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Rita K. Aronson, M.D.

Rita K. Aronson, M.D., was born in Aledo, Illinois, just 30 miles south of Rock Island and was raised on a small family farm near Aledo. She attended Augustana College in Rock Island, where she received an elementary education and music certification. After teaching music in Albany, Illinois, she moved to Kansas, where she attended the University of Kansas, both for premedical courses and medical school. Their first daughter was born at the end of medical school.

The Aronson's then moved to Chicago where she completed residency in the Northwestern residency program. During that time their second daughter was born. In 1991 Dr. Aronson joined "The Group". She delivered their third daughter at Genesis in 1995. The Aronson's currently live in Davenport, where she enjoys gardening, knitting, music, and just being together as a family.

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from the editor



Photo by Todd Welvaert / Radish

How quickly we have come to the time of year colored by frosty mornings and the reds and golds of autumn! Even though October draws us that much closer to the back page of our calendar, I tend to think of it as a time of opening up more than a month of winding down. This has everything to do with being raised in the Midwest. As the harvest is brought in from the fields, horizons start to widen and look scrubbed clean. Likewise, trees that have spent months appearing to be a solid mass of green separate into individual colors and then come apart leaf by leaf.

This little trick of October's — changing our perspective — often makes me think of a passage written by Polish poet Czesław Miłosz:

*Love means to learn to look at yourself
The way one looks at distant things
for you are only one thing among many.
And whoever sees that way heals his heart,
Without knowing it, from various ills —
A bird and a tree say to him: Friend.*

You don't have to look far in this month's issue of Radish to find people who have made a connection to something larger in the course of doing what they love, whether it's a beekeeper with a grasp of the role he plays in supporting the health of pollinators (page 12) or a chef working with dozens of area farmers to create a restaurant truly rooted in local foods (pages 16). Of course, the same could be said of many issues of Radish. In reading these stories and meeting the people in them, I have seen time and again how right Miłosz was in identifying this perspective as healing — when we understand how interconnected our lives are with the lives around us, we find fresh possibilities for our own hearts and for the communities in which we live.

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

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October 2014

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

the grapevine

From our readers

Night hike (Sept. 2014): "I adore hiking after dark and really enjoyed the article in the September Radish. ... A night hike can be made even more enjoyable by purchasing red headlamps or by simply securing red cellophane over a white light with tape or a rubber band. Using a red light instead of a white light will keep the pupils of humans' eyes from shrinking as much when the light is turned on, making it easier to recover night vision after the light is turned off. Also, the animals are less startled by red light; this gives people a better chance to observe the various critters as they go about their nocturnal business."

"I hope the writer and her husband enjoy many more night hikes. There is always some new and marvelous facet of the darkened outdoors to discover. Also, with time and familiarity, many fears will diminish."

— KJ Rebarcak, DeWitt, Iowa

To treat or not (Sept. 2014): "Having treated my 10-year-old ash trees myself against the Emerald Ash Borer this past spring, I read 'To Treat or Not' in the September issue with interest. I found the article's dismissal of the do-it-yourself 'soil drench method' for safety and environmental reasons to be needlessly alarmist. Digging a shallow trench around the base of a tree, spreading a few cups of liquid or granular insecticide, drenching with a sprinkling can of water, and recovering the area with soil poses a negligible risk to the applicator or the groundwater. It should be done proactively on an annual basis, not after a tree has been infected; then it's probably too late. Having a professional inject insecticide into a tree trunk offers a better level of protection (and is the only viable method for older ash trees) but it costs far more. Either treatment is likely less expensive than removal and replacement of a healthy shade tree whose loss comes with its own cost — environmental and otherwise."

— Jeff Dick, Davenport

Just show up (Aug. 2014): "Thank you for this wise and encouraging essay!"

— Dayle, Cedar Rapids, Iowa



Thanks to Friends of Radish, you can find representatives of the magazine this month at the following events:

• **Harvest Open House and Hub Fest**, 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 9, Quad Cities Food Hub, 421 W. River Drive, Davenport. For more information, visit qfoodhub.com.

• **Growers Market Farmers' Market**, 8 a.m.-noon Saturday, Oct. 11, UnityPoint Health-Trinity Moline, 525 Valley View Drive. For more information, visit growersmarkets.com.

• **Meeting the Renewable Energy Challenge Symposium**, noon-3 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 15, main lounge of the Iowa Memorial Union, University of Iowa, 125 N. Madison St., Iowa City. For more information, visit ppc.uiowa.edu/forkenbrock/renewable-energy.

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



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Chef Jared Linn sits at the bar of his restaurant, Barley & Rye Bistro, in Moline. (Photo by John Greenwood / Radish)

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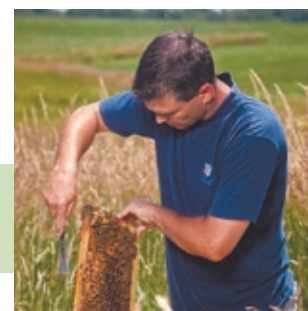
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From removing dumped car parts to rooting out invasive plant and animal species, there's a lot of work to do at the QCCA Wetlands Center. But the land is already hinting at the kind of natural area it can be. Read more about it at radishmagazine.com.

healthy living

Green your getup

Fun costume ideas to cut down on Halloween waste

By Laura Anderson Shaw

There's no question that Halloween is big business. The National Retail Federation projected last year that consumers would spend \$6.9 billion on Halloween, an average of \$75 per person. And the U.S. Census has estimated that in recent years some 41.1 million kids and teens go trick-or-treating. How many of their costumes are shiny and new each year, all wrapped in plastic? How many former costumes and their accessories are thrown away?

As you prepare to face ghouls, goblins and other things that go bump in the night this October, spending a lot of money and creating more waste shouldn't

be things you have to fear. Luckily, when it comes to costumes, there are plenty of ways to "green" your Halloween garb. Here are some ideas to get you started.

At the swap

If you're anything like me, somewhere in your house is a closet or storage container filled with former Halloween costumes or bad fashion decisions. Don't drop them at a thrift store just yet — have a costume swap instead!

Drag out your old costumes, accessories and eccentric clothing, and tell your friends and family to do the same. Choose an evening to host a swap and invite your friends over with their goodies.

Sort the clothing by men's, women's or children's items on tables, the couch or bed, and as guests arrive, sort their clothes, too. Direct your guests to the correct area by making fun signs out of scratch paper, dry-erase boards or chalk boards.







Be sure to have some reusable bags on hand, too, in case your guests need a little help getting their swap items home. Set out some light refreshments and let the costume hunt begin!

Bring and borrow

If you have costumes or clothes you no longer wear, but the thought of letting them go for good spooks you, you don't have to play for keeps! Have a

DIY Unicorn or Dinosaur Hoodie

You'll need:

-  **Scissors**
-  **Needle and thread OR a hot glue gun and glue sticks OR safety pins, depending on how permanent you want your creature's garb to be**
-  **A hoodie**
-  **Thick felt or thick wool scraps from old wool sweaters**
-  **Embroidery floss and needle**
-  **Stuffing**

First, cut squares (to be folded into triangular dino spikes) or rectangles (for a unicorn mane) from your felt or wool. I tend to shoot for 6-inch-by-2-inch rectangles for my mane, and 4-by-4 squares for spikes. The number and size of triangles or rectangles will depend on how full you'd like your mane, how far apart you space the spikes, and how long your shirt is.

For the dinosaur, when you have a few squares made, begin attaching them down the center of the back of the sweatshirt, lined up corner to corner to make a line of diamonds. Sew, glue or safety-pin the pieces down the middle as you go. Once your pieces are secure, fold up the sides of each square to form your triangle spikes, then stitch or glue the edges together. Trim as needed.

For the unicorn, begin gathering your rectangles in groups of two to four, depending on how full and wide you would like the mane. Pinch each rectangle in half as though it were a bow-tie, and then fold the ends together. Tack the pinched points down in rows beginning around the crown of the hood. Leave the ends loose. Continue your work until you've reached the spot just past the area where the hood meets the sweatshirt.

For the horn, cut a tall isosceles triangle from the sweater or felt. Join the sides to create a tall cone. Glue or sew the sides together. If you'd like to hide the ends, turn it inside out.

Thread a length of embroidery floss through a needle and knot the end. Pass the needle through the top end of the horn, letting the knot keep it



bring-and-borrow swap where you and your friends and family may loan costumes, clothes and accessories to each other.

Have guests make simple tags for their items with their name and contact information, and let everyone swap items. After the candy corn dust has settled and the parties for the year are over, everyone can return the costumes to their owners.

Hit the thrift stores

You might be surprised where 10 bucks and a little creativity will get you! Find gear for zombie brides, scarecrows, clowns, cheerleaders, mad scientists and more on the racks of your favorite thrift store.

If you don't have the patience or the nerves to figure out what you'd like to dress as once you get there, make a plan before you go. For instance, the best bears can come from corduroys and fuzzy sweaters. Scary scarecrows are born from oversized flannel shirts stuffed with shredded paper you swiped from the recycling bin.

Get your craft on

Even if you don't have a creative bone in your body, you can still make a fabulously frightening or freakishly adorable costume to celebrate Halloween that will be just as fun to wear in the days after. Need some inspiration? Check out the idea below, which requires only a few supplies and can be made in an evening.

Laura Anderson Shaw is a writer on staff with Radish and the creative crafter who stitched together the Halloween hoodies modeled below by Marley Anderson, 5, of Moline and Silas Thornburg, 4, of Davenport.

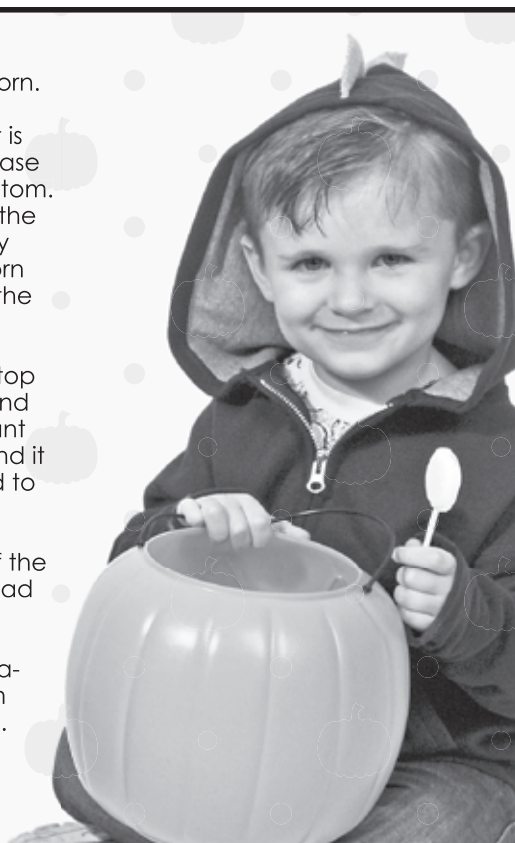
in place while you stuff the horn.

Cut a circle from the felt that is about the same size as the base of your horn to cover the bottom. Glue or sew it to the base of the horn, stopping about halfway around. Carefully stuff the horn before stitching it the rest of the way closed.

Then, take the floss from the top of the cone and wind it around the horn to the base. You want to pull it taught, but don't wind it too tightly! Secure the thread to the base.

Attach the horn to the top of the hood with a needle and thread or glue. And you're done!

For more help and other variations, visit sugartartcrafts.com or twindragonflydesigns.com.



Photos by Gary Krambeck / Radish

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healthy living

Simply stunning

This autumn, treat yourself to a stuffed pumpkin



John Greenwood / Radish

By Sarah J. Gardner

For many years now my husband and I have had a special Halloween tradition: early in the evening when the trick-or-treaters are about to take to the streets, when our jack-o'-lanterns are set out grinning on the steps and a cauldron of treats are set by the door, I retreat to the kitchen and take up a knife to carve out one last pumpkin.

I stop short of giving it a ghoulish expression, though. Instead, once the seeds and strings are removed, I fill the interior with broth and onions and herbs. Sometimes I add some torn bread. Sometimes a little cheese gets stirred in. Once the pumpkin is full, I replace the top and slide it into the oven for a long, slow roast with the soup bubbling away inside.

What a treat it is a few hours later, when the last costumed visitor has retreated from our doorstep, to turn once more toward the kitchen. Our annual pumpkin soup in a pumpkin is a warm and welcoming concoction that seems almost too good to be true: both disarmingly simple and elegantly self-contained. We ladle the broth into bowls, and using our spoons, scrape the roasted flesh of the pumpkin from the inside, stirring it in to become part of the soup.

There's a lot to love about this autumn dish, but if I'm honest, it's not without one or two challenges. Though it's easy to prepare, it can sometimes be a bit tricky to bring to the table — all that hot soup has a way of sloshing about, and the pumpkin, softened from roasting, can sometimes make for a wobbly container. I usually work around this by roasting the pumpkin in a Dutch oven to help catch anything that spills over, and I serve the soup from the stove top.

Last year, though, as we tucked in to our Halloween dinner, I started wondering if there wasn't another way to address this issue. What if the soup was, well, less soupy? A filling for the pumpkin that was more solid would provide a firmer interior for the pumpkin itself and, presumably, be easier to take in and out of the oven.

My mind started racing with delicious

possibilities. The bread I sometimes added to the soup seemed like a step in the right direction, but replacing it with rice seemed like a healthier option and would make for a sturdier stuffing. From there, I thought of all the things I love to eat with rice — sauteed mushrooms, onions, walnuts and spinach — all of which happen to pair just as nicely with roasted pumpkin. And the pumpkin itself is so silky when it's roasted that if I wanted to add some body to the dish with cream and cheese, a little would go a long way.

The next time I got my hands on a pumpkin, I tied on my apron and got to work. Mixing up the filling was easy enough, but as I slid the pumpkin into the oven, it felt like a real leap of faith. Hours would pass before I would know the results. Slowly, the pumpkin changed from bright orange to a deep auburn as it roasted. Slowly, faint aromas of creamy goodness began to waft from the oven. At long last, I could easily puncture the pumpkin with a fork, a sign that it was done.

The results were unquestionably beautiful when I removed the lid of the pumpkin, full of the rich colors of an autumn harvest. As I sampled my first bite, a spoonful of filling and roast pumpkin scraped from the side, I couldn't help but sigh with contentment. Here were so many things I loved in one dish — the perfect comfort food for the frosty, wind-filled evenings of fall.

Sarah J. Gardner is the editor of Radish.

Harvest Stuffed Pumpkin

1 pie pumpkin, weighing 4-5 pounds
1 tablespoon butter
½ large onion, diced
4-5 crimini mushrooms, sliced
2 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
½-1 cup thawed frozen spinach
2 teaspoons sage
½ teaspoon thyme
½ cup walnuts, chopped
½ cup heavy cream

1½ cups cooked long grain brown and wild rice blend, more as needed
½ cup asiago, Romano, or Parmesan cheese (or a blend of all three)
1 cup chicken or vegetable broth, more as needed
Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Using a serrated knife, cut a wide opening around the top of the pumpkin, remove lid, and scrape out the seeds and strings as you would to carve a jack-o'-lantern. (Seeds can be saved to roast later, if desired.) Line a cooking sheet or the bottom of a roasting pan or Dutch oven with parchment paper or a suitably-sized silicone liner and place pumpkin on top. Set aside.

In a large skillet over medium heat, melt butter and begin to saute the diced onions. When they begin to soften (approximately 5 minutes), add mushrooms and garlic. Continue to cook until onions start to brown and mushrooms give up their moisture, about 10-15 minutes more. Meanwhile, drain thawed spinach and squeeze it in your hands to remove the bitter liquid. Roughly chop the spinach and place in a large mixing bowl. Add the onion and mushroom mixture, along with the sage, thyme, cooked rice, walnuts, cream, cheese(s) and broth. Stir to combine.

Ladle the stuffing mixture into the pumpkin, filling nearly to the top. (Pumpkin sizes vary; if needed, additional rice or broth can be added to fill the pumpkin.) Replace the lid of the pumpkin on top and slide the pumpkin onto the middle rack of the preheated oven. Bake for 1½ to 2 hours. The lid will shrink a little during baking and the pumpkin will darken in color. To test for doneness, prick the outside of the pumpkin with a fork; when it can be punctured easily, it is ready.

To serve, spoon the pumpkin filling into bowls, scraping down the inside of the pumpkin as you go to add the roasted pumpkin flesh to the bowls as well. Salt and pepper to taste, and enjoy.

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2014 October Pumpkin Extravaganza!



Sunday, Oct 5, 2014
Scarecrow Making!

1pm Pumpkin Extravaganza Opening!

The Quad City Botanical Center will supply everything for your family to make a scarecrow. Scarecrows made that day will remain at the Botanical Center the month of October and be part of the QCBC fall display. Families who create scarecrows are able to pick them up at the Zombie Olympics on October 26. Scarecrows will be voted on by visitors during the month of October.

Sunday, Oct 12, 2014
Mad Scientist Day & Ice Cream Social

Ice cream, kid activities and more.

Sunday, Oct 19, 2014
Creatures of the Night & Pumpkin Carving
1pm-4pm

Each family will receive one free pumpkin to carve and take home! Additional pumpkins will be available for purchase.

Sunday, Oct 26, 2014
Zombie Olympics
1pm-4pm

(Compete in Goulish Games!)
Costume contest, candy hunt, and awards for the best scarecrows.

A Family Pumpkin Pass can be purchased for \$30 and is good for the entire months activities.

General Admission:

Adults \$6.00 – Seniors \$5.00 – Youth (6-15 yrs) \$4.00 – Children (2-5 yrs) \$2.00
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By Cindy Hadish

Had their small apple orchard proven less productive when they first moved to Iowa, the owners of Sutliff Cider would likely be brewing beer instead of their award-winning hard cider.

"There are only so many apple crisps and apple pies you can make," says Scott Ervin, 54, co-owner with his wife, Pia, of the cidery located at 382 Sutliff Road in Lisbon, Iowa.

The couple moved from Los Angeles in 1995, when Scott, an aerospace engineer, transferred from Rockwell Collins in California to his home state of Iowa. He graduated from high school in Marshalltown and from Iowa State University, while his wife is a California native.

Both were seeking a change of pace that they found in the nearly 40-acre farm just south of Lisbon in scenic rural Linn County. Known for its historic bridge that was severely damaged in the 2008 flood, Sutliff is an unincorporated town about five miles south of the Ervins' farm.

Rustic, century-old barns and other outbuildings dot the farmstead, alongside the apple orchard in which just 20 trees originally grew.

While Scott continued to work at Rockwell up until two years ago, the couple began making cider with apples from the small orchard, although that wasn't their initial choice. "We started making beer, and beer was going to be our thing," Scott says, but after trying out a cider press, they decided to switch gears to hard cider.

He points to Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson among early advocates of cider and its close relative, apple cider vinegar, which has long been used for medicinal purposes.

The Ervins don't make any health claims, but their Sutliff Hard Cider has its own claim to fame. Alongside hard ciders from France, England, Quebec and beyond, Sutliff Cider has been rated among the world's 30 best on ratebeer.com, with just a handful of American ciders ranking in the top 50.

The key to their refreshing drink, Scott says, is handcrafting the cider with 100 percent fresh-squeezed apple juice. "We don't add water, chemicals, nothing," he says.

About 20 bushels of apples are used in each barrel, with each barrel producing 300 bottles of hard cider. Apples used for the cider come from their orchard, as well as other local orchards and some from out-of-state, to keep up with the 200 to 400 gallons of cider they make each week, year-round.

Apples used in the cider include Jonathan, Gala, Cortland and others. The Ervins also planted 600 English apple trees in 25 varieties with "lots of tannins" that make them appropriate for cider-making rather than eating, Scott says.

Balance is important, Scott says. California winemakers helped him refine the blend, made in a style similar to white wine.



Brewmaster Tanner Koomar, left, and owner Scott Ervin, right, in front of the oak barrels in which cider is aged at Sutliff Cider. (Photo by Cindy Hadish)

Outbuildings at the farm are used for storing the Chardonnay oak barrels where the cider is aged for three to six months. Sutliff Cider is the only site in Iowa that makes hard cider, as far as Scott knows.

A barn built in the 1890s, with a limestone foundation that the Ervins had painstakingly restored over a two-year period, serves as the tasting room and headquarters for live music events that happen Sundays from late April through early November, when the tasting room is open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Cider is sold on those days for \$12 per bottle; \$4 for a glass and \$16 per pitcher.

Most of their business, however, is in wholesaling to Iowa bars, restaurants and stores such as Hy-Vee. Scott estimates Sutliff Hard Cider is in 60 to 80 establishments in Des Moines, Iowa City, Ames, Cedar Rapids and Marshalltown.

He notes that the popularity of hard cider has grown, especially compared to Sutliff Cider's early days, when the difference between sweet and hard cider often had to be explained. "It's really taking off as an alternative to both beer and wine," Scott says.

Cindy Hadish writes about local foods, farmers markets and the environment at homegrowniowan.com. To learn more about Sutliff Cider, visit sutliffcider.com.

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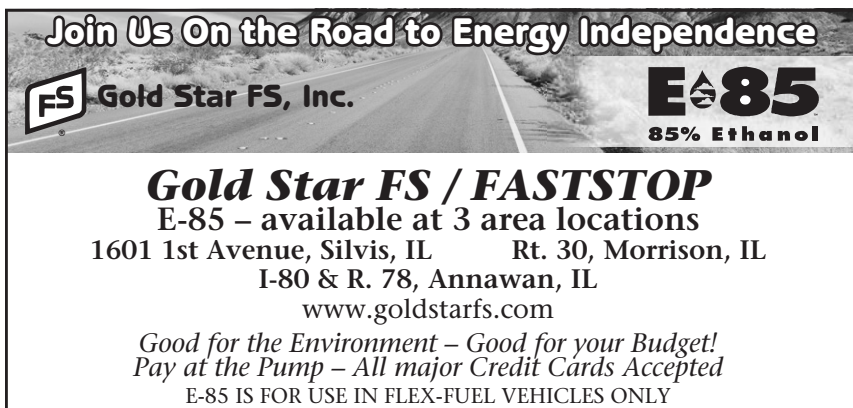
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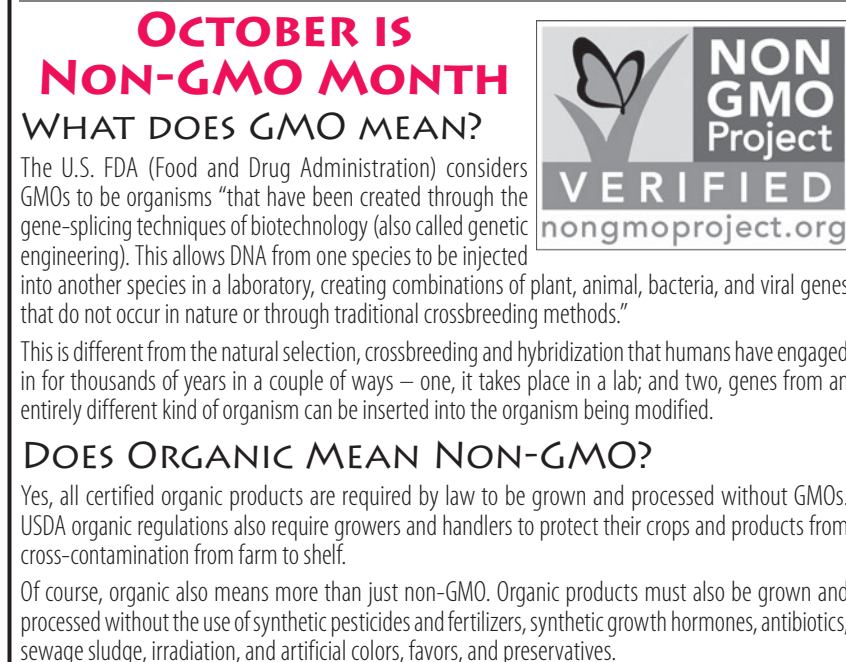
The U.S. FDA (Food and Drug Administration) considers GMOs to be organisms "that have been created through the gene-splicing techniques of biotechnology (also called genetic engineering). This allows DNA from one species to be injected into another species in a laboratory, creating combinations of plant, animal, bacteria, and viral genes that do not occur in nature or through traditional crossbreeding methods."

This is different from the natural selection, crossbreeding and hybridization that humans have engaged in for thousands of years in a couple of ways – one, it takes place in a lab; and two, genes from an entirely different kind of organism can be inserted into the organism being modified.

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Healthy hives

Class to help new beekeepers create thriving colonies

By Nicole Lauer

When you think about the causes behind the declining number of honeybees, loss of habitat and insecticides probably come to mind. But there's another culprit out there: well-meaning but under-educated beekeepers who dive in with the hopes of doing a good deed and end up doing more harm than good.

"They think they're getting into it to help out ... and then their bees die," says Tim Wilbanks, owner of the Kalona Honey Company in Kalona, Iowa. "There's a large number of that, more hobbyists that are sometimes not well educated. They haven't taken a class. They get a hive, it fails."

Wilbanks says media attention on the decline of honeybees and other pollinators has attracted the interest of many to get involved. Unfortunately, he says, many of these people who have been unsuccessful have not taken the time to properly educate themselves.

Wilbanks will lead a new class this fall offered by the University of Illinois Extension Office that will teach people introductory beekeeping. The class is a three-part course that begins with full-day sessions from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Nov. 7 and Nov. 14 at the Deere-Wiman Carriage House, Moline. The final session is slated for March 17 at the same time and location. Registration for the \$50 course is required by Nov. 4. Current University of Illinois Master Gardeners or Master Naturalists receive a reduced rate of \$45.

Extension horticulture educator Martha Smith says the idea is to teach people the foundation information in November and then provide them with a refresher class in March right as they are getting ready to put bees in their backyards.

"There seems to be a resurgence in interest in backyard bees," Smith says. She thinks anyone into backyard gardening or anyone that realizes the



Beekeeper Tim Wilbanks tending a hive. (Submitted)

importance of bees would be good candidates for the class. She says backyard hobbyists and small-farm operators that sell at the farmers' markets are likely class takers, but homeowners might also have a spot in their yards and want to "put a hive up."

This is the first course taught by Wilbanks, but he's previously spoken at beekeeping clubs and

meetings. Although new to the title of instructor, Wilbanks has beekeeping in his blood. He's a fifth generation beekeeper who grew up working in his family's commercial package and queen rearing business, The Wilbanks Apiaries in Claxton, Georgia. Today, he is a part-time beekeeper and full-time chiropractor.

Wilbanks says he started The Kalona Honey Company last year as a small-scale effort to get his four kids, all under the age of 8, involved in bee rearing. He says he has 45 colonies, including his own personal colonies in the Kalona Honey Company and 10 or 15 colonies he owns with a partner in a co-op. Each hive, depending on size, contains up to 50,000 bees.

Wilbanks says starting up a hive in the backyard can run between \$500 to \$700, including a complete hive kit, special protective gear and basic tools. Part of that investment includes \$100 for a package of bees, which includes the queen. There are about 12,000 to 15,000 bees per 3-pound package.

Wilbanks says people first need to ask themselves why they are interested in keeping bees, whether it's solely for garden pollination or with the aim of producing honey. Do they want to just enjoy the hobby or start a small business? Then, he says, they need to familiarize themselves with beekeeping equipment. Other course components include learning what is required to maintain bees, where they can be located and how often and when they should be checked. Wilbanks says he really stresses the essentials.

Because honeybees directly or indirectly effect up to a third of the food we eat, Wilbanks says stemming their decline and aiding their survival is essential.

Nicole Lauer is a regular Radish contributor. For more information on the upcoming University of Illinois Extension beekeeping class visit web.extension.illinois.edu/lhmrs.

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health & fitness

A call to arms

The hows and whys of building upper body strength

By Chris Greene Cashion

The phrases fill magazine pages and fitness class banter: target your biceps, strengthen your shoulders, amp up your upper body. And then there are the photos, oh-so-many photos, of fitness buffs flexing their “guns.” Although the message comes across loud and clear — to be a paragon of health, you need a well-toned upper body — what you hardly ever hear is why. Do arms really matter that much in terms of your overall health and wellness?

According to Erin Phillips, an occupational therapist and a certified yoga instructor from Davenport, we need not forgo the other areas of fitness in favor of conditioning the upper body, but we DO need to find balance and add focus on our upper body as well.

For most of us, she explains, strengthening the upper body “gets shuffled to the back burner in lieu of lower body strengthening and cardio — it just doesn’t often seem as important.” But “the strength, flexibility and balance of the upper body plays an important role in our posture, and that greatly impacts our health in mind and body.”

Phillips suggests looking closely at how we live our lives. For many of us, we spend a good portion of our day hunched over a computer keyboard, at a desk, or seated at some other form of work table. Working and playing in this kind of posture can lead to problems.

“That leads to significant tightness in the front side of the body (anterior shoulders and chest), and significant weakness in the back side of the body (posterior shoulders and upper back). When we work to restore balance in these areas, we restore our posture to a healthier upright position,” she says.

According to Phillips, one of the most natural ways to correct this is to stretch in the opposite direction of that posture. “For example, if you are working at a video display terminal most of your day, you are probably seated with shoulders rolled forward, elbows flexed and palms facing downward. Stretch by rolling the shoulders up and back, straighten the elbows with a big reach behind and twist the palms up toward the sky,” she says.

“Then, to help us stay out of that forward posture, we need to pay attention to our upper back as a means to hold us upright and give our strong arms a good foundation to work from. Start with a simple shoulder blade squeeze from a seated position. This can be done throughout the day.”

She also says there are many forms of exercise that aid upper body strength building that don’t require expensive equipment or complicated movements. You can target whole body or specific muscle groups.

“For instance, weight-bearing exercises are great ways to improve upper body strength but also provide joint and core stabilization,” says Phillips. “Plank exercises and push-ups are a great place to start. You can begin these against a wall, work to an incline on a table or counter top, and then move to horizontal on the floor.”



iStockphoto

She suggests using resistance bands as an easy, low-cost way to add some resistance to your workouts and isolate your bicep and tricep muscle groups.

Yoga also offers opportunities for increasing upper body strength, says Phillips, through weight-bearing exercises like downward-facing dog or variations on plank pose. Shoulder-opening stretches can help with flexibility as well. “Make sure to include arm asanas in your practice to create this balance,” Phillips says.

Sound like a lot to take on? Phillips says it’s useful to remember “our daily lives can be a workout if we are mindful of the way we work. For instance, laundry baskets, grocery bags, and small children can become just the resistance we need to improve upper body strength.”

Finally, remember all pieces of the fitness puzzle are just that — pieces. Keep your eyes on the big picture. “Take a deep breath and think about a simple and manageable plan for healthy living that reflects who you are and what you desire. Surround yourself with an environment of people and things that support your goals. Be kind to yourself and reward your efforts with positive self-talk!” says Phillips.

Chris Greene Cashion is a writer on staff with Radish.

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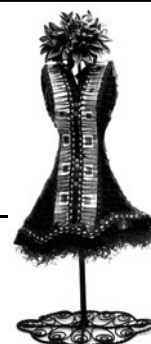
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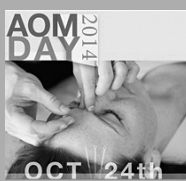
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BARLEY+RYE



Moline eatery makes the most of local foods



Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish

By Leslie Klipsch

At Barley & Rye Bistro, the 87-seat restaurant located at 1320 5th Ave. in Moline, diners enjoy a farm-to-table experience featuring the carefully tended and harvested products of local producers and the care and creativity of a seasoned chef.

Farming is not an easy industry, and neither is the restaurant business, but Chef Jared Linn, who opened the bistro last November, is passionate about making the farm-to-table collaboration work. "The long hours and extra effort are worth it because I get to promote what's available from this area at my restaurant," says Linn.

"We've got so much great produce and protein where we live. People probably don't realize that living just miles away from them are the farmers who provide fresh produce at the Green City Market in Chicago. The quality of the food we have here is fantastic," he says.

Linn showcases this local food by incorporating it into the dishes served at Barley & Rye. The food tends toward classic and fresh, with dishes changing based on what's ripe in the Radish region. Because of this emphasis on the fresh and local, he and his kitchen staff remain flexible and open to improvisation. A sudden rainstorm, for instance, may necessitate a last-minute change in a featured dish simply based on how crops have fared.

On an average week, Linn says he spends several hours shopping at local farmers' markets and meeting with the growers he relies on for superb products. After making his selection, he surveys his inventory and starts creating recipes, drawing on his own creativity and the training he received at the Culinary School of the Rockies and a brief stint in Southern France.

Strong partnerships build a strong menu

Although the farm-to-table approach has become popular in recent years, few restaurants fully integrate local foods into their menu. The national burrito chain Chipotle, for example, touts its commitment to working with local producers, but as its website explains, that commitment is to source 50 percent of one ingredient a portion of the year from a local producer ("local" defined as within 350 miles of the restaurant).

Contrast that with Barley & Rye, where Linn works with more than three dozen local farmers and producers in the immediate area to stock his kitchen year-round. The growers he works with are quick to sing his praises, knowing the effort it takes to make a real farm-to-table restaurant work.

"Restaurants are used to the truck pulling up and getting anything anytime they want, whether it comes from California or Mexico or wherever," says Terry Tygrett of Oak Hill Acres, who supplies Linn with twice-weekly deliveries of organic produce. "He understands if you don't have something, you don't have it — he works with what you have available."

The partnership between Linn and the growers is beneficial in a number of ways. Money spent at the restaurant stays in the community, supporting local farmers and producers, and those growers expand their own customer base. Lyndall Winters of Winter Bison says he has had customers come out to his farm after eating bison at the restaurant and asking where they can find it themselves.

Winters, who has dined at the restaurant himself, describes Linn's cooking as "tasteful. He has a way to bring out the flavor in everything he works with."

Why take on the extra work of a constantly evolving menu, based on what's in season? For Linn it's simply a matter of offering the best meals he can. "People are becoming conscious of what they're putting in their bodies. People don't want to consume chemicals and pesticides if they don't have to," Linn says of his impulse toward farm-fresh ingredients.

Continued on page 24

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The future of food

JFAN speaker to talk about changing the way we farm

By Jane Carlson

To truly change the American food system, we have to go beyond personal choices and restructure the politics of farming and corporate food production.

That's the message renowned food and water safety advocate Wenonah Hauter articulates in her book "Foodopoly: The Battle Over the Future of Food and Farming in America," and the one she'll impart at the annual meeting of Jefferson County Farmers and Neighbors Inc. on Oct. 15 in Fairfield, Iowa.

Hauter is the founder and executive director of Food & Water Watch, an independently-funded organization that advocates for common sense policies that will result in safe food and water. The organization's successes include everything from getting the FDA to set stricter standards for arsenic in apple juice to influencing the EPA to better regulate the chemical perchlorate in drinking water.

For Hauter, it's good news that growing numbers of people are becoming concerned about their food and are making better choices to benefit their health and the environment. But she says large-scale improvements will come only by changing the politics behind the farm bill and the way corporations are able to merge and acquire one another, as well as by implementing stiffer federal regulation of the use of chemicals and stopping the incentivizing of poor food choices.

"People need to have a diet of fruits and vegetables and whole grains," Hauter said. "Processed food is empty calories and it is often advertising that makes people believe they are being properly nourished when they are not."

JFAN is a nonprofit educational foundation. According to executive director Diane Rosenberg, JFAN's work includes educating the community, monitoring for CAFO development, contacting residents near proposed developments. The group also



Food & Water Watch founder Wenonah Hauter. (Submitted)

has provided small grants for alternative farming and educational research.

"We work on the county level but we also work regionally, and we have connections with national organizations as well," Rosenberg said.

One such national organization is Food & Water Watch. Rosenberg said JFAN has begun a dialogue with Food & Water Watch to propose an ordinance to local municipalities in favor of the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act, proposed federal legislation that is meant to end

the use of antibiotics on healthy animals and curtail the growth of superbugs.

Rosenberg said Hauter was asked to speak at this year's annual meeting because of her work in fighting the political and regulatory systems that overwhelmingly favor industrial livestock production.

Prior to founding Food & Water Watch, Hauter worked as an organizer and legislative strategist for environmental groups such as Citizen Action and the Union of Concerned Scientists. She currently is at work on a book that investigates the effects of fracking on agriculture and rural communities, exposing what she calls the "rotten underbelly of fracking."

While Hauter has visited Iowa dozens of times, this will be her first trip to Fairfield, a community she says is inspiring for its commitment to changing the corporate consolidation of the food system.

"They could really be a model for other places in the country," Hauter said.

In addition to Hauter's presentation, the annual meeting will include a brief overview of JFAN's activities presented by John Ikerd, an emeritus professor of agriculture and applied economics from the University of Missouri Columbia and nationally-known expert on issues related to sustainability in economics and agriculture. CAFO litigation experts David Sykes, Richard Middleton, and Charlie Speer will

give updates on current lawsuits in the state of Iowa as well.

The annual meeting will be from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 15 at the Fairfield Arts and Convention Center, 200 N. Main St., in Fairfield. The event is free and open to the public, but a \$5 donation is appreciated to support JFAN's efforts.

Jane Carlson is a frequent Radish contributor. For more information about Jefferson County Farmers and Neighbors Inc., visit jfaniowa.org.

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food

Shake it up

Perk up your popcorn with some easy seasonings

By Sarah J. Gardner

Growing up, I felt there were only two legitimate ways to flavor popcorn: butter and salt for everyday use, and, for special occasions, caramel. Sure, I was aware other flavors existed, but I only had to look at the giant tins of popcorn that were then a popular holiday gift to know I wasn't alone in my basic taste preferences. The tins usually came stuffed with three flavors — plain, caramel and cheese ... or, rather, "cheese."

What I chiefly remember about the third flavor of popcorn was that it was an unnatural color of orange, it smelled vaguely like gym class, and nobody would

touch it. The caramel corn always disappeared first, followed by the plain. The third of the tin filled with the cheese popcorn stayed more or less full until someone got around to throwing it away. Case closed, as far as I was concerned. Two flavors of popcorn were plenty.

Not so long ago, though, I attended a wedding where the reception featured a popcorn bar. Popcorn seasoned with different flavors was handed out in little paper cones. It was delightful. And it got me to thinking maybe it was time to revisit popcorn flavors — with an open mind and a sense of adventure, it seemed there were plenty of possibilities I could mix up and try at home.



Gary Krambeck / Radish

ROSEMARY SALT	NUTRITIONAL YEAST	RANCH POWDER	LEMON PEPPER
<p>THE PREP Pretty easy. Combine ½ cup fresh rosemary leaves (discard the woody stems) and ½ cup kosher salt in a food processor. Pulse several times until the rosemary is finely minced, then spread the herbed salt on a plate for a day to dry out. Stir occasionally for even drying. When done, store in an airtight jar. Sprinkle over buttered popcorn as you would regular salt.</p>	<p>THE PREP There's nothing to make here, so the real work is finding the yeast flakes. The good news is it's increasingly common on market shelves. Nutritional yeast flakes are sold in the health-food section of grocery stores and the bulk-bin area of most natural food stores. Sprinkle it over plain popcorn and start munching.</p>	<p>THE PREP Obviously, you can buy packets of this stuff in the stores, but if you want to avoid the chemical preservatives, make a batch yourself by mixing together ¼ cup dried parsley, 2 tablespoons buttermilk powder, 1 tablespoons dried dill weed, 1 tablespoons garlic powder, 1 tablespoons onion powder and 2 teaspoons salt. Sprinkle over buttered popcorn and store unused portion in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.</p>	<p>THE PREP There are some really wonderful and inexpensive lemon pepper mixes available in the market, but if you'd like to make your own, combine ½ cup dried lemon peel, 6 tablespoons peppercorns, and 6 tablespoons salt in a food processor. Pulse until peppercorns and lemon peel are finely ground. Sprinkle over buttered popcorn; store remainder in an airtight container.</p>
<p>THE VERDICT Fantastic! If there are three flavors that were ever meant to go together, it has to be butter and rosemary and salt. Rosemary works in much the same way with popcorn as it does with potatoes, adding a sunny dimension to the flavor. To be honest, I love this combination so much, I now carry a little container of rosemary salt with me to the movies. It's addictive.</p>	<p>THE VERDICT The only bad thing about this flavor may be the name, which doesn't sound all that appetizing. My nephew, though, is nuts for yeast flakes on popcorn, which he dubbed "cheese flakes" thanks to the flavor they add, a lot like Parmesan cheese. And — bonus! — nutritional yeast is a complete protein and high in B-vitamins, making it a pretty guilt-free addition to a bowl of popcorn.</p>	<p>THE VERDICT Meh. I had high hopes for this one, I'll admit, as ranch was the go-to snack flavor of my youth. But the flavor here wasn't as vibrant as I was expecting. Perhaps because by making it I discovered just how much of ranch mix is parsley, parsley was most of what I tasted. It wasn't bad. I suspect with a little tinkering it could be much better.</p>	<p>THE VERDICT Holy cow, is this ever great! I wasn't sure how this would work, but the pepper adds a real depth of flavor to the popcorn and the lemon adds brightness, making a small snack seem much more substantial — one that is truly savory and delicious.</p>

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October 8, 15, and 16, 2014

www.ppc.uiowa.edu/renewable-energy



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Schedule of Events:

Free Film Screening and Panel Discussion

Dirty Business: "Clean Coal" and the Battle for Our Energy Future

Wednesday, October 8, 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Shambaugh Auditorium, UI Main Library

Student Energy Expo & Poster Session

Wednesday, October 15, 2:00 - 5:00 pm

Iowa Memorial Union Main Lounge

Renewable Energy Debate

Resolved: The United States should adopt and implement a plan to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2030

Mark Jacobson, Robert Bryce, and members of the UI Debate Club

Wednesday, October 15, 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Iowa Memorial Union Main Lounge

Renewable Energy Symposium

Thursday, October 16, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

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Free Public Lecture

Speaking Truth to Power: Lessons from Iowa and Relevance to Global Climate Policies

Dr. James Hansen

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For more information or to register for the symposium, please visit:

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Which is which?

When it comes to alternative health, know your options

By Annie L. Scholl

Statistics from the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) tell us four out of every 10 adults in the United States use some form of complementary and alternative therapy. With dozens of options, there's a lot to choose from! If you are trying to decide if an alternate health practice makes sense for you, it's useful to know what you're getting into. Here is a quick look at 10 modalities — what they involve and what some of their purported benefits are.

✚ **Acupuncture/acupressure:** Based on ancient Chinese medicine, both practices work with the flow of energy through the body along pathways known as meridians. Acupuncture pricks the skin with small needles in specific places to promote relaxation, alleviate pain, and treat disease, while acupressure practitioners use their fingers, hands, elbows and/or feet to apply pressure to do the same.

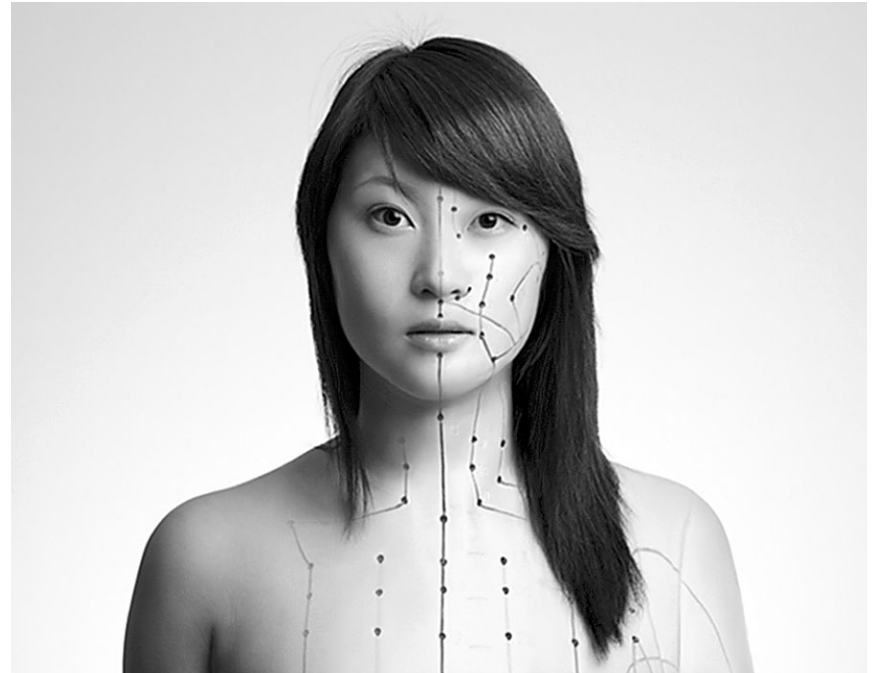
✚ **Aromatherapy:** Aromatherapy involves the use of essential oils — concentrated extracts from plants — that can be inhaled, massaged into your skin, or, on rare occasions, taken orally. It's thought to help with everything from anxiety to pain, insomnia, and psoriasis.

✚ **Ayurveda:** The sages of India developed Ayurveda, a health system that involves two principles: the mind and body are intricately connected — and the mind has the power to heal and transform the body. A practitioner can help you identify your unique mind-body type and the diet, exercise and other lifestyle aspects that are considered ideal for you.

✚ **Homeopathy:** Based on the principle of treating “like with like,” homeopathy is a system that involves taking highly diluted substances, usually in tablet form. It follows the idea that a substance that causes symptoms when taken in large doses can be used to treat those same symptoms if taken in small doses.

✚ **Hypnotherapy:** This complementary therapy uses the power of positive suggestion to bring about change by relaxing the conscious part of the mind while stimulating and focusing the subconscious. When you're in this heightened state, therapists can make suggestions to help break habits such as smoking.

✚ **Naturopathy:** Naturopathy, or “naturopathic medicine,” believes in supporting the body's own healing abilities. Naturopaths seek to find the cause of disease by understanding your body, mind and spirit, and then to help you achieve your best health by educating you about nutrition, exercise, massage and other therapies.



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✚ **Osteopathy:** Osteopaths manipulate and massage bones, joints and muscles to treat various medical disorders. This medical practice is based on the idea that if one part of the body is restricted, the rest of the body must adapt and compensate, resulting in issues like inflammation, stiffness and pain.

✚ **Reflexology:** Reflexology is based on the theory that there are points in our feet, hands and head that correspond to every part of our bodies. Reflexologists apply pressure to these points to alleviate stress, anxiety, depression and other issues.

✚ **Reiki:** This Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation is also thought to promote healing. During a session, a Reiki practitioner is believed to direct the life force energy into your body by resting his or her hands on or above your body.

✚ **Rolfing:** This form of bodywork involves manipulating and reorganizing your body's connective tissues to help release muscular tension at the skeletal level. It often involves a series of sessions and can help release tension and alleviate pain, restore flexibility and revitalize your energy.

Annie L. Scholl is a frequent Radish contributor.

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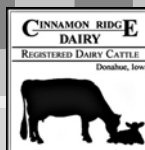


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Continued from page 17

This summer, the Barley & Rye menu was thick with a variety of gorgeous greens, bell peppers, peaches, and herbs snipped from the restaurant's window and patio planters. Bountiful tomatoes and a variety of lush melons made their debut shortly after. Sweet corn showed up in late July and is expected to be a menu mainstay through the fall, along with dishes built on homegrown apples, pumpkins and squash.

Winter diners can anticipate protein-heavy dishes with carrots, onion, honey, cheese and grains — all of which are available locally year-round. Linn also relies on what he “puts up” in his root cellar. Last year he purchased 1,200 pounds of potatoes in November — a decision that rounded out menus for months.

His commitment to using local ingredients touches all parts of the meal, including the bread served at the beginning of each dinner. It's made from grains Linn sources locally and grinds weekly in his kitchen. You can taste the difference, he says, between bread made with freshly-milled flour and bread made with flour that has been sitting on a shelf for weeks or months.

The restaurant space, much like the food, is thoughtfully prepared. Much of the interior is made from reclaimed barn wood, and one wall is covered by a mural depicting the Moline landscape painted by the Rock Island artist Blake Ross. The lighting fixtures are fashioned from upcycled wine bottles — an idea that came to Linn while thrift shopping. It's a crisp, comfortable setting with an appealing patio that seats an additional couple of dozen for outdoor dining.

Linn often stops by tables in the restaurant to chat with customers and ask how they are enjoying their meals. “I love this place and care passionately about the experience of every single customer,” he says. “People should have the best food, the best service, and the best drinks. They should leave with a smile.”

Find more writing by contributor Leslie Klipsch at leslieklipsch.com. For more information about Barley & Rye, visit barleyrye.com.



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A Barley & Rye bison burger and house ketchup. (Photo by Paul Colletti / Radish)

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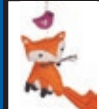
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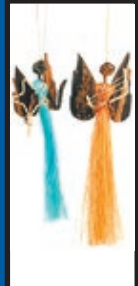
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body, mind & soul

The warrior within

Yoga technique focuses on military, rescue personnel

By Chris Greene Cashion

After reading an article in *Yoga Journal* about military personnel who were using yoga as a tool to deal with post-traumatic stress disorder, yoga instructor Joan Marttila decided “someone” should get the specialized training to offer this type of yoga in the Quad-Cities. She didn’t imagine then that the someone would turn out to be her. From these beginnings, the Yoga Warriors class at the Davenport School of Yoga was born.

To prepare, Marttila attended training in Chicago sponsored by Yoga Warriors International in April. The training, which included sessions with yoga instructors certified in the program and a clinical psychologist from the Veterans Administration, covered “the causes and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder; how the nervous system works and how PTSD affects it; PTSD triggers; the difference between the ‘fight or flight’ nervous system and the ‘rest and digest’ nervous system,” Marttila says.

Statistics vary as to how many active and former military members suffer from PTSD, but for those who experience it, the condition can be life-altering. The condition can cause a multitude of symptoms, including self-destructive or reckless behavior, nightmares, flashbacks, feelings of alienation, aggression, problems in concentration, avoidance of anything that reminds them of traumatic events (people, places, activities), exaggerated startle response — and these are just some of the symptoms.

Marttila says yoga can be used to complement other forms of therapy used to treat PTSD. “Many people think yoga is all about turning your body into a pretzel or chanting some mystical phrases, but really, it’s about yoking the movement required for each pose to your breath and calming your mind,” she explains.

Among other benefits, the sequence of poses used in a Yoga Warriors class help show “how focusing on our breath can change our outlook. For instance, when we get stressed, our breath is very often shallow and rapid. By focusing on deepening and slowing our breath, we can help calm ourselves,” says Marttila.

“Yoga helps our body become stronger and more flexible, which benefits us in daily activities. Many people also report improved sleep. A good night’s sleep helps improve one’s outlook and ability to withstand the ups and downs of daily life,” she adds.

Marttila says that if you pay attention, you may notice something different about those who practice yoga. “If you look at the body of a person who does yoga, you will often note the person’s erect but relaxed posture, their long, strong but not bulked-up muscular system, and their calm demeanor. Yoga encourages good posture, which really helps your body function correctly. The attention to the breath and the slow and mindful attention to poses help give our always-thinking brain a rest,” she says.

A typical Yoga Warriors class lasts about 75 minutes, Marttila says. “The class



Joan Marttila demonstrates Warrior II pose. (Photo by Todd Welvaert / Radish)

begins with a focus on the breath and centering our attention on the movements of the body as we make our way through a series of poses. All movements are done very slowly and deliberately in order to decrease the body’s ‘fight or flight’ response and increase the body’s ‘rest and digest’ response.”

Worries about being too stiff or inexperienced should not keep those interested in the class from trying it. “If an individual finds a pose difficult, modifications can be used to make the pose a possibility. Students are encouraged to realize that yoga is about what you can do with your body and your breath; it’s not about what your classmate can do,” Marttila explains.

Little more is needed to try the class other than simply to show up in comfortable clothes, Marttila says. The Yoga Warriors classes are currently offered on Wednesday nights at 7 p.m. at the Bettendorf location of the Davenport School of Yoga, 3420 Town Pointe Drive. The drop-in fee is \$12.

For those who are curious about Yoga Warriors and whether it would be a good fit for them, Joan Marttila is offering free demonstrations from 1 to 2 p.m. on Oct. 18 and 25. The class is open to all military and nonmilitary personnel interested in yoga as a tool for dealing with PTSD.

Chris Greene Cashion is a writer on staff with Radish. For more information about Yoga Warriors at the Davenport School of Yoga, call 563-322-5354.



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environment

Go green at work

Small changes add up to a more eco-friendly office

By Sharon Wren

Most people want to live a greener life, which might be easy at home but a different story at work. After all, not every company can afford to go completely off the grid. Fortunately, there are many low cost — even no cost — ways to ease your impact on the environment while at work, from the supplies you stock to the choices you make in the course of an ordinary work day.

► **Pause before you print.** One way to save money, ink and paper that's pretty painless is to cut back on printing. After all, not every memo and draft needs to be printed, and many can be shared by email. Unsure if the recipient has the same software that you do? The simplest workaround is to copy and paste text into the body of an email (which, as an added bonus, also cuts down on the spread of computer viruses). Other options include attaching files to an email after converting them to a PDF format using free services available online at sites like freepdfconvert.com or pdfonline.com. And for documents like spreadsheets and slide shows, Google Drive (drive.google.com) is one of several sites that allow remote users to access and collaborate on files.

► **Seek out sustainable paper.**

Speaking of paper, how green are your office supplies? Copy paper made from recycled materials is easy to find, but there are also options for small notepads. These include Redi-Tag's TreeFrog Self-Stick Notes (\$24.36 for a 12-pack), made from 100-percent sugar cane, and their Recycled Self-Stick Notes (\$9.25 for a 12-pack), made with post-consumer materials and nonsolvent, water-based adhesives — which means once used the notes can be recycled again. Free software available to download from sites like simplestickynotes.com and hottnotes.com also let you create small notes on your desktop electronically, further reducing the need for paper.

► **Stock up on the “write” stuff.** A wide array of pencils made from recycled materials are available, including TreeSmart's recycled newspaper pencils (\$8 for 24 pencils), Write Dudes' green recycled denim pencils (\$8.19 for five), and Earthwrite's premium recycled pencils made from reclaimed wood scraps (\$4.49 for 10). In terms of pens, refillable pens such as Paper Mate's InkJoy 550 pens (\$13.93 for eight pens; \$1.98 for three refill cartridges) have always been a more environmentally sound choice. But if pens have a nasty habit of disappearing in your office, there are several low cost options for ones

made from recycled bottles, such as Pilot's Bottle 2 Pen ball point (\$6.90 for five) and gel roller (\$6.99 for three) pens.

► **Cut, clip and staple with green supplies.** As with other desk essentials, scissors can be found made from recycled materials. These include Fiskars' recycled scissors (\$7.99 for 8-inch scissors), featuring handles made from 100-percent post-consumer plastic, and Wescott's KleenEarth recycled scissors (\$6.90 for 8-inch scissors), with handles made from 70-percent recycled plastic (30 percent of it post-consumer). There's even a greener option for that office staple, the stapler. Eco-friendly staplers like Made By Humans' staple-free stapler (\$8.99) work by cutting and folding a tiny flap in the corner of your paper, which can hold up to five sheets together. Better still, the paper can later go directly into the shredder or compost pile without digging out the staple remover. And good, old-fashioned paperclips, which can be used again and again, also can be found made from recycled materials, such as ACCO's recycled paperclips, in which both the metal and coating are made from recycled materials.

► **Solar power isn't just for the rooftop.** Computers and their various accessories use a decent amount of power. Small solar chargers have come far enough in the past few years that they can now charge smartphones, tablets and even laptops. Since a laptop will require more charging ability than a phone, it's important to think ahead and buy a charger with enough power. Options include the Go Power! SUNfilm 5-watt solar panel (\$35.99), which generates enough juice to charge most portable devices. For those who have ditched computers for tablets, there are Bluetooth keyboards such as the Logitech Wireless Solar Keyboard K760 (\$44.99) that power up in the sun and hold a charge for weeks.

Sharon Wren is a regular Radish contributor.



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About borax

Is this mineral an eco-friendly cleaning agent or foe?

By Jeff Dick

Chances are good if you have spent some time making your own household cleaners, you've bought a box or two of borax. Used in everything from homemade laundry detergent to rust remover, borax has long been considered a natural ingredient that is safe to use.

However, if you've also spent time researching cleaning agents, chances are good you've also come across the debate waged in recent years as to whether borax poses potential health risks, especially for children. Others have questioned its green credentials, pointing out that although it is naturally-occurring, borax is pit-mined.

So, which is it? Helpful or harmful? Eco-friendly or environmental hazard?

On one side of the debate is the Environmental Working Group, which has recommended against using the powdery-white substance. Borax, also known as sodium borate or sodium tetraborate, can have short- and long-term health effects, the EWG contends. Skin exposure, inhalation or ingestion can cause rashes, respiratory irritation, and gastrointestinal issues, with toddlers prone to hand-to-mouth contamination.

On the other side of the debate are people like Leslie Martin, a healthy-living advocate who blogs as Crunchy Betty (crunchybetty.com). In her widely linked article "Getting to the Bottom of Borax: Is It Safe or Not?" Martin points out that borax — a combination of sodium and borate — should not be confused with boric acid, which she contends accounts for the misleading conclusions in studies cited by the EWG.

Boric acid is produced when borax is combined with sulfuric, hydrochloric, or other acid. While borax and boric acid sometimes exist together naturally, such as in seawater or volcanic areas, they are not synonymous. Borax is, in point of fact, an alkaline — the chemical opposite of an acid. (The EWG consistently refers to boric acid as "borax's cousin" while conflating the risk of both.)

Martin's reasoning gets the approval of James Cox, a college professor and former Davenport resident who holds a Ph.D. in biochemistry. "Her reasoning is sound," he says. "It's a subject susceptible to confusion, and the Internet is an ideal place to sow misunderstanding."

Among Martin's other points on the borax brouhaha:

- The National Institute of Health ranks borax as a health hazard to the same low level as baking soda and salt. It would require ingesting a lot to cause a problem.
- Borax's high alkalinity probably accounts for any mild skin irritation, just as excessive use of baking soda would have a similar effect. It does not permeate the skin readily but can enter the body through cuts or abrasions.
- Studies indicating borax's potential to disrupt reproductive systems have been done on mice, not humans, force-fed high doses of borax.



John Greenwood / Radish

Becky Rapinchuk, author of "The Organically Clean Home," offers some middle ground in this debate. The potential problems with borax arise when it is inhaled or ingested, so taking sensible precautions when using it make sense. "Keep it out of reach of children and pets, thoroughly rinse all surfaces you use it on, and (as with all powdery ingredients) avoid inhaling it when mixing it in a recipe," she advises, adding the extra work "is well worth it because of the results (borax) gives!"

As for the environmental toll of borax, it is true that the most widely available brand of borax, 20 Mule Team, is produced from a pit mine in California. However, that mine has been widely recognized for its high environmental standards and, according to Scientific American, is considered one of the cleanest-operating mines in the world.

Ultimately, whether borax make sense for your household or fits with your environmental values remains a personal choice. But the good news is whether you feel comfortable using borax while taking some basic precautions, or choose to seek out borax-free recipes for household cleaners, or even look for other eco-friendly cleaning products on the store shelf, options abound.

Jeff Dick is a regular Radish contributor, often writing on consumer issues.

• The General Store •

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By Annie L. Scholl

Mary shouldn't have died. She wasn't a person you would look at and say, "Gosh, she should take better care of herself." In fact she was the proverbial picture of health: Strong, lean, a life-long athlete, and an active mom who loved to shoot hoops and play catch with her sons. Just two days before she was admitted to hospice, even, she went on a 4-mile walk.

But Mary had colon cancer, and three days before Christmas 2012, colon cancer took out this vibrant, funny, full-of-life woman who was just shy of her 56th birthday.

Five months after Mary died, I turned 50 — the magic age when the American Cancer Society recommends colon-cancer testing (earlier, though, if you have risk factors). I wish I could say Mary's death sent me scurrying to sign up for my colonoscopy. It didn't — nor did the fact that my dad and one of my siblings had noncancerous polyps removed.

The truth is I just didn't want to do it — and I blame everyone's horror stories for that.

In much the same way that we Midwesterners say, "It's not so much the heat as it is the humidity," people who have been through a colonoscopy say, "It's not so much the test as it is the prep."

The test, they say, is a cakewalk. But the prep — "let me tell you about the prep!"

And then they do.

Preparing for the procedure, you see, involves taking a strong laxative with the goal of emptying your bowels — completely.

While people's bowel prep stories kept me from getting a colonoscopy when I was 50, I knew I wouldn't put off the test for years. After all, I really did want what only a colonoscopy could give me — peace of mind, or knowledge and early detection if I had cancer. So in July, two months after my 51st birthday, I experienced the dreaded bowel prep — and now, of course I get to tell you my prep story.

The day before my colonoscopy, I went on a clear-liquid diet. For my dining pleasure I chose low-sodium chicken broth, green Jell-O, vanilla Ensure, ginger ale, lemonade, and lemon drops.

That night at 6, the real fun got underway. That's when I mixed up a 64-ounce cocktail of MiraLAX and lemon-lime Gatorade (the latter suggested by one of my older sisters, who shared her prep story) and proceeded to drink an 8-ounce glass of it every 10 to 15 minutes until 24 ounces of it

food for thought

FEAR NOT

Don't let worry keep you from a life-saving exam



Stockphoto / font by Matt Teich

were gone. The remaining 24 ounces I got to save for "breakfast" at 4:45 a.m. — roughly three hours before my procedure.

I drank the first 8-ounce glass, no problem. I had expected it to taste terrible, but actually, it wasn't bad. That didn't, however, keep me from throwing up after the second 8-ounce glass. Excessive throwing up, apparently, is not OK, but fortunately mine was a one-and-done deal.

That, my friends, is the extent of my prep horror story. It wasn't that miserable — and true to what everyone told me, the test was absolutely no big deal. I remember putting on a hospital gown and then talking with the nurse as she did a health history and took my vitals. I remember getting moved to another room and the doctor coming in and greeting me. The last thing I remember before the sedative went to work was the nurse kindly telling me I didn't look 51.

Less than a half hour later, I was in recovery.

As it turned out, I got a clean bill of colon health. No polyps, though there were diverticula present, which are outpouchings in the large intestine. Their presence isn't causing me any problems, but did prompt my doctor to recommend I bump up my fiber consumption, including taking a fiber supplement.

Because my colon got the "all clear," I won't need another colonoscopy for 10 years. By then, just like they say about childbirth, I will have likely forgotten the unpleasant stuff and remember only how great it felt to get the good news.

For you, it might not be a colonoscopy. It might be a mammogram. Or a trip to the dentist. Or even an ordinary physical. Most of us have a procedure we dread that we know we should go in for. Whatever it is for you, go get it done. The worry of not knowing isn't worth it — whether the procedure leads to an early diagnosis or just peace of mind, you'll almost certainly be glad you followed through. After all, in order to work hand in hand with a doctor, you first need to walk through the door.

Annie L. Scholl is a frequent Radish contributor. To learn more about colonoscopies and other recommended diagnostic exams, visit the American Cancer Society's website at cancer.org.

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