Grass-fed Meat Label

(continued from page 18)

from grass and forage could qualify for the grass-fed label. That proposal was strongly condemned in public comments the USDA received from consumers, producer groups, nonprofit organizations, and academics.

Addes Kastel: “It’s important for the public to contact the USDA and let the agency know that grass-fed means grass-fed. The USDA needs to hear that consumers want livestock raised in conditions that promote the animal’s health, protect the environment, and produce meat products that contain the healthiest nutrients.” Although heartened by the USDA’s turnaround on the grass-fed issue, Kastel remains puzzled and disappointed at the agency’s reluctance to apply a similar approach to the role of pasture in organic dairying. “Many of the same nutritional, environmental, and animal husbandry benefits are captured by pasturing organic dairy animals,” explains Kastel. But the USDA has let factory farms that primarily confine their milking herds in feedlots or small sheds gain a significant and growing slice of the organic dairy market. “Co-operatives and their consumer members need to continue pressuring the USDA for a strong (organic) pasture rule that will protect family farmers and produce dairy products that match consumer values and expectations,” Kastel said.

To help consumers and dairy product buyers identify the dairy products produced with the highest organic integrity, the Cornucopia Institute has released a scorecard and report that rates the nation’s organic dairy products. It can be viewed on the group’s web page at www.cornucopia.org.

Putting the High Back into the High Holidays at P’nai Or

by Tobie Hoffman

This fall, in Summit Church’s Fellowship Hall, a High Holiday gathering unlike anything you may have ever experienced will unfold again, as P’nai Or—the Mt. Airy Jewish renewal congregation whose name means “Faces of Light”—offers High Holiday services of a different stripe to seekers of all backgrounds.

“The High Holidays at P’nai Or are Jewish renewal at its best,” said Rabbi Marcia Prager who has been co-leading these festive gatherings along with many talented P’nai Or members, for thirteen years. “We blend traditional liturgy with uplifting heart-opening poetic translations so that Hebrew and English prayers flow intertwined with each other. The music is profound—deep, high and sweet in a way that caresses your soul. And of course, everyone is included. There is passionate prayer, quiet meditation, opportunities to reflect and do some pretty deep inner work, and also time to share, to be creative and even make some new friends.”

P’nai Or High Holidays are a great introduction to the themes of this season in the Jewish year, and to different styles and approaches to these themes that can make them even more powerful and personally relevant. "If you have grown past thinking of God as a judgmental King on a throne, and are ready for some of the more poetic imagery that grows out of the Jewish mystical tradition, P’nai Or will be a refreshing change for you too," said Abby Michaelski who came to P’nai Or three years ago after trying many different congregations. "I needed a more dynamic, more integrated way of understanding the creative life-force that I experience in the world and in my life. P’nai Or High Holidays takes the traditional liturgy and imagery and makes it soar in a way that is resonant with my experience. Boy was this a wow."

“I wanted an informal, really friendly environment where I could have a spiritual experience, and also bring my kids” said Sam Steinig and his wife Rodi, who come with their young daughter and baby girl. The P’nai Or Children’s Program runs through the holiday, offering a blend of childcare and High Holiday activities and projects for children. We can bring our kids into the service to be with us, and also let them be with other kids and have educational fun.”

(continued on page 25)
The Simplicity Dividend
Personal Kyoto Pledges
by Betsy Teutsch

This Simplicity Dividend column, which I have written for several years, has focused on editing one’s personal consumption, yielding a personal bonus of time and money, along with intangibles such as happiness and fulfillment. It turns out that downsizing yields another benefit becoming more significant by the day: minimizing your consumption decreases your personal carbon dioxide emissions.

The excess of carbon dioxide emissions is, of course, what is fueling (quite literally) global warming, and the preponderance of evidence of impending climate crisis is blaring at us from all sides. Combating global warming will take massive global paradigm shifts in technology and policy; in the meantime, though, each of us can make personal choices to decrease the CO2 emissions we ourselves generate. Since Americans consume a disproportionate share of the world’s fossil fuel, it follows that Americans making changes in our consumption will have disproportionate impact, as well.

Unlike conventional dirty pollution, carbon dioxide is invisible. That makes it hard to track our impact, and hard to improve our behavior based on any perceivable effects. How would a household go about committing to the Kyoto protocol, the international effort signed by 161 countries but notoriously ignored by our United States government? The Kyoto formula, based on worldwide carbon dioxide emissions, is very complicated, but a rough goal for household compliance is to reduce CO2 emissions by 20 percent. It is challenging, but very doable with vigilant attention and action. Reducing emissions by 20 percent can be accomplished through an infinite variety of strategies; indeed once you start on the path, you may exceed the goal. Given that the cost of energy is escalating, in the long run you are likely to save money, even if that is not your goal.

The three main sources of a household’s CO2 emissions are heating, transportation, and electrical appliance use. Keep in mind that most electricity in Pennsylvania is generated by coal-fired plants. That means the CO2 emissions take place on site, before the electricity which you use is added into the grid. So the CO2 doesn’t literally come from your house, but is produced on your behalf elsewhere. It’s upsetting to realize this, since when it gets to our homes, electricity is quite clean.

The easiest method to reduce your emissions would be to move to a 20 percent smaller home, drive a high mileage vehicle as little as possible, and buy electricity from a renewable source, available from PECO. (In Pennsylvania, non-fossil fuel electricity is primarily generated by wind power, but other options include solar, hydro-electric, as well as bio-gas, all renewable sources now being deployed.) Not many of us are going to spring for a new home; a Prius, and wind power, though I am happy to report that I know people who have done each of those things. Wind power is way cheaper and easier than financing a Prius or moving, by the way.

Starting on your home heating, there are many ways to lower your fuel consumption, which lowers your CO2 emissions, and your bill. Remember to compare your usage to prior years, not the bottom line figure, since the cost of energy is increasing dramatically. Your bill will probably still be higher than last year’s, but if your usage is down, you’re going in the right direction. The simplest way to lower your usage is to lower the thermostat, installing a programmable thermostat will help you to do this more efficiently and comfortably. Another strategy is to lower your thermostat even further, and add electric heaters to the rooms you use most frequently. I “preheat” my home office in the winter, and find that since it is a small room, raising its temperature a few degrees makes it tolerable, even though the rest of my monster house is really cold. You might be ready for a new boiler, which while expensive, will give you increased efficiency, another hallmark of responsible energy consumption.

These types of investments pay for themselves over time. The faster the cost of energy escalates, the faster the payback. Conservation, including insulating walls, caulking or replacing windows, weather-stripping, and experimenting with insulating paint will all help to lower your fuel consumption. So there are many paths to take to get to a 20 percent reduction. Reducing one’s gasoline emissions likewise can be accomplished through a host of strategies. If you have two cars, get in the habit of using the one which gets better mileage more often. Do errands more efficiently, and consider running more of them by foot or bike or internet. If you commute by car, taking public transit one day a week would effectively lower your emissions by that golden 20 percent. Air travel generates enormous carbon emissions; according to Sierra Club’s magazine, “for a family of four, a round-trip transatlantic flight creates as much greenhouse gas as driving for a year.” So perhaps you might reconsider a long airline trip and go somewhere in easy driving distance instead. Try carpooling to meetings and social gatherings with others going in the same direction.

(continued on page 25)
Co-op Joins Morris Arb. Fall Fest, Oct. 1
by Susan Crane

Each fall, scores of families in the Delaware Valley look forward to an afternoon of fun at the Morris Arboretum’s Fall Festival. Now in its eight year, on Sunday, Oct. 1 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m., the Morris Arboretum will host its annual Fall Family Festival. The Arboretum’s beautiful landscape provides the perfect backdrop for this lively event. Glorious trees burst with hues of orange and red as families gather to make a scarecrow or paint a pumpkin. Fall Festival is the highlight of the Arboretum’s fall calendar, last year drawing over 1,700 visitors. What makes the event so unique is that almost all the activities are geared toward both children and adults, allowing families to spend a wonderful afternoon together.

What will make it even better this year is that Weavers Way will be joining the fun, with a selection of organic, locally grown and other Co-op products. Weavers Way will also provide a variety of apples for apple tasting. Bushels of apple varieties will be available. Visitors can delight in sampling the various apples varieties and choosing an assortment to take home. Among the other favorites is the scarecrow making, for which the Arboretum supplies all the materials, including the scarecrow frames, hay and a vast selection of clothing. This is serious business for many folks who are intent on having the “best-dressed” scarecrow around. Visitors are encouraged to come early for scarecrow-making, as many visitors head right to that area to ensure their pick of the best outfit.

Returning for a second year in a row will be Wendy Whitten “The Singing Scientist” and her friend, Flumpa the Frog. Flumpa is a character based on the red-eyed tree frog, and together he and Wendy make science fun in an interactive 30-minute performance that includes music, sing-a-longs and storytelling. Shows are scheduled for 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. Kids also enjoy choosing and creating a pumpkin “masterpiece.” The pumpkins can be painted in a variety of colors and decorated with glitter, yarn, pompoms and doilies. Additional pumpkins can also be purchased to take home.

No visit to the Arboretum at this time of year would be complete without a stop at the Garden Railway Display. This year’s theme, Fairy Tale Rail II enchants visitors with its charming replicas of storybook homes — from the Thumbelina’s tiny cottage to the majestic Cinderella’s castle. Be sure to see the display before it closes for the season on Oct. 9.

Finally, take a few moments to look around and enjoy the spectacular fall color. In the Philadelphia area, there is truly no better place to see beautiful autumn trees than at the Morris Arboretum. The Arboretum is home to some of the area’s oldest and largest trees, as well as many trees known for their particularly superb color — including red and sugar maples, scarlet oaks, and black gums.

The Fall Festival is the perfect way to enjoy an afternoon of fun in a glorious autumn setting. Make plans to visit the Arboretum and it will become an annual event for your family, too.

Grant Helps Families Caring for Elderly
by Susan G. Smith

Time Out, a program of Temple University’s Center for Intergenerational Learning, has received a grant from the Chestnut Hill Health Care Foundation to help families caring for elderly relatives who live in Northwest Philadelphia. The zip codes targeted are 19118, 19119, 19144, 19150, 19138, and 19128.

The program offers care-giving family members a “break” by providing trained, caring college students who go to the homes of frail, older adults and serve as companions, prepare meals, do light grocery shopping, and accompany the person cared for to nearby medical appointments.

Participating students go through an intensive ten-hour training course, provide two references and have a criminal history clearance. The students are paired with families based on the family’s request and the student’s schedule, are employed by the families and are paid $7 an hour. There also is an annual $25 registration fee.

For the past eighteen years, Time Out has provided quality respite and home support to caregivers. One such family caregiver described the program as “A godsend. It is such a relief to know that somebody is there to help. I no longer have to leave work to bring my mom home from dialysis. I know she has company and assistance with her dinner when she is tired and weak from treatment.” To receive more information about the program, contact Susan G. Smith at 215-204-6540.
I was alarmed to find out in the July/August Shuttle that Michele’s soups contain MSG in the soup base. I am highly allergic to MSG and will avoid her soups from now on. The Co-op has an obligation to let consumers know about this additive. Please, in black marker, write contains MSG on the ingredient list and make sure it is clearly visible. As a co-op whose main concern is providing high quality foods, someone should search available soups in the areas that don’t contain MSG.

-- Melle Cutler

Thirty-five years ago, the town of Pripyat developed around the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant. The plant was pronounced safe by its chief engineer, Vladimir Kirochenikov. Nikolai Fomin, the plant’s chief, engineer, claimed that even if the incredible should happen the automatic control and safety systems would shut down the reactor in a matter of seconds. Chernobyl had emergency core cooling systems and many other technological safety designs and systems.

According to Boris Chernov, a steam turbine operator, the workplace is checked daily by a radiation control service so sensitive that the slightest deviation from the norm will set off an alarm. Pyotr Bondarenko, a shift superintendent in the department of labor, protection and safety, claimed that working at the plant was safer than driving a car. Holding a plant job requires a perfect knowledge of rigidly enforced safety rules and logical safety designs and systems.

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This information appeared in a special report of Soviet Life magazine, February 1986. But the reactor still failed. In the U.S., we, too have nuclear plants which some claim are safe, which were even supposed to produce energy “too cheap to meter.” We have had a partial meltdown at Three Mile Island, one in Detroit, plus significant other serious malfunctions across the country. Should we wait for Chernobyl to happen here? And where will it happen -- in Oyster Creek, in Berwick, in Peach Bottom, in Salem, in Forked River, or Limerick? Should we wait for Chernobyl to happen here? And where will it happen -- in Oyster Creek, in Berwick, in Peach Bottom, in Salem, in Forked River, or Limerick?

-- Jane Kiels

**Why Do You Think It’s Called Devil’s Pool?**

by Donna Lavater

Devil’s Pool is living up to its name. The pool where the Wissahickon and Cresheim Creeks meet in Fairmount Park is polluted by discharges from wastewater (sewage) treatment plants and stormwater runoff containing animal waste, gasoline, and oil. Still, park users continue to swim there and risk their health and safety. This summer the Friends of the Wissahickon (FOW), a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the Wissahickon section of Fairmount Park, is working to educate park users about the dangers of swimming in Devil’s Pool.

Swimming in any of Philadelphia’s rivers and streams is illegal and dangerous. The Philadelphia Department of Public Health states that swimming and wading is not permitted due to risks of drowning, injury from submerged objects, strong currents, and other hazards. In the past, swimmers at Devil’s Pool have drowned.

Swimming in Philadelphia creeks and rivers is also a serious health hazard. Joanne Dahme of the Philadelphia Water Department points out that in summer about 90 percent of the flow in the Wissahickon contains wastewater (treated sewage). People and animals risk bacterial and viral disease by swimming or wading in the Wissahickon Creek. Says Dahme, “Swallowing even a small amount of this water exposes a person to diseases like Giardia or Cryptosporidiosis, with symptoms of cramps, diarrhea, nausea, and fever. If sewage leaks into the creek, bacteria such as e-coli can also be present in the water.”

“We want all park users to enjoy the Wissahickon,” says FOW Executive Director Maura McCarthy. “But they should observe park regulations for their own health and safety and the preservation of the park.”

For more information about FOW, visit www.fow.org.

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Video Library (7141 Germantown Avenue) now has SCOOP, a newly opened, old-fashioned ice cream shop right in front of the store in the heart of Mt. Airy and Philadelphia’s Historic Northwest.

Serving Bassetts, a Philadelphia favorite since 1861, SCOOP is delighted to combine the old and the new in fine Philly tradition. The hours for SCOOP are noon to 9:30 p.m. Sunday to Thursday, noon to 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. An added plus: the shop will be open year-round. Come fall, watch for an expanded menu of sweets and beverages, perfect choices for an afternoon pick-up or an after-dinner dessert.

A bit of history—let’s call it “Mt. Airy Musical Chairs”: As some veteran neighbors know, Video Library is now located next door to the Sedgwick Theater in a store that was once a Sun-Ray drugstore. (See the images in the tile still outside the store.) It was the original Cooperman’s that has since moved to the corner of Mt. Pleasant Ave. When David Fellner bought Video Library, he thought it deserved a larger space with added features. (The former Video Library site is now the new, charming take out/sit down Mexican restaurant, Mi Puebla). So he moved Video Library to the current site and completely renovated it. “So what can be more fitting,” David claims, “than to create the old soda fountain that enlivened all drugstores.” He continues with pride, “I love seeing kids, families and old folks like me enjoying a stroll down the avenue with their ice cream. But I especially like having people come and stay a while at the ice cream bar or at the tables.”

SCOOP is a perfect spot to watch movies on the screen above the bar. Or take your treats into the new screening room in the back of Video Library. You can also rent the screening room for an ice cream social, a birthday party, or a movie-gathering with friends. Contact Betty Ann at 215-248-9560 or bettynan2@verizon.net to make your plans.

And don’t forget to come out to Mt. Airy’s First Fridays, Sept. 1 and Oct. 6. Movies will be featured in the Sedgwick Theater both nights. In addition to the other grand events held up and down the avenue, SCOOP will provide free toppings for your ice cream on those nights. Movies, ice cream, strolling, visiting the many shops and restaurants…. You sure don’t want to miss the excitement on the Avenue.

Get the SCOOP! at Video Library
by Betty Ann Fellner

Mt. Airy neighbors Janet Gala and her 2-year old twins enjoy their ice cream at Video Library’s SCOOP! Danny (r) and Sophie (l) are regulars at Mt. Airy’s newest ice cream parlor.
Finding Al Schatz: The Discovery of Streptomycin and a Life it Saved

by Ivan Ishay

When long-time Co-op member Albert Schatz died in January 2005, many people remembered his long career in research and teaching. But most didn’t know that he was a 23-year-old graduate student at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, Schatz spent much of his time diligently worked alone in a basement laboratory to find an antibiotic to treat tuberculosis. In October of 1943, he discovered that antibiotic and named it streptomycin.

Streptomycin saved millions of lives and changed the face of medicine throughout the world. Meanwhile, his professor, Selman Waksman, took the credit, relegating Schatz to the footnotes of history.

Over fifty years later, German-born Inge Auerbacher read an article that named Schatz as the co-discoverer of the drug. As a young Jewish girl during World War II, Auerbacher was a prisoner at Terazin concentration camp in Czechoslovakia. She was diagnosed with tuberculosis and taken to a Star Child of the Holocaust, and beyond the Yellow Star. She was decided to co-author this book.

Finding Dr. Schatz is their powerful true-story – told in their own words – of a scientist who changed the world and a woman who lived because of it.

The book can be ordered at Big Blue Marble Bookstore, next door to Weavers Way. It is also available at Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble.

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USDA Unveils Grass-Fed Meat Label; Consumer Feedback to USDA Needed

by Will Fantle, Research Director for The Cornucopia Institute

Consumers could be big winners if a proposed new USDA standard for grass-fed livestock wins approval. Meat from animals fattened only in pastures—receiving 99% of their energy from grass and forage—would be able to use the agency’s new grass-fed label. The grass-fed livestock label covers all ruminants, including cattle, goats, and sheep.

The USDA proposal is specific about what they mean by grass-fed, defining it as “grass (annual and perennial), forbs (legumes, brassicas), browse, forage, or stockpiled forages, and post-harvest crop residue without separated grain.” The proposal makes an allowance for mother’s milk fed to young animals prior to weaning. And minerals and vitamins are okay as part of the feeding regimen. The current rulemaking draft replaces a highly controversial proposal that would have allowed cattle to be “finished” and fattened on corn, and in feedlots.

Many organic consumers and others seek grass-fed meat because of its distinct health advantages. According to a recent report from the Union of Concerned Scientists, meat from animals raised entirely on pasture is not only leaner but contains higher levels of beneficial substances that may fight cancer and strengthen the immune system. “When you eat grass-fed meats, you’re getting beef with benefits,” notes Dr. Kate Clancy, a nutritionist and senior scientist at the Union of Concerned Scientists and author of Green Meat. In particular, grass-fed meats contain higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids (also found in salmon and some other fish, as well as in flax and a few other seeds) and CLAs (conjugated linoleic acid), a beneficial class of omega-6 fatty acids. In animal studies, CLAs like those in grass-fed meat have been shown to protect against cancer.

The grass-fed approach has other pluses, as well. The animals live in conditions allowing them to exhibit their natural behavior, a circumstance that stands in marked contrast to the misery associated with penning thousands of animals into giant feedlots. Fed grains and forced to stand in their own manure, the stressed feedlot animals are routinely administered antibiotics to fend off or treat diseases. Pared animals can also improve soil quality. Their manure is spread about in amounts small enough to actually fertilize and not overwhelm the soil while protecting ground and surface waters.

“The USDA’s grass-fed initiative represents a dramatic improvement over their previous proposal,” says Mark Kastel, Senior Farm Policy Analyst for The Cornucopia Institute, a farmer advocacy and agricultural watchdog group. In 2002, the agency suggested that ruminants receiving 80 percent of their energy from corn, and otherwise compliant with Fair Trade standards, should be granted the Fair Trade certification label. The grass-fed livestock label was created in response to consumer demand for a distinct class of omega-6 fatty acids. In animal studies, CLAs like those in grass-fed meat have been shown to protect against cancer.

Another sore spot for some of the farmers was the Fair Trade certification process. Farmers have to pay for the inspection, which is optional but required for organic certification, and there is no feedback provision for producers in that process. Yet another huge issue is what to do about the entrance of Starbucks, Walmart, McDonalds, Nestle, etc. into the fair trade world. Part of the fair trade system up to now is that it served small producers. The U.K. certifying organization, Fairtrade Foundation, granted certification to one of Nestle’s brands, “Partners Blend.” This was a really sore issue with the Tanzanian tea farmers, who have to compete for tea, which can be planted globally. This was a really sore issue with the Tanzanian tea farmers, who have to compete for tea, which can be planted globally.

As an example of whether it is even best for farmers to grow crops like this at all? After all, coffee, tea, and chocolate are not essential to life like foods that provide calories and protein and vitamins and amino acids and fiber. Leaves one wondering. But mean-while, I would choose fair trade products doing ethically to create the impression that the other companies “greenwash” them- selves. The entire business is run that way! Then there are the other issues of local food, which coffee and chocolate and beans will never be, and the question of whether it is even best for farmers to grow crops like this at all? After all, coffee, tea, and chocolate are not essential to life like foods that provide calories and protein and vitamins and amino acids and fiber. Leaves one wondering. But mean-while, I would choose fair trade products doing ethically to create the impression that the other companies “greenwash” them- selves. The entire business is run that way!

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October is Fair Trade Month

by Norman Weiss

October is Fair Trade month, so I thought it would be appropriate to write about our co-op and fair trade. Products in our store that carry the TransFair Fair Trade logo are Choice Teas, Equal Exchange coffee and chocolate bars, Frontier Teas (not all), Green and Black chocolate bars, Lara Bars, Sunsmire chocolate drops, and our own organically bagged chocolate drops. Dr. Bronner’s soaps do not carry the Transfair logo but claim to be made using fair trade guidelines.

We also sometimes have fair trade bananas, and are looking into fair trade rice and sugar. Also maybe other produce items, and in coming months, hopefully some domestically produced fair trade items like pecans.

So what does the term fair trade mean? What does the logo mean? Why should we buy fair trade products? Turns out, like most things in life today, the closer you look the more complicated it gets. Here is some of what I have gleaned about fair trade.

Ideally, fair trade is about ensuring producers of goods are paid a “fair price” for their products, meaning that producers can feed their families and children can get an education instead of working in the fields. Social and environmental and other economic goals also factor in.

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and the Church of the Brethren were the first, in 1946 and 1949 respectively, to develop fair trade supply chains. In 1975, from mostly southern hemisphere producers.

The fair trade movement wanted a way to distinguish fair trade products in the marketplace. In 1997, they created the Fairtrade Labeling Organizations Internationa (FLO), an umbrella organization whose mission is to “set the Fairtrade standards, support, inspect and certify disadvantaged producers and harmonize the Fairtrade message across the movement.” In 2002, FLO launched a new International Fairtrade Certification Mark. The goals of the launch were to improve the visibility of the Mark on supermarket shelves, facilitate cross border trade and simplify procedures for importers.

Fair trade advocates generally support the following principles and practices in trading relationships:

1. Gender equity: women’s work is properly valued and rewarded. Women are always paid for their contribution to the production process and are empowered in decision making.
2. Safe and healthy working environment. The participation of children (if any) does not adversely affect their well-being, social, educational requirements and need for play and conformance to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as the law and norms in the local context.

• Environment: encourages better environmental practices and the application of responsible methods of production.

Probably few people would quibble that these are worthy goals. However, things start to get complicated when it comes to certification and labeling products “Fair Trade.” FLO inspects producers to document fair trade standards are being met. Then, in the U.S., Transfair U.S. is responsible for monitoring importers and manufacturers. It is the Transfair U.S. logo that then appears on the products like the ones we sell at our co-op.

In July, Margie and I attended some seminars and workshops hosted by Equal Exchange regarding fair trade. Here we directly heard about the fair trade movement from many viewpoints, farmers, farmer co-op representatives, importers, certifiers, manufacturer/processors, wholesalers, and retailers. One of the highlights for me was talking one on one with a representative from a tea producers co-op from Tanzania, and a representative from a chocolate producers co-op in Peru. It turns out that there are many issues in the fair trade movement, one of the biggest being whether plantation-grown items should be eligible for certification, and clarity of the certification label. For example, for coffee to be certified by Transfair U.S., the coffee must not only comply with the price and environmental guidelines, it must be grown by a producer co-op. This means that a private or corporate owned coffee plantation, no matter how well they treat their workers.

October is Fair Trade Month (continued on page 18)
INTERACT THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS
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Opening the 2006/2007 Season:

Kiss of the Spider Woman
by Manuel Puig
translated by Allison Baker
directed by Seth Rosin

Starring
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Before the acclaimed film and hit musical came this intimate, intense, tender and startling stage play, revealing an unlikely love story between two men imprisoned by an oppressive government.

October 20–November 19

Later in the Season:

A House with No Walls
by Thomas Gibbons
translated by Allan Baker
directed by Seth Rosin

January 19–February 18, 2007

Inspired by real-life events, A House With No Walls explores the controversy that arises when liberal and conservative African-Americans clash over a “liberty” museum that is scheduled to be built on the former slave quarters of George Washington’s Philadelphia home.

When Something Wonderful Ends
by Sherry Kramer

A World Premiere
April 6–May 6, 2007

This poignant, funny, edgy, and politically-astute one-woman tour-de-force interweaves the death of the playwright’s Jewish mother, the Barbie Doll craze of the 1960’s, and the world’s oil-driven economy into one astounding whole.

Skin in Flames
by Guilem Clua
translated by D’A. Sanders
May 25–June 24, 2007
directed by Seth Rosin

A World Premiere

Graphic sexuality and intriguing mystery mark this dramatic thriller in which a photojournalist is forced to re-examine the circumstances that launched his career, challenging him to explore the thin ethical line between reporting on and influencing events in history.

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With gas prices soaring above three dollars per gallon, Glenn Bergman joins a growing movement of 2,500 Philadelphians who have traded in car ownership for PhillyCarShare vehicles from more than 60 neighborhood locations in Center City, West Philadelphia, East Falls, and Mt. Airy. The popular hourly car service arrived in West Mt. Airy on Friday, July 11, with a brand new Toyota Prius, conveniently located on the corner of Carpenter and Green Streets, although it would appear PhillyCarShare's reputation has preceded itself. Local residents have already joined after hearing of PhillyCarShare's pending expansion in the neighborhood. A working mother, Loretta joined PhillyCarShare's expansion in the neighborhood. "I was really excited to hear you guys are expanding to include surrounding areas," says Loretta Smith, about learning of PhillyCarShare's expansion in the neighborhood. A working mother, Loretta joined when her car-owning neighbor moved to another state. Then she saw a PhillyCarShare vehicle, "and I went on-line and looked it up. It just worked out perfect." Loretta used to rely on friends, but now she can return the favor. "Now people come to me. "She recently drove a friend to a job interview, and she has even referred the service to many inquiring strangers. Aside from the social benefits, Loretta uses PhillyCarShare for child transport and grocery shopping. "It's a pain trying to travel with a two-year-old and groceries on the bus." For more information or to join, visit www.phillycarshare.org or call 215-730-0988.
Fall Garden Notes

by Mark Goodwin

Fall Leaf Color: We all know the powerful effect of maple leaves that turn red, orange, and yellow in the fall. However, you don’t have to plant a maple tree to adorn your landscape in fall color.

One of the most popular fall foliage plants is the euonymus shrub called “Burning Bush.” For two weeks in the fall, the leaves turn a bright red before they drop. Hedges of burning bush are particularly striking. You can see a burning bush hedge on Mermaid Lane traveling east from Stanton Avenue to Cheltenham Avenue past the agricultural center on your right. These shrubs are popular in “Bible theme” gardens.

Fothinggill is a spring flowering shrub with leaves that become red, orange, and yellow in the fall. Another shrub with eye-catching autumn leaf color is the blueberry. Yes, the leaves of that same blueberry bush that provides your summer ice cream and yogurt with a healthy topping will turn an enticing carmine color in the fall.

Plumago (ceratostigma) is an under-used ground cover that flowers blue in the summer and regales us in the fall with crimson tinted leaves. If you want fall leaf color in your trees but consider maple too common, consider the arnalanich (or serviceberry) which has leaves that blaze reddish and orange around Halloween. The ornamental pear tree (callery varieties) is more “tender” (not hardy) annuals that will not withstand the cooler nights of early fall.

Garden Magazines: Organic Gardening has become more oriented to the small space and urban gardener, and is still an oasis of natural solutions to garden problems in an age of irresponsible use of chemicals.

Horticulture is more upscale with more articles for people with larger properties (and incomes). However, it puts out regional editions (ours is the “Mid-Atlantic Regional”), which ensures that most articles are geared to our planting zone.

Fine Gardening was recommended to me by my sister, Donna Goodman, who gardens in New Palz, New York. It’s chock full of ideas for the creative home gardener with a wealth of photographs to accompany its informative articles.

All of these magazines are available at Barnes and Noble and Borders.

Fruit

eating fruits and vegetable early in life are more likely to consume more.

• Just eight percent of American adults (this doesn’t include Co-op shoppers of course) think that they should eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day, 66 percent think two or fewer servings are sufficient.

• Only 23 percent currently eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day, which means that over 140 million Americans, or 77 percent of the country’s population, is not eating the minimum daily amount of fruits and vegetables recommended.

• An adult’s daily fruit and vegetable intake is about three and a half servings. The good news though is that by promoting the consumption of fruit and vegetables by a nationwide campaign there can be dramatic effects:

• Awareness of the proper number of servings is associated with higher consumption.

• Awareness of the specific health benefits offered by fruits and vegetables is similarly associated with higher consumption.

Since most Americans like the taste of fruits and vegetables, eating Five A Day should be an appealing change of lifestyle for people. Encouraging the habit of eating fruits and vegetables beginning at an early age can potentially improve the health of all Americans.

Fruits and vegetables are clearly an important part of a good diet, and variety is as important as quantity. No single fruit or vegetable provides all of the nutrients you need to be healthy. That is what I tell my children. Perhaps one of these days they will listen.

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Eating More Fruit

by Peter Samuel

We all know that the summer is a great time to eat fruit. In July and August there are local peaches, blueberries, plums, cherries, nectarines plus the usual fruits from other parts of the country and the world. Jean McKenzie, director of produce at Weavers Way, says “there are 29 conventional fruits and 15 different organic fruits on sale most of the time at the co-op.” That includes different varieties of some fruits, like four kinds of apples, and a few kinds of peaches and pears, but still that is a lot to choose from.

I started a kick a couple of years ago to eat at least five different kinds of fruit every day, all year round. Besides the notion that I would be healthier, I thought by setting an example I might convince a few of my five children to become fruit eaters too. You know how well that kind of thing usually works, right? My son turns up his nose at everything but fresh raspberries, and most of the others like just a couple of fruits, and nobody likes the same ones. I do have one daughter who loves to make fruit salad with as many different things she can find in my kitchen. Perhaps my efforts are not a complete failure.

The Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH) which started out in 1991 recommending eating a combination of five fruits and vegetables a day, has now revised their campaign from Five a Day to five fruits and vegetables a day. PBH is chair of the National Five a day Partnership, consisting of government agencies, non-profit organizations, and industry working in collaboration to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables for improved public health. The Five a Day for Better Health program is the nation’s largest public-private nutrition education initiative in history.

A World Health Report in 2002 attributed at least 2.7 million deaths a year to insufficient fruit and vegetable intake linked to cardiovascular disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, some cancers and obesity.

“Boosting fruit and vegetable consumption is a simple message with profound implications for global food production and distribution systems,” said WHO’s Dr. Derek Yach, executive director of Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health. The largest and longest study to date, done as part of the Harvard-based Nurses’ Health Study and Health Professionals follow-up study, confirmed that the higher the average daily intake of fruits and vegetables, the lower the chances of developing cardiovascular disease. Their study included almost 110,000 men and women whose health and dietary habits were followed for 14 years. Compared with those in the lowest category of fruit and vegetable intake (less than 1.5 servings a day), those who averaged eight or more servings a day were 30 percent less likely to have had a heart attack or stroke.

In addition to helping your heart health, a report titled “Food, Nutrition and the Prevention of Cancer: A Global Perspective” reviewed over 4,500 worldwide research studies and found that if people increased their fruit and vegetable consumption to at least five servings a day, cancer rates could be reduced by more than 20 percent.

Colorful berries (blueberries and blackberries) are full of phytonutrients (especially the skin of blueberries) and contain powerful antioxidants, called anthocyanins, and are true cancer fighters. Blueberries are a prime example of the color rule: the deeper the color, the better the berry. Similar antioxidants are found in other reddish-purple fruits and plants, such as cherries, red cabbage, and plums. Jean told me that at the Co-op the favorite fruit is bananas. We shoppers go through almost a ton a week. She also said that so far there hasn’t been much interest in things like guavas and papayas, but keep your eyes out for the apruim (a delicious new combination of the plum and apricot). Fruits contain powerful antioxidants, called anthocyanins, and are true cancer fighters. Blueberries are a prime example of the color rule: the deeper the color, the better the berry. Similar antioxidants are found in other reddish-purple fruits and plants, such as cherries, red cabbage, and plums. Jean told me that at the Co-op the favorite fruit is bananas. We shoppers go through almost a ton a week. She also said that so far there hasn’t been much interest in things like guavas and papayas, but keep your eyes out for the apruim (a delicious new combination of the plum and apricot).

PBH is a non-profit consumer education foundation whose mission is to be the catalyst for creating a healthier America through increased consumption of a variety of fruits and vegetables. PBH is chair of the National Five a day Partnership, consisting of government agencies, non-profit organizations, and industry working in collaboration to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables for improved public health. The Five a Day for Better Health program is the nation’s largest public-private nutrition education initiative in history.

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Mt. Airy Map

The Mt. Airy Historical map was complete and ready for printing in April of 1994. Stephenson Brothers, a printing company founded in 1929 on Chestnut Street near Broad, made the first run. This company had some of the largest offset printing presses in the city and these presses could print from a metal plate that was as large as the map itself. Of course, there were four plates necessary for printing the map – one plate for each color. Photographs were made of each mylar sheet, one that was drawn in ink, the others that had been carefully overlaid with red frisket. A metal plate was etched with the image produced from each full-size photograph. The initial run was for 500 maps. Because the Core States Bank in Mt. Airy graciously donated the funds for the initial run of the maps, they were offered for sale at the Core States Bank (now the Sovereign Bank) on Germantown Avenue at an evening preview in April, 1994. Sales were brisk – and perhaps 100 maps were sold that night. Weeks later, the map was sold at Mt. Airy Day, on Saturday, May 7, 1994, and again, many maps were sold. All funds collected from the sale of the initial 500 maps were donated to the Mt. Airy Business Association (MABA).

Even before all 500 of the Mt. Airy Historical maps were sold, people were telling me of other fascinating, and important, details of Mt. Airy history that I had neglected to get onto the map. I compiled a list of new information for a subsequent printing. It was clear that the initial printing of the map, 500 copies, was just not going to be enough. By September of 1994, another 750 copies of the map were printed by Stephenson Brothers, and this time, the map included more information that had been gleaned in the four months since it had been initially printed.

I had heard that Mt. Airy Historical maps are all over the world. I have sent copies to relatives in Italy. I also know that the maps are being collected from the sale of the initial 500 maps and reprinted full size from the screen of a computer screen. The map was digitized and printed full size from the screen of a computer. The map now lives on a "zip drive," as well as on paper. One thousand copies of the third edition were printed in the spring of 2004 – the largest number of any printing. There is no difference in quality between the offset printed map and the digitized map. The cost of the third edition of the map was completely underwritten by the Mt. Airy Learning Tree and Elfant Wissahickon Realtors. Jonna Naylor of the Learning Tree was a top-notch motivator behind the initiative, a genuine "cause of getting things done."

Since the third edition of the map appeared two years ago, I have discovered that there is even more significant history of the neighborhood that I could have placed on the map.

I keep this information filed informally in my head, and I am not too bad at keeping track of what is documented and what is not. Should there ever be the need for a fourth edition, I’m sure I’ll have information to refresh the third. There will, however, be the significant problem that I am simply running out of space on this document. I’m not sure that any computer can solve that problem.

R. David Schaad is a registered architect who works with the Urban Design Division of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission. He is a member of the Historical Commission, the Sign Committee of the Art Commission, and the Design Review Advisory Committee of the Navy Yard.

Hope Avery Joins Elfant Wissahickon Team

Elfant Wissahickon is pleased to welcome Hope Avery to their team. A Temple Graduate and former therapist for autistic children, Hope brings a unique mix of compassion, drive, social and business savvy to the real estate profession. Hope is aware of market trends and has the resources to help clients quickly close the deal. Contact Hope at (215) 247-3689, ext. 246.

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Mt. Airy Maps: The History Behind the Geography

by Ron Isdell

After I had lived in Northwest Philadelphia for a number of years, I became familiar with two historical maps of our area that artists had created early in the 20th century. The first was an historical map of Germantown, beautifully drafted by Joseph Riegel, Jr. in 1933. Though a small map, it is drawn in great detail, and indicates a high level of scholarship. This map dealt almost exclusively with Germantown’s 18th century history, and its founding families. I have seen a hand-colored version of the Germantown map at the barn behind Cliveden, but it was originally printed in black and white. Riegel also made a beautiful historical map of Bucks County, Pennsylvania in the 1930s, but because of his rigorous knowledge of Germantown, I suspect he lived here in Philadelphia. Another effort with which I had become familiar was Joseph P. Sim’s 1929 map of Chestnut Hill. Though this map does not include drawings of the architecturally significant structures of the neighborhood, it too, displays a thorough knowledge of community history, and is very Beautifully drawn. This black and white map was reprinted in the late twentieth century.

Both maps reflect a “proto-New Deal” graphic style that is particularly appropriate for historic maps. Elegantly composed and hand-lettered in a manner that suggests 18th century documents, the maps are a commentary of one age on the history of another. Of necessity, the authors of these maps cannot explain a complete history of the places they depict, they can only pick and choose from the facts of a much larger history, and essentially draw and write about the issues that interest them. Historical maps cannot be completely comprehensive, and are very much the product of the author’s interests and specific knowledge.

Germantown and Chestnut Hill are very old places, predating Mt. Airy. Germantown was founded in 1683, and Chestnut Hill is mentioned in a document as a settlement as early as 1704. William Allen, the Chief Justice of the Province of Pennsylvania from 1731 until 1774, didn’t complete his great estate “Mt. Airy” on the road between Germantown and Chestnut Hill until 1740. The Allen estate, and the road that led to the estate itself — “Allen’s Lane” — was one of the earliest streets that ran perpendicular to Germantown Avenue in what would become the neighborhood of Mt. Airy. Laid out in 1746, Allen’s Lane paralleled the major cross streets of Germantown, e.g. Washington Lane, far to the south. The lane crossed the Livreyn Mill on the Wissahickon Creek to William Allen’s country seat on Germantown Avenue, or, before 1838, the “Great Road.”

To my knowledge, no one had ever created a historical map of Mt. Airy, and that is what I set out to do in 1993. Little did I know that the effort would stretch into 1994. I started by enlarging the Mt. Airy portion of a “gas station” map of Philadelphia to a size that I knew could be printed by an offset printing press. The map that I worked from was not created in Philadelphia, and there were numerous errors in the names of streets, locations of institutions and major confusion by a remote cartographer concerning what was actually a street and what was a Fairmount Park trail. Other areas reflected the confusion that the cartographer encountered as rail lines interrupted streets. I eventually drove every street in East and West Mt. Airy to ink truly reflected the way that we could circulate through the neighborhood. All maps are imperfect to some degree.

I created the “original” of the map on mylar, a plastic sheet that can be drawn on with an ink pen. In this case, I used Rapi-"graph pens of varying widths to make lines. Mylar is very stable and will not dis-"tort with humidity. I knew something of Mt. Airy history simply by reading books that were readily available at the Lovett Li-
"brary, or by getting resources from my late friend Pat Henning, who was Mt. Airy’s most profound “keeper” of neighborhood history. For images, I sometimes drew from historical photos of Mt. Airy struc-
tures — especially when that resource had been demolished or if a particularly good photograph of the structure was available. At other times, I took photographs of structures myself and drew from those photographs.

It occurred to me that making a histori-
"cal map was something like the process of
"creating a crazy quilt. One does it in patch-
es, working at one corner for a while, and
then weeks later, picking up again, and go-
ing to yet another corner of the map – not
necessarily in a rational manner but — in a
manner that “makes sense at the moment.”

Having new information about a particu-
larly significant place, or finding a com-
pelling or beautiful image may lead one to
a location on the map that was previously ex-
plored. In progress blue-line prints of the map made at various stages of its develop-
ment reveal the map to be a patchwork of highly developed and sometimes com-
pletely undeveloped areas of territory. As neighbors or friends passed information along to me, I’d include their insights and
note them as well as the significant history that is already documented in neighbor-
hood histories. All told, the effort to make the map took nearly a year.

Both the early 20th century Chestnut Hill Historical map and the Germantown Historical map were printed in black and white. The Mt. Airy map is not only con-
siderably larger than the early efforts, I be-
lieve it is the only one of the three that was originally designed to be printed in color. The first printing of the Mt. Airy Histori-
"cal map included four colors — black, green, yellow and blue. In order to print color, each color must be prepared on a sepa-
rate sheet of mylar to allow for “color separation.” This means that if green is go-
ing to be printed on the press, all the areas of the map that will be printed in green ink must be masked by, ironically, a red color “frisket,” that must be cut to the exact boundaries of all areas to be colored “green.” (As it happens, the color red pho-
tograph is a particularly dark fashion, and is suited to creating the etched plates for printing.) Applying “frisket” is a te-
dious process, and involves pressing the “frisket” film down onto the mylar, and then cutting away all areas that will not be color-
ed in the way one intends — that is, the film must eventually describe the area that will be printed only in green ink. This process must be repeated for all subse-
quent colors. Of course the “original drawing” itself — with all text and images, and the lines that describe all streets, is printed in black ink.

(continued on page 12)
Number of Participants in Co-op Benefit Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>Family Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Plan</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Plan</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability and Life Insurance</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401(k) Retirement</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible Spending Account</td>
<td>14*</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
* (2 are for both health care and dependent care)  
| Employee Discount             | 52        | (all staff) included |

Co-op matches at a rate of 25 percent up to four percent of an employee's compensation. For example, if someone earning $8,000 in a fiscal quarter contributed $320 to their 401(k), the Co-op would provide a matching contribution of $80. The 25 percent match is a far better return on investment than any CD I know of.

Total Compensation Package

Here's the whole Co-op benefits package at a glance: health care insurance, self-funded dental reimbursement plan, FSA tax-savings health/dependent care plans, sick leave bank, short-term disability, long-term disability, life insurance and 401(k) tax-deferred retirement plan.

When we look at the total compensation that staff receive, we need to include benefits as well as wages. For the upcoming fiscal year, our budgeted payroll is $1.24 million and budgeted benefits (health, dental, disability insurance, life insurance, retirement plan and employee discounts) amount to another $150,000. All told, roughly $1.4 million in total compensation for Co-op employees.

At this writing I am waiting for the auditors' much-hailed annual report. I have my schedules, trial balances and Proacct all lined up and ready to go. By the time they leave we will have year-end numbers.

Unfortunately, that will be after the Shuttle editor's stringent deadline (even later than this tardy submission). Suffice to say that we had a very good year with over a seven percent increase in sales and a healthy bottom line. So this will be one of those columns where we just chat.

When I first came to this job, I looked for support groups that would assist with industry standards and practices. The finance committee has a wide level of business experience, of course, and does an excellent job. They continue to closely monitor funds at the Co-op (a contributing cause of my ongoing hair loss), but I was looking for something more.

I found it in a small file labeled "Co-CoFist." I later learned that Weavers Way is part of the National Cooperative Grocers Association (NGCA), which confers upon us some excellent benefits. Not the least of which are a buying discount with our largest vendor, as well as advertising and management aids. NGCA endeavors to give its members the benefits of chain stores but still keep their independence.

In the finance area, NGCA provides virtual "store-over-store" comparisons with the other cooperatives in what they call "Common Co-operative Financial Statements" or "CoCoBud." Co-op submits to financial data and allocation of payroll hours by department, and Co-CoFist analyzes and compares this information.

There has been considerable effort in the our finance department to make our traditional, "Weavers Way" view of departments comparable to the way the rest of the grocery world views departments. In the Weavers Way view of the goods sold next to the deli case are considered deli, because they are in the deli manager's space, she orders it, stocks it, worries over it, and is otherwise responsible for it. In the wider grocery store world, those items would be considered "packaged groceries sold in the deli."

So, which is more important, internal reporting (who's responsible for it) or external reporting (what the item actually is)? They are both important and we are not completely there yet.

In return for our participation, we get analytical reports on margin, operating expenses (classified no less), net income versus what we should expect and what is happening in the rest of the cooperative world. We also have begun using a service called CoColud which is a budgeting and forecasting tool. Co-Colud uses past trends plus current budget plans to forecast five years of balance sheets, income statements and statements of cash flows.

We also get to talk to each other. In addition to the award winning team at CoFist (the group NGCA has contracted to handle this stuff), I can communicate directly with finance managers from other co-ops, who have been very forthcoming with very practical and timely advice. And in cases when a broad breadth of opinion is needed, there is even a list serve call CoCoPocketprotector, which gets a good response.

Co-opermetrics also conducts continuing professional education from time to time. I had attended the last one in Milwaukee.

Two days in Milwaukee with a room full of CoCoPocketprotectors... talk about a good time.
New Pricing Signs at the Co-op
by Tanya Arnsberg

Now that Weavers Way has been using Point of Sale software for almost a year, most of you have probably seen our new price signs. It is a challenge for us to keep the signs up to date, as well as to keep up with the new products we receive constantly, and it is a challenge for the shoppers to find where we are listing the prices. Here is a guide to finding prices at the Co-op:

Grocery items are usually priced on the front of the shelf where the product is sitting; these signs have the price, the size and the price per unit. The bottom shelf has been angled so that you can read prices without sitting on the floor. Sometimes similar products share shelf space but have different prices (like Health Valley soups or McCutcheon jams). In this case, we have price lists nearby and usually a sign on the shelf area telling you where to find the price list. Mycological dried mushrooms, rice cakes, cranberry jelly, pectin and Fantastic Foods Cap-A-Soups are all listed on price sheets nearby. Potato chips, corn chips and pretzels still have the same older-style price sheets you've seen at Weavers Way for years. Frito Lay products have the price on the bags.

The freezers and refrigerators are still in progress; the old signs going down the side of the refrigerator are still there, but we are trying to put signs under each product. Unfortunately, our shelves make it difficult to attach signs and we are still trying to find the right hardware. Please bear with us as we find better ways to label the refrigerators. The deli refrigerator does have signs and we are working to get all the shelf tags printed.

Bulk, prepared foods, cheese, and meat or fish have labels on the package with the price, description, and sometimes the ingredients and our logo. We are still in the middle of adding our second floor items, so most of those are still being priced on the box or bottle. The whole second floor will eventually be like the first floor, with prices on the shelf or, for hanging items, prices at the end of the peg. The pet store has signs on the shelves as well as a price book, located just to the right of the door as you walk in. The price book is listed by type of product (cat food, dog food, etc.), then by brand and description. Large items (over five pounds) have removable stickers that you can bring to the cash register instead of lugging a large bag of dog food over to the checkout counter. The stickers have the item description and the barcode (which the cashiers can just scan instead of scanning the big bag). The price is listed on the shelf where you got the item so we don't waste stickers when the price changes.

Items that are on sale for the Coop Advantage Program now have little labels with the CAP logo and the sale price. These labels are the same size as our regular labels so they won't be knocked off the shelf.

Produce has handwritten signs under each product for both weighed items and those sold by the piece.

Flowers and a few items like mini cream cheese, refrigerated pasta sauces and crabmeat will have stickers with barcodes and prices on them. Some flowers (like roses or astromeria) don't have the prices on the sticker, but all the flower prices are listed on the door to the second floor near where the flowers are sold.

The main reason we enacted this change was that with our new POS system, we have to scan every item. The days when we could look into your bag and key everything in without removing them are over. Using baskets makes it easier for our cashiers to be faster and more accurate.

Unfortunately, another reason for this rule is that in recent months, we have caught several shoplifters, and almost all of them have placed items into a bag or box and simply tried to walk out without paying. Obviously this applies to a very few people, and if you are asked to use a basket it in no way suggests anything suspicious on your part, but in this case we need to be fair, and we need to be consistent.

Many have already made this change, and we thank you. Others still need to make this adjustment, and we ask your cooperation.

Please do not be put off by someone handing you a basket if you are using a bag to shop; they are doing their job, and you are helping us transition to a slightly different method of shopping. In the future, when we use PLUs to key in produce, this will dramatically increase the need to use baskets, rather than handing the cashier a bag of assorted fruit and veggies to be sorted and weighed.

I hope this all makes sense. Please feel free to talk to me anytime about this or any other matter concerning your shopping experience.

In other news, be on the lookout for a fifth checkout to be available this fall, and not just during the holidays. This will increase line speed, and reduce congestion in store. Thanks.
February 2007; an extra two-month grace period is tacked on for using FSA funds. This grace period is not just about submitting the paperwork for reimbursement, it’s about receiving services. See a doctor in December 2006, get reimbursed from 2006 FSA funds; see a doctor in February 2007, get reimbursed from 2006 FSA funds if you still have some available.

Health Care Options

Let’s catch our collective breath here for a moment and retrace our steps a bit. The increased premiums for health care quoted by Aetna got us to a plan with higher copays which got us to the FSA plan as a way to shelter some copays via the tax code. In a nutshell, this tangled web is being faced by employers and employees nationwide as higher costs for health insurance are driving increased interest in FSAs, HSAs (health savings accounts that require high annual deductibles for health care) and the like. Proponents of such changes say that it is good for consumers to shoulder more of the health care burden, that it will make them (us) more price conscious, and thus, in the long run, hold down premiums for both hospitals and doctors.

Not surprisingly, this tangled web also leads many employers to consider self-funded health care plans. Forget insurance carriers with high premium and high-copay plans and deal with hospitals and physicians directly through reimbursement plans. Some Co-ops, especially in the Northwest region, have done so (as an article in a recent issue of Cooperator Grocer described). When we looked at our circumstances, though, it was not an option we could adopt in short order. Exploring the financial implications of self-funded health care in depth requires a full year, and even then may not be viable for firms having fewer than several hundred employees. Self-funded health care is not the Co-op’s immediate future.

Dental Plan

But let’s shift now to a benefit plan at the Co-op where self-funding does pay—dental care. For several years now the Co-op has offered a dental reimbursement plan for employees. We self-insure this plan, meaning we set the monthly premium rates, we determine the extent of covered procedures and we fix the reimbursement schedule. Since we have no contracts with dentists or dental groups, participants in the dental plan can go to any dentist they like; no worries about networks or subscribing dentists.

Effective July 1, 2006, significant changes were also made to our dental plan. First, we are now offering this plan as an option we could adopt in short order. Second, we now allow orthodontics work to be covered, and without any provisions regarding lifetime maximums (a common provision in group dental insurance). Third, we reduced the percentage of the monthly premiums paid by full-time (32+ hours/week) and part-time (22-32 hours/week) staff for their individual coverage; these percentages now line up with those for the health plan: full-time staff pay 13 percent, part-time staff pay 63 percent, and dependants must pay the premiums in full. Last, we changed the reimbursement schedule to give participants more cash up front, namely full reimbursement for the first $300 in dental care per year.

As a business expense, we could afford to make these additions to our dental plan because we held the line on health care premiums. Holding the line on health care also enabled us to make our benefit package more complete in the areas of disability insurance and life insurance.

Disability and Life Insurance

When several staff over the past years faced lengthy absences due to illness or injury, we learned that we had no appreciable disability coverage until after 90 days had passed, at which time our policy for long-term disability kicked in. Employees typically have no more than three to four weeks of vacation and sick leave combined, so they might face several weeks with no income at a time when they had more expenses to pay. This gap needed to be addressed.

A year ago the Co-op established an emergency sick leave fund, namely employees with dire situations can draw from when their personal sick leave runs dry. Co-op staff donate their vacation and/or sick leave in exchange for some cash, which can be used by co-workers in need. This sick leave bank has roughly one month’s
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Mt. Airy Village Fair
(continued from page 1)

ness Center and Moving Arts studio (MaMa) to hold this event and to work for sustainability, ecology and community. With a vigorous nod to these themes, expect “fun, not flyers” for all ages at the fair. Carpenter Lane along the 500 and 600 blocks (straddling Greene Street) will be closed for the day... while your talent-ed neighbors and Co-op member-friends will be shown their stuff. This translates to such doozies as: • Squimmy worms – learn about ver-miculture and the making of compost • Pet Parade and contest-of-orts (yes, bring yours – see below) • Modular origami – this new form literally builds on itself • Ayurvedic cosmetology • Bees a buzzin’ • Goats and other animals you can feed (courtesy of Saul Agricultural High School, which provides the Co-op with spinach and green things) • Baking contest (for info, e-mail muze@erols.com) • Make-your-own ice cream • Squeeze your own juice • Non-gluten detectibles • Downing demo • Cloth diaper workshop • Art show • Wedding choreography how-to • Co-operative games • Wedding dress-up and myriad foods with all kinds of vehicles. Check with area businesses about the schedule for competitions, parade and entertainment. The Co-op’s Maureen Gregory will be organizing the baking contest. Co-op members wanting to help staff the event can earn credit for Co-op hours – sign up in advance on the bulletin board at Weavers Way. Pets welcome but will not garner Co-op hours. For information about time, schedule, competitions, location and parking, call the Bookstore, check the bulletin boards at the Co-op or High Point Café, or see our neighborhood newspapers. The Mt. Airy Local and Germantown Express will be running events in advance. The Chestnut Hill Local will also be covering events and parking information. For information about time, schedule, competitions, location and parking, call the Bookstore, check the bulletin boards at the Co-op or High Point Café, or see our neighborhood newspapers. The Mt. Airy Local and Germantown Express will carry rules for the baking contest and pet parade competition rules in its Aug. 30 issue and the schedule in its Sept. 5 issue. The Chestnut Hill Local will also be covering events in advance. If you have a special talent or intriguing way to present your work, hobby or interests, check with High Point Café or call MaMa (Moving Arts studio) 215-842-1040 or (preferred) e-mail muze@erols.com. No rain date is planned, which means that this event has been cleared with the gods.

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Staff Benefits Report

by Dave Tobey, Human Resources Manager

A few months back I reported on the general wage situation for Co-op employees. I would now like to update the members concerning staff benefits. Effective July 1, 2006, several benefit plans continued with only minor changes, whereas others were changed in major ways and other benefits were added. Some of the details are long in the telling, so bare with me. But here’s the overall vision: to provide the most comprehensive, most flexible benefits package we can at the least cost to employees without passing along higher costs to the Co-op membership.

Health Plan

By far the most significant change occurred in the Co-op’s health plan. The specific plan we had from Aetna was an old one, in fact a plan Aetna no longer offers for new underwriting. When we received their premium quotes for the 2006-2007 plan year, we were met with an unpleasant surprise. Aetna quoted a rate increase of roughly 38 percent. To put it another way, the total premium bill for health care – paid by the Co-op and employees combined – would increase by $60,000. That’s right – $60,000, or roughly one percent of the Co-op’s sales for an entire year, and that was just for the increase.

After we got over our sticker shock, we reviewed quotes with our independent consultant and considered health plans from both Aetna and other insurance carriers. Ultimately decided on a health plan from Aetna that would only increase premiums about three percent, but one that also had higher copays for such items as doctor visits, prescription drugs and hospital stays – increasing from between $10 to $30 to between $30 and $50 and adding a $10 deductible. Higher copays, of course, pass along increased costs to employees so we began investigating ways to ease this burden; two means were adopted.

First, we decided to reimburse employees (as well as family members paying for FSA plans) for any copays due to hospital stays or outpatient surgery. These copays increased from $125/day to $300/day and could be a sizable outlay in the face of an severe accident or illness. The Co-op will reimburse these copays in full.

Second, we decided to establish a Flexible Spending Account (or FSA plan) for employees. An FSA is covered under section 125 of the tax code and allows for certain payroll deductions (“salary reductions”) to be made pre-tax. FSA plans come in two forms: health care and dependent care. Flexible Spending Account

There are several key elements of such plans; let me use the health care plan as an example. (a) Individuals designate a certain amount of their wages to the FSA health plan. (b) When individuals incur expenses that are health related, they request reimbursement from their FSA accounts. (c) The result is that individuals save the taxes they would have paid had they paid these same expenses out-of-pocket. And then paid for health care expenses in after-tax dollars. There are of course fine print details for FSA plans; it is, after all, part of the federal tax code (state and city governments make their own decisions about how to handle FSAs). But that’s the gist of how FSA plans save on taxes. Take for example someone who might be facing prescription drug copays of $75/month, or $900/year. From that amount alone, an FSA might save them $30/month or $360/year. That’s why FISAs can be so attractive to employees (as well as family members paying for FSA plans). Or just imagine facing an orthodontic procedure or significant daily-care expenses – savings from health care and dependent care FSA plans combined could be in the thousands for a given tax year.

(continued on page 8)
like I was at a casino, weighing the odds as mutations of coverage from Aetna. I felt medical treatment. Our agent sent us the pocket when they think about seeking begin to realize that the crisis is not only on daily, but when it hits you square in would need a much larger group (perhaps that, while this might be possible, we staff (as we do with dental), but we found have him bring in some alternatives. could not be true. We called our agent represent 33 percent of our profit. This about three percent, the increase would be equal to about one percent of our net income. Since this year we had a return of about three percent, the increase would represent 33 percent of our profit. This could not be true. We called our agent back and asked to meet with him and have him bring in some alternatives. David also looked into self insuring the plan? Our carrier, Aetna, wanted to increase Our costs were going up about 12 percent with the new program. Last year our benefit costs were around $100,000 – that is without cover- ing everyone. Our costs were going up about 12 percent with the new program. Still a big dollar amount for a small company. When we reviewed the coverage, we all realized that the cost was going to be out of reach for some of the staff, due to the copays that had been added (i.e., $100 copay of prescriptions until the next level of copay kicks in). I began to think about the number of people in our country that declare bankrupt- ry each year due to health/medical bills. The leading cause of bankruptcy is due to medical bills. Then there are over 44 million Americans that have no cover- age. How can we allow insurance compa- nies to continue to make such high profits from a service that should be non- profit and cooperatively run? When you add up the extra costs of our current system – profits for insurance companies (such as Aetna), the adminis- trative costs and the time spent by inde- pendent agents, human resources staff (e.g., David and I), and individuals sift- ing through all the different plans, not to mention the cost of the system and corrupting influ- ence of political contributions ($36 mil- lion from insurance companies and $123 million from the healthcare industry in the 2004 alone) – you see that a lot of the money we pay for health care doesn’t re- ally go towards health care. We could easily lower the cost of in- surance by eliminating the profit margin and the hidden costs in companies negoti- ating insurance premiums. Think of the time each company wastes trying to make a decision, negotiating, sending out mem- orandums to staff, rewriting their benefits plans, etc… you get the point. This brings me to Manitoba Public Insurance Canada (see http://www.mig- online.com/html/service/automobile.asp), a program that covers, I believe, all resi- dent drivers of Manitoba. This is a non- profit insurance risk company that uses independent agents to handle the insur- ance and policy execution. I remember a report on NPR stating that when Manito- ba stepped in, rates dropped by 40-50 percent (I could be wrong on this, but it is the number I remember). So, ask why can we not have one large U.S. insurer that spreads the risk throughout the country, is non-profit, and is handled through pre-tax premiums directed to in- dividuals, and not to companies. This nonprofit (or cooperative) could have a board made up of providers, consumers, government, and business representatives. A basic or basic plus program could be provided at either no cost (low income) or as a percentage of income. Any profit would be used to upgrade the program systems and to assist low income mem- bers of the United States. We could eliminate Aetna, US Health Care, etc. and some of the current gov- ernment programs. I am sure we can do better, but we must first eliminate the power of the insurance groups. Whatever we do, I am sure there is a better method to insure and deliver health care for us. I want to thank David for all his work. To learn more about staff benefits at Weavers Way, see David’s piece on our in- surance and benefit program.
has received funding over the years to offer grants for environmental or educational programs in the recycling area of Mt. Airy, Germantown and Chestnut Hill. For example, Neighborhood Interfaith Movement, Hanbury Garden and Nature Center, Rubicon Woods Action Project, Friends of Cloverly Park, Harmony Garden, Mt. Airy Learning Tree, Vincent M.A. Woods Foundation, and Face to Face were all recipients of our grants this year. These grants paid for projects like fencing for a children’s garden or planting vegetation and educating children about the environment.

The change of site decision was made in order to have more money for grants. The Germantown Home site will be free for our recycling use.

Maurice Sampson, a Block Captain for the 100 W. Gorgas/Mower Lane Neighborhood Association, initiated the idea to ask Germantown Home because of their easy access and close proximity to Weavers Way.

The hours of recycling will remain the same: the third Saturday of the month, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The same materials will be collected: paper, plastic bottles, aluminum cans, and cardboard.

The new recycling site is in the parking lot behind the firehouse on Germantown Ave. at Carpenter Lane. (From Carpenter Lane, cross Lincoln Drive, pass the Septa station and stop sign at top of hill. After Mower Lane, turn left into parking lot.) The new site is just under one mile from the Co-op.

Before the program can move forward. Perhaps that is true. The objective should be to determine the best way to minimize those costs not whether to incur them at all. This would be a prudent investment and would certainly earn a return.

Want recycling? Demand it. The circumstances are ripe for change. The debate should not regard whether or not to improve the city’s recycling but simply how to do so.

Evan Beier does all his shopping at Weavers Way and lives in the 400 block of W. Sedgwick. Professionally he’s a program organizer for Clean Water Action, a grassroots environmental organization with 6,000 members in Philadelphia. He is a member of the city’s Recycling Advisory Committee and sits on the Steering Committee for Recycle NOW Philadelphia Campaign, a campaign of the Recycling Alliance of Philadelphia.

Thank You, Unitarian Church

By Sandy Folzer

Thank you to the Germantown Unitarian Society of Germantown.

Weavers Way Co-op has had a long term relationship with the Unitarian Society of Germantown. They have been supportive of our recycling program for many, many years. They have been cheerful partners in our joint venture to recycle in order to clean up the environment and to give grants to environmental or educational organizations.

The Church has endured the comings and goings every third Saturday morning of numerous cars up and down their driveway. They have been tolerant of all our hustle and bustle at that time. The Church has also had to put up with those uninformed or inconsiderate enough to dump recyclable materials when we are not scheduled, which means they have to live with the “trash” until someone from the Environment Committee or the Co-op comes to remove it.

Weavers Way Co-op will always feel a kinship with the Unitarian Society of Germantown for their assistance over the years.

What You Can Recycle

Weavers Way’s Monthly Recycling Program, now at at the Germantown Home, part of New Courtland Elder Service at 6959 Germantown Ave., at Carpenter Lane, accepts:

Residential Mixed Paper:
- newspaper / magazines / junk mail / catalogs / phone books / books
- advertisers without plastic bags / paper bags / wrapping paper (dry, clean)
- cereal boxes, flattened with liner removed / office paper / office files
- corrugated cardboard boxes, flattened to save space unless used to contain other mixed paper

* Do not bring mixed paper in cardboard boxes, or paper bags.
* You can bring paper in plastic bags, but remove plastic bag at site.
* Do not bring paper that has a plastic or wax coating.
* Do not bring wet or soiled paper.

Plastics – 1 & 2 only, with the following exceptions:

- automotive products
take-out food containers
strawberries/blueberries containers if the top is wider than the bottom

YES
detergents, cleaning products, etc.
- food, water bottles, RX bottles, etc.
- kitty litter containers
- mouthwash, saline solution, baby powder, shampoos, liquid soaps, etc.

If the top is narrower than the bottom.

Air conditioning has arrived!

Friday, 8/11, 7:30pm. Films at the Sedgwick comes to Big Blue Marble. Learn everything you may or may not need to know about being a woman.


Thursday, 9/14, 6:30pm. Salome Thomas-EL, author of The Immorality of Influence and I Choose to Stay discussing the importance of every adult's influence on the life of a child. Soon Will Smith will play Thomas-EL in a theater near you!

Saturday, 9/16, 7:30pm. VERY SPECIAL Local Author Showcase: Local book launch for Jonathan McGoran writing as D. H. Dublin. Join Weavers Way’s own Shuttle editor as he debuts his novel Body Trace!

And check out our website for more on our regularly scheduled events: First Friday Sustainability Salon, Book Club, Local Author Showcase, Poetry Aloud and Alive, Baby group, and two Story Times for kids re-starting in this Fall at new times.
Mt. Airy chapter by calling me at 215-

Sadly the city is dragging its feet in in-

Civic duties aside, there’s a new recy-

Sadly citizens are still expending

What this could mean for the city is

For the material that is tossed into a

For the material that is tossed into a

By Evan M. Belser

Openings in Pre-K and Kindergarten for 2006-2007

Support for Other Co-ops

A leading goal of the Co-op is to

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A leading goal of the Co-op is to
When Larry Schofer joined Weavers Way in 1975, he was looking for a sense of community. When he became the chair of the Co-op’s Education Committee 27 years later, he wanted to expand the scope of that community. According to Schofer, the goal of the Education Committee is to “serve the non-shopping interests of the Co-op’s members.”

The committee was created in the 1980s, to put out the Shuttle, then a simple mimeographed newsletter. As the Shuttle became more professional, committee members served as advisors, discussing content and advertising. In recent years, though, as the Shuttle has become its own enterprise, the education committee has refocused its efforts to provide opportunities for cultural, culinary, and environmental expansion.

“From ‘organic farming’ to ‘eating without sugar’ to ‘learning about classical musicians,’” says Schofer, “there are all kinds of things that members are interested in and are willing to put together an evening workshop about. We give them work credit, and they teach to the members of the community.”

Generally, the committee holds 1-2 of these free workshops per month. Over time, the popularity has grown so much that the Co-op’s administrative assistant had to ask Schofer and his colleagues to screen the requests.

“We set up a list of criteria — generally, we don’t want any workshops for commercial purposes, and we want to ensure that they’re not discriminatory. Other than that, it’s up to the community, what they want.”

In the past, the committee has insti-
tuted a book exchange and an electronic media giveaway. They’ve attempted to enhance the communications capabilities of the community — through an electronic bulletin board, Common Threads (which can be accessed through the Co-op’s website), and through a conversation corner within the store, “a place where people can sit and have coffee and chat, a social side of the Co-op.”

With five current members — Schofer, Elliot White, Gayle Simons, Richard Lin- senberg, and Seth Horwitz — the education committee is on the small side these days. But they’re still trying to have a big impact, both on the Co-op and on Mt. Airy as a whole. They’re in the process of determining what their role in the community should be, but are hoping to ex-pand their reach beyond the confines of Co-op membership.

“Last year, we had a movie screening about the oil crisis for the general pub- lic,” says Schofer. “We’re hoping to reach out to a larger group than the four or five that show up for most workshops.”

McGoran Book
(continued from page 1)

Dublin introduces us to the forensics team, where Madison’s uncompromising uncle, David Cross, is in charge. Her first assignment, with partner Melissa Rourke, is to investigate the deaths of two over-dosed coeds at the University of Pennsyl- vania. On day one, Madison manages to annoy homicide detectives, sets off a me- dia frenzy and draw the ire of the police commissioner, the mayor and the presi-dent of the university. Though David wants the case closed quickly and cleanly, Madison manages to annoy homicide detectives, sets off a media frenzy and draw the ire of the police commissioner, the mayor and the president of the university.

Dublin will be finishing up the third novel in December.

CK: Three novels That’s impressive. Should put some cash in his pockets.
JM: Chump change. A little more than half a buck per book. He won’t be quitting his day job anytime soon. But he’ll probably work less. One of the perks of not making much money in your day job is that you don’t have to get a huge advance to compensate for cutting back on your hours a bit.

CK: What is Dublin’s day job?
JM: No known. Can I tell you about my novel Slapdash? It’s a crime novel too, but funny.

CK: We really don’t have time, Jon. Call me when it’s published. Getting back to Dublin, did he have to do a lot of re- search?
JM: Unlike my novels, which are mainly plot and character driven — and funny — Body Trace is more about process, the forensic process of solving a crime. That involves a lot of research.

CK: Like showing up at crime scenes and taking notes!
JM: No, that would involve leaving the Co-op basement. Dublin spent a lot of time on the phone, asking people how he can use their product to kill people.

CK: And they answered him?
JM: I guess so. The book’s coming out this month, right? By the way, they make great gifts and Amazon.com offers free shipping for orders over $25.

CK: What are you, his agent?
JM: We’re like brothers. Sort of like Nicholas Cage’s dual roles in Charlie Kaufman’s movie Adaptation. You can also buy the book through my website, www.jmcgoran.com. I also have excerpts of my novels, which are funny.

CK: Sure. Sure. Do you remember any of Dublin’s research phone conver-sations?
JM: D.H. wouldn’t want me to give too much of the plot away, but I heard him ask questions about how much of it if anything it would take to kill some- one, how quickly it would kill somebody. Stuff like that.

CK: And people answered him?
JM: Some did. If you recall the Pub- lisher’s Weekly review, coots got mur- dered. Dublin actually called sorority houses to find out how they worked and how you’d go about killing someone. As you can imagine, the girls were a bit leery. But luckily, when he called one sorority, the cook answered and spilled the beans — I mean, I don’t think he literally spilled any beans he was handling, although, I guess he could have.

CK: What’s the key for finishing three books under such tight deadlines?
JM: The secret is to have a thoroughly detailed outline. Dublin spent an average of five weeks writing the outlines and then completed acceptable drafts of the novels in about five months. But more importantly, you have to trust the outline, trust that you included all the things you begin to worry about half-way through the manuscript.

CK: That’s an awful lot of informa-tion to keep loaded in your brain.
JM: I also wrote detailed outlines for my novels Slapdash and Pig Latin.

CK: Jon, we’re done the interview. Can you thank Dublin for me?
JM: Visit my website — www.jmcgo- ran.com — for excerpts of Slapdash, which busier part of the year. Dublin and Day- mar have compiled our yearly sales records. Rachele made many new signs for the first floor, Daymar helped shred many old payroll records, they all worked at the farm several times, and of course they helped fill open cooperator slots wherever it was needed.

We enthusiastically support these pro- grams, and hope to host more kids in the future. After last Summer, we hired Sheni- ka Balfour to be a cashier and help input data into our new POS system. She is still with us, and doing a wonderful job.

Co-op work credit will be given for (Co-op work credit will be given for favorable reviews). Join us for the debut of Body Trace at Big Blue Marble, Borders and Amazon.com. (Co-op work credit will be given for favorable reviews).

Once again we have hosted three local high school students for a five-week pro- gram this summer as part of a Career Exploitation program through Mt Airy USA, and the Saul High School.

The three students are Ashley Urqhart, Rachele Styer, and Daymar Fuse. Daymar will be a junior at Martin Luther King High School, Ashley will be a junior at Saul High School, and Rachele will attend Community College of Philadelphia. They helped us out im- mensely this summer, completing proj- ects we find hard to even begin during the summer and the fall.

This summer’s interns at the Co-op were (L-R) Ashley Urquhart, Daymar Fuse, and Rachele Styer. Thanks for all your hardwork!

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2006 THE SHUTTLE PAGE 3

PHOTO BY ROBINCANNICLE
Inspired by a speech given by Gar Alperovitz, seventeen Weaver members met on Sunday morning, June 25, to inaugurate a program of study and political action – the first such effort in the Co-op’s 35-year history. Gar Alperovitz, noted political economist and historian, challenged his listeners at the Weavers Way spring membership meeting to do more to realize their potential in laying the foundation for the evolutionary transformation of American society. Recognizing the benefits of local, grassroots, democratically controlled wealth creation by a variety of types of organizations – including retail consumer food co-ops – Alperovitz advocated the formation of small-scale action/agendas as a means of furthering this long-range endeavor. Following Alperovitz’s talk, the Board of Directors posted a sheet in the store for members to sign up in order to participate in small groups to discuss his book, Beyond Capitalism, and ideas for political action. So far, over forty members have expressed interest in participating.

At the June 25 meeting, members discussed the group’s purpose and suggested alternative names for the study-action program. Some initial ideas for possible future activities included reaching out to more people and other groups, agitating for a reactivation of a 1980s city council ordinance on local co-op development, and a closer examination of wealth redistribution proposals such as those enacted in Alaska and Massachusetts. Suggested alternatives to the “Beyond Gar” moniker included “New Democracy,” “A Better America” and “Transformation Among Us.”

Smaller groups of five to seven people have begun meeting (see below). Inter-agency communication will proceed via an electronic listserv. Co-op members should contact the leader of the group they wish to join, and begin reading Gar’s book. If none of the times is good for you, volunteer to form a new group.

Roused by guest Gar Alperovitz’s fiery rhetoric, the newly formed ABC Study/Action Group springs into positive action.

by Bob Noble

Robert Noble is a staff member who has done many things, from helping to write this op-ed piece to working on the budget. He is also a member of the group that convened to discuss the book, Beyond Capitalism, and ideas for political action. He says that he is excited about the possibilities of this group and looks forward to seeing how it develops.

The Shuttle is published by Weaver Way Co-op and is mailed to all members. Deadline for the next issue is Oct. 1, 2006.

Statement of Policy

Articles should be under 200 words and can be submitted neatly typed, on disk, or e-mailed to johnweaverway@comcast.net. Be sure to include your name, phone number, and membership number. Drop them off by the deadline in the drop box on the second floor of the Co-op. The purpose of the shuttle is to provide members with information as well as education about co-ops, health food and related issues, and matters of interest to the members as consumers and citizens of the community. Articles express only the views of the writers and do not appear on the book, at least I managed to get my face on the cover. (These tight deadlines have not been kind to me)

Business Board

From El Presidente!

Stuart Katz

Policy Governance

For the past several years, the board has used a system of governance called Policy Governance. In order to form a sub-committee which spent several months discussing those policies that govern our relationship with the General Manager and reviewing similar policies from other food co-ops, we made a significant change to the Weavers Way policy manual. We approved what are called Executive Limitations proposals. These policies tell the GM what outcomes, events or circumstances the board will not allow. In some cases, these are financial, as in, “The General Manager shall not approve an expense”.

L1.1 Indefiniteness of a type and level that jeopardizes the ability of the Co-op to pay its rent, or repay its current and long-term financial obligations in a timely fashion

Or they may have to do with staff.

“The General Manager shall not: L1.1 Operate without written personnel policies that are clearly communicated to, and discussed with, all Co-op employees.”

As long as these policies are followed, the GM is free to meet all of our other goals in any way he sees fit. This form of governance is designed to free the Co-op board from micro-management and allow the GM and the staff to solve problems creatively. Over the next year, the GM will provide the board with regular reports detailing his success at meeting our goals while operating within these Executive Limitations policies.

In July, the board examined those policies that detail how the board has done its job. Meeting as a whole, the board reviewed each of the governance policies and discussed not only how we did, but whether these policies continue to effectively address the current situation and issues relevant to the board. In general, the board felt we carried out our roles at a respectable level of performance, although we will be discussing some proposed changes as well as some additions and deletions of policies in some key areas. However, the largest policy area – governance of the Co-op board – is still to be discussed. It is impossible in this limited space to discuss the details of these policies, but I direct you to our web site, www.weaverswaycoop.coop, to read the board policy manual and the minutes of the June and July meetings to see what our monitoring highlighted.

(continued on page 4)
Manager's Corner by Glenn Bergman

A few weeks ago, David Tukey, Weavers Way Human Resources Manager, came to me with the long-awaited last piece of news we needed to finish our budget process: the annual health care premium and the percentage increase. It is a yearly tradition to guess the percentage increase. Will it be single digit or double digit percentage increase? Will they drop us? We will start this process in April or May by meeting with our agent, who is "independent." He gives us a ballpark figure, but tells us he has really no idea until the Insurance Company gives us a quote.

We start the process of asking around to others, "What did your insurance rate change this year?" We hear all kinds of percentages from single digit to up in the twenties. For those of you who are in small businesses, work in the benefits department of a large company, or try to find your own independent insurance for which you pay 100 percent of the freight.

(continued on page 6)

Co-op Meets with Andi Sheaffer by Bob Nally

On June 23 former Weavers Way Finance Manager Andi Sheaffer and her attorney, Jeff Lindy, met with representatives of the Co-op, Treasurer Susan Beetle, Finance Manager and Staff Director Lou Dobkin, Produce Manager Jean MacKenzie, and Immediate Past President Bob Noble. Assistant District Attorney Drew Dedo was also present. The meeting was a requirement of the Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (ARD) agreement between Andi and the DA. The other two requirements of the agreement, which she has also fulfilled, were that she pay Weavers Way $30,000 and apologize for her role in the financial fiasco that was revealed beginning in November of 2002. By fulfilling the agreement and completing two years probation, Andi will have her record expunged.

(continued on page 2)

Shuttle Editor Exploits Position, Shamelessly Promotes New Book(s) by Don Kueh

If you’ve ever fulfilled your Co-op hours by working in the basement, you may have heard the nimble fingers of D.H. Dublin tapping away on his laptop in the shadows. Do not disturb the man. Do not offer him a cashew or a fig. Do not ask him what constitutes mixed greens. While there is no record of physical violence from Dublin, his imaginary forces into strange and demented behavior are well documented in his first novel, Body Trace, due out Sept. 5 from Penguin Books. I encourage everyone to buy the book, so that you can understand the mind of a mad genius.

Dublin refused to be interviewed for this article, even rebuffing a free French press. But Shuttle editor Jon McGoran graciously agreed to fill the void.

Shuttle: But this book.

Dublin’s debut novel, Jon: J.M. It’s a brisk, tight novel about the crime scene unit of the Philadelphia Police Department with a quirky, career-driven cast. Through a beautiful, book-smart rookie, technician Madison Cross, (continued on page 2)

(continued on page 15)

Co-op Car Share Arrives at Weavers Way by Ana Kwele

Glenn Bergman is selling one of his cars. The Weavers Way Co-op manager will join PhillyCarShare after parting ways with his 1996 Saturn. "The insurance and maintenance costs of an extra car are excessive," says Bergman. "PhillyCarShare will fill the void." In fact, this PhillyCarShare enthusiast is such a fan, his pivotal efforts are bringing PhillyCarShare to Weavers Way.

When Bergman saw how convenient and affordable car sharing would be for the Co-op’s members, he immediately green-lighted the arrival of a car at Weavers Way. Bergman also helped develop enticing incentives.

(continued on page 7)

Mt. Airy Village Fair (continued on page 7)

At Greene Street & Carpenter Lane, Sunday, Sept. 10 by Pam Angay

If the reason you don’t compete in pie-eating contests is that you like your desserts organic, your number’s up: We have the street fair for you.

On Sunday, Sept. 10, from 11 to 5 p.m., the World’s First Organic Pie-Eating Contest will be held in front of the High Point Cafe, one of several dozen activities and entertainments featured at the first Mt. Airy Village Fair, at the intersection of Greene and Carpenter Lane.

The Co-op has come together with Big Blue Marble Bookstore (whose brainchild this is), High Point Cafe, Maternal Welfare, and of course... Scads more...