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THE COMPOST


Vol. 39, Number 1 Winter 2017

Co-op Scoop: Annual Meeting 2017 Alice Rubin

So here we are, in a whole new year. And here we are, the proud owner of a nice plot of land in our beloved Willimantic! OK, it isn't the prettiest building in town – but the purchase of this property is securing our home for many generations to come. How we use this building – it is all up to us! It is very exciting and a bit overwhelming. I feel like my usual winging it style is not quite appropriate in this situation. I am thinking that we need a long range plan before we even start. This is a big deal, and a big project if we want to do it right and have our investment serve the Co-op and the community far into the future.

We could gut the building and renovate it to serve our most immediate needs. But without the bigger, long term vision, we risk having to redo what we initially did. I don't want to do this. I want our Co-op to take the time and consider all the many layers and the potential of this project. One of those layers is energy efficiency. At our January Board Meeting Lynn Stoddard (a long time member and past Board Chair) of ECSU's Institute for Sustainable Energy and Paul Torcellini, also a Co-op Member as well as a member of the Eastern and National Renewable Energy Lab spoke on ways to achieve very high energy performance goals or net-zero energy, when building or renovating a building. The approach to achieve this is different from a traditional project where we would describe what we want – offices, storage and meeting space and get quotes based on these uses. In this net-zero energy model we would say what we want in terms of specific energy use based on how we plan to use the space. This is something that we will be looking into further.

There are many other factors to consider as well. We want a building that is comfortable to be in. We want to use materials that are not hazardous or toxic. We want to use the space well to serve our member-owners needs. This is a round a bout way of saying that this isn't going to happen overnight. But that doesn't mean we aren't working on it! We will keep you updated through the newsletter and posts on Facebook as well as the bulletin board that is right as you come in the door.

Our first step toward creating this long term vision will be to gather input from the membership. In the gallery is a Wishing Tree. Here, you can write on a paper leaf your wishes for the Co-op's new building. This way everyone can contribute their thoughts and see what other people are wishing for. And hopefully by the time spring really does arrive, our Wishing Tree will be in full leaf! We will also hold stakeholder meetings. Two or three meetings will be for members and then there will be a meeting for different groups of people who will be impacted by what the Co-op does. Some of these groups will be farmers, downtown businesses and non profits. While that is happening we will get all of the junk and garbage cleaned out of the building, and then tackle the removal of asbestos and other hazardous materials. Hopefully by spring we can let people in for tours so that you can see the potential as well as the work involved. 

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Newsletter

Amy Kalisher

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What's Growing in Windham?

• • • • • • • • *Sally Milius* • • • • • • • •

This has been a new kind of year at GROW Windham, one where we're taking a step back, to articulate our broader vision and how we can bring this about most effectively. This means a steep learning-curve, as we dive into the world of program management, organizational charts, strategic planning, and communication and promotion. Luckily, we're not alone figuring this out. Alice connected us to Jane Cook, who facilitated a visioning session with our staff last fall, and Erin McMahon, our new CT Food Justice VISTA Service Member, has brought her systematic mind and planning experience to the process. The result is a clearer sense of our mission and how it plays out in the schools, through our youth program, the Windham Youth CORE, in our gardens, and in the community.

In the schools, under the leadership of Kate Callahan, GROW Windham has been collaborating with the Windham Public Schools for the past five years to develop a range of interdisciplinary food- and garden-based curricula, which we have packaged into handbooks and lesson kits that teachers have begun to implement independently. This year Carlisle Dockery has worked with K-2 students in the "Little Chefs" program, where they have the opportunity to learn literacy skills while simultaneously gaining practical kitchen skills as they learn to make and appreciate their own healthy snacks. Older students learn hands-on science through "Kids Dig In!," which touches on themes of conservation, botany, biology, and earth science, and includes corresponding "Little Eaters" nutrition units that build literacy and research skills. Finally, new this year is the "Veggie Superheroes" Curriculum, being developed by the UCONN Nutrition Club. In addition to these formal curricula, GROW Windham also supports Healthy Cooking and Food Justice enrichment courses at the Middle School and High School.

In the Windham Youth CORE, GROW Windham's high school youth program, the youth have re-organized their program into three "community enterprises", led by Youth Leaders and facilitated by our new program coordinator, Renato Muguerza. These are: "Garden Development", focused primarily on their new growing space in Lauter Park; "Community Engagement", to involve more community members in their projects and to encourage more local advocacy for social justice issues; and "Networking", with local youth and community members, as well as other youth programs in the region. This has been an exciting new direction for the program. Sienna Valente-Blough, our former VISTA, who we are fortunate to have stay on with us part-time as a Youth Network Coordinator, has supported youth to lead workshops at regional and national conferences. Two of our program graduates, Vania Galicia and Sasha Rojas-Hernandez, won a national award on behalf of the program at the Everyday Democracy Convening this past December.

This past Saturday, all three of the enterprise groups were hard at work at the Chocolate Festival, with the support of university and community mentors. Garden Planning was asking the community to help name their new garden in Lauter Park and decide what to grow; Engagement was developing a community slide show, in preparation for "CommUNITY/ComUNIDAD", a community-building event that they will co-host with CLiCK later this spring; and Networking was working on the GROW Windham newsletter and social media presence. Keep your eyes open for opportunities to support all of these youth-led initiatives.

In our gardens, GROW Windham is developing our new growing space in Lauter Park, with the support of Jaron Gaier, our new Garden Coordinator, and a force of interns from a UCONN Service-Learning course. The new space is taking shape: last fall, the town installed a new water line and a fence, and with a grant from the North Central Health District we planted 25 fruit trees. We're in the midst of installing a hoop house and planning

continued on page 4

Staff Favorites

Chris Dubis

Hi there! Most of my cooperative coworkers are also shoppers here too! We're super passionate about the products that we carry. However, we often don't get to share with you some of our favorites. Here we go! I had a staff member in each department name a few of their current Coop top picks and the reasons why. Enjoy!

John, Front End

Ariston Basil Infused Olive Oil in bulk and **Ariston White Balsamic Vinegar** in bulk: *"Both of these items make my salad taste like summer! Also White Balsamic Vinegar doesn't stain my shirt!"*

Wendy, Produce

Wendy has an unhealthy relationship with the **Milk Chocolate Pecans** in bulk right now. She's in love!

Her ultimate favorite is **Tobacco Road Farm's Spinach**. We don't have it right now but it might be back soon. Absence makes the heart grow fonder for sure!

Andalou 1000 Roses Heavenly Night Cream is also her all-time favorite skin care item. It's a great protective treatment, especially for cold dry nights.

Saige, Grocery

Fromage Double Crème Cheese with our bulk **Olive Tapenade** are a great pair together for any occasion. Saige keeps it stocked in her fridge at all times. It's a great appetizer to bring to any party. They pair great with a **Portuguese vinho verde**, a favorite wine of Avery (Bulk) and Chris (Wellness). Our neighbors, Elm Package store, carry a few varieties.

Red Ace Beet and Turmeric shots, found in our probiotic cooler are delicious energy shots without caffeine. Rich in nitric oxide and anti-inflammatory constituents, they are great substitutes for a cup of tea or coffee. Saige particularly enjoys them before or after a run outside!

Kara, Wellness

Freshly ground **Honey Roasted Peanut Butter** is great sweet treat with **Honeycrisp Apples**.

One of the best bar soaps we carry is **Tree Fort Natural's Patchouli Moroccan Red Clay**. Locally made in Colchester, this is perfect for patchouli lovers and oily and acne-prone skin. Moroccan Red Clay is a gentle exfoliant and purifier.

Mammoth Tangerines right now are so sweet and juicy! The best thing about them is the fact that they are seedless for easy snacking. 🥕

2017 Board Elections

This year we have 3 of our current Board Members up for reelection. Voting will happen at our Annual Meeting on Saturday April 1st. See back page for details.

Kathleen Krider has been a member of the Willimantic Food Coop for a very long time. She has been a member of the Board of Directors for just long enough to feel like she is starting to learn, connect and feel relevant to the work of the board. Her day job allows her to work in Willimantic with area social services agencies and provides her the opportunity to shop and loiter in the town she most calls home. Working in town is meaningful and rewarding, serving the WFC as a board member is a natural compliment. Kathleen lives in Coventry, her sons Levi and Asa are often milling about and when she isn't outside doing something fun, she is inside doing something fun.

Bryan O'Hara is a local vegetable grower at Tobacco Road Farm in Lebanon. The farm has supplied the Co-op with produce for more than 20 years. Bryan strongly believes in democratic member involvement in Co-operative governance. He considers himself a Co-op enthusiast.

Johnnie Walker is the owner of Walker Woodworking, a Willimantic Business. Johnnie is a long time Co-op member and long time lover of the bulk department. He is running for his third term. 🥕



What's Growing *continued from page 2*

the perennial and annual beds for the spring. There will be community workdays at the garden every Saturday in April from 10-1. In addition, with the Eastern CT Conservation District, we will be co-hosting four conservation workshops at the Garden this season: Water Quality (3/25); Water Conservation and Irrigation (4/22); Composting (5/27); and Pest Management (6/24). Please join us.

In the community, we have been facilitating the development of The Windham Community Food Network, a group of community members, agencies, businesses, and schools working to engage the resources and talents of its participants to meet the needs of community members and support a more just and sustainable local food system. The Network has five working groups that support: Food Access, Education, Community Engagement, Local Growing Spaces, and Economic Opportunities for local producers. The next event will be the Know Your Farmer Fair on February 25th at the town hall, an opportunity to connect food producers with consumers, including local restaurants and home chefs or avid veggie lovers.

Finally, GROW Windham is supporting the Willimantic Farmers Market to continue the momentum developed through the USDA Farmers' Grant, which has just ended. Although the market is not in season, lots of behind the scenes work is underway to prepare for the market to open again in May. Be on the lookout for ECSU students, who will be in the community collecting donations to support the SNAP Double Dollar program for the 2017 season. The market is looking to the community to continue supporting their activities, through business sponsorships, and individuals interested in volunteering their time.

Helping us to present all of this good work is Cris Cadiz, our new director of communications, who is leading interns and the Windham Youth CORE to develop our facebook and website presence, as well as helping to promote events. Check out new developments to our website: a calendar posting events from all of our partners; ways to get involved; and a new "donate" button, in case you have resources to spare. Or feel free to contact us directly by email: info@growwindham.org or phone: 860-423-4534 x312. Join us! 🥕



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Fun in the Kitchen

Sasha Bajjo

Hello Dear Coopers,

I have been having quite a bit of fun in the kitchen this winter, particularly in my crock pot. The weather has been great for warming, comforting foods that pack a lot of protein, and develop wonderful flavors. Recently, I made lamb steaks in the crock pot, served with an invigorating kohlrabi and radish salad, and broccoli and cheese on the side. Oh yes, it was a good day for food.

All ingredients listed are from the Coop:

2 lamb leg steaks
1 carrot
1 turnip
2 sprigs fresh rosemary
3 sprigs fresh mint
Salt (I have Himalayan pink salt in my pantry now)
Black pepper
2 pinches of Berbere seasoning
2 pinches of powdered Cumin
4 pinches Curry powder
Worcestershire sauce
Olive oil to drizzle over steaks
Water to coat bottom of crock

Drizzle a little olive oil on the bottom of the crock so the steaks don't stick. I used the herbs and spices to make my own dry rub for the steaks. Pull rosemary and mint off stems, and combine with spices in a bowl. Put steaks in bowl one at a time and rub in to coat on each side. Place into crock pot side by side with about one inch between. Slice carrot and turnip, and layer around the steaks. Add Worcestershire sauce to taste, about 1 tablespoon. Drizzle a little olive oil over the tops of the steaks. Pour in just enough water to coat the bottom of the crock pot (about 1/8 cup). Cook on high for 5 hours, turning steaks over every couple hours.

2 small kohlrabi
1 small-medium radish
Olive oil
Balsamic vinegar
1 navel orange
4-5 sprigs of fresh mint
Salt
Black pepper

Thinly slice kohlrabi and radish (use a mandolin if you have one), and place in a medium sized bowl. Pull mint leaves off their stems and add to bowl. The original recipe I used for this salad called for lemon juice, but I didn't have one so I used a navel orange instead. While peeling the orange to squeeze for juice, I noticed some of the slices were small and even tiny, so I plucked those out to add into the salad for some extra umph. Squeeze the rest of the orange over the veggies. Just a splash or two of balsamic is all you need, and a little olive oil to help blend all the flavors (I bet the white balsamic we just got in would be a stellar ingredient). Add salt and pepper to taste. I mixed everything by hand, so I could pull apart the kohlrabi and radish slices that were stuck together. Chill for at least a half an hour before serving.

2 large broccoli stalks
Cheddar cheese (Bruce gave me a block of herbal jack that was the bees' knees)

Cut and boil broccoli to your desired tenderness. Drain and set aside. Cut the amount of cheese you wish to add into cubes. Melt a little butter in a small pot, and add cheese cubes. Stir continuously on a low-medium setting. As soon as everything is perfectly melted, remove from heat and pour over broccoli.

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Winky's Food Review *Winky Gordon*

Hello Cooperators! Up for review this issue: Tierra Farms dried organic mango (\$12.99/lb.); Berkshire Mountain Bakery raisin spelt sourdough bread (\$5.99/22 oz. loaf); Country Queen raw goat cheddar (\$15.49/lb.); Green Bee's Love Potion soda ((\$9.99/22 oz. bottle).

It may not be local, it may not be in season, but oh baby is the dried organic mango delicious! When asked what food she'd recommend for this issue of my food review, Olivia Beaulan instantly and without hesitation, directed me to the dried organic mango. Her declaration: "Nature made it for us to enjoy." I'd say she's right, particularly at this gloomy time of year. Often dried fruit tastes only vaguely like its fresh source but this is most definitely mango. You can practically feel the fresh juice running down your arm. It's sweet, tangy and a reminder that it's warm and sunny on some part of the planet. Try it. Tierra Farms supplies many of our bulk foods and is located in Valatie, NY, south of Albany. The mango itself is from Mexico.

Berkshire Mountain Bakery is in the super-charming town of Housatonic in the lovely Berkshire mountains of Massachusetts. I have become jaded by the many super-charming websites I've looked at over the years of my food review, so here's the short version of the company's story: young man learns to bake in Holland, gets invited to come make bread at the Kushi Institute, brings his family to the Berkshires, gets rave reviews, opens a business. I'll say a little more about the sourdough raisin spelt bread itself. It is made with unbleached white spelt flour and stone-ground whole spelt flour, water, raisins, sourdough culture, salt, cinnamon, palm oil. It's not quite as hearty as the old Kupris bread from many years ago (remember?), but it's pretty substantial, which I find satisfying. And I have so missed a fine raisin bread, good for many an interesting sandwich and, of course, perfectly complete just toasted with butter. For tonight's dinner, this bread was the foil for avocado and the goat cheddar. The world may be in an uproar, but not all is lost if there's still cinnamon raisin bread, avocado, and goat cheddar. I am grateful for these things. FYI: Spelt is from the plant *Triticum spelta*, which is related to but not the same as *Triticum aestivum*, the wheat plant. It does

contain gluten but is sometimes better tolerated by those with gluten intolerance. My guess is the sourdough culture also makes it more digestible.

Hooray! The Co-op has another goat cheese for sale! This one is sharp, gritty, and hails from Iowa. Milton Creamery primarily makes cheese from cows – Amish cows no less. (Their web site describes working with family farms with small herds, mostly pasture fed, and has a link to the tiny town the where the business is located.) The Country Queen appears to be their only goat cheese; I have no idea where the goats are from. I thoroughly enjoyed the above mentioned sandwich, made with this cheese. It's bold, salty, and was a great counterpart to the avocado. Salty, sharp, gritty, paired with smooth, fatty, and rich; life really is good.

Finally, the Love Potion. I keep wanting to add Number Nine, but it's just Love Potion. That right there is some fancy-pants soda pop. Wowee. As you may recall, I am a sucker for a pretty label; this soda's got one. And, of course, it's got a great story: the soda maker whipped it up one night when he realized he'd forgotten his wife's birthday and needed to bail himself out quick. Hence, its name. The label reports this "elixir" is "handcrafted with strawberries, organic cocoa nibs, and vanilla," all of which are clearly revealed in its taste. It also contains honey – a signature ingredient in all of Green Bee's sodas – water, and citric acid. It is good – and expensive. I had an interesting conversation with Emmett (who recommended it) about the value of a bottle of soda in comparison to a bottle of wine. Those of us who drink wine might spend \$10 on a bottle. Why not on a bottle of artisan soda? If you're

a soda connoisseur and you are curious about the Love Potion, I encourage you to try it and judge for yourself. I can imagine it as a novelty, bought to impress someone – perhaps someone you'd like to entice with a little love potion.

That's all for now. See you at the Co-op. And now, more than ever, take care, and be kind to yourself and to one another. 🌱



Helen's Wellness Review *Helen Scanlon*

For this edition of *The Compost*, I bring you Bach's Rescue Plus Stress Complex effervescent tablets. Bach flower remedies, created in the 1930s by British physician

Dr. Edward Bach, have long been a popular product to promote well-being and natural healing, and this new Bach dietary supplement specifically targets stress. And who doesn't need a little help in the stress department these days?

The Bach Stress Complex formula contains a plethora of stress-fighting vitamins and minerals to help you get through the day. Just drop a tablet in a glass of water, allow it to dissolve fully, and enjoy the sugar-free, natural berry flavor. It turns

water into a fizzy pink drink—and it's quite tasty. It's nice to know that while you are enjoying it, you are helping your body fight stress naturally.

From the Bach website, www.bachflower.com, each tablet contains the following:

Pantothenic Acid (Vitamin B5): helps support normal mental performance.

Vitamin B12: helps maintain normal cognitive function

Magnesium: Contributes to normal energy release.

Zinc: Contributes to normal cognitive function.

Good stuff! I really enjoyed the light, refreshing flavor of the Rescue Plus tablet—allow it several minutes to fully dissolve in the water, and add a couple of ice cubes if you'd like. This would be a grand summer beverage, but I thoroughly enjoyed it after a brisk winter run. Our very own Wellness Manager, Chris, told me he enjoys it right before bedtime. Good idea, Chris!

Bach's Rescue Plus Stress Complex effervescent tablets are perfect for busy parents, students, athletes, or any hardworking, overwhelmed person looking for help to cope with daily stress. As with any supplement, consult with your doctor before taking it, and thoroughly read the information on the package to ensure you are using it properly. Go to <http://www.bachflower.com/rescue-plus/> to learn more!

Deep breaths and happy healing,

Helen 🌱



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Agenda

- Board Elections •
- Sally Milius, Director of Grow Windham •
- Financial Report •
- Expansion Update and Discussion •