

91 Valley Street Willimantic, CT 06226 860.456.3611

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STORE HOURS

8:00am - 8:00pm *Every Day*

THE COMPOST

Vol. 40, Number 4 Holiday 2018

Co-op Scoop Alice Rubin

Food. We all eat it. Food is much more than one of life's requirements though. So much joy and love and tradition are evoked and conveyed in the role that food plays in our lives. This is often most obvious during the holidays. Grandma's cookie recipe, Aunt Sue's pie...those recipes get dusted off once a year and are passed on from generation to generation. New traditions also are made along the way. Some of these new traditions are based on seasonal produce; if it was a great squash year, well, let's have a special squash soup.

At the Co-op we try to help by procuring the freshest local produce available to help make your holiday meals special. Actually, we do this all of the time; we want our community (and the entire world!) to be a well fed one!

Even though they make it look effortless, the staff here at the Co-op work really, really, hard to not just keep the shelves and the bins full, but to make sure that they are full of really great food. They ask questions like:

- · Where was it grown?
- Is it organic?
- Does it taste good?
- How much will we have to sell it for?

Our staff goes out to other grocery stores; (they -- the stores, not the staff! -- will remain nameless) to 'comp shop.' They compare their price to the Co-op's price to be sure that we are priced competitively. If we aren't priced pretty close to their price, then we look to see if we can lower ours.

Our staff is constantly searching for locally produced food. Whether it is foraged mushrooms (this was one heck of a mushroom year!) or bottled hot sauce, they prioritize purchasing the food that will not only feed us, but put money back into our community.

Our staff makes our store beautiful in many ways. The artistic displays throughout the store are constantly changing to highlight different seasonal goods. Different themes help us all plan meals or point out an item that we didn't know the Co-op carried.

Our staff make sure that our shelves are filled in a way that makes it easy for you to find what you are looking for. And yes, aisle signs are in the works!

Our staff take the time to 'Front and Face' by pulling the product on the shelf to the front so that it is easy to see and looks nice. I used to think it was a silly thing to do, but it does make a difference. Check it out next time you come shopping.

Our staff think about Gluten-Free, Paleo, Dairy Free, Grass Fed, Non GMO, Fair Trade...the list goes on. The point is the food business is not a simple one anymore. And the knowledge and dedication of our staff is something I am very grateful for.

Our staff is the best multitaskers ever! They can ring up your groceries while having a conversation about your kids/your dog/the world. They answer your questions and even help bag your groceries.

Keeping our food Co-op going is a huge effort. And it truly is a group effort. All of the staff, all of the working member-owners and everyone who shops here are part of our success!

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Attention Busy Foodies!

Make Your Holiday Food & Gift Shopping Easier! Help the planet! Buy Specialties at the Coop!

Carol Davidge

While shopping at the Coop, you'll find dozens of fabulous food and non-food gifts priced from \$1.29 and up around the store. In Bulk Foods, the lovely cellophane bags







make ideal holiday wrapping for fair-trade, organic mixed nuts, candies, teas, granola, coffees or spices as well as pre-packaged delights that don't need wrapping.

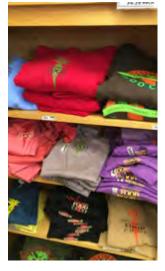
You'll find take-out from local restaurants, local artisan cheeses and freshbaked pies and breads from regional bakers. Produce features the freshest locally grown foods - never doubt that your dinners will be a treat for others with salad greens from local growers or that a hostess will delight in the variety of produce that you bring.

My favorite always unexpected gift is Real Pickles fermented foods - eyes pop when a recipient opens a wrapped keepable mason jar and finds one of the numerous varieties from beets to carrots with ginger, to traditional sauerkraut (refrigeration required). And you'll find many brands and types of fermented foods such as miso and kefir. After they laugh, people appreciate the health benefits they'll be enjoying.

Near Produce are mesh recyclable bags, items for food preservation, and compost buckets.

Unexpected treats for tired souls are tucked into the cubbyhole by the checkout desk, including fair-trade wool socks, tees and hoodies, spirit lifting books, and color-photos by Carol Davidge continued on page 3







Busy Foodies continued from page 2

ful beeswax and aroma-therapy candles that encourage Peace, Meditation, Immunity, and Healing.

The Cosmetics & Home Goods area offers colorful healthy soaps and aromatherapy bubble bath balls.

In Housewares, opposite the dairy cooler, are kitchen goods such as wood spoons, scrubbers, and decorated bamboo dishcloths; close by are pet care items and treats.

In all areas of the Coop, you will find food for your body and your spirit that is fun for the eyes and easy on the pocketbook. So this holiday season, help sustain the Coop, support local and international growers, and craftspeople.

Happy Holidays! 🍍





Expansion Update Alice Rubin



Our work on "What to do with our property?" continues with C&H Architects. We began working with Jesse Selman the Architect in charge of our project, this summer. He and his team have been talking with us, looking at our store and our property at 87 Church Street. They ask great questions to get at the heart of the Co-op's vision, which is based on input from our Member-Owners, Board and Staff. His focus is very much on using space well, allowing for an efficient and safe workplace, which in turn increases quality of customer service, shelves that are well stocked,

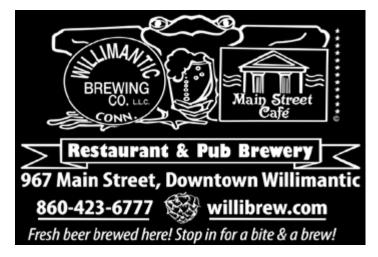
Jesse is also thinking of our project as part of the larger picture of our town. We will be right next door to the new Senior/Community Center – how can we work together? What will that building look like? How can we create pathways to connect the two buildings? Where will everyone park?

and customer safety, to name just a few of the

benefits of a well designed space.

There are so many things to think about, and many things to wonder about and make guesses about!

Jesse will be making a presentation to the entire Co-op Board soon - I promise to share more information as we continue our adventure.



Helen's Wellness Review Helen Scanlon

Hello, Co-opers!

For this issue of The Compost, I review three awesome products to help you get through the chilly days of fall and winter. Dry skin? No problem. Face need some brightening and toning? Got you covered. Need to de-stress with a fragrant, soothing bath that doesn't turn your skin into sandpaper? All good.

Read on:

Dry hands are an issue when the snow flies. Skin cracks, gets scaly, and just looks downright, well, reptilian. Does the Co-op have anything to help our weathered mitts?

Heck yes! Grab a tube of Alaffia Coconut Reishi Hand and Body Crème, in coconut chai.

It smells earthy and rich, and it moisturizes and protects like a boss. I am super-duper-mega picky about skin moisturizers: most claim they really work, but don't. If a skin crème doesn't make my hands feel like springtime rose petals, I'm over it.

Guess what? I am so not over Alaffia—because it really goes to work. It is rich and emollient, and has protective ingredients so you don't have to keep reapplying each time you wash your hands. And it smells amazing. I shared some with a co-worker, and she had to run right out and get her own tube because she fell in love with Alaffia's coconut chai fragrance.

Furthermore, you can feel good about your Alaffia purchase. Here's the deal (from the product description): Alaffia pays fair wages, empowers mothers and utilizes sustainable wild crafted ingredients. Funds from product sales help conduct our empowerment projects in Togo, West Africa.

Next, I tried Acure's Biocelluose Face Mask and a Pacha Soap Co. Froth Bomb. I drew a nice hot bath, threw in a sand and sea froth bomb, and put the Acure mask on and soaked away. The Pacha Froth Bomb happily fizzed away and filled the tub with gorgeous turquoise water packed with essential oils, salts, and natural fragrance. The sand and sea one was quite pleasant (think beach!) Later in the week I tried the French lavender froth bomb,





and WOW, did it smell heavenly! So relaxing, too. You can find these little delightful bath spheres near the front of the wellness aisle. Grab a bunch and keep them on hand!

You can feel good when you soak in a Pacha Froth Bomb—and not just because it smells like a dream and softens and nourishes your skin (from pachasoap. com): Your Pacha Soap purchases help fuel clean water initiatives, small-scale soap shops and other sustainable ventures in developing countries!

I left the Acure Biocellusose Mask on for five minutes while I soaked in the tub, and rinsed it off afterward. The package says you can leave it on for fifteen minutes, and smooth the elixir into your face—alas, you can always tweak that to meet your skin's needs, as fifteen minutes may be too much for sensitive skin. The mask was a nice addition to a relaxing wellness routine, and made my face feel renewed and bright. Winter is right around the corner, so your face will appreciate a little pick-me-up now and again. I've reviewed Acure products before, and I really like what their line offers.

From the product description: With Vitamin C & Kale, for all skin types, 100% vegan. 0% questionable. Free of parabens, sulfates, phthalates, mineral oil, petrolatum and silicone.

The Co-op has everything you need for your wellness! Treat yourself, and do it now. Why wait? Self-care should be an every day occurrence, not just reserved for when you think you need it.

Go you!



It's Easy (and Necessary) to Be Green: Our Journey Back to the Co-op Elaina Hancock

When my husband and I first moved to the area, we joined the co-op. I had always wanted to eat and shop locally and I've always loved co-ops and "hippie stores." Then grad school sucked me in, we bought a fixer-upper, got some pets, had some kids. Caught up in the whirlwind, suddenly it became all too easy to shop elsewhere.

Fast forward to now, I have a job that allows me to dig into and write about topics that fascinate me. Recently I have been covering various aspects of climate change, notably about changes that we can see and experience right here, right now in our backyards. You don't have to travel to see the melting glaciers to grasp the effects of climate change on the planet -- just look outside.

I intended to cover a range of topics, hoping to capture the interest of readers. I knew I'd be preaching to the choir to many, but if I made climate change personal for others by tying it to something that impacted them directly or something they really cared about, maybe I could reach someone new.

The project has taken its toll, writing for months about these topics is a real downer. Truthfully being so tuned in and enmeshed with the bad news, I noticed I was starting to see things differently. Rather than getting down, I decided to funnel the energy differently.

I began to feel a strong sense of obligation that I needed to do more to lessen the impact my family and I have on the planet and to live more lightly on the land, so to say. We already live quite frugally, which thankfully often goes hand-in-hand with being green. We buy as much as we can second-hand, we try to bike or walk to work when possible, we try to not use the air conditioner unless it's sweltering (I'd prefer to never use it but I can't always get my way!) and each year we try to do "no heat 'til trick-or-treat."

But there is always room for improvement and, on reflection, we are doing a lot but nowhere near enough.

Looking for low hanging fruit, it was clear we needed to do something about reducing the amount of waste we produce, namely plastic. Since we compost, our garbage would be comprised week after week of a frustratingly omnipresent quantity of non-recyclable plastic packaging, mostly from groceries. I collect recyclable plastic bags and film and take it to the bins at the grocery store, but the amount that can't be recycled is still too high. On top of that, most of the plastic consumers think they are recycling are actually ending up in the landfill anyway. Collectively, we need to avoid plastic altogether.

Reducing waste is important as well as reducing emissions. A good chunk of a household's greenhouse gas emissions come from their food choices, so we are tackling our emissions and plastic addiction by eating more locally and choosing organically grown food. We joined an amazing CSA and are bulk bin shopping at the Co-op.

Where I once decided that we couldn't afford or didn't have time to shop locally, I realized we couldn't afford not to. I started to write this before the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report came out in October. The report's findings that we must take immediate and drastic action solidified my resolve, as I hope it did for millions of others.

Do what you can. Vote for climate advocates and sustainable initiatives. Vote with your dollars. The clock is ticking, we need to make big changes, now, before it's too late.



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Dede Delaney

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Winky's Food Review Winky Gordon

Carbs! Carbs! Live! All carb all the time. Well, at least for the duration of the Food Review. We've got Jilz Crackerz (\$6.99 / 5.5 oz.box), From The Ground Up Cauliflower Crackers (\$3.99/4oz. box), Capello's Cheese Pizza (\$12.99, 1lb box). I am not a nutritionist and I don't play one on TV but I do know that the food category of carbohydrates is loaded with bad choices. If I am going to indulge, I want quality carbs, not cheapy stuff. I want carbs that are Gluten Free! Grain Free! Good for the Planet! Okay, I made that last one up. The following carb-rich foods do have some great things going for them.

Jil did a great job developing her gluten free, grain free Crackerz – in her Crackery of course. I tried the Mediterranean flavor ones and totally dig them. Their all organic ingredients include: tapioca, almond and sunflower seed flours, sesame, chia and flax seeds, and a few others, including lavender. Truth be told it was the lavender that made me choose this flavor; how could I not? These complex crackers definitely have the seed thing going on but are more delicate than a super-seed food. They are earnest little crackers with a clean taste, not heavy, and a perfect accompaniment to any cheese are other food you want to eat them with. We also carry Tuscan Original and Cracked Pepper and Salt flavors at the Coop. Jilz Crackers are made in Oxnard, California.

Also in the cracker department: From the Ground
Up gluten free, vegan Cauliflower Crackers, Cheddar
Flavor. They're so little. And so cute. And so easy to gobble
a handful before you can even say cauliflower. True to their name, cauliflower flour is the first ingredient, followed by





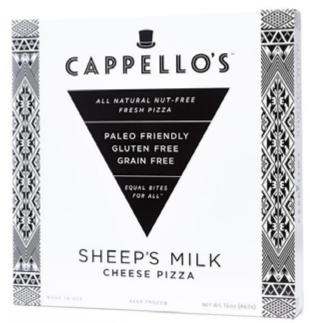
rice and cassava flours, potato starch and a whole bunch of other things including a vegetable blend powder. They do include "responsibly sourced palm oil certified by bureau veritas." I don't know about that bureau yet. And before I get to the taste part I have to tell you that these very snackable crackers are made in....Greece! So curious to me. Their "About Us" page tells nothing except their version of "we wanted to make good food" and so on.

The taste: good. Kind of salty. Fun. Snacky. I can imagine these would be especially enjoyed by someone who craves cheddar flavor but can't eat cheese. The combination of flours, vegetable blend powder, sunflower lecithin and more totally pull off the cheddar flavor for me. I imagine it would be hard to use these little crackers as a vehicle for any kind of dip or spread – just too small. To me they are more in the category of chips or popcorn – easy to eat by the handful – than they are in the cracker one. We also carry Sea Salt and Nacho flavors of this cracker.

And finally, the pizza. Searching for the answer to

continued on page 7

Food Review continued from page 6

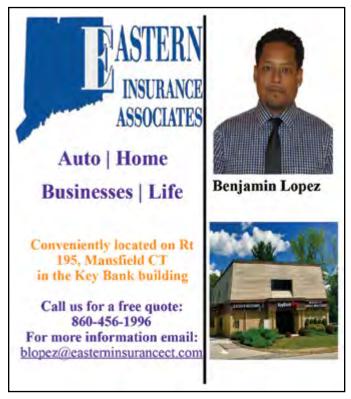


why someone would pay \$12.99 for a 1 lb. pizza, I looked at Grass Fed Girl's website where she discusses 6 reasons to go grain free. The reasons have to do with the structure and composition of grains and digestive processes and were pretty compelling. Interestingly, I found her site listed just above one dedicated to discussing why grains are important. (Are you overwhelmed by the zillions of diets out there right now? My head is spinning.)

Capello's gluten free, grain free Cheese Pizza, packaged in a box with a sexy design, is just fine. When I eat pizza – not very often – I go gluten free myself. I am already okay with the unconventional crust; this one didn't seem too different. It's made with arrowroot and coconut flours, eggs, coconut oil and psyllium husk among other ingredients. The topping is your basic mozzarella and red sauce. Capello's lets you know that their coconut ingredients are responsibly and sustainably sourced, and their eggs and milk cage-free and grass fed respectively. With 23 grams of fat and 820 milligrams of salt in a single serving, this pizza is so definitely not part of a low fat or low salt diet! The truth is, I didn't find this pizza any better than the others we carry at the Co-op. I am not on a grain-free diet so it doesn't matter so much to me. If grain-free is what you're looking for, you'll probably be delighted to be able to indulge in pizza again. Capello's is made in Denver, Colorado. The Coop also carries a Naked Pizza Crust from this company.

That's what I've got for now. So many carbs, so little time. Whether you are eating carbs or not, paleo, keto, vegan, or not - whatever you're eating, be thankful for the good fortune of having food in your house. And be kind – to yourselves as well as to one another.











% off everything*

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for member-owners

** MUST BE CURRENT ON EQUITY PAYMENTS

Nov 24 (Small Business Saturday) — Sun. Pec 16



Local craftspeople will be selling their wares each Friday, Saturday and Sunday

Saturday November 24 — Sunday December 23