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HEALTHY LIVING FROM THE GROUND UP



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Carolene Robinson, RN, is a 40-year veteran in the nursing profession who currently works in the Trinity Cancer Center. She is one of more than 3,000 Trinity associates committed to providing quality care for patients and improving the health of the communities Trinity serves.

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## “A Doctor’s Confession”

(And Why I Still Do What I Do)

Dear Friend:

Perhaps a confession can help clear the air so there’s no misunderstanding. But let me say a few other things first.

**Ten years ago something happened that changed my life forever.**

At the time I was a financial analyst for Florsheim in Chicago. I was a former college volleyball player who still loved to play, but I had developed a very painful shoulder problem from all my volleyball playing. I couldn’t raise my arm above my shoulder and what was even worse for me at the time; I could no longer play my favorite sport. It eventually spread to my neck and caused headaches that stopped me from sleeping at night. For more than 2 years I had painkillers, muscle relaxers, and physical therapy that only made me feel better until the next day. I considered surgery, (my doctor in Chicago said that was my only option), but I decided against it. A friend of mine convinced me to give a chiropractor a try. The chiropractor did an exam, took some films, and then “adjusted” my spine. The adjustment didn’t hurt; it actually felt good. I got relief, and I could use my shoulder again. In fact, within only one month I was back playing volleyball again, at full speed, like I never had a problem. It worked so well that I went to chiropractic school myself.

Now people come to see me with their “rotator cuff” problems. Also, they come to me with their *headaches, migraines, chronic pain, neck pain, shoulder/arm pain, whiplash from car accidents, backaches, ear infections, asthma, allergies, numbness in limbs, athletic injuries*, just to name a few.

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# from the editor



Editor Sarah J. Gardner and Brad Scott verify that the compost produced in the kitchen of Scott Community College — a Radish Award winner — has no odor. (Photo by Todd Mizener / Radish)

Years ago, inspired by a stray line from a song that croons, “The Mississippi’s mighty, but it starts in Minnesota, at a place where you could walk across with five steps,” two friends and I set out on a camping trip to Lake Itasca to see these headwaters for ourselves.

Once there, it actually took us eight very large strides to get across the rocky streambed that is the start of the Mississippi. Even so, I would have been hard pressed to identify that spot as the beginnings of the famous river were it not for a sign nearby.

I also could not have known then that one day my life, too, would flow into the Mississippi valley and I would find myself living within walking distance of the river whose headwaters I had once visited on a lark. Life is funny that way.

That trip comes back to me now in the mornings when, high up on a bridge on my way in to Radish, I watch the sun spill onto the water below — miles and miles of it in either direction. It makes me think about where small beginnings and a little creativity can get you.

What an encouraging idea at the beginning of the year, which, like the Mississippi starts small: daylight is short, temperatures are in the single digits, we have only a dim notion of what is ahead. And yet, small changes made now have the power to shape the entire year to come — for that matter, small changes made this year have the power to change the next decade, even the century ahead. Look no further than our 10 Radish Award winners to see such efforts already at work.

This also brings to my mind Wendell Berry’s poem, “A Vision,” in which he argues that human survival depends upon our willingness to do work whose benefits will not be realized in our lifetime. If we do so, he writes, then long after we are gone, “the river will run clear, as we will never know it, and over it, birdsong like a canopy.”

I think about that sometimes on my way over the Mississippi, imagining a person so far in the future our children’s children wouldn’t know her, watching dawn break over this river, perhaps cleaner and brighter for the efforts we undertake now, and my heart fills with song. Shouldn’t that be the gold standard for new year’s resolutions — even if they cannot be immediately achieved, they allow us to look joyfully to the future?

— Sarah J. Gardner,  
[editor@radishmagazine.com](mailto:editor@radishmagazine.com)

**Radish**  
HEALTHY LIVING FROM THE GROUND UP

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Gerald J. Taylor  
PUBLISHER

Joe Payne  
MANAGING EDITOR

Sarah J. Gardner  
EDITOR  
(309) 757-4905  
[editor@radishmagazine.com](mailto:editor@radishmagazine.com)

Val Yazbec  
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Terry Wilson  
NICHE PUBLICATIONS MANAGER  
(309) 757-5041

Rachel Griffiths  
ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE  
(309) 721-3204

Spencer Rabe  
LAYOUT & DESIGN

PUBLISHED BY  
Small Newspaper Group

Deborah Loeser Small  
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

Joseph Lacaeyse  
TREASURER

Robert Hill  
VICE-PRESIDENT

Thomas P. Small  
SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT

Len R. Small  
PRESIDENT

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# contributors



**Lisa Hammer** has been in newspaper work in Henry County, Illinois, for the better part of 30 years. She and her husband, Ray, live in rural Cambridge with their teenage daughter Mary. Their son is a senior at Knox College. Her avocation is conservation. Read Hammer's article about efforts to revitalize the Hennepin Canal on page 8.



**Jim Earles** is a Kundalini Yoga teacher, home schooling parent and freelance writer living in Dubuque. He and his wife, Amber, have three young children. Jim can be contacted at [yogaspectrum@yahoo.com](mailto:yogaspectrum@yahoo.com). This month Earles returns to Radish with an article about the Future Talk program in Dubuque. Learn more about it on page 20.



Making her Radish debut this month, **Pam Berenger** is a former Argus/Dispatch newspaper farm writer who left in 2001 to pursue a professional goal in the health field. Berenger is a graduate of Black Hawk College's nursing program and currently works as community liaison for Intouch Adult Day Services of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois. Read her article about Radish award winner Ashley LaGrow on page 18.



Frequent contributor **Sharon Wren** has been freelancing for 15 years, mainly writing on green, parenting and food topics. She lives with her family on Campbell's Island, Illinois, where she is working on a solar oven cookbook. Her hobbies include working in her greenhouse and cooking. This month Sharon has written about the newest building at Scott Community College as well as Bald Eagle Days. You can find these articles on pages 16 and 34.



**Chris Greene** is the coordinator of the Grapevine news for the business section of The Dispatch and The Rock Island Argus newspapers in the Quad-Cities. (She also appeared on the first Radish cover in 2005.) In her free time she enjoys cooking, gardening, running, volunteering and reading. Read her story about the Fireside Knitters on page 27.

Also appearing in Radish this month are contributors **Ann Scholl Rhinehart** ("Pedals to the people," page 12); **Julie Stamper** ("Listening for a solution," page 24); **Brandy Welvaert** ("Grass-fed revival," page 14); **Dawn Neuses** ("The green fleet," page 22); **Ann Ring** ("Into the bin," page 32); and **Molly Downey** ("Contentment and craft," page 40).

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# the grapevine

Come in from the cold with Radish this month! Radish representatives will be at the following events, where you can say hello, pick up an extra copy and tell us about articles you would love to see in future issues.

- **Bald Eagle Days**, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 8, at the QCCA Expo Center, 2621 4th Ave., Rock Island. Read more about this event on page 34.
- **Fulfilling Your New Year's Resolutions**, a free workshop with nutritional consultant Joe Dunning, 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 15, at Heritage Natural Foods, 1317 6th Ave., Moline.
- **Small Wind Energy and You**, a presentation hosted by the Sierra Club Eagle View group, 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 17, in the Bronze Room of the Moline Public Library, 3210 41st St.



Submitted

## Gluten-free recipes that everyone can enjoy

Mini-review: "100 Best Gluten-Free Recipes," by Carol Fenster (Wiley, first edition 2010, 192 pages, \$16.95 hardcover)



I'm no stranger to gluten-free cookbooks. With my husband's diagnosis of celiac disease about 3½ years ago, we purchased titles like "The Gluten-Free Gourmet" and "Living Gluten-Free For Dummies." But this book is a welcome addition. Beyond its five categories of recipes — from breakfast foods to desserts — its colorful pages include contact information for a variety of gluten-free associations and product vendors.

Glossy photographs of mouth-watering concoctions accompany the recipes, which are truly delicious. We made Pan-Roasted Chicken Breasts with Apricot-Teriyaki Glaze for company, and it was a big hit. I also recommend the Stuffed Trio of Sweet Peppers. Both recipes are simple, straightforward and don't require an exhaustive array of ingredients or a large time commitment.

Perhaps the most difficult component of gluten-free cooking is baking. Most recipes call for a unique blend of gluten-free flours (e.g., rice/tapioca/potato/chickpea/almond/etc.) that can be difficult to track down, not to mention expensive. Author Carol Fenster addresses this challenge with her "Sorghum Blend," a mixture of sorghum flour, potato starch or cornstarch, and tapioca flour. All the baking recipes in the book call for this blend, which can be mixed ahead of time and stored for up to three months. As gluten-free cooks everywhere will attest, having a single flour blend ready for all baking needs is extremely appealing.

Despite the great content inside this hardcover book, my one complaint is that its physical form leaves something to be desired. A spiral binding would have allowed cooks to consult it more easily while at work in the kitchen.

— Amanda Y. Makula, Rock Island

## From our readers

Our Daily Bread (Nov. 2010):

"What a beautiful story on life, bread and God's grace with us. I do enjoy Uncle Billy's bread, I think I will enjoy it a little more now that I realize just how much love goes into it!"

— Vickie, Aledo, IL

## Radish Reads: Check out these freebies!

Our Radish Reads went quickly in November: All of the titles were claimed within three days of the issue hitting the stands. If you missed out on the last batch and would like to try your hand at writing a review, here's your chance. We have a new stack of books waiting to be read. Request any of the titles below by sending us an e-mail to [editor@radishmagazine.com](mailto:editor@radishmagazine.com). The book (one per reader) will be yours to keep for free in return for a short, 200- to 300-word review which may be printed in a future issue of Radish. All of the titles are available on a first-come, first-served basis, so get your requests in early!

- **"The Crabby Cook Cookbook,"** by Jessica Harper (Workman Publishing, 2010): A book as full of recipes as it is of stories about friends, family, in-laws, celebrities and one well-fed golden retriever.
- **"Herb Gardening for Dummies, 2nd Edition,"** by Karan Davis Cutler, Kathleen Fischer and Suzanne De John (Wiley, 2011): A friendly, hands-on guide that includes tips and advice on how to grow a thriving herb garden.
- **"The Cake Mix Doctor Bakes Gluten-Free,"** by Anne Byrn (Workman Publishing, 2010): From a classic German Chocolate Cake to Pretty in Pink Strawberry Cupcakes, this book offers a wealth of cakes all born of simple additions made to packaged gluten-free cake mix.



## Coming next month in Radish

- Cold Iron Creek Farm
- Winter skin care ►
- Reusable Usables Creative Arts Center
- Cooking with cocoa
- The Black Hawk Hiking Club





# healthy living from the ground up

## features



**6 Radish Awards overview**  
Presenting 10 great efforts through 10 great stories.

**8 Waterway restoration**  
Enthusiasts work to revitalize canal for recreational use.

**10 'Public Produce'**  
A local author's vision for growing food in the city.

**12 Pedals to the people**  
Iowa City Bike Library helps people 'check out' cycling.

**20 A better tomorrow**  
Future Talk youth engage in community service.

## in every issue

**2 from the editor**

**3 contributors**

**4 the grapevine**

**36 rooting around**

## on the cover



The 2011 Radish Award designed by Molly Downey and representatives of the 2011 Radish Award winners. (Cover design by Dale Attwood)

## departments

**14 eating well**  
Grass-fed revival: A leap of faith brings grass-fed beef back to the market.

**16 environment**  
The cutting edge: Leafy vegetables aren't all that's green in the new SCC kitchen lab.

**18 body, mind & soul**  
The power of one: Teen sees the value of volunteering one impact at a time.

**22 environment**  
The green fleet: Moline mechanics' efforts reduce waste, save energy.

**24 body, mind & soul**  
Listening for a solution: Volunteer mediators help settle one conflict at a time.

**26 food**  
Macaroni sampling: Of the organic offerings, which mac 'n cheese is best?

**27 community**  
Knit together: Crafters create community and goods for worthy causes.

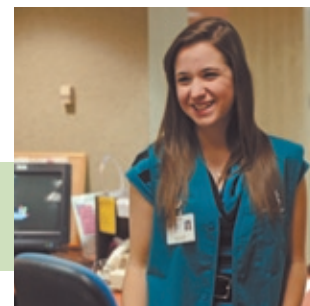
**28 health & medicine**  
Peek-a-boo, baby: Do baby monitors undermine parental peace of mind?

**30 eating well**  
Veggie cakes: A sweet take on overcoming veggie phobias.

**32 environment**  
Into the bin: With some exceptions, more than ever can be recycled. **Page 34:** Eagles and wolves, oh my!

**35 health & medicine**  
Beat the winter blues: What you need to know about Seasonal Affective Disorder.

**40 food for thought**  
Contentment and craft: Groundedness inspires artist who designed 2011 Radish Awards.



healthy living

# 2011 Radish Awards

Presenting 10 great efforts through 10 great stories

By Sarah J. Gardner

Every January it is our great pleasure to present Radish Awards to 10 individuals and organizations making a difference in our communities and our world. It is also our pleasure to bring you their stories. Ready to be inspired? Here are the 2011 Radish Award winners and where in this issue you can read more about their grassroots commitment to healthy living.

**Iowa City Bike Library:** Since 2004, the Iowa City Bike Library has taken a novel approach to keeping bikes out of the landfill and encouraging more people to try out cycling. Volunteer mechanics rehab donated bikes, then make them available to “check out” for a six-month period. Read all about their efforts on page 12.

**Friends of the Hennepin Canal:** Made up of a group of equestrians, snowmobilers, fishermen and folks who just love the waterway, the Friends of the Hennepin Canal is working hard to restore three locks along the canal that will open a 50-mile stretch for recreational use. Find out more on page 8.

**Darrin Nordahl:** In “Public Produce,” author and city planner Darrin Nordahl explores the benefits of growing food on public land. By using examples from his time in Davenport, Nordahl is bringing the efforts of our cities and citizens into the national discussion about urban agriculture. Learn more about his ideas on page 10.

**Future Talk:** Imagine a program that engages at-risk youth in conservation work, community service and skill-building workshops, then rewards their efforts with savings accounts and camping trips. That’s Future Talk, an innovative program that benefits the environment and hard-working youth alike. Read about this Dubuque program on page 20.

**Sawyer Beef:** When Norm Sawyer told folks at the feed store he was going to try raising grass-fed beef, they laughed. Such methods take more time, greater effort and come with no guarantee that anyone will buy the beef. But that’s what Norm’s customers were asking for, so he and his son took the plunge. Learn more about their motivations on page 14.

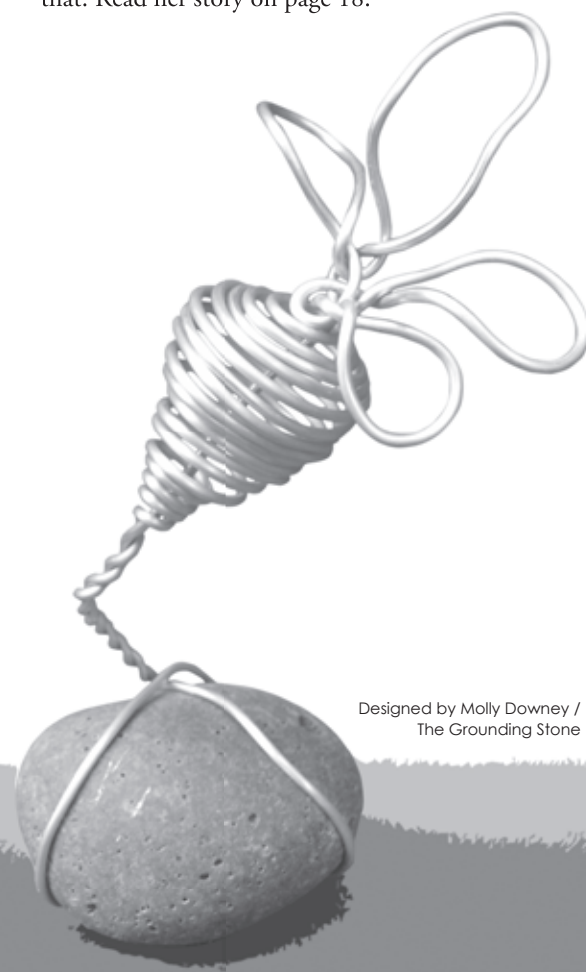
**Quad Cities Mediation Services Inc.:** Among the stereotypes about Midwesterners is that we are friendly to the point of avoiding conflict. So what do you make of a group of Midwesterners who volunteer to wade into other people’s disagreements in hopes of helping them come to a resolution? Find out on page 24.

**Scott Community College Culinary Arts & Hospitality Program:** There’s a new building on campus, and students and faculty love its eco-friendly features. Read all about it on page 16.

**Fireside Knitters:** This dedicated group of crafters serves the community by knitting goods for charity; builds community by welcoming any who wish to learn to knit; and, by meeting in a library, they make great use of public space. Learn more on page 27.

**City of Moline Fleet:** When you’ve got 380 vehicles on the road, every green effort you undertake adds up in a big way. Discover the creativity and environmental commitment of Moline’s mechanics on page 22.

**Ashley LaGrow:** If there is one thing she has learned in her 250 (and counting) volunteer hours, it’s that even if your efforts only impact one person, you’ve made a difference. We imagine this amazing teen has impacted far more lives than that. Read her story on page 18.



Designed by Molly Downey /  
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# Waterway restoration

Enthusiasts work to revitalize canal for recreational use



The Friends of the Hennepin Canal hope to make the waterway a thriving destination for many kinds of recreation. On the cover: Chicago resident Steve Zintal, who bequeathed funds to the canal in his will. (Submitted)

By Lisa Hammer

Imagine the Illinois countryside viewed from a languid current of water. When you arrive at a lock there is no need to get out and carry your boat to the other side, you can simply pass on through. Thanks to the efforts of the Friends of the Hennepin Canal, such a recreational opportunity may soon become a reality. Dubbed the “Renaissance Project,” the undertaking aims to restore three locks and reopen 50 miles of the 100-year-old, hand-dug canal.

“It’s an interesting beast because a lot of people love it,” says Henry County Tourism director and Friends of the Hennepin Canal member Cathy Foes.

The Renaissance Project is a partnership between the Friends of the Hennepin Canal and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The Friends of the Hennepin Canal include the canal’s most ardent supporters. Gary Wagle of Galesburg

(who grew up around the canal at Colona) organized the group in 1998 and currently serves as president. The first board of directors of the Friends was composed of a “nice cross-section” of equestrians, snowmobilers and fishermen, says Wagle.

“And people like me who were just interested in the canal,” he adds.

The DNR estimates the Hennepin Canal State Parkway has one million yearly visitors among its approximately 300 access points. The Friends/DNR project envisions new private enterprises including boat rental, bike rental and bed-and-breakfasts along the canal. The project encompasses communities in five counties (Rock Island, Bureau, Henry, Lee and Whiteside) where people can band together and create a destination area, says Foes.

The three locks to be restored to functionality are among five that have already been restored to their original look, but the work fell short of making

them operable. Retired DNR canal superintendent Steve Moser reportedly told Foes they couldn’t have picked a better route, due to the work that’s already been done.

Inspiration for the Renaissance Project started with the attention given to the canal for its centennial celebration in 2007, followed, like a discordant musical note, by then Gov. Rod Blagojevich’s closure of the canal just a year later.

To protest the pending closure, petitions were started at several towns, including one that gathered 5,000 signatures at Annawan. Many people showed they cared about keeping the canal open. Letters were sent to legislators. One meeting at Geneseo attracted 400 people.

“That’s when Gary says it’s time to move forward on his dream,” says Foes.

“The fact we went through these crises and demonstrated a lot of support illustrates the fact that



the canal is dear to the hearts of a large segment of the community,” Wagle says.

It would really be wonderful to restore additional locks, says Wagle, but it’s a long way in the future. “These locks are the most critical. By restoring these three, we can have travel on the canal without restoring the bridges.”

Johnson Lasky Architects of Chicago will launch the first step toward repairing the locks. A \$60,000 engineering study will determine what’s involved in lock repair, now estimated to cost \$350,000 to \$650,000 per lock. The Renaissance group hopes to raise \$80,000 in grants and donations to pay for contingencies and fundraising costs. They planned for PayPal capability on their website.

“Our goal is to raise the money by May, whether it be donations or grants,” says Foes. She says the engineering study may get the go-ahead when the group has perhaps 60 percent of the funds raised. She noted speakers are available for any group or organization wanting to know more.

Foes says people have asked her why start an expensive project when governmental budgets are such a disaster. She says it’s the only way to save the treasure.

“It’s the perfect time to take this public sentiment and move it into something forward to save the canal,” she says. “People don’t really appreciate it until it’s gone.”

Brett Lohman, whose Lohman Companies Insurance Foundation early on gave \$1,000 to the project, says support is important so that the canal will be spared if the Department of Conservation has future cuts.

He says he likes to get on the trail from Geneseo and ride to Colona or Atkinson for breakfast or lunch, and he’s used the canal to Rock Falls while snowmobiling on his way to Wisconsin. He also gives senior citizens golf cart rides on the canal as part of the Geneseo Chamber of Commerce’s “Trains, Planes and Automobiles” event.

Future phases could restore additional locks until eventually there would be a great circular path from Chicago to the Mississippi and back. Such an effort would be enormous: there are 33 locks on the main part of the canal. Twenty-one locks make a 196-foot climb from the Illinois River to just west of Wyanet.

David Barber, president of the American Canal Society, is among those who would like to see all locks on the Hennepin Canal eventually restored. He looked over the canal last summer, taking a fancy to movable bridges of several designs — among them hand-cranked lift bridges that slide onto the road. He says he thinks the structures haven’t received the attention they deserve.

Barber says he likes the plan to start with the three locks — representing the highest stretches of the canal with the fewest locks.

“If you can be successful with that, which is limited in scope, then you start showing people what can happen,” he says. “Then you branch out from there. It’s not a big issue, it’s just a matter of starting with the easy part and working your way out. The canal is in very good shape, it’s all owned by the state and it has water in it. That gives you a tremendous leg up.”

He cites a canal in Scotland where a series of locks was replaced with a boat lift in 2002. According to Barber, the Falkirk Wheel boat lift has become the third most popular tourist attraction in Scotland.

“This is the kind of impact waterways have,” he says.  
“This kind of thing has potential.”

To read a longer version of this story and see a map of the canal area to be restored, visit [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com).



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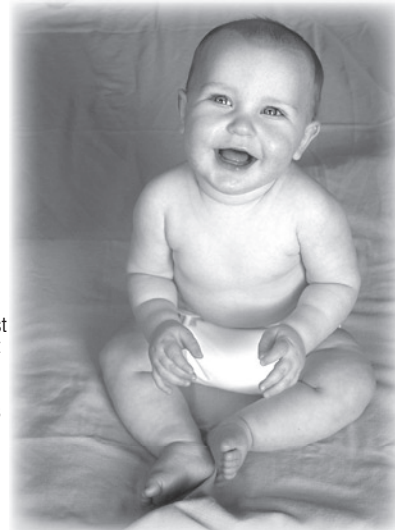
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healthy living

# 'Public Produce'

## A local author's vision for the future of urban agriculture

By Sarah J. Gardner

In "Public Produce," author Darrin Nordahl draws on his experiences as a city planner and resident to tout the benefits of making productive use of public land to grow food. Intrigued, I caught up with Nordahl with a list of questions to learn more.

**Radish:** Can you describe how you came by the idea to grow edible plants on public land as a way of meeting municipal food needs?

**Darrin Nordahl:** It was while I was living in Berkeley, California. It is amazing how much food one finds growing in the public spaces there: figs, oranges, Meyer lemons, apples, plums, persimmon, cherries, clementines, apricots and tomatoes! And because these fruits are all planted in public space, anyone can harvest them, free of charge.

Most of these trees and shrubs were planted by citizens. I thought if local officials could help coordinate these citizen efforts, the municipality might alleviate some of the food insecurity concerns within Berkeley. And maybe this idea had merit in other cities, as well.

**R:** What are the potential benefits to the citizens and municipalities that embrace this kind of civic agriculture?

**DN:** Before I answer that, I want to contrast civic agriculture to its polar opposite: corporate agriculture. Corporate agriculture is under fire because of its heavy reliance on fossil fuels, copious irrigation and use of chemical pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers. Corporate agriculture also replaces ecosystem biodiversity with large-scale monocultures, wrecking habitat and soil quality. And the produce from corporate agriculture has to travel thousands of miles to reach our supermarkets, spewing tons of greenhouse gases in transit.

Civic agriculture is generally composed of many



Darrin Nordahl with plans to convert a Davenport parking lot into a park. (Photo by Gary Krambeck / Radish)

smaller, intensively cultivated plots in and around the city. These generally use rainfall for irrigation (or require far less irrigation), are gardened organically and use a diversity of plants, which maintains soil health. Civic agriculture also doesn't require extensive distribution, since the food is so readily available (in some cases, right outside one's front door).

**R:** One of the things that struck me in reading your book was the idea that restoring farms on the outskirts of cities, though good for residents also living on the outskirts, might not equally meet the food needs of citizens living in the inner city

or downtown areas. What are some of the challenges to growing food within city limits?

**DN:** There are surprisingly few challenges, but the biggest concern I hear regards the quality of the soil. Lead contamination can be an issue in older neighborhoods. But there are many ways to mitigate contamination, such as raised bed gardening, neutralizing the soil pH, or planting fruiting crops. It has been found that lead does not accumulate in the fruiting parts of plants.

**R:** By the same token, are there any advantages city land might have for small-scale agricultural endeavors?



**DN:** There are many, but I want to call attention to one big advantage: food safety. There's been an alarming increase in pathogen-tainted produce recently (E. coli on spinach and romaine lettuce; salmonella on tomatoes, peppers, peanuts and alfalfa) from large, commercial farms. Salmonella and E. coli are not generally found on small, urban garden plots.

**R:** Could you describe the plans for the municipally-owned parking lot at 5th and Brady Streets in Davenport and explain how this puts into practice some of the ideas you explore in "Public Produce"?

**DN:** That parking lot is the crumbling remains of what was a three-level parking ramp. The city has plans to turn that lot into green space, landscaped with edibles. I've met with numerous community organizations (food banks, soup kitchens, universities and charity groups) who are interested in helping with maintenance and harvesting the produce.

**R:** You have observed that one of the challenges cities face as they try to revitalize their downtowns is that businesses are reluctant to relocate downtown if people don't live there, and people are reluctant to live there if businesses providing everyday needs for things like food aren't in place. Could making fresh produce available by planting it in public spaces downtown be a way to perhaps break that cycle?

**DN:** Absolutely! Downtowns and depressed neighborhoods often lack healthy food options, such as grocery stores, farmers markets, and produce stands. Seeding public spaces with fruits and veggies helps make those neighborhoods more attractive to would-be residents.

**R:** In "Public Produce" you note one of the pitfalls of community gardens is that they are often viewed by city governments as place holders for future development. When a party interested in putting a business on that plot comes in, the gardens are often razed. Is there anything, though, to prevent vegetables and herbs planted in public parks from being similarly removed if an administration favoring ornamental plants comes to city hall?

**DN:** If aesthetics are a concern, the best strategy is to plant food much like you would plant an ornamental garden. In other words, consider each plant's texture, color, and form to create an artful composition. Montpelier, Vermont, replaced an ornamental perennial bed in the center of their State House lawn with edibles. However, they used plants with high aesthetic value, such as beets, kale, chard and red lettuces. It is gorgeous! Edible and ornamental are not mutually exclusive.

**R:** The 20th century victory garden campaigns began with encouragement from the federal government. But, you argue, future urban agriculture initiatives will be better served if they start on the municipal level. Why is this?

**DN:** Because city hall acts faster than Capitol Hill. I do agree we need food reform at the federal level. I'm just not optimistic that our nation's half-century support of corporate agriculture is going to wane anytime soon. Even if federal food reform is imminent, the policy will likely be too homogeneous for our many unique and diverse communities. Food reform cannot be a "one-size-fits-all," which is the typical aim with any federal policy.

*Darrin Nordahl is the city designer at the Davenport Design Center, formed in 2003 as a division of the Community & Economic Development Department of the city of Davenport. You can read more questions we sent to Darrin, and his thought-provoking answers, online at [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com).*

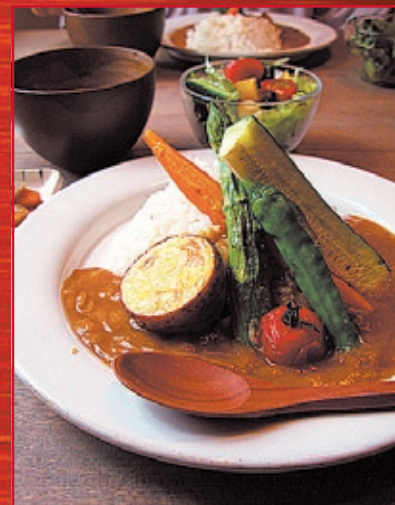
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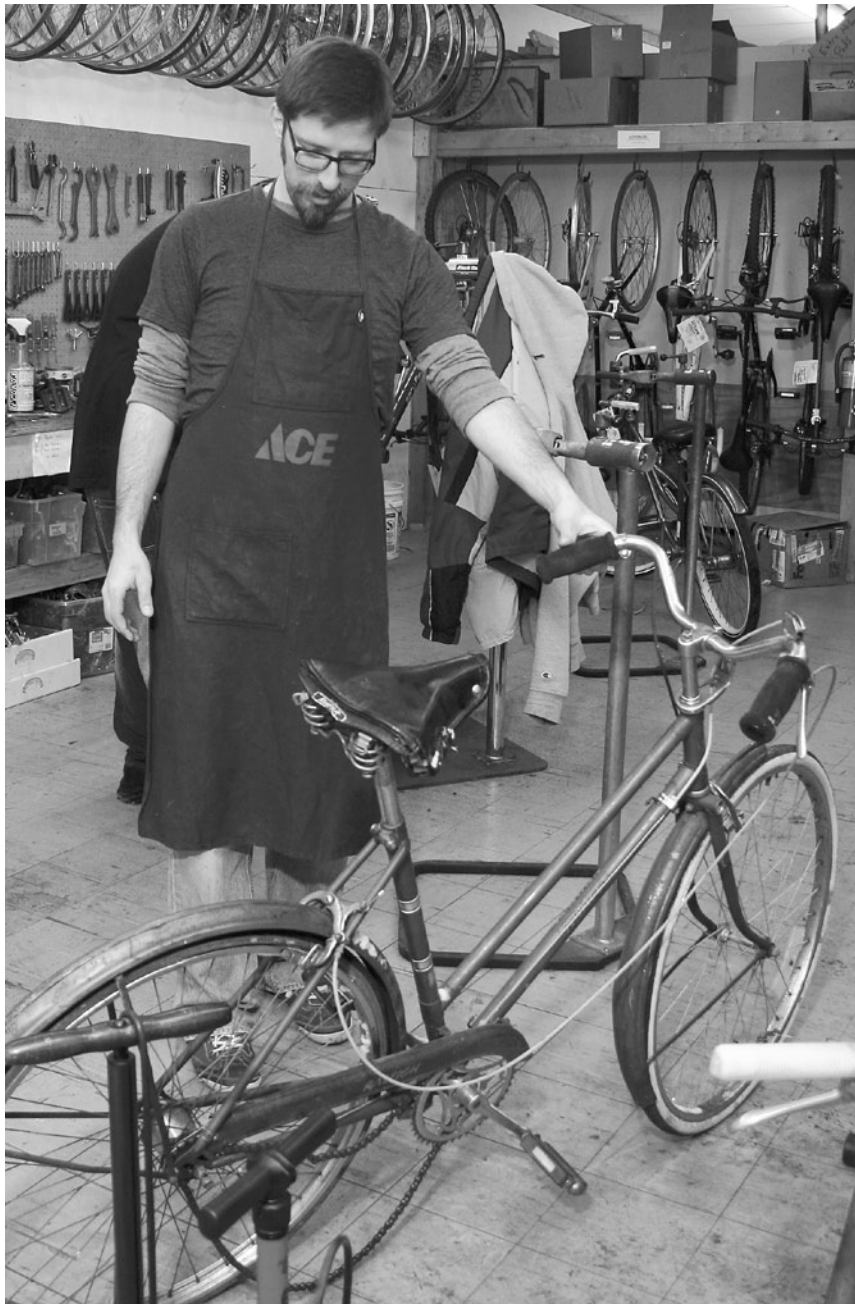
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healthy living

# Pedals to the people

Bike Library helps those interested ‘check out’ cycling



Garrison Kline, one of the bike library volunteers, at work.  
On the cover: volunteer Darryl Raasch. (Submitted)

By Ann Scholl Rinehart

Although he had no idea what it meant exactly, when bike enthusiast Brian Loring heard the term “bike library,” his wheels were set in motion, so to speak. The term stuck with him, until the day came when he wanted to create a program that would keep bikes out of landfills and get more people bicycling. He pulled “bike library” out of his memory bank and developed his own version. The result: The Iowa City Bike Library.

Here’s how it works: People visit the bike library at 408 E. College St. and find a bike they like. They then pay a deposit to check out the bike for six months. At the end of that time period, they can return their bike and get their deposit back, minus damages beyond normal wear. Or they can choose to keep the bike and forfeit their deposit. During the six months, labor is free on adjustments and minor repairs.

Bike deposits run from \$5 for a single-speed youth bike to \$100 for an adult bike. Most deposits, though, are in the \$45 to \$75 range. The money is used to purchase parts and equipment to keep the program operating.

Loring, 51, executive director of Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County, started the Iowa City Bike Library in 2004. The endeavor had humble beginnings, he recalls. The Iowa City Mayor’s Youth Empowerment Program helped him get his first bikes. He set up a folding table at the Iowa City Farmers’ Market and was delighted to sign out two bikes.

Much has changed over the years. Thanks to Loring’s tenacity, the city of Iowa City leased the old John Wilson Sporting Goods building, near the corner of College and Gilbert, to the program for \$1 per year. The building isn’t ideal — the bike library doesn’t have access to plumbing, for example — but the prime location on the east side of downtown Iowa City has been the key to the success of the bike library, Loring says. “It was busy from the get-go,” he says.

In the summertime, it’s not uncommon for people to camp out front to get first crack at the bikes — and for the line to snake out the front door of the small building as people wait their turn. Last year, 200 bikes were checked out to youths and another 400 went to adults. About 90 volunteers are on the roster; most of them are actively involved. Volunteers also include residents of Hope House, a minimum-security halfway house in Coralville. On Sunday mornings, they work on children’s bikes and may then spend time working on their own bikes, which are often their chief mode of transportation.

“People will say, ‘Is this what you envisioned?’ Maybe I lacked vision but I never imagined we’d have this space and this crew of volunteers,” Loring says. “The community that we’ve built around this institution has been fantastic. I never pictured that.”

On a recent chilly Saturday morning, customers weren’t lined up but the bike library was still bustling. Donald Baxter and Garrison Kline, both members of the



bike library's steering committee, were cleaning and helping carry in donated bikes and bike parts. Darryl Raasch of Iowa City was building a bike that he planned to donate to a homeless man whose bike had been stolen. Sam Pottebaum, a relative newcomer to the bike library, was salvaging parts.

Baxter, 52, a library assistant at the University of Iowa, has been involved with the bike library for four years. A bike and pedestrian rights activist for years, he says he liked the bike library's goal of getting more people riding bikes versus driving vehicles. "It's definitely made a difference," he says, noting he often sees the bike library's sticker on a half-dozen bikes or so that are parked in the bike rack at his workplace.

The bike library, he adds, lets people new to bicycling "get their feet wet" without making a huge financial commitment. Often, people get turned on to cycling, turn their bike back in and purchase a bike from one of the local bike shops. Bike shops also support the bike library by donating money, parts and old bikes.

"We're set up so we don't directly compete with them," adds Kline, 28, who is a production scientist at Integrated DNA Technologies, headquartered in Coralville. For example, the bike library doesn't hire out to do bike repair, however, it does allow people to use its tools, books and equipment to tune up or repair their bikes for \$5 per hour from noon to 3 p.m. on Saturdays.



Brian Loring

**'Maybe I lacked vision but I never imagined we'd have this space and this crew of volunteers.'**

That's what brought Pottebaum, a University of Iowa student, to the bike library. Since his bike is his primary mode of transportation, he wanted to learn how to maintain it. Toward that end, he takes a class on Wednesday evenings at the bike library. He also decided to get involved as a volunteer, which he's done since last fall.

Kline, who began volunteering a year and a half ago, says he likes volunteering for the bike library. "It makes me feel like I'm able to contribute back to Iowa City in a way that supports my beliefs and encourages them in others. We're putting more bikes on the road. More people are commuting (on bikes). If I can help any single person with that, it makes me happy."

Adds Baxter: "Bicycling is a community-building experience. People don't interact in their cars in positive ways. Through walking and bicycling, they do."

Loring says he marvels at how his idea has grown into a viable program. He often fields inquiries from people across the country who want to replicate the bike library in their communities. He's astonished, he says, that the bike library has warranted so much press and community support.

"It's a tribute to the people who put time and energy in and have built this thing up," he says.

*To learn more about the Iowa City Bike Library, visit [bikelibrary.org](http://bikelibrary.org).*

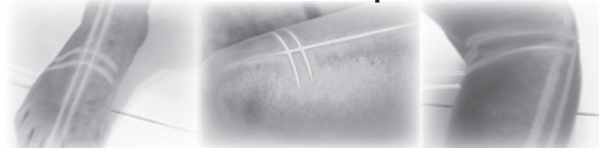


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eating well

# Grass-fed revival

## A leap of faith brings grass-fed beef back to the market

By Brandy Welvaert

A good cook knows that you don't mess with a great recipe. But a really good cook just can't resist trying to make improvements.

Tinkering with the recipe might describe what's happening at Sawyer Beef in Princeton, Iowa, where Neal Sawyer and his father, Norman, have been farming together for about five years, raising some of the best, melt-in-your-mouth cuts of natural beef you'll find in the Radish region and beyond.

While the farmers continue to work hard to bring their usual brand of beef to market, a new venture has the pair exploring new pastures. Last fall they butchered their first two grass-fed cows, animals fed no corn and no soy — just blades of perennial, green goodness.

Why grass-fed? Customers started requesting it, saying that they had read about it and wanted to try it, explains Neal. The farmers wanted to please these savvy consumers, but they wondered whether shoppers understood what they were asking for. After all, grass-fed beef hasn't been a mainstream taste since the 1950s, when the post-war boom lowered grain prices, making beef more affordable and available than ever before.

"We'd always been under the impression, especially my dad, that grass-fed beef didn't taste as good," Neal candidly admits.

Now the pair knows better. Even though they cost a little more (\$6.50 versus \$5.50 per pound for rump roast), the grass-fed cuts sold out before Sawyer had a chance to try a steak at home. More grass-fed meat will be available again next summer and fall, when Neal hopes to get a taste himself.

Though customer demand birthed the first grass-fed experiment for the Sawyers, the project wouldn't have been possible without their continuous work to stem soil erosion and fortify the land that has been in the Sawyer family for five generations.

"We are improving our soils and our grasses — and better grasses mean better grass-fed beef," Sawyer says. The farmers plant diverse grasses and use a rotational grazing system that has them moving the herd from one paddock to another every 12 hours.

"It involves a lot more management," says Neal. "But we are observing the cattle a lot more, along with what our soil is doing and our grasses are doing — all those sorts of things."

For now, at least, most of Sawyer Beef is grain-fed, but the animals are not routinely given antibiotics or growth hormones. And instead of spending their lives standing nose-to-tail with multitudes of other cows in too little muddy space, as most cows do these days, Sawyers' cattle seem to get more attention — and certainly more exercise — than some children.

One argument for grass-fed beef is an environmental one. Corn requires many more resources to grow and flourish than grasses do. And many grasses return year after year, fortifying rather than depleting the soil. Growers aren't all switching to grass-feeding operations, however, because corn still generally costs



Neal and Norman Sawyer with their cattle. (Photo by Gary Krambeck / Radish)

less as feed as it requires the farmer to own and steward less land. Also, cows get fatter faster when they eat corn, making for a quicker return on the investment.

Others have made the argument that there's something intrinsically wrong with feeding cows a diet of corn — among them, Michael Pollan, the author of "The Omnivore's Dilemma" — maintaining cows evolved to digest grass, not grain. Neal won't take the case for grass-fed beef quite that far.

"People will say, 'Cows aren't meant to eat corn.' Well, that's kind of true, but then I think, 'Well, what are humans meant to eat?' Really, who's to say what is meant to eat what? With that said, there can be problems feeding corn, especially ... if you feed a high content of corn for too long," Neal says.

Yet perhaps the most persuasive argument of all for grass-fed beef is that it does, indeed, taste good. And it's good for you, too.

"Healthwise, grass-fed beef has more omega-3 fatty acids in it, which is what you find in fish oils — and it's leaner meat," says Neal.

*Sawyer Beef is available at the Freight House Farmers' Market, 421 W. River Drive, Davenport; at Johnnie's General Store, 1314 Washington St., Davenport; in sandwiches at Seeds Café, 2561 E. 53rd St., Davenport; and direct from the farm by calling (563) 289-4359. A price list is online at [sawyerbeef.com](http://sawyerbeef.com).*







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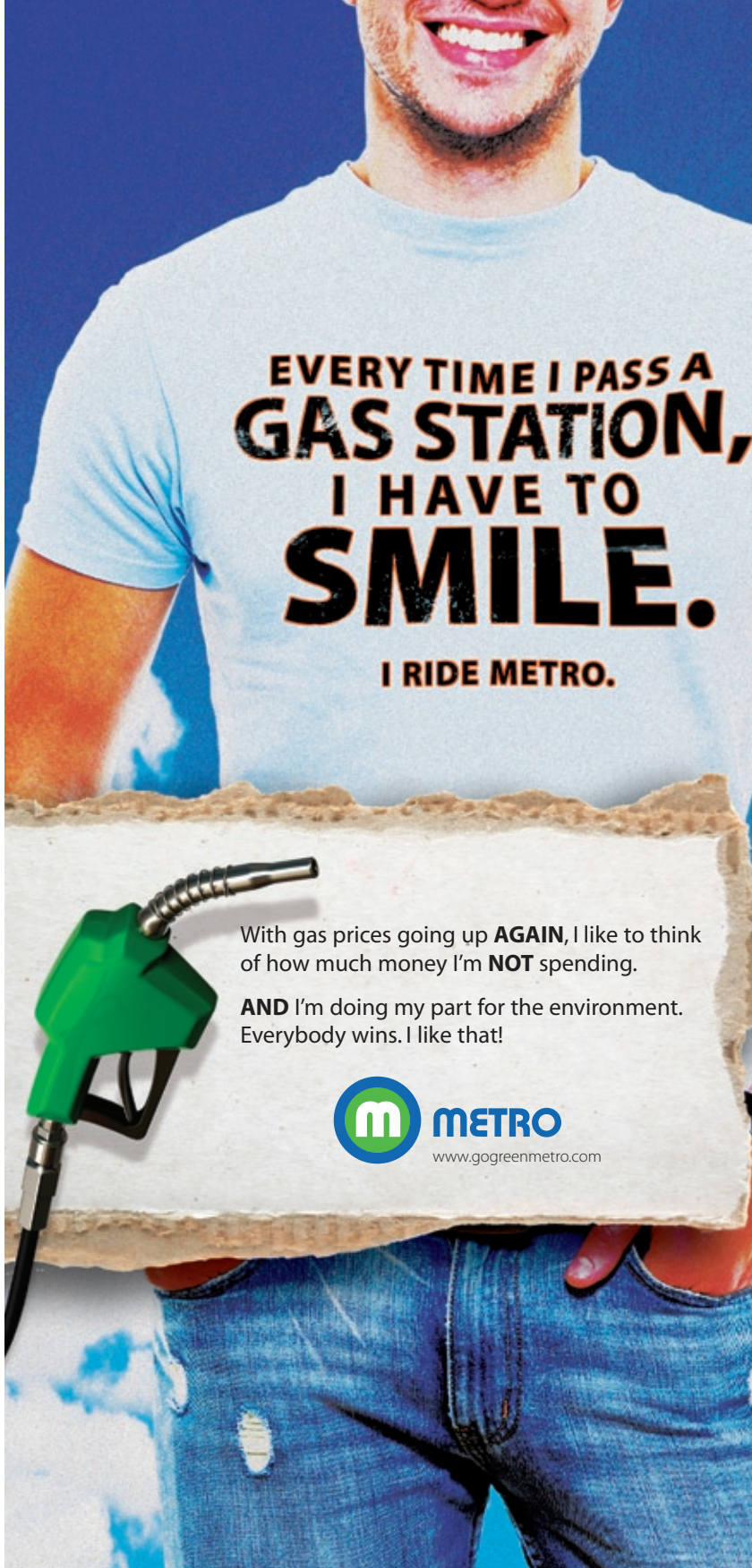
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environment

# The cutting edge

## Leafy vegetables aren't all that's green in the SCC kitchen

By Sharon Wren

Ask Chef Bradley Scott, director of the culinary arts and hospitality program at Scott Community College, anything — about his students, about his instructors, about the food that will be prepared in the kitchen classroom that week — and he will speak with infectious enthusiasm. But ask him about the new building that houses the culinary lab and he really lights up.

Open since September, the 10,000-square-foot, \$2.3 million Culinary Art & Hospitality building at Scott Community College in Bettendorf is a remarkable example of eco-friendly innovation. Greening their program was a priority from the beginning. “We had talked from the start about using silver LEED as a goal,” says Scott. “We might not be at that level but that’s the goal.” (LEED levels assess green building practices, silver being the third highest a project can achieve.)

It’s not hard to spot the new building on campus. Large banks of windows are on all sides of the structure, flooding the interior with natural light. Even on a cloudy day it seems bright. This reduces the need for electrical lighting overhead. It also helps make the culinary lab feel open and airy, despite being full of state-of-the-art equipment.

One such piece of equipment is a new, \$30,000 eCorect composter, paid for

with donations from business partners. Scott is visibly proud of it. The composter takes 100 pounds of wet food, such as potato and carrot peels, and cooks, chops and pulverizes it for eight hours. What’s left is three pounds of dry compost, which is used to top-dress lawns and flower beds on campus. There’s no smell and the compost is flaky and crumbles easily.

**‘We couldn’t be happier with the way the facility turned out.’**

A press release from the company that manufactures the eCorect composter touts the machine’s ability to reduce “the weight and volume of food waste and scraps by 80 to 90 percent and recycle those food wastes into a high-quality organic soil amendment in less than 24 hours. The eCorect can be fed any type of food waste and has zero landfill impact.”

The department’s commitment to the environment doesn’t stop with compost. The new facility also has dual flush toilets and students are instructed to run only full loads in the dishwasher. Rooms feature motion detecting lighting, which turns on when someone walks in the room.

Even the centralized location works to reduce the carbon footprint of the program. Whereas in the past, actual hands-on cooking was done “in kind” at various kitchens around town, now students no longer need to leave campus to participate in cooking labs. Supply orders also no longer need to be delivered to multiple locations. All of that adds up to less fossil fuel consumption on the part of program participants and suppliers.

The new facility is a big hit on the Belmont Road campus, according to Scott. “The students love it, in comparison to years past,” he says. With everything in one building, the students get more lab time, since the commute is just across the hall. “Many of our students are inner city students who don’t drive, so they’d have to take a bus to get across town to a lab, or try to find a ride,” says Scott.

Future plans include adding more green touches, this time of a horticulture variety. “We’re planning on an herb garden next year, along with some vegetables to be used in the culinary arts program. Someday we’d like to put in a greenhouse, too,” says Scott.

For the time being, though, Scott says, “We couldn’t be happier with the way the facility turned out.”

*To learn more about the culinary arts and hospitality programs at Scott Community College, visit [eicc.edu](http://eicc.edu).*



Brad Scott, director of Scott Community College culinary arts and hospitality program, pours kitchen scraps into the composter. (Photo by Todd Mizener / Radish)





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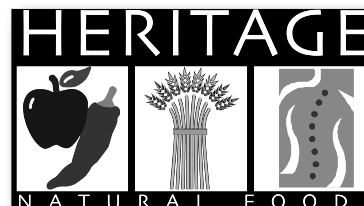
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body, mind & soul

# The power of one

## Teen sees the value of volunteering one impact at a time

By Pamela Berenger

With a shy smile and a shake of her head, Ashley LaGrow denies being an overachiever. The 17-year-old senior at ROWVA High School in Knox County, Ill., said she is simply “involved.”

Sitting in the waiting room at Cottage Hospital in Galesburg, Ill., waiting for her shift as a volunteer at the information desk to begin, Ashley calls herself a “random volunteer.”

“There are a lot of things I do at school that keep me from volunteering as much as I’d like,” she says. Studying is one of them. Ashley is currently ranked first in the senior class. In addition to hitting the books, Ashley is president of the Humane Society Club, vice president of the Student Council, president of National Honor Society and drum major in the marching band, among other activities.

“I would like to do more volunteering, but I don’t like committing to something and not completing it,” she says. Because of her involvement in school activities, Ashley says she was “only” able to log 250 hours of volunteer time since the fall of 2009.

Her volunteer hours, which have earned her a Presidential Volunteer Service Award, are part of a commitment she made as a participant in the Hugh O’Brien Youth Leadership program. She was nominated by school staff and attended a HOBY seminar as a sophomore. She returned her junior year as a Junior MC where she led discussion groups on leadership and talked to sophomore ambassadors about HOBY’s mission of service-learning and motivation-building experiences. She plans to return this summer as a Senior MC and artistic director.

“HOBY builds your self confidence,” says Ashley. “Being part of the program gives you the tools to be an independent person. HOBY is known for doing. The experience is unexplainable. I try and try to put words to it, but I can’t explain it. I only know that it helped me break out of my shell. I know it helped me bump up my volunteering and made me a better person.”

For Ashley, being a better person means reaching out to others. One group of young people who benefited from her efforts — through the National Honor Society’s Reading Buddy program — were first graders at an area school. Although the program was intended to be a one-time event only, Ashley says she enjoyed it so much she continued to volunteer once a month at the school.

“It’s hard to pinpoint exactly what it means to volunteer,” Ashley says. “Reading with the first graders is satisfying. One day after reading they asked if I could stay a little longer. One by one, they came up to me and handed me cards telling me what it meant to them to have me there. Really it means more to me. Even the smallest thing can help someone, and you really don’t always know the impact you have.”

When looking for volunteer opportunities in December 2009, she focused on Cottage Hospital and landed a volunteer position there. Those who work with her are pleased.

“Ashley is wonderful,” says Judi Minor, who serves as the hospital’s senior circle advisor, director of volunteers and senior health insurance program coordinator. “She has her head on straight, is driven and really knows where she wants to go in her life. I don’t think there has been a time that she didn’t or couldn’t help out when asked.”

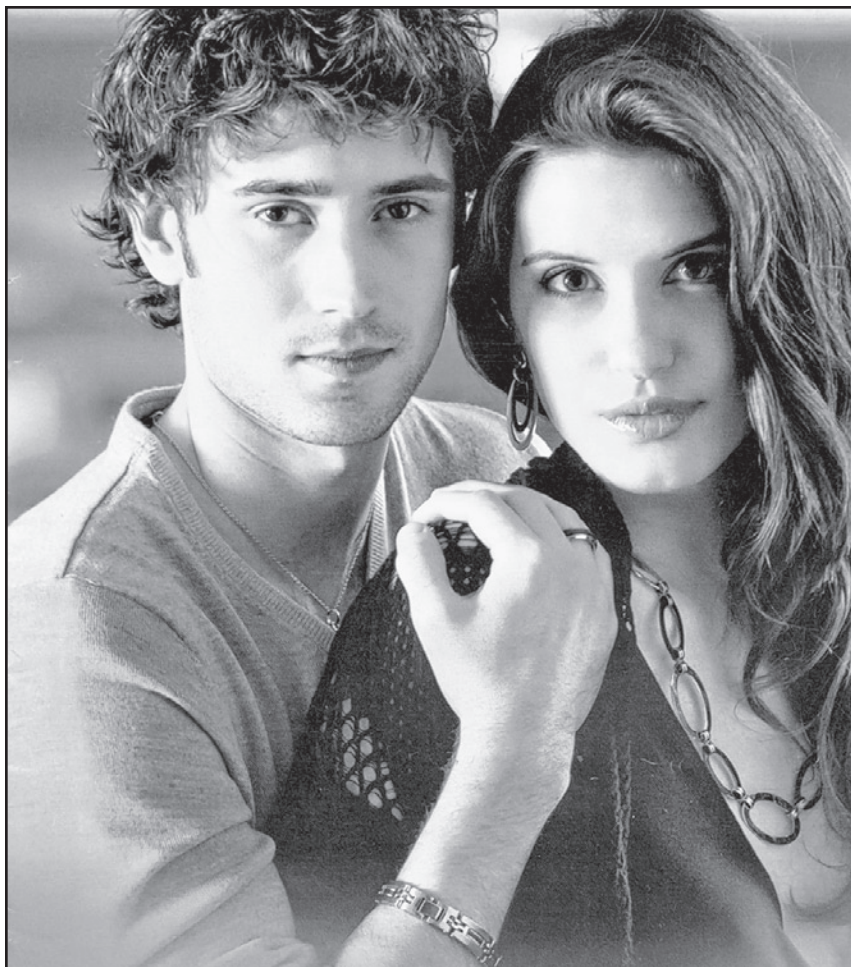
Although her goal is to head to Augustana College in Rock Island and major in education, not health care, she finds her work at the hospital rewarding, equating it to the power of one.

“It’s a great way to help,” Ashley says. “What gives me the most satisfaction is the feeling of making a difference even if it is in a small way, like delivering flowers or their mail. Even if you’ve impacted one person, you’re making a difference for one person.”



Photo by Kent Kriegshauser





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healthy living

# A better tomorrow

## Future Talk youth engage in conservation work

By Jim Earles

When I told Dana Livingston, founder of Future Talk, that he would be accepting an award on behalf of all the kids who have participated in the Dubuque program, a big and satisfied smile spread across his face. He assured me that they were the ones who truly deserved it.

"They are a great bunch!" he said.

Tall and lean, Livingston exudes a contagious enthusiasm for learning about and enjoying nature. However, it is the growing lack of connection with the natural world he has observed in so many young people that inspired him to create Future Talk. Launched in 2008, this summer program for at-risk teenagers seeks to demystify nature and create a lasting connection with our environment. Along the way, other valuable life skills are imparted.

"The big three principles which we work with in Future Talk are work, education and service. We are working with kids who come from backgrounds of poverty, so they don't have the same opportunities available to them that you or I might. Future Talk gives them a chance to do meaningful work for a

stipend," Livingston said. "They earn \$5 an hour, but that can increase to up to \$8 an hour if they complete all the requirements."

Throughout the summer the youth, along with Loras College students who volunteer to assist them, labor nine hours per week at outdoor cleanup and restoration in prairies and nature sites in and around Dubuque. They also do work at several parks and green spaces in residential neighborhoods. "Iowa's native savanna ecosystem is 99.9 percent gone, but the kids are helping to restore some small part of that," Livingston says with pride.

"The crews with Future Talk have been coming out to the Mines of Spain Recreation Area for three years now. Each year it gets better," says Wayne Buchholtz of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. "The kids that come out are really excited and amazed at what nature is all about and that they get to work in a place like this. When I visit with the kids about the work they are doing, they light up. You can tell that they do feel that they are making a difference in the environment."

Play has a place in the program, too. Through Future Talk, these same participants — many of whom have never been in the woods before — have



Future Talk participants work at Pholman Prairie Preserve north of Dubuque. (Submitted)



opportunities to venture out into nature on trips to hike, fish, camp, canoe and participate in team-building exercises. Their adventures include a strong environmental literacy component. The kids also come face to face with their own fears and misconceptions about nature. Livingston seems to have lost track of how many times he has had to reassure kids that they will not be eaten by bears, mountain lions or bobcats.

"I grew up on the land, outdoors my whole life, always active in nature in one way or another. I think the big thing that impacted me is the realization we could lose that, and then seeing it reflected in our kids here in Dubuque. What a tragic loss," says Livingston, who felt giving kids time to play in nature was especially important after reading Richard Louv's book, "Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder."

However, the goals of the program reach beyond the environmental focus. Future Talk also is about helping at-risk youth to cultivate volunteerism, job skills and financial literacy. Beyond their conservation work, participants in Future Talk are required to engage in several hours of community service. A partner in the program, the Multicultural Family Center in Dubuque, provides a wide variety of programs for families, youth, adults and seniors, all of which offer excellent volunteer opportunities for Future Talk kids.

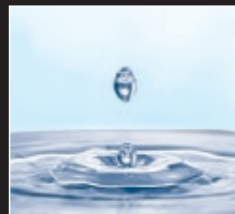
Future Talk also seeks to help young people prepare for meaningful employment later in life by emphasizing reading and writing skills, as well as safety, teamwork and professionalism. The interactions with the Loras College students, as well as other volunteers through AmeriCorps and VISTA, also provide the youth with strong role models for success. Participants must attend a series of educational workshops and seminars, which include homework. There is even a technology component, as Future Talk recently partnered with the Dubuque Art Center in a program which helps teenagers film and edit short videos on topics of their choice. The video projects, in particular, get the kids thinking and talking about their prospective futures.

While there is an obvious financial component to the program in that the participants get paid, here too the ideals are lofty. The kids are not paid in cash, but rather they must have a bank account into which they are paid through direct deposit. As an added incentive, each dollar that is earned through the program is matched, up to \$100, in the participants' savings accounts by donations from the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque. When they want access to their money, the youth must actually go to the bank to withdraw it, thus building a familiarity with banking practices and maintaining an account.

As a program, Future Talk is still too young to assess its long-term effectiveness, but it has clearly created an impact upon the people it has touched thus far. Talking with Livingston, it is difficult to imagine that his infectious love of nature could fail to kindle the same love in the Future Talk youth. If we accept the notion that rediscovering and strengthening our human bond with the natural world can heal us, then Livingston and his Future Talk program are hard at work healing the wounds of our separation, one young person at a time.



Dana Livingston, center (in red), with Future Talk participants. (Submitted)



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environment

# The green fleet

## Moline mechanics' efforts reduce waste, save energy

By Dawn Neuses

J.D. Schulte, the fleet division manager in charge of the 380 vehicles and pieces of equipment owned by the city of Moline, is always on the lookout, as is his crew. For what? They keep their gears turning to find new ways — with minimal to no cost to the taxpayers — to recycle materials, reduce waste and otherwise green their operations.

"I think the trend is going this way," says Schulte. "We are staying on the cutting edge of what responsible fleets are doing."

Whether it's the trend or not, the list of green initiatives the department has undertaken is impressively long. For starters, the fleet mechanics recycle all waste oil. In fact, filters, too, are drained for 24 hours then crushed and recycled. Cardboard, paper and batteries are recycled at no charge to the city. The department sells aluminum, copper and metal for revenue.

The fleet also recycles items some might find surprising. Aerosol cans the city formerly paid the landfill to dispose of are now pierced, crushed and recycled by fleet mechanics. Cleaning solvent in the parts cleaning sink is used for 16 weeks, then recycled. Brake parts are cleansed using a cleaning machine and the cleaning fluid is recycled every 16 weeks.

"A lot of people don't realize what goes on, what we are capable of doing for the environment and all of the things we can do the right way," says Mark Robertson, a certified mechanic with the fleet department.

Although many of these projects are not expensive to implement, it isn't entirely accurate to say they have no impact on taxpayers: in some instances, the fleet department's efforts actually save tax dollars.

For example, the fleet department has city employees restricted to light-duty work rewire broom segments for street sweepers. Moline uses the old broom segments it, and Rock Island, would normally throw away, and purchases nothing but new wire. The department hasn't had to buy a new broom segment in more than a year. It is an estimated \$1,200 savings to the city, Schulte says.

The fleet department also is using a full-synthetic oil in 15 vehicles, allowing it to reduce the number of oil changes in those vehicles from four a year to one. Schulte says this practice will result in a significant cost and environmental savings compared to using a petroleum-based oil.

In addition, the department has started using a full-synthetic transmission fluid in 20 garbage trucks and snowplows, which can take up to 24 quarts of fluid to fill. Now, the fluid in those trucks only has to be changed once every four years, Schulte says.

"It definitely becomes hazardous waste when you drain it out," he says. "We are saving on the front end and saving afterward, too."

To help with its efforts, the department applies grants to offset costs. In January, for example, the city bought nine Ford Fusion Hybrids for \$43,541.82. The low-cost purchase was possible because Moline received a \$182,916 Energy



Clockwise from back left: Dave Mallum, Tom Hepner, Ron Finley, Mark Robertson, Jeff Lockwood, Grant Hatch, J.D. Schulte and Jan Petterson of the Fleet Services Division of Moline Public Works. (Photo by Stephanie Makosky / Radish)

Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant from the Department of Energy for the hybrids. They replaced Ford Crown Victorias that averaged about 10 miles per gallon, more than 25 miles per gallon less than the hybrids.

The city expects to spend \$446 a year for fuel per hybrid, compared to \$1,144 for a Crown Victoria. Over a 10-year period, the hybrids will reduce fuel consumption by 25,746 gallons and carbon dioxide emissions by 315 metric tons, Schulte says.

What is the motivation behind all these green efforts? Moline's fleet division is not after national recognition, awards or accolades for its environmental consciousness. Instead, its efforts have simpler roots.

"We are doing positive things because it is going to help the environment in the long term. Maybe it won't impact me, but my family and their families will benefit," says Grant Hatch, a Moline fleet technician.

However, over the years, the fleet department has garnered recognition — ranging from ranking as the No. 10 fleet in the U.S. to earning the most recent, a Radish Award — for its creativity and initiatives to save the environment.

Says Schulte, "I'm proud of what we've been able to do. We've got a team of folks here who can see the big picture. They see the baby steps they take here can make a difference."





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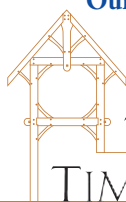
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# Listening for a solution

## Volunteer mediators help settle one conflict at a time

By Julie Stamper

Even though Bill Peiffer has helped many people locked in conflict sort through their disagreements, there are still moments that take him by surprise. “There have been the cases where the mediation was complete, the agreement written, and we are on the way to the judge,” he says, “And they (the people previously in dispute) start exchanging info about their children or siblings and you realize that you were part of reconciling a family or very old and valued friendship. They did it themselves, but knowing you had a part in it is probably the best feeling I ever get in this work.”

Peiffer serves as a mediator through Quad Cities Mediation Services Inc., a volunteer organization that helps people in conflict work toward resolution. The group specializes in neighborhood and community disputes; family, juvenile and elder care issues; and divorce and custody matters. For disagreements that are heading to court, mediation is an opportunity for people to figure out a settlement on their own, rather than one handed down from the bench. Mediation also is an opportunity to mend relationships that would otherwise be permanently damaged.

The objectives of QCMS are twofold: to provide mediation services to the community and to train volunteers to mediate. Those who complete the training say they learn to listen to people more neutrally, rather than taking a side or

making value judgments based on their own belief system. Often the training carries over into personal lives and makes the volunteers better communicators.

Peiffer coordinates the training sessions. He has been with QCMS since 2007, when he was told about the mediation services by a friend who was already working with the group. He finds the training valuable not only in a public venue, but also in volunteers’ day-to-day lives.

**‘The process of mediation is always interesting, as no two mediations are the same.’**

“For those of us involved as mediators, we get better at settling squabbles and disagreements that occur in our families and employment. Mediation training makes us better able to step back and help family and friends find solutions that they truly own rather than the assigned solutions we as parents and friends impose,” says Peiffer.

The training program leans toward small-claims court work in Scott County. Volunteers are taught to listen first and then ask open and thought-provoking questions. The training assists volunteers in putting those they work with at ease and establishing confidentiality and impartiality in the process. The goal is to have parties be heard and understood during mediation. While an agreement between participants is desired, the conversation is the goal.

Since January 2008, all small-claims cases in Scott County must be mediated. It’s a benefit to small-claims court, as mediation settles nearly half of the cases out of court, and it’s a good opportunity for the trained volunteers of QCMS to exercise their expertise. QCMS provides its services to small-claims cases at no charge; other mediations are done for a sliding-scale fee.

Linda Schneider serves on the board as chair. In addition to volunteering for QCMS, Schneider mediates conflict in her professional life as well. She participated in the QCMS training in 2005 and has volunteered her services ever since.

“Although I had training through my work, I participated in the training offered by the center as well,” Schneider explains. “The process of mediation is always interesting, as no two mediations are the same. This conversation (between parties) can be very emotional, and as the mediator, I see the understanding of the respective positions and the beginnings of the repair of the relationship evolve through the process.”

*To learn more about QCMS, contact Bill Peiffer at (309) 738-9980.*



Genevieve Anthony in a mediation training. (Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish)





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food

# Macaroni sampling

## Of the organic offerings, which mac 'n cheese is best?

By Sarah J. Gardner

Is there any comfort food to compare to macaroni and cheese? When it comes to buying organic, though, shoppers may be in for sticker shock: organic products can cost two or three times as much as the conventional brands. How do you know you are getting your money's worth?

At Radish, we decided to find out how the various organic mac 'n cheese products stacked up. We scoured area grocery aisles for a sampling that included sauce packets and powdered cheese, frozen entrees and noodles of various shapes. All were prepared exactly according to the package instructions and then, in a blind taste test, we rated each according to color, consistency, texture and taste. Curious which product noodled its way to the top? Read on.

### Annie's Creamy Deluxe Whole Wheat Shells & Extra Cheesy Cheddar Sauce

Organic content: pasta

Cost: \$4.49 (\$1.50 per serving)

This was the mac 'n cheese my nephew was certain would be the winner. "The ones with the squishy sauce are always the best," he declared, a very

convicted 7-year-old. Our taste testers were less convinced. Although one person noted the noodles were pleasantly chewy for being whole wheat, two others felt they were on the grainy side. And the cheese sauce surprised everyone by ending up a bit thin. Out of a possible 100 points, this product scored 48. Annie's Shells & Real Aged Cheddar, which costs less (\$2.55), and has a packet of powder instead of the ready-made sauce, fared a bit better, scoring 59 points total.

### Back to Nature Macaroni & Cheese Dinner

Organic content: none

Cost: \$2.15 (86 cents per serving)

Savvy shoppers know just because a shelf-stable product has some organic ingredients, that doesn't mean there aren't other undesirable food additives lurking in the mix. The only way to be sure is to read the label. Although this product has no organic components, it also contains no artificial preservatives or flavors, so we decided to give it a shot. One of our reviewers picked this as her favorite, noting its appetizing color. Another wrote that it was "as natural looking as mac 'n cheese can be." On the whole, though, our testers found the taste to be a little bland. It scored a total of 56 points.

### Simply Organic Macaroni & Cheese Dinner

Organic content: wheat, sugar, cheddar cheese, whey powder and nonfat milk

Cost: \$2.19 (88 cents per serving)

Here was the big surprise of our taste test. This product, a relatively unknown brand name, was not only among the most affordable we sampled, it also contained the most organic ingredients — something we learned only after declaring it the best tasting overall. It even fooled our inveterate mac 'n cheese purist, who was convinced it came from the famous blue box. Of course, it probably didn't hurt that the instructions for preparing the dish called for twice as much butter as the others, which may be why our taste testers found it to have the creamiest and cheesiest sauce. Delicious! It scored a whopping 78 points.

### Amy's Macaroni & Cheese

Organic Content: pasta, low-fat milk, rice flour

Cost: \$3.89 (1 serving)

We had high hopes for this product. The clerk who rung it up at the store said it was very popular, and coming out of the microwave (this product is from the freezer aisle), it looked thick and creamy. The reviews, though, were somewhat mixed. Although all found the appearance appealing, one person thought it tasted "soapy." Another picked it as her favorite, proving in mac 'n cheese as in so much else, a lot comes down to personal preference. Overall it scored 72 points.



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community

# Knit together

## Crafters create community and goods for worthy causes

By Chris Greene

The fire crackles in the background as a group of women work steadfastly to create blankets destined to be given away. Their chatter is punctuated by melodic giggles and hearty laughs, as well as the occasional sigh when a dropped stitch is discovered and part of a project must be redone. This is not a quilting bee of years gone by, though it bears a strong resemblance to one. No, this is a modern-day group known as the Fireside Knitters.

Every Tuesday, the Fireside Knitters gather in front of the stone fireplace at the Fairmount Branch of the Davenport Public Library. The members combine their knitting and crocheting skills to create afghan blankets, hats, mittens and other items that will be donated to charitable causes. Group founders Julie Morrison and Sue Dillon say all skill levels are welcome. All ages are welcome too. This is one of the bonus aspects of the Fireside Knitters, Morrison says. “You get to know people you would have never known before — the socialization is such a benefit.”

The Fireside Knitters began four years ago as a creative outlet for teens. When teenage turnout was a little less than overwhelming, the group expanded to encompass all ages. Morrison says so far they have taught knitters from 7 years old to folks in their 60s. Members of the group are as varied as the projects. On the evening I visited the group, members on hand included professional women, homemakers, retirees, a mother and daughter duo, a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law duo, a nun, and one husband who was there to do nothing more than chauffeur and enjoy the company of the knitters.

Skill levels vary as much as the members. One young woman was just learning how to knit, while another was able to take one look at a half-finished, abandoned project — with or without a pattern — and complete it to perfection. Instruction is provided on an as-needed basis. The group’s founders are happy to assist, but members are just as likely to lean over and give tips to each other. Just show up, and materials and instruction are provided. Members can work on their own projects if they prefer, or on items to be donated. Membership is not limited to women, although the group hasn’t had many male members.

Dillon says the knitters come from everywhere. “Some learn about us from the library flier, from people talking about us at yarn shops, from the newspaper, the crawl across the bottom of the television on some channels ... and from me constantly talking about it and inviting people,” she says.

Their meetings are somewhat unstructured. Morrison says the group officially meets at 6:30 p.m., but some of the women begin gathering around the fireplace earlier. Their activity often creates interest and sometimes even generates new members as patrons gravitate their way. Members come and go in accordance to their own schedules. Some even attend by proxy — as I sat chatting with the knitters, one young woman’s husband arrived an hour or so into the session to turn in one square his wife had completed and gather more yarn for her to begin the next.



Members of the Fireside Knitters at work. (Photo by John Greenwood / Radish)

The squares are a big part of the group’s mission. Members are able to complete individual squares, which are then joined together to create afghan blankets that will later be distributed to the needy. This effort is in conjunction with the Warm Up America Foundation. The organization is devoted to helping people learn to knit as a part of a crusade to donate blankets to worthy causes. Warm Up America recently partnered with Lands’ End, which is providing signature FeelGood yarn to assist with the various projects. Library patrons, participants and others provide donations also in the form of yarn, needles and pattern books to keep the Fireside Knitters going.

The Fireside Knitters also have made many donations locally. According to Morrison and Dillon, the group has provided baby hats to Genesis Medical Center in the Quad-Cities, along with renal sleeves for the dialysis patients; blankets and layettes to Birthright; bandages for a world organization for leprosy; as well as a myriad of other donations to the VA Hospital, Women’s Choice Center, Crisis Pregnancy, chemotherapy centers and schools.

*To learn more about the Fireside Knitters, visit the library’s website at [davenportlibrary.com](http://davenportlibrary.com) or call (563) 326-7832.*



# Peak-a-boo, baby

## Do baby monitors undermine parental peace of mind?

By Nicole Riehl

A baby monitor can be reassuring for parents, who know that they'll be summoned if the little one is in need. Of course, the devices have also caused parents to lose sleep as they panic over a peep or sweat the silence.

Perry Howell, a University of Iowa graduate student in communication studies, is researching how child surveillance technologies hold the promise of reducing parental angst, but may in fact have the opposite effect.

Howell, a licensed clinical psychologist, points out that the use of fetal ultrasound, pregnancy advice books and baby monitors has increased since the 1980s, a time when parents began to view the world as more dangerous. As the desire to monitor and protect children intensified, studies have consistently revealed that American moms and dads are more anxious about and dissatisfied with the parental role than ever.

"Many parents I interviewed acknowledged their overprotectiveness, and the potential for that nervousness to rub off on the kids," says Howell. "They wanted to relax and not worry so much, in part so their kids would feel more comfortable in the world. Several parents, myself included, recognized that we are more uptight than our own parents were, even though the world is arguably safer."

### Illusions of safety

Howell argues that baby monitors reinforce the notion that parents should never relax because the child could be at risk at any moment — but that parents can do the watching without missing a beat.

"There's some evidence that increased surveillance is a result of lessening parental interest in children — that despite their desire to protect the children, parents are increasingly tempted to let technology do some of the work," Howell says. "Part of this trend is that American parents are reluctant

to give up non-parenting activities when they have kids, and baby monitors are available as an efficient, pro-multitasking technology."

### A personal choice

Several parents Howell interviewed concluded that monitors weren't effective because they could hear the baby without one, because of the anxiety it caused, or because it picked up the wrong signal. In one case, a video monitor picked up a feed of an astronaut in outer space; in others, babies used monitors to make their parents magically appear. Still, none of the parents were willing to advise against using a monitor.

"It tends to be an individual decision, and something you have to figure out on your own," Howell says. "My wife and I used a baby monitor in a three-room house, then realized it was unnecessary. With each of these technologies, people are generally willing to give it a shot and put up with some anxiety

if there's even one-millionth of a chance it could save their child."

Howell isn't suggesting that parents boycott surveillance technologies or quit worrying about their kids. In his years as a family therapist, he worked with a broad range of parents — including some who didn't pay enough attention to their children. He does encourage parents to consider whether their concerns about the world's risks are reasonable, and whether various surveillance technologies are helping or causing more worry.

"Many times parenthood makes you anxious, and many times you should be," Howell says. "But if that's coloring your feelings about parenthood, or if you notice your child adopting a risk-averse way of looking at the world that could interfere with other important values like innovation, discovery, and adventure, you should look at whether you're going overboard."

*Reprinted with permission from the University of Iowa.*

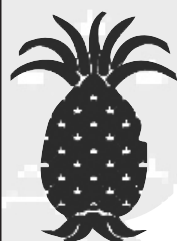




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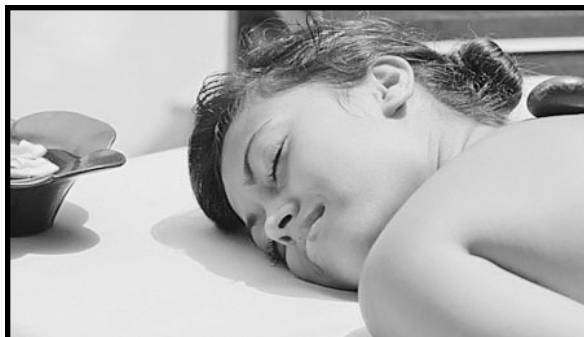
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eating well

# Veggie cakes

## A sweet take on overcoming veggie phobias

By Clare Howard,  
from GateHouse News Service

**D**ouglas Drenckpohl is out to change the way people think about vegetables. First he worked on vegetable baby foods. Then it was pureed vegetable soups, then vegetable ice cream. Now he has tested a series of recipes for vegetable cakes.

But just to be clear, Drenckpohl is not interested in tricking people into eating vegetables. His goal is to change attitudes about vegetables by providing people with an unexpectedly pleasant encounter with a food they vowed to hate.

Drenckpohl, neonatal dietitian at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria, Ill., recounts example after example with his nephews. They claim to hate eggplant, but they've never tasted it. They spurn

squash, but they won't sample it.

"The purpose of butternut squash cake is once again to get kids to eat a vegetable they think they don't like," he says. "Squash makes a delicious, moist cake. Zucchini does well in a cake."

So far he's tested, tweaked and taste-paneled to rave reviews his butternut squash cake, sweet potato cake, chocolate orange beet cake and easy chocolate zucchini cake.

Drenckpohl usually takes his inventions to work for his critical feedback.

Laura Boyer, a nurse colleague in the OSF neonatal intensive care unit, liked his squash cake but may prefer Drenckpohl's chocolate orange beet cake. "The chocolate orange beet cake has an amazing consistency," she says.

Drenckpohl says some nurses at work had never

eaten a beet before and claimed they never would.

However, their experience with chocolate orange beet cake was positive, and they say they're more inclined to try beets in the future.

He says adding vegetables to cake recipes actually helps cakes retain moisture.

"Most of these recipes are for cakes made from scratch, but I developed one recipe for people who don't have time and use box cake mixes," he says.

While the goal is to change attitudes, there are immediate nutritional advantages to vegetable cakes.

"It's extremely critical to get children to overcome an objection to vegetables," says Catherine Schneider, another nurse colleague. "When a cake is baked with vegetables inside, the vegetables retain vitamins. You can take vitamin pills all day long, but they are not as good as food with vitamins."



### Butternut Squash Cake

1 1/3 cup all-purpose flour	2/3 cup vegetable oil
1 cup sugar	3 eggs
2 tablespoons baking powder	1 cup ground walnuts
1 tablespoon baking soda	2 cups shredded butternut squash
1 tablespoon cinnamon	1/2 cup raisins (optional)
1 tablespoon ground nutmeg	1 cup milk
2 teaspoons allspice	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a mixing bowl, add all dry ingredients. Mix together. Add vegetable oil. Stir. Beat in one egg at a time until thoroughly mixed together. In a food processor, finely chop walnuts. Place in batter and mix. Peel and remove seeds from butternut squash. Use food processor to shred butternut squash. Place in batter and mix. (One butternut squash is more quantity than this recipe calls for. Please only shred enough butternut squash for this recipe). Add milk 1/2 cup at a time. Mix. Butter and flour two 8-inch cake pans. (Can use nonstick vegetable spray.) Pour cake batter evenly into pans. Bake 35-40 minutes or until toothpick inserted into cake comes out clean. Allow cake to cool. Remove from cake pans. Frost cake with cream cheese frosting of your choice. Makes a two-layer, 8-inch cake.

*For additional recipes, visit [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com).*

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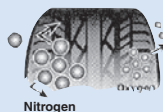
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environment

# Into the bin

## With some exceptions, more than ever can be recycled

By Ann Ring

Wondering what to do with all your wrapping and packaging materials now that the holidays have come and gone? You're not alone. Each year, more than 25 percent additional waste is generated during the holiday season, an increase greater than any other time of the year.

Though it appears innocent enough, wrapping paper is, in many cases, not recyclable. Neither are bows, ties, ribbons and glittery or embossed greeting cards. Jacque Jaquet, part owner, secretary and treasurer of Eagle Enterprises Recycling Inc. in Galva, Ill., says, "Purchasing recycled gift wrap does sound like a good idea, but we can't tell the difference between that and any other wrapping paper, so we can't recycle it."

So much for the bad news. The good news, though, is that amount of things that can be recycled, and the number of people recycling, increases every year.

"In June our recycling volume jumped 34 percent and has stayed there. There's no explanation for the jump," says Paul Jaquet, founder and president of Eagle Enterprises and president of the Illinois Recycling Association.

A floor-to-ceiling heap of unsorted product at Eagle Enterprises confirms a huge and somewhat mysterious industry. Newspaper, cardboard, junk mail, aluminum cans, water bottles, plastic bags, office paper, strange plastics — it's all there — waiting to be sorted, baled and hauled to a larger facility.

"We recycle 3½ tons an hour, on average," says Paul's son, Adam, who also is part of the family business that started on their farm 17 years ago. "Sometimes we can't keep up (with the volume), and we have to truck semis full of the unsorted to Chicago recycling plants. They pay us the cost of trucking to do that," he says.

"As to what's recyclable and what's not," says Erin Vorac, communications coordinator for Waste Commission of Scott County (Iowa), which processes about 40 tons of material a day, "it's always best to check with your own community recycling program."

Vorac makes a good point; differences among communities may surprise you. For example, Eagle Enterprises Inc. allows plastic grocery bags but the Waste Commission for Scott County does not. Eagle accepts water bottle caps, but Scott County does not, "simply because they're too small," says Vorac. "Small pieces (of anything, including paper) is residual (unrecycled)."

Most municipalities accept more than ever — newspapers (including ad inserts and slicks), magazines, cereal boxes, junk mail (including window envelopes), aluminum, tissue boxes, office paper, paperback and phone books, cardboard tubes and egg cartons, sometimes beverage and food glass, and plastics No. 1 through No. 5 and No. 7.

Since the 1970s, recycling technologies have continually changed and have eased the process for consumers. Curbside recycling is commonplace (Dubuque claims to be the first in Iowa), drop-off sites are convenient, and consumers



Photo by Gary Krambeck / Radish

no longer have to peel labels from bottles or cans. For some, one of the biggest changes has been the shift from dual stream to single stream recycling, which allows everything to go in one container and be sorted at centers.

But more technology is needed. Depending on your area, many everyday products are still not recyclable for a number of reasons: facial tissue, paper towels, tissue paper, cereal bags, plastic wrap, cellophane, food wrappers, construction paper, waxed cups, and some plastics like drink cup lids. Plastic No. 6 (polystyrene foam or Styrofoam) can be a culprit due to its petroleum-based materials. However, a growing number of shipping retailers will recycle or reuse your packaging materials like foam peanuts.

Eagle Enterprises Inc. operates with remarkable simplicity. After products are dumped on a conveyor and separated by an assembly line of people, each category — paper, plastics, aluminum, etc. — is baled and hauled to larger recycling centers and sold as commodities. The rest goes to landfills. According to Vorac, only 3 percent of its material goes to the landfill. Of Eagle Enterprise's volume, only 5 percent to 11 percent end up as waste material.

The Jaquets now provide jobs for 32 full-time people. It may not sound like much, but they are part of Illinois' payroll of \$3.6 billion that's directly related to recycling, matching \$4 billion in direct-industrial output in Iowa.

So what can you do to encourage more recycling if you are already sorting your refuse before taking it to the curb? "Close the recycling loop," says Vorac, "by purchasing recycled products."



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#### **Steve Sinner Vase "Green Bound"**

This vase is part of Steve Sinner's Bound In Black series, which refers to the sometimes controversial use of paint on wood art. It was exhibited at SOFA Chicago last year.

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## environment

### **Raptors and wolves on expo at 2011 Bald Eagle Days**

By Sharon Wren

Pining to get out and interact with nature, despite the cold weather and snow? Here's your chance: Bald Eagle Days, the popular event featuring nature exhibits and bird-watching tours, returns to the Quad-Cities this month. Flocks of bird lovers are expected to converge at the event to be held Jan. 7-9 at the QCCA Expo Center, 2621 4th Ave., Rock Island.

A highlight of the event are the tours to local eagle-watching spots, something that even the experts enjoy, says Brent Langley, publicity chair for the Quad City Audubon Society (QCAS). Eagle tours begin at 10:30 a.m. both Saturday and Sunday, last an hour, and are followed by the next tour after a 15-minute interval. The buses pick up in front of the QCCA Expo Center and take attendees to nearby eagle-viewing locations along the Mississippi. "The bus schedule is posted in the Expo Center and the buses are rarely filled, so this is a great opportunity for the general public to watch eagles through the scopes and direct questions to our knowledgeable members," says Langley.

QCAS members enjoy the opportunity to interact with the public, talk about the organization and answer questions about birds and birding, he says. It is also a chance to discuss a wide variety of topics related to nature and environmental issues. The QCAS members even take their spotting scopes on the buses to better help the public view the eagles.

Meanwhile, inside the expo center, attendees can learn more about QCAS, browse through the exhibitor booths, participate in activities geared toward children and watch a variety of nature-themed shows. Exhibitors at Bald Eagle Days this year include Niabi Zoo and the Pella Wildlife Company, which will be bringing Arctic wolf Keona and timber wolves Bridger and Lola. Pella Wildlife Company CEO Ron DeArmond says that Pella exhibitors plan to "go over (wolf) behavior, impact on agriculture, and interactions with humans."

Admission to Bald Eagle Days is \$5 for adults and \$1 for kids; children under 6 get in free. All shows are included in the admission price. Parking is free, as are shuttle buses to and from eagle-watching spots along the Mississippi. Hours are 4 to 8 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets are available in advance at the QCCA Expo Center office Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or online at [brownpapertickets.com/producer/25773](http://brownpapertickets.com/producer/25773).

For a complete schedule of the presentations, visit [qccaexpocenter.com](http://qccaexpocenter.com).



Photo by Todd Mizener / Radish



# health & medicine

## Beat the winter blues: What you need to know about Seasonal Affective Disorder

By Samantha Schwartz, from Natural Home

When the weather gets cold and the days grow short, half a million people around the world fall into a depression called seasonal affective disorder. "SAD can be severely debilitating; it adversely affects the sufferer's ability to work and socialize," said Stephen Ilardi, Ph.D, author of "The Depression Cure: The Six Step Program to Beat Depression Without Drugs." Subsyndromal seasonal affective disorder (SSAD), a less-severe version, makes many more people sad and sluggish, with less mental clarity and less restful sleep, Ilardi said.



GateHouse News Service

Winter's light deprivation affects sleep, energy and hormone levels, Ilardi said, and the winter sun's rays are too shallow to penetrate skin and stimulate your body to make vitamin D, an important brain nutrient. By the end of winter, many Americans are vitamin D-deficient. (Vitamin D supplements can be effective against SAD.)

**How do I know if I have SAD?** People with SAD notice a severe change in mood in winter months. Symptoms include energy loss, intensely sad moods, social withdrawal, oversleeping, difficulty concentrating, feelings of worthlessness, appetite changes and intense carbohydrate cravings that lead to weight gain.

**Who gets SAD?** SAD is more prevalent in cold climates. People with jobs that keep them inside, with a history of depression and other mood disorders, and with Mediterranean, Middle Eastern or African ancestry are more vulnerable to SAD, Ilardi said. "People whose ancestors were from Iceland and the Arctic Circle have a shockingly low rate of SAD. It's likely due to the natural selection process; people with genes that protect them from SAD chose to stay in colder climates, and people who were affected negatively by the climate migrated away, or produced fewer offspring."

**What can I do?** Bright light therapy has been shown to be as effective as antidepressants in treating SAD. "Light therapy is fast-acting with fewer side effects. People using light therapy will usually see improvement within five days, versus two to four weeks with antidepressants," Ilardi said.

The Columbia University Winter Depression program recommends daily exposure to a light box of 10,000 lux (100 times brighter than indoor lighting) for 15 minutes to two hours, once or twice a day depending on the patient's needs.

Vitamin D supplements can be effective against SAD. Most adults require 1,000 to 2,000 international units (IU) a day in winter to keep blood levels in the optimal range, according to Ilardi.

*Excerpted from Natural Home, a national magazine. To read more articles from Natural Home, please visit [www.NaturalHomeMagazine.com](http://www.NaturalHomeMagazine.com) or call (800) 340-5846 to subscribe. Copyright 2010 by Ogden Publications Inc.*

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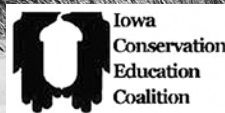
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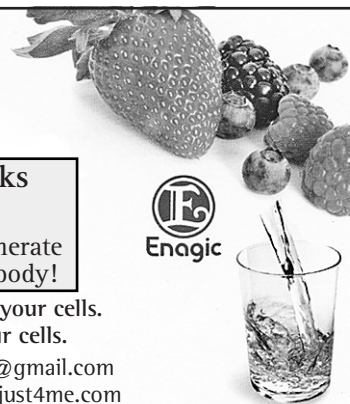
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## rooting around

### Learn how to better advocate for two-wheeled transportation at the Iowa Bicycle Summit

Want to make an impact on bicycle culture in Iowa? The Iowa Bicycle Summit is dedicated to producing low-cost, accessible education on building stronger bicycle communities. Sponsored by the Iowa Department of Transportation and the Iowa Bicycle Coalition, the summit will be held at the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines on Jan. 28 and 29. This event provides bicycle advocates with information on the best practices in bicycling for transportation and recreation. Learning to build better bicycle communities takes time and experience, just as learning to ride does. The summit is a chance to gain skills in advocating for, and developing, adequate provisions for bicyclists. Learn more about community bicycle clubs, cycling safety, bicycle injury rehabilitation, urban dirt and new marketing ideas such as bike-share programs. The summit will conclude with the announcement of the 2011 RAGBRAI Route. Find out more or preregister at the Iowa Bicycle Coalition website, [iowabicyclecoalition.org](http://iowabicyclecoalition.org).

### Confused about vitamin D? New guidelines about meeting your daily need

During the past 10 years information coming from medical researches has suggested Americans, particularly in winter months, are deficient in vitamin D. At the same time, researchers have connected the vitamin with benefits such as lowered risk certain types of cancer, cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes and depression, prompting some health-minded individuals to take upwards of 4,000 international units daily. Now, new research suggests there are risks to consuming too much. Confused as what you should do? Vitamin D researchers at Iowa State University suggest getting out into the great outdoors whenever possible — in summer, just 20 minutes of exposure to the sun will stimulate enough vitamin D production to meet your daily needs. They also recommend consuming foods fortified in vitamin D such as milk, margarine, cheese and orange juice as well as foods in which vitamin D naturally occurs such as fatty fishes, egg yolks and beef liver. Finally, if your consumption of such foods is infrequent and you are unable to get enough sun exposure, the specialists recommend taking a supplement of 1,000 IU of vitamin D in the summer and fall, and 2,000 IU in winter and spring.

### Retreat explores the benefits and challenges on the path to forgiveness

Psychologists and medical doctors advise living a life steeped in forgiveness. It's good for our spiritual, mental and physical health. Contemplate forgiveness and reconciliation at a daylong retreat titled "An Unfinished Journey: Exploring Issues of Forgiveness" that will include discussions, reflection, a film preview and a presentation by Dr. Mara Adams, Associate Professor of Theology at St. Ambrose University, Davenport. The event will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Benet House Retreat Center at St. Mary's Monastery, 2200 88th Ave. W., Rock Island. For more information or to register, call Jackie Walsh at (309) 283-2108; e-mail [retreats@smmsisters.org](mailto:retreats@smmsisters.org); or visit [smmsisters.org](http://smmsisters.org).

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## Grab your popcorn: Sustainability graces the silver screen at the second annual Oneota Film Festival

More than 25 nationally and internationally acclaimed films — each with a theme related to sustainability — are slated to be screened at the Second Annual Oneota Film Festival. Among the flicks to be featured are “What’s the Economy For, Anyway?,” “Tar Creek” and “Ride the Divide,” a film about the 2,700-mile-long mountain-bike race that traces the Continental Divide from Canada to Mexico. Other films will feature stories of ecotourism, local economies, social justice and sustainable living. There is no charge to view any of the films at the event, which will be held Jan. 21-23 at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. The festival also will host panel discussions with filmmakers and other specialists in hopes of generating discussion about local activities and initiative related to issues featured in the films. For more information, contact Kyril Henderson at (563) 382-5975, or visit [oneotafilmfestival.org](http://oneotafilmfestival.org).

## Sharing the joys of soy: Workshop lets participants make their own spa products

There’s no need to feel guilty about pampering yourself when you make the spa products yourself. Learn to do just that at an upcoming workshop, “Homemade in the Heartland,” hosted by the Rock Island County Extension office from 9 a.m. to noon Jan. 22. Workshop participants will have a hands-on opportunity to make soy-based botanical favorites including lip balm, body lotion, soap and a patriotic red, white and blue candle. Participants will make one to keep and one to donate to a local family of a deployed military member. Unable to attend yourself? A number of military wives have signed up to take the class, and you could sponsor one. The cost to sponsor someone or participate yourself is \$15 and includes all supplies. Preregistration is required. For more information or to sign up, call (309) 756-9978.

## Got a new iPad or iPod for Christmas? A few apps will help green it up

Whether you want to raise chickens, or just daydream about farm-fresh eggs, the Pickin’ Chicken app (\$2.99) from Mother Earth News will help you find the right breed. It has listings for 75 breeds and includes descriptions like growth rate, laying ability, conservation status, climate and more.

Are those paper towels really made from recycled paper? If you have the Greenpeace Tissue Guide (free), you can find out for sure. More than 100 brands of paper products in four categories (toilet paper, paper towels, paper napkins and facial tissues) are reviewed, showing the overall recycled content they contain and whether they’re bleached without toxic compounds.

Ever wish you had all those green cleaning product recipes in one handy place? Green Shine (free) gives them to you, organized by room, such as kitchen, bathroom and laundry. You can save your most used recipes to a favorites list.

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## River Music Experience's

### 3rd Annual Wine Tasting Event

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## rooting around

### Local creamery returns a winner from the World Cheese Awards

Milton Creamery, a 2008 Radish Award winner, recently brought home another award to add to the shelf, this time from the World Cheese Awards in London, England. With more than 2,600 cheese to judge from around the globe, it is the world's largest international cheese competition. Milton Creamery, a small, family-owned-and-operated company won a gold medal in the "Extra Mature Creamery Cheddar, aged 9-12 months" competition for its Prairie Breeze cheddar. They were the only American cheese maker honored in that category. Milton Creamery only uses milk from nearby Amish family farms in their cheeses, which are handcrafted using a unique combination of old-world, labor-intensive processes and modern, high-tech efficiencies and tools. "A lot of credit for our success has to go to the families who produce our milk," says owner Rufus Musser. "These are wonderful people who operate small, family farms where every cow is hand milked and given nothing but wholesome feed." Curious as to what a world champion cheddar tastes like? You can sample the cheese at the Freight House Farmers' Market in Davenport, where it is sold every week.

### What's your resolution?

Looking for a simple change you could make this year that leads to big results? In her book "The Green Year," author Jodi Helmer offers 365 ideas — one for each day of the year — that add up to a more ecologically mindful lifestyle. Her suggestions range from ones you've probably heard of (save 10 gallons of water each morning by turning off the tap when you brush your teeth) to the surprising (use 30 times less energy by sending a text instead of an e-mail). Other tips that might suit for a New Year's resolution: Changing the default margins in your word processor program from 1.25 inches to .75 inches results in using 5 percent less paper. Or try getting rid of your screen saver, which uses 100 watts of power, as compared to the 10 watts used when an inactive computer is in sleep mode. For more ideas, look for "The Green Year" (Alpha, 384 pages, reprint edition 2008, \$14.95 paperback) at your local library or bookseller.

### Organic farmers and advocates prepare to attend the 2011 MOSES conference

Mark your calendars: the 2011 Organic Farming Conference, that largest event of its kind, is scheduled to be held Feb. 24-26 in La Crosse, Wis. Organized by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES), OFC is considered the foremost educational and networking event in the organic farming community. Last year more than 2,700 attendees came to OFC. Highlights of the event include the presentation of the MOSES Farmer of the Year award, given each year to an outstanding organic farmer or farm family in recognition of their innovation and stewardship. OFC also attracts nationally prominent speakers. This year the keynote addresses will be given by Urvashi Rangan, Ph.D., director of technical policy for the Consumers Union, and Tom Stearns of High Mowing Organic seeds. For more information on the conference offerings this year and a registration form, visit [mosesorganic.org/conference.html](http://mosesorganic.org/conference.html).

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## Affordable Health Care Act takes steps to help consumers make more informed decisions

The Department of Health and Human Services released new guidance that will give consumers more information about their health-insurance plan. Under the new rules, health insurers offering limited-benefit health-insurance plans (sometimes called "mini-med" plans) must notify consumers in plain language that their plan offers extremely limited benefits and direct them to HealthCare.gov where they can get more information about other coverage options. HHS also has issued guidance restricting the sale of new mini-med plans except under very limited circumstances. The new guidelines ensure that consumers in plans with low annual limits are notified of the quality of their health plan so that they can make informed decisions about whether mini-med coverage is right for them. More information about the new guidance can be found at [www.healthcare.gov/news/factsheets/increasing\\_transparency.html](http://www.healthcare.gov/news/factsheets/increasing_transparency.html).

## Just call him the Eco-Pope!

Pope Benedict XVI is turning Vatican City into a leader in alternative energy use. According to Osservatore Romano, the Vatican's daily newspaper, "the Vatican has reached a small record in solar energy power production per capita: 200 watts at peak times ... per inhabitant, compared to 80 in Germany, the world leader in this field." Solar panels installed on the Paul VI conference hall has saved the equivalent of 89.84 tons of oil. Nearly 2,400 panels generate about 15 percent of the power used by Vatican City. Future plans include a 100 megawatt facility on Vatican property outside of Rome.

Cardinal Giovanni Lajolo, who runs the city state, says that the pontiff also is interested in a solar-powered Popemobile, provided that it can be fitted with bulletproof materials. "If one proposed an electric Popemobile that was efficient, safe and a reasonable size, what interest would he have in preferring a petrol Popemobile?"

## If your family tree contains food allergies, it may be 'Hello, stork,' 'So long, Mr. Peanut'

If you're expecting, and there's a family history of food allergies, you may want to reconsider eating that PB&J sandwich, according to researchers at Johns Hopkins Children's Hospital. In a study of 503 babies between the ages of 3 and 15 months, mothers who ate peanuts at least twice a week during pregnancy were almost three times more likely to have infants with levels of peanut antibodies high enough to suggest a possible allergy. Dr. Robert Wood, a co-author of the study, said that while eating peanuts is not itself enough to induce an allergy, it can be an aggravating factor in babies already predisposed to the allergy. The children in the study also had either confirmed or suspected allergies to milk or eggs. Breast feeding didn't appear to be a factor, as some test subjects were breast fed, while others drank milk- or soy-based formulas.

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food for thought

# Contentment and craft

## Groundedness inspires artist behind 2011 Radish Awards

By Molly Downey

I have always placed stones throughout my living spaces as decor. I love to bring the outdoors in and I felt the stones anchored the rooms. Two years ago I began wrapping my stones in wire in order to hang them on the walls. I dubbed them Grounding Stones and started making a variety of designs in the wire. Last spring I decided to share my art with others.

I believe that stones have the ability to keep people grounded. They serve as reminders of who we are and where we are from, a solid object representing our connection to the earth. Stones have always been awe inspiring to me as little pieces of earth, shaped by time, pressure and the elements over thousands of years. When I work with stones, I am humbled, each one with its own history and its own future. They precede our existence and will outlast us all, putting the finite moments we are given on this earth in perspective.

My medium is wire, which I twist into a variety of designs and tie to stones. My designs are inspired by the different influences in our lives that keep us grounded — family, love, faith, animals, nature, music; the infinite number of grounding forces are as endless as the stones I attach them to. My designs are constantly evolving. When I began, they started as simple spirals and are now intricate designs created with one single woven wire, flowing on a continuous path starting and ending with the stone.

The intention of the Grounding Stone is to anchor any space. It expresses to family, friends and guests the spirit and passion that grounds our lives, the thing that keeps us tethered to this world, keeping our feet on the ground. We each have our own “groundings,” the things in our life that make us the happiest. Our connections to this earth may get frayed, but at our core, we are rooted in our sensibilities and the personal passions that bring us joy and make the difficult parts of life easier to bear.

My work reminds me every day how lucky I am to be a part of this world and this human community, and my craft connects the two. I am

drawn to the contrast of shiny aluminum and natural stone, combining delicate and strong. It is an acknowledgement of our precious and fragile connection to the earth's energy.

We have Grounding Stones scattered throughout my home, in both indoor and outdoor spaces, and every time I see one it truly fills me with contentment and joy. The crafting of these pieces has become one of my “groundings.” When people see my work, I hope they feel the same joy and sense of well-being I feel when I create it, especially when the design represents something with which they have a connection. Creating a conduit for positive energy is the goal.

I love the reaction I get from someone when I create a piece they have requested. They share their influences with me and it becomes a collaborative effort. I've found that I'm not alone in my love of rocks. I've had people bring me stones from all over the world, stones they have carried with them for years, reminding them of who they are. I have put dragonflies on stones from childhood, motorcycles on stones from South Dakota, hikers on stones from the Grand Canyon, and shamrocks on stones from Ireland. I enjoy a challenge. After giving it some thought, where to begin, where to end the wire, the design comes to me and I'm often surprised with the end result.

We spend our lives looking for external things to make us happy. The Grounding Stone reminds us of the happiness that comes from within, those things that have brought each of us peace and enjoyment throughout our lives. It reminds us now more than ever to embrace the intrinsic parts of us that celebrate who we are, what we love, and the simplicity of our groundings.

*You can find Molly Downey's designs at the indoor Freight House Farmers' Market, 421 W. River Drive, Davenport; at MudPuddleRoo, 417 13th St., Moline; at Calla, 1026 Mound St. in the Village of East Davenport; or online at [thegroundingstone.com](http://thegroundingstone.com). E-mail her at [thegroundingstone@gmail.com](mailto:thegroundingstone@gmail.com).*



Artist Molly Downey at work in her studio creating new designs using stones and wire. (Photo by Todd Mizener / Radish)



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