Radish

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MAY 2015

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from the editor

Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish

Every issue of Radish brings unexpected joys for those of us who put it together. I have always felt it is a great privilege to be able to sit down with the growers, wellness practitioners, and community volunteers featured in the magazine and listen as they share the motivations and hopes behind what they do.

Without fail, their enthusiasm is infectious — as Ann Ring discovered while working on this month's cover story about Healthy Harvest Urban Farms and Organic Garden Center, page 10. Following her interview with Chad Summers, she sent me a glowing email detailing how inspired she had been by the conversation. It was one of many Radish assignments, she said, she could credit with leading to healthier choices in her own life.

I knew exactly how she felt. It has happened to me more times then I can count in the eight years I have worked with Radish. In fact, I had just had a similar experience myself the previous week as I sat in the Bettendorf library watching children reading to dogs so that I could contribute the Bettendorf portions of the story Mary Blackwood put together on page 14.

While I jotted down notes, Nala, a black Labrador puppy involved with the program, nuzzled up to me. I felt deeply touched by the generosity and goodwill the dogs and their owners brought to the library. It left me wishing I could work on every Radish project with a warm and cuddly dog at my side, but more than that, I was inspired to think about ways I could be more generous with my own time and interests.

The longer I work with Radish, the deeper I find my gratitude grows for the people who fill the pages of this magazine, and not just because they are so open-hearted in sharing their stories with us. When we went out to take pictures for the Healthy Harvest article, owner Chad Summers told me with a sheepish grin that he felt like in the first year of his business he "jumped in a little over (his) head." And yet here he was, a year later, with a business that was growing and an undiminished enthusiasm for the good it could do the community.

I am humbled by that kind of courage. Without people willing to take those leaps, nothing can change for the better. How lucky we are to live in communities where so many individuals take the risk of really putting their ideas out there — whether building a garden center based on organic principals or recognizing the value a canine companion can bring to the reading experience — and doing the hard work to make that vision a reality.

— Sarah J. Gardner
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the grapevine

From our readers

Bobcats are back (Feb. 2014): "Great article. Today, March 27, 2015, I spotted a bobcat on the edge of my yard sleeping in a pile of leaves near the treeline to a timber that's about 100 acres. What a beautiful animal. I've lived here 48 years and this is the first time I have ever seen a bobcat in this area."

— Dennis VanDuyne, Coal Valley, Ill.

Beg your pardon

An article in the April issue of Radish incorrectly listed the birth year of conservationist Aldo Leopold. He was born in 1887 in Burlington, Iowa. We regret the error.

On the Road with Radish

We love to meet our readers! Thanks to Friends of Radish, you can find representatives of the magazine this month at **a screening of the movie "Grow,"** followed by a discussion with a panel of local growers, at 5 p.m. Sunday, May 3, at the Quad Cities Food Hub, 421 W. River Drive, Davenport. For more information on this free event, visit qcfoodhub.com.

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

Mark your calendars! Ninth annual Healthy Living Fair is June 20

John Greenwood / Radish

The last couple of months have been busy ones here at Radish, as we've been hard at work putting together our annual Health Living Fair. This year the fair will take place from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, June 20, and will once again be held adjacent to the Freight House Farmers' Market, 421 W. River Drive, Davenport.

You won't want to miss this free event, now in its ninth year. It's a celebration of the best the area has to offer in healthy living: the latest in environmentally-friendly products; opportunities to get involved in outdoor recreation and conservation; resources for holistic, alternative and integrative medicine; goods and services that support overall well-being, and much more — this is an event that truly has something for everyone. And, of course, it wouldn't be a Radish Healthy Living Fair without great local foods, a variety of fitness demonstrations on stage, and the ever popular Pet of the Year contest. We can't wait to see you there!

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healthy living from the ground up

features

in every issue

on the cover

Nieko and Chad Summers at their business, Healthy Harvest Urban Farms and Organic Garden Center. (Photo by Todd Welvaert / Radish)

departments

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During the months of March and April, drivers getting on or off Interstate 74 in Bettendorf have been met with a disquieting sight: scores of trees that have been sawed down. And yet, among those who may have rightly guessed the trees were being removed as part of ongoing efforts to construct a new I-74 bridge, few would have known this part of the project was carefully timed from an environmental standpoint.

According to Mary Kay Solberg, a senior environmental specialist with the Iowa Department of Transportation, IADOT regulations mandate that trees be removed during colder months in part to prevent disrupting the nesting cycles of birds that might use those trees in spring, and to minimize impact on other animals, such as bats, that may roost there in warmer months.

Read more about steps being taken to protect vulnerable animal species — including aquatic life — during bridge construction at radishmagazine.com.

Submitted

Program shows a little prairie packs a lot of power

By Dennis Moran

An innovative Iowa State University program is finding ways to bring back some of Iowa's native prairie grasses and put them to work protecting farmland and waterways. The results so far have been impressive in showing a wide array of benefits, to farmers as well as the environment, including less topsoil erosion, cleaner water and enhanced biodiversity, including an increase in helpful pollinating insects and birds.

The program, developed by ISU's Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, is called Prairie STRIPS, which stands for Science-based Trials of Rowcrops Integrated with Prairie Strips. The program helps farmers design and plant strips of native prairie grasses among the row contours of corn and soybean fields. The researchers have calculated that giving over just 10 percent of the participating fields to prairie yields big results.

"The neat thing is you get such a diverse array of benefits for taking a small amount of land out of production," says Tim Youngquist, Prairie STRIPS agricultural specialist. "It's a small change making a big impact."

How big? The program's test area, begun in 2007 at the Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge in Jasper County, has shown 40 percent less runoff with 95 percent less topsoil loss, and 95 percent less phosphorus, 84 percent less nitrogen, and 95 percent less sediment leaving the fields for streams and rivers. The test acres have shown double the abundance of native birds, among other wildlife benefits.

As ISU does outreach to inform farmers about the program, they've been getting some eager responses. Youngquist said prairie strips are now in place on 17 private farms (including one in Missouri) and six state reserve farms.

"More are in the docket, 10 to 15 more for this season," says Youngquist, one of about 20 ISU faculty and staff members involved in the program.

The ability of prairie grasses to reduce runoff loss of fertilizer nutrients like phosphorus and nitrogen, as well as soil sediments, is particularly timely. Iowa has been wrestling with a strategy to reduce pollution in waterways, not only for the health of Iowa residents but for the health of the Gulf of Mexico as well.

The cumulative effect of agricultural runoff flowing down river has created a hypoxic "dead zone" spreading from the mouth of the Mississippi into the Gulf. States are tasked with reducing fertilizer runoff from farms, and Iowa is encouraging farmers to reduce phosphorus and nitrogen runoff by 45 percent on a volunteer basis. Planting prairie strips has the potential of greatly exceeding that target.

Youngquist also points to an aesthetic value: In winter the tall prairie grasses are a striking sight standing over bare, harvested fields, and even then they are providing food and habitat and are part of a dynamic landscape. It's a taste of what Iowa used to look like — when 85 percent of the state was covered in prairie. The figure now is less than one-tenth of 1 percent, Youngquist says.

Protecting the land and its habitats are what these dense, deep-rooted prairie grasses were made to do.

The program also has shown great promise in getting farmers and both agriculture and conservation agencies on board together — groups that don't always see eye to eye on balances of farm production and environmental protections. Representatives from all sides give enthusiastic testimonials to the program in videos on the Leopold Center's website.

"We need the benefits of modern agriculture, and we need the benefits of conservation," Youngquist says. "This is a way to step out of the conflict zone and have some of both. People are acknowledging a need. I think there are a lot of farmers interested in something like this. We're just going to have to keep spreading the word. No farmer wants to hurt the land. Absolutely not. They want to do the best they can."

David Gossman is one such farmer. He has a 678-acre farm in Jackson County, northwest of Maquoketa, and for 20 years he has done a variety of conservation work. He's also now a participant in the Prairie STRIPS program.

"This hillside has three infield buffers — they basically run across the field," he says, pointing to 30-foot-wide rows of prairie grasses that follow the contours of a hillside field planted in corn last year. "They're basically to stop soil erosion going down the hill."

He calls the strips "infield buffers" because he has for many years planted prairie natives on his land, including in "edge buffers" between crop fields and streams or other boundaries. In fact, the expertise he's gained from his years of experiments with prairie grasses and from networking with other members of the Iowa Native Plant Society has made him an asset to the Prairie STRIPS program.

"He's one that we've visited several times," Youngquist says. "David's been a good resource. He's been very willing to share his methods and seed mixes he uses."

Diversity is key in mixing prairie grasses, says Gossman. "A lot of people will plant natives, but they'll only plant 10 to 15 species," he says. "I plant 50 to 100, because I really want to maximize that biodiversity. It helps it take."

What helps Gossman afford all the conservation work on his land, including the acreage lost to planting Prairie STRIPS, is compensation for it from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), which encourages farmers to set aside land for environmental health and quality.

Youngquist points out that compensation funding available from CRP and other sources can help sway the decision among farmers to implement the Prairie STRIPS program. The land used for the prairie grass planting is often on hillsides, where erosion is most likely to occur, and may not be a farmer's most productive land anyway.

Youngquist said the Leopold Center will continue to monitor results of the Prairie STRIPS program. Researchers expect to continue to find beneficial results, the betterment of Iowa's lands and waters.

***Dennis Moran** is a regular Radish contributor. For more information about **Prairie STRIPS**, visit nrem.iastate.edu/research/STRIPs.*

Pizza to the people

Mobile wood-fired pizza oven brings taste of Italy to Q-C

Photos by Paul Colletti / Radish

By Becky Langdon

On a trip to Italy in 2012, John Anderson wrote down four words that would become the foundation for Streets of Italy: "mobile wood-fired oven." John and his wife, Angie, were living in Germany at the time on a three-year civilian assignment for the U.S. Army. While overseas they traveled throughout Italy experiencing the local cuisine and getting a behind-the-scenes look at numerous restaurants.

"I weaseled my way in the back of kitchens in Rome and Naples throughout," Anderson says.

He found that people were very proud of their restaurants and what they do. Many mom-and-pop shops in particular didn't mind taking him back to the kitchen, showing him how they make sauce, noodles and pizza.

When he experienced authentic Neapolitan wood-fired pizza, he fell in love with the fresh flavors and unique approach and wanted to bring it back to the Quad-Cities area. "There's nothing around here that I've found that was near that," says Anderson. "I wanted something like that here."

Authentic Neapolitan pizza is very different from the pizza served at most American, big-chain pizza shops. The soft, elastic dough is worked exclusively by hand, spread to a thin crust and then topped with only fresh ingredients. A typical Neapolitan pizza is only about 10 inches in diameter, often enjoyed as a single serving because of its thinness. It's cooked in a wood-fired dome oven at a temperature of 800-900 degrees Fahrenheit for about 90 seconds.

A taste of history

While wood-fired pizza is more accessible in other parts of the country at restaurants, the idea of a mobile wood-fired oven is still fairly new. The inspiration for Anderson came from the history of the pizza.

"I'm a big history geek. I love medieval history," he says. According to him, the history of wood-fired pizza goes something like this: Originally, tomatoes were thought to be poisonous and were used only as ornaments on tabletops and in gardens, like flowers. This fear is not as crazy as it sounds given that tomatoes are actually part of the nightshade family.

Italy's poorest of the poor decided to boil them, however, thus creating the first pasta sauce. It was used on noodles and spread on flat bread to make pizza. Then they created wooden carts on wheels, which they would use to take pizza down to the streets and sell it.

These pizzas gained popularity, and legend has it that eventually Queen

Continued on page 30

Healthy Harvest

Q-C business hopes to put better eating in reach for all

From left, Angelo, Chad, Nieko and Darian Summers at Healthy Harvest Urban Farms and Organic Garden Center. (Photos by John Greenwood / Radish)

By Ann Ring

Last year, Healthy Harvest Urban Farms and Organic Garden Center opened on a bit of open ground at 3900 Archer Drive, East Moline — but it was clear right from the beginning that a big vision lay behind this unimposing garden center.

In addition to carrying a large selection of certified organic seeds and seed starting supplies for gardeners, it also stocked organic produce from growers like Oak Hill Acres, Roots Organics, and Heilmann Hawkeye Acres that customers could purchase just as they would from a farm stand. There was also an education component to the business. Children who visited were given seeds to plant and take home, and owner Chad Summers envisioned offering classes on-site and establishing community garden plots where gardeners could receive a helping hand growing their own food.

And it all began, years ago, with a haircut. Little did Chad know when he sat down in the chair for a trim, the woman with the scissors would be a catalyst for a lifestyle change, a culture change, and one day, a new business.

Inspired to make a change

Ruth Blount was a hair dresser in East Moline that Chad would visit for a haircut every now and then. “You get your hair cut, and you’re going to talk, right?” says Summers. Blount shared her holistic way of life and beliefs with Chad — eating organic and local foods and her reasons for using organic products in her work. Those conversations stayed with him, and Chad began making a few small but deliberate changes in his own diet.

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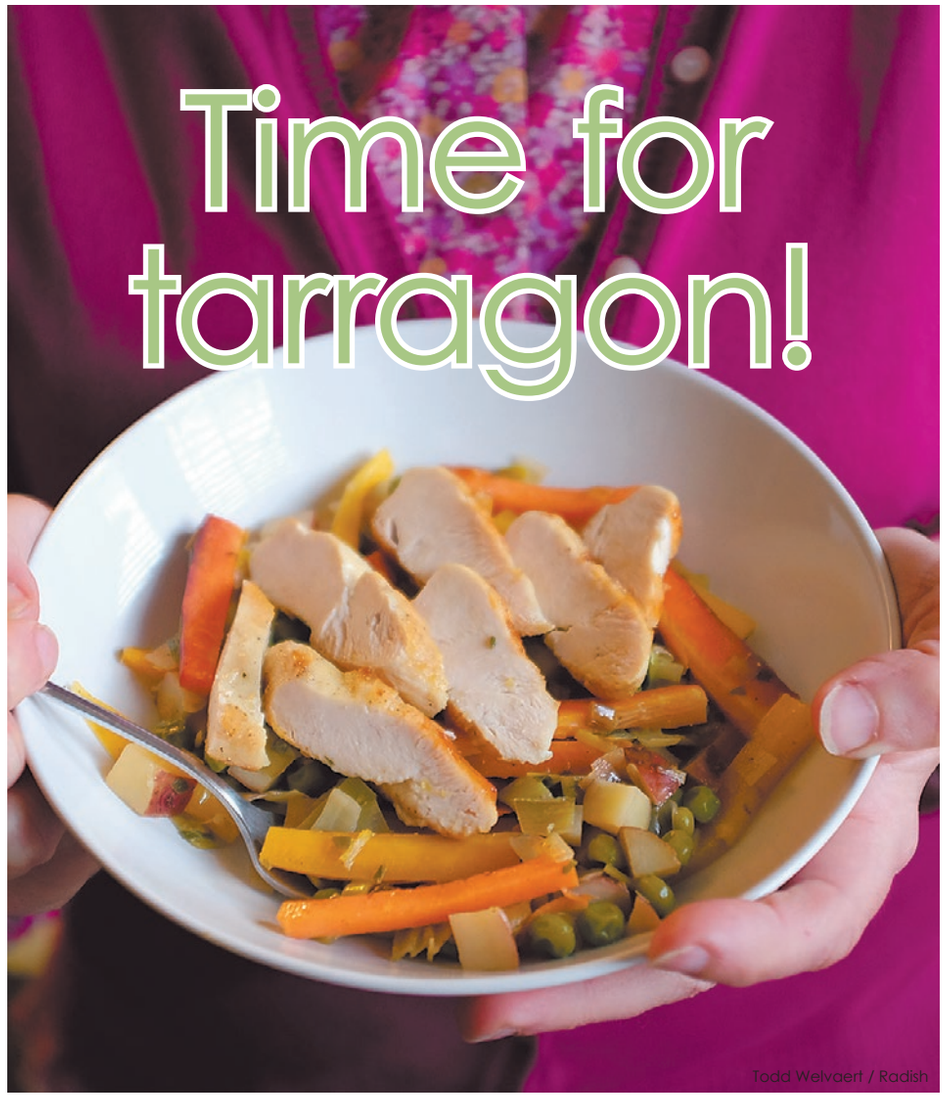
Time for tarragon!

A spring dish that revels in the earliest gifts of the garden

By Sarah J. Gardner



Todd Welvaert / Radish

If you asked me to name the flavor of spring, I would tell you without hesitation it is the taste of tarragon. Something happens when the days turn sunny and warm that just makes me nutty for this herb. I liberally sprinkle it over salads made of roasted beets and walnuts. I lay it over thin slices of brie folded into omelets that I eat for lunch on a bed of greens. I take detours on bike rides along the Mississippi River to sip pineapple tarragon soda at Fresh Deli. For a few giddy weeks, it's as though I cannot get enough.

Part of this, no doubt, is because tarragon is one of the first plants to pop up in my garden each spring — and also one that, no matter how much I eat now, will have managed to run amok in a couple more months. A friend once told me it was tarragon, more than any other herb, that symbolized for him the value of tending even a small garden. A one-time investment of a couple of dollars in a little sprig of tarragon to plant at home will yield such a yearly abundance of this herb that it would quickly add up to a hundred dollars purchased in little packets in the store. I think of this every time I snip a small fortune of leaves to add to a salad.

Easily my favorite use for tarragon, though, is a dish that in my home has come to be known simply as "tarragon chicken." It's an almost comically short name for a dish that contains a wide variety of spring flavors: sweet peas, spring leeks, new potatoes. There are also carrots and thin slices of garlic, as well as a dash of lemon zest, all of which combine to create a colorful meal that manages to be both light and fresh-tasting, but filling. It's also versatile — leave out the chicken, and you have a vibrant side dish of spring vegetables that will liven up any dinner.

I like fresh tarragon so much, it came as a real surprise to me to find how much more potent the flavor of dried tarragon is. This is true of most dried herbs, of course, but I didn't imagine the somewhat delicate flavor of fresh tarragon would hold up through the drying process. I was never happier to be wrong than when I was forced to use some dried tarragon in a pinch.

For this reason, I now enjoy fresh tarragon with abandon in the spring and early summer, but I make sure to dry a fair amount to see me through the cold months as well. All of which is to say, I will be welcoming the sunny days ahead with generous servings of tarragon chicken — and months from now, in the last weeks of winter, I'll be eating it again with dried tarragon, thinking eagerly ahead to the spring days to come.

Sarah J. Gardner is the editor of Radish.

Tarragon Chicken

- *1 tablespoon olive oil*
- *2-3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts*
- *1-2 tablespoons butter*
- *2 garlic cloves, sliced*
- *2-3 leeks, white and light green parts only, sliced*
- *8-10 small new potatoes, cubed*
- *6-8 carrots, cut into small sticks*
- *½ cup water*
- *1 small lemon, zested and juiced*
- *2 tablespoons dried tarragon*
- *1 cup fresh or frozen peas*

Preheat oven to 425. Heat olive oil in an ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken breasts, cooking for 4 minutes on each side, then remove the skillet from the stove and place it in the preheated oven to cook 10 minutes more. When done, allow chicken to rest for 10 minutes on cutting board before slicing across the grain.

Meanwhile, while the chicken is in the oven, melt butter in a second large skillet over medium heat. Then add the garlic and leeks and cook, stirring, until the leeks start to soften, about 5 minutes. Add the potatoes and carrots and continue to cook, stirring, 5 minutes more. Add the water, lemon juice and lemon zest, cover the skillet with a tight-fitting lid, and allow veggies to steam for 10 minutes.

Finally, remove the lid from the skillet of vegetables, add the tarragon and peas, and cook, stirring, until peas are heated through and most of the liquid has boiled off, leaving the veggies lightly glazed. Mix in the sliced chicken. Bring the skillet to the table to serve.

Furry encouragement

Young readers benefit from some canine companionship

By Mary Blackwood and Sarah J. Gardner

Excited children mill around the "storytime room" of the public library in Coralville, Iowa, as a 125-pound Malamute named Austin strides in at a stately pace. His job? To help these children improve their reading skills.

It's a gathering repeated in the Bettendorf Public Library, as young readers in the children's area cozy up to the dogs waiting patiently by the desk, each wearing the telltale vest of a therapy dog with a patch reading "I'm friendly, please pet me."

The same scene plays out in several other libraries and schools throughout our area, including the Rock Island Public Library and Scott County Public Library. The programs go by different names — R.E.A.D. (Reading Education Assistance Dogs), Paws to Read, Read with Rover — but the goal is the same across the board: giving children the opportunity to practice reading skills in a nonjudgmental arena, without being corrected or scrutinized, by reading to, yes, dogs.

"I always say, 'Dogs don't judge. They just listen,' " says Angie Hall of the Quad Cities Canine Assistance Network, which facilitates the program at the Bettendorf library. As a result, says Hall, the exercise is a real confidence booster for the children participating.

Maggie Winegarden, who instituted the program over nine years ago in Johnson County, Iowa, agrees. "There is research and anecdotal data looking into the physiologic benefits of petting a warm-blooded animal," she says. "Therapy animals also create an ideal physiologic setting for learning."

Third-grader Rachel Johnson has the first session with Austin and his handler, Sandy Lanier. They set up in a quiet area of the Coralville library; there's a pillow for Rachel, and Austin reclines on the floor next to her, while Sandy sits cross-legged nearby, close enough to help out if needed, but far enough to fade into the background. Rachel begins to read to Austin in a very soft voice.

According to librarian Victoria Walton, "For kids who might not do reading as a first choice, after reading to the dog, lack of enthusiasm often simply disappears."

Rachel's voice grows more confident as she reads. She reaches out to pet Austin's head. The characters' voices become more animated as she reads the dialogue. When a sound outside the window causes Austin to raise his head and look away, Lanier unobtrusively gives him a hand signal to return his focus to Rachel and her story. He tucks his nose between Rachel's shoes on the pillow.

A therapy dog must be mellow and gentle and enjoy petting. The handlers even learn to train the dog so that it appears the dog is listening to the story. The key is to allow kids to succeed at reading in the company of a creature that won't care if they miss every other word. If the kid picks a book that is above his reading level, the handler may ask him to find all the A's on a page and point them out to the dog.

"Some kids make up their own stories," says Lanier, who has seen it in all in three years on the job with Austin. These kids might read an alphabet book and explain the pictures to the dog. "So long as it promotes reading skills, it's good."

Owner Angie Hall watches as Lucy Neuberger reads to Mater, a therapy dog, at the Bettendorf Public Library. (Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish)

At the Bettendorf library, second-grader Lucy Neuberger carries a stack of books over to Mater, a 7-year-old basset hound. "Which book would you like to hear?" asks Angie, his handler. Mater nudges one of the books with his nose and Angie flips open the cover and starts reading.

Mater often will use his paw or nose to pick a book, says Angie. "We always tell the kids he likes the dog books," she says with a grin.

With a soft voice and a steady pace, Lucy reads the entire book out loud. Then she picks up her stack of books and moves to Nala, a black Lab puppy reclined nearby, and begins again with a new story.

Currently, there are over 10,000 R.E.A.D. teams across the U.S. The enjoyment the young readers and dog handlers get out of it is evident. And what do the dogs get out of it? "They're love sponges," says Winegarden. "They love meeting people and being talked to and petted."

***Mary Blackwood** is a regular Radish contributor. For more information about these programs, visit the **Quad Cities Canine Assistance Network** online at qccan.org and the **Therapy Dogs of Johnson County** at therapydogsjc.com.*

Paul Colletti / Radish

A heart for tarts

Whether sweet or savory, a tart can be just the ticket

By Sarah J. Gardner

Growing up, I had a mother who made her living as a baker, and so I saw early on how easily kitchen cupboards could get out of hand. Pick something — anything — needed for baking, and sooner or later you are going to find a slightly different size of that same thing irresistibly useful. Cake pans. Cookie sheets. Mixing bowls. Cooling racks. On the day I packed up Mom's kitchen to move out of my childhood home, I cleaned out one cabinet after another and vowed my collection of kitchen utensils would be a smaller and tidier lot.

Now, I blush to recall it every time I open a drawer to rummage for a spatula. It's the sort of thing I imagine Mom and I having a good laugh

Simple, Flaky Tart Crust

6 tablespoons cream cheese

6 tablespoons unsalted butter

¼ teaspoon salt

¾ cup all purpose flour

Using a mixer or food processor, whip together the cream cheese, butter and salt until smooth. Add the flour and mix together until dough begins to resemble coarse crumbs and then comes together as a cohesive mixture. Shape the dough into a disk, wrap it in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least one hour.

When ready to bake, preheat oven to 425 degrees. Roll the chilled dough so that it is slightly larger than a 10-inch round or 11x7-inch rectangular tart pan. Grease the pan well with cooking spray, then fit the dough to the tart pan, trimming the excess.

Thoroughly dock the entire bottom of the tart shell with a fork, then slide it into the oven to bake for 10 minutes. Tart shell should be set but still light in color when removed from the oven. The sides will be beginning to pull away from the pan. If the tart shell has risen in the middle, use a thin metal spatula to gently press the steam out and flatten the bottom. Place the pan on a wire rack to cool slightly. Lower the temperature of the oven to 375 degrees and add the filling for a sweet or savory tart, depending on your preference (see recipes that follow). Finish baking as directed.

Sweet Blueberry Lemon Tart

6-8 teaspoons lemon curd (roughly half a 10-ounce jar)

2-3 teaspoons poppy seeds (optional)

2 cups fresh blueberries

Once the half-baked tart shell has cooled slightly, spread the lemon curd over the bottom crust. Don't worry if it isn't very even, as it will spread out as it melts. Return the tart to the 375-degree oven and bake an additional 15-20 minutes, until pastry is a light golden color and the lemon filling is bubbling. Remove to a wire rack and sprinkle with poppy seeds (if using). Allow to cool for 15 minutes, then arrange blueberries over the lemon filling — the lemon curd will be sticky enough to hold the blueberries in place without cooking them. Allow to cool completely, remove from the pan, then slice and serve.

over. The hubris of youth! Especially on days when the utensil I'm digging for is something I inherited from her, it feels like a little private joke she's hidden in my cabinets — exactly the way she'd always tuck a note into the boxes of baked goods mailed to me in college.

And yet, for all that, there remains in me a desire not to let things get too far out of hand. It's part of the reason I never buy anything for my kitchen on impulse, and also a big reason why I resisted having a tart pan for so long. I already owned a pie plate, after all (two pie plates, if I'm honest), so wouldn't a tart pan just be more of the same?

As so often happens, what changed my mind was a stray comment by a friend — in this case, my friend Sarah, who years ago mentioned how much she loved a good vegetable tart. That made me take notice. Until then, I had only thought of tarts in terms of desserts. The idea that they could do double duty and be used to make savory dishes was a revelation. After all, nothing is nearer and dearer to the heart of someone trying to keep kitchen clutter in check than a single item that can be used in multiple ways.

Need I say what happened next? The next time I saw a tart pan in a thrift store, I decided to give it a try. It wasn't long before I was hooked. As it turns out, I was only partially right in assuming tarts are like pies. True, they both have a flaky crust, but in practice, tart crusts are generally less fussy to work with and only require one sheet of pastry, not two. Many tart crusts don't even need to be rolled out, they simply can be pressed into the pan. And blind-baking them only requires pricking the bottom crust with a fork, not messing around with parchment paper and pie weights.

Tarts also tend to lend themselves to more reasonable proportions, being thinner and smaller in size, so slices of sweet tarts feel like slightly less of a guilty indulgence than slices of pie. And savory tarts are truly versatile. They can be made with relatively few ingredients, so they don't require quite the same commitment quiches do, and they can be served hot or cold. Easy to make and elegant to serve, they are the perfect dish for Sunday brunches or summer lunches.

As a result, my tart pan is one of the items in my kitchen I never have to rummage for in the back of a cabinet. It's simply put into use far too often to have a chance to disappear. If only I could say the same of that second pie plate.

Sarah J. Gardner is the editor of Radish.

Savory Parmesan Asparagus Tart

2 dozen thin asparagus spears or 1 dozen thick spears

6 tablespoons panko breadcrumbs

6 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

6 thin slices of prosciutto or thinly shaved deli ham

2 eggs

½ cup milk

A pinch of nutmeg

Salt and pepper

As the half-baked tart shell is cooling, cut the asparagus spears into 1-inch segments and set aside. Sprinkle half of the breadcrumbs and half of the Parmesan cheese over the bottom of the tart shell. Cover with the prosciutto or ham slices, then spread the asparagus segments evenly on top. Beat together the eggs and milk, then stir in the nutmeg, salt and pepper before gently spooning this mixture over the tart filling. Top with the remaining bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese, and return the tart to the 375-degree oven to bake an additional 20-25 minutes, until the egg mixture is set and the cheese starting to brown. Allow to cool on a wire rack for 15 minutes before removing from the pan and serving.

A fitting tribute

Eco-friendly alternatives to gravesite artificial flowers

By Annie L. Scholl

The woods are dotted with brilliant red roses, bright yellow sunflowers and pale purple hydrangea. Spring is here, but these flowers have been with me all winter long. I've watched them grow — not in size but in number. They're the artificial flowers that have blown off the headstones and grave markers in the small, country cemetery where I walk my dogs each morning.

Until my move across the road from this cemetery, I hadn't given any thought to the practice of placing flowers on graves. It's never been my thing. My sister Jeanne decorates our mother's gravesite because she takes pride in it looking nice — she wouldn't, after all, have allowed Mom's yard and house exterior to look ratty while she was alive, Jeanne says — and it makes my sister feel connected to Mom.

In late May, my 83-year-old dad plans to travel back to Iowa from his present home in Georgia, not only to celebrate his grandson's high school graduation, but to make the cemetery rounds over Memorial Day weekend. In years when he can't get back to Iowa, Dad sends Jeanne money so that she and her husband can do the tour for him.

It's an old tradition. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs website, on May 5, 1868, three years after the Civil War ended, Decoration Day was established as a time for loved ones to decorate the graves of the war dead with flowers. It's believed May 30 was originally selected because flowers would be blooming all over the country. Now, of course, it's called Memorial Day and celebrated on the last Monday in May.

For many, Memorial Day has become the time that they head to the cemetery to remember their loved ones. The ritual of placing fresh flowers on graves has mostly given way to artificial arrangements of plastic, silk and polyester. My guess is that most people who decorate their loved ones' grave spend time at the site, then drive away, trusting their beautiful tribute remains.

My morning cemetery walks, however, show me that many of these lovely looking arrangements don't stay anchored. Even after a relatively mild wind or rainstorm, the cemetery grounds and nearby field and woods are littered with artificial flowers — even the ones with metal brackets meant to keep the arrangement mounted on the headstone.

Littering, I'm sure, wasn't anyone's intention.

So what is the alternative to artificial memorial arrangements for people who are environmentally conscious? Real flowers, right? Yes, but be mindful. In that same little country cemetery by my house, someone had the right idea by leaving a bouquet of real yellow roses on their loved one's grave. However, he or she left behind the cellophane wrapping, too. It ended up in a garbage can after I retrieved it from the grass on the edge of the cemetery.

Again, I'm sure that wasn't the giver's intention.

Artificial flowers litter a graveyard following a windy day. (Photo by Annie L. Scholl)

So what else can you do? Decorate with fresh flowers from your own pesticide-free garden is one great idea. Or, consider these five other options:

- **Plant flowers.** Most cemeteries won't allow you to plant in the ground, but check to see if you can leave a planter box. You could fill it with a plant like lantana, which thrives with little moisture and produces flowers all summer and fall.
- **Spruce it up.** Spend time cleaning up your loved one's gravesite. Remove leaves and other debris. Trim away long grass from the stone. Take that time to think about that person. No need to leave anything behind but your love.
- **Plant a tree.** In your own yard, of course. Choose your loved one's favorite tree or one that makes you think of that person. Add a bench and you have a sacred space to sit and remember your loved one.
- **Make a donation.** Take the money you would have spent on a memorial arrangement and donate that money instead to a charity or organization that was important to your loved one.
- **Write a letter.** Thank your deceased loved ones for the contributions they made to your life. Tell them what you miss about them. If you have forgiveness work to do, include that, too. Tuck your letter away, or create a ritual and burn it.

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

Pollinator power

These small but mighty garden helpers need our care

By Laura Anderson Shaw

The folks at the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center in Dixon, Iowa, have long been good stewards of the planet, working to preserve forests, grasslands, wetlands and the wildlife there while also offering outdoor recreation and education for the community.

Now, the center officially has pledged to protect pollinators like bees and butterflies as part of the Xerces Society's Bring Back the Pollinators campaign.

According to the Wapsi River Environmental News quarterly, the center has pledged to "grow pollinator-friendly flowers, provide nest sites, avoid pesticides and spread the word."

Naturalist and director of the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center Dave Murcia says the center has always recognized the role of pollinators and has held programs in support of them, but now, the center is working to raise awareness.

Of the 100 crops that make up about 90 percent of the world's global food supply, Murcia says 71 percent are dependent on bees alone to pollinate, including fruit trees. "That's scary when you're looking at the bee population declining," he says.

In order for the many types of bees and other pollinators (such as butterflies, moths, nectar-feeding birds like hummingbirds and other insects such as beetles) to do their jobs, the "habitat has to be there for them (to) feed themselves," Murcia says.

Pollinator-friendly habitats offer nectar as well as pollen, which provides food to the animals as they pollinate. They also are chemical- and pesticide-free. Murcia says bees that visit plants treated with chemicals can bring that residue back and kill their hives.

Pollinator-friendly habitats also offer nest sites. These could include cavities, leaf cover, water sources, foraging and space to raise young. "If the native plants aren't there for food and nest sites, then the native pollinators will not be here," says Murcia.

In addition, the center also is installing a beehive and a pollinator garden by the nature center that will include native shrubs and trees such as paw-paws, gooseberries, bee balm, butterfly weed and viburnum. The garden and observation hive will give visitors an "up-close" look at the types of native plants the pollinators are drawn to, and the connection between the two.

Murcia says the center also will encourage people to plant native, pollinator-friendly plants that bloom during a variety of seasons at home and in their own communities, and minimize or eliminate the use of chemicals as they do so.

Pollinator-friendly plants include flowers such as monarda and milkweed, trees such as basswood and locust, and fruit-bearing plants such as blueberries, raspberries and tomatoes.

For more information about the types of native plants pollinators are drawn to, or to take the pledge to protect pollinators yourself, visit the Xerces Society's Bring Back the Pollinators website, xerces.org/bringbackthepollinators.

Overall, pollinators are "critical for our food source as humans," Murcia says. "We want to spread the world about how important the pollinators are."

Laura Anderson Shaw is a writer on staff with Radish.

Got the bug?

If you're interested in learning more about what can be done to help pollinators in your own backyard and across the Radish region, you'll want to check out the Quad Cities Pollinator Conference to be held June 10 and 11 at Jumer's Casino and Hotel, 777 Jumer Drive, Rock Island.

The conference will include a variety of educational sessions as well as keynote presentations given by John Phipps, commentator for U.S. Farm Report, and Dr. May Berenbaum of the University of Illinois department of entomology.

For a complete schedule of workshops, list of conference fees, and registration information, visit qcpollinatorconference.org.

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REGISTER NOW!

Registration is now open for the inaugural **Quad Cities Pollinator Conference, June 10-11, 2015,** at Jumer's Casino & Hotel, Rock Island, IL.

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Commencement address by May Berenbaum, Ph.D, Department of Entomology, University of Illinois.

Speakers: Bayer Advanced • City of Davenport • Family Farmer • IL Beekeeper • Ion Exchange • IA Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship • IA Producer • IA State Apiarist • IA State University • Master Gardeners • Monsanto • Nachusa Grasslands • NRCS • Pheasants Forever • Sawyer Beef • Tall Grass Prairie Center • United Soybean Board • University of IA • University of Northern IA • U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Topics: plant-pollinator relationships, pollinator decline, designing pollinator support plantings, land conservation practices, and pollinator-friendly landscapes in agricultural & urban settings.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Agricultural community; municipal, state and federal government employees; landowners; homeowners; beekeepers; and educators.

INFORMATION

For more information and registration, visit **www.qcpollinatorconference.org**.
Exhibitor space & sponsorships are available.

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Living Lands & Waters
Freight House Farmer's Market
Eastern Iowa Community Colleges
Radish — Healthy Living From the Ground Up
The Singh Family Charitable Giving Fund

farmers' markets

ILLINOIS

BUREAU COUNTY
Bureau County Farmers' Market, 429 S. Main St., Princeton; 3-6 p.m. Tuesdays and 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturdays, May 23-Oct. 24. 815-875-2616

CARROLL COUNTY
Mt. Carroll Farmers' Market, north side of courthouse on Market Street; 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 31. mtcarrollil.org

HENRY COUNTY
Geneseo Farmers' Market, City Park on Pearl Street; 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays, June 6-Oct. 31. 309-507-0002, geneseofm@geneseo.net

Kewanee Farmers' Market, 200 W. 3rd St.; 7:30-11 a.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays, May 16-Oct. 31. 309-852-2175

JO DAVIESS COUNTY
Elizabeth Farmers' Market, St. Paul's Lutheran Church parking lot, 411 W. Catlin; 3-6 p.m. Fridays, May 1-Oct. 30. 815-218-6942 or facebook.com/elizabethfarmersmarket

Galena Farmers' Market, Old Market House Square, 123 N. Commerce St.; 7 a.m.-noon Saturdays, May 9-Oct. 10. 815-777-1838

Galena Territory Association Farmers' Market, 2000 Territory Drive; 7:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. May 24; June 7, 21; July 5, 19; Aug. 2, 16, 30; Sept. 6, 27; and Oct. 11. 815-777-2000

Hanover Farmers' Market, in front of Hanover Township Library, 204 Jefferson St.; 9-11 a.m. Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 3. 773-430-4871

KNOX COUNTY
Galesburg Farmers' Market, parking lot on Simmons Street between Seminary and Kellogg streets; 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 31. 309-368-1750

Oneida Farmers' Market, across from DT Sales and Service parking lot, 221 W. U.S. 34; 3-6 p.m. Thursdays, June 18-Sept. 24. 309-483-8412 or facebook.com/oneidafarmersmarket

LEE COUNTY
Dixon Farmers' Market, Hay Market Square Park, Highland and 3rd Street; 7 a.m.-noon Wednesdays and Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 31. 815-284-3306

MCDONOUGH COUNTY
Macomb Farmers' Market, Courthouse Square; 7 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursdays and Saturdays, May 21-Oct. 17. 309-837-4855 or facebook.com/macombfarmersmarket

MERCER COUNTY
Main Street Farmers' Market, Central Park, Highway 17 and College Avenue, Aledo; 4-6 p.m. Thursdays, June 4-Oct. 8. 309-582-2751 or aledomainstreet.com

OGLE COUNTY
Polo Farmers' Market, 200 block of S. Division Avenue; 3-6 p.m. Thursdays, July 9-Oct. 15. 815-946-3131

PEORIA COUNTY
RiverFront Market, 212 SW Water St. (parking lot between Liberty and Main Streets), Peoria; 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays, May 23-Sept. 26. 309-671-5555

ROCK ISLAND COUNTY
East Moline Farmers' Market, Skate City parking lot, 1112 42nd Ave.; 8 a.m.-noon Wednesdays and Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 31. 309-235-6425 or growersmarkets.com

Franklin Field Farmers' Market, 12th Avenue and 9th Street, Rock Island; 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays, June 6-Oct. 24. 309-786-2609

Cunningham-Brooks Farmers' Market, 9th St. and 4th Ave., Rock Island; 4-7 p.m. daily, June 6-Oct. 24. 309-786-2609

Rock Island Farmers' Market, Rock Island County Health Dept., 2112 25th Ave.; 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sundays, May 24-Oct. 25. 309-235-6425 or growersmarkets.com

Trinity Moline Market, UnityPoint Health-Trinity Moline, 500 John Deere Road; 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 31. 309-235-6425 or growersmarkets.com

WARREN COUNTY
Monmouth Farmers' Market, First State Bank of Western Illinois parking lot, N. Main and W. Boston streets; 7 a.m.-noon Fridays, June 5-Oct. 30. 309-734-3181

WHITESIDE COUNTY
Twin City Market, 106 Ave. A, Sterling; 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays, year-round. 815-626-8610, twincityfarmersmarket.com or facebook.com/twincityfarmersmarket

Morrison Farmers' Market, 204 E. Lincolnway (Route 30) next to the Heritage Museum, Morrison; 8-11 a.m. Saturdays, May 23-Sept. 26; 5-8 p.m. July 29, downtown Morrison. 815-772-4749, morrisonfarmersmarket.com or facebook.com/morrisonfarmersmarket

IOWA

CEDAR COUNTY
Cedar County Farmers' Market, south of the courthouse, Tipton; 7:30-11 a.m. Saturdays, May 16-Oct. 3. 563-946-3551

Mechanicsville Farmers' Market, across from fire station on 1st Street; 4-6 p.m. Tuesdays, May 26-Sept. 29. 563-432-7756

Tipton Farmers' Market, next to gazebo on courthouse square; 4-6 p.m. Thursdays May 7-Oct. 29; 3-5 p.m. Thursdays Nov. 5-April 28. 563-940-7824

West Branch Farmers' Market, Gazebo at Main and Downey streets; 4-6 p.m. Tuesdays June 2-Oct. 30; Town Hall, 110 N. Poplar St., 9-11 a.m. Nov. 7, Dec. 5, Jan. 2, Feb. 6, March 5, April 2, May 7. 319-643-2044

CLINTON COUNTY
Comanche Farmers' Market, A&B Storage lot on 21st St.; 4-7 p.m. Tuesdays June 2-Sept. 29. 563-259-9414

Lyons Farmers' Market, Lyons Four Square Park, Clinton; 4-6 p.m. Wednesdays and 8-11 a.m. Saturdays, May 27-Oct. 26. 563-577-2216

Preston Farmers' Market, Iowa 64 at Twogood Park; 4-6 p.m. Thursdays, June 25-Sept. 17. 563-577-2216

DES MOINES COUNTY
Riverfront Farmers' Market, 400 N. Front St., Burlington; 5-7 p.m. Thursdays, May 7-June 4, June 25-Sept. 10, and Sept. 21-Oct. 1; and downtown Jefferson St. 5-7 p.m. June 11, 18 and Sept. 17. 319-752-6365

DUBUQUE COUNTY
Dubuque Farmers' Market, on Iowa Street between 10th Street and Loras Boulevard; 7 a.m.-noon Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 31. 563-588-4400 or facebook.com/dbqfarmersmarket

Dyersville Area Farmers' Market, Commercial Club Park, 225 11th St. SE; 2-5:30 p.m. Thursdays, May 14-Oct. 8. 563-875-2311

HENRY COUNTY
Mount Pleasant Farmers' Market, Wright Family Pavilion at McMillan Park, Walnut Street; 4-6 p.m. Wednesdays and 8:30-11 a.m. Saturdays, May 16-Oct. 17. 319-931-7842 or facebook.com/mtpfarmersmarket

IOWA COUNTY
Amana Colonies Farmers' Market, Henry's Village Market, V Street, Homestead; 4-7 p.m. Fridays, June 5-Sept. 4. 319-622-3931 or henrysvillagemarket@gmail.com

Williamsburg Farmers' Market, NE corner of Williamsburg Square; 4-6 p.m. Fridays, May 29-Oct. 16. 319-646-2075

JACKSON COUNTY
Maquoketa Farmers' Market, Ohnward Fine Arts Center, 1215 E. Platt St.; 4-6:30 p.m. Tuesdays, May 19-Oct. 20. 563-652-6978 or maquoketafarmersmarket@gmail.com

JEFFERSON COUNTY
Fairfield Farmers' Market, Howard Park at Main and Grimes streets; 3-6 p.m. Wednesdays and 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 31. 641-919-3212

Fairfield Senior Citizen Site Farmers' Market, 209 S. Court St.; 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturdays, Nov. 7-April 30. 641-919-3212

JOHNSON COUNTY
Coralville Farmers' Market, parking lot of the Coralville Community Aquatic Center, 1513 7th St.; 5-7 p.m. Mondays, May 4-Oct. 5. 319-248-1750 or facebook.com/coralvillefarmersmarket

Iowa City Farmers' Market, lower level of Chauncey Swan parking ramp between Washington and College streets; 5-7 p.m. Wednesdays and 7:30 a.m.-noon Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 31. 319-356-5210 or facebook.com/ficfm

Mercer Park Farmers' Market, 1317 Dover St., Iowa City; 3-6 p.m. Tuesdays, May 5-Oct. 27. 319-356-5210

Oxford Farmers' Market, Creekside Park on Mill St.; 5-7 p.m. Mondays, May 11-Sept. 28. 319-828-4959

University Heights Farmers' Market, 1300 Melrose Ave.; 5-7 p.m. June 2, July 7, Aug. 4, Sept. 1, Oct. 6. 319-354-1433

JONES COUNTY
Anamosa Farmers' Market, 600 E. Main St.; 3-6 p.m. Wednesdays and 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays, June 10-Oct. 17. 319-462-2971

Monticello Farmers' Market, middle school parking lot at 274 S. Main St.; 3-5:30 p.m. Wednesdays and 8-11 a.m. Saturdays, May 9-Oct. 28. 319-480-6739 or monticelloiowafarmersmarket.com

LEE COUNTY
Fort Madison Farmers' Market, Central Park on 9th and Avenue E; 4-6 p.m. Thursdays, May 15-Oct. 1. 319-372-5471 or fortmadison.com

Keokuk Farmers' Market, River City Mall parking lot, 300 Main St.; 7-11 a.m. Saturdays, May 16-Oct. 10. 217-242-4061

LINN COUNTY
Center Point Farmers' Market, south of Center Point Mercy Care off Lewis Access Road; 4-6 p.m. Thursdays, June 11-Aug. 27. 319-849-1508

Central City Farmers' Market, Courtyard Park pavilion, S. 5th Street; 4-6 p.m. Thursdays, June 4-Oct.8. 319-438-1761

Downtown Cedar Rapids Farmers' Market, 2nd and 3rd Avenues SE between 2nd and 5th Streets SE in downtown Cedar Rapids; 7:30 a.m.-noon Saturdays; June 6, 20; July 4, 18; Aug. 1, 15; and Sept. 5, 19. 319-398-5317 or cedarrapids.org

Ely Farmers' Market, Community Center, 1570 Rowley St.; 4-6 p.m. Tuesdays and 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 3. 319-848-2036

Hiawatha Farmers' Market, 10th Ave. parking lot of Guthridge Park; 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Sundays, April 26-Oct. 25. 319-393-1515 ext. 570

Marion Farmers' Market, city depot in City Square Park at 7th Avenue and 10th Street; 8-11:30 a.m. Saturdays, May 2-Sept. 19 (8 a.m.-noon June 13, July 11 and Aug. 8; 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sept. 26). 319-447-3590 or 319-377-6316

Mount Vernon Farmers' Market, First Street Community Center lawn, 221 1st St. E.; 4-6 p.m. Thursdays, May 7-Sept. 24. 319-310-4145

NewBo Farmers' Market, 1100 3rd St. SE, Cedar Rapids; 4-8 p.m. May 8, 22; June 12, 26; July 10, 24; Aug. 14, 28; Sept. 11, 25. 319-200-4050, newbocitymarket.com or facebook.com/newbocitymarket

Noelridge Farmers' Market, Collins Road and Council Street, Cedar Rapids; 4-6 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, May 1-Oct. 16 (closed May 25, July 3, Sept. 7). 319-286-5699 or facebook.com/noelridgefarmersmarket

LOUISA COUNTY
Louisa County Farmers' Market, Youth Center at the Louisa County Fairgrounds, Highway 92, Columbus Junction; 4:30-6:30 p.m. Fridays, May 8-Oct. 9. 319-728-7971, columbusjunctioniowa.org or facebook.com/columbusfarmers-market

MUSCATINE COUNTY
Downtown Muscatine Farmers' Market, corner of 3rd and Cedar streets; 7:30-11:30 a.m. Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 31. 563-260-0950

Muscatine Midweek Farmers' Market, Muscatine Mall parking lot, 1903 Park Ave.; 2:30-5:30 p.m. Tuesdays, May 5-Oct. 27. 563-260-0950

SCOTT COUNTY
Bettendorf Farmers' Market, parking lot at 2117 State St.; 2-6 p.m. Thursdays, May 7-Oct. 29. 563-332-5529

Davenport Farmers' Market, parking lot of NorthPark Mall, Davenport; 8 a.m.-noon Wednesdays and Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 31. 563-332-5529

Freight House Farmers' Market, 421 W. River Drive, Davenport; 3-7 p.m. Tuesdays, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sundays, May 2-Oct. 31; 3-6 p.m. Tuesdays, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays, Nov. 3-April 30. 563-322-6009 or freighthousefarmersmarket.com

LeClaire Riverfront Farmers' Market, south levee on the end of Wisconsin Street; 3-6 p.m. Saturdays, May 2-Oct. 31. 309-314-8278 or visitleclaire.com

Trinity Farmers' Market, UnityPoint Health-Trinity Bettendorf, 4500 Utica Ridge Road, Bettendorf; 3-6 p.m. Mondays, May 4-Oct. 26. 563-332-5529

WASHINGTON COUNTY
Riverside Casino & Golf Resort Market, casino parking lot, 3184 IA-22, Riverside; 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sundays, July 5-Sept. 27. 319-648-1234

Washington Farmers' Market, downtown Central Park, Washington Street and Iowa Avenue; 5-7:30 p.m. Thursdays, May 14-Oct. 22, 319-458-9396

Quite a milestone!

Venerable Q-C hiking club prepares for 2,500th hike

By Chris Cashion

Every journey begins with the first step, and for the Black Hawk Hiking Club, that first step began in 1920 when famed local businessman and outdoor enthusiast John Hauberg founded the group. Now, 95 years later, the hiking club is preparing to celebrate an impressive moment in club history. On May 9, the group will hit the trails for its 2,500th hike.

The hike will begin at 1:30 p.m. at the Black Hawk State Historic Site, 1510 46th Ave., Rock Island. Hikes organized by the club generally last around 90 minutes, though there is often a shorter route available, and the outings are open to anyone who would like to participate.

According to club committee member Joe Taylor, the hikes usually attract about 50 to 75 hikers. To celebrate the 2,500th hike, they are hoping to have 100 to 150 hardy souls on the trails.

"In today's age, when a movie is only number one for a week, a song is a hit for a day and a celebrity is popular for 15 minutes, I like being grounded in an organization that has staying power — 95 years is a long time. And this hike is also special because it gives us five years to get ready for the 100th anniversary celebration in 2020!" Taylor says.

Just don't expect a rain date if you would like to join the club on this milestone hike. One of the other unique things about the club is that they have never canceled a hike, no matter what the weather brings.

The club has hiked throughout the region, but Taylor says Black Hawk State Historic Site seemed just right for the 2,500th hike. "Club founder John Hauberg had a lot to do in establishing Black Hawk State Park — now State Historic Site — in 1927, so this is a great place to celebrate the club's founders and early days," Taylor says.

If you're tempted to join the club on this or any other hike (a calendar of upcoming hikes can be found on the club's website, blackhawkhikingclub.com), Taylor offers a few suggestions. "Listen for someone to yell 'hiya' when it is time to gather together," he says, and "bring a watch or clock because the hike will leave on the dot at 1:30 p.m. A club tradition is to start on time!"

He also suggests when hiking at this time of year, it's a good idea to wear layers, "which you can take off or add to as the weather dictates. It could be cool as you start out, but you will warm up as you hike, so just a T-shirt or one big, old winter coat may not work for the entire afternoon. I would wear hiking boots to help with traction on the trails and to give your ankles support. Tennis shoes will work, but are not the best for this hike."

Perhaps most importantly, you'll want to bring a mug. Why? It's another club tradition to provide a hot beverage to share together after the hike.

And if you find that you just haven't had enough after the hike is completed, that doesn't have to be the end of your excursion. "Black Hawk State Historic Site has lots to offer, so come early or stay late to enjoy the Hauberg Indian Museum and the Civilian Conservation Corps display in the lodge," says Taylor.

__Chris Cashion__ is a writer on staff with Radish. Visit the __Black Hawk Hiking Club__ at blackhawkhikingclub.com or find them on Facebook.

From left, Black Hawk Hiking club members Joe Taylor, Jane Yokoi, Sandy Cline, Bill Howard, Dennis McBride and Maria McBride. (Photo by John Greenwood / Radish)

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Paul Colletti / Radish

Margherita, who was the queen of the people, wanted to try it. The Margherita pizza is said to have been named after her with its toppings of fresh mozzarella, fresh basil, and marinara sauce representing the colors of the Italian flag.

Adventures along the way

In 2013 Anderson discovered a company called Fire Within, based in Colorado. They had designed and fabricated a mobile wood-fired oven like the one Anderson envisioned. He took a two-day safety course in Boulder, Colorado, and got delivery of the truck in April 2014.

Streets of Italy debuted the following month, setting up shop at the LeClaire Farmers' Market and then in the parking lot of Dunn Brothers in Bettendorf every Saturday morning during the warm months.

Currently, Anderson works full time at the Rock Island Arsenal as a contracting officer for the federal government, but he runs the pizza business with the help of his two friends and employees, Eddy Rhodes and Mike Schaefer, during his off hours.

That first year was a real learning experience, he says. In addition to figuring out how much business they could handle, they also learned operating a food truck has some unique challenges. "It's not like a restaurant. Wind can change it. Temperature can change your day. We've cooked in rainstorms, snow, downpours, and mosquito-infested areas by the river," says Anderson.

This year Streets of Italy will be open at the Freight House Farmers' market in downtown Davenport on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. They are looking forward to using it as an opportunity to expand their menu. "We will be doing the classics, but are really excited about featuring a farmers' market pizza every Saturday where my chef will go out into the market and find different combinations using farm fresh ingredients," says Anderson.

They've also already lined up 20 catered events.

Anderson feels prepared and excited for the busy season ahead. "It's the only job that I've ever had that people really thank you for doing your job," he says. "People would specifically come back and say, 'This is amazing, thank you so much, I can't wait for the next one.' People appreciate what you do."

__Becky Langdon__ is a frequent Radish contributor. For more information on __Streets of Italy__, visit facebook.com/StreetsOfItalyPizza.


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Although doctors don't know the cause, a few years later Chad developed a case of psoriasis, an autoimmune skin disease, which only grew worse over time. "I got really depressed," he says. "I even didn't want to go out much," which seems deeply uncharacteristic of this vibrant and outgoing personality. His psoriasis reached a point to where his doctor wanted to prescribe methotrexate, which, according to the National Library of Medicine and other sources, may cause very serious, life-threatening side effects.

Instead, Chad began reading and educating himself about gut flora, nutrition and its effects on the body and the autoimmune system. Influenced in part by the film "Forks Over Knives" and the book "The China Study," which argue that there is a connection between how we eat and degenerative diseases, his family's diet became increasingly plant-based.

"I started taking my own advice," says Chad. "By that I mean I had to take care of my own life and stop being a victim — stop asking myself, 'Why me?' "

A remarkable thing happened: his psoriasis virtually went away. Chad now eats a 100-percent plant based diet.

Growing a business — and a community

The quote, "luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity," is what happened next. One day, Chad and his mother spotted the piece of property on Archer Drive in East Moline which, coincidentally, also included a hoop house and an irrigation system, since the property had been a former landscape business. Chad tracked down the landowner and signed a lease in March 2014, establishing Healthy Harvest Urban Farms & Organic Center LLC.

Clearing out the brush on its two and a half acres meant he had to miss out on planting season the first year, so he and his son Nieko, his partner in the business, turned their attention to buying produce wholesale from certified organic growers and selling them at their business.

Their retail store also stocks everything growers need for their own organic gardens, from seed to soil, tools to amendments, even kits to make raised garden beds. Over half of the property has been set aside for what Chad hopes to be his "pride and joy" — an education center with garden plots available to lease.

Ultimately, says Chad, "you'll be able to get everything you need to sustain your own garden, whether it's (a plot) here at Healthy Harvest Urban Farms, or in your own yard."

Every business card he passes out sums up its purpose: "Healthy Harvest was started with the intention of raising awareness on what we eat and how it directly influences our overall health. Our mission is to share what we've learned with anyone that we can. A sense of community is an important part of our lives and we would like to do our part."

Chad is excited to be part of a national movement of an increasing number of people taking the time to read labels, think about where their food comes from and how it's not just prepared — but manufactured. "Having access to locally grown and organic food means less dependence on our food sources," he says.

His ultimate vision is to continue educating the public, teaching the young, and transforming vacant lots into urban farms. "We want to help organize community gardens wherever we can … to take back ownership of our food and what we eat," he says. "No one's responsible for our health but us."

***Ann Ring** is a frequent Radish contributor. For more information on **Healthy Harvest Urban Farms and Organic Garden Center**, visit facebook.com/healthyharvesturbanfarms.*

The General Store

food for thought

Make it to market

Trips to area farmers' markets reward on many levels

By Cindy Hadish

As a youngster, I didn't fully appreciate the Cedar Rapids Roundhouse, home to a thriving market where my mom would buy seedlings and other items to which I paid little attention back then. Homegrown fruits, vegetables and other local foods were mainstays at our house, whether they were ripe berries picked from our backyard or meat and produce from my grandparents' farm near Chelsea, home to some of the most fertile land in Iowa.

Limited time and a shady yard meant less of my family's food was homegrown as an adult, and as I started reading food labels, especially through a decade of work as a health reporter, I began to see farmers' markets as the missing link to that nutritious, fresh, local food that my brothers, sister and I took for granted as children.

My hometown hosts one of the largest farmers' markets in the Midwest, but the Downtown Cedar Rapids market's sea of people, produce, products and pets isn't for everyone. The crowds that keep some people at bay, however, serve as a boon to the 200-plus vendors, many of whom tell me that this type of market — with upwards of 15,000 customers saturating the streets — is what keeps them in business.

At the same time, those farmers, bakers, gardeners and artists say they appreciate the slower pace of the area's small-town markets, where they can chat with their customers and know many by name. If only more people would take the time to visit their local farmers' market.

Habits are hard to break. It might seem easier to buy a week's worth of groceries at a giant box store, but what are the long-term health consequences? Why not buy apples from a market vendor, knowing they're grown a few miles away? It doesn't take a study to know fresh tastes best, but research does show that fresher food, eaten shortly after harvest, is more nutritious than items that have been sitting in a warehouse and shipped thousands of miles. The pesticides and other chemicals used on many industrial-style farms are another health issue of their own.

When I buy asparagus and carrots from Grinnell Heritage Farm's market booth or spinach from Abbe Hills Farm near Mount Vernon, I know how those vegetables are grown. I've spoken with the growers and know how they manage their fields.

Buying farm-fresh eggs, produce, local honey, meats and dairy from area farmers not only provides healthy meals for me and my family, but a financial boost to those local producers. The $30 I might spend in one day at a market isn't much, but multiply that times 10 or 100 and that grower or baker can stay in business doing what he or she does best.

And, big or small, farmers' markets are a wonderful snapshot of the communities that sustain them. If you are thinking of taking a few summer road trips in the months ahead, building in a little time to stroll through the local farmers' market is a great way to get a glimpse of the many vibrant lives that fill the towns you are visiting.

Photo by Todd Welvaert / Radish

Many years ago, a friend told me in glowing terms about the farmers' market in Washington, Iowa. It took more than a decade to make the trip, but I finally visited last summer. Bakers representing the area's diverse ethnicities and produce vendors hawking vegetables surrounded the fountain in the town's tree-lined park, while savory scents of grilled food wafted through the air.

That bucolic scene, often accompanied by guitar players or other hometown entertainment, is replicated at markets I've visited in Oxford, Marion, Central City, Hiawatha and Homestead, Amana, among numerous others. Those markets don't have hundreds of stalls to meander through, but you'll find a variety of produce at reasonable prices, with friendly vendors who can explain how their food is grown and answer other questions.

This season, why not make it a habit to regularly visit your local farmers market? You'll find flavorful, fresh foods to benefit your own health, and you'll help keep your hometown market and hard-working farmers thriving.

Cindy Hadish *writes about local foods, gardening and farmers markets — and maintains a list of eastern Iowa farmers markets — at homegrowniowan.com. For more information on farmers' markets in eastern Iowa and western Illinois, check out the* ***directory of farmers' markets*** *on page 22 or visit radishmagazine.com.*

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