

# pea soup

Winter 2019

## Seasonal Cheeseboards

Beautiful & delicious – page 12-13

Create your own – page 16-17

# Board News & Views

Mike Link, VFC Board President

Thanks to all that attended our first “in-house” Annual Owners Meeting. We enjoyed a great chili supper and liquid refreshments as well as a few door prizes. The event was held in the new dining/meeting area of the store and included showcasing the accomplishments of the year, our current financial position, status of community initiatives and changes to the membership of the Board of Directors. We said thank you and goodbye to Karen Mischel and Larry Homstad and welcome to Olive Reynolds and Tonya Wagner. Eric Snowdeal was re-elected to another three-year term.

The financial report at the meeting was shorter than usual due to our on-going annual audit. Final sales and expense numbers are now being checked by our auditors prior to publication. More details will be available in the 2019 Annual Report scheduled to be published in December.

Owners voted and passed all three proposed changes to articles & bylaws. Class C shares were added – which allow for further investment by members as well as continued improvements to the VFC assets and infrastructure. Also, all ownership equity is now fully refundable and can be transferable with the Board’s approval.

We’re hosting some great events for owners and shoppers, including the **Holiday Open House** – a fun day of savings, free food samples and prizes. Join us Saturday, December 14, 10am-4:30pm. **Coffee with the Board** returns in 2020 with free coffee, freshly baked scones, and a chance to sit down with Board members in the deli seating area to ask questions or get further info on what is happening with our co-op. Go to the calendar on pages 18-19 for dates, times and details for these events.

As always, feel free to contact any VFC Board Member individually with comments or questions, or attend a Board meeting. VFC Owner-members are always welcome. Enjoy the fall weather and let’s hope winter is mild and late in arriving!

L to R: Olive Reynolds, Eric Snowdeal, Mike Link, Peter Bergquist, Elizabeth Tigan, Aurora Boyd, Tonya Wagner



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mike Link, President  
Peter Bergquist, Vice President  
Eric Snowdeal, Treasurer  
Elizabeth Tigan, Secretary  
Aurora Boyd  
Olive Reynolds  
Tonya Wagner

The Board meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm in the Co-op Community Room. Changes are posted on the VFC website. To make a presentation or ask questions at the meeting, please contact a Board member 10 days in advance. Contact the Board at: [vfcboard@viroquafood.coop](mailto:vfcboard@viroquafood.coop)

## PEA SOUP PUBLICATION TEAM

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## ADVERTISEMENTS

Ad space is limited and available on a first come, first served basis. Ad sizes and prices are as follows:  
1/8 page: 3.5" w x 2.25" h – \$50  
1/4 page: 3.5" w x 4.75" h – \$100  
Ad deadline for Spring: January 28  
Email: [marketing@viroquafood.coop](mailto:marketing@viroquafood.coop)

Pea Soup is intended as a vehicle for communication among Co-op owners and shoppers. Articles pertaining to health and nutrition are presented for informational purposes only. VFC recommends consulting a healthcare professional for medical problems and advice. Ads printed in this publication are not necessarily endorsed by the VFC.

The Pea Soup is published quarterly and printed on recycled paper.

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Cover Photo Credit: Haley Stafslieen

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# Let's Get Rid of Plastics!

Jan Rasikas, General Manager

Envision this: You step out of a time machine in the year 2033 at the VFC. Shoppers representing a diverse mix of the community fill their baskets with healthy food sourced nearby, and responsibly sourced food from around the world — that much hasn't changed. But one noticeable thing has: you barely see any plastic.

Many of the packages are made of familiar materials such as aluminum, glass and fiber. But now you see new and unfamiliar materials that did not exist in 2019, such as a futuristic-looking biofilm that rapidly biodegrades after use. Return-and-reuse programs are commonplace for products of all types because suppliers have adopted circular models. Pallets and cases now come in durable wraps that are returned and reused hundreds of times. Staff go about their work, completely oblivious to how incredible their plastic-free food co-op would seem to their colleagues back in 2019.

The scenario above is one interpretation of how the future could look if food co-ops embrace a "Plastic Free by 2033" vision. This vision is based on the reality that each year, more plastic is produced than the year before — driven in large part by the rise of single-use items.

While access to recycling is widespread, just 9% of plastic in the U.S. is recycled. Much of it instead ends up as debris. Plastic does not biodegrade; rather than breaking down into harmless substances, it breaks into increasingly smaller pieces of plastic that linger almost indefinitely. Recent research has found microscopic plastic in 83% of all drinking water, in rain, in snow, in soil, in our food and in our bodies. A dump truck's worth of plastic enters the

oceans every minute, and if we continue on this path, the oceans will contain more plastic than sea life by 2050.

As leaders in the natural products industry, we know we can do better. Items designed to be consumed within minutes, days or weeks do not need to be packaged in material designed to last forever. We know that it will not be easy, that the path to plastic-free is not clear, and that it will require partnering with every group of co-op stakeholders. Yet we believe solutions exist, and we see packaging innovation proceeding rapidly.

This year, eleven NCG food co-ops from across the country convened on our behalf. A "Better Packaging Solutions Committee" assembled to discuss this vision, interpretations of the concept of plastic-free, and what exactly it would mean for suppliers, shoppers, co-op staff and the packaged food industry. The group has weighed in on challenges, existing solutions, milestones, and many areas where innovation is needed over the next 13 years.

As our peers on the Better Packaging Solutions Committee work to define a strategy and goals to guide progress toward our vision, we can do our part by making some changes now

in our co-op. VFC's efforts include removing PFAS from all paper containers/bags, using washable dinner, drink, and flatware, and stocking paper bags in all departments (done!).

We removed plastic grocery bags in 2006 and have a recycled shopping bag program, as well as reuse boxes from our deliveries at the checkout stands. We're working to totally reset our bulk department; we're adding more bins for dried fruits, reducing repacked items, and making more products available for purchase in your reusable containers from home. Similar to our program for glass milk bottles, our upcoming fresh juice bottles will be part of a return-and-reuse system with a deposit exchanged for returning and reusing them.

We recognize that the work must begin today — even without knowing every step along the path to success or having all the solutions now. We know new technology and materials will emerge when demand increases. By articulating our biggest, most-audacious goals, we're helping to create a vision of the world we want to see. We hope each shopper will join us.

Adapted from the original article by  
Sheila Ongie, NCG Sustainability Manager



# The Gift Giving Season

*It's time to spread holiday cheer!*



## Cozy



# Boozy



## Kitchen



## Kids



## Holiday







## Cozy

'Tis the season for lots of layers! There is no denying that these locally made wool mittens will keep your hands warm all season long. Layer colorful scarves together and find the perfect wool beauties to match your winter attire! Warm textures are surely beautiful in this white winter weather. Don't forget to snuggle up for the next few months indoors and get cozy with beeswax candles that keep the home fires burning.

## Boozy

We have some fine gadgets and gizmos for any boozy connoisseur. Wrap bottles of wine in locally made reusable gift bags and pair them with a Henri the Gnome bottle stopper. It will definitely be a hit! Saké sets, Moscow mule copper mugs or flasks – we have the proper vessel for everybody's beverage of choice.

## Kitchen

When in doubt, give the gift of beautiful and functional kitchen gadgets! For the ones in your life who love to host, you'll find the perfect gift for a cook – or – anyone with a kitchen. From elegant salt mills and cutting boards to reusable dish covers and cookbooks for any level chef. We even have the most awesome wooden spice tray ever (look at how those spoons fit in there). And yes, we have Chemex coffeemakers in every size!

## Kids

Let the games begin! For the children in your life, we have a variety of memory games, puzzles, and playing cards to keep you and your littles entertained for hours through the holiday season and all year long. Family and friends – have fun together. Let's be honest, the most enjoyable games are not just for the kids.

## Holiday

It's impossible not to spread cheer and good tidings with all the holiday items we have collected for you. Light that pine scented candle while you write your holiday cards to your loved ones. Plus, doing the dishes after a joyous holiday feast is way more fun with Santa on the dish cloth or penguins on the dish towel.

*Hugs from the VFC Mercantile Team*



Winter 2019



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Easy Gift Idea:

# DIY Lip Balm

Delight someone special with a homemade gift! Surprisingly simple to make, lip balm is also a cinch to customize with essential oils for endless scent combinations.

**M**aking your own lip balm is beyond easy. In a matter of minutes, you can craft a few tubes to give as gifts (and one to keep for pampering yourself). What makes DIY lip balm so great? Not only can you make it just the way you like it, you can control the ingredients and use simple, natural ones — no petroleum found here!

You should be able to find most of the supplies you need for this project in the co-op's health and body care section, or online in larger quantities. A local craft store is a good place to look for tins and tubes to hold the finished product.

To make the balm, follow this general recipe, and customize to your tastes from there. We've included a few of our favorite scent combos for inspiration.



## Lip Balm Recipe

Makes four ½ oz. tubes.

- 1 tablespoon beeswax pearls  
(or grated, unbleached beeswax)
- 1 tablespoon shea butter
- 2 tablespoons carrier oil  
(sunflower, castor, almond or jojoba)
- 10 – 15 drops essential oil
- 1 teaspoon honey (optional)

1. Melt beeswax, shea butter and oil together in a small bowl in the microwave. Or use a double boiler or a heat-safe bowl over simmering water.
2. Stir until ingredients are liquid, then add essential oils and optional honey. Mix well.
3. Transfer to a large eyedropper, syringe, or container with a spout, and divide liquid among four ½ ounce lip balm tins, jars or tubes.

## Customize Your Creation

**To tint or color lip balm,** add ⅛ teaspoon of lipstick to the solid ingredients when melting (just take a tiny dab off the end of a purchased lipstick). You can also use a drop or two of natural red food coloring, or a small amount of beetroot powder or a loose mineral powder (like blush).

**To make lip balm super shiny,** adjust the recipe by adding one teaspoon more of carrier oil. Note that this formulation will not be suitable for tubes, since the end result will not be firm enough.

## Scent Ideas

Aroma	Essential Oils and Ingredient Substitutions
Chocolate mint	7 drops peppermint, replace shea butter with cocoa butter
Cinnamon-sugar donut	4 drops vanilla, 4 drops cinnamon, 2 drops nutmeg oil
Coconut	Use coconut oil as the carrier oil
Vanilla orange	5 drops vanilla, 5 drops sweet orange
Root beer float	3 drops anise, 3 drops spearmint, 2 drops vanilla
Vanilla rose	5 drops vanilla, 5 drops rose
Medicated (has antibacterial properties)	5 drops tea tree, 5 drops peppermint





# Winter Wellness



A medical diagnosis is the process of determining which condition or disease explains a person's symptoms. Often times in western medicine, upon diagnosis the treatment is focused mainly on relieving symptoms.

The medical world has been drawing connections between inflammation and ailments in the human body. Fortunately for us, the human body is always seeking a state of equilibrium achieved for optimal function (i.e. homeostasis). When you take this into consideration, you might make the connection that often times, symptoms showing up in the body are a more complicated indicator of a lack of overall balance. So what can we do to achieve such balance with our health?



The body is miraculously complicated, as are all the body's systems: circulatory, digestive/excretory, endocrine, exocrine/integumentary, immune/lymphatic, muscular, nervous, renal/urinary, reproductive, respiratory, and skeletal. With that in mind, I'd like to suggest my favorite herbal supplement that does so much for our all-around levels of homeostasis when it comes to each one of these systems: **Andrographis, a.k.a. the King of Bitters!**

Generally speaking, American diets don't regularly incorporate bitter as one of the five basic tastes the tongue is sensitive to (which also includes sweet, salty, sour, and pungent). Bitters support digestive function by promoting digestive juices, assisting in breakdown of food and absorption of nutrients – as well as regulating appetite. Andrographis assists with this tenfold!

We're featuring this herb, available in both liquid and capsule form, because of its antiviral and antibacterial properties. Its major role is to support a healthy immune response. This is a pro-active herb to take during the winter because it's both preventative as well as "...used as an antipyretic [fever reducing] for relieving and reducing the severity and duration of symptoms of common colds and alleviating fever, cough and sore throats...."\* It is one of my favorite power herbs to have in my home first aid kit because it's most effective when taken at the first onset of a cold.

When seeking a bang for your wellness buck this winter, check out Andrographis!



**Arwyn Wildingway, VFC Wellness Buyer**

\*Andrographis Paniculata (Chuān Xīn Lián Lián) for Symptomatic Relief of Acute Respiratory Tract Infections in Adults and Children: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis." Edited by Rajesh Arora, PloS One, Public Library of Science, 4 Aug. 2017, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5544222/>.

**Andrographis, the King of Bitters**





# Herbal Education at the VFC

The recipes below are from two classes I have taught at the VFC, *Winter Health for Kids* and *Herbal Soup & Bone Broth*. While there are scores of excellent books and online articles about herbal knowledge, joining a class can enrich your learning & demystify the techniques. Class discussion is often filled with ingredient ideas and smart questions, plus everyone leaves ready to create the recipes. Classes are aimed to be applicable for beginners to herbal enthusiasts – topics are explained in relatable and practical ways. **Check out the calendar in the back for upcoming winter classes, I'd love to see you there!**

**Herbalist & VFC Instructor Jess Krueger**



## Kid-friendly Herbal Cold & Cough Syrup

Makes ~12 fluid oz. of finished syrup. Use dry herbs.

- 28 grams (1 oz.) elderberry (*Sambucus* spp.)
- 14 grams (½ oz.) white pine twigs & needles (*Pinus strobus*)
- 14 grams (½ oz.) thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*)
- 14 grams (½ oz.) elecampane root (*Inula helenium*)
- 7 grams (¼ oz.) rose hips (*Rosa* spp.)
- 7 grams (¼ oz.) mint (*Mentha* spp.)
- 1 cup honey (local, when available)

1. In saucepan, add 8 fluid oz. (1 cup) water and honey\* each, then gently heat.
2. Weigh dry herbs, then add to saucepan. Stir, bringing to a simmer; then lower heat and cover.
3. Simmer covered for 20-30 mins.  
Strain herbs and bottle syrup.
4. Keep refrigerated for up to one month.
5. Suggested dose = 1 tsp. – 1 TBL., as needed.

## Suggestions

This recipe is best suited for a damp cold and cough with a lot of mucus. The herbs are considered decongestant & expectorant.

*\*Honey is not recommended for children under 1 year of age. While honey serves as a preservative, do not heat it beyond 95° in order to keep it raw & full of its beneficial properties.*



## Local Immunity Support Soup

Makes ~2 quarts of broth. Recipe can be modified per preferences.

- 1 lb mushrooms (maitake, shiitake, oyster, or combination)
- 1 cup fresh burdock root, chopped
- 1 cup winter radish (Daikon or beauty heart) cubed or thinly sliced
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 Tbsp fresh ginger root, minced
- 8 cups bone broth or water
- ¼ cup dulse or kelp seaweed
- Salt & pepper, to taste
- Lard, coconut oil or ghee
- Optional garnishes: scallions, toasted sesame oil, coconut aminos or tamari, lemon wedge

1. Sauté onion, garlic, mushrooms, and ginger in lard, coconut oil or ghee until soft.
2. Add burdock root, radish, seaweed and broth/water.
3. Bring to a simmer for about 10 minutes.
4. Add garnishes and a squeeze of lemon.

## Suggested Resources

[townsendletter.com/FebMarch2005/broth0205.htm](https://townsendletter.com/FebMarch2005/broth0205.htm)  
[herbcraft.org](http://herbcraft.org) (Jim McDonald)  
[henriettesherbal.com](http://henriettesherbal.com) (Henrietta Kress)





## Local Producer Profile

# Kickapoo Meadery

**M**ead is a delicious alcoholic beverage made by mixing honey, water and yeast and allowing them to ferment and transform into a brew that is greater than the ingredients. Purportedly, mead was the preferred drink of the Vikings in old-world Norway. With Vernon County's rich Norwegian culture, it is a wonder that mead doesn't have a more regular place on our table.

For those of you that are interested in adding mead to your table this holiday season and into the future, look no further than our local mead producer – Kickapoo Meadery. This bee-to-bottle mead company is owned and run by married partners, Tim McDonald and Diane Roy in Blue River, Wisconsin.

Tim and Diane have been keeping bees since the 1980s and have a deep love and respect for them. For around 16 years they owned and operated Kickapoo Honey – VFC's long-time supplier of local honey. In 2014, they decided to take a break from commercial beekeeping. They sold the business and took a couple years off restoring two houses.

At that same time, a new idea for a business began to take hold. Over the years of keeping bees, Tim had also dabbled in the world of mead making. He shared his homemade mead with friends and they told him that he should consider making mead and selling it.



### **From bee to bottle!**

*Kickapoo Meadery is one of very few mead producers that both produce all their honey and make mead. Today, they have 40-60 colonies of bees which supply all the honey they need for mead making.*



After spending so much time around bees, it was hard not to want to go back to beekeeping. “Mead was a way for us to still be around bees,” Tim shared. In October of 2018, Kickapoo Meadery received its winery license in time to sell to the VFC and sample the mead at our Grand Reopening Celebration last November.

Kickapoo Meadery is one of very few mead producers that both produce all their honey and make mead. Today, they have 40-60 colonies of bees which supply all the honey they need for mead making.

Tim and Diane go the extra mile to treat their bees right. Eight years ago, they seeded an 8-acre pollinator planting at their farm that has a diverse species of plants that flower and provide ample food for the bees from spring through the fall. This past October they planted an additional 8-acre monarch habitat. “With these plantings... they really are a reliable source of nectar and pollen for the bees,” which Tim thinks is already having a positive impact on bee health and the honey they produce.

Once the bees make their liquid gold, Tim and Diane collect it and bring it back to their meadery. Tim converted their old honey bottling building into a mead making facility where they extract the honey and make small batches of mead each week. Once the mead is fermented and aged, they bottle and distribute it to a variety of retail locations from La Crosse to Madison.

Kickapoo Meadery offers a diverse selection of meads that can please anyone from the new-to-mead drinker to the mead connoisseur. They make traditional meads (high alcohol, 14-16% ABV) in a variety of styles including dry, semi-sweet and sweet. Tim and Diane also go the extra mile and offer barrel finished versions of their traditional meads. These meads are aged in charred American oak rye whiskey barrels for a few months prior to bottling. Beyond their traditional mead line up, they also offer unique flavored meads. Their ginger root mead is made with organic ginger and is a perfect balance of sweet and spicy, while their Wild Bergamot Mead is floral, herbal and striking.

Tim’s favorite mead is their wild bergamot mead. “As far as we know, no one else in the country makes a bergamot mead.” They source bergamot flowers for the mead from their pollinator plantings and have made many batches to get the flavor just right. “Bergamot is a very potent flavor and it took some time and trial and error to perfect.”

“When we started, our goal was to do our own thing. We wanted to make very good mead and self-distribute it without spending an astronomical amount of money, and have the mead make its own way,” said Tim. They have certainly accomplished this making some of the most unique and local bee-to-bottle meads in the Midwest.

*For delicious food pairing suggestions, check out “Sarah’s Top Four Kickapoo Meadery Pairings” on page 16 in this issue.*



*Big thanks to Tim McDonald for these bee and flower photos. To see more photos of their meadery, follow Tim and Diane on Instagram here: [@kickapoomeadery](https://www.instagram.com/kickapoomeadery).*

**Join Tim who is sampling his meads at our Holiday Open House on Saturday, December 14 from 1:30 to 4:30pm.**



# Seasonal Cheeseboard!

Want to make a board like this at home? Be sure to attend Cheese Buyer Sarah's Cheeseboard Creation Class at our Holiday Open House, December 14 at 1pm!

## Candied Walnuts

The perfect sweet, nutty texture to enhance any cheeseboard.

*Pairs well with: any cheeses ranging from Wisconsin original Colby to aged Spanish sheep cheeses. Accompany with a barrel-aged semi-sweet mead, reislings or medium bodied red wines.*

## Parmigiano Reggiano

Deposits of tyrosine add texture and depth to this parmesan (those crunchy bits found only in well-aged cheeses). Mild and nutty with a hint of sweetness.

*Pairs well with: champagne, sparkling wines or pinot grigio.*

## Kii Date and Walnut

### Crisps (left-middle of board)

Sweet, savory and full of so many textures! These crisps are the perfect carrier for a soft cheese with a light sweet finish.

*Pairs well with: bright tasting soft cheeses, pressed cheese (like Mobay), smoked goat cheddar or your current favorite cheese!*

## Roth Buttermilk Blue

Bold yet restrained with a mellow, earthy flavor and soft, creamy finish. Ranked Top Crumbled Blue Cheese by Cook's Illustrated. Great for cooking, crumbling or serving!

*Pairs well with: local honey, figs, pears, dates, dark chocolate, dark beer, mead or gin.*







### Mobay, Carr Valley Cheese

A local take on a French classic. A layer of sheep milk cheese next to a layer of goat milk cheese, separated only by a thin line of grape vine ash. Try tasting both sides separately and then together! Pairs well with: chenin blanc, meads and light to medium-bodied red wines.

### Smoked Mild Cheddar, Nordic Creamery

This smoked goat milk cheese is crowd pleaser! Take it a step further than a cracker by melting it atop roasted veggies. Pairs well with: tart apples, green grapes, peppered salami, medium to full-bodied wines, pale ales or barrel-aged meads.

### Applegate Organic Peppered Salami

Rich in flavor with a hint of garlic and black pepper coating, this is the salami river of your cheeseboard dreams. Pairs well with: any cheese or appetizer spread.

### Spanish Marcona

**Almonds** (top-right of board) If you know, you know. Similar in texture to macadamia nuts, these specialty roasted and salted Spanish almonds will take your cheese board from enthusiast to next level connoisseur.

Pairs well with: Nordic Creamery Smoked Goat Milk Cheese, Deer Creek "The Robin" Colby Cheese, and Kickapoo Meadery Semi-Sweet Barrel-Aged Mead.

### French Mimolette Cheese

Its electrific orange paste has sweet, caramelized depth and a smooth, fudgy finish. Inspired by Dutch Edam, this cheese tastes like really good cheddar and an aged gouda, all in one.

Pairs well with: Bergamont Mead from Kickapoo Meadery, caramelized walnuts, oak aged ales, stouts and cabernet sauvignon.



# VFC News

## Meet Sam & Kris, the New VFC Deli Leadership Team!

The Viroqua Food Co-op deli has new management. Samantha (Sam) Witte is our new Prepared Foods Manager and Kristofer (Kris) Hendrickson has accepted the position of Assistant Deli Counter Service Manager. They are very excited about the future of VFC and bringing our community healthy, delicious and convenient foods.

### Sam Witte

I came to the VFC with 13 years of professional experience as a trained pastry chef. My career started back when I was a kid; I loved to spend my time making cookies. One cousin would bring me an empty ice cream pail and \$20 on a regular basis. When I got a little older I started making cakes and cupcakes for all sorts of different occasions. I received 2nd place in a Chocolate Mousse competition before attending culinary school.

I obtained my degree from Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts Minneapolis/Saint Paul and spent most of my career working in the Twin Cities. My first baking job after culinary school was at a bakery in Minneapolis called Cupcake. A few years after working at Cupcake, they became Food Network Stars. They were three-time winners and champions on the show Cupcake Wars.

I later moved on to be a pastry assistant at a Wolfgang Puck Restaurant, 20.21 at the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis. My husband Josh and I met and together we went on to manage a bakery in Lowertown Saint Paul, Faces Mears Park, owned by famous Moroccan Chef David Fhima.

After our first daughter Sophia was born, I took a position as the Lead Pastry Chef at Northwestern University. I then had my second daughter, which is when we decided to take a leap. We moved to Richland Center, Wisconsin, and settled down for the next five years taking on many new adventures. I managed the Pine River Food Co-op and started Samantha's Sweets Bakery at the Press Box, as well as sold produce and baked goods at the local farmers market. Now I am looking forward to having many new adventures right here in Viroqua.

### Kris Hendrickson

I have been living in Viroqua for the past two years, working at the Co-op for the past 18 months. Previous to working at the VFC, I spent most of my adult life living in Minneapolis, working in various areas.

After a divorce I moved back home to La Crosse where my family resides. Soon after I met my (now) wife and fell in love, she introduced me to Viroqua. I loved the culture of Viroqua almost as much as I love her! We now reside on a farmette a few miles out of town, we share our home with my two stepsons, Warren and Weston, and our daughter Ingri.

I feel so fortunate to be working here at the VFC as I enjoy cooking, creating, serving and eating healthy food. In my spare time I love to go hiking with my family and Pawtucket (our dog) and feel very fortunate to have access to the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. I also enjoy music; my wife



Kris Hendrickson & Sam Witte

and I try to attend as many local music shows and are working on making it to a few larger venues. My stepsons Warren and Weston love basketball; I spend a lot of time coaching them in the gym or the driveway.

### A Tasty Future

Sam and Kris look forward to introducing new and exciting programs in the VFC Deli. They will be starting a tasty new selection of frappès and fresh fruit smoothies at the barista bar. "We are also working hard to roll out our \$5 Dinner Program," says Sam. "This is a meal that the VFC will make and have available every Wednesday evening, in addition to our many other choices throughout the deli. I am so excited to watch the deli team grow into our new space."



## Local Farms or Business Encouraged to Apply for VFC Microloan

The VFC Microlending Committee is pleased to announce that the 2020 Microloan Applications are now available online at:

[www.viroquafood.coop/you-own-it/microlending-initiative](http://www.viroquafood.coop/you-own-it/microlending-initiative)

We invite any local farm or business (local = within 100-mile radius of VFC) selling food or products to VFC or at the Viroqua Farmers Market to apply for a one-year, no-interest loan

of up to \$3,500. Through the VFC Microlending Initiative, VFC aims to strengthen small, local farmers and producers that are part of our local food system.

**Deadline: Applications are due by January 15, 2020** and can be sent to VFC Outreach Coordinator Bjorn Bergman at 609 N Main St, Viroqua, WI, or email him at: [bjorn.bergman@viroquafood.coop](mailto:bjorn.bergman@viroquafood.coop)



2017 Microloan recipient: Bree & Eric of B&E's Trees

## McIntosh Library Receives 2019 VFC Co-op Community Fund Grant

It is with great pleasure that we announce our 2019 VFC Co-op Community Fund (CCF) Grant Recipient: **Viroqua's McIntosh Memorial Library**. They were chosen by our review committee to receive a \$500 grant to expand their free "Culinary Literacy" programming in 2020.

In 2019, the Library offered a number of food and gardening programs with great engagement from the community. They had children in their after-school program start seeds, plant, and tend to the plants in the planters in their outdoor courtyard. They also planted a container herb garden inside the library.

During the summer and fall, the Library used the produce from the container gardens as part of weekly cooking classes with kids and four cooking classes for adults. They also hosted a cooking demonstration by Inga Witscher, the host of Wisconsin Public Television's *Around the Farm Table*. Additionally, they hosted adult education classes on beekeeping, maple syrup production and raising backyard chickens.

With this grant, the Library is excited to expand their cooking and gardening programming in 2020, including:

- Purchasing supplies for the 2020 vegetable and herb garden in their courtyard.
- Increasing the number of food and cooking programs offered for both kids and adults in 2020. The grant would help cover the cost of purchasing food and supplies for these classes.

Join us in congratulating the McIntosh Memorial Library on receiving the 2019 VFC CCF Grant and keep your eyes peeled for upcoming

cooking and gardening programming they offer in 2020!

*The VFC Cooperative Community Fund was established in 2016 with the specific goal of providing grant funding to local nonprofit organizations that have a mission consistent with the Viroqua Food Co-op. Priority is given to grant requests for educational projects, development projects, and local events that match VFC's mission and focus on but are not necessarily limited to: food and food systems, nutrition, health and well-being, cooking education, sustainable agriculture, cooperative education, and social change. Learn more at [www.viroquafood.coop/ccf](http://www.viroquafood.coop/ccf)*

### McIntosh Library Cooking Class for Children



# Cheese Pairings, Please!

Meet Sarah Clemens, our new Cheese Buyer with fun pairing ideas!



A lot of things have changed at the Viroqua Food Co+op recently and one thing we are really excited about is the new specialty cheese case. Our new Cheese Buyer, Sarah Clemens, brings you a diverse collection of cheeses from the Driftless region and beyond – some you may have heard of, and those you have yet to discover. Whether looking for

the perfect cheese to pair with that special dinner or for help with building a center-piece cheese board for your next engagement, we've got you covered.

"Trust your taste buds and your instincts" suggests Sarah. "So much of the fun of cheese is discovering gems you never knew existed. Choose three or four pieces of cheese, both familiar and new, then pair them with your favorite crackers, jams, nuts, charcuterie, and fresh or dried fruit."

On Saturday, December 14, Sarah will be teaching a free class during the Holiday Open House where you learn to build amazing cheese boards of your own – and of course, eat cheese! See the next page for details and mark your calendar.

While we're excited about one of humankind's oldest foods, let's look at fun ways to pair it with one of our oldest drinks – mead. Below are Sarah's selections for matching delicious cheeses and appetizers with local Kickapoo Meadery Meads. Also, be sure to learn about our local mead makers on page 8-9 of this issue.

## Sarah's Top Four Pairing Suggestions for Kickapoo Meadery Meads

### Semi-Sweet Barrel-Aged Mead

1. Smoked Goat Milk Cheese, Nordic Creamery
2. Rush Creek Reserve, Uplands Cheese
3. Deer Creek Colby Cheese
4. Parmigiano Reggiano, Italy



### Sweet Mead

1. Goat Cheese w/VFC's Cranberry Compote
2. 2-Year Aged White Cheddar, Capri Cheese
3. White Stilton w/Mango & Candied Ginger
4. Smokey Blue Cheese, Rogue Creamery



### Semi-Sweet Mead

1. Wischego, Hidden Springs
2. 7-Year Cheddar, Hook's
3. Monterey Jack Habanero, Maple Leaf
4. Raw Goat Milk Mild Cheddar, Mt. Sterling



### Bergamot Mead

1. Cupola, Red Barn Family Farms
2. Taleggio, Italy
3. Mindoro Blue, Swiss Valley
4. Mimolette, France





# Holiday Open House

Saturday, December 14 – 10am-4:30pm

## Free samples from local producers

- Cheesecake from VFC Bakery
- Mead from Kickapoo Meadery
- Turkey from Ferndale Market
- Salami from Driftless Provisions
- Maple Syrup from B&E's Trees
- Left Bank Wine
- Kickapoo Coffee
- Driftless Brewing Company
- LuSa Organics
- Cress Spring Body Care *and more!*

## Free classes in the Co-op Community Room

11am-12pm Co-op Explorers:

### Holiday Cookie Decorating for Kids

Children are welcome to decorate (and take home) holiday cookies with Sam Witte, VFC Deli Manager.

1-2pm

### Seasonal Cheeseboard Creations

Join Sarah, VFC Cheese Buyer, as she helps you explore the tricks of the trade to delight your holiday guests with delicious and gorgeous cheeseboards – made by you!

## Enter to win great prizes

basket full of holiday foods, Ferndale Turkey, organic holiday tree

## Enjoy live music

Noon Firefly Brass Band  
2-4pm Kickapoo Pearls

## Find your last minute stocking stuffers

and bring home a holiday tree from a local and organic tree farmer!



# Calendar of Events

For details, visit our event calendar at: [www.viroquafood.coop/about/events](http://www.viroquafood.coop/about/events)

## December 2019

### Give Where You Live Bethel Buttik

Round up any day this month.

### Savings for Owners

#### owner discount days

December 10-12



#### 15% off Meat Dept.

(includes fresh & frozen)

### In-store Event

#### Holiday Open House

See page 17 for details

Saturday, December 14, 10am-4:30pm

### In-store Savings

#### Wellness Wednesday

All customers save 10% off supplements, herbal and homeopathic formulas from the wellness aisles.

Wednesday, December 18

### Holiday Store Hours

#### Tuesday December 24

Open: 7am - 7pm

#### Wednesday December 25

CLOSED Wednesday

#### Tuesday December 31

Open: 7am - 9pm

## January 2020

### Store Hours

#### January 1, 2018

Open 8am-7pm

### Give Where You Live

#### Living Faith Food Pantry

Round up any day this month.

### Savings for Owners

#### Owner Discount Days

15% off Body Care Products

January 7 - 9

### Co-op Community Room Class

#### Kitchen Spices for Winter Health

Many common kitchen spices add more than just flavor to winter cooking.

In this class, we explore a few herb combos – such as garlic and rosemary, their medicinal properties, energetics, and how to use them regularly in home kitchens. This class will demystify your spice rack and highlight what medicine you already have in your home. Together we will create a sea salt and herbal condiment for each participant to take home along with a recipe card.

Wednesday, January 8, 6-7:30pm

Instructor: Jess Krueger

Cost: \$20 VFC Owners/\$25 Non-owners

### In-store Savings

#### Wellness Wednesday

All customers save 10% off supplements, herbal and homeopathic formulas.

Wednesday, January 15

### Free Film Screening Movie TBA

We're excited to host our film series in our new community room! Check our website and facebook page for details.

Thursday, January 16, 6:30-8:30pm

Location: Co-op Community Room

### VFC Board Event

#### Coffee with the Board

Free coffee and scones with the Board

Saturday, January 18, 9-11am

Location: VFC Indoor Seating Area

### Co-op Community Room Class Fermented Vegetables

Incorporating more fermented foods into our diets can help with digestive ailments, improved immune function and more. In this class, you will learn about the nutritional benefits of fermented vegetables and Laura will demonstrate three very approachable techniques for fermenting vegetables: sauerkraut, kim chi and brined vegetables. Participants will try several fermented vegetables and will take home the recipes, along with a grocery list for making these foods at home.

Tuesday, January 21, 6-7:30pm

Instructor: Laura Poe Mathes

Cost: \$20 VFC Owners/\$25 Non-owners





## February 2020

### Give Where You Live Driftless Humane Society

Round up any day this month.

### Savings for Owners Owner Discount Days

15% off Wine & Spirits

February 4 - 6

### Co-op Community Room Class Intro to Wine Tasting

Enjoy a fun night out with your neighbors. Learn about and sample wines from around the world, along with appetizers from the VFC.

Thursday, February 6, 6-7:30pm

Instructor: Todd Wohlert

Cost: \$10 VFC Owners/\$15 Non-owners

*Try something new –  
sample appetizers &  
learn about wines at  
the VFC!*



**Thursday, February 6  
6-7:30pm  
with Todd Wohlert**

### Co-op Community Room Class Warm Up! Herbal Drinks for Winter

Blending a tea or simmering a decoction are accessible ways to take in herbs during the cold months of the year. In an effort to create effective and potent medicine, we cover the basics of water-based herbal preparations. Included are suggestions for weight vs. volume ratios, steeping durations, and sourcing quality herbs. This class is excellent for the herbal enthusiasts who want to up their tea game at home! Participants will create a root and spice based decoction and take home the recipe.

Wednesday, February 12, 6-7:30pm

Instructor: Jess Krueger

Cost: \$20 VFC Owners/\$25 Non-owners

### Co-op Community Room Class Sourdough Bread Basics

There is nothing better than the smell and taste of fresh, homemade bread. Sourdough bread is naturally fermented, making it more nutritious and easier to digest than store-bought, yeasted bread. Learn the basics of creating and caring for a sourdough starter. Participants try naturally leavened whole grain bread, take home recipes and grocery list.

Tuesday, February 18, 6-7:30pm

Instructor: Laura Poe Mathes

Cost: \$20 VFC Owners/\$25 Non-owners

### In-store Savings Wellness Wednesday

10% off all supplements, homeopathic & herbal formulas from the wellness aisles.

Wednesday, February 19

### Free Film Screening Movie TBA

We're excited to host our film series in our new community room! Check our website and facebook page for details.

Thursday, February 20, 6:30-8:30pm

Location: Co-op Community Room

### VFC Board Event Beer with the Board

Join the VFC Board for local brews, appetizers and discussion about the Viroqua Food Co+op. Event is an open house format so come and go as you please. Free beer and appetizers for those 21+ years old who attend.

Friday, February 21, 5-7pm

Location: VFC Co-op Community Room

### Co-op Community Room Class Love Your Houseplants

Tips & techniques to help your green friends thrive through the dark months.

Tuesday, February 25, 5-7pm

Instructor: Arwyn Wildingway

Cost: Free for all attendees



*Help your houseplants  
thrive this  
winter!*

**Tuesday  
February 25  
5-7pm**

# “Round Up” for Local Nonprofits to Make a Bigger Impact

# Give Where You Live



**AUGUST 2019**

## Youth Initiative High School

VFC Outreach Coordinator  
Bjorn Bergman presents a  
\$2,259 donation to Matt Voz,  
YIHS Administrator.



**SEPTEMBER 2019**

## Viroqua Farm to School

Bjorn Bergman presents  
a donation of \$2,008 to  
Renae Diehl of Viroqua Area Schools –  
Farm to School.



**OCTOBER 2019**

## VFC Co-op Community Fund

Bjorn Bergman presents a \$2,374  
donation to Mike Link, VFC Board  
President on behalf of the Co-op  
Community Endowment Fund.

## 2020 Give Where You Live Schedule

Thank you to VFC Owners for voting in the Give Where You Live Donations Program.  
The following schedule is a list of the 2020 local nonprofit recipients:

<b>January</b>	<b>Living Faith Food Pantry</b>
<b>February</b>	<b>Driftless Humane Society</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School</b>
<b>April</b>	<b>Viroqua Farmers Market</b>
<b>May</b>	<b>Vernon Trails</b>
<b>June</b>	<b>Community Hunger Solutions</b>

<b>July</b>	<b>WDRT – Driftless Community Radio</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>Youth Initiative High School</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>Viroqua Farm to School</b>
<b>October</b>	<b>VFC Co-op Community Fund</b>
<b>November</b>	<b>Bethel Butikk Food Pantry</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>Kickapoo Valley Reserve</b>





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## VFC fresh baked pies – order ahead and save!



Traditional 9" pies made with organic ingredients:

- Classic Pumpkin \$16.99
- French Silk \$17.99
- Brown Butter Pecan \$19.99

Wheat-free 9" pies made with organic ingredients:

- French Silk \$17.99
- Pumpkin \$18.99
- Raw Fruit (dairy free) \$19.99

**Save \$1.00 on each pie  
when you order 72 hours ahead!**

**Pre-order by calling 608.637.7511  
and ask for the Bakery!**

Celebrating **1** Year Anniversary!

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VIROQUA  
CARE from HEAD to TAIL

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Dr. Janna Kottke 🐾 Dr. Elayne Hass  
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RidgeToRiversAnimalClinic.com

## FOSTER PARENTS NEEDED!!



### Kids need good homes

Family Works Programs, Inc is looking for people interested in becoming treatment foster parents.

#### We provide:

- Training
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- Respite
- Monthly Support Groups
- 24-Hour Crisis Intervention
- Compensation Based on the Needs of the Child

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE, FIND OUT MORE TODAY!**

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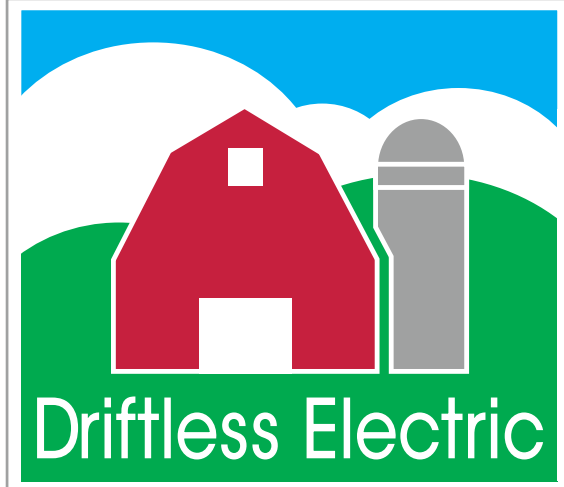


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**1st THURSDAY Guest Artist Receptions 5-7 pm**  
 Dinner following at Rooted Spoon Kitchen Table.  
 Call 632-2120 for reservations  
 Dec. 5th: **Artisan Market** - 36 Artists  
 Jan. 2nd: **Member Show** - Through the Door  
 Feb. 6th: **Greg Cheesebro** - Potter

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## Learn Meditation with Lyrea Crawford

# Coherency Training February 21-23, 2020



**FREE Intro 7 to 8 PM on Feb. 21**

Restore balance, inner quiet and clarity. Move toward full system integration with these simple, yet profoundly effective meditative techniques.

*Our systems were designed to function in a coherent, integrated fashion, with calmness, clarity and healthy vitality. But stress can interfere with this way of being. This week-end training includes instruction in the usage of four simple techniques which powerfully catalyze the release of underlying stresses. It also provides information on how the mind functions, and a look at the various states of consciousness. This training is all that is needed to begin utilizing these very effective tools in your life. Once taken, the class may be repeated as many times as desired, at no additional cost.*

Taught by Lyrea Crawford at the Vitality Center in the LaFarge/Hillsboro area. A map and complete info at

**[www.lyreacrawford.com](http://www.lyreacrawford.com) • 608-383-3589**



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 or 608-637-7600 ext 15

*Viroqua Food Co-op Member Discount*



609 N Main St, Viroqua WI 54665  
**Open Daily 7am - 9pm**

## Holiday Hours

**December 24** 7am - 7pm  
**December 25** **CLOSED**  
**January 1** 8am - 7pm

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
LGI

# owner discount days

**DECEMBER 10-12  
TUESDAY-THURSDAY**

## 15% off

**Meat & Seafood**

Grab a holiday ham, some fresh fish,  
or any other holiday meat specialties.  
Stock up and save!

**JANUARY 7-9  
TUESDAY-THURSDAY**

## 15% off

**All Body Care Products**

Winter can be harsh on your skin.  
Take care of your skin with bath, body  
and face care items of all sorts!

**FEBRUARY 11-13  
TUESDAY-THURSDAY**

## 15% off

**All Wine & Spirits**

We know how you're feeling. It's  
February.... Lift your spirits. Take the  
opportunity to try something new.

