

Summer Solstice 2011

Long days
Infused with light, color, sound
Lush green
Flowers and bird song

Hard to imagine the darkness of winter

Yet underneath this celebration
An emptiness waits
Longing to be filled

Ah, the longing - a relentless
yearning for our heart's desire.

Buffalo Bullsheet

Buffalo Mountain Coop and Cafe

Summer 2011

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Coop Hours: 9-7 Mon.-Fri, 9-6 Sat, 10-5 Sun
Café Kitchen: 8-3 Mon.-Fri, 9-1 Sat.

Many of us live within a culture which defines progress solely in terms of material comfort and offers little wisdom or context for the perennial unrest of the heart. We try to fill this vacancy inside with food, sweets, intoxicants, stimulants, possessions, and endless dramas. Our holy grail is romantic love filled with passionate sexuality. And as each fix fades into the veneer of memory, we keep searching for the next.

The truth is that, despite an affluence and material abundance unprecedented in human history, most of us in the developed world are starving. We simply have not found a way to address our emotional needs beyond drowning them out with denial or over-stimulation. The spirituality we are offered through the traditional church or temple is often defined by antiquated superstitions, which bear little relevance to our life here and now. And our real religion of science, though it has given us a remarkable handle on our physical world, has nothing to say about our hunger for meaning and purpose. The natural yearning that comes with being human is largely misunderstood, displaced by our frantic efforts to establish more material security and comfort.

Western culture is spreading now throughout much of the world due to the zealous conquering of our European ancestors and the relentless seduction of modern day corporate advertising. Yet as we gallantly proffer the "good life" to our less fortunate neighbors, some of us are becoming increasingly aware of the shadows inherent in our model of civilization. We see the cracks in the wall and rightfully question the sustainability and wisdom of our approach to development.

Amidst this gaping lack of deeper wisdom in industrialized societies a new spirituality is being born, inspired by ancient teachings from cultures around the world. A doorway opened in the cultural upheavals of the 1960's that allowed some light to shine into the shadows of Western civilizations insatiable drive for material advancement.

This ancient wisdom re-packaged for the "new age" is naturally marginalized by main-stream society just as all radically new movements of truth have been throughout human history. Consider how Galileo was mocked and imprisoned for suggesting that the planets in our solar system revolve around the sun, Columbus was ridiculed for his assertion the earth was round, and Jesus was disgraced and crucified for saying that he was one with God.

Today we know that these seers were telling the truth and we celebrate them as heroes, along with many others who were once considered too far out to be taken seriously. So we can justifiably assume that this strange spirituality incubating in the midst of our frantic industrial development will one day be the basis of a new paradigm for humanity.

Miles Sherts lives at Sky Meadow Retreat in Stannard and leads retreats and workshops in Buddhist Insight Meditation and Conscious Communication skills. You can learn more about the retreat and upcoming events at www.SkyMeadowRetreat.com

Much of our coop membership has heard about Child Haven through our ongoing sari sale and our two wildly popular sari fashion shows. Former collective member and Community Dinner coordinator Robin Cappuccino has been active with the group since its inception. And now, Child Haven has made the news:

There is a new video out about the work of Child Haven International, and their homes for 1400 women and children in India, Nepal, Tibet and Bangladesh. The saris and some of the scarves that we sell go to support this work. It is also a project that Robin is spending more time with since leaving his work as a collective member here at the co-op. He and his family are among the people interviewed in the film. Produced by the Canadian news program W5, it can be seen at their web-site

<http://www.ctv.ca/CTVNews/WFive/20110401/w5-childrens-champions-110402/>

In addition, the Co-op had for sale some Nicaraguan Hammock Chairs, brought in by Robin as well. We sold out of our first batch, that we had hanging in the stairwell to the café, before the first day was out! The proceeds of the sales go to support a project working with Nicaraguan street kids in Nicaragua. Now we are eagerly awaiting more of these beautiful and comfy chairs. While we wait, a video is available about this project at the co-op that members can bring home to watch. Just ask at the front register to sign it out.

The Yoga of Community

By Tina Ghantous

Living in community is a crucial part of our health and well-being. All species are interconnected in the web of life, and that includes us. In Tantric philosophy, all life is a manifestation of one divine, intelligent source, which is intrinsically good. Yoga is simply one path that can bring our thoughts and actions closer to this true nature.

Working the body into increasingly complex postures does increase vitality, but it also serves to train our minds. Can we be strong and flexible at the same time? Can we love what we have? How can you endure a difficult situation and turn it around to your advantage? Can we bring illumination to darkness? These lessons are not just to use on your yoga mat, they carry over into your day-to-day interactions, and the effects ripple out into the community you are part of.

Over the past year, I have been studying Anusara yoga rather intensively. The Sanskrit word *kula* means community, or can mean family, and is a central concept in the teachings of Anusara yoga. Participation in a *kula* is a spiritual endeavor. The *kula* serves to support the growth of the individual by reminding everyone of the power of aligned actions of the many, and the one source underlying all diversity.

One of my teachers touched on the subject of the yoga of relationships, and I would like to share some of what I took away from it and contemplated with you, the wonderful Northern Vermont Kula. First of all, relationships should serve joy, and be beneficial and uplifting. Hopefully this is the case for some of your relationships, but in reality they can span a wide spectrum from pleasant to difficult. Learning to see relationships clearly is a valuable tool that can prevent stress and anxiety.

In joyful relationships, the other person sees your highest self. The people you share this type of connection with can be regarded as your “teachers” because they uplift you and remind you of your true essence. Think of your best friend, your grandchild, anyone who inspires you. These teachers can serve as a sort of protective barrier in all of your

interactions with others. According to one of my yoga teachers, Deb Neubauer, “holding the light of your teacher in your heart,” is a strategy to invite your highest self into all relationships. To me this was a new way of approaching the idea of having an open heart. Rather than being sensitive to the negativity of others and letting it diminish your own light, rather than taking on other people’s suffering, you could act with compassion. Compassion seems to be one of those new age buzz words you see on bumperstickers and tee shirts, loaded with meaning but way overused. The meaning is often construed as emotional sympathy, but what it does mean is acting from the heart. The difference being the direction of the flow of your own *prana* (life energy; you may have heard it called *chi*) in such situations. Through this protective shield, your light can shine out with purity, and you can be motivated not through guilt, fear, insecurity, or jealousy, but by the supreme goodness that is at the core of your being. Acting through the light of you teacher, or from your highest self who is complete and inherently good, you will be able to shine out into darkness.

In some of the more difficult relationships, it may seem as if you tried everything, but the interaction just keeps bringing out the worst in you. In these cases compassion may require stepping back in relationship, creating space where things can resonate without a reaction, possibly letting things distill over time until you can move from a place of balance, until you can be conscious of the light of their being. Maybe that is what the “difficult” person truly needs. Maybe this will work for you, maybe not. Maybe here is where you apply that turning difficult situations to your advantage I mentioned earlier. In this way the difficult person also becomes your teacher.

We are given guidelines for living in community by Patanjali in his Yoga Sutras.

Patanjali was considered to be an evolved soul who chose embodiment to help humanity, and historically may have lived in India between 200 and 500 B.C. According to a translation by B.K.S. Iyengar, sutra 33 of the first book is as follows:

“Through cultivation of friendliness, compassion, joy, and indifference to pleasure and pain, virtue and vice respectively, the consciousness becomes favorably disposed, serene, and benevolent.”

Mr. Iyengar tells us that “This sutra asks us to rejoice with the happy, to be compassionate to the sorrowful, friendly to the virtuous, and indifferent to those who continue to live in vice despite attempts to change them.” When someone in our community is celebrating, perhaps a new job or romance, can you feel their happiness or does your ego get in the way wondering ‘Why them, why not me?’ Are you standing in your own way blocking your own happiness? Can you wish the best to even those who are not making the choices you would make? Someone who has been dishonest, someone who has done harm to you? The idea, again, is to keep shining your own positive light into any situation. These sentiments were around 2500 years ago in Patanjali’s time, and his advice about how to live harmoniously still rings true. Patanjali also presents us with the *yamas*, the universal rules for living in community, which can be interpreted as nonviolence, truthfulness, generosity, fidelity, and taking only what we need. So here I will end this contemplation with the thought we also evoke at the end of yoga practice: the divine spark within me bows to honor the same divine light that shines within you.

Namaste.

Update on the Rudolf Steiner association of parents children and teachers. . .

from Paule Bezaire and Timothy Edgar

Preparation continues with the classroom to be available for the association of parents, children and teachers: the earthplaster has been lazured, a small sink is being installed, and we are hopeful that it will be available in August for an open-house with fun activities for children and parents: French activities? Story and circle? A study group on biodynamics, or the significance of fairy tales in the Waldorf curriculum? We are hoping that you will join us for a joyful painting and drawing class for parents and children, to set the stage for the Rudolf Steiner's inspired association. Timothy is looking forward to changing hats and setting off on some artistic avenues of discovery while opening up to our community at large. Paule is eager to share the space, once again, with children and families, and enjoy their presence.

Juno

Gold threads
weaving under blue
waves
where bass mimic silk
swishing through
shadows
and arms weave strokes
above
solar so-lit waters.

Gold threads
wedging in the Earth
brewing medicine unseen
where moss runs the hills
caresses feet green

invites white berry
blossoms
to share the terrain
as polka dots
as stars
opening everywhere
to love
and
rain.

by Phyllis Rachel Larrabee
from *Shoveler on the Roof*

Until then, you can sing this one with your little one. . .

"Over in the meadow in the sand and the sun, lived an old Mother turtle and her little turtle one.

"Dig", said the mother,

"I dig" said the one.

So she dug all day in the sand and the sun.

Over in the stream where the trees grow large lived an old Mother fish and her little fishies two.

"Swim" said the mother,

"We swim" said the two.

So they swam all day where the streams run blue.

Over in a hole in a tree with branches long lived an old mother bluebird and her little bluebirds three.

"Sing" said the mother,

"We sing" said the three so they sang all day in the hole in the tree.

Over in the reeds on the shore in the sun lived and old mother muskrat and her little muskrats four.

"Dive" said the mother,

"We dive," said the four.

So they dove all day in the in the reeds and the shore.

Enjoy your summer...

Celebration of Garth's Life

July 16th, 2011, 2pm

Please join us as we gather for a celebration of Garth Stillwater's life. Bring a story, poem or memory to share, if you are so inclined, a potluck dish, as well as dining ware.

Feel free to bring a chair if you need one. 150 Dodge Road, Elmore, Vermont. Call Constant Graze for more information: 802.888.7401.

Vermont Foodbank Volunteer Gleaners Needed

A breath of fresh air, exercise, and a harvest for Vermonters in need: all results of a day in the fields gleaning with the Vermont Foodbank.

Gleaning is the age old practice of salvaging what is left after the harvest, or in today's terms harvesting produce that is otherwise unmarketable. The Vermont Foodbank Gleaning Program harvests excess produce from local farms with the help of many volunteers, making it available to our neighbors in need. Many of the donating farms are your neighbors in the greater Hardwick area.

The Vermont Foodbank is the state's largest hunger-relief organization, serving communities in all 14 counties of Vermont through a network of 280 food shelves, meal sites, shelters, senior centers and after-school programs. The Gleaning Program is one way the Foodbank captures and distributes nutritious foods that are locally produced. In 2010 the Vermont Foodbank Gleaning Program worked with more than 100 farms and hundreds of volunteers who contributed 1,200 hours of their time to salvage more than 400,000 pounds of fresh, local produce around Vermont!

Any gardener will tell you that getting produce from the field to the plate takes a lot of work. There are many ways that volunteers can participate in the Vermont Foodbank Gleaning Program. The most obvious is helping harvest (glean) on local farms. Many of the same farms that sell their produce to the coop also donate their excess or unmarketable produce to the gleaning program. Participating as a gleaning volunteer offers community members the chance to learn firsthand about local food production and food insecurity in the state. Your contribution is crucial to our success. To find out more or sign up as a volunteer please contact: Sally Ingraham at (802)477-4109 or singraham@vtfoodbank.org.

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About the Vermont Foodbank

Vermont Foodbank is the state's largest hunger-relief organization, serving communities in all 14 counties of Vermont through a network of more than 280 food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, senior centers and after-school programs. In FY2010, the Vermont Foodbank distributed more than 7.5 million pounds of food to as many as 86,000 Vermonters. The Vermont Foodbank, a member of Feeding America, is nationally recognized as one of the most effective and efficient nonprofits and food banks in the nation. To learn more about hunger in your community and to take action against hunger and poverty in Vermont, visit us on the web at www.vtfoodbank.org

Echo of Kyoto

Ky o to
sounds like a key
to fresh air

a late dream of
corporate responsibility
ringing yesterday's paper outside
where fish leap in the air
and the wood thrush
sings: WE can't wait!

I go down to the lake
to its burka of mist
eyeing the heron
gracefully plowing through the air
blue against gray morning

while around me
dandelion greens and plantain
and orange paintbrush blossoms
wake up shake off their shower
and loons wail
and bull frogs thrum
and the morning dove
well...mourns

and I hear the call
of a thousand strawberries
to touch summer to my teeth.

by Phyllis Rachel Larrabee
from *Shoveler on the Roof*

Wild edibles group

Come join us in our third year of weed eating! We meet every other week at someone's home, usually in the Hardwick area, for a wild edible potluck and to identify, pick, cook and enjoy a meal of wild plants and, sometimes, animals. We have enjoyed red clover fritters, woodchuck on rice, nettles, garden weeds many ways, sumac lemonade, Japanese Knotweed crisp to name but a few. Contact Lucian Avery for more information: lavery@pshift.com, 472-3899.

Mushroom Walk with Alan LePage - July 24 at 3 o'clock.

Join Alan LePage for a mushroom walk on the Hardwick Trails (behind Hazen Union), Sunday July 24 at 3 o'clock. Alan has been hunting and eating mushrooms since his youth and has a vast knowledge of the local fungi. He grew up in Barre where he still tends his family farm between mushroom forays. This event is a fundraiser for WGDH (the Goddard community radio station, 91.7 FM in the Hardwick area) and a \$30 donation to the station is suggested. For more information contact Alan at lepagefarm@yahoo.net or call him during his radio show - Curse of the Golden Turnip - from 6-9 on Sunday mornings - 454-7762. Or contact Lucian Avery - lavery@pshift.com, 472-3899.

Produce Matters

By Jef "Frey" Ellis

Welcome to the first edition of "Produce Matters". This will be a regular column dedicated to giving you more insight into the inner workings of produce at the Buffalo Mountain Co-op and beyond. Each edition will have a theme to keep me from rambling on incoherently. This Summer's theme is "Introductions".

Let me start off by introducing myself. My name is Jeffrey Ellis, a.k.a. Frey (pronounced Free). I took over for Ivy Pagliari last October and hit the ground running. It has been a smooth transition thanks to Ivy, an incredibly supportive staff, all the well-seasoned growers, and an amazing membership. This is my fourth produce department that I have managed in the past ten years. I got my start at the South Royalton Co-op and after a few year hiatus moved on to the Randolph Food Co-op. As soon as the Randolph Co-op closed, I immediately started at L.A.C.E. in Barre. This was my first experience starting a produce department from the ground up. It was an exciting department to work in because it was 100% local. Unfortunately, the store as a whole lacked the retail experience to keep it fiscally sound, and my wife (Rebecca Beidler) and I were laid off after six months. After being unemployed for six months, we finally found work in Hardwick. Rebecca got a job as a gleaning coordinator for Salvation Farms and I ended up at Patchwork Bakery and Walden Heights Nursery. We are so grateful for the opportunity to be apart of such a wonderful community. Before I became a part of the Collective, I was on the Co-op board for a year and a half. This was a valuable experience that gave me further insight into how special our Co-op is. I feel that since being in produce here, my skills have blossomed.

Enough about me. Let me now introduce the incredible produce staff that I have the pleasure of working with. Valeria Angelo and Myrna O'Neill are our veterans in the department and their hard work and history here has been so valuable to me. Marisa Neyenhuis started last fall and has been a reliable and humorous addition to produce. Gwyneth Harris started this spring as our new Sunday produce position. Gwyneth worked with me at the Randolph Co-op, so her transition here has been seamless. It's so exciting to see, Cole, their son growing up, because he was born when Gwyneth was working in Randolph. I have fond memories of baby Cole in a fleece lined basket hanging out in the

produce prep area. Sara Urban has been a reliable sub in the past and has been helping out quite a bit since I have been here. Victoria Howard, who has been working hard in the café, is now also filling in at some critical times in produce. Our newest addition is Jon Pepe, who will be helping me out a couple days a week this summer in response to the increased workload in produce. This will allow me to do more administrative work, like this newsletter article. All the produce staff (and cashiers) have been quite patient with all the changes that I have made with the display, procedure, and the new influx of variety that we're offering. Give them a shout out and thank them for all their hard work when you see them, because we wouldn't have the level of quality that you experience without them.

Now that summer is finally kicking in, the produce department will be bursting with local goodies. I would like to introduce our wonderful farming community that supplies our Co-op with high quality fruits and vegetables. There are the perennial favorites that you know and love: Riverside, Hazendale, Surfing Veggie, Harvest Hill, Mystic Morning, Blackwell Roots, Walden Heights, Sweetgrass Orchard, Pete's Greens, Shirley's Produce, and Robin Taylor. There is a wave of new farms that are just getting started in the area that will someday be your perennial favorites. There's Bear Swamp Farm, Hatchbrook Gardens, Rooster Ridge, Riverside Gardens, Peace of Earth, Cate Hill Orchard, Burt's Orchard, and Provender Farm. I feel that the more farms that the Co-op can develop relationships with, the better. It makes my job a bit more complicated, but in the end it will ensure a consistent supply of local and organic produce. Keep your eyes peeled for a board in the department that will list all our local growers and where they are located. Also this will identify which are certified and those who are not. Over the next year we are going to update and add to the farm photos displayed above the produce shelves. It's such a joy to watch the hayseeds germinating into the next generation of farmers who will be nourishing our communities into the future.

Now it's time to introduce some thrilling projects that are in the works that will further enhance your produce buying experience. Soon you will meet, in comic book form, the produce department's new mascots 'The Alliums': they are a family of garlic characters that will make appearances in informational handouts and signage. Evan Book will be responsible for the animation and I will be providing the text. This will eventually become a produce manual that will be available for the membership to own. My produce mentor, Kye Cochran, inspired this project. She was the produce guru for the Upper Valley Food Co-op in White River Junction, VT for many years. She created a series of comic strips called 'The Duchess of Daikon' as informational handouts and I found this to be an entertaining way to educate the membership on how to handle and purchase their produce. There will be an introduction to our project posted in the department soon, along with the first handout that will feature Garlic (naturally).

Another project is renovating our signage and for this, I called upon the artistic styling of Grace Hurley. The new signs will be hand written along with a beautiful drawing of the particular crop. I feel the clear and consistent signage is an important part of a successful produce department, plus it will help you identify crops on the display that you might not be familiar with. The artistic expression of our new signage and the comic strip will enhance the natural beauty of the fresh fruits and veggies. Another goal of mine is to provide you with lots of seasonal recipes to inspire you to use fresher, whole foods in your diet.

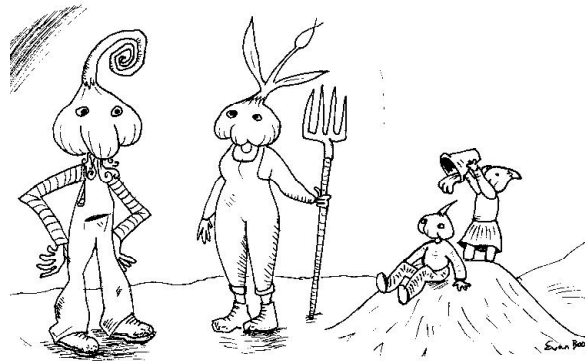
Finally, I am looking for some volunteers to be involved in produce. I am looking for folks to do sampling on a weekly basis. It would be about a half an hour a week commitment. Mondays and Fridays in the early afternoon would be a good time for this. I'm also looking for someone to do research about various topics that I can't seem to find the

time to do myself, such as: the carbon footprint of non-local produce; is large scale, corporate, organic produce really safe?; and a host of other food-related issues. This information would be great to publish for the Bullsheet. I am always looking for folks to work on routine cleaning projects as well.

We here in Vermont are so blessed to live in such a peaceful and abundant spot compared to so many places on Earth. I encourage us all to be thankful for what we have and to be filled with gratitude every day.

Peace Out, Y'all

Our new comic friends, the Alliums! Look for us in the produce department!



Tales From the Barnyard

or; Rocks In My Head by Olive

I've been thinking about rocks lately, which doesn't make much sense given that every waking hour that I'm not at work, I've been spending in the dirt. Glorious summer, a miracle of light, warmth, color, expansion and excitement like fireworks on the 4th of July. Everything happens at once. It would be easy to jet propel a few feet above the ground from the pure joy of it, if it weren't for something to weight one down, like rocks. My place is perched on an outcropping of ledge, so I am surrounded by stones, boulders and more rocks. The most efficient way to make use of them is to place them like room dividers around each area of the garden. I stack a double layer and use the pointy ones to mark path entrances. This gives a deceptively organized look to things, plus helps the perennials get the concept of boundaries, which is contrary to their nature. Here I must give credit to my husband who is actually the rock guru; he can unearth a particularly fine quartz specimen and immediately know the exact spot for it. He can roll a boulder out of a depression and coax it up hill til it nestles among the flowers like it was always there.

I was told by a wise woman once that if you want to learn how to affect change in a positive way, you begin by working with stones. Once you get the energetic vibrations of stones you can go on to plants, then animals, and eventually people. She advised starting out with stones because they vibrate so slowly that a novice can't do any harm. The earth's crust was formed in the Precambrian era, that's 4,600 million years ago, so if you can learn to read the layers and textures of our Vermont granite, schist, marble and slate, you can read the history of the earth and hear the stories of time as you dig around in the dirt, which is, you guessed it! Ground up rock.

