessment of SemBioSys's plans to grow drug-producing safflower in Washington, and is seeking public comment.

Tell the USDA to say "no" to pharma-

ceutical safflower and that you don't want drugproducing food crops grown outdoors in Washington or anywhere else.

More information and sample comments that you can personalize and submit online are available at

www.ucsusa.org/food\_and\_environment/genetic\_engineering/ large-scalepharma.html.

You also can sign a petition calling for a nationwide ban on growing pharma food crops outdoors at www.ProtectOur-Food.org. Biopharming with food crops is risky For more than a decade, the USDA has allowed pharmaceutical (or "pharma") and industrial crops to be grown outdoors in 35 states. Food crops such as corn, soybeans, rice, peas, barley and safflower have been engineered to produce human and veterinary drugs, hormones, plastics, detergents and other pharmaceu-

tical and industrial substances. Never intended for general public consumption, these chemicals may be harmful if accidentally ingested in food.

"The drugs, hormones, and other chemicals in these crops are not intended for consumption by the general public, and their effects on human health are unknown," said J. David Heywood, M.D., of

Washington
Physicians for
Social Responsibility. "Insulin,
blood thinners
and other pharma crop compounds have the
potential to provoke allergic reactions or other
adverse health
effects, and we
lack scientific

evidence documenting their safety."

Yet pharma and industrial crops easily can infiltrate our food supply when seeds are mixed accidentally or when crops cross-pollinate. In 2002, a company called ProdiGene experimented with small plots of pharma corn (containing a vaccine for pig diarrhea), and allowed the corn to mix with half-a-million bushels of soybeans headed for the food supply.

ProdiGene's pharma corn also may have cross-pollinated with feed corn in Iowa that year. In both cases, contamination of the food supply was narrowly averted, at a cost of nearly \$3 million to purchase and destroy the tainted crops.

Similarly, last fall an unapproved strain of GE rice was found to have widely contaminated the nation's rice crop. Although the rice was not a pharma crop, the incident revealed continuing gaps in the regulatory system governing GE crops.

Mirroring previous food contamination accidents, the contamination of rice with an unapproved GE variety has seriously impacted the commercial rice industry. Import markets in Japan and Europe are deeply suspicious of U.S. long grain rice, and analysts predict market losses may reach \$150 million.

Producing drugs and chemicals in food crops is a bad idea from a food safety perspective. The National Academy of Sciences, a nongovernmental body of scientists and professionals, has warned in two reports that it's virtually impossible to keep pharma compounds out of the food supply if food crops are used. It's likely that contamination of the food system already has occurred, and there's no reason to believe it won't continue, especially as the acreage planted with pharma crops increases.

A 2005 report from the USDA's own auditor sharply criticized the department's oversight of pharma and other GE crops. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found the USDA has failed to inspect pharma crop fields as promised and to document inspections properly. The OIG also found the USDA didn't even know where some pharma crops were planted or where the harvests were stored.

The report concluded: "... current regulations, policies and procedures do not go far enough to ensure the safe introduction of agricultural biotechnology." If companies and the USDA are so lax with small plots of pharma crops, how will they manage the large-scale production proposed for Washington?

Economic boon or liability? The Sem-BioSys safflower is not the first pharma

(continued on page 20)

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#### Pharmaceutical Crops

(continued from page 19)

crop to be planted in Washington. Since 2001, the state's land-grant university, Washington State University (WSU), has been experimenting with barley, injecting human genes to produce a variety of substances. (See the September 2004 issue of Sound Consumer.) WSU's ongoing experiments have been much smaller than the proposed safflower production by Sem-BioSys; this year, WSU has applied to plant 0.2 acres of its drug-producing barley.

Economics are important in debates over pharma crops and, in Washington, biotechnology and agribusiness figure prominently in Governor Gregoire's 10year "business plan" for the state. The pharma crop industry touts its technology as a boon to farmers and hard-hit rural communities.

Yet a 2005 report, "The Economics of Pharmaceutical Crops," authored by an Iowa State University agricultural economist, struck a blow at the notion that farmers will benefit much. The analysis concluded that the claims of pharma crop proponents are inflated and that farmers and rural communities are unlikely to be major beneficiaries.

"Proponents of pharmaceutical crops have inflated the rewards and downplayed the risks," said Dr. Jane Rissler, senior scientist at the Union of Concerned Scientists, which commissioned the study.

"State officials, farmers and rural communities should be wary of rosy, optimistic claims."

An economic analysis from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University similarly found, in the case of pharma tobacco, that the biotech company would be the primary beneficiary. Consumers would benefit comparatively little and tobacco farmers not much at all.

Pharma crops, in fact, could prove to be a liability for Washington's farm economy. Safflower sometimes is planted in rotation with wheat. If pharma safflower seeds wound up in Washington wheat fields — a result of human error during handling, storms that blow seeds where they don't belong, transport by birds, or rotation with contaminated safflower one of the state's most valuable crops could be compromised.

(Indeed, the latter scenario spawned the 2002 ProdiGene incident in Nebraska: A rotation of soybeans was contaminated by pharma corn "volunteers" seeded from the previous year's crop.) Detection of a shrimp drug or human insulin in Washington wheat could be a disaster for wheat growers, jeopardizing exports and perhaps leaving them liable for costly cleanups and potential lawsuits.

"I take pride in growing high-quality wheat for customers around the world," said Eric Zakarison, who raises wheat on 600 acres near Pullman. "The government shouldn't take chances with the safety of my product and the livelihood of small farmers like me."

Although safflower is not a major crop in Washington, there are some growers and brokers in the state whose livelihoods also could be threatened if buyers worry that any safflower moved through the state might be contaminated. In Missouri in 2005, rice growers faced the threat of a boycott when a major rice buyer became skittish over proposals to grow

pharma rice in that state.

In addition, since most of Washington's commercial safflower crop (about 1,500 acres annually) is destined for the wild bird seed market, contamination also could pose a hazard to bird popula-

#### Benefits unsubstantiated

Aside from the risks, there's little evidence that the pharma crops proposed for Washington will be of great value to anyone but their corporate creators. Like most pharma crop companies, SemBioSys makes expansive claims about the benefits of its new technology, saying in a recent press release that its GE safflower-based insulin could reduce product costs by 40 percent and production costs by 70 percent. The company offers no economic analysis to support its assertions.

Meanwhile, the governors of 11 states with high insulin costs reportedly are urging the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to approve generic insulin manufactured the traditional way — in confined tanks. This move alone would likely spur competition and drive down the cost of insulin. It appears that traditional drug companies are ready to meet the growing demand for cheaper generic insulin, given FDA approval.

As for the drug intended for farmed shrimp, this product would serve only to prop up an unsustainable aquaculture industry that crowds too many shrimp too close together, inviting disease and creating other environmental problems.

The risks of contamination from using food crops such as safflower to grow drugs simply outweigh the hypothetical benefits. Approval of large-scale production, such as the 1,000 acres proposed by SemBioSys, would set a precedent, making it easier for companies to plant more and more acres of drug-producing food crops, increasing the chances of a tainted food supply.

The USDA should reject these proposals and implement a nationwide ban on outdoor pharma food crops to ensure that our food supply — in Washington and across the country — remains safe and free of contamination.

If biotech companies want to produce plant-based drugs, they should follow the lead of Dow AgroSciences, which won approval of a chicken vaccine produced by tobacco cells contained in a steel tank. Cell cultures are a proven way to generate pharmaceuticals under controlled conditions — without the risk of introducing drugs into our food.

Karen Perry Stillerman is a senior analyst with the Food & Environment Program at the Union of Concerned Scientists.

\* A request from another company to grow 3,000 acres of drug-producing rice in Kansas is pending.

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www.phila.gov/streets/hazardous\_waste.html

May 5 (Saturday): Streets Department Training Center @ State Road & Ashburner, I.3 miles north of Cottman Ave and south of Linden Ave.

**June 9** (Saturday): Northwest Transfer Station. Domino Lane & Umbria St in the Roxborough section of the city.

**July 19** (Thursday): Streets Department Training Center @ State Road & Ashburner, I.3 miles north of Cottman Ave and south of Linden Ave.

**August 25** (Saturday): Streets Department 3<sup>rd</sup> district Highway Yard, 22<sup>nd</sup> & York St.

**October 6** (Saturday): Streets Department Facility, Southwest Philadelphia. 3033 South 63<sup>rd</sup> St., northwest of Passyunk Ave.

**November 3** (Saturday): Northeast Sanitation Facility. Delaware Avenue between Castor Avenue and Lewis Street in the Bridesburg section of the City (near the Allegheny Exit of I-95).

Bring your oil-based paint, solvents, pesticides, lead-acid batteries, Rechargeable batteries, oven, drain and bathroom cleaners, flammable liquids such as gasoline, kerosene or oil-gas mixtures, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and lead fishing weights. Computers and electronic equipment are accepted at all events.

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# Japanese Cherry Blossom Celebration at Morris Arboretum

by Christine Pape

This April, the Morris Arboretum, 100 Northwestern Avenue in Chestnut Hill, will once again host an annual Japanese Cherry Blossom Celebration, as part of the Subaru Cherry Blossom Festival of Greater Philadelphia. The Subaru Cherry Blossom Festival is a project of the Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia and

is an initiative to encourage a better understanding of the cultural, social, and educational customs of Japan in the United States

In the early 20th century, John and Lydia Morris established one of the finest collections of Japanese plants and gardens in the region at their home, Compton, which would later become the Morris Arboretum. To commemorate this heritage, the Arboretum has a variety of activities planned for adults and children during the month of April. The activities will celebrate the gardens, art and culture inspired by the 35 varieties of cherry trees that grace the Arboretum with their blossoms each April. The highlight of the celebration will be a visit by the newlycrowned Cherry Blossom Queen from Tokyo, Japan on April 16 at 10:00 a.m.

Weekends in April will offer an array of events designed to celebrate this unique aspect of the Arboretum's history, including tours of Japanese Garden Elements each Saturday at 2:30 p.m. Other events include: Origami for Kids, 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 14; Swarthmore Taiko Drummers, 1 p.m. on April 14; and the



Japanese Tea Ceremony, 11 a.m. on Sunday, April 21.

Japanese-inspired classes for kids include: Creating an Asian Dragon, Sunday, April 1, 1 p.m.;

Making Japanese Paper Figures on Sunday, April 22 at 1 p.m.; and Painting The Bamboo Forest on Saturday, April 28 from 1-2:30 p.m. Additional information regarding classes, including cost information and registration, is available by calling (215) 247-5777 ext. 125 or by visiting www.morrisarboretum.org.

# Mt. Airy Kids' Literary Festival

On Saturday, April 14, and Sunday, April 15, join Big Blue Marble for the Mt. Airy Kids Literary Festival. There will be book readings and signings from plenty of great children's authors and illustrators, crafts, activities, storytelling, and more, at Big Blue Marble and in collaborative venues throughout the Mt. Airy neighborhood. Check www.bigbluemarblebooks.com for festival updates.

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#### L • E • T • T • E • R • S • & • R • E • S • P • O • N • S • E • S

General Manager Glenn Bergman responds to a letter from Member Paul Glover in last month's issue

Last month member Paul Glover wrote a letter to the Shuttle concerning expansion plans and the findings of the consultant we hired to assist us with direction in our expansion. Last year, I hired Pete Davis, consultant to many coops interested in expansion or relocation, to assist me with trying to find a direction for our co-op.

I had thought about expanding next door to 555; one day we will, but for now the parking and cost of construction for retail space did not make sense. I decided to save our funds for an expansion with a loading dock, some parking (not too much), and space for a membership desk on the floor to answer questions and help members. None of the space arrangements would have added any of these to our present store and expansion plans.

Then we were part of an expansion plan with a developer at the Rivage site in East Falls, an area that I am still very much interested in looking at in the near future. The site did not come through at first, but plans were underway to work with the new developer and architect (a member of WW). I invited General Managers from four other co-ops to visit Philadelphia and

to review the locations with me and to assist us with a decision. They all said, "Do a market study first" So, I followed their advice and hired Pete Davis. Sure we all have a gut reaction as to what we should do and can do and perhaps should do, but I needed some facts.

His report stated that we should remain in the Northwest area of Philadelphia first and that we should open close enough to the present store to take away business from the current store, and that these sales that are taken from the present store will assist the new store to get started.

Paul says that the consultant stated that we should move "where everyone can see it, in a whiter neighborhood." No, that is not what he said. He did say we should do a number of things; not all of them we will follow. He did say that he would like to see us relocate the present store to Germantown Ave, after we open our second store. I do not think that is a plan that I would like to see, nor will I propose it to the Board or members.

Our plan, at this point, is first to find a location in a part of the Northwest community that fits our demographic profile for a natural food store buyer so we have a 90 percent chance of being successful. Then, once that store is up and running, and making a profit with good cash flow, we will look for a third store in an area

that might not match our market profile as well, but one that we can handle in size and sales with the successes of the other two stores

Paul goes on to speak about product lines expanding and that we are going to sell out to the large corporations, etc. No Not on my watch. And not on *yours*, either. We have eliminated more of these large corporate organic suppliers than we have added. We eliminated Dean from our daily milk supplier last year and gave the entire supply to a local dairy. We continue to purchase more and more local yogurt, too. We have expanded our farm and hired a farmer so we can expand our supply of local high end product ALL year round.

Well, I could go on, but I ask that members attend the General Membership Meeting and that they read and ask question as often as possible. We will not stray from our mission, from our product philosophy, nor from our Ends set by our Board. We can work harder now to purchase local products and to make sure that we merchandise and promote these products. Our Merchandising Manager has been empowered to start up the Merchandising Committee again to assist with keeping prices in line against competition and to help with promoting local products.

I want to thank Paul for writing this important letter, but not to worry too much – we will try not repeat what took place in his previous co-op after their expansion.

~ Glenn Bergman

# Environment Committee Accepting Grant Applications

by Sandy Folzer, Environment Committee Chair

Local community groups are invited to submit grant applications to the Weavers Way Environment Committee. The Environment Committee receives incentive funds through the Philadelphia Partnership Recycling Program as a result of our recycling efforts. These grants are used for public purposes, resulting in a tangible improvement in the community. Funds may be used for planting trees and other vegetation, gardens, and supplies to support gardens. Also, environmental training programs and after-school programs are some of the ways in which youth and the public may learn about caring for the environment.

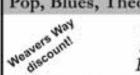
Anyone requesting a grant will learn within a month of the deadline if they have been selected. We anticipate giving grants ranging from \$100 to \$1000, depending on the available funds from recycling. Grantees are then obliged to submit a report with receipts describing exactly how the money was spent.

Those wishing to submit a grant should pick up an application and guidelines from the Environment Committee box (Sandra Folzer) on the second floor of the Co-op. Applications are due April 25, and should be returned to the same box by that date.

Grant applications and guidelines are also available at www.weaversway.coop.

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#### Financial Update

#### **Ups and Downs in Second Quarter**

by Lou Dobkin, Finance Manager

The quarter that ended Dec. 31 was a very mixed bag of good and so-so news. Net income for the quarter was \$77,352 on sales of \$1,759,396. This compares with \$89,193 on sales of \$1,650,571 for the same quarter last year. Year to date, we have a net income of \$138,477 on sales of \$3,333,185, compared to \$106,342 on \$3,073,985 of sales last year. This represents 6.6% increase in sales for the quarter and 8.4% for the year to date over last year's sales and 0.7% over budget for the quarter and 2.0% over budget year to date.

The labor numbers continue to be an improvement over last year, with labor as a percentage of sales at 23.47% vs 24.44% last year. Personnel costs continue to come in under budget by 4.38% through the year to date. We do not see this as a continuing trend, as we added the new positions of full time farmer, part time outreach coordinator (for the marketplace program) and part time merchandiser. All of these positions are unbudgeted; further, some additional efforts that had been in the budget took some time to implement.

Margins were a little disappointing, 2 basis points (0.02%) below last year and 44 basis points (0.44%) below budget. We have identified areas that we believe may have caused this and we feel confident that we can make some improvement.

I always look forward to the explanation of "Other Income," as it is always an entertaining if not unique story. This quarter is no exception. The Other Income line includes Interest income (which exceeds budget by \$4,063 or 40%), Weavers Way Community Program reimbursements, rental income, visitor fees, and — for your reading pleasure — the National Cooperative Grocers Association (NCGA) volume rebate of \$20,315.

The NCGA volume discount is basically a signing bonus for the national buying agreement we have signed with our largest supplier, United Natural Foods. The agreement provides for lower prices to the NCGA members and has other benefits, but it is a little tough on our cash position. The payments will be received over a three-year period, though the income is recognized at the signing in December. In addition, the agreement reduces our terms from 30 days to 21 days, starting in January. The agreement is very strident about tardiness of payments. As a direct result of the agreement, our cash position was reduced in January by about \$45,000. From a cash point of view, Ryan Howard may have gotten a better deal.

Together with a \$46,500 payment for the new walk-in refrigerator in the basement and the payments for inventory in the holiday season (all that great product shoppers bought here during the holidays), our cash position decreased by about \$100,000 in the month of January.

Administrative expenses took a dramatic upswing primarily as a result of payments for professional fees for the website, the expansion market study, and tenant-related legal fees.

Balance Sheet	Dec. 31, 2006	%	Dec. 31, 2005	9/
Assets				
Current Assets (ex Inventory & Cash)	25,389	1.21%	32,692	1.93%
Cash	797,902	38.10%	440,610	26.03%
Inventory		12.40%	268,500	15.86%
Fixed Assets	940,082	44.89%	906,223	53.53%
Other Assets	71,326	and the second second second second second	44,950	2.66%
Total Assets	2,094,314	and to take helper the broken beauty	1,692,974	100.00%
Liabilities & Equity				
Current Liabilities (ex Accounts Payable)	200,862	9.59%	197,946	11.69%
Accounts Payable	305,018	14.56%	223,104	13.18%
Long Term Liabilities	332,551	15.88%	333,875	19.72%
Total Liabilities	838,431	40.03%	754,925	44.59%
Member Equity	547,287	26.13%	464,380	27.439
Retained Earnings	570,119	27.22%	367,328	21,709
Year to Date Income	138,477	6.61%	106,342	6.289
Total Equity	1,255,883	59.97%	938,050	55,419
Total Liabilities and Equity	2,094,314	100.00%	1,692,974	100.00%
Income Statment	Dec. 31, 2006	%	Dec. 31, 2005	9,
Sales	3,333,185	100.00%	3,073,985	100.009
Cost of Goods Sold	- Committee of the party of the latest and the late	66.44%	2,041,734	66,429
Gross Profit Margin	1,118,509	33.56%	1,032,252	33.589
Expenses			1-773.5053.5	1141000
Personnel	785,143	23.56%	753,804	24.529
Occupancy	73,848	2.22%	72,591	2.369
Depreciation & Amortization	28,025	0.84%	28,822	0.949
Operating Expenses	33,752	1.01%	33,547	1.099
Administative Expenses	88,217	2.65%	54,194	1.769
Governance Expense	9,423	0.28%	6,971	0.239
Promotional Expense	27,069	0.81%	18,643	0.619
Total Operating Expense	1,045,476	31,37%	968,571	31.519
Operating Profit	73,033	2.19%	63,681	2.079
Other Income	75,171	2.26%	53,486	1.749
Other Expense	9,726	0.29%	10,825	0.359
Total Other Income & Expense	65,444	1.96%	42,661	1.399

#### 0 R M 0 Ν N Α 0 0

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#### **Managers/Department Heads**

<u>General Manager</u> Glenn Bergman, ext. 123 Purchasing Manager

Norman Weiss, ext. 119 **Operations Manager** 

Rick Spalek, ext. 101 Finance Manager

Lou Dobkin, ext. 110 Fresh Foods Manager

Dale Kinley, ext. 104 **Prepared Foods Manager** Bonnie Shuman, ext. 102

Second Floor Manager Martha Fuller, ext. 114

**Human Resources Manager** 

Dave Tukev, ext. 121 Deli Manager

Margie Felton, ext. 112 Cashier Dept. Manager Susan McLaughlin, ext. 311

Communications Director Jonathan McGoran,ext. 111

<u>Flowers</u> Nina DaSilva

Membership Manager Robin Cannicle, ext 303 **Board Coordinator** Karly Whitaker

**Grocery Manager** Chris Switky Produce Manager Jean Mackenzie

<u>I.T.</u> Tanya Rotenberg, ext. 195

Farm Manager David Zelov

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floral@weaversway.coop

member@weaversway.coop boardadmin@weaversway.coop

christopher@weaversway.coop

mackenzie@weaversway.coop

tanya@weaversway.coo

farmer@weaversway.coop

#### **Weavers Way** Recycling

**New Courtland Elder Service** 6959 Germantown Ave. (Enter from Carpenter Lane) 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 3rd Sat./month.

#### Co-op Meetings

Board: 1st Tues., 7:00 p.m. • Education: 3rd Wed., 7:30 p.m. Environment: 1st Wed., 7:30 p.m. • Finance: 3rd Thurs., 7:30 p.m. Diversity:3rd Tues., 7:15 p.m.

Operations, Membership, Merchandising, and Leadership Committees meet as needed. All meeting schedules are subject to change. Meetings are held at 610 and 559 Carpenter Lane and at members' homes. For more information about committee meet-

ings, e-mail boardadmin@weaversway.coop or call the store.



#### **Suggestions**

by Norman Weiss

Greetings and thanks for writing. As usual, suggestions and responses may have been edited for brevity, clarity, and/or comedy. Once upon a time I used to use this article to discuss what I thought was my destiny of becoming a movie star. Surprise, surprise, it never happened, and now I've given up. I'm officially abandoning the movie star thing, although I still don't think I'm going to be at the Co-op another 28 years. I'm still convinced showbiz is in my future, although at my usual rate of progress it may be playing piano during social hour when I get to living in a nursing home. Then I will send the Shuttle a letter saying my prediction finally came true.

#### suggestions and responses:

- s: "We used to carry a Muir Glen product of "Fire Roasted" tomatoes. I don't recall if they were whole or crushed, but they were delicious Do they still make them? Can we get them at least sometimes? I know the shelf is crowded over there. Thanks "
- r: (Norman) We can no longer carry any fire roasted products. Turns out that fire flames are actually the mechanism by which the devil releases evil spirits into the world. Naturally we don't want to support this activity. We will consider sun-roasted tomatoes, roasted by boy scouts with reflective cookers earning their cooking merit badge. This is the kind of product we can feel good about. (Chris) A number of shoppers have mentioned "Fire-Roasteds," but space is tight. I'll try to find room. Consider a preorder of a case of 12 cans for \$27.40, crushed, diced or whole tomatoes (28 oz cans).
- s: "Sugar free cereals? Or if you have them, more choices?"
- r: (Norman) We currently stock 1: Kashi Puffs. Two others just have barley malt and one gram or less per serving: Uncle Sam and Erewhon Crispy Brown Rice. Familia Swiss Muesli has no added sugar but contains dried fruit. There are also a number of hot cereals with no sug-

ar, and of course rolled oats (which if you lightly bake and add some nuts will be unsweetened granola). Are there other types or brands you have in mind.

- s: "1) Biodegradable produce bags. 2) Fewer small yogurt selections the dairy case is crazy. 3) Vegan mac & cheese."
- r: (Chris) 1) We're actually looking into this at present, still in "research" phase. 2)?. 3) We did have "Road's End" vegan mac & cheese mix a few years ago, discontinued it due to slow sales.
- s: "Thought you were gonna get Metropolitan Bread Levain whole wheat sourdough, big loaf, their best and (almost) least expensive bread. At least that's what you said back in the summer. And you're waiting for...what? Just do it it'll sell and we'll all be happy."
- r: (Nancy) Thanks for reminding me. We are selling out often and could use another bread variety.
- s: "As someone who has done floor clean-up a few times recently, I have to wonder if it's possible to raise money to replace the incredibly dingy tile floors (on the first floor of the building). It would make a huge visual impact and give a much cleaner impression as opposed to the current grandma's-basement-look. Modest display cases, boxes w/racks would look brighter with an even neutral colored floor. It's just a bummer to keep vacuuming and sweeping and never feel like it's actually clean. Bake sale anyone?"
- r: (Steve) You're right, the store would look better. I've included a line item in next year's capital budget for floor replacement. Replacement would be costly and would probably require that we close the store for a few days. We'll review all the potential projects for the upcoming year, but this one might wait until we've got that swing space (yes, the Co-op does have line item veto).
- s: "Please consider carrying a small sourdough loaf. I have noticed that the small country white loaf is always the last to sell out if it does sell out. I'd buy that loaf if it were a sourdough."
- r: (Nancy) We've added both Slow Rise and Mindy's small sourdough loaves recently — their loaves are becoming very popular and we keep increasing their products. Slow Rise is in Lancaster County and uses organic flour. Mindy's comes from Greenberg bakery in Glenside.
- s: "Requesting DanActive yogurt if possible (I know space is limited). I make trips to Whole Foods for this alone.
  Thanks"
- r: (Chris) Sorry, no room at this time to add DanActive. You can preorder a case of six 4-paks for \$1.84. I'm sorry to hear you have to make trips to Whole Foods alone. Next time, call me, and I'll go with

you. I'm really fun company, and I could pick up a few things at Whole Foods...

- s: "As a new member, I found your orientation really amazing and I was really impressed with Robin, the Membership Coordinator."
- r: (Jon) We were thinking it was about time Robin's mom joined the Co-op; Welcome aboard (Chris) We're glad you liked the orientation. Robin is impressive, more and more as time goes on. Stick around
- s: "It would be great if we could carry cooking sherry and/or marsala cooking wine. Lots of recipes call for it."
- r: (Chris) We do carry sherry cooking wine, as well as burgundy, on the bottom right of the oils and vinegars shelf. Our distributors don't seem to carry any marsala wine. (Norman) It is strongly recommended when cooking, to avoid using recipes. They are constantly in the way, have too many steps, and are too bossy — "mix this, combine that, bake at some random temperature for x minutes, etc." Here's a basic recipe I've used for preparing many a dish that can replace most other recipes: 1) Put food in pot. 2) Heat until ready to eat. You can now toss all your cookbooks. Warning: do not try to claim this recipe as your own; by being printed in the Shuttle I now own the copyright. However, we might be able to work out a licensing deal.
- s: "You used to carry a less sweet variety of Ghirardelli hot cocoa mix than what's here now. I think this version is too sweet and it would be great to bring back the old one. Thanks."
- r: (Chris) We replaced the Ghirardelli unsweetened cocoa with Rapunzel brand, which is also unsweetened, as well as organic and fair trade, harvested by farmers (in the Caribbean & South America) who adhere to sustainable farming practices, and are guaranteed by the Fair Trade pro-

gram they're in to be paid a livable wage for their work. This is a social consciousness decision that we made, hoping Coop shoppers would support it.

- s: "Bring back Boca Meatless Sausages The Amy's meatless patties aren't as good. They're too grainy."
- r: (Chris) We dropped Boca Links, and brought in the Amy's patties, because Boca is owned by Kraft Foods, which is owned by a cigarette manufacturer, Philip Morris Inc. Instead of our shopping dollars going to Philiip Morris, we can support Amy's Foods, a smaller, independent natural foods maker. When we made the switch, I was hoping that the two products were similar and equally tasty. I'll wait for more comments from shoppers...

#### Orione Simonian-Taylor Likes Being 3.5 years old



"WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT SHOPPING AT THE COOP?"

"I'm three and a half years old."

~ Orione Simonian-Taylor

#### Welcome to Weavers Way Cooperative Association

Dear Neighbor,

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

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	TIME	LOCATION
Wednesday	Apr. 11, 2007	6:45 p.m.	GJC
Saturday	May 2, 2007	10:30 a.m.	CA
Wednesday	Jun. 6, 2007	6:45 p.m.	GJC

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

Robin Cannicle, Membership Manager+

PLEASE RETURN THIS PORTION TO WEAVERS WAY

#### Equal Exchange

#### **Coffees of the Month**



Organic French Roast \$6.99/lb.

Dark and Delicious with full body and a smooth finish

Reg. \$8.50/lb

Organic Decaf Breakfast Blend \$10.05/lb.

The Decaf Breakfast Blend is a balanced blend of light and dark roasts and is also full bodied with a rich flavor and has sweet overtones.



Name (please print)  Phone Number  Address (including zip code)	S	Someone from my household will attend the orientation meeting on
	N	lame (please print)
Address (including zip code)	<u> P</u>	Phone Number
	Α	address (including zip code)