

# Radish

HEALTHY LIVING FROM THE GROUND UP

GET  
OUT OF  
TOWN  
ON THE  
HIGH TRESTLE TRAIL

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OCTOBER 2011

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treatments

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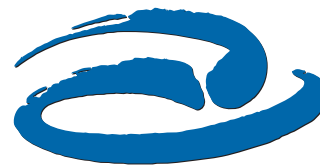
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# from the editor



Photo by Ben Ferguson

Growing up, I had the rare fortune of a school playground that was half covered in trees. Every autumn my classmates and I would gather beneath them at recess and make a game of trying to catch the leaves as they tumbled from above. This is wholly unlike trying to catch a ball; leaves do not fall straight down. They dart and twist, turn over and come about, changing course all the way to earth. Only the most alert among us were able to catch more than a handful before the bell rang, calling us back to class.

My love of being outdoors in this season persists to this day. Because of my early schoolyard studies in how different kinds of leaves fall, I can say with full confidence my favorite leaves to watch in the autumn are from locust trees. I love the way the top and bottom sides of those leaves are subtly different in color, so that as they flicker to earth it looks all the way down as though the wind is switching them on and off. Against a gray sky, those little yellow leaves are pure felicity.

If that's not enough reason to get outdoors this season, here's another: Being in nature makes you smarter. A recent study conducted at the University of Michigan found that people performed a whopping 20 percent better on memory and attention tests after taking a break to walk through an arboretum. That's like going from a C-plus to an A on an exam. This boost in brain power is in addition to the already established benefits nature breaks have demonstrated in other studies focused on improving mood and reducing stress.

This month in Radish you'll find articles that suggest many ways to make the most of being outdoors, from getting out on the newly built High Trestle Trail to gathering flowers to dye fabric. We also have a story about walking to school written by our youngest-ever Radish contributor. And, just in time for the fall migrations, you'll find an article on observations about changing bird populations in our region.

It's hard to believe autumn is already here, but when I think about how the year has flown and the fun I must have been having to make it seem so, I'm reminded of how enjoyable it is to put a new issue of Radish together each month. With so many interesting articles to read, that's no surprise.

— Sarah J. Gardner  
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**Radish**  
HEALTHY LIVING FROM THE GROUND UP

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# healthy living from the ground up

## features



12

**6 Hit the trail**  
Iowa's newest destination trail is worth the trip.

**8 Going Greek**  
Yogurt that's easy to make and even easier to eat.

**10 Unreasonable woman**  
Anybody can stand up for their hometown, says author.

**12 That one pose ...**  
Yoga Festival instructors discuss personal challenges.

## in every issue

2 from the editor

4 the grapevine

5 contributors

## on the cover



Metal arches over the High Trestle Trail are designed to evoke a mine shaft as a tribute to the coal mining heritage of the area. (Photo by Ben Ferguson)

## departments

**14 handmade**  
Cut and color: Common plants can breathe new life into old fabrics.

**16 eating well**  
Nuts or not? Sorting through the facts about peanut allergies.

**18 environment**  
Feathered friends: Local bird watchers notice changes in bird populations.

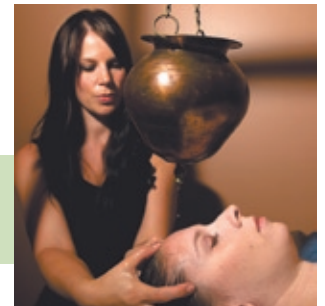
**20 environment**  
House call: Energy audits can help homeowners save a bundle.

**22 body, mind & soul**  
Shirodhara: Ancient knowledge offers new approaches to relaxation.

**24 health & fitness**  
Get on your feet: A reluctant convert to walking discovers its many merits.

**26 community**  
Quad City Earth Charter Summit enters its fifth year.

**32 food for thought**  
Pinkwashing: Make sure you know where your donations are going, and if the products involved are healthy.



## radishmagazine.com

Living Lands & Waters' new floating classroom-on-a-barge will host its first class this month on the Illinois River in Peoria.

The East Moline-based nonprofit has offered barge-based teacher workshops for years. The new barge, however, also will allow LL&W to have classes for high school students. Among other amenities, the classroom has garage doors that, when open, allow students to see the river during workshops.

The 150-foot-long barge also will be a traveling home for LL&W programs manager Tammy Becker and the other crew members.

Read about the floating classroom, view pictures and watch a video of Becker talking about the barge at [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com).

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## HyVee Apples: A Fall Favorite

**October is National Apple Month**

### Fun Facts:

- The U.S. is one of the top producers of apples in the world with over 100 varieties grown commercially.
- On average, each of us consumes over 20 pounds of fresh apples per year.
- The science of apple growing is called pomology.
- The largest apple picked weighed just over 3 pounds.
- On average, a medium apple is 90 calories and contains more fiber than a serving of bran cereal.

**Apple and Smoked Gouda Lettuce Salad**  
Serves 5.

### All you need:

- 1 (11 oz.) bag mixed baby greens
- 1 cup halved red grapes
- 1 apple, cored and chopped
- 2 oz. smoked Gouda cheese, diced
- 2 tbsp. chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup light red wine vinaigrette

### All you do:

In a large bowl, toss lettuce, grapes, apple, cheese and pecans. Drizzle with vinaigrette and toss gently to coat.

**Nutrition Facts per serving:** 150 calories, 8 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 15mg cholesterol, 320 mg sodium, 16 g carbohydrates, 2g fiber, 14g sugar, 4g protein. **Daily Values:** 20% vitamin A, 20% vitamin C, 25% calcium, 4% iron.



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## the grapevine

### From our readers

**Mega Hike** (Sept. 2011): "What a lovely story. I'm inspired to learn how to make my own spring rolls, too. Such a great publication. Be proud."

— *Kathy Casstevens-Jasiek, Utica, IL*

**Masala Bhangra** (Sept. 2011): "I attend Masala Bhangra every Saturday and it is the BEST workout ever! It is a fun way to work up a sweat. I like the music. Neeru repeats the movements so you are able to catch on. Bring water! I encourage those interested to join us Saturday morning, 11:30 a.m. at the Bettendorf YMCA! See you there!"

— *Monique, Davenport*

**The delight of kites** (Sept. 2011): "Thanks for a great article! Perhaps I should build a kite with it."

— *James Patten, Davenport*

## We need your nominations

Know someone who is making a positive impact on local foods or agriculture, the environment or your community? Let us know about them! We are on the lookout for the next recipients of the Radish awards, and you can help. Send an email to [editor@radishmagazine.com](mailto:editor@radishmagazine.com) with the words "Radish award nomination" in the subject line and tell us what your nominee is doing to promote healthy living from the ground up.

## On the Road with Radish

We love to meet our readers! You can find Radish at the following community events. Come say hello, pick up an extra copy and tell us what you'd like to see in future issues.

• **Fourth Quad Cities Earth Charter Summit**, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 15, at the Augustana College student center, 639 38th St., Rock Island. Read more about this event on page 26.

• **Subaru's Zero Landfill Plant**, a public presentation by Subaru sponsored by the Eagle View Chapter of the Sierra Club, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 19, at the Moline Public Library, 3210 41st St., Moline.

• **Freight House Farmers' Market**, 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 1, at Heilmann Hawkeye Acres' booth, 421 W. River Drive, Davenport.

## Like us on Facebook

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# contributors



**Deb McKee Kelly** has four children, and she and her husband Darin own and operate Good Life Farms (goodlifefarms.com) in Eminence, Ind. Deb and Darin grow hydroponic lettuce, basil, arugula and other greens, as well as field tomatoes, spinach, beans and other veggies. They also raise a small flock of sheep. Deb was treated for breast cancer in 2003. She makes her Radish debut this month with an article on pinkwashing on page 32.



Former Radish editor **Brandy Welvaert** returns this month with an article on making yogurt at home. Brandy works and writes for Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport by day. By night she likes to write some more, cook and eat. She lives with her husband, Jeremy, and son, Henry, in East Moline, Ill. Read her article, "Going Greek," on page 8.



**Maggie Howe** grows herbs, spins fibers, hula hoops, bikes, runs, knits, cooks, cans, geeks out with film cameras, listens to records and plays with her cats and house bunny in beautiful central Iowa — and still finds time to contribute to Radish! Online evidence of her various pursuits can be found at prairielandherbs.com and girlwithasword.blogspot.com. Find her article on creating natural dyes to breathe new life into old fabrics on page 14.



**Sofia Serrano** makes her Radish debut this month as the youngest contributor ever featured in our magazine. Sofia is a 14-year-old student who enjoys writing, softball and music. She has a wicked sweet tooth and loves chocolate. She is hoping to someday be a writer, psychological profiler or culinary artist. Read her thoughts on walking to school on page 24.

Also appearing in Radish this month are contributors **Ann Scholl Rinehart** ("That one pose ..." page 12); **Sharon Wren** ("Unreasonable woman," page 10); **Becky Langdon** ("Shirodhara," page 22); **Chris Greene** ("Feathered friends," page 18); and **Ann Ring** ("Nuts or not?" page 16).

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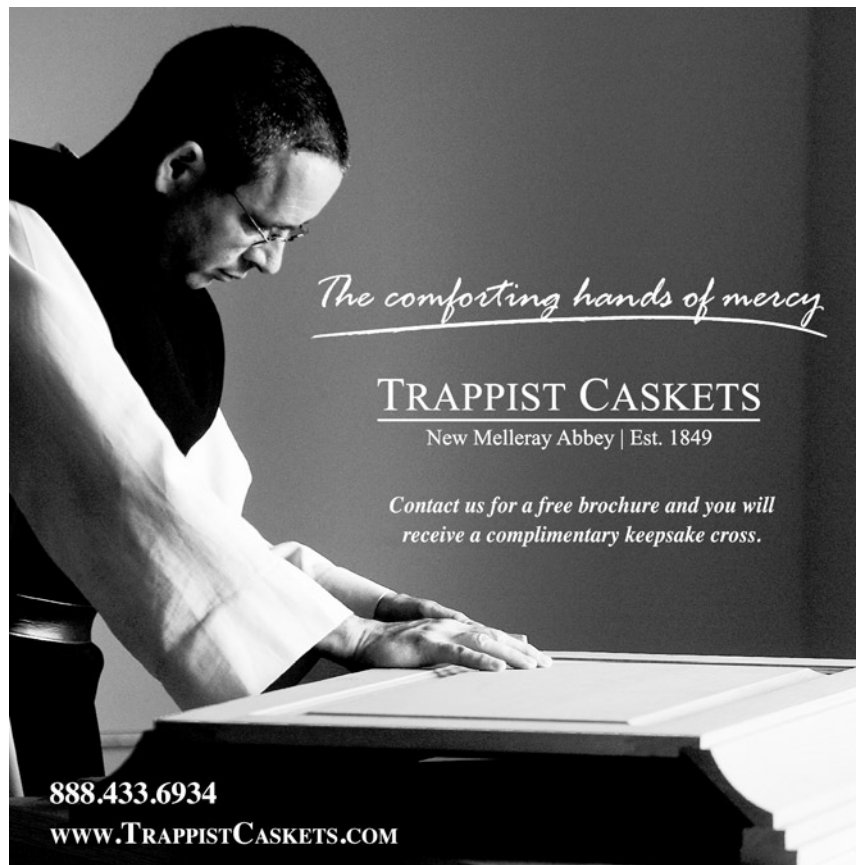
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healthy living

# Hit the trail

## Iowa's newest destination trail worth the trip

By Sarah J. Gardner

It was not the sight I expected to encounter the morning my husband and I unloaded our bikes alongside the High Trestle Trail: a languid hawk in flight, wings spread wide, near enough to see the warm air ruffle the tips of its feathers, soaring below us. Less than three miles into the ride, though, that is exactly what I witnessed. Passing over the bridge from which the trail takes its name, with the Des Moines River 13 stories below us, I spotted the hawk. In a blink it cut below the bridge while we wheeled overhead.

To say it is spectacular doesn't quite do the bridge justice, and yet in truth it is just a half-mile segment of the 25-mile High Trestle Trail. Opened in the spring of this year, the trail lies on a former rail line owned by the Union Pacific railroad. The corridor was acquired in 2003 by the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, which then began working with the five communities through which the trail passes — Ankeny, Sheldahl,

Slater, Madrid and Woodward — to develop the trail, write grants and undertake fundraising that would enable them to purchase the corridor from INHF. Now the trail is owned and jointly managed by the towns and counties along the trail.

"There were so many people involved, and the project was successful because of that — the many people who took an interest," said Lisa Hein, program and planning director for INHF, in a subsequent phone interview. Establishing trails are some of the most complicated projects the organization undertakes,

she says, but also the most rewarding "because of the many lives touched."

Now finished, the trail is well paved and flat, making for a leisurely ride through the surrounding farmland. At several points it crosses over gravel roads and a handful of highways; stop signs warn cyclists of coming intersections. On the day we rode the trail, most of the drivers we encountered were alert and courteous, waving us through the intersections, though it is still better to be safe than sorry. Road vehicles have the right of way and can be hard to spot when the crops are high in the fields. The intersections are few enough and far enough in between that it is not a serious hindrance to

stop, especially considering the large farm machinery that might be traveling on those roads.

You can access the trail from any of the five communities as well as from a handful of entry points along the trail — there is no set starting point. Several



Riders crossing the Des Moines River along the High Trestle Trail. To see the bridge lit up at night, visit [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com). (Photo by John Gibney)



parking lots along the path allow you to jump on or off easily. As you ride the trail, small, unobtrusive signs alert you of places to eat and rest as you approach the different communities. On the day we set out on the trail, I took it as a good sign that we parked near a sandwich stand called “The Radish Express.”

Along our ride, the only serious impediment we had encountered was some wind late in the day, which can be quite gusty coming off the fields. Several segments of the High Trestle Trail have mature stands of trees growing on either side of the path, though, providing a convenient windbreak. And the parts that aren’t wooded have lovely and expansive views of the countryside.

## The trail at night

Because we made a long weekend of our biking expedition, camping at nearby Swede Point Park, we decided to try the trail again the following day, this time after dark. Once night fell, we returned to the Woodward trailhead with our bikes for a different experience of the trail. We set out pedaling down the path with a full moon at our shoulders, our headlights the only other illumination. The moon was quickly lost behind the trees, the night full of the chirruping of crickets and chittering of locusts.

It is difficult to convey fully just how dark the next two miles were. Every so often the headlights of other cyclists would flicker into view, but for the most part we only had the ghostly LED cast of our own lights to show the way. Watching out for oncoming cyclists so as to pass safely while also keeping an eye on the narrow band of trail illuminated by our own lights proved challenging at times. There were also some cyclists with neither head- nor taillights, and given the short range of bicycle lights in general, we scarcely had time to react once we saw them. For your own safety and that of others, I highly recommend taking some form of light with you if you plan an evening trip down the trail.

A little more than two miles into the ride, it suddenly seemed as though the night was being zippered open: the trees fell back on either side, and overhead a swath of moonlit sky rapidly widened. The Des Moines River basin spread out from north to south, and the mudflats, somewhat drab in the daylight, glowed now with a pale sheen. Two stone pillars, part of the art installations at the bridge, rose up fully illuminated like monoliths; I confess I felt a little chill as I sped between them and onto the bridge.

If the pillars felt like relics of an ancient society, what came next was decidedly space-age. It’s not often riding a bike seems to induce a time warp. Blue lights encircled the High Trestle bridge, strung beneath the off-set metal squares that arch over the bridge, creating a tunnel of electric light. With the stars overhead and the empty night above and below us, it felt like we were rocketing through space.

“Even without the art installations the river valley would be spectacular, but the art really grabs your attention,” said Hein. She hopes the amazing vistas along the trail impress visitors with the rich natural heritage of the area and inspire them to protect such places where they live as well.

With all the cycling, we slept well that night (aided, perhaps, by the beer we had to celebrate the end of the ride at the Flat Tire Lounge, a small pub built in a Quonset hut alongside the trail. Ropes strung along one side of the building provide convenient parking for bikes.) In the morning, as we took down the tent and loaded the bikes back on the car, a chevron of geese passed overhead, the first migrating birds of the season. They had their beaks pointed straight toward fall — the perfect time, Ben and I agreed, to make another trip and ride the trail again.

*For more information on the High Trestle Trail, including maps, visit [inhf.org](http://inhf.org).*

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healthy living

# Going Greek

## Yogurt that's easy to make and even easier to eat

By Brandy Welvaert

Let's face it: Food that's good for you and good for your wallet doesn't always appeal to the palate. Nor is it always easy to prepare. Healthy, affordable, delicious and simple are rare qualities to find packaged neatly into one food, but Greek yogurt — which has been gaining popularity in the Midwest over the last several years — manages to do it quite nicely.

"What's Greek yogurt?" you may ask. Good question. Even after having sampled some of the store-bought stuff, I wondered. Greek yogurt was thicker, creamier and a little more tart than the regular yogurt I'd been eating, but I couldn't tell you why. All I knew was that I was addicted after just one bite of Fage brand's 2-percent milkfat variety, which comes nicely packaged with honey on the side.

What I wasn't addicted to, however, was the price. The larger containers of this stuff, which cost less per ounce than individual servings, and created less packaging waste, nonetheless were running me \$5 a week. I soon realized that \$5 on a few servings of yogurt just could not continue to happen — not on my recently slashed grocery budget, anyway. I had to crack the secret to creamy, delicious, crave-able yogurt. I had gone Greek, and I wasn't going to be going back to regular

yogurt anytime soon. (Translation: I hit the Internet quicker than you can say [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com).)

The secret to Greek yogurt, it turns out, is simple. It's strained. You know the water-like substance that you sometimes find has collected on top of your Stonyfield Farms whole-milk strawberry? This stuff is called whey. Greek yogurt has less of it because it's strained out of the product. Simple, right?

Speaking of this straining process, it's probably more correct to call this creamier style of yogurt "strained yogurt" rather than "Greek." Even though the Greeks enjoy strained yogurt, this food probably didn't originate in Greece and has, in fact, been enjoyed across Europe for a long time.

Aside from creating a creamier yogurt, the straining process also yields a more protein-packed yogurt, says Jessica Forbes Stamm, M.S., CCN, a nutritionist who writes for Kalona SuperNatural and at [stammnutrition.com](http://stammnutrition.com). Specifically, strained yogurt has about 60 percent more protein — around 2.5 grams per serving rather than 1.5 grams. This is good news for people who are trying to gain more muscle mass by eating more protein, Stamm says.

Interestingly, however, strained yogurt contains lower levels of a specific type of milk sugar called galactose. "Galactose is a preferred source of energy for the



Photo by Brandy Welvaert / Radish

### Strained Yogurt

- |                                       |                   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| ½ gallon milk, milkfat of your choice | Whisk             |
| ½ cup purchased Greek-style yogurt    | Warm blankets     |
| <b>Supplies:</b>                      | Colander and bowl |
| Slow-cooker                           | Cheesecloth       |

Pour the milk into a 4-quart slow-cooker set to low. Allow the milk to heat for about 2 hours, then turn off the slow-cooker and whisk in the purchased yogurt.

Wrap the entire slow-cooker in warm blankets — I used a large fleece blanket and wrapped it twice — and place it a non-drafty area. Leave it like this for 10-12 hours overnight.

In the morning, line a colander with a cheesecloth and place over a bowl. Be sure that this setup is large enough to handle all of your yogurt. Pour the



brain, and it is needed for expectant mothers to make breast milk,” she says. She adds that this means regular yogurt is better for pregnant and nursing mothers, and for people who feel that they need extra brain nutrition.

As with all dairy products, there are good reasons to seek organic. Equally important, Stamm says, is to buy milk from grass-fed cows, if you can find it. “Grain feeding lowers levels of CLA (conjugated linoleic acid), a really important fatty acid that helps to support blood sugar control and muscle building, which is why bodybuilders take it in supplement form,” she explains.

Considering that I couldn’t find organic Greek yogurt in the large health section at the supermarket near my house — let alone milk from grass-fed cows — I’m going to assume that to go organic, most of us are going to have to make our own. Which is great news because it’s so darn easy. And it’s cheaper, too. I’m now spending about half of what I was on Greek yogurt. Half! So here’s the skinny.

To make strained yogurt, all you need are supplies — and maybe even ingredients — you have in your kitchen. No special tools are necessary. You can make it with your stove and oven, or a slow cooker. Heck, you can use your microwave, if you must, although it’s not the best option since microwaves tend to heat foods unevenly.

With strained yogurt, there’s no need to go to great lengths to get great results. I say this because some people go to insane lengths. I found a Chowhound thread in which a woman writes about turning her bread drawer into a yogurt incubator by affixing an incandescent light bulb to the inside. That sounds like a fire hazard. And I don’t have a bread drawer.

I used my slow-cooker, so that’s the method I’m sharing here. If you’d rather do this with your stove/oven, there’s a great YouTube video from a guy in Vermont who does this — and he wears a neat hat with floppy ears while he does it. I highly recommend this video, regardless of the method of preparation you choose.

warm yogurt into the cheesecloth. It will be runny but not runny enough to go through the cheesecloth quickly. At this point you can refrigerate the yogurt. Leave it like this for several hours. (I left it alone for eight hours.)

How quickly your yogurt strains completely will depend upon its consistency when placed in the fridge and the temperature of your fridge, as well as how thick you want the finished product to be.

When your yogurt is ready, enjoy it as you normally would. I like it with a drizzle of honey. Nutritionist Jessica Stamm prefers it with granola. She also suggests placing it directly into an ice-cream maker to make frozen yogurt. Yum! (Source: HowStuffWorks.com)

*Cook’s notes: For creamier yogurt, replace some of the milk with half-and-half. Be aware that this obviously will increase the fat content of your yogurt.*

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# Unreasonable woman

Anybody can stand up for their hometown, says author



Diane Wilson at home in Seadrift, Texas. (Submitted)

By Sharon Wren

**F**ourth-generation fisherwoman. Author. Mother. A corporation's worst nightmare. All these words describe Diane Wilson. When she learned that Calhoun County, Texas, where she lived, rated worst in the nation on the Environmental Protection Agency's list of toxic-waste disposal sites, she sprang into action. The story of her fight to get corporations to clean up the waters in which her family made its living — and from which locals caught dinner — is chronicled in her book "An Unreasonable Woman: A True Story of Shrimpers, Politicos, Polluters and the Fight for Seadrift, Texas."

Wilson will be the keynote speaker at the annual meeting of Jefferson County Farmers & Neighbors (JFAN), Inc. in Fairfield, Iowa, at 7:30 p.m., Oct. 5. She graciously agreed to answer Radish's questions about her experiences and motivations.

**Radish:** What will you be discussing at the upcoming JFAN conference?

**Diane Wilson:** When I was first invited to speak at JFAN, executive director Diane Rosenberg and I talked about what a Texas shrimper, turned environmentalist, turned peace and justice activist, could speak about that would make sense to Iowans. Well, right off the bat we noted though we were many states apart and Iowa seems to be into big hog farms while Texas is into chemical, nuclear, gas and oil production, our commonality was corporate influence.

I found by listening to Diana Rosenberg that corporate interests were behind Iowa's high number of factory farms, and unfortunately, too, Iowa's share of legislators who received campaign donations. Diane had said that even though JFAN had success in keeping CAFOs (concentrated animal feeding operations) low in Jefferson County, right now, Cargill was looking to expand or build 30 CAFOs in nearby Davis

County because they wanted to increase operations in Southeast Iowa overall.

We have a similar situation in Texas, and I'm going to talk about some of those specific situations where corporations not only influence but control the life blood of the county, and if the community comes into conflict with corporation, well, the community is out. For me and my community and my homes and our bays, I had to resort to unorthodox civil disobedience to keep them from destroying our bays, marine life, fishing communities and our culture on the gulf coast of Texas. I hope I can convey in some small way my heartfelt belief that if a fourth-generation fisherwoman, with five kids, little support and no money can make a difference, then anybody can. People just need to be reminded how powerful and capable of making change they are.

**R:** Tell me about Code Pink for Peace.

**DW:** In 2001, a very diverse group of women from across the nation met in a canyon in California to determine how to become Unreasonable Women of the Earth. The "unreasonableness" aspect was based on a misquote of George Benard Shaw that said, basically, "reasonable women adapt to the world and unreasonable women make the world adapt to them. Therefore all progress depends on unreasonable women." In other words, given the upside downness of a world hell-bent on destruction, only by women being unreasonable could the battle for a healthy planet and a world at peace be won.

One of our first actions was a worldwide hunger strike supporting the survivors of the world's worst environmental disaster that has taken, to date, the lives of over 20,000 people. This disaster was in Bhopal, India, in 1984, when a poison gas leaked from a Union Carbide facility in Bhopal, India.



The name “Code Pink” is a play on the United States Department of Homeland Security’s color-coded alert system in which, for example, Code Orange and Code Red signify the highest levels of danger.

**R:** Have things in Calhoun County improved since your protests against Formosa Plastics?

**DW:** In some ways they are and in some ways they aren’t. The corporations are now much more alert that they are being watched, and I did manage to accomplish zero discharge with both the Formosa Plastics and Alcoa plants. But the business of making chemicals and regarding profit as the highest god has only multiplied and multiplied. Consequently, along with that went the fall of our fisheries and our communities. And the cancers take our people, and the discharges into air and water affect our cattle and our bays. If this is progress, then it is a very sad situation.

**R:** What protests are you working on now?

**DW:** We are beginning a program to test the workers inside the Formosa plant in Point Comfort, Texas, for vinyl chloride exposure. This is an attempt to show that the chemical standards of exposure are not adequate and that a corporation often fudges on how much they are contaminating their workers. Many workers give their lives in exchange for a job. Cancer is rampant. We are trying to do something about it.

**R:** There’s been a lot of news over the past few years about the dangers of plastic, and plastic in our food. Is this because it’s a new development or we’re just now realizing the dangers?

**DW:** I am amazed at how long it takes the rest of the world to catch up what is really going on in this country. I think it is because most Americans are removed from the source. People are always horrified, literally horrified, when I tell them things going on at a day-to-day level in our hometown around those corporations. I have a worker and his son who most days pick up plastic pellets that wash from the chemical companies discharges. These fill the bay, they wash up on the beaches. The fish swallow them, and probably that is the reason that when we tested Vietnamese fishermen (who eat a lot of fish) for phthalates (that chemical that is used in plastics to make it soft and malleable, but is also a hormone disrupter) they lit up like a neon sign.

**R:** What’s something you’d like Radish readers to know about your causes that they might not know?

**DW:** I don’t think people realize the level of corruption and the ways these corporations get around the law. And nothing gets done even when this is brought to the proper authorities because the proper authorities are often mired into the system. It often feels to me like one of those science-fiction movies where one person knows the awful truth about an alien that is fixing to take over the earth, and she’s got two days to stop the invasion, and nobody believes her. I often get the most incredulous looks when I tell someone the truth about what is going on. The public never believes it is that bad.

*Diane Wilson’s most recent book is “Diary of an Eco-Outlaw: An Unreasonable Woman Breaks the Law for Mother Earth” (Chelsea Green, first edition April 2011, 256 pages, \$17.95). To read more of our interview with Wilson, visit [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com). For information at her upcoming appearance at the JFAN annual meeting, visit [jfaniowa.org](http://jfaniowa.org).*

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# That one pose ...

## Yoga Festival instructors discuss personal challenges

By Ann Scholl Rinehart

It's difficult to imagine our yoga teachers struggling with poses. After all, they can seemingly bend, stretch and breathe their way into any position. But the truth is, even they have challenges with certain poses. Here, some of the presenters at this year's Iowa City Yoga Festival, Oct. 7-9, share their journey through some of their most challenging poses. (For more information about the Second Annual Iowa City Yoga Festival visit [iowacityyogafestival.com](http://iowacityyogafestival.com).)

**Challenge: Padmasana (Lotus pose)** *James Miller, 40, founder and organizer of the Iowa City Yoga Festival*

"Lotus taught me patience, consistency, to listen to my body, and to honor and respect the limits of the anatomical structures involved in both the knee and hip joints. Part of the challenge for me was to personally witness in my teaching how some people could do it so effortlessly without any prior training! The other part was learning to discern between signals my body was sending me — some were growth pains and some were absolutely clear: do not go further!"

"I can do Lotus pose now, but not without warming up and not without making sure that I'm moving my hips and knees in the right direction. I'm not at a level where I could use it effortlessly as a meditation seat, but I think I can imagine the day where that could be possible."

**Challenge: Adho Mukha Vrksasana (Handstand)**

*Jeani Mackenzie, 64, Davenport School of Yoga*

"Handstand in the middle of the room has been a challenge for me forever. Perhaps I have some fear of going over backwards; about not having enough balance or strength. I've had a lot of frustration over the years with my inability to figure out what to do or not do. At the moment I have let it go and have decided that maybe I won't be able to do it — and I'm all right with that. I've learned to focus on the things I can do, not the things I cannot do. I can stay strong and flexible and know that I continue to improve both of those things."

"I have discovered in many years of practice and teaching that often we make things too hard mentally and physically. When we let go of the struggle and stop trying so hard, we figure out an easier way to practice yoga and life."

"I have learned I am stronger than I thought," says tapas yoga shala instructor Kelly Harris, now pregnant, of persevering at difficult poses. (Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish)





**Challenge: Jumping** *Kelly Harris, 33,  
tapas yoga shala, Davenport*

"One of my biggest challenges once starting the Ashtanga Yoga system was the jumping through and jumping back required between postures. Several parts of this process were challenging. I don't really have 'the body' for it and began with limited upper body and core strength. We took a technique workshop with Matthew Sweeney, who broke down the component parts and offered a pathway to learn the full expression of a jump through and jump back.

"Before this class, I had been taking the easy way out, jumping in a way that built little to no strength. Daily practice and effort in each jump made the difference. Every time I practiced I did each jump the best I could, as closely as how I had been taught until I wore out and had to back off. Every week and every month, I got a little stronger and a little better.

"Through this pose, I have learned that I'm stronger than I thought. I also learned that even things that I thought were not possible, with sustained effort, are attainable. (Speaking both on and off the mat.) It's now an integrated part of my practice and I enjoy sharing the process with students."

**Challenge: Urdhva Prasariṭa Eka Padasana**  
**(Standing splits)** *Carol Morehead, 55, Passion Dance Studio  
and Morningstar Studio, Fairfield*

"Practicing my Standing Splits, I focus and breathe into the stretch in my quads and hamstrings. As I continue to move deeper into the pose, the tightness in my hips starts to release. My torso moves closer to my standing leg and my upraised leg reaches higher. If my body allows, I aim to reach the full expression of the pose.

"In my personal yoga practice, I follow an intuitive, organic flow, listening to what my body needs in each moment. Moving through each pose, I have my full attention on the sensation where the most stretch is felt. If it does not start to release after a few moments, I back off for a bit, breathe and then re-enter the pose. Moving my body in this way allows my muscles and ligaments to gradually let go. After some time, the restrictions release and I sink deeply into the pose, experiencing a wave of pleasantness or bliss in the area, what I call the 'Ahhhhhh' moment!"

**Challenge: Stillness** *Sandy Eimers, 51, bāl'•ance yoga lounge  
and bāl'•anced breath school of yoga, Ankeny, Iowa*

"Although asana (pose) is gratifying at all levels, the single largest challenge in my yoga practice will always be guiding my mind to stillness. Belligerent hamstrings and waffling core muscles pale in comparison to the challenges of my inattentive mind.

"Yoga introduced a journey of seeking strength from within. Each visit to the mat brings unique experience and offers opportunities to let go of expectations. So much of what we learn on the mat can be applied to encounters in everyday living.

"Coming into stillness involves letting go ... not an easy task for a 'human-doing.' In the Bhagavad Gita Krishna warns that, 'the wise never act with selfish attachment to the fruit of their labor; they give their best effort in fortune and misfortune alike.' Practicing positive detachment is a grueling battle in our reward-based culture."

*For more responses from yoga instructors, visit [radishmagazine.com](http://radishmagazine.com)*

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# Cut and color

## Common plants can breathe new life into old fabrics

By Maggie Howe

Fall's bounty isn't just pumpkins and apples. Mother Nature also provides us with beautiful barks, nuts and flowers to create gorgeous dyes for fabrics. This practice isn't just for crafters: natural dyes are an earth-friendly way to give those no-longer-white shirts and skirts a new look, prolonging their usefulness. Slightly stained, secondhand napkins, towels and tablecloths can be rescued from the discard pile and made "new" with a natural dyebath, too.

It's easy. If you can boil water, you can make natural dyes. All you need are a few scraps of cotton, linen, silk, or wool fiber or fabric, and you are ready to play. A beautiful range of yellows, golds, greens and browns is easily obtained from common roadside plants — even some we overlook as weeds!

First, you must mordant your fabric or fiber. A mordant is a substance that allows the dye to permanently bond with the fabric or fiber — you cannot skip this step, or your dye will not stay! Fortunately, the process is simple. Dissolve about four ounces of alum (available in the spice or canning section of most grocery stores) into two to three gallons of water. Bring to a boil. Turn off the heat, add up to one pound of the fabric or fiber you wish to dye, and let it sit for about 24 hours.

Next, find a handy ditch, a public area full of wildflowers, or a friend's farm, and gather your dye materials. Common autumn dye materials in our area include black walnut hulls, Osage orange bark or twigs, goldenrod flowers, black-eyed Susan flowers, Queen Anne's lace flowers and horsetail. Gather your materials, using approximately the same amount of dye materials as material to be dyed. In other words, if you have four ounces of yarn to dye, you want to gather about four ounces of flowers or bark. This is a rule of thumb, so don't be afraid to stretch it. Less dye material will make a softer color; more will yield a stronger color.

## A beautiful range of yellows, golds, greens and browns is easily obtained from common roadside plants

Roughly chop or grind your dye material. Fresh flowers can be chopped with garden shears; osage orange is a very tough wood, so don't worry too much about breaking it up. It is a very strong dye that yields its color easily. Simply soaking the strips of bark will make a wonderful dye bath. It's best to break apart the walnut hulls if you can, but they don't need to be pulverized.

It's best to find a large aluminum pot and large plastic or metal spoons or tongs to use solely for dyeing; while most dyeplants are safe to digest, not all are. A trip to a local thrift store will most likely yield the perfect supplies.



Wool yarn and linen, silk and cotton fabric dyed using walnut shells, black-eyed Susan flowers, Queen Anne's lace flowers, and Osage orange bark. (Photo by John Gibney)

Place your plant material and a gallon or two of water into your dye pot, and bring to a low simmer. At this point, you have a choice. If you are dyeing cotton, linen or silk fabric and prefer a mottled, textured dye, you can simply add your fabric in with your plant matter and let it simmer merrily away together. (Do not do this with yarn or wool, however, as you will most likely felt or shrink it). Simmer gently for 20 minutes and then check the color of your fabric or yarn. If you like the color, let the materials in the dye vat cool, then wash and dry your fabric. Deeper, richer colors can be obtained by letting the fabric set in the cooled dye bath for a day or longer.

To obtain a smooth, even dye color on fabric, or to dye wool, yarn or fiber, you will need to use a slightly different method. Simmer your plant matter in water for 20 minutes or up to two hours. Let the dye cool several hours or overnight and then strain it through an old T-shirt or cheesecloth. The resulting liquid is your dye. Place it back in the pot, add your dyeables, and bring back to a very low simmer. Let the pot simmer 20 minutes, then check the color of your fabric or yarn. If it pleases you, turn off the heat and let the dye cool; otherwise, continue to heat the dye vat until you have obtained the desired color.

Rinse or wash your fabric or cloth, let dry, and it is ready to use. Naturally dyed cloth makes fabulous quilts, art projects or reusable wrapping paper. For the crafty, any type of natural fiber or yarn — cotton, linen, mohair, angora, wool — can be dyed using these methods and used for knitting or other projects.



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# Nuts or not?

## Sorting through the facts about peanut allergies

By Ann Ring

This June, the journal *Pediatrics* published a study that reached newspapers everywhere: Eight percent of all children in the U.S. have at least one food allergy. Many of those cases are peanut allergies. Why, after more than 100 years of Americans enjoying a simple snack at the ballpark, circus or with grandpa, is the peanut now the most common food allergy?

Dr. John Moore, with Medical Associates Clinic, Dubuque, Iowa, says, yes, there has been an increase in peanut allergies, but its exact cause is unknown. “There are many theories out there in trying to explain this increase,” he says, including an increase in peanut consumption and peanut-containing products; earlier recognition of allergies; and earlier introduction of foods with potentially cross-reacting proteins such as soy.

Another theory, according to Dr. Mark Blaser, of Medical Arts Associates Ltd., Moline, includes the hygiene hypothesis, “the rise in allergies due to modern cleanliness, vaccinations and lack of exposure to infections,” sometimes described as a bored immune system mistakenly picking on miscues. Karen Kelley Maves, MD, an immunologist and allergist and founder of Allergy & Asthma Associates of the Mississippi Valley, Davenport, adds yet another theory — incorrect self-reported allergies that actually turn out to be a food intolerance.

Food allergies, which more commonly develop during childhood but can arise at any age, are an abnormal response to a food protein. In an allergic peanut reaction, the body’s immune system mistakenly believes the food is harmful, even if inhaled. The body overreacts and produces harmful antibodies, called immunoglobulin E (IgE), and makes the body produce histamines and other chemicals, causing mild to severe reactions like hives, eczema, nasal congestion, vomiting, wheezing, low blood pressure, rapid pulse, diarrhea,

respiratory distress, anaphylaxis and death. There is no cure for peanut allergies, though approximately one out of five children may grow out of it.

Parents normally know how to prevent a reaction in their child. But older teens and young adults may be more vulnerable as they sometimes become lax in managing their allergies. Those with peanut allergies must watch for cross-contamination on home- and restaurant-kitchen surfaces and utensils, and certain foods like Asian cuisine may need to be avoided as dishes may contain peanuts or use peanut oil in cooking. Even ice-cream scoops can contain cross contamination.

But what about cross contamination and protecting children when they’re away from parents — like at school? Although most people would agree that all students should have equal access and opportunities to learn in a safe environment, some argue schools have gone too far over peanut allergies. Certain precautions like banning nuts and peanut butter altogether have brought on resentment from parents and teasing from classmates who don’t have a food allergy.

Luckily, this wasn’t the case for 14-year-old Robert VanderLinden of Urbandale, Iowa, whose first peanut reaction, vomiting and hives, occurred around age 3. “He’s definitely anaphylactic,” says his mother, Carla. “When he was in fourth grade he was in and out of the hospital for a week.”

Both Robert and Carla say there have been no problems in school, fortunately. School staff have even emailed Carla food labels of what the school will serve. “During lunch I ate at a peanut-free table with another classmate, but later on I sat with the other kids,” says Robert, now a freshman in high school.

And now that he’s older, Robert, an Iowa resident, is allowed to carry a single dose of epinephrine at all times in case he goes into anaphylactic shock. While Robert doesn’t take his peanut allergy lightly, he believes that awareness and education can reduce the risk of having a reaction. “All of my friends understand my allergy, and a couple even wanted to learn how to use the EpiPen on me in case I had a reaction,” he says.



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environment

# Feathered friends

## Local bird watchers notice changes in bird populations

By Chris Greene

When I was in middle school some 20-plus years ago, I had a teacher who taught all of his students a course in ornithology, the study of birds. I'm not sure how this course of study figured into the framework of physical education or health — the two subjects he usually taught — but I *am* sure that the things I learned in that course stuck with me much longer. I still can't spike a volleyball, but I can identify a rose-breasted grosbeak and an indigo bunting.

Recently though, I've noticed I'm seeing birds that definitely did not make an appearance in Mr. Schroeder's talks. Take pelicans, for example. Suddenly it seems they are everywhere along the Mississippi River, like regal, prehistoric beings that seem quite out of place to me in our local waterways. According to local experts, this is just one of the changes in our local "birdscape."

Brian Ritter, facilitator at Nahant Marsh, Davenport, and Mary Lou Petersen of the Quad City Audubon Society, say there are quite a few birds we are seeing for the first time or in larger numbers than before.

"American pelicans have become far more abundant here than they ever were," says Ritter. "They were quite rare for our area even just 15 years ago. Also, we are seeing more sandhill cranes both migrating through and nesting in the area now. Of course, bald eagle populations have made a remarkable recovery."

"Cooper's hawks have made a comeback since the ban of DDT — it was rare to see them in the 1960s and '70s," says Petersen. "Peregrine falcons have made a comeback also — man did well there with captive breeding and the DDT ban. The gull populations are doing well here. We're seeing more here than we used to during the winter. We are also seeing more turkey vultures and other raptors."

As for the pelicans, adds Petersen, "They started showing up in noticeable numbers around 1995. It's kind of a mystery — they were once common here about 100 years ago, but then all but disappeared here. It seems they've begun pushing their northern boundaries farther again, possibly due to global warming."

While we have enjoyed the appearance (and reappearance) of a number of species, others are not faring so well. "Passenger pigeons disappeared because of severe overharvesting," Ritter says. "Prairie chickens declined because of overharvesting and rapid changes to their habitat. Bobwhite quail and pheasants are disappearing because they prefer shrubby and grassy habitat near fields, and most of those places are being converted into farmland, as the price of corn has risen over the past few years."

Petersen adds that swelling deer populations also have hurt the pheasant and quail populations.

"As deer eat, plant understory is being demolished. Things like garlic mustard grow in its place, and this is no good for the ground-nesting birds. There is also an issue with human population pressure — as more people move further into the country, more bird habitat is consumed," Petersen says.



Two juvenile pelicans at the Mississippi River. (Photo by John Greenwood / Radish)

"Excessive flooding and severe winters over the last few years have had a definite negative impact on some species, such as pheasants," adds Ritter.

A number of groups' efforts either directly or indirectly impact the natural habitats of local birds. These include Quad City Natural Area Guardians, the Scott and Rock Island County conservation boards, the Quad City Audubon Society, the Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Quad City Conservation Alliance, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever and Nahant Marsh.

For individuals wishing to make a positive impact, "create backyard habitat for birds by planting native fruit-, seed-, pollen- or nut-producing plants and adding a water feature. Join or support local conservation groups and efforts. Get involved with bird counts. Use integrated pest-management techniques on your lawn and garden. Educate yourself about our local birds," Ritter says.

If memory serves me correctly, the education is pretty easy to come by. Grab one pair of sturdy, comfortable walking shoes, a pair of binoculars, a good field guide to North American birds, plus a notebook and pencil to record what you see, and you're one "Mr. Schroeder" shy of everything you need to study local ornithology. I'm not sure where one finds a retired middle school teacher who is up for the task, but the local Audubon society does organize guided walks.

Visit [quadcityaudubon.org](http://quadcityaudubon.org) for more information.



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environment

# House call

## Energy audits can help homeowners save a bundle

By Sarah J. Gardner

Larry Kirkpatrick is no stranger to spiders. Prior to becoming a home-energy specialist, Kirkpatrick made his living in pest control. When he came to my home to perform an energy audit, it was a comfort to be told this. After all, at some point I knew he'd venture into the basement, where he'd encounter the furnace, the water heater and cobwebs by the dozen.

Kirkpatrick is employed by A-TEC Energy, a company contracted by MidAmerican Energy to perform home-energy audits. The service is free to homeowners and landlords in Iowa and Illinois and easily arranged. To schedule an audit I simply called MidAmerican and was given a time and date as well as Kirkpatrick's name.

He arrived at my doorstep on time with identification in hand, a jovial older gentleman in a checked shirt holding a packet of information and a black canvass bag. Several foam cylinders jutted from the top of the satchel.

"The LED bulbs I get," I thought as Kirkpatrick set several on my table. "But the foam cylinders? What are they for?"

I got my answer in the basement. After taking a look at my furnace and water heater, Kirkpatrick turned his attention to my pipes. Pulling one of the cylinders from his bag, he slit it down one side and showed me how to pop it around the pipe carrying hot water from the heater. Kirkpatrick explained that with pipes wrapped in this foam tubing — something I could easily do myself — less heat would be lost as the water traveled from the tank.

Next we moved to the upstairs. Kirkpatrick popped the plates off several electrical outlets and poked a skewer into the wall behind them. "Hey, you've got insulation in here!" he exclaimed, beckoning me closer. "It's a spongy texture. You can feel it," he said, and sure enough, I did.

"I get such a thrill and such fulfillment out of helping people, it's quite rewarding," said Kirkpatrick when I asked about his work. More than once



Larry Kirkpatrick checks the age of an air conditioner. (Photo by Todd Welvaert / Radish)

homeowners have called him up a year after his visit to say what a difference they've seen in their bills since taking his recommendations, he said.

I could easily see what would inspire the gratitude. By the end of the hour, Kirkpatrick had replaced my showerhead with a new, low-flow model; had replaced lightbulbs in my dining room and kitchen with bright LEDs; and had calculated how much it would cost to add insulation to my basement and attic. He had even figured out how quickly I would recoup the cost in energy savings for the various projects.

"Keep your receipts!" Kirkpatrick advised before leaving, as he explained how to apply for rebates from MidAmerican Energy. For homeowners in Iowa, the power company will rebate 70 percent total or up to \$750 per project (attic, sidewall and basement) for labor and materials to add the recommended amount

of insulation. In Illinois, the rebate amounts to 70 percent total or up to \$600 per project for insulation added to the attic/sidewall and to the basement.

"Our commitment to the environment is a core value for all MidAmerican Energy employees, which is why we do our best to educate and encourage customers to be energy efficient," explained Tina Potthoff of MidAmerican Energy when asked why the company offered the audits and rebates. "When customers install energy-efficient equipment or work to reduce their energy usage, they can save money on energy bills, make their home or business more comfortable, and help reduce the demand on natural resources needed to produce energy."

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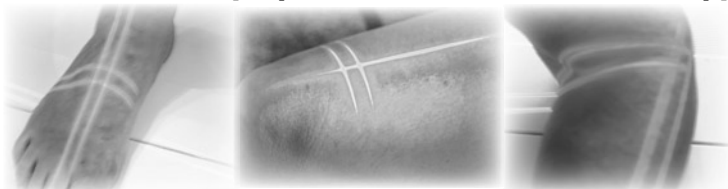
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body, mind & soul

# Shirodhara

## Ancient knowledge offers new approaches to relaxation

By Becky Langdon

At first it seemed like any other trip to the spa. I checked in at the front desk, a sleek, black marble countertop. Behind it was a parchment wall adorned with mirrors framed in wrought iron. Jodi Treptow, a licensed massage therapist, greeted me warmly and led me to a room in back.

With dim lighting, an earth-tone color palette, and nature-inspired music, the room looked and felt much like others I'd seen before, with one exception. A copper, funnel-shaped pot with a hole in the bottom hung over the head of the massage table. The sight of it transported me to another place and time, fitting for the exotic sound of the word Shirodhara, pronounced SHE-row-DAR-uh, the treatment I was to receive.

Although it may seem like the latest "new" thing to try at the spa, Shirodhara is actually quite old, originating in India more than 5,000 years ago. Part of the traditional medicinal practices known as Ayurveda (which translates as "the complete knowledge for long life"), Shirodhara is a soothing experience in which warm oil is drizzled gently over the forehead in a continuous stream invoking a deep sense of relaxation. Some of the largest benefits of Shirodhara include reducing stress, relieving anxiety, and promoting better sleep.

Pouring oil on your forehead? I admit as I went to try Shirodhara firsthand at John Taylor Salon and Day Spa in Rock Island, it sounded a bit messy to me. What I experienced, however, surprised me.

Treptow asked me to lie down with my head tipped slightly back near the edge of the bed and comfortably supported by a neck roll. Soon I felt the warm oil running gently across my forehead and along my scalp. While the stream of warm oil running lightly over my forehead was relaxing enough, the accompanying scalp massage made the experience heavenly. I found myself drifting into a meditative state, completely free from tension.

Sesame oil is one of the oils traditionally used

for Shirodhara, but Treptow explained that it also has moisturizing benefits for the scalp and hair follicles, and it's easier to wash out than heavier oils.



Becky Langdon receives a Shirodhara treatment from massage therapist Jodi Treptow. (Photo by John Greenwood / Radish)

"Since it's a salon and day spa," she said, "we like to use an oil that's most beneficial from a beauty aspect as well."

In the day-spa environment, Shirodhara is offered mainly as a relaxation method. Health spas

specializing in the ancient traditions of Ayurveda, however, incorporate Shirodhara as one of many treatments that make up a holistic approach to health and wellness. The Raj in Maharishi Vedic City, Iowa, just outside Fairfield, is one such spa that has been offering Ayurvedic treatments for more than 18 years.

Graciella Zogbi, The Raj Vedic health educator, says that Shirodhara is the most common and popular Ayurvedic treatment because it can be used on all body types. It's beneficial for anyone with a fast-paced and hectic lifestyle.

"Shirodharas remove stress, anxiety and fatigue deep from the brain and nervous systems," Zogbi says. "They're very relaxing treatments."

The main focus at The Raj is developing personalized health programs that begin with a pulse assessment by an Ayurvedic health expert. These experts listen to the rhythms of the pulse at various levels of pressure, determine an individual's body type, and recommend treatments based on the information they gather.

"The whole health history is present in the pulse," Zogbi says.

Shirodhara is one of the many detoxifying and rejuvenating treatments that may be customized with herbalized oils based on the specific body type. Founded with the goal of offering authentic treatments, The Raj follows the ancient classical texts for every recommendation and program.

While the art of Shirodhara may be ancient, the experience was new for me. I left the spa relaxed and refreshed. My hair felt soft after washing, and to my surprise, I received a compliment on how it looked later that afternoon. Whether you're looking for a way to de-stress, or if you're interested in exploring a holistic approach to health and longevity, Shirodhara might be for you. The treatment starts at \$65 at John Taylor and lasts a half hour. At The Raj it costs \$125 through their day-spa program and lasts 25 minutes.

*To learn more about Shirodhara and other Ayurvedic treatments, visit [johntaylordayspa.com](http://johntaylordayspa.com) or [theraj.com](http://theraj.com).*



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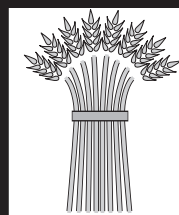
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# Get on your feet

A reluctant convert to walking discovers its many merits

By Sofia Serrano

I'm a 14-year-old girl who has lived most of my adolescent life with technology. Most everyone I know has a cell phone, computer, iPod or even an iPad. We take riding in a car for granted. Last year, though, I started eighth grade and attended a school located much closer to my house. In fact, it was close enough to walk to school.

Over the warmer school months I refused to walk because of the intense heat that makes everything around you sticky and slow. There was absolutely no way I was going to walk through that. However, when the cool breeze of fall rolled around I found out about my mom's plan to kick me out of the car (metaphorically speaking) and leave me to walk home from school. I admit when she told me this before she dropped me off that fine morning my first thought was, "She's ditching me!"

The day crawled on with the usual, bustling stress of middle school: the trampling mob frantically trying to get to lockers, the student body crammed together, the resounding voices in the hallway. It all can grate on my nerves.

When the last bell finally rang through crowded hallways, I practically ran out of the building. Only then did I remember I had to walk. As you can image, this made my "great" day even better. I'm not going to lie, usually after school I'm short-fused, and when I get home I tend to be moody and fussy about even the smallest things.

I set out on my way home putting in the earphones for my iPod and wondering if I could possibly hitchhike back to my house. After walking evenly for awhile I started to unwind. I felt the breeze, enjoyed the rhythm of my walking and the fuzzy

warmth of the sun. To my astonishment I felt myself forgetting about the troubles of my day and loving the lack of crowds. The air was fresh, and when I turned off my music everything hushed.

It was just very peaceful and serene. I hadn't taken the time to enjoy walking since I was little, and honestly I didn't remember what I'd been missing. When I got home I wasn't angry or moody. I felt calm and refreshed, like I had just taken a cold shower after playing a hard game of softball in the summer. My mom was shocked, to say the least. When she asked me how my day went, I just said, "My day wasn't too great, but the walk was nice."

This actually made my mom really happy. Overall, walking home from school has not only

improved my moods on school days but also encouraged me to get my homework done while I have time (those school books are heavy!). It also makes me want to enjoy the outdoors more often.

A warning to parents: While walking may not make your kids want to do their homework or go outside more often, I encourage any

teenager like me to try walking home or just being outside in general — but I also encourage adults to do so. This isn't just for teens. Walking from work whenever possible can help you de-stress from the workday, too.

My high school this year is too far to walk, but I'm still going to take time to de-stress by walking. I might even be able to make the whole walk without turning on my iPod (old habits die hard). While most people (myself included) don't like to trek home through a foot and a half of snow, when the weather is nice, try walking. It's honestly not as hard as you think. It won't kill you — unless, of course, you're getting kicked out of your car, literally.



Gary Krambeck / Radish



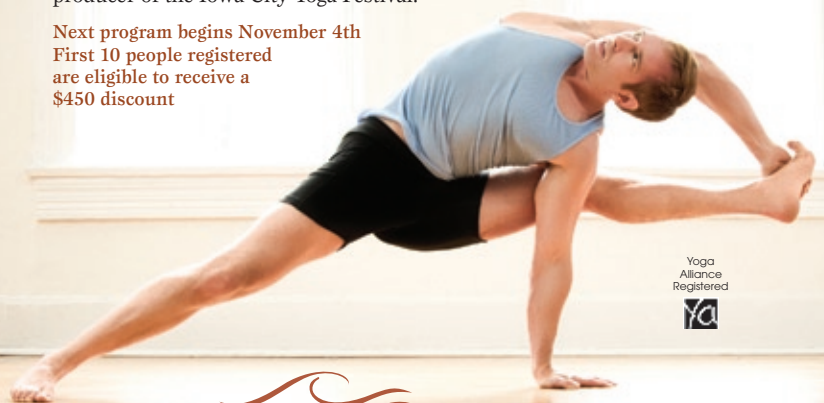
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## community

### Quad City Earth Charter Summit enters its fifth year

By Sarah J. Gardner

Held each year in coordination with Earth Charter Summits around the globe, the Quad City Earth Charter Summit will take place this year from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 15, at Augustana College, Rock Island. It will be the fifth year for the area event, which explores ways to enact on a local level principals outlined by The Earth Charter, a global document drafted in 2000. This year the summit will focus on ways to strengthen and sustain communities through local foods.

"Food is vital when talking about justice and sustainability," explains Sister Pat Heindenry of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in a press release for the event. "Everyone, especially children, should know what they are eating, where it came from, what was put on or in it. All people should have access to fresh, local, chemical-free food."

The Congregation of the Humility of Mary is joined by QC Progressive Action for the Common Good and Augustana College in hosting the summit this year. The event aims to bring together consumers, farmers, businesses, organizations and government agencies to create a vision for an improved food system.

Jason Grimm, food system planner for Iowa Valley Resource Conservation & Development, will be the keynote speaker at the summit. In his talk, he will discuss opportunities to rebuild community-based food systems on the regional, community and backyard scale.

"We can all participate on some level, whether in raising food or purchasing it," says Grimm, describing his upcoming talk. He will discuss successes his organization has had building alternative food systems as well as current research on urban agriculture.

This will be Grimm's first appearance at the Earth Charter Summit, though he says he has heard many things about what is happening with local foods in the Quad-Cities and is "hoping to learn more about it."

In addition to Grimm's keynote address, the summit will also include four breakout sessions: "Growing Food and Justice," led by Lisa Martin for the Congregation of the Humility of Mary; "Growing Local Food Partnerships," led by Garry Griffith, director of dining at Augustana College; "Farm to School," led by Sherry Staub; and "Seed Saving," led by Mitch Tollerud and Cindy Heilmann, of Heilmann Hawkeye Acres.

Cost to attend the Earth Charter Summit includes lunch and is \$10 for general admission, \$5 for students, and free for the unemployed. Advanced registration is encouraged to help plan for meals and seating, though attendees may also register at the summit from 9 to 9:30 a.m. on the day of the event. To preregister, email [qcprogressiveaction@gmail.com](mailto:qcprogressiveaction@gmail.com) or call (563) 676-7580. For more information on the summit, visit [qcprogressiveaction.org](http://qcprogressiveaction.org).



Jason Grimm (Submitted)

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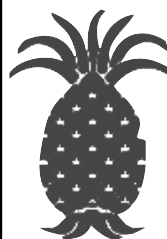
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food for thought

# Pinkwashing

## Make sure you know where your money is going

By Deb McKee Kelly

Now that October is here, breast-cancer awareness is in full swing. As pink pops up in everything from candy bars and soup cans to portable toilets and power tools, you may find yourself trying to decide what fundraisers to support, and which products to purchase.

Financial support is needed for many aspects of breast cancer. A huge number of businesses and efforts are aimed at bringing more awareness to the disease, while others endeavor to raise money to combat it, or to provide free or reduced-cost screenings for women. Breast-cancer fundraising and awareness has slipped past the bounds of the October calendar, and it is now common to hear and see breast-cancer fundraisers and promotions year-round.

But who are these promotions benefiting?

I was 27 at my first Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. I was still practically bald after four months of chemo, still sore from my mastectomy, and I wore the bright pink T-shirt proudly, albeit with a slight twinge of discomfort as more pink goodies were handed to me from every direction: a pink feather boa, pink ribbon pins, bookmarks, fliers, bracelets.

I tried to be gracious. These items were harmless. I should be grateful, I told myself, that so many people care so much about this disease that nearly took my life. I could abide the pink ribbon frenzy, and appreciate the fact that money was being raised to put an end to breast cancer. Besides, I was new to the breast-cancer world. Who was I to question the use of a symbol that brought hope and the promise of a cure?

The pink ribbon has had a long run. It was 20 years ago that the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation created the symbol that would become the icon of the breast-cancer awareness movement. However, the ribbon — and everything it stands for — may be starting to fray at the edges.

As we now know, the color pink has been used recently to market items that may not be benefiting breast-cancer research. Worse, it has been used to market items that may actually contain carcinogenic ingredients.



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The term “pinkwashing” first appeared in 2009, but at that point, it meant the use of pink ribbons and the color pink simply to get consumers to purchase products based on claims of supporting breast cancer research, even though the claims may have had dubious merit. Now, the term is more specific

to marketing by companies that purport to support breast-cancer research and eradication even while they actually promote products that may increase breast-cancer risk.

Corporations aren’t alone in this misstep. In April, Komen began promoting a new fragrance, “Promise Me,” which has angered many in the cancer community. The perfume’s ingredients include chemicals that have been linked to breast cancer in lab animals.

As the familiar pink shows up this month, and in the months to come, be sure to ask yourself what you personally believe is the most important issue surrounding breast cancer. Act accordingly and armed with as much knowledge as you can find. Contact companies that are using the pink ribbon while promoting potentially dangerous products. Let them know you disapprove.

When you choose to donate to an organization, when you do a fundraising walk, or when you purchase some pink-ribboned item, make sure you know where the money is going, and how much is earmarked for the issue you are most interested in supporting. Stay in tune to the alternative breast cancer organizations, such as Breast Cancer Action ([bcaction.org](http://bcaction.org)) and its sister project, ThinkBeforeYouPink.org, to get current information about pinkwashing.

For me, there is just one issue that stands above the rest: research into the cause and prevention of breast cancer — specifically, environmental factors that may be causing more people to be at risk. When the very organizations we trust to work on this issue are making decisions that pit environmental factors against us, we have let them know we will not accept it.

Seventy-one percent of respondents to a poll on PinkRibbon.com said exploitation of the ribbon is OK, because “it generates money for the cause.” You may agree. Just be sure you know what cause you’re supporting. Too many well-meaning consumers have no idea.



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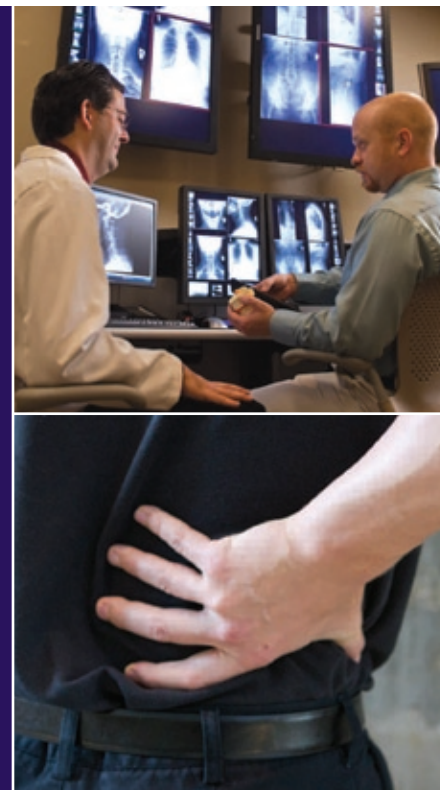


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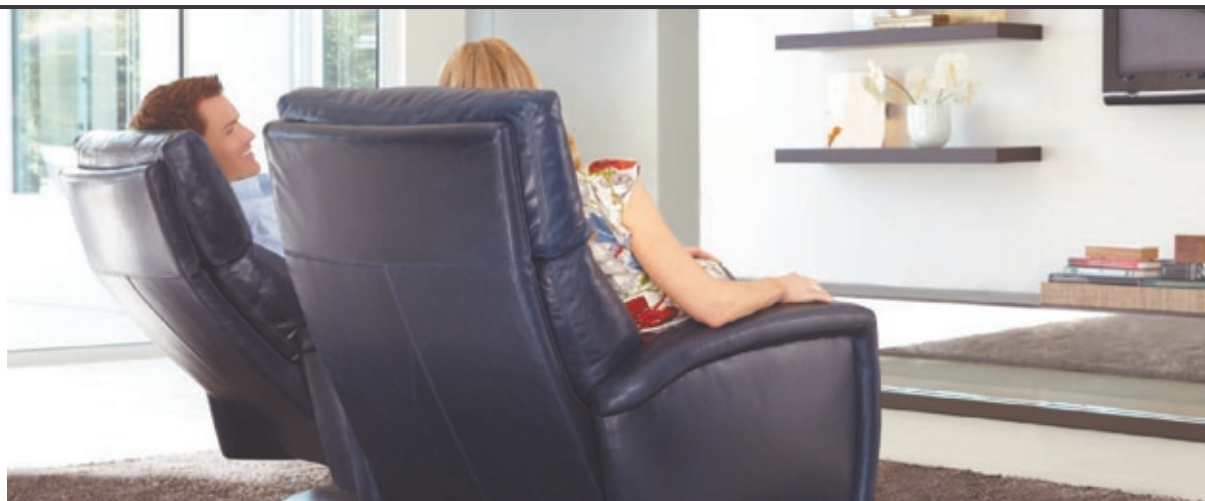
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