



# The Compost

**WILLIMANTIC**

**Vol. 33, Number 1**

**Birthday 2011**

**FOOD**

**CO•OP**

**91 Valley Street  
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**willifoodcoop@snet.net**

**www.willimanticfood.coop**

## **STORE HOURS:**

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Saturday  
9:00am - 6:00pm

Sunday  
10:00am - 5:00pm

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### **Looking Forward, Backward, and Outward** *Alice Rubin*

It is hard to believe that it has been five full years in our new store – it feels like we have always been here. I sometimes think back on the process that we had to go through to get here. I don't think of it often as it was a pretty stressful time, but I am glad we did it. We just paid back the first set of member loans from our move. It reminded me just how lucky we are to have such a supportive membership. We wouldn't be here today, celebrating 31 years in business without you. Thank you again, to all who donated, loaned, labored and shopped. What a wonderful Co-op we have. Please come to our Birthday Party Saturday, February 12<sup>th</sup> and celebrate what we have created here together.

We have been working on the project of balancing our equity account for a few years now, and finally, we are pretty much done. It has been a trip down memory lane, going through all of our member records since the Co-op began. We have the cards called 'The Ancient Ones.' They are white and have 36 little squares, one for each month that the member either worked or paid \$1. Then there are the Blue cards, followed by the same card in pink, with 40 somewhat larger squares, one for each month that the member paid \$1.50. Last come the white slips for each \$20 payment. These cards span the 31 years the Co-op has been in business. Some people have all 4 cards, and some of those have lots of little notes. Things like "merged households with so and so," "Transferred equity to so and so," "Moved," with no note where the equity went, "Refund requested," but no note if it was refunded. Confusing as it all is, it is sort of a history of our community. There are many people who were here at the beginning and are still here today. There are names that I recognize and realize I haven't seen them in 15 years. I wonder where they went, or are they still here? We have many cards with \$1.50 paid once, 10 years ago and no current address. So verifying these records, making sure they were entered correctly in our Equity Spread Sheet... well it has been a long time coming. Many thanks to Nan King and Susan Chasin for sifting through all of this information, trying to make it all make sense. Now that we have it sorted out as much as it is going to be, we will be sending out Certificates of Membership to all of you that have paid your equity in full (\$120 per adult). And we will resume yearly equity billing for those of you not yet paid in full. One thing I can say is that we have improved dramatically in our record keeping department. I sure am glad for that. If you are wondering about your equity, please email Susan at [equitywillicoop@snet](mailto:equitywillicoop@snet).

I have always believed that food is a very political issue, and lately that has never been more true. Last month a Food Safety Bill was passed. Luckily it contained an amendment that made farms with less than \$500,000 in sales exempt from the intense regulations. Without that amendment, many, no, most of the farms in our state would be out of business and we as consumers of local food would be out of luck or eating 'underground.' You remember a year or so, when there was the big push to make raw milk illegal? While many people are embracing locally grown food, cage free chickens and doing away with feedlot livestock, we are

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having more cases of tainted food being sold, and more regulations to 'protect' us. If we do not make our thoughts on these regulations heard, we are in danger of losing our rights to eat as we choose. I know that might sound a bit extreme, but I worry that the power of big agribusiness will win, only because they yell louder – and of course, have more money. I worry that they will allow more genetically modified foods be grown and then sold with no label telling us that we are eating genetically modified food. I think that we cannot take it for granted that we will always be able to buy the foods we are accustomed to buying at the Co-op.

It is hard to get good information on these issues. There is a lot of media hype. I will be working with the New England Farmers Union to get accurate information and making sure it is posted in the store and on the website. I have been very impressed with the Farmers Union and I hope that our co-op will work with them more in the future. Their knowledge of farming issues coupled with their knowledge of our political system could really begin to affect food policy. And the Farmers Union is specifically looking to work with co-ops, as they see the benefit to both the farmers and the Coops. 🌱

### Have something to share in *The Compost?*

**The next deadline is Friday  
April 15th !**

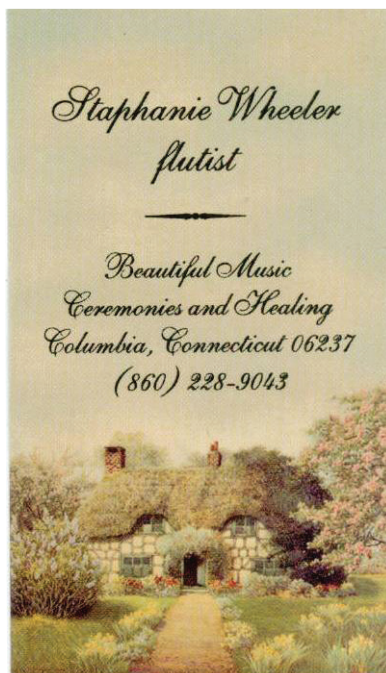
**Email Shandra at  
shandra@snet.net for more  
information**

#### **WANTED !**

Working Members to help  
with Tasty Thursday Food  
Demos.

3:45- 6:15pm

Interested? Please email  
Sarah Keleher:  
alliswell13@sbcglobal.net



### Help GROW Willimantic!

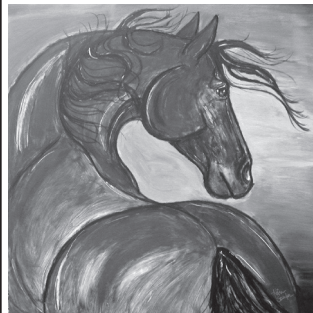
*Sally Milius*

Windham GROWS is a community gardening initiative working to grow resources to promote opportunity, wellness, and sustainability in the Windham region. This year we plan to involve youth in cultivating vegetable gardens at three sites: the Windham Middle School, Village Heights, and in the Lauter Park Community Garden. The gardens will be planted this spring by two after-school programs, and then maintained over the summer by three different summer camps. Volunteers are needed for periodic workdays and for help filling in the gaps between programs, primarily in late June and August. If you are interested in volunteering for a workday, or in adopting a garden for part of the summer, please contact Sally Milius at (860) 336-9005 or shmilius@gmail.com. 🌱



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## Community Wildlife Habitat

*Pam Wright*

Willimantic has a new environmental initiative which may interest *The Compost's* readers. We are hoping to become Connecticut's second officially certified "Community Wildlife Habitat."

The habitat certification program was set up by the National Wildlife Federation of America to encourage individual property owners to take an active role in preserving and creating native habitat. This is an effective way to prevent the extinction of migrating species and native pollinators in a world where open space is being increasingly lost to development.

Downtown Willimantic might seem an unlikely choice for a Community Wildlife Habitat, but the decisions that city dwellers make on their own private bit of space are extremely important. These decisions are even more significant in a densely populated area than they might be in the countryside where undeveloped space still exists. Collectively, they can have a great impact when enough people get involved. Preserving environmental quality in an urban landscape is especially important, but not necessarily difficult when everyone is willing to play a small role. By composting, conserving water, minimizing waste, litter, and pollution, reducing our carbon footprint, getting our young people out of doors, and planting native over invasive species, we are improving our overall environment...for native wildlife and ourselves as well.

We have already completed the requirements to be officially registered on the NWF website. In the next stage of our effort, "The Willimantic Wildlife Habitat" team is looking for one hundred (or more) homes in our area to become certified as "backyard habitats" A "backyard habitat is a yard (or patio or even a balcony) where the occupant has provided the four basic elements necessary for the survival of native wildlife. Wildlife may include pollinators, butterflies, birds, reptiles, amphibians, small mammals and native plants. The four basic elements are

food, water, shelter and safe places to raise young. The final requirement necessary for individual certification is to recognize and to try to incorporate sustainable gardening practices into one's every day life.

The steps needed to certify your home are quite easy to take and the WWH team is here to assist. We are a committee of the Garden Club of Windham. The chairperson, Advanced Master Gardener, Pam Wright, can be reached by e-mail at [KeepWilliWild@Gmail.com](mailto:KeepWilliWild@Gmail.com). We also have a Community Face book page, "Willimantic Wildlife Habitat", which highlights local activities, and includes tips, ideas and local photos. During the next few months we will have information about certification and other environmental issues available at the Willimantic Food Co-op. Check for dates and times when team members will be on hand to answer questions. We hope everyone will help us create a healthier community one habitat at a time! 🌱



## Windham, Mansfield and Lebanon residents – get ready to save! *Jean de Smet*

The Neighbor to Neighbor Energy Challenge, a Department of Energy-backed program, is soon to launch in 14 towns across Connecticut, including Windham, Mansfield and Lebanon. Over three years, Neighbor to Neighbor will help residents cut their energy waste by 20 percent, translating into huge annual energy cost savings and cleaner, more livable communities. The best part? Communities that work together to reach energy waste reduction goals can win valuable rewards, like LED lighting and solar installations.

Skyrocketing energy costs are a real concern in Connecticut. Our electricity rates have increased more than 100 percent since 1990. The average Connecticut household's annual energy costs total more than \$3,500.

**Stephanie J. Smith, lpc**  
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Meanwhile, winter heating season is in full swing. We're looking for ways to make our homes more energy efficient while improving comfort.

The Neighbor to Neighbor Energy Challenge will promote a number of tools and programs, including Home Energy Solutions (HES), a Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund program that offers low-cost home energy assessments to qualifying homeowners. Affordable energy efficient repairs and upgrades can cut your energy costs by 20 percent annually. HES assessments are great way to learn what you can do about the energy and money being wasted by your home – and each assessment includes more than \$750 in installed efficiency measures, so you'll see savings immediately. Then you can get started on those bigger upgrades and retrofits, which will help you realize real energy and cost savings!

You can get started with HES today by visiting [www.ctenergychallenge.com](http://www.ctenergychallenge.com) and pledging to participate in the program. We'll contact you with next steps and will keep in touch as we near the program's official launch in early 2011.



### Do you love the Co-op?

Are you interested in the future of our store?

Consider running for the Co-op's Board of Directors! Meetings are the first Thursday of the month from 7-9pm.

For more information please contact our President of the Board,  
Dan Britton at [danielbritton@gmail.com](mailto:danielbritton@gmail.com).

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### Winky's Food Review *Winky Gordon*

So much chocolate, so little time! This is the review I've wanted to do forever - all chocolate, all the time. Do you remember when we were lucky to find one or two really good chocolate bars among the sweet drek out there? Do you remember when it was unusual to find dark chocolate at all? Well - no more! Let me tell you, co-op brothers and sisters - we got chocolate galore. It was horribly painful to choose just a handful of chocolate items to review; I would have been happy to report on every single one in the store. That would be a lot of product and a lot of fat. Instead, I roamed the store looking for chocolate products that were new to me - not the "boring" ones that have become my staples. I was looking for something a little jazzy.

What I finally settled on, after excruciating decision-making: *Fearless* Raw Organic Chocolate, with matcha, green tea, peppermint (their spelling) \$ 5.99 /2 oz. bar; *Guayaki* Yerba Matte's Organic Mate Chocolate Tea: \$7.49/ box of 16 tea bags; *Earth Balance* chocolate soymilk: \$4.99/ half gallon ; *Kinnikiinnick* Kinnitoos gluten free 'fudge sandwich creme' cookies, \$5.45/8 oz. package; *Cold Fusion*, Belgian chocolate gelato. Here's what I didn't choose because I already know I love them: *Green and Black* chocolate bars, almost any kind but especially the ones with orange; *Endangered Species* bars; *Equal Exchange* - bars, cocoa; *Alden's* drop-dead good chocolate ice cream; chocolate covered walnuts - the almost most decadent thing in the store. I had the fun of testing some of the products with a group of smart and interesting women who happened to be at my house on Chocolate Day. Their comments are included.

"That's damn good chocolate milk," was Hillary's satisfied response to the *Earth Balance* soymilk. At first I was unenthusiastic, experiencing it as too thin in comparison to cow's milk. Once I stopped comparing densities, I came to appreciate how very deeply chocolate it is. The nutritional benefits of this product are: you get 5g protein per cup, it's organic and non-GMO. Organic evaporated

### Acupuncture & Chinese Herbs

Deborah Pacik, Lic. Ac.  
Diplomate of Oriental Medicine



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(their misspelling!) cane sugar is the third ingredient, not the first or second, with Dutch process cocoa coming right behind. For those who want the pleasure of chocolate milk without the cowness of it - this is your product. It is also, apparently, the product that will be replacing *Silk* soymilk, which is no longer organic, at our Food Co-op.

Hillary was also taken by the *Kinnikinnick* Fudge Sandwich Creme Cookies, declaring "I really like this cookie," as she thrust it out for emphasis. Eva was not so impressed and commented that the inside is good but the outside is too dry. Cherese was completely unimpressed. As we discussed the cookie, we agreed that it has the unfortunate sandiness that gluten-free baked products often do; it's a texture thing. Again, if you take it for what it is and don't focus on what it's not, this is a perfectly respectable cookie. Those who don't do gluten but want sweet will be grateful, and kids will probably think it's just fine. The list of ingredients names cocoa powder twice - once for the creme part and once for the cookie. And here's something I've never heard of: it contains pea protein. Hmmm?

Okay - about the *Fearless* Chocolate: its packaging that is remarkable. Not that the chocolate's not good - it is - but the packaging is amazing and evokes that "Wow I'm hip and eco-minded with really good taste," sentiment. This is well-dressed, boutique chocolate. Its outside cover is 100% recycled paperboard, printed with what looks like soy ink. The graphics are spare, appealing, and who doesn't want to believe they are fearless? The next layer is a wrapper with all kinds of cute spelling "mistakes" written on it, and the bar itself is presented with the shape of a bite taken out of it, to represent "donating a bite of your chocolate bar to those who enrich our world." Wow. It might be better if this chocolate were presented with less pomp and circumstance; maybe the product could speak for itself. FYI: the deal with raw cocoa is that it contains unroasted beans and is made with lower heat than usual, thus "preserving its natural nutrients." Kids won't like it but grownups who like their chocolate

seriously dark (70% cocoa) will. I didn't really notice the matcha or peppermint elements.

The *Guayaki* Mate Chocolate was a pleasant surprise. It's organic, fair-trade, and contributes to rainforest restoration. Oh yeah - and it's good. Yerba mate is grown in South America and has a host of nutritional benefits including vitamins, minerals, and "abundant antioxidants." It's also got quite a kick and will get you going at whatever time of day you drink it. Interestingly, the package notes that caffeine is but one of three stimulants in yerba mate, the others being theobromine and theophylline. My experience is that yerba mate is, indeed, a stimulant but doesn't leave me uncomfortably flying in the way coffee does. (Just for the record, I'm a dedicated Sencha green tea drinker.) The addition of cocoa and 'spices' makes a subtle impression, one that



is pleasant and not overwhelming. It probably won't satisfy a chocolate craving, but is used more like a flavoring.

Finally, the piece de resistance - *Cold Fusion*, Belgian Chocolate Gelato. This is just seriously good, full-bodied chocolate. I'm not sure I get the whole deal about the cosmopolitan appeal of gelato except that you get to pretend you speak Italian for a minute. Its first ingredients are: milk, sugar, cocoa, cream, and nonfat dry milk. Those of us who care about this sort of thing will note that it has much less fat than ice-cream; it has plenty of sugar to compensate. In addition to its satisfying taste and its cute but not too cute packaging, *Cold Fusion* has the local (relatively) thing going for it. It's handpacked in Newport Rhode Island. Maybe we should take a field trip to *Cold Fusion* and then to *The Narragansett Creamery*, maker of some of the Co-op's fabulous cheeses? Maybe we should eat our way around New England?

Dear readers, I love getting to write this food review and I love that we have the Co-op in our neck of the woods! Whether you like chocolate, vanilla, or none of the above, be grateful for our good fortune and do your best to support our store. See you at the birthday party, where I'm sure there will be plenty of chocolate cake. 🍰

## Falling In Love With The Earth



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## Preparing Bulk Seed Foods: Part One *Kristin Fortier*

With the upcoming changes and expansion coming to our Bulk Department, it got me thinking about all of the seed foods (legumes, grains, rice, seeds, and nuts). With so many different kinds of dried goods it can sometimes be overwhelming to know exactly how to prepare them. Due to some recent developments in my health, I've had to examine how I prepare these types of food. The methods I've adopted have had a huge positive impact on my health! I thought the information I've gleaned over the past couple of years might be useful to others.

I researched the way traditional cultures prepared their seed foods. (I've referenced my resources below for you to find out more information.) One thing that many of these cultures had in common was that their preparation imitated natural factors that neutralize the seed's preservatives and allow it to sprout. These factors being moisture, warmth, slight acidity, and time.

The benefits of preparing seed foods:

- ~Deactivates enzyme inhibitors (block digestion)
- ~Neutralizes phytic acids (block mineral absorption- iron, phosphorus)
- ~Neutralizes tannins and lectins (irritants)
- ~Pre-digests complex starches & sugars (hard to digest)
- ~Begins breakdown of gluten (hard to digest: can be toxic)
- ~Begins breakdown of cellulose (impossible to digest)

### Legumes

Legumes contain phytic acid and enzyme inhibitors. Phytase is an enzyme that neutralizes phytic acid and liberates minerals. This enzyme co-exists in plant foods that contain phytic acid. In general humans do not produce enough phytase to safely consume large quantities of high phytate foods on a regular basis. However, probiotic lactobacilli, and other species of the endogenous digestive microflora can produce phytase. Thus humans who have good intestinal flora will have an easier time with foods containing phytic acid. Sprouting and soaking activates

phytase reducing or even eliminating phytic acid.

Here is a quick sampling of seed food preparations taken from the books *Nourishing Traditions* by Sally Fallon, and *Cure Tooth Decay* by Ramiel Nagel.

Black, Kidney, Pinto, Black Eyed Peas, or White Beans

2 cups of your choice of above beans. Add 2 table spoons lemon juice. Cover beans with warm filtered water and stir. Leave in a warm place for 12-24 hours depending on the size of the bean. Drain and rinse, place in a large pot, add water to cover beans, and bring to a boil. Skim off foam. Reduce heat. Simmer covered for 4-8hours. Check occasionally, add more water if necessary. Season to taste or add to your recipe.

### Nuts and Seeds

Nuts and seeds contain numerous enzyme inhibitors and can put a real strain on the digestive system if consumed in excess. Soaking them in salt water activates enzymes that neutralize the inhibitors. This method imitates the Aztec practice of soaking pumpkin or squash seeds in brine and then letting them

dry in the sun before eating them whole or grinding them into a meal. Recipe can be adjusted. It makes great use of the oven to do a few large batches at once.

Walnuts, Pecans, Almonds, Pumpkin Seeds, Sunflower Seeds, Pine Nuts, or Hazelnuts

To 4 cups of any of above nuts or seeds, add 2 tablespoons sea salt-nuts and seeds do not require an acid medium. (1 tbsp. if you are making almonds, pine nuts or hazelnuts) Dissolve salt in bowl of filtered water (enough to cover). Add nuts or seeds. Leave in a warm place for at least 7 hours or overnight. Drain in colander and spread onto stainless steel baking pan. Place in warm oven (no more than 150 degrees) for about 12 hours or overnight. Turning occasionally until dry and crisp. Store in airtight container. You can also use a dehydrator for great results!

**Part Two: Grains** coming in May...

### References

Sally Fallon w/Mary Enig Ph.D. , *Nourishing Traditions: The Cookbook that Challenges Politically Correct Nutrition and the Diet Dictocrats* (Washington D.C.: New Trends Publishing, 2001), 452-510

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Ramiel Nagel, *Living with Phytic Acid*, March 26, 2010 <http://www.westonaprice.org/food-features/1893-living-with-phytic-acid.html>

Bee Wilder, *Nuts, Seeds and Legumes Must Be Prepared Properly*, <http://www.healingnaturallybybee.com/articles/foods18.php#a10>



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## Greeting from the Bulk Department *Jon Campo*

As I write this the days are getting noticeably longer and Spring is surely right around the corner. So whats new in Bulk Foods you ask? In a word, Beans. We have been unable to get any Northeastern beans here for about two years. I got some here and there from a friend who ordered extra for us, but that was it. Most of the crop was lost in the northeast for the last two seasons. Thanks to Markus, and our friends from Crown of Maine (a co-operative distributor) we now have a good amount of yellow eye beans, jacob's cattle, and soldier beans - all Maine grown. Boy are they good. If you haven't had baked beans made with yellow eyes, you are in for a treat. We also have some unprocessed Maine - grown Oats prepacked in bags. Crown of Maine also provides us with the only really fresh corn meal I've ever had, as well as yummy rye flour, whole spelt flour, and whole wheat flour, all stone ground at Morgans Mills in Maine. I used the whole spelt flour to make Parker House rolls over the Holidays, and they were great. By the way, if you are sensitive to gluten, ask your health care provider if you can try spelt; a lot of folks can tolerate spelt but not wheat. This gives you a LOT more options for baking. Highly recommended.

We also have three new granolas from our friends at *Grizlies Granolas* in Oregon, two in bulk and one packaged. A lot of granola tastes the same. Not *Karakoram Crunch*, it's really different. Named after a mountain range in Pakistan, it is flavored with cardamom and pistachios. It also generates cash for a worthy cause. Every quarter Wildtime Foods donates 10% of the profits of this product to the Central Asia Institute, which works to support community based education, especially for girls in Pakistan. You may know of it from the best selling book *Three Cups of Tea*. *Aunt Maple's Crunchy Granola* is more along the lines of what you would expect, this is a nutty, maple granola with a surprise addition of almond butter. This product is flavored with real maple syrup, hazelnuts, and cinnamon, it has no added "flavors," and almost no sodium, and Sile reports that it is a good source of fiber. Sile and her nutritional advice and good humor will surely be missed around here. The last product is a gluten-free Cinnamon Nut Granola. As you

know, we can't promise that any bulk products are gluten-free, which is why we are selling this in packages. It is made with Bob's Red Mill Gluten-free Oats and is non GMO, no salt, is very lightly sweetened with molasses, and tastes good. If you have tried some of the other gluten-free granolas, I think you will be pleasantly surprised.

In the baking area, you will find the new Valrhona Baking Cocoa. This complements the Valrhona Baking Chocolate which we sold out of over the holidays. I was shocked at the amount we sold. I'm personally excited about this because it means I don't have to go to Whole Foods anymore, or do the online thing to get good chocolate. I'm including a recipe in this issue for a flourless chocolate cake for your favorite sweetie on Valentines Day. It's gluten-free and easy to make, and tastes great. I generally poach recipes from other folks for the newsletter, but this is all mine. We used to serve it with creme fresh at a cafe I worked at, but I like it with *Beltane Farm* goat yogurt. Enjoy. 🌿

### Chocolate Flourless Cake

¼ cup Valrhona or Dutched cocoa  
6 large eggs  
1 stick of sweet  
(unsalted) butter  
9 oz bittersweet baking chocolate, chopped fine  
½ cup organic raw sugar  
pinch of salt                      large pinch of white pepper  
confectioners sugar, for dusting



Preheat oven 275°. Butter and flour 9" spring formpan or other cake pan. In the top of a double boiler melt the chocolate and the butter with the water just simmering, stirring occasionally. (You could butter and flour the pan while this happens) When melted, whisk in the cocoa powder, pepper, and the yolks one at a time. Remove from heat.

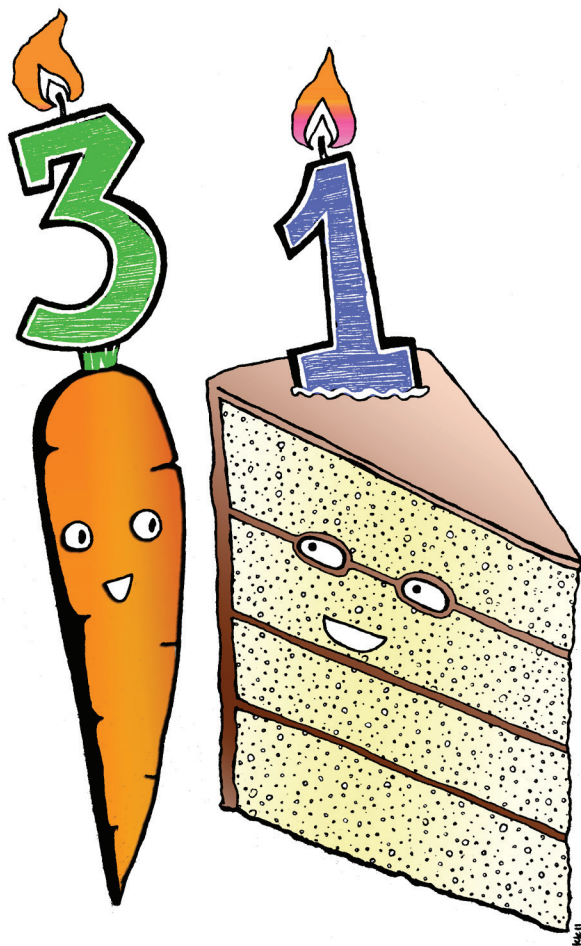
In a large bowl gently stir the egg whites with the pinch of salt, then whip until fluffy and gradually beat in the sugar. Whip until stiff but not dry. You can certainly use a stand mixer for this if you have one. Gently fold about a quarter of the whites into the chocolate mixture, then add this to the egg whites and fold until mostly, but not entirely combined. You don't want to deflate the mixture. Pour the mixture gingerly into the prepared pan, and place in the center of the oven. Check it after 40 minutes, it should just be set, and definitely not dry. Remove to a cooling rack, and let cool for about 20 minutes. If you have used a springform pan, run a knife around the edge of the pan, and remove the sides of the pan. Dust with confectioners sugar. It is best served warm with cream or creme fresh, or my favorite, *Beltane Farm* goat yogurt. 🌿

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February 12<sup>th</sup>

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Performers Include

Ken Cormier

Echo Uganda

The Electric Trains

Full Gael

\* Sorry, no preorders.



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