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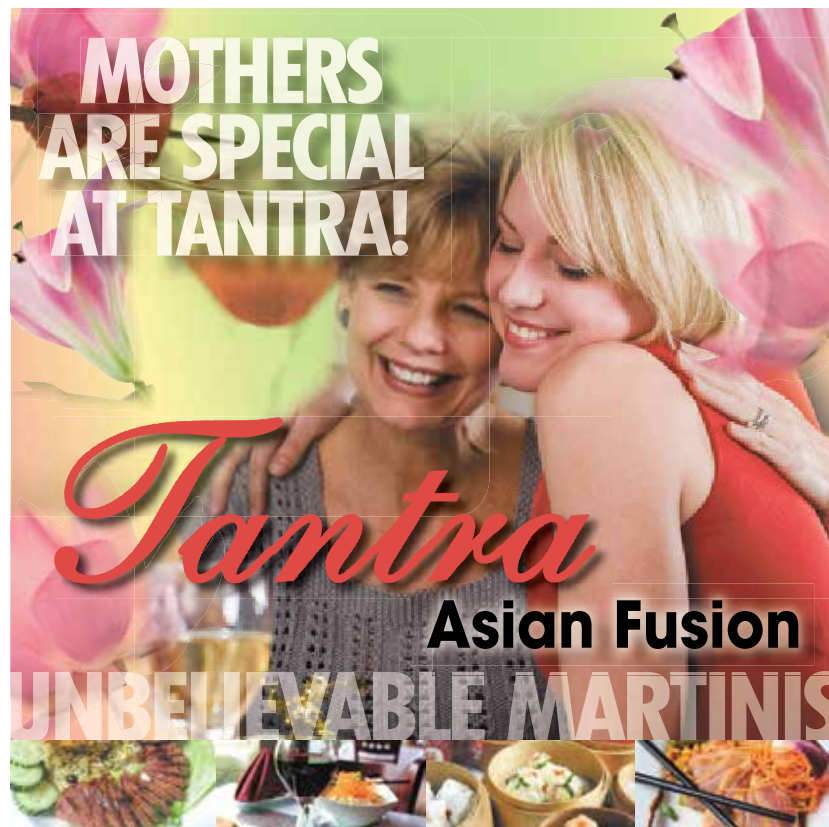
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HEALTHY LIVING FROM THE GROUND UP

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# from the editor

I'm sort of a goat whisperer. At least I felt like I was one recent afternoon on Linda and Jim Johansen's dairy goat farm in Milan. (The couple also tends to fruit trees, but when I visit, my attention is on the goats!)

The minute Radish photographer Meg McLaughlin and I walked into the barn with the Johansens, we were swarmed by goats. Like curious puppies, they sniffed us, circled us and playfully nipped at our boots, zipper pulls and anything else within their range.

Jim would call to a handful of the larger ones by name, and they'd eagerly run to the fence. While Meg positioned a stepladder to photograph the Johansens with some of their herd, I hung back with my new friends, including Rose and Kelly, baby-talking to them, and telling them over and over again how adorable they were.

After the photos were taken and we said our goodbyes, former Radish photographer Todd Welvaert and I returned to the farm on a warmer day to shoot photos for this month's cover. This time, I got to hang out with three-week-old babies, the little guy on our cover included!

Each trip was an excellent break in the middle of stressful weeks. At work — no matter what you do for a living — we face deadline pressures, more work than we seem to have time for and the sort of haunting hope that we're doing a good job of it. Then we go home and find some of the same. The laundry beckons, errands beg to be run and hey, that bathroom isn't going to clean itself.

But we're not alone. The Johansens work from sun-up to sundown for their goats — longer, now that the babes have been born! — while Linda also juggles teaching piano lessons each weekday afternoon, either at home or at Calvary Lutheran Church in Moline, where she also plays piano and organ, and directs the choir. (Read all about their crazy schedule doing jobs they love on page 8!)

But in those moments on the farm, playing with the tiny goats, the stress of everything else seemed to melt away. I forgot about all of my responsibilities and just laughed.

For all the times you simply need a break, but don't have access to adorable goats, we've tried out a handful of apps for your smartphone that can help you reach some zen. Read about them on page 10.

They're no baby goats, but they'll do in a pinch.

If your evenings are packed and your mornings are even worse, check out a recipe for baked oatmeal on page 14 that you can mix up, bake, cut and microwave through the week for quick and easy breakfasts. At least that meal will be one less thing you have to worry about!

With Earth Day on its way later this month, this issue also is chock-full of plenty of ideas to help the planet, from things you can do with your used coffee grounds to ways you can go green on the go.

No matter where you find your solace this month, I hope you find a slice of it with us!



Radish editor Laura Anderson Shaw hanging out with goats at Linda and Jim Johansen's Milan farm.

Meg McLaughlin / Radish

**Radish**  
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Radish uses soy-based ink and recycled content in its newsprint and is 100 percent recyclable.

— Laura Anderson Shaw  
editor@radishmagazine.com



# the grapevine

## From our readers

"The Radish is a bonus for us females alike. Thank you!" — *Carol Houston, Bettendorf*

"Very, very good!" — *Frank Ross*

"Colorful and full of healthy info and recipes. — *Mary Ellen Rogers, Rock Island*

"Very good hints and info." — *Shirley Malik, Eldridge*



Thanks to Friends of Radish, you can find Radish magazines and our reusable shopping bags this month at the **Keep Burlington Beautiful Earth Day Cleanup**, 8:30 a.m.-noon April 16, Port of Burlington, Burlington, Iowa. For

more information, contact Tabettha Miller 319-753-8131, [millerT@burlington-iowa.org](mailto:millerT@burlington-iowa.org).

Also find magazines and bags at the **Nahant Marsh Spring Cleanup & Garlic Mustard Pull**, 9 a.m.-noon April 23, Nahant Marsh, 4220 Wapello Ave., Davenport. Register by phone or email at 563-336-3374 or [nahantmarsh@eicc.edu](mailto:nahantmarsh@eicc.edu). For more information, visit [nahantmarsh.org/event/spring-cleanup-garlic-mustard-pull](http://nahantmarsh.org/event/spring-cleanup-garlic-mustard-pull).

To discover more upcoming events of interest, see the events calendar on the Radish website.



## Tickets now on sale for Radish Magazine Yoga Fest

The Radish Magazine Yoga Fest will take place July 15-17 at the Holiday Inn Rock Island, 226 17th St.

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For more information, including a complete schedule, visit [radishmagazine.com/yogafest](http://radishmagazine.com/yogafest).

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# healthy living from the ground up



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Meet the Johansens, who have a dairy goat farm in Milan.  
(Photo by Todd Welvaert / Radish)

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## radishmagazine.com

Known for his research on the herbicide atrazine and its effects on the fertility of male frogs, biologist and University of California-Berkeley professor Tyrone Hayes will present his research and conflict with atrazine manufacturer Syngenta at the spring EquiKnox lecture at 7 p.m. April 20 in Kresge Recital Hall, Ford Center of the Fine Arts, at Knox College, Galesburg.

The EquiKnox Series, organized by the Knox College Office of Sustainability, brings renowned speakers on issues of sustainability to the campus each spring and fall, according to [knox.edu](http://knox.edu).

The event is free and open to the public. Read more about Hayes and the event at [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com).



healthy living

# Pianos, goats and fruit trees

## It's a unique combination

By Laura Anderson Shaw

There seldom is a dull moment on Linda and Jim Johansen's Milan farm. Between caring for more than 115 goats and hundreds of peach, apple and pear trees, Linda teaches piano each weekday afternoon, either at home or at Calvary Lutheran Church in Moline, where she also plays piano and organ, and directs the choir.

The pace is "just something we both enjoy," Jim says.

Linda says her husband's alarm goes off at 4:30 every morning. He gets up and begins prep work, including cleaning and moving the goats into another area of the barn so they can be milked.

Mornings and evenings are spent milking the goats, hauling grain and sanitizing the pipes that carry the milk. The number of goats being milked twice each varies, from about 100 downward, depending on how many of the goats are pregnant.

Jim spends many of the in-between milking hours working in the barn next to the couple's home while Linda teaches.

She has played the piano since she was 8.

"It's challenging, and it allows you to express yourself, and it allows you to share your gifts with others who enjoy listening," she says.

In college, she majored in music education, and was a public school teacher for 10 years. Now, she exclusively teaches piano to 25 students.

"(As) soon as I finish teaching piano, I'm off to the barn to milk again," Linda says.

In the spring and summer, the goats roam the land and enjoy the pasture. In the fall and winter, they spend their time inside the barn, complete with a nursery that offers warmer areas for baby goats.

The Johansens say taking care of the babies becomes a 16- to

18-hour-per-day job. They're bottle fed three times a day, and "they have to be taught to take their bottle," Jim says. "Linda's very good at that."

Jim says, as dairy farmers, the couple wants their goats to bond to them. In addition, if they're bottle-fed, it protects them from disease that may be transmitted from their mother, and it prevents them from damaging their

mother's udders while trying to eat, he says.

Jim was raised on the farm — which has been in his family since 1937, he says. His family had dairy cows. In the '70s, he raised sheep and beef cows on the family farm and rented grounds, and he left the family farm in 1983.

He sold lawn seed on the road for many years, he says. "It's still involved in raising something," he says. "That was how I had my fix for farming."

He met Linda in 1996, and "told her many, many times, 'Oh, we'll never move to the farm,'" he says.

"(And) you know where we are, now."

He was in his mid-50s when the company he worked for decided to eliminate traveling salesmen, and he did not have any job prospects. In 2004, his mother sold the farm to him and his two siblings (they each now own a third of the farm), and in 2006, once their house was built, the two

moved to the farm.

The couple planted 500 fruit trees and grew many types of vegetables, and Wesley Acres Produce was born. There were green beans, cucumbers and tomatoes, and the couple "specialized" in lettuces, Jim says. The couple raised the produce and sold it in a variety of places.

"It was something we could do on a limited acreage and make enough money to live on," he says.

But marketing the products is difficult, he says, and when you're in your



Meg McLaughlin / Radish

Linda and Jim Johansen are interrupted by one of their goats before posing for a photograph on their goat farm in Milan. The Johansens tend to more than 115 goats in total.



mid-50s, “bending over and picking produce all day long is really hard on your back.”

About five years ago, he was asked if he knew anyone who sold goat’s milk. He wasn’t aware of anyone selling it in the Quad-Cities area, but promised to keep his ears open. He figured he could use the connections he had forged in the community.

Not long after, he heard someone was selling two dairy goats. “Since I was raised on a dairy farm, I thought, OK, I can buy these two dairy goats (and) supply the milk for the people,” Jim says.

He and his wife enjoyed working with the goats, he says, and six weeks later, the couple bought four more, and then a few more. At that time, they were tending to the goats, vegetables and fruit, as well as chickens.

The produce aspect of the business was going well, “but not great,” he says.

Then, they were approached by Montchevré cheese, out of Wisconsin, which was looking for more goats’ milk in the area, and wanted to know if they were interested in being a “full-time dairy,” and they began laying the groundwork.

In 2014, Jim says he and his wife greatly expanded their barn. The couple milks twice daily while the goats stand on a 40-inch-tall milking platform, and Montchevré comes and picks up the milk.

“We’re not bending over to do any of this work,” he says. “It’s all upright,” he says, and “hand-level.”

While they didn’t know a whole lot about goats in the beginning, “both of us like animals,” Linda says, adding that goats are “very sociable and fun to be around. ... We have names for all of them.”

A few of the goats look very similar to each other, Linda says, but “you can tell by their personality” who they are.

“The minute I say their name in the barn, they come running up,” Jim says.

One recent afternoon, he proved it.

“Hey, girls!” he called as he walked into the barn, a bucket of apples in tow. Many of the goats made a beeline for the fence.

“Angie! Loretta? Where’s my girl?” he cooed. Sure enough, Angie and Loretta made their way to the front of the pack.

He began to hand them apples, and the goats happily chomped away.

“We have an unending supply” of apples, Linda says.

Dozens of goats played together in one corral area, while others laid and walked around in another.

Jim described the barn expansion he and his wife completed, pointing to the front of the building and explaining the additions. He says he completed much of it standing on a ladder, with his wife handing him what she could.

“It’s not perfect,” he says. “But it’s what we like, and it’s ours.”

*Laura Anderson Shaw is the editor of Radish.*



Todd Welvaert / Radish

**A few of the goats look very similar to each other, but “you can tell by their personality” who they are.**

— Linda Johansen

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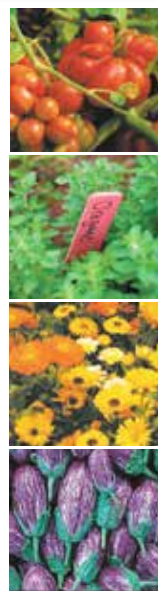
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body, mind & soul

# Relax with an app

A handy set of hand-held tools to help you breathe

By Katy Williams

We live in a society that pressures us to be on-the-go yet connected 24/7. Busy lives, jam-packed schedules and no time to breathe. Phones beep and notifications buzz repeatedly throughout the day and night, as the pile of work in front of us increases.

This is when the majority of us hit our breaking point, where the stress consumes us. But living in such a connected world, we might have a hard time setting down our phones or otherwise pressing pause.

The good news is that our phones can give us a brief sense of relief, too — a little bit of hand-held solace through relaxation and mood-lifting apps aimed toward improving our stress levels. So while you are sitting in the pick-up line at your child's school, killing time between classes or hiding in the break room at work, take out your phone and find that momentary serenity.

## The app: Happify Free with the option of in-app purchases (Apple and Android)

Positivity is key in world full of negativity, anxiety and stress. But when the “I think I can” motto gets too hard to keep pushing through, try the Happify app. Bursting with bright oranges, pinks, blues and greens, the colors alone can boost your morale in an instant.

In the app, personalized activities aim to increase positive emotions. Studies have shown that these daily victories and focus on the positive solutions have aided in improving happiness.

## The app: Calm Free with the option of in-app purchases (Apple and Android)

Forget the expensive meditation alarm apps! This application has it all for free. Filled with calming blues and grays, it provides that calming color



Metro Creative Graphics

scheme its name suggests.

While a bit too simplistic, the app offers some breath techniques paired with relaxation music or sounds. It's easy to use on that 10 minute break when you need a moment to yourself. Just press “go,” close your eyes and the meditation begins.

It is worth noting that you'll have to pay for anything past the simple relaxation element.

## The app: Pacifica Free with the option of in-app purchases (Apple and Android)

Remember your early days of journaling, back in the time that was filled with giggles, sleepovers and hiding diary keys from your siblings? As the years go by, though, the moments for us to sit down and write an entry may have dwindled down to nothing. Many of us have learned to keep our feelings locked up inside, which may push us to the verge of a stress explosion. But with a breathtaking aqua and sunset color scheme, the Pacifica app

allows you to relieve some of the stress and tension with a few clicks of a button.

The application is widely known as a “thought journal.” Pacifica will ask your mood periodically throughout the day to document noticeable patterns and assist you in finding a solution to help manage stress. The app also helps you document personal goals, whether it be speaking up at an office meeting or changing your lunch order at the cafe down the street.

## The app: Inner Balance Free (Apple and Android)

We all have those days where our minds, emotions and words just do not catch up to each other. The Inner Balance app, packed with warm blue and maroon colors, works to restore coherence through three daily, five-minute sessions that are aimed at reducing stress levels and overall wellness.

## Putting the best to the test

Everyone has their own preferred coping mechanisms when it comes to dealing with stress, so the success you have with each of these apps will vary. After putting the applications to a week-long test, I found that the best application for me was Pacifica.

While it did not provide the fun activities that Happify included, or the simplicity Calm entailed, it allowed me to elaborate on my thoughts every day without a five-page, hand-cramping diary entry.

Additionally, it clued me in on my behavioral patterns throughout the day, and allowed me in on a secret — I am the happiest on Thursdays and Sundays, or when I spent time walking by the river.

In a world where putting down the phone may not always be an option, the best thing we can do is try to alleviate our stress and enlist our phones to help.

*Katy Williams is a regular Radish contributor.*



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healthy living

# By land and by sea

## Rural Iowa farmers raise hogs — and shrimp

By Cindy Hadish

**D**enny and Lea Rehberg have added a decidedly coastal flavor to their Midwestern farm.

Rehberg's Pork is well-known at Iowa farmers markets for its bacon, ham, sausage and other purebred Hampshire hog products, but the farm is poised to make a name with its shrimp, as well.

The Rehbergs are among just a handful of Iowa farmers who have dived into indoor shrimp operations. Thousands of the crustaceans live in a former hog building that was repurposed to house the tanks where the shrimp are raised in rural Walker, Iowa.

"We thought it was a good fit with our antibiotic-free, naturally raised pork because the shrimp are raised antibiotic-free, too," says Denny Rehberg, who grew up just one mile north of the farm where the Rehbergs now live.

He farms 160 acres of non-GMO grain used to feed the Hampshire hogs, a private purebred herd considered to be "heirloom pork."

The black pigs, with distinctive white bands around the front of their bodies, have some of the oldest genetics in the Hampshire breed. Unlike the majority of Iowa hogs that spend their lives in large-scale confinement units, the Rehbergs' hogs are raised unconfined, with plenty of room to roam in the fresh air.

While the feeding and other chores associated with raising hogs is hard work, the couple say it's no comparison to the labor-intensive shrimp operation.

Ten-day post-larva shrimp, each just the size of a pin head, travel from the Florida Keys to Iowa, where they are transferred to two "nursery" saltwater tanks in the shrimp building.

Lea is in charge of testing the water quality, which includes measuring dissolved oxygen, temperature, salinity, nitrates, ammonia and more.

"Everything affects the shrimp," she says, noting that even barometric pressure can play a role in whether or not the shrimp thrive.

The Rehbergs use a biological filtration system with natural bacteria that "eats" the waste in the water. They only add water to the zero-exchange system as needed because of evaporation.

"Everything mimics what the sea does," Denny says.

As the shrimp grow, they are moved into various tanks in the lower level of the building, where the water is kept at a balmy 80 degrees, giving the operation a tropical feel.



Denny and Lea Rehberg.

Submitted

Three times each day, the shrimp are given pelleted feed from Zeigler Brothers in Pennsylvania, known for its high quality aquaculture products. Aquaculture, as the Rehbergs and other farmers are exploring, is a fast-growing food sector, as solutions are devised to meet the world's growing protein demand.

"It's just a way to stay outside the box and be diversified," Denny says. "What's the best thing people like to eat? It's shrimp."

Investigations in recent years have pointed to numerous issues surrounding imported shrimp, including filthy conditions and contamination with banned chemicals — such as the antibiotic, chloramphenicol, which has been linked to cancer — as well as the slave labor used in "peeling sheds" on shrimp farms in Asia, where much of the United States' shrimp originates.

The Rehbergs say they wanted to offer an alternative, and began their shrimp operation last year, selling small amounts of shrimp from their farm and

special order to some of their regular customers.

The shrimp take about four months to reach market-size, and are placed on ice, with heads on, before being sold.

While the Rehbergs have experimented with recipes, such as bacon-wrapped shrimp on the grill, simply boiling the shrimp for just a minute or two is an easy way to enjoy them.

"If you can boil water, you can cook shrimp," Denny says.

The Rehbergs plan to sell the shrimp alongside their pork products at farmers markets in Hiawatha, Iowa City, Marion and downtown Cedar Rapids this season, but the shrimp likely will need to be pre-ordered, as they are sold fresh.

At this point, the couple prefers to sell the shrimp directly to customers rather than through retail outlets or restaurants, though the couple recently began selling the shrimp through the Iowa Valley Food Co-op, where customers order online and pick up the products at distribution points in Cedar Rapids and Iowa City.

"I like to see the connection between the consumer and the farmer; people today are so removed from that," Denny says, adding that farmers market and co-op customers understand and appreciate that connection.

"It's honest food."

*Cindy Hadish writes about local foods, gardening and farmers markets at [homegrowniowan.com](http://homegrowniowan.com). For more about Rehberg's Pork & Shrimp, visit its Facebook, or [rehbergspork.com](http://rehbergspork.com).*



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# Over oatmeal? Try this!

## Turn dessert into good-for-you breakfast

By Sarah J. Gardner

Stop for a moment and imagine a line of children shuffling through the dining hall doors at their summer camp for their morning allotment of oatmeal. What do you see? Grim, unsmiling faces? Bowls of watery, beige goop? Perhaps even a young waif straight out of a Dickens novel forlornly wondering if it's worth asking for some more?

Poor oatmeal. It's so good for us — packed with heart-healthy fiber and vitamin B1, among other nutrients — but so hard to get excited about. Or, at least it was for me until I had a summer camp experience that changed my perspective. I was lucky enough in college to work summers at a camp where Oatmeal Thursdays were the most eagerly anticipated morning of the week. Kids clamored to get into the kitchen early to bring servings of oatmeal to the table.

What made the difference? This oatmeal was baked rather than boiled, and the result was something like getting to eat cake for breakfast. We'd slice it up and serve it eagerly, knowing if our cabin finished our portion quickly enough, we might be able to get seconds.

Of course, as I've grown older and made the recipe many times myself, I've come to realize the reason that oatmeal seemed like cake was because, basically,

it was cake — baked with plenty of oil, flour and sugar. Slowly, sadly, I realized whatever good was coming of eating that oatmeal, it didn't necessarily cancel out the other ingredients. Added sugar is added sugar — mixing it with healthy ingredients doesn't make it any better for you.

Still, I remained a believer in baked oatmeal. I had seen enough people genuinely excited to eat it to think there was something to this cooking method if the ingredients could just be tweaked. My quest lasted years, and began with reducing the amount of sugar before finally finding a recipe that did away with it entirely. Better still, it combined the oatmeal with flavors I loved from another favorite confection, carrot cake. Using the natural sweetness of carrots and dried fruit, this baked oatmeal both looks and tastes delicious.

Best of all, it's simple to make and keeps well in the refrigerator. These days, I've gotten into the habit of making a batch on Sunday evening, then slicing off a portion each following morning and reheating it for breakfast. I find it's delicious plain, but just like regular oatmeal, it also can be served with milk poured over it (or a little maple syrup!).

This makes for a quick, easy and healthful breakfast to start each day. The fact that it's also really pretty with all those colorful fruits and nuts, well, that's just bonus!

*Sarah J. Gardner is a former editor of Radish.*

### Carrot Cake Baked Oatmeal

**2 cups rolled oats**  
**1/2 cup chopped nuts such as pecans or walnuts**  
**1/2 cup low-sugar raisins or other dried fruits**  
**1 teaspoon baking powder**  
**3/4 teaspoon cinnamon**  
**1/2 teaspoon salt**  
**1 cup milk or dairy alternative**  
**2 teaspoons vanilla**  
**2 eggs, beaten**  
**1 cup shredded carrot**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a pie plate or 9x9-inch baking pan. Stir together all ingredients except carrots. When ingredients are well-combined, add carrots, and stir to coat. Transfer to the prepared baking dish and bake until firm, 30-45 minutes. The baked oatmeal can be sliced and served immediately or cooled and placed in the refrigerator to reheat later.



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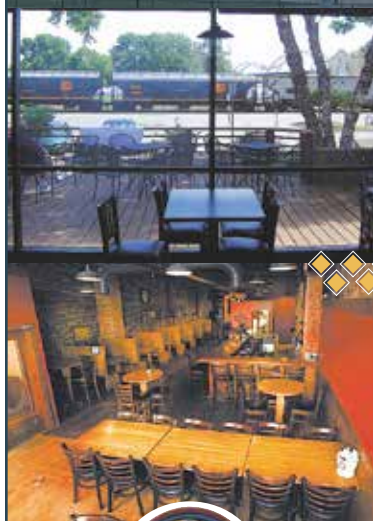
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# Green on the go

Keep your commitment even when you're out and about

By Laura Anderson Shaw

**W**e have the best of intentions at home. Maybe we try to reuse plastic containers before tossing them into the recycle bin, or we spend hours on Pinterest looking for the latest wall decor we can fashion out of cardboard toilet paper tubes.

But much of our hard work around the house may go out the window once we're out the door. Morning coffee runs mean more paper cups and cardboard sleeves. Dinners out mean more plastic and foam to-go containers. Adding more greens to our cart at the grocery store also means adding more plastic produce bags to our garbage.

The good news is, it doesn't have to be this way. With a little extra care and planning, you can pack your commitment to the environment and take it with you wherever you go.

## A leg up on lunch

It might be the teenage girl inside of me talking, but I love lunch bags and boxes. Every back-to-school season when the bags and boxes hit the shelves, I have to talk myself out of buying more. (I already have more than a few that I rotate through...)

Many of them, though, on the shelves and in my cupboard, are floral, Monster High or Hello Kitty. While I'm a 30-year-old who carries them proudly with no shame, I can bet that many women and men would not feel the same. But have no fear! You can find hundreds of non-frilly, flashy-free handmade



Todd Welvaert / Radish

reusable lunch bags on Etsy. (If you do prefer a sassier style, rest assured there are hundreds of those, too!)

They are comparable in price to the bags you'd find on physical shelves, too, and light years better than wasting brown bag after brown bag.

If you'd like to ditch plastic sandwich bags, too, you'll also find a slew of handmade, reusable and washable sandwich and snack bags on Etsy, in any color or pattern you can think of.

## Jonesing for Joe — not waste

I'm no stranger to morning coffee runs. In fact, I'm a frequent flier at every coffee shop within a 5-mile radius of my office. If you're like me, you can cut back on your plastic and foam cup consumption by bringing along your own coffee tumbler.

**The next time you go to your favorite coffee shop, bring your own tumbler. Many stores — such as Starbucks — also offer a discount when you do!**

Many big-name coffee shops, such as Starbucks and Dunn Brothers Coffee, even carry their own plastic or ceramic to-go tumblers in the same sizes you'd order your favorite drink. The next time you go, bring your own tumbler and ask that you take your coffee or tea in it instead. Many stores — such as Starbucks — also offer a discount when you do!

Even if you can't always bring a

**Continued on page 31**



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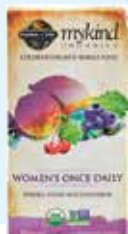
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# Grounds to celebrate

## Give your brew an encore around the house

By Ann Ring

**A**h, you've enjoyed your morning coffee. But now what do you do with the grounds? If you've ever felt a bit annoyed tossing them into the trash because you don't know what else to do with them, we've got you covered. Here are a few ways to reuse those grounds:

### In your compost pile or garden

Toss used coffee grounds onto your compost pile, since the grounds are rich in nitrogen. Just be sure to limit the amount of grounds you add so you don't throw off the ratio of carbon-nitrogen, or "green" to "brown" ratio.

Here's a how-to, from [homeguides.sfgate.com](http://homeguides.sfgate.com):

1. Put one-third each coffee grounds, grass clippings and dried leaves into a compost bin. If you don't have enough leaves or grass clippings, use shredded paper coffee filters.

2. With a pitchfork, mix the coffee grounds and matter together thoroughly.

3. Allow the compost to develop a soil-like appearance and an earthy aroma before using it. It may take three months or longer for compost to fully break down, depending on the materials used.

4. Lay a tarp on the ground and spread the compost out on the tarp. Let the compost dry.

5. Add as much as 6 inches of compost per year to your vegetable garden soil. Work the compost into the soil with a shovel or pitchfork. If you don't have enough compost to amend the entire garden, put one handful of compost in each transplant hole or seed furrow.

### Other garden tidbits:

- Adding coffee grounds to your compost pile or garden are good for attracting worms — which enjoy many of the same foods you do. Worms tunnel the soil, and their castings fertilize it because they're rich in phosphorus, calcium, nitrogen and magnesium.
- Before you sow carrot and radish seeds, mix them with dried coffee grounds to give them an energy boost.
- Keep your cat or the neighbor's cat away from the garden or flower bed



Todd Welvaert / Radish

by spreading a mixture of used coffee grounds and orange peels around your plants.

- Mix used grounds with dead grass clippings, brown leaves, or dry straw to neutralize some of the acidity, then spread them around your azaleas, hydrangeas, rhododendrons, camellias, roses, or other acid-loving plants.
- With the right soil, coffee grounds offer one way to possibly produce blue to lavender-blue hydrangeas. Modify the soil with coffee grounds to increase the acidity. It isn't necessarily a quick process, and the earlier you add coffee grounds to the soil, the earlier the impact the hydrangea's bloom color.

### Refrigerator refresher

In lieu of baking soda, set coffee grounds in an open bowl, cup or jar, and place it in the back of your refrigerator or freezer to deodorize the area. Simply replace the container every two weeks.



## Fireplace fantastic

Used coffee grounds won't do all of the work for you, but they will make it easier to clean out your fireplace! Scatter damp coffee grounds over the ashes to weigh them down and prevent the typical cloud of dust that arises as you attempt to scoop.

## Pots and pans scrub

Mix a handful of coffee grounds with your favorite dish soap to add an abrasive that will help scrub off tough bits of food from your pots and pans.

## Kitchen disposal cleaner

With newer disposal units, pour a tablespoon each of used coffee grounds and baking soda down the drain to clean the blades.

## Exfoliate hands and body

Rub used coffee grounds and hand soap into your palms after handling smelly foods such as garlic, onion or fish. The grounds will absorb the smell on your hands. To exfoliate your body, use 1 tablespoon each of raw honey and virgin coconut oil, and 1/2 tablespoon of used coffee grounds to gently massage your skin in the shower, then rinse with warm water.

## Shiny hair

Remove hair product build-up with old coffee grounds! Before you shampoo, grab a handful of used grounds and massage them into your hair. The coarse texture is enough to break apart the product residue, but it's also gentle enough that it won't damage your hair.

## Shoo, flea!

After bathing Spot with his shampoo, massage used coffee grounds into his coat. Rinse and dry as usual. The grounds can act as a natural flea repellent!

## Deodorizer and air freshener

Easy! Sprinkle used grounds onto a cookie sheet and let them dry completely over the course of a couple of days. Then, spoon them into an unused coffee filter or old pantyhose, closing the sachet at the top with a twist tie. Set them in your smelliest household spots, including cars, closets, shoes and the garbage pail.

## Dye wood, fabrics, paper and eggs

Boil used coffee grounds in water. After a little while, dip fabrics, paper, or eggs into the pot to dye the object a rich brown hue. You also can use a paint brush to apply the mixture to wood for a unique stain.

## Clean your grill

Use your grounds to scrub off the built-up grime on your outdoor grill.

*Ann Ring is a frequent Radish contributor.*



### Register to Attend June 23-24

Geared toward the agricultural community, municipal, state and federal government employees, landowners, homeowners, urban dwellers, beekeepers, and educators, the **2nd Quad Cities Pollinator Conference** will be held June 23-24.

The first day will take place at the River Center located in downtown Davenport, Iowa, and will consist of nearly 20 experts speaking on current pollinator issues, challenges, and opportunities.

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**Dr. Karen Oberhauser**

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#### Luncheon Keynote by:

**Dr. Orley R. "Chip" Taylor**

Founder & Director of Monarch Watch



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Each level includes complimentary exhibitor space at the River Center on June 23, 2016.



# Go green!

## Simple, delicious eats for spring

By Brandy Welvaert

**E**at your greens! It's healthy advice, and spring is the right time for leafy veggies whether you grow your own or tap your favorite farmer.

Kale and chard, among other leaves, are some of the first vegetables to make a spring debut in markets. If you're lucky, you may not have to travel that far. Dandelions shooting up in your backyard? There's no need to weed. Instead, grab a fork!

### Kale

Kale is a frilly-leafed cousin of cabbage with a flavor similar to that of its relative. Known for its dense nutrient content, cruciferous kale can replace spinach in most cooked dishes, such as soups and stews. In cold salads, a small amount of kale perks up flavor and texture — but too much overpowers most palates. The simple recipe below is an interesting exception, in which kale pairs with velvety avocado and bright lemon.

### Dandelion Greens

No time for a garden? No problem! As long as your lawn is chemical-free, you can start harvesting spring's most likeable weed: the dandelion. These saw-toothed plants become bitter the larger they grow, so get out early to pick the smallest, most tender leaves. Add them in small amounts to salads, tuck a few into your grilled-cheese sandwich, or harvest a whole bunch and braise them with garlic to mellow their flavor.

### Chard

Chard features large, thick leaves on stalks that grow in a variety of colors. The redder the stalk, the stronger the flavor of this member of the

beet family. Also known as Swiss chard, this cruciferous vegetable won't last long in the fridge, so buy it no more than two or three days before you plan to use it.

Don't toss the stalks! You can save the stalks and cook them like asparagus, standing up in boiling saltwater.

*Brandy Welvaert is a former editor of Radish. For more recipes using spring greens, see this story online at [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com)*

#### Kale-Avocado Salad

**2 big handfuls chopped kale, tough center stalk removed**  
**1 avocado, chopped**  
**2 1/2 tablespoons olive oil**  
**1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice**  
**Sea salt and pepper to taste**  
**1 medium tomato, diced**

Place kale, avocado, olive oil and lemon juice in a medium bowl. With your hands, squeeze the kale and avocado until the kale is limp and the avocado is evenly mixed. Add tomato and stir. Season with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.

#### Dandelion Greens with Double Garlic

**1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil**  
**1/4 cup thinly sliced garlic (5 or 6 cloves), plus**  
**1 teaspoon minced garlic, or more to taste**  
**1/2 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes, or to taste**  
**Salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**1 pound dandelion greens with stems, well washed and roughly chopped**



Brandy Welvaert / Radish

Kale-Avocado Salad.

**1/2 cup chicken, beef, or vegetable stock**  
**Lemon wedges for serving**

Put the olive oil in a large, deep saucepan with a lid over medium-high heat. When hot, add the sliced garlic, pepper flakes, and some salt and black pepper and cook for about 1 minute.

Add the greens and stock. Cover and cook until the greens are wilted and just tender but still a little firm, about 5 minutes.

Uncover the pan and continue to cook, stirring, until the liquid has all but evaporated and the greens are quite tender, at least 5 minutes more. Taste for seasoning and add red or black pepper and salt as needed; add the minced garlic, cook for 1 minute more, and serve hot, warm, or at room temperature, with lemon wedges.

Source: "How to Cook Everything," by Mark Bittman



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# Sustainable living:

## 8 everyday ways to make it work for you

By Lindsay Hocker

**E**arth Day can inspire a second wave of resolutions for the year, a list of things we'd like to do to leave behind less of a carbon footprint. Maybe we know what we need to do, but we're pressed for time between responsibilities at work and home, or maybe we simply don't know what more we can do. Either way, here are a handful of tips to get you going.

### Make recycling routine

Once recycling becomes a habit, it doesn't feel like a chore. At our house, we keep recycling bins in our kitchen nook. There, it is easy for us to toss items in the correct bin instead of the nearby trash can. It's near the sink so we can give things a rinse before dropping them in. It's also close to the front door, which makes it all easy to grab when it's time to drive to the recycling center.

If your city has a curbside recycling program, consider taking advantage of it to make recycling easier yet.

### Skip bottled water

The amount of waste produced by bottled water is well known and avoidable. But still, the ease and convenience of bottled water beckons! My suggestions for skipping it take a little planning, but in the long run, they will save you money and help the environment.

For starters, stock up on a few reusable water bottles or a thermos if you haven't already. Fill one up and take it with you, especially if you're headed to a place where you might opt to buy bottled water. If you can't stand the taste of tap water, invest in a filter, or use an infuser water bottle to add berries, cucumbers, lemons and more to change up the taste.

Leaving an empty water bottle in your car or backpack also can help when an unexpected situation pops up — simply find a drinking fountain to fill it up instead of hitting a vending machine or store.

### Cut down on preventable waste

Work to buy items with minimal packaging. Buy things in bulk when you can, or cook up a batch of food instead of relying on single-serving packages, then reuse or recycle everything you can. Materials that are not easily recycled may often be repurposed as storage, or for use in a craft project.

If you are ordering take-out food, don't take items you don't need. For instance, if you are eating the meal at home, decline the napkins and plastic utensils. Avoid using throwaway plastic or paper place settings at home.

If you do end up with plastic utensils, hand wash them and keep them for multiple uses.

If you are out and purchase a beverage such as coffee, save the plastic lid to recycle instead of pitching it. Save napkins for future use by sticking them in your glove box or bringing them inside. There's no reason a never-used item should be land-filled.

Remember re-usable bags

Most of us have reusable shopping bags filled with reusable shopping bags, but many of us forget to actually use them.

Consider naming the bags first on your shopping list as a note-to-self you'll see before you leave the house. If you store the bags in the car, make a point of moving them up to the passenger seat when you are grocery store-bound. Out of sight, out of mind won't be a problem if the shopping bags are right next to you!

If you forget your bags, consider asking the cashier for paper bags instead of plastic. You can use the paper bags in a variety of ways at home — I set cookies on them to cool!

— or easily recycle them. Some grocery stores have areas where you can drop off plastic bags for recycling, too, so if you do end up with plastic grocery bags in your home, you don't have to throw them out.



Metro Creative Graphics

Continued on page 32



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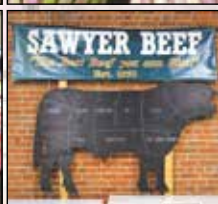
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healthy living

# Mississippi Bend Trykes

By Laura Anderson Shaw

As the days grow warmer, excited children with cabin fever are bursting from their homes and begging their parents to dig their bicycles from their winter storage spots so they can cruise the neighborhood with friends and family. Some children, though, aren't so lucky.

"Children with disabilities or who are unable to operate a traditional bicycle on their own lose out," says Katie Powers, of Davenport. Powers is a pediatric physical therapist and vice president of Mississippi Bend Trykes, a local chapter of AMBUCS, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to creating mobility and independence for people with disabilities.

Enter Mississippi Bend Trykes, founded in December 2015. "Our mission is to provide Amtryke therapeutic tricycles to children unable to operate a traditional bike," Powers says.

Adaptive tricycles cost \$3,000 or more, all of which must be "paid out-of-pocket by the family. It cannot be billed to insurance like a walker or wheelchair," Powers says.

Many disabled children could benefit physically and socially from using a tricycle with their friends and families, but because of the cost, families can't always afford them. "Access to an adaptive tricycle would provide the child with an opportunity to get exercise, enjoy quality time with family, and participate in an activity that their typically developing peers get to do," Powers says.

Prior to the inception of Mississippi Bend Trykes, there was not a local chapter serving the Quad-Cities, Powers says. A group of pediatric therapists and parents of children with disabilities recognized the need



for the organization in the community, so they founded the local chapter.

"As a pediatric PT, my job is to help give kids mobility. I help them learn to crawl, walk, run, ride bikes and more," Powers says. "For some of my patients, riding a bike will never be an option, and this group is opening doors for them and their families."

Powers says the organization will host a fundraiser — Trivia for Trykes — beginning at 6 p.m. Friday, April

29, at the Knights of Columbus, 1111 W. 35th St., Davenport. Proceeds will go directly toward providing Amtryke therapeutic tricycles to Quad-Cities-area children.

"We are hoping to spread awareness of our organization across the Quad-Cities" to attract volunteers, donors and sponsors, as well as families of children with special needs so the group can provide tricycles to as many children as possible, Powers says.

"We're helping make things happen that families once thought were impossible. What kid doesn't want to ride a bike around the neighborhood with their friends?"

*Laura Anderson Shaw is the editor of Radish. For more information about AMBUCS, visit [ambucs.org](http://ambucs.org). For more information on Mississippi Bend Trykes, visit its Facebook page or email [mississippibendtrykes@gmail.com](mailto:mississippibendtrykes@gmail.com).*





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healthy living

# Plant, harvest, learn

## Davenport high school cultivates Urban Farm Project

By Annie L. Scholl

This spring, Davenport Mid City High School students involved in the school's Urban Farm Project will harvest winter wheat and grind it for flour. They'll replace the wheat with sweet corn, and plant potatoes, carrots, beets, lettuce, cabbage and other vegetables to replace rye they've grown. They'll save back berries for planting next year.

As excited as she is about the spring harvest and upcoming planting, teacher Lynn Meyers is more excited with how much her "farmers" have "blossomed."

"Three of my students have been working together since August, but the other five students only joined us mid-January," says Meyers, 58. "In their short time together they have formed a cohesive unit. They are self-directed. They are making decisions. They are collaborating. Sometimes, but not so often anymore, they will stop and ask a question or for my opinion. They are growing and maturing before my very eyes."

The Urban Farm Project sprouted when school began last August.

"We had a dream of creating a school farm," says Meyers, who started teaching at Mid City when the alternative high school opened in the fall of 2014. "Although we had an idea of what we wanted to do, we really were at a loss as to how to bring our dream to fruition."

A friend put her in touch with Nate Clark, manager of Enterprise Citizenship and vice president of the John Deere Foundation at John Deere in Moline. Meyers invited Clark to Mid City to meet with students.



Submitted  
Mid City High School students working on the school's Urban Farm Project in Davenport.

"We showed him our land and presented our dream," Meyers says. "He was very impressed with our students and decided that John Deere and Mid City could work together to make our dream come true."

Thanks to the support of John Deere and P&K Midwest, Mid City broke ground last November, tilling up two quarter-acre plots on about five acres south of the school building.

Mid City, in north-central Davenport, replaced the Kimberly Center, the district's previous alternative school. Many of the students, principal Jake Klipsch says, have struggled in school for a variety of reasons. He hopes through endeavors such as the Urban Farm Project that students wake up wanting to go to school.

"I couldn't be more excited," says Klipsch, 36, about the farm. "This is

what education is meant to be. These are skills kids will take with them into the rest of their lives."

Meyers says many of the students at Mid City don't always have access to — or income for — fresh, nutritious food, so one of the project's priorities is to provide them with fruits and vegetables. They also hope to establish a Mid City Market and donate to local food banks.

Student Hannah Walker thinks it would be "cool" to go into elementary and middle schools and teach younger students that "growing your own food is very healthy."

Walker says she never thought she would be interested in participating in a project like this, but now she's motivated to help her family grow vegetables.

"Once everything is grown, you

are proud of what you've done," she says.

Meyers says Mid City staff and students alike have embraced the project. The ecology class researched the size and type of raised beds that are in the works for the project. They sent the specs to the carpentry class, which will build them and help place them outside.

Students and staff have volunteered to spread compost, even giving up weekends to do the work. Meyers hopes even more will get involved as the project continues to grow.

"A couple of our seniors have voiced their desire to come back and volunteer next summer just to stay connected," Meyers says, adding that working outside in nature "has a very calming, often cathartic, effect" on students.

The goal of the project, she adds, is to instill in students a sense of family and community. She hopes that one day students will start gardens in their own communities.

"Planting, harvesting, cooking and baking are very social, communal activities," Meyers says.

While students may not always retain everything they learn throughout their educational careers, Meyers believes they will remember experiences like working on the Urban Farm Project.

"I want my students to take what they have learned and look forward — forward to becoming independent, self-directed, self-sufficient and confident people who value and feel gratification from helping others."

*Annie L. Scholl is a frequent Radish contributor.*



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# A good night's Zzzz

What may be keeping you from rest, and what you can do about it

By Chris Cashion

**S**leeping is much like breathing. We take it for granted until we have a problem, and we can't live without it. Unlike breathing, however, we don't really know why sleep is so necessary for our bodies.

"It's a mystery as to why it's essential," says Dr. Steve Rasmus, medical director of the Genesis Sleep Disorder Center.

According to Rasmus, studies conducted with sleep-deprived animals illustrate just how important sleep is.

"Without sleep, their fur starts to fall out, their systems deteriorate and after about 18 (to) 20 days without sleep, they die," Rasmus says.

UnityPoint Clinic's Dr. Naveen Kanathur, whose specialties include sleep medicine, concurs. He says that although the true purpose of sleep is poorly understood, it is generally felt to help the body repair and revitalize itself. Some of the things thought to happen while we sleep include the clearance of neurotoxic waste; the promotion of neuronal connection formation (synapse), and the maintenance of these connections, which can help with learning and memory.

According to Rasmus, studies have shown that during sleep, brain tissue shrinks and channels become more open, allowing the toxic substances that accumulate while we are awake to drain.

According to Science magazine's website — [sciencemag.org](http://sciencemag.org), published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science — these fluid-filled channels in the lymphatic system clear toxins from the brain in much the same way the lymphatic system rids metabolic waste from other parts of our bodies.

Relatively new studies of the lymphatic system have shown that the substances that accumulate in the brain could be what causes diseases such as Alzheimer's, Rasmus says.

Not only does the body not function optimally without sleep, lack of sleep can prove to be downright dangerous. "Excessive sleepiness is the

second leading cause of car crashes and a major cause of truck crashes in the U.S.," Kanathur says, adding that short sleep duration also has been associated with the development of hypertension, heart disease and obesity.

Rasmus stresses the importance of teaching drivers — young drivers, especially — how dangerous it is to drive when tired.

"They know not to drive drunk, but not necessarily to not drive when tired, yet it can be just as dangerous."

So to avoid dangers such as these, how much sleep do we actually need?

"For the average adult, it's just over eight hours, but it's a bell curve. Some adults need seven, some nine. Elementary school-aged children need around 11, middle school-aged children need around 10, and high school students need approximately nine," Rasmus says.

It sounds easy — simply sleep the required number of hours, and everything will be great. Sometimes, however, it's much easier said than done.

"Chronic sleep deprivation is common, and could result from reduced sleep duration and/or quality," says Kanathur. "Work demands, social and family responsibilities, medical conditions and sleep disorders can lead to sleep deprivation."

The most common sleep disturbance is insomnia. "About 50 percent of adults experience occasional bouts of insomnia, and one in 10 suffers from chronic insomnia," Kanathur says. "Women and older adults are more likely to experience insomnia," he says, which essentially refers to the difficulty of falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking up early in the morning "without (the) ability to return to sleep."



This causes an "impairment of daytime functioning," as well as "daytime sleepiness, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, learning, anxiety, and irritability," Kanathur says.

Another common sleep disturbance is obstructed sleep apnea. "This is the partial or

Continued on page 30





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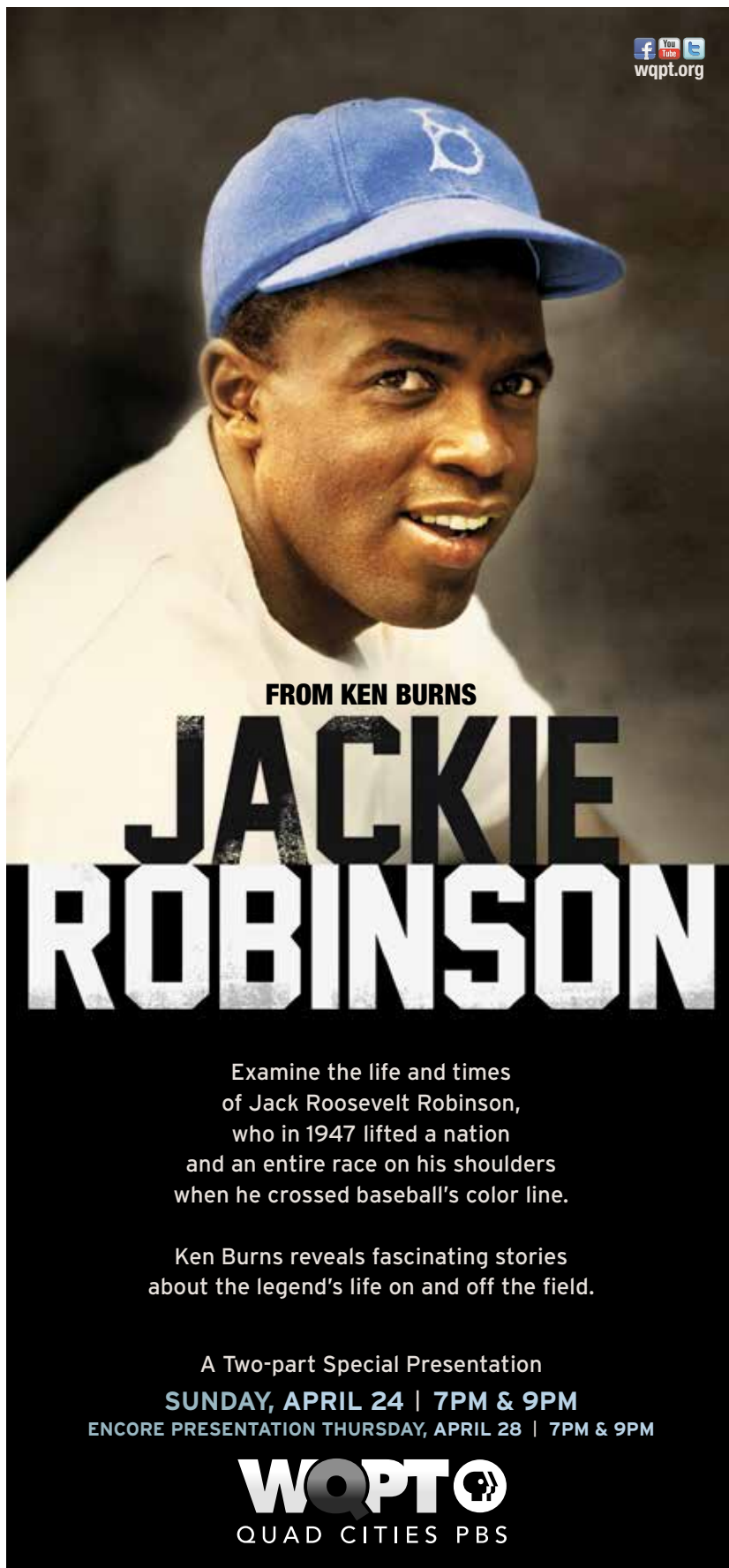
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## Sleep continued from page 28

complete collapse of the airway while we sleep,” Rasmus says. “Often, we snore. When you come up for air, you come up to a lighter state of sleep. When this happens repeatedly, you are at a greater risk for hypertension, heart attack and stroke.”

Restless leg syndrome is another problematic condition that can impede your ability to sleep. It causes “an achy, tingly feeling in your legs that gives you the urge to move, and it returns when you become inactive again,” Rasmus says.

Other issues that can get in the way of a good night's sleep include chronic pain, acid reflux and trouble breathing.

So what can we do to help ourselves get some better rest? Kanathur offers these tips:

- Maintain a fixed sleep schedule, including on the weekends.
- Practice a relaxing bedtime ritual.
- Exercise daily.
- Evaluate your bedroom to ensure ideal temperature, sound and light.
- Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillow.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine.
- Turn off electronics before bed.

Rasmus also suggests meditating or finding another relaxation technique, and not allowing yourself to look at the clock while you're in bed.

If you do use electronics such as computers, e-readers or cellphones before bed, try reversing the white print and black background, or use a screen cover that helps filter the light. Studies have shown that the blue light emitted from these screens can negatively affect our circadian rhythm, which helps synchronize our sleep patterns.

If you've tried these strategies and you continue to find yourself excessively sleepy and are having trouble staying awake throughout the day, especially while driving, it may be time to see a sleep specialist, Rasmus says.

Additionally, if your primary care physician has screened you for sleep apnea and discovered it is an issue, or if someone has noticed that you appear to stop breathing in your sleep, a trip to a sleep specialist may be in order.

“If you decide to see a specialist, the first thing we will do is listen to your history. Why are you here? The majority of the time, it's sleep apnea,” Rasmus says. “We will determine your issue based on your history. If we suspect a sleep disorder, then a sleep study is ordered. A sleep study may not be necessary, as in the case of insomnia or RLS.”

If you are diagnosed with sleep apnea, there are treatments available. According to Kanathur, two of the most common treatments are weight loss and continuous positive airway pressure therapy, or CPAP, which uses a small machine that supplies to you a constant and steady air pressure through a hose and a mask or nose piece, according to mayoclinic.org.

Other possible therapies include mandibular oral appliances and upper airway surgery.

Rasmus says medication also may be recommended for those suffering from insomnia when other at-home solutions don't work, especially for those who have recently experienced a traumatic life event such as a death in the family or a divorce. For those folks, a sleep aid may be used temporarily until life has settled down and a regular sleep schedule can be reestablished.

*Chris Cashion is a writer on staff with Radish.*



mug with you, you easily can stuff a reusable coffee sleeve into your purse or pocket to cut back on using the cardboard variety. Etsy is a great place to find them, or you could fashion your own from felt and jazz it up with a hot-glue gun, brightly colored thread and ribbons. Your neighborhood coffee shop — like Cool Beanz Coffeehouse in Rock Island — might also carry some for sale.

## Take it to-go, not to the trash

I would be hard pressed to name a time I didn't have to ask for a to-go container after dinner at a restaurant. After all, most places serve twice what we need, anyway! To cut back on foam and disposable plastic container usage, consider carrying your own reusable version along instead. Just like the throw-away containers, you could grab any number of sizes, tote your leftovers home, and wash when they're gone. Keep a few in the car so you've got them when you need them.

## Napkins are for washing, not for tossing

Meals out always mean paper napkins — unless you're at a swanky restaurant. Beat the urge to overuse by having a cloth napkin or bandana on hand. These also are great staples to keep in the car for emergency nose blows or spills. Simply tuck a few in your center console or glove box and go!

## Pick your produce — not your garbage

Your car is loaded up with reusable grocery bags, and your list is safely in your smartphone. Huzzah! You have mastered as-green-as-you-can-get grocery shopping! First stop, the produce section! And that's when you remember — those apples are going to have to go in a bag.

Next time, pack up some reusable produce bags, too. They come in many styles and sizes, and many look like a sheer cloth, drawstring alternative to the plastic bags and twist-ties you'll find at most stores. Depending on what you're buying, you can get a few uses out of them, then throw them in the laundry or wash them in the sink when they need it.

You can find reusable produce bags at a number of area stores — including the Quad Cities Food Hub, 421 W. River Drive, Davenport — as well as Etsy.

*Laura Anderson Shaw is the editor of Radish.*



Todd Welvaert / Radish

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Environment,  
 continued from page 22

## Buy local foods and goods

Buying local goods whenever possible is a great way to be earth-friendly. Locally-grown or locally-created items mean using less fossil fuel, as the items did not have to be transported long distances.

Local food also is fresher. If you have outdoor space or a sunny window, you could look into growing some produce right at home — it doesn't get any fresher or more local than that! To find farmers markets near you, visit [radishmagazine.com/markets](http://radishmagazine.com/markets).



Metro Creative Graphics

Locally-grown or locally-created items mean using less fossil fuel, as the items did not have to be transported long distances.

## Compost what you can

Food scraps and yard waste take up a lot of landfill space, and a lot of it doesn't have to. While having a compost heap requires a yard, there actually is an apartment-friendly option for composting. Small compost bins can be kept indoors. You can use the compost to fertilize your houseplants, or gift it to a gardener friend. For a how-to, visit [ecowatch.com/2013/12/16/how-to-compost-apartment](http://ecowatch.com/2013/12/16/how-to-compost-apartment). This is something I have been wanting to do; maybe I'll find the perfect spot this year for a bin.

## Turn out the lights

Cut back on your electricity bill, make your home safer, and make less of an environmental impact all at the same time by turning off lights as you leave a room, and unplugging electronics when they are not in use. You also can hang laundry to dry instead of using the dryer to make a dent in your electricity usage.

When buying new appliances, be sure to invest in those that are energy efficient.

## Drive less; get active

Reducing the amount of time you spend driving means less pollution and a reduction in the amount of fossil fuel you use annually. Bike, walk, or use public transportation whenever possible. Other ways to make an impact include car pooling, and making a specific plan while running errands so you may use the most efficient route. This way, you will use less gasoline, and also save on another precious resource: time.

*Lindsay Hocker is an occasional Radish contributor.*

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# 'Life is about balance'

## Navigating a path to healthy living

By Katy Williams

From what I have learned over the last two years, living a healthy life is about balance — not the number on the scale, the amount of muscle mass you have or how skinny you are.

We live in a world where we are constantly bombarded by messages that tell us we can lose 10 pounds in three days, or that going low-fat, low-sugar or low-carb will forever change our lives. Everywhere are the phrases “too many carbs,” “too much fat,” “bikini body.”

According to the National Eating Disorders Association's website, [nationaleatingdisorders.org](http://nationaleatingdisorders.org), 46 percent of kids ages 9 to 11 are “sometimes” or “very often” on diets, and likewise are 82 percent of their families. The site also states that 35 percent of “normal dieters” progress to excessive dieting, and of that group, 20 to 25 percent progress to partial or full-syndrome eating disorders.

While there is no single cause of eating disorders, the website states, “mass media provides a significantly influential context for people to learn about body ideals and the value placed on being attractive.”

Of American elementary school girls who read magazines, the site states, 69 percent say that the pictures they see “influence their concept of the ideal body shape.”

I was one of the 69 percent.

Since about sixth grade, I have struggled with comparing how I looked versus what I saw in the mass media. In 2013, the summer before my senior year of high school, I decided I needed to lose weight. To be fair, I was 5-foot-9 and 225 pounds, which, if you consult a Body Mass Index chart, is categorized as obese. I didn't exercise very often, and I had poor eating habits.

I was diagnosed with celiac disease, and while I removed gluten from my diet, I also attempted to develop a healthier lifestyle, but I had little success. After spending two weeks in Europe, though, where I walked more than 10 miles each day, I noticed that my body felt better when I ate just a little bit better and moved more. So I started working toward a healthier lifestyle — and ended up

frustrated with books on crash diets.

I crunched numbers and restricted the amount of calories I ate. In the back of my mind, I think I knew it wasn't healthy, but I had dropped a large number of pounds in a short amount of time. I was noticeably thinner, and my inner dialogue said I was “supposed to” look that way.

I spent two years like this. I slowly began to realize what I was doing wasn't necessarily healthy, so I attempted to recover from my yet-to-be-diagnosed eating disorder. I tried to eat more, I stopped counting calories, and I reached out to my best friend and my mother.

And it worked — until I went away to college. I wasn't happy there, and I relapsed into a depressed, anxiety-ridden state. I was officially diagnosed with anorexia last winter, weighing 109 pounds with clothes.

Anorexia was never a choice; it was an illness. But I could make the choice to stop allowing it to control my life. I met with my doctor and a therapist, and increased my food intake dramatically. As I write this, I am 19-years-old and fully recovered, with my weight restored to a doctor-approved healthy weight.

I've also found happiness again.

But how can you block out the commercials, magazine articles and images pressuring you to be thin? The truth is, you can't. You can't stop the invention of the newest way to drop 10 pounds, and you can't stop people from promoting products, no matter how bad for you they may be.

Instead, you have to learn to ignore it.

A wise person (and Internet meme) once said: “Some days you eat salads and go to the gym. Some days you eat a whole pizza and refuse to wear pants. It's called balance.”

Do I advocate a healthy lifestyle? Of course. Exercise and eat fruits, veggies and lean protein. That's my lifestyle 75 percent of the time. But healthy living also means eating ice cream, cheese fries or those loaded tacos you've been craving, too.

Healthy living means balance. And finally, I've found mine.

*Katy Williams is a regular Radish contributor.*



Photos submitted  
Katy Williams in 2013.



Katy Williams in early 2015.



Katy Williams in late 2015.

**“Healthy living also means eating ice cream, cheese fries or those loaded tacos you’ve been craving. Healthy living means balance.”**





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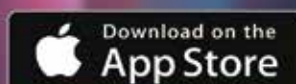
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