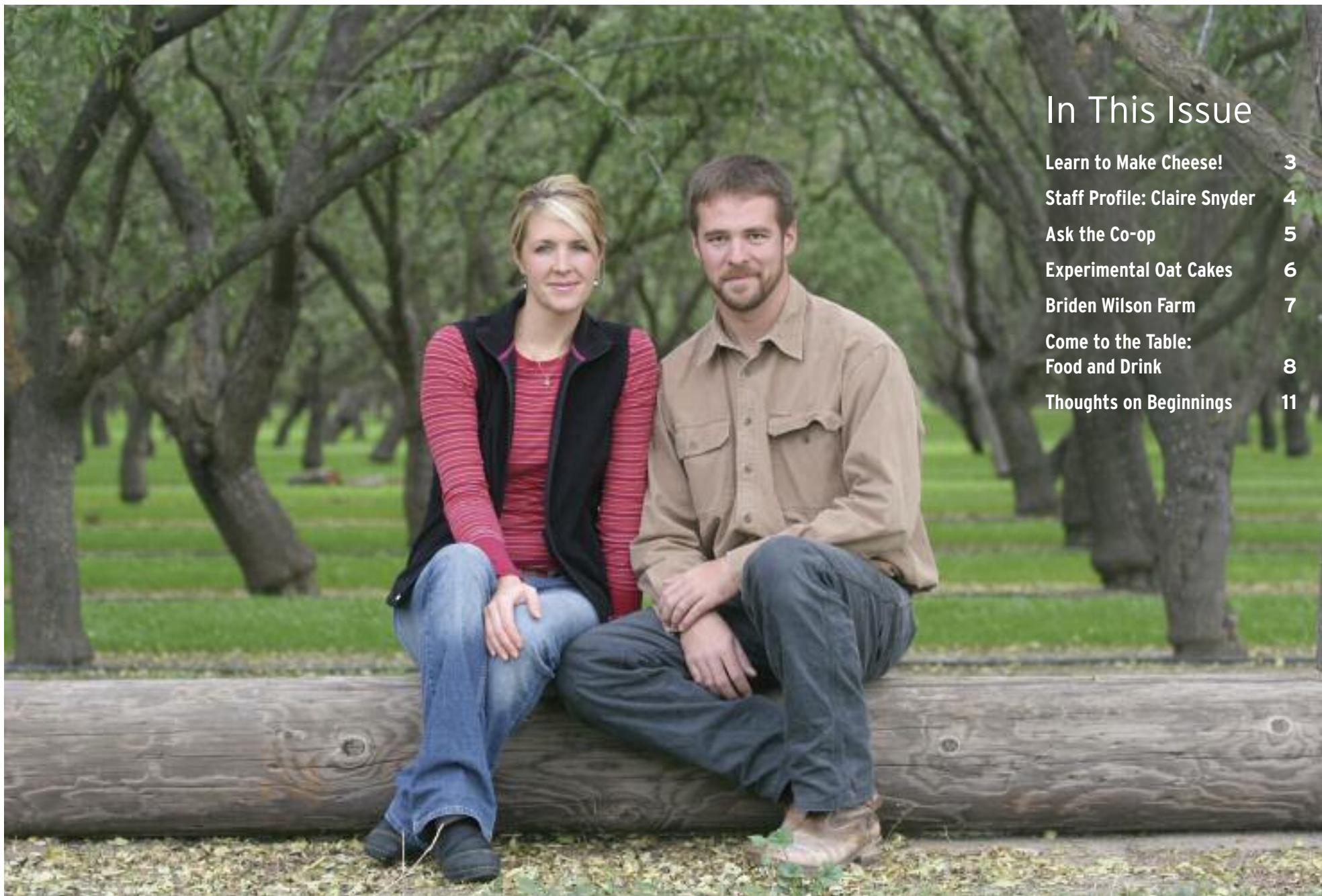


Ch^{natural}oices

January
2010

The Co-op
will close at 9 p.m.
on Monday, January 11
for our staff party.

THE DAVIS FOOD CO-OP NEWSLETTER



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THE DAVIS FOOD CO-OP
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Co-op Principles

The Davis Food Co-op adheres to the principles of cooperatives as revised and adopted by the International Cooperative Alliance in 1995:

1. Voluntary and open membership;
2. Democratic member control;
3. Member economic participation;
4. Autonomy and independence;
5. Education, training and information;
6. Cooperation among cooperatives; and
7. Concern for community.

Davis Food Co-op 2009-10 Board of Directors

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First Alternate

Teddy Consolacion ('10)

(June 30 of the year given is the end of a director's term.)

This newsletter is printed on a minimum 40% post-consumer recycled paper. When finished, please pass it along to a friend for reuse.

On the cover: Tom and Rebecca
Dafae of Briden Wilson Farm.
Photo by Steve Bonnel

< GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT >

A Few Notes on Fiscal Year 2009

By Eric Stromberg

Fiscal Year 2009 ended on October 3, 2009, and each year the board of directors has eight and a half months from the end of the fiscal year decide whether or not to declare a patronage refund. Typically, our board makes this decision in November.

A patronage refund, the return of net earnings to members based on their patronage, is declared when the Co-op's need for net earnings and capital allows. Cash reserves, cash flow, and tax implications also influence the decision. When a patron-

age refund is declared, each member receives the same percentage refund, but individual amounts vary based on each member's total patronage—the purchases they made during the fiscal year.

Fiscal year '09 had limited net earnings of approximately \$100,000 (or 0.50 percent of sales). Based on our need to restore our capital and ensure reasonable cash reserves, the decision was made not to declare a refund.

Net earnings for the year were lower than historical averages, due primarily to depreciation and amortization expenses. Why did depreciation and amortization affect this

past fiscal year? Depreciation is a non-cash allowance for the reduction in the value of an asset over time. Because the Co-op recently purchased a fair amount of new equipment over a short period of time, the depreciation line item in the income statement is high. Even though depreciation is a non-cash expense, it does reduce net earnings.

Amortization is the income statement line item that accounts for the payment of debt installments. Fiscal year '09 reflects the payment of interest we incurred for renovation.

Amortization and depreciation expenses will continue to be high over the next several years and that will influence future patronage decisions. We plan to make a capital

investment in a new cash register system this year. The Co-op has the long-term goal of repaying debt ahead of schedule, and this requires positive cash flow and strong cash reserves. For the same reason, we are also not issuing our usual incentive gift certificates to full share partners.

Once debt repayment and depreciation allow us to do so, resuming regular patronage refunds is also a long-term goal.

As always, your support helps keep the Co-op strong and healthy. Even with rough economic times, your Co-op is in good fiscal health. Thank you.

In co-operation,



< MEMBERSHIP >

Co-op Serves, Benefits Members

By Doug Walter, Membership Director

January is a "new beginning" for your membership in the Co-op. Share investments this month affect your good standing for all of 2010 and a little bit of the next year, too. Joining the Co-op or investing now actually gives you good standing for longer than at any other time of year. It also guarantees you can participate in this spring's Co-op election.

That's why we say January is when you can get a great deal at the Co-op!

Every current shareholder needs to invest \$20 in shares before or on March 31, 2010, unless they're ahead on their investments, or they've already invested their full \$300 in Co-op shares. The deal we offer is that investments this January give you good standing through March 2011, a total of 15 months. From a cash flow standpoint, this gives you more for your money.

The only reason shareholders with less than \$300 invested would need

to invest less than \$20 this spring is if their total investment is \$281 dollars or more. If you end up with more than \$300 invested, we'll let you know and arrange for you to "even out" at \$300. If you do have more shares invested than are required, thank you! We will use our computer to extend the validity of your Co-op card into 2010.

You should have a Co-op card with a bar code on it, whether you're a shareholder or a household shopper. Don't throw that card away, even after March 31! We can update our computer information so that it re-validates all of your household's cards.

You'll want to use your Co-op card when you shop, so that your patronage can be tallied. Your patronage does not automatically add to your investment total. However, in a year when members are issued a patronage refund, you may choose to reinvest that money in shares, up to the point at which you have \$300 invested. All shares in your account are your money.

Food, Profits for the Sake of People

Our Co-op is incorporated as a California Cooperative Corporation, and very often makes profits. We reinvest or distribute those profits to sustain our business, to strengthen our cooperative, and to benefit our members. Contrary to what you may hear or read, the Co-op is not non-profit in any real sense; we have always striven to profit in order to benefit our members and community, in accord with cooperative principles.

Our fiscal year that will end October 2, 2010, is unlikely to show a profit, due to the depreciation expenses on all the new equipment we've bought in the past few years. Our business's cash flow is looking fine, and the equipment should serve shoppers and workers for years to come. It is entirely possible that profitability will take another several years to return, or perhaps conditions could bring back some profits in 2010. Whether or not they'd be big enough to warrant distribution by patronage refund is a question for our elected directors, not me. For more on this, please see General Manager Eric Stromberg's column above, which explains our Board's decision not to declare a refund this year, based on the need to restore capital and

ensure reasonable cash reserves. (You can also find it at <http://www.davisfood.coop/patronage.html>)

No Money Left?

Not everyone can invest \$20 by March 31. We understand this, and welcome your membership regardless of your economic status. Co-op membership is open to all—that's one of our fundamental principles.

If hard times have hit you, you don't have to give up your good standing or your vote. Share investments can be made a few dollars at a time—try five dollars each month from January to April. You'll need to apply for an extension of the investment deadline, so look for the pink Exemption or Extension Application form at the checkstands, or ask a cashier. You can also contact me directly, and we can work out an arrangement that suits your finances.

If you are experiencing extreme financial hardship of the persistent sort, please use the same form to apply for an exemption from this year's share investment requirement.

Letters to Doug Walter can be dropped off in the suggestion box, sent to the Co-op at 620 G Street, or sent by e-mail to dwalter@davisfood.coop

< FROM THE EDITOR >

Casting Off the Old Year

By Amy Radbill

To be perfectly honest, January has never felt like the real beginning of the year to me. I'm pretty sure I'm not alone in this—for plenty of people, the rhythm of the year begins in fall: There's the new school year—especially true for those of us living in a university town like Davis, and oddly, many of us seem to retain this feeling of something beginning with the school year long after we're done with formal schooling; and for some of us, of course, there's Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish new year.

So the secular, non-academic New Year, the January 1st celebration, always feels a little strange to me—more like a pause in the middle of the year than anything else. But on the other hand, who am I to snub my nose at a chance for a new beginning? A clean slate is a clean slate any time, and it's nice to have multiple chances each year to take stock of our lives, shake things up, make some changes.

At a new beginning, when there are changes to be made, some of us like a little ritual to help move us in the right direction. My favorite part of Rosh Hashanah has always been *tashlich* (tahsh-leek), a word that means “casting off.” *Tashlich* is a lovely ritual that takes place on an afternoon during Rosh Hashanah, alongside a flowing body of water. People usually gather as a community to do this, although the ritual itself is a solitary one. The idea is to take bits of something representative of the past year's mistakes and missteps—frequently breadcrumbs one has brought for the purpose—and cast them on the water, allowing the water to carry them away (or the ducks to eat them, if you happen to be near the ducky sort of water).

The general idea is very simple: Take a few moments to reflect on what you'd like to let go of, what you'd like to change, how you'd like

to live your life differently. Then you literally let go: Cast off the mistakes, and let the water carry them away.

A few years ago, this ritual was interpreted beautifully by Jen Lemen, a blogger I'm fond of. She wrote an entry titled “A Little Ritual for Letting Go of Fear and Other Things That Weigh You Down” (go on and Google the title if you'd like to read the entry—it's very inspiring if you like this sort of thing!). I don't think Jen knew about *tashlich* when she came up with the ritual, but she was specifically inspired by Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement, which closely follows the new year). I like that she didn't know about *tashlich* actually—that she came up with such a close relative of the idea makes it feel as if there might be some cosmic logic for this sort of ritual. Jen's ritual focused specifically on fears that were keeping her from progressing in her life the way she wanted to, and if you do this, you can certainly focus on whatever it is that's holding you back or getting you down. Her ritual also involved actually writing out the fears/blocks/whatever on leaves or rocks with a water soluble marker. Then she let them go in the water, to be both dissolved and swept away.

You needn't be Jewish to use this sort of ritual for yourself. And perhaps more importantly for some of you: As well suited as this idea is to those of us who hug trees and make granola, those activities are not actually prerequisites for participation. All you need is the desire to mark a new beginning in a significant way and to add a conscious, active element to the changes you'd like to make in your life. Ritual, even if you don't exactly believe in it, can be a surprisingly powerful force. In fact, I don't believe that belief has anything to do with it—I think the power of ritual is in the action. The awareness of that power comes only through practice and the repeated performance of the ritual.

Ritual isn't, of course, magic. It won't wash you clean all by itself—you still have to work to make changes. But the action required by ritual can propel you forward in ways you may not expect. Maybe this is the year to find out.

In Other News:

And speaking of changes: You may notice some changes to *Natural Choices* this month. We're working to be more focused on food, the producers we work with, and the store. Check out our new food section, which will feature recipes, information on cheeses, wine features and wine suggestions to go with the Co-op's new “12 for 40” menus (available at the store—we won't be reprinting all the recipes here, just some nice wines to go with them). We hope you enjoy our new style.

Amy can be reached at amymorgan95616@gmail.com.

Cooking Classes at the Co-op: Cross the Street for Some Good Eats!

By Eve West Bessier

Co-op sponsored cooking classes take place across the street from the store in the Teaching Kitchen, at 537 G Street. You can always find a listing of all classes offered each month (as well as all the information you will need to sign up for them) right here in the newsletter, just a few pages ahead. The Teaching Kitchen holds up to 24 adults or 16 kids. Classes for kids are hands-on and therefore more space intensive. Classes can fill quickly so do sign up early.

This month, we would like to feature our Introduction to Artisan Cheese-Making classes with our own local artisan cheese-maker, Sacha

Laurin. I spoke with Sacha in December while she was in Australia, and she “wheyed” in with some enthusiastic commentary on the ancient edible art form.


People have been making cheese for centuries, and in centuries past, most people knew where their cheeses came from and how they were created. We moderns, however, often have no clue. Sacha says that out of a class of twelve participants, she may have only one person who knows how milk becomes cheese. That's one reason she is so passionate about making the process accessible to the public, “It's alchemy, chemistry, art, and magic all rolled into one. That's how I see cheese-making.”

Continued page 5

11^{on} eleven SALE

January 11th, 12th & 13th

**Take 11% off all
frozen foods
located on aisle 4**



The Frozen Foods Department

Taxes & surcharges apply • Sale does not include discount meat, or items in the frozen seafood case • See in-store for details

Member Orientation

**Thursday, January 14 and
Wednesday, January 27
6:00 p.m.**

- Want to know more about your Co-op?
- Interested in member work?
- Just looking for some free entertainment?
- Attend the new member orientation (“old” members welcome).

We'll even throw in two hours of work credit for your attendance! The orientation is free, but sign-up is required at the member information desk. Sorry, no phone reservations. Co-op members can register by e-mail to jcross@davis

Staff Profile



Claire Snyder

By April Kamen

Claire Snyder was born and raised in Stockton, California and describes herself as “a northern California girl at heart.” It’s hard for her to imagine living anywhere else. “It’s beautiful here. The possibilities are endless being that we’re so close to San Francisco, the coast, Napa, and Tahoe.” She and her boyfriend Dennis recently bought their first house, a process that has brought many new, interesting activities into Claire’s life.

Claire loves finding deals on used books, hosting wine nights with friends, watching her cats, getting recipes from her mom, refinishing furniture, and grocery shopping with Dennis. When asked what she likes to do in her free time, Claire replied, “Free time? Discuss food, read about food, dream about food. Ask anyone who knows me well, and they will tell you my main priority in life is to discover, prepare, and consume food. I’m planning my next meal or snack before I’ve finished eating the current one... My greatest joy is to see another enjoying a taste of something that I have an affinity for as well.”

In alignment with her passion for food, Claire has chosen the food and grocery business as her career path. She appreciates all the learning opportunities that the Co-op offers. She explains, “...it’s always changing, especially in the natural foods market, so there is always something new

to learn. I’m never quite sure where that will take me; One day I’ll be swimming in a wealth of information given to me in an herb/holistic medicine training with one of the companies we do business with...the next day I’ll be shopping the cheese department and decide I’d like to take a class here to learn how to make it myself...and after that I’m checking out the latest Seafood Watch, or reading an article about sustainability efforts on a local farm. All I know is that I want to be surrounded by food and make a conscious effort to bring that experience and education to others.”

Claire came to Davis to work at the Co-op in April 2007. Prior to that, she was a buyer for the Sacramento Natural Food Co-op’s wellness department for two years. Her wellness training comes from working in the department, where she finds she has many valuable resources. She enjoys the positive impact that sharing her knowledge of alternative medicine can have. “Alternative medicine and herbs can be life changing—and helping a customer get over something as simple as a cold, or as complex as ADHD, chronic inflammation, or depression is pretty gratifying.” However, she quickly adds that whole foods are just as important for wellness. “...people often have the common misconception that you can take a pill and you’ll be cured. I always walk them over to the produce section and remind them that whole foods are just as important. And that by shopping here, they can make some pretty mindful decisions.”

April Kamen is a Co-op staff member and former director.

From the Co-op Staff

Staff Picks



ALEX PEARSON, BULK DEPARTMENT

Talenti Dulce de Leche Gelato
\$5.29

“I go through three or four cartons of this stuff every week—worth every penny! Rich and delicious, it’s the best ice cream we sell at the Co-op—with all due respect to our many other excellent ice creams! The carton says four servings, but it’s so rich that it’s really more like eight.”



BRAD CACCIATORE, FRONT END

Coconut Bliss Mint Galactica
\$5.59

“Vegan, gluten free, low glycemic . . . Awesome.”



JASON LOGAN, WELLNESS

Amy’s Organic Teriyaki Bowl
\$4.89

“This is a good vegetarian pick for a frozen product—made with organic ingredients, it’s quick and easy and fairly nutritious. I’m a fan of the teriyaki flavor.”



KEIKO YOSHIMOTO, HUMAN RESOURCES

Jolly Llama Sorbet
\$1.49

“So tasty and delicious! It’s really creamy for a dessert with no dairy. I love the mango flavor best.”

Ask the Co-op

Got a question the Co-op staff can help you answer? Our knowledgeable staff members are on call to give you the information you need on food, health, agriculture, Davis, community, cooperation, and much more. If you have questions, we'll get you an answer! Submit questions to Julie Cross at jcross@davis.food.coop.

Food Facts

By Julie Cross

Q: I love creamy soups, but I'm trying not to eat too much fat. Is there a good substitute?

A: There are plenty of low-fat fake

creams out there, but I can't much recommend them. The best bet for a low fat creamy soup is the humble russet potato. Cube one or two and add them to your other soup ingredients. When everything is nicely cooked, puree with the stick blender and enjoy. If the mouth-feel is too thin for you, you may want to add back some of the fat that vanished with the cream—a teaspoon of olive oil drizzled across the top of the soup will add about five grams of heart-healthy fat, versus the 15 grams of dairy fat in even the most restrained of cream soups.

Q: What is rennet, and can vegetarians eat it? Please, please, don't take away my cheese!

A: Rennet is what makes cheese coagulate. Animal rennet is made from the lining of calf stomach (which even I will admit is slightly revolt-

ing, but a good example of using an animal nose-to-tail). Vegetable rennet can come from any number of plants, including fig, nettle, and soybeans. GMO rennet is produced in a laboratory, using calf genes to modify bacteria. Generally, European cheeses tend to be made with animal rennet and American with GMO, but there is no regulation or disclosure requirement. Where we know the source of the rennet, we add it to our labels. Best bet for vegetarians: Kosher cheese always uses vegetarian rennet.

Q: Which vegetarian bacon do you like the best?

A: I'm not a big fan of mock foods. For any recipe calling for crispy chopped bacon, I think the nicest substitute is roughly chopped pecans, toasted in a skillet and tossed with a tiny bit of tamari at the end. For sliced

bacon, say for a sandwich, I think it's worth the time to pop a little tofu in the oven—slice extra firm silken tofu as thin as you can, coat both sides with tamari or teriyaki sauce, and bake in a slow oven until crispy, an hour or so at 250 degrees.

Q: I'd like to buy the bags of bulk yeast from the cooler (they're a bargain compared to the little packets) but I don't know how to use them. And how long will they last?

A: One packet of yeast equals two good teaspoons of bulk yeast. Sealed and refrigerated, your yeast should keep a good twelve months. Before making any recipe, "proof" your yeast to see if it's alive. Put a half teaspoon of sugar (honey is fine too) in a small bowl with two tablespoons of warm (NOT hot—think baby bath temperature) water. Add two teaspoons of yeast. Go on about your busi-

ness for about 10 minutes. If your yeast smells delicious and has a lovely creamy top, it's alive. If it's just sitting there, toss it and get another bag.

Q: Why are some carrots sweet and delicious, and others watery or even bitter?

A: Carrots are basically sugar storage devices for plants, and some varieties of carrots are better at it than others. We all grew up eating Emperor carrots, the long, straight variety grown by most farmers. Emperor are easy to harvest and store well, but they're not the most delicious variety. Nantes carrots aren't easy to harvest—they're grown in odd crooked shapes—and get soft much more quickly. They're absolutely delicious, however, and worth every penny of the higher price associated with hand harvesting.

Cooking Classes

Continued from page 3

Sacha's passion for cheese certainly did not come from a love of milk. "I've never been able to eat or drink milk," she confesses, "but I love what you can turn milk into!" While living in France for fifteen years, Sacha ate every cheese she could get her hands on, and as a result her palate became very attuned to the varied textures and tastes. But you don't have to live in France to appreciate fine cheeses or be a gourmet to make them. You just have to know some basic principles, the "basic pillars of cheese making," as Sacha calls them.

Cheese is made by cooking milk in a precise manner in order to extract the protein of the curd and then release the whey in measures, depending on the level of moisture you desire in the cheese. The more whey you release, the creamier the texture. "Cheese-making is a tactile and sensuous process," says Sacha. There's a learning curve and she recommends taking at least three of her four offered classes in order to really "get" the

process and become proficient.

Milk is nutritious but spoils quickly. This was especially true prior to refrigeration, and is still the case in cultures (no pun intended) where refrigeration isn't common. So cheese-making was a very clever way to preserve this useful farm product through fermentation. As it ages, cheese self-regulates bacterial growth so that healthy bacteria acidify the milk in order to prevent unhealthy bacteria from growing. "You add some salts on the outside," says Sacha, "but the cheese takes care of itself, it's a sterile environment."

You do need a clean environment when you are making cheese, and using a food-grade sanitizer is essential, but making cheese in modern times is a very safe process and a rewarding one. According to Sacha, "Cheese making unites art and science in a way that few other consumable creations do. On one level it is as ancient and simple as time itself; on another it is artistic, creative, epicurean; and on another it requires meticulous and complex procedures, focus and understanding of the properties of the various bacteria and enzymes, and their roles



and interaction in the transformation of fragile milk into timeless cheese."

Join Sacha Laurin this month (and in February) and learn how to create your own Camembert, goat cheese, blue cheese and mozzarella. She will teach a class for each of these cheeses.

Take one, or take them all. The classes are \$30 each, or you can take all four for a discounted price of \$110. Details are provided in this month's class listing. You can contact Sacha Laurin at mnymoonscheese@gmail.com.

Turning base metal into gold may be an impossible dream, but turn-

ing milk into cheese is practical alchemy!

Eve West Bessier is a writer, vocal coach, and life coach. Check out her Web site at www.evewestbessier.com

< BULK BUYS >

An Oat Cake Experiment

By Sarah Mandel

I don't remember learning to use the stove. No doubt it helped to be one of several children, with a mother who was always burning things—I remember the time the pressure cooker exploded. The kitchen ceiling was quite high, yet it was covered with a fine puree.

It was my father who taught me how to cook. He was quite a cook himself, from the school of biscuits with pan-fried chicken, gravy most definitely not from the Colonel, and on Sunday nights, oyster stew made from milk and butter and oysters from a can. Little round oyster crackers on top, or if we didn't have those, a few smashed-up saltines. But the point is, he never measured and his biscuits were great.

But the clincher is, oat cakes are a perfect air sickness food, along with candied ginger.

I still don't make biscuits without measuring—I don't make biscuits much anyway, but for those of you who've never tried, they're really just scones with a lot less butter. You put the butter on later, for maximum impact. Along with the honey. But I'm wandering. What I'm really after here is how to make something when you don't have the recipe.

This is not a technique that I recommend for the faint of heart, for dishes from an unfamiliar cuisine, or for anything you already like just the way it is. But sometimes there's something you want that you can't find in the books, and it's worth trying to figure it out.

In this case, I'm talking oat cakes.

They're round and about the size of a hockey puck, and they come wrapped in plastic wrap, sometimes in one of those wonderful molded glass canisters with a knobbed lid that makes the most satisfying sound when you replace it. They've been around for years—I used to get them off the counter at the produce store near work. Around here, Mischka's and Common Grounds both carry them. The ones at Common Grounds actually come with an ingredients label, sealed in a cellophane bag—a first!

They're mostly oat, with some chopped up dried fruit and a little sweetening, and they taste much better than they sound. Plus they keep forever, and in my opinion actually taste better when dried out from spending a few days in the bottom of the purse. But the clincher is, they are a perfect air sickness food, along with candied ginger.

I've flown a lot—haven't we all—and I've used Dramamine, Scopolamine, Seabands, Reliefbands, you name it. Dramamine takes forever to get out of my system and leaves me too dopey to function once I arrive at my destination. Scopolamine gives me vertigo, Seabands don't work, and Reliefbands burn my wrist.

But oat cakes and candied ginger before take-off and landing do the trick, as long as you don't drink too much water. (Remember to rehydrate once you get where you're going!) We're going on a trip soon, and I wanted to learn to make my own. I looked on the Internet, and the closest thing I found is a recipe for fat-free vegan oat cakes at Jeena's Kitchen.com. That gave me a sense of where to start. I don't care about fat-free, which you can tell when you look at me, but hey, my good cholesterol is high and my heart is in



great shape. The Danish genes come through once again.

I'm using the Jeena's Kitchen recipe to give me approximate amounts, and I'm taking the parts I like. I'm skipping the more elaborate aspects, like pureeing and straining the Clementine oranges. The eight ounces of oats called for is about a cup, and I'm going to use white grape juice rather than the sugar and water. I have some tapioca flour I will add as a binder to help firm things up. But I will try soaking the raisins with the tea bag—I've never heard of that technique before, but it has appeal.

Here's my trial recipe for:

OAT CAKE EXPERIMENT ONE

- 1 heaping cup rolled oats,**
- 2 tablespoons tapioca flour (yes, it's available in the Co-op baking section)**
- 1/4 cup sunflower seeds**
- 2 tablespoons flax seed**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 cup raisins and chopped dried apricots, soaked**
- 1/2 cup white grape juice**
- 1 tablespoon agave syrup**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Have a round metal biscuit or cookie cutter on hand.

Mix the dry ingredients together: oatmeal, seeds, tapioca flour, and salt. Once they're evenly distributed, add the soaked raisins and dried apricots and mix again.

Now comes the experimental part: Chef Jeena's cakes have all that apple and Clementine juice, so I'm using 1/2 cup juice. I'm also using some agave to help them stick together. Once the ingredients are moistened, you're ready to form the cakes.

Use a parchment covered cookie sheet, and heap the moistened mixture inside the round cookie cutter just like Chef Jeena shows, about two tablespoons per cookie.

Pack it down firmly, as the mixture is not doughy, and would not stick together without the mold. Once it is packed you can lift the mold and it will hold its shape.

Bake for 30 minutes. Remove from pan and cool thoroughly on a rack.

Post-Experiment Report

Well, they're done, and the verdict is mixed. My husband loves them. However they're not quite what I had in mind. They're pretty much Chef Jeena's cakes, with soft cooked centers, which I suppose is no surprise since I took so much from that recipe. The ones I'm trying to duplicate are drier and have the same texture throughout. Maybe the oats are pre-ground a bit in a food processor, and cooked at a lower temperature.

This is the joy of experimentation—you never know what you're going to get. However, I have some oat cakes to take on the plane tomorrow. When they're cool, I'll wrap them in plastic wrap and we'll see how it goes. I suspect they'll do the trick. And when I get back, I'll try again.

Organic Rolled Oats (Bin #7708) are on sale for \$.89 per pound in January (regularly \$1.45 per pound).

Sarah Mandel can be reached at spmandel@dcn.org

< PRODUCER PROFILE >

Briden Wilson Farm

By Doug Fetterly

If you question whether family farming is alive and well, look no further than Briden Wilson Farm. Located just south of Arbuckle (north of Davis, toward Williams) it is a ten-acre almond farm that is owned and operated solely by the Dafoe family (Briden and Wilson are old Dafoe family names).

Tom and Rebecca Dafoe moved here from Wisconsin in 2000. Tom had farming roots in North Dakota. Rebecca was from Minneapolis. They moved to California for two reasons—three, really. Rebecca's parents and the rest of her family had moved to California's central coast. Also, as Tom noted, "I was working for Cessna and had the chance to move." Then there was the adventure of it all.

Why almonds? Tom said that he has loved agriculture since he was a young boy, but almonds were not yet in sight when they came to California. "When we moved out here, I was interested in the crops that they grew out here." Being surrounded by almonds, it was a natural progression. "When we were ready to buy some property," he noted, "this orchard came up for sale, with a cozy home on it. We really just wanted some property to farm. That was in 2003, when we bought the place."

"We farm it ourselves," Tom said. "We do everything from turning the water on and off, to pruning the trees, down to cleaning the almonds themselves. If we need help, we'll contract a little bit. It's just us: Rebecca, myself; my mom (Irene) helps us." Various roles are no doubt played by their five children: Mikaela, 12; Zechariah, 9; Briden, 7; Caleb, 5; William, 3.

Their Web site (www.homegrownalmonds.com) states that they sub-

scribe to Good Agricultural Practices. Tom elaborated: "The simplest way to put it is it's a sanitary orchard—simple things like keeping animals out of the orchard, especially near harvest time." They focus on keeping the orchards clean, and they incorporate integrated pest management (IPM) practices. "We are not organic yet," Tom said, "but we are working towards it." He said they are down to one insecticide application a year (they spray for navel orange worm) and working to get rid of that one.

Their harvest season is August to October and includes two varieties—Nonpareils (a French term for 'no equal') and Carmel. The first harvest is the Nonpareils, which are the raw nuts they supply the Co-op. The harvesting of the Carmel variety occurs one-and-a-half to two weeks after the conclusion of the Nonpareil harvest.

Tom described the two varieties: "The Nonpareil is lighter skinned. I call it blonde. Really smooth. It's a large nut that is somewhat flat, not really round; mild sweet flavor. Fresh, raw, they are just delicious. The Carmel is not quite as large; it is rounder, not as flat, with a darker brown colored skin that is slightly rougher." Tom said the Carmel is more pungent, which is especially noticeable if you roast it. "Those [the Carmels] are the nuts we use for making our almond butter."

As to processing, they make the almond butter themselves. For the roasting, Tom said there is a commercial kitchen in Arbuckle that they take the almonds to. "We work with him (George) on recipes and what flavors we want."

Which are the most popular? "By far the natural raw," Tom said. "Coming in second would be the almond butter. Out of all the roasted flavors, so far, the wasabi roasted is hugely popular." He noted that it depends on where they are marketing the roasted almonds as to which flavor is the most popular. "We are adding half a dozen new flavors this year, hopefully within a few weeks."

Where can you purchase these delicious almonds? "We call our Web site



our online roadside stand," Tom quipped. "We tried to get into the Davis Farmers' Market, but there were enough vendors that they told us they didn't have room for us. We are in the Arbuckle farmers market."

Check out the Web site for recipes. There is an array, using almonds of course. Tom noted that the recipe page also includes recipes that people have submitted.

Do the Dafoes say "ahl-muhnd" (consumer-speak, like ahh) or "am-uhnd" (the farmer's vernacular, like am-bush)? "I catch myself saying 'ahl-muhnd' all the time. The first time I ever heard the word 'am-uhnd,' the gal that was cutting my hair said her husband was planting 'am-uhnds'. She told the story behind [the pronunciation of] almonds—that when you harvest them you shake the 'L' out of them and they become 'am-uhnds.'"

You can find Briden Wilson Farms almonds in raw, roasted, and flavored varieties (including Wasabi, Jalapeno Cheddar, Cinnamon Honey, and Butter Toffee) in the produce department (\$4.99 for eight ounces), and natural almond butter on aisle 8 (\$11.29 for 16 ounces).

Doug Fetterly is a freelance writer in Davis. He can be reached at dougralf@cal.net.

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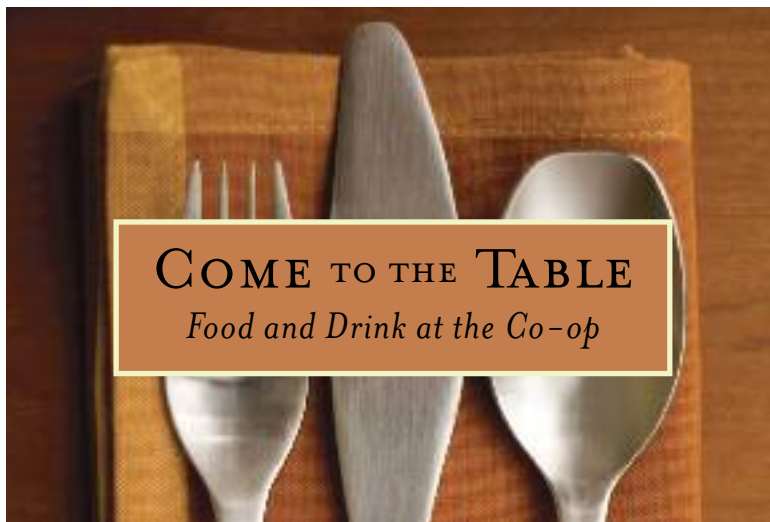
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[WINE]

Berryessa Gap Vineyards

By Meghan Rosen

Lush. Tannic. Full-bodied, with notes of tobacco, red berries, and ... Cap'n Crunch?

In the tasting room, Valerie Crow, the hospitality manager and sales representative of Berryessa Gap Vineyards, has heard it all. And she loves it. "It's a learning environment," she says, "We want to extend the feeling of family to everyone who joins us. The tasting room is friendly and easygoing, so people aren't afraid to express themselves and say what they're tasting...whatever it is." She smiles.

I feel at home already. It's a chilly winter afternoon, and though they're not usually open on Sundays, Valerie has made an exception for our interview. When I arrive, she locks the door behind me, and we settle into a comfy couch. Valerie hasn't been waiting long, but already she's had to turn away wine-seeking passersby. I'm not surprised—even with the door closed and the lights dimmed, the tasting room is inviting.

Our couch backs up to a large window that overlooks the shops and streets of historic downtown Winters. The room is cozy, dominated by a large wooden bar, and lined with yellow and blue prize ribbons. It's one of two tasting rooms operated

by Berryessa Gap Vineyards. The second is about three miles down the road at the winery—a converted fruit and nut packing facility—that has a similar laid-back atmosphere.

Find Berryessa Gap Tradition (\$26.49), Tempranillo, Malbec and Syrah (\$16.99 each) in our wine department, on the rack labeled "Yolo and Solano."

"It's rustic," Valerie says, "...elegantly rustic. There are no pretenses. Most of the owners' time and energy goes into the juice." And when they're not crafting award-winning wines? "We do our best to get involved with the community." Whether they're participating in fund-raisers or pouring at open houses, I'm as impressed with Berryessa Gap's cultivation of community ties as I am with their grapes.

This past summer, the winery hosted their first bocce ball tournament ("It was a hit!" Valerie tells me). In between games, they served locally inspired lunches. It's a peaceful setting for a leisurely afternoon picnic with a bottle of wine (or two). The vineyards, set against the golden backdrop of California's Coastal range, lie on an eastern slope of the Berryessa

foothills. A gap in the mountains channels cool air from the coast to the vines; It's a natural air conditioner for the grapes, and the inspiration for the winery's name.

Berryessa Gap Vineyards was founded in 2000 when Dan Martinez and Santiago Moreno teamed up with Mike Anderson and branched out from the family root stock nursery business. Mike, a wine maker and researcher in the Viticulture and Enology department at UC Davis, likes to experiment. "It's just part of him, Valerie says, "He's a scientist; he tinkers around by nature." Unlimited access to different grape varieties in the nursery has given the trio freedom to play with flavors. (The winery is stocked with their favorite results.)

Even if you haven't visited Berryessa Gap Vineyards, you may have already had a glass of their wine. The winery supplies to Berkeley, San Francisco, Oakland, and locally in Winters and Davis. Tucos, Village Pizza and Grill, Bistro 33, and Osteria Fasulo all carry at least one variety. "Come out and try some," Valerie offers, "tastings are complimentary." She loves newcomers, and seeing how people experience different flavors. Because Berryessa Gap ages their wines in neutral barrels, the taste of wood doesn't overshadow the fruit. Valerie says this allows the grapes to speak for themselves. Even if they sometimes say, "Cap'n Crunch".

On January 16th, Berryessa Gap Vineyards will host a "Big Pots, Big Reds" event from 6-8:30 at the winery. Select wines will be paired with large pots of elegant comfort foods made from local ingredients; guests are encouraged to bring their own table settings (and get creative—there's a no plastic/no paper policy). Tickets are 45.00 for Wine Club/Slow Food Members & \$55 for the General Public. Visit berryessagap.com to purchase tickets.

Megan Rosen is a UCD graduate student in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. She blogs weekly about life and science at <http://aliquots.wordpress.com>



Valerie highlighted a few standouts from Berryessa Gap Vineyards:

Sunset Rosé of Primitivo: Though often overlooked in the tasting room, Valerie tells me not to discount the pink-hued Rosé. "It's dry, but fruity and fragrant, and works well with spicy foods." Valerie often has to convince men to taste it, but most are pleasantly surprised. "It's okay for guys to have a pink drink," she says. Especially if you can pair it with barbecue.

Petite Sirah: One of Valerie's new favorites. "Petites can be a little bit gritty, but ours isn't—it's more luxurious." The recently released 2006 vintage is "smooth and supple, with elegant flavors." Though Petite Sirahs are often mixed with other wines after the

Wine with Dinner

Wines chosen by Doug Walter, list assembled by Sandy Weaver

The following wine choices coordinate with a few of the recipes from menu #16 of the Co-op's new and popular "12 for 40" menu series. These menus are designed to provide weekly shopping lists and recipes to create six meals for two adults, all for around 40 dollars. Current and past menus can be picked up at the Co-op.

With the Stuffed Pasta Shells:

Lovely: Cantele-Salice Salentino \$9.99

The aroma of bacon and smoke dominate the notes of rose and plum when this is first poured. A blend of negroamaro (85 percent) and malvasia near (15), it gains depth with air, melding richness with vibrant acidity.

Continued page 10

harvest, the vineyard at Berryessa Gap was planted with different varieties of grapes, so blending occurs in the vineyard, not the winery.

Malbec: Originally from France (and used in blended Bordeaux wines), this inky purple grape variety is now characteristic of wines from Argentina. While Argentinian malbecs tend to be big, bold, and often overwhelming, "ours is a happy medium," Valerie says. "It's fruit forward with earthy undertones," and popular with customers.

Tempranillo: A prominent red wine grape in the Rioja region of Spain, the Tempranillo variety thrives in the climate and soil of Yolo County. This up and coming wine is a tasting-room crowd pleaser: Every vintage Berryessa Gap has produced has sold out (often within months).

[PRODUCE NOTES]

After The Harvest

By Georgia Mckenzie

Here we are, embracing the new year as the chill depths of winter surround us. Well, moderately chill—this is a temperate zone in Northern California. The bounty of summer is over, the harvest is safely put away, and now it's time to relax and stay warm and comfortable until it's spring and the thermometer can go back to 80 degrees where it belongs. We may have the urge to hide the winter away but Mother Nature is still at work, growing things that are suited for this particular season. Now that the holidays are over, it's time chill out with fresh, seasonal produce and do what all the sensible mammals are doing: hibernate.

So what to do? First off, stock up on some salad greens. They're in season now (thank you temperate zone gods), and go well with everything. Delicious apples or orange segments bring that fruity zest that's normally brought by the summer tomatoes.

Move on to those braising greens, such as collards, kales, and chard. Chop them up, add some onions, a touch of pepper, a dash of a strong cheese like cheddar and there you go—a tasty, warm meal.

Of course, it's a cold cruel world out there and more provender is required to face it. Do not forget the earth's apples, the lowly potato. Versatile, delicious, wicked easy to grow and just plain darned useful, whether in the kitchen or as a clock battery (www.ehow.com/how_18637_make-potato-clock.html), this is a great time to work with spuds. Whether you've decided on potato gnocchi in marinara, the creamy warmth of a potato leek soup (bonus: leeks are also a winter vegetable!), or simple home fries, you're going to be satisfied (and comforted) by this eldest of comfort food staples.

There are a few more ground crops

that are winter specialties. Sunchokes, or Jerusalem Artichokes, are a tasty food that would like to be popular again, along with another former staple, the parsnip. This sweet, yellow/white carrot looking thing has been spurned despite its yummy glory. Sunchokes can be cooked like a potato or sliced thin and eaten raw. Parsnips need to be, perhaps, parsnip fries?

For winter fruits, I'd like to recommend the persimmons, if you've

Continued page 10



[CHEESE]

Moove Over, Baa'd Cheeses...
These Are Goat For You!

By Lis Harvey

Welcome, food lovers, to *Natural Choices'* new column about cheese! In which our heroine will coerce you to cram as much of it into your New Year's resolution as possible. I know—twist your arm, right? This month's salivatory topic: goat cheese. It's tangy, versatile, and good for you! (Not news, Harvey.) True, that memo went

out long ago, and goat cheese is now a widely appreciated foodie staple. So, it should come as no surprise that goat cheese ranks high in the flavor-over-fat context. Thinner than cow's milk and closer to human milk in composition, it's friendly to lactose-intolerant tummies, and high in vitamin A and potassium. Rarely made with rennet (goat cheese-mongers use acid instead), goat cheese is generally gluten-free and stands up well to heat. Lower in calories than you might think, it is also rich as all get-out. Take a few heaping tablespoons of Laura Chenel's Chevre (a reliable standard), and stir into your favorite tomato sauce. The result will beat the pants off plain old pink sauce with cream, and it can turn spaghetti night into a spiritual experience. Goat cheese has half the fat (but twice the protein!) of cream cheese*. Which works out in your favor, if you are watching your calorie intake. Have two tablespoons-worth on your bagel, instead of that thimbleful of cream cheese.

...it's friendly to lactose-intolerant tummies, and high in vitamin A and potassium.

Another non-surprise: the Coop carries many local-icious varieties of goat cheese. Laura Chenel and Redwood Hill Farm (goat cheese brie!) are Sonoma County purveyors, just a couple hops over the hills. Cowgirl Creamery is on your way to the lighthouse in Point Reyes—a person headed out to hike could stop for a tour and a wheel of Purple Haze (fresh goat cheese laced with lavender and fennel). If you're not on the 100-mile-radius diet, though, definitely treat yourself to Coach Farm's Green Peppercorn Pyramid.

This individually-wrapped delight from Pine Plains, New York, has an astonishingly complex flavor and forte-velvet finish, and pairs well with any red, white...or Mr. Pibb. A bottle and one of those tiny towers makes a perfect hostess gift, next time you're invited to dinner—hats off if you can make it up the walkway without eating it all yourself.

Ah, the incredible power of goat cheese! Can it move mountains? It can certainly rock ice cream. Sound gross? Think again. Think cheese cake ice cream, then think clouds. Jeni's of Columbus, Ohio, makes a Goat Cheese and Cognac Fig ice cream that is the best frozen treat I've ever tasted. Period. You can have it shipped to you, thanks to jenisicecreams.com and dry ice, or you can make it here, in the land of figs and whimsy...and Amy Radbill's ice-cream classes. Your call.

**Nutritional values provided by the Joy of Cooking, the nutrition facts on Laura Chenel's Chevre, and Nutritiondata.com, by Conde Nast Digital.*

Lis Harvey is a retired folksinger, raising a toddler in Davis. She recommends getting addicted to super-spreadable Snofrisk (ask the cheese counter to point out the triangular container from Norway), and salty-sweet Brunost. Another Norwegian marvel, this goat cheese comes in a slice-able block called Ski Queen Gjetost, and will remind you of caramel, peanut butter, and all that is holy. Makes a fabulous breakfast treat with pumpernickel or apples. Don't tell your kid it's cheese—just teach them the word "Brunost." They needn't know it means brown cheese. They'll love it.

Wine with Dinner

Continued from page 8

Luxurious: Boeger- El Dorado-Barbera- \$15.99

Barbera is dominated by aromas of tart cherry, red apple, and plum. Its crisp and well-rounded palate is highlighted by flavors of raspberry and spice.

With the Clam Chowder:

Lovely: Pepperwood Grove Viognier \$7.99

Light lemon gold. Aroma of Peach, apple, honey, and hints of lime, spice, and wood. The mouth feel is light to medium bodied, a bit sweet up front, then mildly tart. Juicy peach, citrus (lime/orange), and lightly spicy oak flavors finish crisply.

Luxurious: Banyan Madera Viognier \$14.49

This one of the great grapes of France's Rhone Valley. It is an extremely aromatic variety, redolent of ripe peaches and wild flowers. It

is frequently used to add aromatic complexity to blended wines, but on its own, delivers a rich, soft wine with high alcohol and deep flavors of honey, peach, apricot and tangerine.

With the Sausage Coffins:

Lovely: Cellar No. 8 California Zinfandel \$8.99

Zin characteristics of raspberry, blackberry, cedar and pepper. Not a typical California Zinfandel. This is much more earthy and subtle. Quite fruity. There is not a lot of complexity, but some blackberry, raspberry, and a good bit of chocolate on the palate.

Luxurious: Sebastiani Sonoma Zinfandel \$11.49

This wine opens with a fruity bouquet that is very up front. On the palate, the wine is nicely balanced and very flavorful. A good barbecue wine that finishes with some lingering effects. It tastes like juicy, warm berries. It pairs well with everything from steaks to barbecue and pizza.

With the Ricotta Lemon Sauce:

Lovely: Santa Julia Mendoza Torrontes \$6.99

From the Mendoza region of Argentina, this has a fragrant, floral nose with fresh, ripe muscat and Gewurz-like aromas (rose petals, lychee). In the mouth it has similarly fresh and ripe, grapey fruit flavors—lime, pomegranate, lychee—with a hint of mineral and a mild, pleasing acidity. Overall, it is a nicely balanced wine with a clean finish.

Luxurious: Bokisch Lodi Albarino \$14.99

A complex, aromatic white wine. It is pale yellow in color with a slightly green tinge. Albarino is picked earlier to mimic the style of Albarino from its native area of Galicia, Spain. It exhibits its distinctive varietal character with bright aromas of green apple and jasmine, leading up to a tropical hint of lychee. It is medium bodied with a lemony clean acidity and a long finish. This Albarino shows excellent balance and varietal character.

[RECIPES]

Winter Soups

By Tony Gruska

My first attempt at preparing soup was when I was somewhere around ten years old. My parents and I were living on the top floor of my grandparents' Milwaukee flat. An inside stairwell in the back connected the flats.

The soup I made consisted of water, potatoes, and carrots, with a bunch of dried herbs tossed in for flavor. As my family and I all loved soup and ate it often, I knew when I took the first taste that it was awful and in no way resembled the flavorful soups my grandfather (Dziadek—pronunciation: JAH-jah) made. I asked him what had gone wrong, and he replied, "You forgot to put a chicken in your pot."

What he meant was that soup needs some vehicle to carry the flavor of the herbs and vegetables, and that water alone does not cut it. Broth, butter, oil, cream, fat, etcetera, are ingredients that should be used individually or together, providing the necessary structure for a delicious pot of soup.

Here are some flavorful soup recipes that are sure to warm you up on a cold night.

ROASTED WINTER SQUASH SOUP

3 cups butternut or any other variety of winter squash, cut in half and seeded
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, peeled and minced
4 tablespoons butter (1/2 stick)
1 1/2 cup onion, diced
1 tart apple, cored and chopped
4 cups chicken stock or whole milk
3/4 cup cream
1 cinnamon stick
salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Place squash, cut side up, on a baking sheet. Put minced ginger into the cavity

of the squash. Bake until squash can easily be pierced with a fork and is starting to caramelize. Scoop out squash flesh and set aside.

In a pot, melt the butter, and cook the onion and apple, sautéing until they're soft and translucent. Add roasted squash. Cook for five minutes. Add chicken stock or milk. Bring to a low boil. Add cream, cinnamon stick, and salt and pepper to taste. Simmer over low heat, stirring constantly, for about 15 minutes. Remove the cinnamon stick. Puree until smooth, using a blender, immersion blender or food processor. Serve immediately.

WINTER MINESTRONE

1/2 cup white beans, any variety, soaked overnight in cold water
1 fresh rosemary sprig
1 bay leaf
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
1 leek, white part only, chopped
1 celery stalk with leaves, chopped
1 medium escarole head, chopped and moist from washing
1 tablespoon flat leaf parsley, chopped
salt and pepper
freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Drain beans, and put them into a large soup pot with rosemary and bay leaf. Cover with cold water, bring to a boil and simmer for about two hours.

While beans are cooking, heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion and sauté for two minutes. Add carrots, leeks and celery, sautéing until vegetables are soft and start to caramelize. Add damp escarole and parsley, sautéing until wilted. When beans are done, add vegetable mixture to soup pot. Season with salt and pepper to taste, adding more hot water if necessary. Bring soup to a boil and simmer for about 20 minutes over low heat. Ladle into bowls and top with grated Parmesan.

Produce Notes

Continued from page 9

never had them before. Crispy Fuyu persimmons are sweet and remind me of mild apples, while soft Hachiya persimmons are like a blend of honey and cream. With the addition of citrus fruits like tangerines and grapefruits, you can put those longings for summer out of your mind. Well, almost.

Need more inspiration to try some seasonal veggies? Check out these recipes!

SHICHIMI FRIES

Shichimi is a Japanese style chili powder mix—look for it in the bulk aisle at the Co-op.

6 medium-sized potatoes: 2 red, 2 Yukon gold, 2 purples, or you can even substitute parsnips!

2 tablespoons of olive oil

2 teaspoons of garlic powder

1 teaspoon of shichimi powder

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Cut the washed potatoes into long fry shapes. In a bowl, mix oil and seasonings. Add the potatoes to the bowl, and coat them thoroughly with seasoned oil. Place on cookie sheet in pre-heated oven. Cook for 25 minutes, turning the fries over halfway through. Sprinkle with salt to taste.

SIMPLE SUNCHOKE SOUP

Sunchokes are also known as Jerusalem artichokes.

1 pound peeled and thinly sliced sunchokes

1/2 yellow onion, chopped

1 tablespoon olive oil

4 cups of chicken broth (for vegetarians, substitute good quality vegetable broth)

1 cup of spinach, chiffonaded*

1/2 cup cream

Shredded cheddar cheese (sharp for me)

In a stock pot, sauté the onions until translucent. Add stock and sunchokes. Boil until tender, about 20

minutes. Blend the mixture until reasonably smooth.** With the soup over a low heat, stir in the spinach and cream. Serve with a sprinkle of cheddar or a swirl of hot sauce.

**To chiffonade the spinach—or any other greens—simply stack the leaves, roll them together into a log shape, and then use a sharp knife to slice across the log. This should result in long, thin strips of greens.*

***It's easiest to blend hot liquids using an immersion blender, but if you only have a standard blender, be very cautious when pouring and blending the soup.*

GP McKenzie would prefer to spend winter in bed with some fries and a hot cup of tea, and still somehow mysteriously get paid and have a clean bathroom.

Beginnings:

Inspirational Words for a New Year



Gathered by Rae Gouirand

There are two mistakes one can make along the road to truth... not going all the way, and not starting. (Buddha)

I had as many doubts as anyone else. Standing on the starting line, we're all cowards. (Alberto Salazar)

Vitality shows in not only the ability to persist but the ability to start over.

(F. Scott Fitzgerald)

There are two kinds of people, those who finish what they start and so on.

(Robert Byrne)

Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going.

(Jim Rohn)

Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end.

(Seneca)

A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.

(Lao Tzu)

No river can return to its source, yet all rivers must have a beginning.

(Native American proverb)

All this will not be finished in the first 100 days. Nor will it be finished in the first 1,000 days, not in the life of this administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin.

(John Fitzgerald Kennedy)

The beginning is the most important part of the work.

(Plato)

From small beginnings come great things.

(Proverbs)

Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending.

(Carl Bard)

With the possible exception of the equator, everything begins somewhere.

(Peter Robert Fleming)

Start all over. Start all over. Start all over. Start all over.

(Tracy Chapman)

In every phenomenon the beginning remains always the most notable moment.

(Thomas Carlyle)

Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.

(St. Francis of Assisi)

You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.

(Joe Sabah)

You can learn new things at any time in your life if you're willing to be a beginner. If you actually learn to like being a beginner, the whole world opens up to you.

(Barbara Sher)

Fear not that thy life shall come to an end, but rather fear that it shall never have a beginning.

(John Henry Cardinal)

What we call the beginning is often the end. And to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from.

(T.S. Eliot)

Every day is a fresh beginning, Every morn is the world made new.

(Sarah Chauncey Woolsey)

The indispensable first step to getting the things you want out of life is this: Decide what you want.

(Ben Stein)

A hard beginning maketh a good ending.

(John Heywood)

There will come a time when you believe everything is finished. That will be the beginning.

(Louis L'Amour)

I wake expectant, hoping to see a new thing.

(Annie Dillard)

Nourish beginnings, let us nourish beginnings.

Not all things are blest, but the seeds of all things are blest.

The blessing is in the seed.

(Muriel Rukeyser)

First things first, second things never.

(Cicero)

The secret to a rich life is to have more beginnings than endings.

(David Weinbaum)


Rae Gouirand is a writer, writing instructor, and editor living in Davis. She can be reached at rgouirand@gmail.com.

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< THE SUGGESTION BOX >

Great Service from Co-op Staff!



A: Thanks for your feedback regarding our wonderful staff!
Rose McFadden,
General Merchandise and
Wellness Manager

Q: Two of your employees in the Produce Department were extremely helpful. I was looking for thyme, which you were unfortunately out of, when one suggested your holiday mix which included thyme; she also pointed out that you had loose organic oregano that was cheaper than the packaged. Thanks for looking out for the customer's bottom line.

Anonymous

A: You're very welcome! Glad we could be of assistance.
Elizabeth Davidson,
Produce Manager

Q: Products made in China are bad! Not all but most industrial products have terrible humanitarian and environmental impact. There should always be an alternative (and muffin trays that make a dozen).

J.

A: Thank you for expressing your concern. We make a conscious effort to source products that are fair trade. However, it is near impossible to find an alternative for every product at a price people will pay. This topic is at the forefront of our minds and we will continue to voice our concerns to manufacturers.

Rose McFadden,
General Merchandise and
Wellness Manager

Q: Could we please wait until after Thanksgiving to put the Christmas ornaments out? Thanks.

Anonymous

A: Thanks for your input. Since we are located in a college town, we have many shoppers who like to purchase holiday items early in order to have time to send them to family and friends across the country and overseas.

Rose McFadden,
General Merchandise and
Wellness Manager

Q: Please order Bach Flower Sleep Remedy. Thank you.

Anonymous

A: We do carry this product; it's located across the aisle from the other Bach remedies.

Rose McFadden,
General Merchandise and
Wellness Manager

Q: Thank you for carrying sun butter. Please continue. I don't know

what we'd do if you didn't have it. My son is allergic to nuts, so this is such a blessing. Thank you.

Anonymous

A: You're very welcome! We're always glad to help shoppers with special dietary needs.

Melanie Madden,
Acting Marketing Coordinator

Q: Please put prices on sale items on ends of aisles. Coconut milk is??? Thanks!

Anonymous

A: We strive to make sure that the price of every item in our store is clearly labeled and easily identifiable, but occasionally in the bustle of changing out our end caps the sale signs get lost in the shuffle. If we've overlooked a missing sale sign please let any staffer know and we will correct it right away; this is a major priority for us!

Rachel Quinn,
Scan Coordinator

Q: The staffer (Claire?) that helped me with the water canteens was great! Thanks!
L.L.

Are YOU looking for

- Greater participation in your Co-op?
- A discount on your Co-op grocery bill?
- Work requirements as low as two hours per month?

**VOLUNTEER AT YOUR CO-OP—
SUPER WORK!
(OR MEMBER WORK)**

Learn more

- Pick up a blue Volunteer brochure in the store.
- Attend a New Member Orientation, held at the Co-op twice each month. Check page three of this newsletter for orientations this month.

Q: Please include baking suggestions (temperature and time) on the labels of your DFC cookie dough. Your cookies are awesome!

Anonymous

A: Thanks for the good suggestion! I will gladly add that information to these labels.

Rachel Quinn,
Scan Coordinator

Q: Please! Please! Please! **Don't get rid of the whole bench!** It is important to the feng shui and friendliness of the Davis Co-op beyond words!

M.M.

Q: The Green bench is a Davis Landmark! Nothing will be the same if it's removed.

Anonymous

A: Our original plan for the installation of the new SAFE Credit Union ATM was to remove the hay bale (or "Flintstones") bench entirely, but the overwhelming response from shoppers and members who've expressed intense emotional attachment to the bench has made us reconsider this

plan. In collaboration with our architects, we are currently exploring options that would allow us to keep a part of the bench in place and still install the ATM on our scheduled timeline. We will keep you posted with developments as they occur.

Eric Stromberg,
General Manager

Q: I had such a good feeling coming in this cold night—that **the Co-op was a happy welcoming place.** And I realized that it's in large part because you treat and pay employees well so that they are happy, friendly and want to work here. I'm sure there's always more to be done on this front but I wanted to say "Yay for good labor practices!"

Anonymous

A: We do seem to have a higher incidence of smiling faces on the sales floor than one is used to seeing in conventional grocery stores, don't we? And while the efforts on the part of our managers and HR department to treat employees well is certainly

a major part of our satisfaction, I'd like to mention some of the other contributing factors that make the Co-op such a great and welcoming place to be—many of our members and shoppers come to the Co-op in the frame of mind that they are in a community gathering place, not just a grocery store, and that makes a huge difference in our daily interactions; it inspires us to interact with shoppers as fellow community members, not just customers to be served, sent on their way, and forgotten. Your note is a prime example—you guys care about us, so we care about you! I also think that our direct accessibility to an abundance of good, nutritious food (and people with the knowledge and skills to teach us what to do with said food!) is integral to our bright functioning—as Virginia Woolf says, "One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well." I would add to that, "work well!"

Melanie Madden,
Acting Marketing Coordinator

Q: My Co-op newsletter arrived yesterday 12/10 which means many of your advertisers did not get their info out in a timely manner. People would have missed IRH's mtg on Dec. 3, the Palms show on 12/5, 12/5, 12/8. In addition the orientation mtg for the Co-op. Please work on punctuality. Thank you.

Anonymous

A: Apologies to our loyal readers and our advertisers for the unfortunate delay in the December mailing; there was an error at the mailing house, but they are aware of the mistake that they made and have made assurances that it won't happen again. While we make every effort to ensure that the paper version of *Natural Choices* reaches our readers in a timely manner, sometimes circumstances beyond our control do cause delays; but we always put out the newsletter on the racks in our store on the first of the month (provided the printer gets them to us on time), and nothing can stop us from publishing the newsletter digitally—you can always find it at davisfood.coop on the first of the month.

Melanie Madden,
Acting Marketing Coordinator

Q: Thank you! Thank you! **Thank you! For replacing the broken and missing infant/toddler seatbelts on the shopping carts.** Thanks again!

T.M.

A: You're welcome!
Phil Rexroad,
Maintenance Department

Q: The day manager and cashier staff were very good at accommodating for the 11-12 rush today Friday December 11. Yippee.

Anonymous

A: Thanks for the feedback, and keep it coming! We do try our best, and it really helps us to do our best when you let us know when we're doing things well—or not so well!

Ernie Felix, Front End Manager

Q: I do not like the decorations in the butcher dept. They look tacky—the stick on wallpaper strips.

S. L.

A: There was something of a disconnect between the specs we were shown for these decorative borders and what actually appeared once they were installed. We're not thrilled with the way they turned out, either, and have plans in the works to replace them.

Melanie Madden,
Acting Marketing Coordinator

Q: Please stock vegetarian dashi/dashi-no-moto. Yours has bonito!

Customer

A: Can you recommend a brand of vegetarian dashi? Prepared dashi packets are similar to bouillon and traditionally contain katsuobushi or dried bonito. It's easy to make a homemade vegan dashi, but I'm unfamiliar with any pre-made vegetarian dashi.

Beth Tausczik, Store Manager

Upcoming Events at the
IRH INSTITUTE for
RESTORATIVE HEALTH

Free Health Screenings at the Davis Farmers Market
Sat. January 9 • 8am-12:00pm &
Sat. January 23 • 8am-12:00pm

E-Health Resource Center Launch
IRH will be launching its new state of the art website featuring our E-Health resource center. The E-Health resource center will be a membership-based online resource for your health and wellness needs, complete with webinars, dietary tools, and more!

Throughout the month of January, IRH will be offering E-Health memberships for only \$35 per year—that's \$10 off the standard \$45!

Wellness at Work
IRH is proud to now offer its corporate wellness program, Wellness at Work, to local businesses. Bring wellness into your workplace and reap the rewards of health, efficiency and a less stressful work environment. If you would like to have our wellness services offered at your job site, please ask us for information or provide to your HR manager. Please contact Steven at the Institute for Restorative Health at 530-758-4474 ext. 221.

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WHAT'S UP AT THE CO-OP

COOKING CLASSES

Unless otherwise noted, all classes are vegetarian with vegan and omnivore options discussed. Most adult classes last roughly two hours; classes for kids are one and a half hours, and In Good Taste classes one hour. Classes are held at the Teaching Kitchen, 537 G Street. Please park in the Co-op parking lot.

Payment in advance is required to reserve a seat. You may make payment by mail to The Davis Food Co-op, Attn: Julie Cross, 620 G Street, Davis, CA 95616 or in person (cash or check only) to our store at 620 G Street. Payment is accepted at the door only if seats are still available—most classes fill up quickly.

Children's classes are divided into levels—choose the session at the right level for your child.

Level 1, roughly ages 3+-5: speaks clearly and understands directions

Level 2, roughly 5-8: can follow directions with help and supervision

Level 3, roughly 8-12: reads and follows directions, needs help for new ideas and skills

Chicken Soups and Stews*

Tuesday, January 7, 6:00 p.m.

Chicken soups and stews are old-fashioned basics—and they needn't be labor intensive. Come learn to make delicious chicken broth from scratch (or to cheat on the broth making without compromising your soup!), and how to make both fantastic chicken soup and irresistible chicken with dumplings.

Instructor: Amy Radbill \$25

Kids Can Cook! Alphabetical Vegetables

G is for Green Bean, H is for Hubbard Squash, and I is for Iceberg Lettuce. Think kids don't like those veggies? You'd be surprised! (gluten-free)

Instructor: Julie Cross \$20

Hands-on, 1.5 hours.

Level 1 Friday, January 8, 3:30 p.m.

Level 2 Friday, January 22, 3:30 p.m.

Level 3 Friday, January 29, 3:30 p.m.

Intro to Gluten-Free Flours

Tuesday, January 12, 6:00 p.m.

The hard part of gluten free cooking is learning the whys and wherefores of the flour. This class is a prerequisite to our GF Baking classes.

Demonstration, about 1 hour

Instructor: Amy Radbill \$7

Condiments at Home Part 1

Wednesday, January 13, 6:00 p.m.

If you're accustomed to store-bought condiments, you have a real treat in store! Homemade mayonnaise, mustard, aioli and ghee are inexpensive, delicious, and fun to make yourself.

Instructor: Julie Loke \$25

Gluten-Free Croissants

Thursday, January 14, 6:00 p.m.

Flaky, buttery croissants are a classic French pastry, and with a little know-how, you can translate them into a gluten-free form. The resulting puff pastry can be put to other uses as well. Join us to learn how!

Instructor: Amy Radbill \$25

In Good Taste: Chocolate

Friday, January 15, 6:00 p.m.

Our most popular In Good Taste class. Join our staff for a wide variety of our favorite chocolates. Tasting only, about 1 hour

Staff \$7

Vegan Cafe Tiny Bites

Saturday, January 16, 2:00 p.m.

With tiny bites, you can have all of

the fun and none of the guilt of dessert! Try bite-sized café-style treats, including chocolate truffles, pumpkin mini-muffins, dates stuffed with almond paste, and lemon poppyseed cookies. We will also prepare hot, frothy drinks including homemade chai tea, mochas, and lattes. All vegan recipes.

Anne Zanzucchi \$25

Gluten-Free Bread

Tuesday, January 19, 6:00 p.m.

If you've eaten one too many crumbly, pasty-tasting doorstops, take heart. With a little know-how—and some weird ingredients—you can eat sandwiches again

Instructor: Amy Radbill \$25

Anything But Cab

Wednesday, January 20, 6:00 p.m.

Cabernet Sauvignon is a great wine grape, but there are many other red wines for dining or sipping. Join wine lovers expanding their horizons by exploring "alternative reds," both varietal wines and blends. Wine classes are taught in the Co-op Conference room at 620 G Street. You must be 21 or older to attend.

Instructor: Doug Walter \$25

Intro to Artisan Cheese Making

Thursday, January 21, 6:00 p.m.:

Camembert

Thursday, January 28, 6:00 p.m.:

Goat Cheese

Thursday, February 18, 6:00 p.m.:

Blue Cheese

Thursday, February 25, 6:00 p.m.:

Mozzarella

Join Sacha Laurin to explore techniques and recipes for making your own cheese at home. Each student will take home a cheese from each class—and the knowledge to make it again!

\$30 per class

OR take all 4 for \$110

Healthy Winter Cooking In-Season

Saturday, January 23, 2:00 p.m.

Want to cook in-season in the winter, but not sure what to do with greens and root vegetables? Join food writer/blogger, Adrienne Capps, for a creative demonstration class using in-season (local where available) ingredients.

Instructor: Adrienne Capps \$25

Veggie Girls Cook!

Tuesday, January 26, 6:00 p.m.

Julie Loke has more in our continuing series for teen girls. In January, we'll explore delicious risotto and rice pudding. In February, we'll play with phyllo in sweet and savory applications.

Open to girls ages 12-19 only, class includes dinner.

Instructor: Julie Loke \$20

Dinners in a Flash

Wednesday, January 27, 6:00 p.m.

Easy, healthy dinners that are quick and complete for families on the go! Learn to make several different meals that you and your family will love from chicken to pasta to vegetarian. Guaranteed to be yummy good!

Instructor: Stephanie Shimada \$25

Canning Vegetables (Pressure Canning)

Saturday, January 30, 2:00 p.m.

Pressure canning is a wonderfully easy way to preserve vegetables long after harvest season. Dennis Zanchi will share the tools, techniques and science of home pressure canning. This is a hands-on class where everyone takes home a jar of carrots.

Instructor: Dennis Zanchi \$30



The Co-op will close at 9 p.m.
on Monday, January 11
for our staff party.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Ask The Doctor!

Sunday, January 17

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The Co-op is pleased to welcome Meghan Larivee, a Naturopathic Doctor with the Institute for Restorative Health in Davis, who will be in-store to answer your basic health questions. Free, drop-in, limited space.

WINE AND BEER TASTINGS

Wine and Beer Tastings – From 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the Co-op Conference Room. Meet folks from the winery, taste a wine or two, have a snack and meet other Co-op members. There is a fee of \$1.00 per wine tasted, with profits benefiting Yolo Community Care Continuum (YCCC). For details of wines being tasted, e-mail jcross@daviscoop.com or pick up a flier in the store.

January 8 – Winter Beers

January 15 – Layer Cake Wines and Friends



CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Classified ads are free to Co-op members in good standing. Limit: one ad per month per household. **The deadline for the February issue is January 3.** Submit your ad via e-mail to amymorgan95616@gmail.com or to the editor's box in the administration offices. Please indicate which category. Thirty word limit. No phone calls. You must resubmit your ad each month you want it to run.

A classified ad does not represent Co-op endorsement of the products or services offered. We reserve the right to edit the ad or to reject any ad deemed unsuitable.

CLASSES/EDUCATION

DAVIS WALDORF SCHOOL Kindergarten OPEN HOUSE Saturday, January 23, 10:45-12:30 Parents and children 4-6: Spend the morning enjoying typical activities in our beautiful kindergarten classrooms. 3100 Sycamore Lane, Davis CA 95616. RSVP: office@daviswaldorf.org

DAVIS WALDORF SCHOOL PRE-SCHOOL Open House Saturday, January 23, 8:45-10:30 or 11 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Parents and children 1-4: Experience a morning in our nurturing, developmentally-based program. 3100 Sycamore Lane, Davis CA 95616. RSVP: office@daviswaldorf.org

GARDEN EXPLORATION WORKSHOP: Saturday, January 23, Noon—3 p.m. Winter garden tour, healthy soil, pruning, bare-root, cool season vegetable planting, composting. Time for exploration/questions! \$20 fee. Contact: TheDiggingFork@gmail.com

LESSONS IN THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE offer an individualized approach designed to develop lifelong skills for self-care that help people recognize, understand, and avoid poor habits affecting postural tone and neuromuscular coordination." BMJ 2008, 337:a884. Stephen Brown, Ph.D., 757-2955, sbrown@dcn.org

LOOKING FOR A SERIOUS COMMUNITY OF WRITERS? Sunday workshop beginning January 10. Find structure and support to keep your writing growing in a well-established group. Meets in Davis. Contact Rae Gouirand at rgouirand@gmail.com.

MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION course taught by Denise Dempsey. FREE info session Tues., Jan. 19, 7:15, North Classroom, Bet Haverim, 1715 Anderson Rd., Davis. [StressReductionPrograms.com](http://www.davisholistic.com/mbsr) <<http://www.davisholistic.com/mbsr>. 530-304-4341.

OIL PAINTING with Philippe Gandiol. Outdoor on location Fridays 9:00 am - 12:00 pm or class at Davis Art Center Mondays 6-9 pm. For more information check website www.philippegandiol.com or call 530-304-2401

PEREGRINE SCHOOL in Davis. Nurturing the gifts and talents of every child. Pre-school, kindergarten and daycare programs. www.peregrineschool.org (530) 758-8845.

QIGONG AND TAI CHI FOR HEALTH AND LONGEVITY. Reduce stress; promote healing. Special exercises for hypertension, diabetes, women's health, etc. Rebecca Pope, PhD, certified Master of Medical Qigong. qigongforhealth@gmail.com or 792-7127.

SPANISH LANGUAGE TUTOR/TRANSLATOR: All ages and levels welcome. Individual classes in a relaxed atmosphere. UC Davis teaching and translation of agriculture and biology topics background. If you are interested please call Beatriz at (530) 757-2538 or e-mail at beatrizcabezon@gmail.com

WANT TO COMPOST? Don't have a yard? Attend a FREE Worm Composting workshop! Saturday Jan. 23rd, 11 am-1pm at UCD TriCo-Ops. Free worm bin & worms. RSVP to projectcompost@yahoo.com.

ZEN MEDITATION: Bird Path Zen Community of Davis meets weekly. Call Eric, 795-9596.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

BELLAGIO DESIGN & PHOTOGRAPHY specializes in portraiture on location, weddings, and other events. We do retouching and photo restoration. Visit at www.bellagiophoto.com and contact Svetlana Kitson at (530) 220-4823 or info@bellagiophoto.com.

DAVIS COMMUNITY ACUPUNCTURE CLINIC Providing affordable healthcare for all. \$15-\$40 sliding scale, pay what you choose. www.DavisAcupuncture.com Itay Neta, LAc. 530.219.0761

LASER COACHING. Create a breakthrough on an issue in 30 minutes. A shift in perspective is key to making positive change. See what's possible! In-person or phone sessions. Call for complimentary first session. Eve West Bessier, M.Ed., Certified Life Coach. 530-756-6021

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TITLE-24 AAG CONSULTING offers professional, quick, and cheap residential Title-24 documentation services and energy consulting. See aagenergyconsulting.com. Contact Alea German at 707-292-1662 or agerman22@gmail.com

VEGETARIAN COOKING INSPIRATION: Sign up for weekly, healthy vegetarian recipes from a local Davisite at www.vegetarianized.com. Submit your meat recipes to be turned into vegetarian or just get help improving your favorite vegetarian dishes. Email Adrienne@vegetarianized.com.

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Steve Seskin, Craig Carothers,
Don Henry 1/9
Rita Hosking & Mary McCaslin 1/16
John McCutcheon 1/17
Lucy Kaplansky 1/31
James McMurtry 2/17

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Check our website for upcoming events.

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DAVIS FOOD CO-OP

JANUARY 2010

COOKING CLASSES

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See page 14 inside for class details

DAVIS FOOD CO-OP • OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. • 620 G Street • Davis, CA • (530) 758-2667 • www.davisfood.coop

Everyone can shop the Co-op, anyone may join. *Natural Choices* is also available online at www.davisfood.coop. If you wish to stop receiving *Natural Choices* in the mail, contact the membership department at (530) 758-2667.