

pea soup

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And Much, Much More!

VIROQUA
FOOD
COOP

Board News & Views

Larry Homstead, VFC Board of Director

The holidays are always a time of anticipation around the Co-op, but this year is especially exciting as the work on the new parking area is in full swing. Thank you to all of our customers for your patience and willingness to walk extra steps so that we all have plenty of parking during VFC's future growth.

One of our primary goals as a cooperative is to provide quality food at a fair price to our owners. The extremely wet weather this summer in the midwest, combined with drought in the far west, has really impacted the quality and quantity of produce nationwide. Our produce section in the store is always beautiful and a source of pride – but it is a real struggle right now to maintain the selection and quality (page 12). Thanks to the employees who keep it fresh and well stocked. Those of us not involved with procuring and ordering the wide varieties of products offered throughout the store sometimes don't realize how difficult finding good products can be.

VFC's Holiday Open House is December 9 (page 18). Enjoy the festive atmosphere and free samples in the store. Also, check out the recipes in this issue as you are planning your holiday feasts (page 10).

Although the Co-op is closed on Christmas day, we are open on December 24, 7am-7pm, so that you can pick up any last minute items you might have missed. We are open regular hours on December 31 and 10am-7pm on January 1, 2017.

More exciting store developments are coming. We have made significant progress since the 2013 Community Conversation and will be asking for more owner input about expansion plans (see sidebar this page). Express yourself! Join conversations with the Board, come to meetings, and email comments and questions. It is vital for owners to let the Board know if they have concerns, and it is also important to let store employees know their work is appreciated.

VFC Board of Directors (L-to-R): Eric Newman, *Treasurer*; Mike Link, *Vice President*; Eric Snowdeal; Karen Mischel; Curt Brye, *President*; Peter Bergquist, *Secretary*; Larry Homstad.



Board Outreach

Holiday Open House

Friday, December 9, 3-7pm,
@ Viroqua Food Co-op

Join the VFC Board! They will have a table located in the bulk section next to wine samples. Stop by and talk to them about the expansion.

Beer with the Board

Friday, February 17, 5-7pm,
@ Routed Spoon Kitchen Table

Join the Board at Routed Spoon's 219 Drinkery for discussion about the Co-op, free chips, salsa and one drink (beer/wine) for those attend.



Coffee with the Board

Saturday, March 11, 9-11am,
@ Viroqua Food Co-op

Free coffee and scones with the VFC Board. Stop by and share your ideas pertaining to the Co-op's expansion project.

Expansion Update

Jan Rasikas, General Manager

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Curt Brye, *President*
Michael Link, *Vice President*
Peter Bergquist, *Secretary*
Eric Newman, *Treasurer*
Larry Homstad
Karen Mischel
Eric Snowdeal

The Board meets on the third Wednesday each month at 6:30pm at VFC's offsite office. 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: vfcbod@viroquafood.coop

PEA SOUP PUBLICATION TEAM

Charlene Elderkin
Design, Writing, Editing, Advertising
Shana Meshbeshier
Design, Writing, Photography, Editing
Bjorn Bergman
Research, Writing, Editing

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
Spring Pea Soup ad deadline: January 27
Email: 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 Viroqua Food Co-op.

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

DOWNLOAD THE PEA SOUP
viroquafood.coop/members/vfc-publications/

By the time you receive this newsletter, we'll be parking on the new lot! It seems like a sea of concrete right now, but one of the recommendations from Viroqua City Council's traffic study was that we maximize parking to take pressure off the streets of our residential neighborhood. Imagine another island around the utility pole and all three islands with shrubs and perennials. Landscaping is also planned for the north side of the lot along Broadway Street next summer. We're planning an electric vehicle charging station on the north edge. Center Avenue will remain open through the winter.

The timeline on page 23 shows a quick reference of the complexity and details of our expansion project. We are on track to begin building improvements in Spring 2017, but there's a lot to accomplish before then! We're inching toward the final plans and scope of the project. Then we assemble the financing package.

Many of you have asked about Preferred Share Cooperative Investments (Class C) and that's very exciting as we will need to raise owner equity to make the project work. Thanks for your confidence and support as we grow the VFC! Our Board of Directors is preparing a Capital Campaign launch in January 2017. As a VFC owner, look for an invitation in the mail to attend this event and learn about Class C investments.

It's important to the Co-op that we work with local lenders on the project, but to make that happen we have to get creative with financing. We'll continue with our status as a USDA Rural Development project, and we are pursuing New Market Tax Credit Program for gap funding.

The City of Viroqua agreed to apply for a Community Development Investment (CDI) Grant on our behalf. The CDI Program supports small city and rural community redevelopment efforts by providing financial incentives for shovel-ready projects with emphasis on downtown, community-driven

...continued on page 23

PEA SOUP

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Things We Love

It's true – we are penchants for sumptuous cheeses. Treat your friends and family to these particular staff favorites, seasonally available at the VFC!

Hook's Ten Year Sharp Cheddar: This aged sharp cheddar is an award winner for good reason! With each delectable nibble (enjoy the cheese, people!) the calcium crystals explode with flavor while melting in your mouth at the same time! This cheese isn't always available so get it while you can!

Andrew, Deli Manager

Roth Kase Buttermilk Blue Cheese: Holy Cow this is a lovely tasting creamy blue! My favorite way to eat this is stuffed into peppadew peppers (which sit at arm's length from the blue cheese section). It's crafted from raw buttermilk, hooped and pierced by hand, and aged meticulously for 60 days. The most unique artisanal blue cheese we offer at VFC.

Christie, Front End Staff



Cypress Grove Creamline Lamb Chopper: While this smooth, buttery cheese is fantastic grated on mushroom risotto or doubled up with IPAs and Sauvignon Blancs—it will also turn heads at the cutting board when you tell your guests it's a sheep milk cheese. Undeniably a new favorite, despite its sheepness!

Shana, Marketing Assistant

Upland's Cheese Rush Creek Reserve: My favorite way to serve this is to warm the wheel to room temp. for an hour, remove the top rind by peeling it away to reveal the custard-like paste, and spread on toasted baguette rounds. The cheese is reminiscent of cured meats. With a limited supply, reserve your wheel early by reaching out to Cole, our Cheese Buyer!

Bjorn, Outreach Coordinator

Owner Discount Days at VFC

Check out these special deals! Owners get an *extra 15% off* these great items. Become a Co-op owner today and enjoy more savings!

**DECEMBER 7-9
WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY**

15% off bulk nuts

Single nuts, mixed nuts, whole nuts, nuts in pieces, you can find all the nuts you need for holiday baking and general holiday nuttiness in our bulk section.

**JANUARY 12-14
THURSDAY-SATURDAY**

15% off all candles

A wide selection of candles of all shapes, sizes and scents to bring light into this dark time of year. Find 100% beeswax candles as well as soy-based candles.

**FEBRUARY 10-12
FRIDAY-SUNDAY**

15% off all lamb, fairtrade roses & sparkling wines

Valentine's Day is around the corner, save on these romantic essentials!





Gifts from Mercantile

A Holiday Gift Guide from Crystal Curley

It has been said that giving is good for you, as it strengthens bonds and evokes feelings of gratitude. It turns out laughing, crying, and hugging are really good for you too. Reducing stress and releasing endorphins, in science terms, all stimulate the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PSNS: i.e., the “rest and digest” system; opposite of the “fight or flight” system). Activating the PSNS can do awesome things in your body like promote healing, build immunity, aid in digestion, and even lower blood pressure. Turns out all of these actions – giving, hugging, crying, and laughing – tend to happen with

higher frequency around the HOLIDAYS! Don’t forget: all are important parts of social connection, human interaction, and family functions.

I know we may have finally recuperated from last year’s ups & downs, but here we are here again. Let’s pretend you already have your Christmas tree up and house already decked out. Alright, maybe you’ve merely untangled your first string of lights. Either way, let’s get this party started with some food – then on to shopping for the stocking stuffers. The good news is that the VFC has your bases covered, or a good chance we have something pretty darn close.

Gifts they will love!

Our shelves are bursting with many gift options for under your tree. Whether your friends are your family or your family members are your friends, we've got something for everyone.

- The 2017 wall calendars and engagement books will bring organization – or at least bit of artistic beauty and inspirational words each month.
- The puzzles were such a success last year, we brought them back with a few new fun designs.
- The colorful tin pencil boxes and variety of journals aim to please.
- Our local Wisconsin Roots Music Cooperative CD is a sure hit this holiday; great music, one-of-a-kind cause.
- Teapots and coffee presses pair so nicely with the seasonal tea and chocolate offerings.
- Candles of all sizes, scents and wax varieties will add ambiance and light to the house, while the kitchen towels and aprons help deck the halls.



Stocking Stuffers!

These small things don't even need to be wrapped, just stuff everyone's stocking! An assortment of journals are only 4"x6" but still hold many great ideas. Big Dipper Wax Works Aromatherapy Candle Tins are always on my list of gifts to give and actually fit inside the colorful pencil tins. Holiday chocolates are here: dark and milk chocolate truffle bars from Seattle Chocolates; peppermint-flavored Little Secrets candies; mini-chocolate bars from Divine Fairtrade Chocolates. Be creative and have fun, we really do think there's a little something for everyone here at the VFC. Happy Holidays!





Crystel Curley, Fabric Artist specializes in upcycled wool potholders “because stuff gets hot!”

Principle 6 Producer Profile

Potholders, Inc.

Crystel is one of those unsuspectingly talented artists. She not only has a knack for colors and fabric patterns, but has a great sense of humor, too!

Her mom and some key-high school art and English teachers have served as her inspiration. Let’s be clear though, the older we get, the more we understand how success has as much to do with inspiration as it does hard work, to which Crystel is no stranger. “My mom has been sewing these potholders for a

long time. When I left home and got my first sewing machine, that’s when I took up making similar projects – over 10 years ago now.”

Fast forward to today. Even though Crystel’s mom lives in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, and makes/sells similar items up in her neck of the woods, Crystel and her mom actually work together to make these. “We both think of the sayings, then she prints them on fabric. We meet up for a weekend and share our materials. While she chips in the printed

fabric quotes, I’ve gotten lucky at finding wool blankets at antique shops, or even acquiring my friends’ shrunken wool belongings. Other than the top fabric with patterns, I depend on sourcing all recycled wool.”

Not only is Crystel an exceptional upcycler of fabrics, she utilizes the leftover wool scraps from the potholders to stuff her decorative pillows, which are made pretty strictly out of upcycled fabrics from prior projects, too.

If the hilarious, thoughtful, and kitchen-relevant quotes don’t pull you in (“THAT’S WHAT SHE SHRED” and “COOKING WITH GAS” are pertinent favorites), consider these bright and very well-crafted items a smart stocking stuffer for all those foodies in your life... ‘Cause who couldn’t use a potholder that says “ESPRESSO YOURSELF” – *seriously!*



Daryl Skrupky is the featured VFC Artist through the month of December.

Principle 6 Producer Profile

Drawings by Daryl

Daryl Skrupky is a friendly fellow and has been a lifelong artist. He first began dabbling in the art world by drawing portraits in college. He graduated in 1969 and was hired as a biology and earth science teacher at Kickapoo High School. During his 37 years of teaching there, he continued to draw and his subject matter branched out into his love of wildlife and the natural world.

“I started making art because I couldn’t find the artwork that I was

looking for.” What he was looking for was art that fully captured the beauty of wildlife and his fascination with the outdoors.

Daryl’s colored pencil drawings are where all his passions are fully realized. His main subject matter is anything to do with nature: trout, bluegills, muskie, deer, mushrooms, hostas, cranes, song birds, woodpeckers, herons, and humming birds.

A few years into retirement, Daryl showed his artwork to friend Bill Mapp,

a former Viroqua High School art teacher. “Bill was impressed and encouraged me to make prints out of them and try selling them.” Bill and Daryl worked together to find a printer who could “get the color just right.” Once accomplishing that aspect of the process, Daryl started exhibiting at farmers markets and art shows. Since then, his artwork has gained popularity, especially with people interested in wildlife. Today, he sells his artwork at the Viroqua Farmers Market, many retail locations throughout the Driftless region, and at art shows around the state.

If you want some of Daryl’s art work in your home, purchase a framed print right off the art wall in the VFC seating area now through December. You can also find his greeting cards year-round at the Viroqua Food Co-op.



Company's Coming

Two recipes to help you impress your dinner guests!



Curious as to how you will cater to all that company coming? Looking to make a big meal on a small budget with little time to spare? Try our One-pan Roast recipe with staple items from the Co-op. Or make some meatballs ahead of time, then pull them out of the freezer before your guests arrive. The meatball recipe is an easy one to double or triple, while the roast is a bountiful one-pan wonder.

During this holiday season, not only will *you* leave the whole family well fed, but *they* will also be leaving compliments for the chef!

One-pan Rosemary Pepper Roast

Serves 6-8. Prep time: 15-20 mins. Cook time: 75-90 mins.

- 1 2-3 lb. grassfed beef roast
(rump roast used in this recipe)
- 1 white onion, cut into moon wedges
- 1 head celery (~8 stalks), each cut into 2-3 pcs.
- 1 2 lb. bag carrots (~10 qty.), halved long way
- 2 heads garlic (~10-14 cloves),
½ slivered, ½ roughly chopped
- 2 lbs. potatoes (~8 qty.), cut into moon wedges
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary (or to taste), chopped
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme (or to taste), chopped
- 1 pint beef broth (or quart; use extra for stew)
- 2 Tbsp. miso &/or soy sauce (to taste)
- Sea salt & fresh ground pepper to taste
- Extra virgin olive oil

1. Preheat oven to 550°F for initial broil. Line pan with prepped veggies. Drizzle olive oil, salt & pepper & toss until coated.
2. Grind generous amount of pepper with hint of salt & coat all sides of meat. Use knife to create slits in top of meat then insert slivers of garlic.
3. Coat top & sides of meat with chopped herbs (utilize as much/little as preferred).
4. In spouted cup, mix beef broth, rest of garlic, plus miso, soy sauce, more herbs, salt & pepper to taste. Pour just enough over meat to coat, plus just enough over veggies that pan has thin layer of juice on bottom.
5. Broil for 12-15 mins. at 550°F or until glistening brown. Turn down to 325°F. Cook for additional 50-75 mins.
6. To ensure meat stays moist: check for doneness by cutting into meat once, inspect that spot every 15-20 mins., then close up & reset timer for another 15-20 mins. Each time, pour minimal broth over meat; sample veggies to check for doneness.
7. If med-rare is preferred, remove roast from pan when internal temp. is ~130°F, OR when middle of roast is still quite pink. If med-well preferred, cook until temp. is ~150°F, OR when middle is barely pink. **NOTE:** meat continues to cook for 10-15 mins. after removed from heat! After removing from heat, do not cut & allow to rest on platter/cutting board with grooves for 15-30 mins. as this yields juicier roast.

8. Once veggies are at preferred doneness, remove from oven. Arrange on serving platter then place roast on top. Garnish, slice, & serve.

Garnish with microgreens, sprigs of parsley, slivers of beauty heart radishes, or even tomato roses. Add leftovers to beef stock to create extra meals – makes a wonderful stew!



Stuffed Lamb Meatballs

Recipe by: Food Front Co-op. Serves 4-6. Total time: 25 mins

- 2 lbs. grassfed ground lamb
 - ½ cup hazelnuts or walnuts, roasted & chopped
 - ½ cup dried cranberries, chopped
 - 1 Tbsp. fresh rosemary, chopped
 - 2 Tbsp. fresh sage, chopped
 - 2 oz. bleu cheese, crumbled
 - 1 tsp. sea salt
 - 2 tsp. pepper
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In large mixing bowl combine lamb, hazelnuts, cranberries, rosemary, sage, bleu cheese, salt & pepper. Mix well. Form mix into ~16 meatballs.
 2. Place meatballs on greased sheet pan, spray tops with cooking oil spray & bake in preheated oven for ~15 mins., or until meat thermometer registers internal temperature of 155°F.

Serve with buttered egg noodles or rice pilaf & your favorite veggie side dish. Serve this dish with marinara sauce or brown gravy.



“The entire US has experienced crop-damaging weather from coast-to-coast this year. The ripple effect is causing a supply shortage of many of our favorite foods...”

Farms, Floods & Failed Crops

How they affect food prices at the Co-op

Fall radish field after high winds, hail and 10" of rain at Ridgeland Harvest in September. Other farms in the valleys had crops buried in soil and completely lost. Photo used with permission by Ridgeland Harvest.

Living in an agricultural area, we directly experience weather impacts on our growing season – from large grain farmers all the way down to small fruit and vegetable growers. This past growing season has brought many challenges for our farmers and their crops. The late frosts this past spring demolished our early apple & pear varieties and the deluge of rains this summer and autumn brought molds, blights, and delayed harvests of everything from lettuces to root crops, like potatoes and onions.

With great misfortune, we are not alone in this. The entire US has experienced crop-damaging weather from coast-to-coast this year. The ripple effect is causing a supply shortage of many of our favorite foods, organic or not, which in turn directly impacts the cost of our food everywhere.

In the News:

- Florida citrus crops have been ravaged by Asian Citrus Psyllid post hurricane, which are spreading the “citrus green disease” and contributed to over a 16% supply drop in 2016.
- Avocados have reached their highest prices in over 3 decades. Supply is diminished by export conflicts from Mexico and weather. Fruit is slow to ripen resulting from limited sun (too many rain clouds) and insect issues.
- Floods across the country have resulted in less production of winter vegetables and root crops.
- Fruits and vegetables produced under such wet conditions have a much shorter shelf life. Premature spoilage is prevalent across most fruits and vegetables this season.

Did You Know?

- The VFC negotiates prices with produce distributors on a weekly basis. Our certified organic and Equal Exchange avocados & bananas are priced as close to “cost” as possible. We keep rock bottom prices on the shelf for you while helping you to SHOP YOUR VALUES!
- VFC offers the BASICS Program (purple price tags) for over 100 mostly-organic products throughout the store – at affordable, everyday low prices.
- VFC offers weekly and bi-weekly sales through our Fresh Deals & Co-op Deals flyers. Watch for newspaper ads or grab these sales flyers as you walk in so you can save money while shopping throughout the entire store.

Learn more about the VFC P6
Microlending Initiative and
download a Microloan Application
on our website by going here:
<http://s.coop/1u295>



Wisco Pop! receiving the 2016 Microloan

P6 Microloan Applications

The VFC P6 Microlending Committee is pleased to announce that applications for our 2017 P6 Microlending Initiative are now available on our website. We invite any local farm or business 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 P6 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** and can be sent to Bjorn Bergman, VFC Outreach Coordinator at 609 N Main St, Viroqua, WI, or bjorn.bergman@viroquafood.coop

Announcement: The VFC P6 Microlending Initiative Committee (includes VFC staff and Board members) will review applications in late January 2017 and announce the recipient(s) in the 2017 Spring Pea Soup.

Types of projects that are funded by the VFC P6 Microlending Initiative are the ones that:

- 1. Help fill a hole in local food system by expanding production and/or distribution of products.*
- 2. Purchase equipment to increase efficiency and decrease production costs.*
- 3. Help a local producer grow their business.*

VFC Raises Entry-level Wage

Alycann Whalen Taylor, Human Resources Manager

The Viroqua Food Cooperative combines a commitment to natural foods, superior customer service and the building of a cooperatively run business. We emphasize selling organic and local foods and products to promote the long-term health of individuals and the environment. As owners and as a center for community, we offer the opportunity to create together a work of enduring value.

Viroqua Food Co-op has served our rural community as a dynamic cooperative grocery for 20 years. We are fully focused on our Mission to support the health of our community and create a work of enduring value.

Being a principled employer is an important part of “...creating a work of enduring value.” It is challenging to meet owners’ requests for both lower prices and fair wages and benefits for staff, but we know it is the right thing to do – you’ve told us so! In every survey we’ve conducted, our owners have expressed their concern that VFC staff have good wages and benefits.

We are proud to announce that effective in October 2016, the Viroqua Food Cooperative’s new entry level wage is \$10.00 per hour. Entry level positions exist throughout the Co-op, many of which do not require previous grocery experience. They are essential to the VFC’s success. This entry level wage becomes

effective after 90 days of employment.

To determine our new entry level wage we utilized the MIT Living Wage model as a benchmark. MIT Living Wage for Vernon County is \$9.46 (Wisconsin State is \$10.20).

To transition to our new entry level wage, 28 out of 64 employees received a pay increase. This increase was determined utilizing a model that acknowledged longevity.

While just under half received a pay increase, all VFC staff were in agreement that everyone who works here should receive a wage that supports basic cost of living.

Our Cooperative brings an intrinsic value to the community – in responding to the needs of shoppers, making it easier to nourish their families, connecting them to the sources of their food, offering a safe and engaging “third” space, and being principled employers.

For more information on staff benefits, see the employment page on our website at:

www.viroquafood.coop/employment

VFC Staff: (above) Tony Hooverson, VFC Produce Lead; (below) Kat Lemmer, Grocery Staff/soon-to-be Assistant Deli Manager.

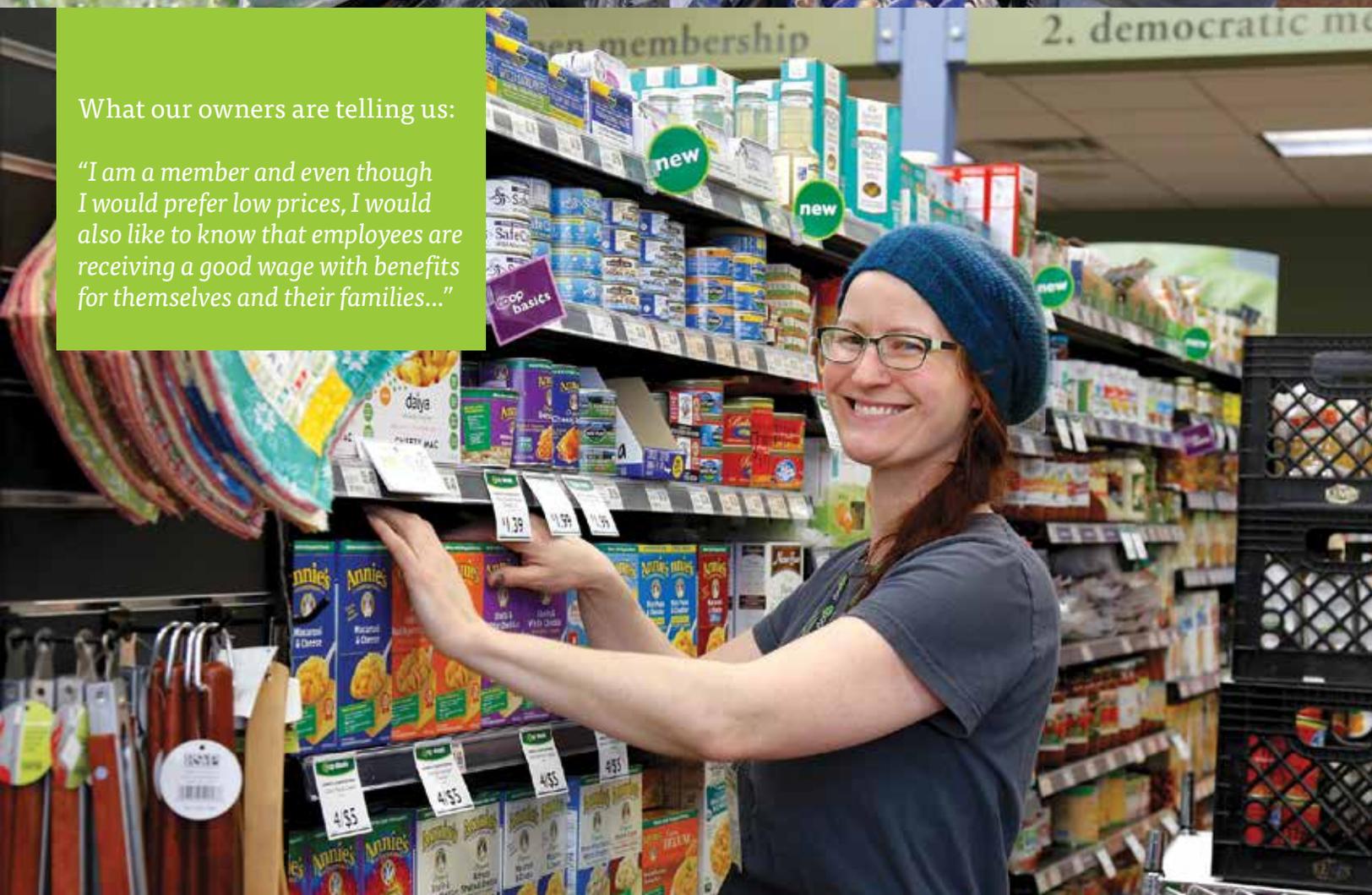
What our owners are telling us:

"I also am in full support of creating more opportunities for the Co-op to serve the community, both with job increases and potential wage increases..."



What our owners are telling us:

"I am a member and even though I would prefer low prices, I would also like to know that employees are receiving a good wage with benefits for themselves and their families..."



“Declaring a patronage refund is... our way of telling you we’re running the VFC by the Seven Cooperative Principles.”

Patronage Refunds

Why is VFC sending me a \$3 check?

A \$3 check – it can’t be worth it?!

Of course it is! And let’s face it – if you found \$3 on the street, you’d pick it up, right? The truth is, a minimum \$3 check amount is the threshold where the costs would outweigh the benefits.

As the Viroqua Food Co-op continues to grow and be successful, it’s important to note the patronage refund as part of our success. In years in which the Co-op is profitable, the Board of Directors declares a patronage refund. The patronage refund returns a portion of the profit to Co-op owners, while also reinvesting profit in our continued growth. That’s **Principle #3 Member Economic Participation** in action!

For Fiscal Year 2015-16, the VFC Board of Directors declared a \$40,550 patronage refund. Of that amount, 20% is returned directly to owners by check during January 2017. The remaining 80% is allocated to individual owner accounts, but held by the Co-op as equity. This is called **retained earnings** and represents an ongoing investment in our Cooperative by the owners. The ability to retain significant cash, tax-free, creates a resilient business and builds our community’s commonwealth.

There are fixed protocols that regulate us as a cooperative business, but that also gives us special benefits – because we own it together. You, as a VFC Owner, share in the profit according to your patronage. The Co-op then gains benefit in reduced taxes by declaring the greatest possible patronage allowed, determined by total percent of sales to owners.

We’re not aiming for a fat net profit at the end of each year – we typically budget for under 1.5%! We plan for important work all through the year, like deep weekly sales, owner discounts, boosting wages, and donating to local nonprofits. So even though it seems to be a small amount for some owners, declaring a patronage refund is a smart business move for the Co-op. It’s our way of telling you we’re running VFC by the Seven Cooperative Principles.

How is the refund distributed?

Owners receive a check directly in the mail and may use their patronage refund for in-store purchases or redeem it for cash at their bank or credit union.

Those who earn a refund and are paying for their ownership in installments must have their ownership balance paid in full before receiving a patronage refund check. Any refund is then applied to the outstanding ownership balance.

Want to donate your patronage refund? We’ve got an incredible opportunity for you to do just that. The **VFC Co-op Community Fund (CCF)** supports like-minded community projects and organizations that match our mission. Bring your check in to the store and donate at the registers or ask for the Customer Service Manager. If you want to learn more about this great endowment fund that is given to nonprofits and/or cooperatives in our community, watch for more details on our website for VFC’s Co-op Community Fund!



Driftless Folk School

Discounted Classes with VFC Ownership

Owners receive a \$10 discount on the upcoming DFS Classes.

To register for a class, go to the Driftless Folk School website:

driftlessfolkschool.org

Sunday, December 18, 2016 **Cooking with Organ Meats**

Organ meats are an essential part of a healthy, whole-food diet, but they can be a little intimidating to prepare. In this class you will become familiar with some of the common organ meats, their nutritional value and how to prepare them. You will come away with several recipes that you and your whole family will love!

Instructor: Laura Poe

**Cost: \$45 course fee + \$15 supply fee,
\$10 discount for VFC Owners**

Saturday, January 21, 2017 **Cooking with Pork**

If you want to learn how to cook with pork, this is the class for you. Learn how to cook pork steak, roast, and ribs – and what exactly side pork, head cheese, and pork jowl are! We'll also render lard, whip up liver pâté, and stir a hearty pork and bean stew. Bring your aprons and adventurous appetites!

**Instructors: Shaun & Aaron
Lopez-Murphy**

**Cost: \$75 course fee + \$25 supply fee,
\$10 discount for VFC Owners**

Saturday, February 11, 2017 **Love & Chocolate: DIY Valentine Treats**



The class will taste cacao beans and learn how to use them, discuss the differences between dutch process cocoa and natural process cocoa, and work together to create several chocolate recipes. Chocolate creations could include bars, tarts, truffles, or candies. Recipes will be selected and adapted to student interests (gluten free, dairy free, nut free). No baking or chocolate experience necessary. Must love chocolate.

Instructor: Heidi Krattiger

**Cost: \$45 course fee + \$10 supply fee,
\$10 discount for VFC Owners**

Sunday, February 12, 2017 **Beverage Fermentation 101: Kombucha, Shrubs, Tonics, and More**



Fermented beverages are a part of every traditional diet, both for health benefits and as a way to preserve food. In this class, we will learn how to make (non-alcoholic) fermented beverages like kombucha, kvass, kefir, shrub, jun, ginger ale, vinegar and more. This class is great for all skill levels who want to learn more about fermenting!

Instructor: Laura Poe

**Cost: \$45 course fee + \$15 supply fee,
\$10 discount for VFC Owners**

Calendar of events

For details on VFC events, visit our website calendar: viroquafood.coop/about/events

December 2016

In-store Event

Holiday Open House

Join us for our Annual Holiday Open House! Enjoy free samples from local P6 producers and farmers. Enter to win a variety of prize baskets. Enjoy music in the deli seating area.

Friday, December 6, 3-7pm

Savings for Owners

Owner Discount Days

15% off Bulk Nuts

December 7-9

1% Wednesday on behalf of **Bethel Butikk**

1% of sales go to this local community food pantry

Wednesday, December 14

In-store savings

Wellness Wednesday

10% off all supplements, homeopathic & herbal formulas from the Wellness Aisle, plus a selected produce item

Wednesday, December 21

Store Hours

Dec. 24, Open 7am-7pm

Store Hours

Closed Dec. 25

Store Hours

Dec. 31, Open 7am-9pm

January 2017

Store Hours

Jan. 1, Open 10am-7pm

1% Wednesday on behalf of **KGAP**

1% of sales go to the Kickapoo/Guatemala Accompaniment Project

Wednesday, January 11

Savings for Owners

Owner Discount Days

15% off all varieties of Candles

January 12-14

In-store Savings

Wellness Wednesday

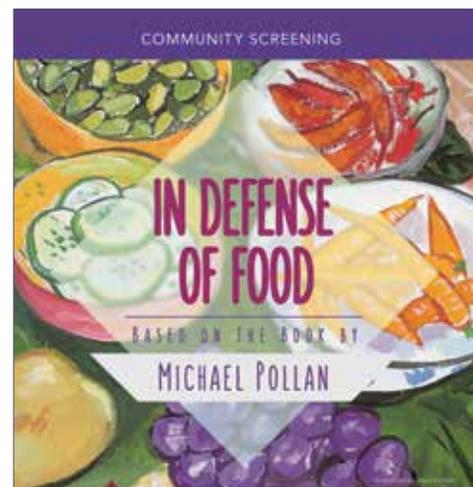
10% off all supplements, homeopathic & herbal formulas from the Wellness Aisle, plus a selected produce item

Wednesday, January 18



Free Film Screening

In Defense of Food



Traveling the globe and exploring the supermarket aisles to illustrate the principles of his bestselling "eater's manifesto," Pollan offers a clear answer to one of the most confounding and urgent questions of our time: What should I eat to be healthy? 78 mins.

Thursday, January 19, 6:30-8:30pm

Location: The Ark

401 E Jefferson St, Viroqua

Short discussion following the film.

VFC Board Event

Capital Campaign Launch

Our Board of Directors is preparing a Capital Campaign launch in January 2017. VFC Owners will receive an invitation in the mail to attend and learn about Class C investments.

TBA, January 2017

Rooted Spoon, 219 S Main St, Viroqua

www.viroquafood.coop/expansion-news

February 2017

1% Wednesday on behalf of **McIntosh Memorial Library**

1% of sales go to the Viroqua Library
Wednesday, February 8

Savings for Owners **Owner Discount Days**

15% off Fairtrade Roses, Twisted Oaks
Farms Lamb, and all Sparkling Wines
February 10-12

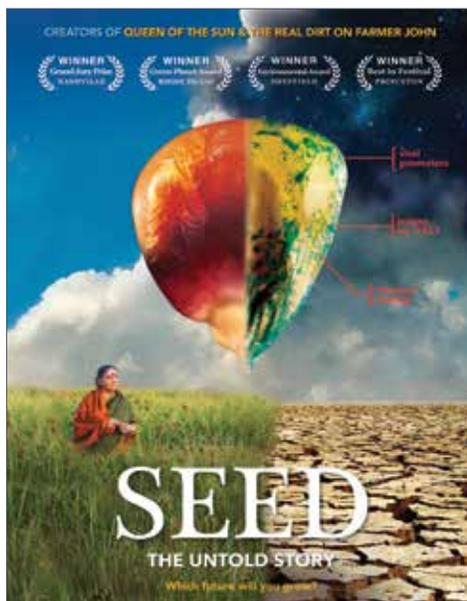


In-store Savings **Wellness Wednesday**

10% off all supplements, homeopathic &
herbal formulas from the Wellness Aisle,
plus a selected produce item

Wednesday, February 15

Free Film Screening **Seed: The Untold Story**



Farmers, scientists, lawyers, and
indigenous seed keepers fight to defend
the future of our food. These heroes
rekindle a lost connection to our most
treasured resource and revive a culture
connected to seeds. 94 mins.

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

Location: The Ark, Viroqua

Short discussion following the film.

VFC Board Event **Beer with the Board**

Join the Board at Rooted Spoon's
219 Drinkery for discussion about the
Co-op, free chips, salsa and one drink
(beer/wine) for those attend.

Friday, February 17, 6:30-8:30pm

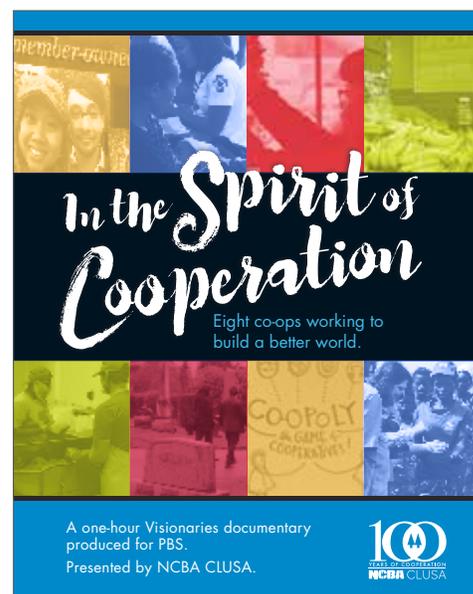
Rooted Spoon, 219 S Main St, Viroqua

March 2017

VFC Board Event **Coffee with the Board**

Saturday, March 11, 9-11am, VFC
Free coffee and scones with the VFC
Board. Stop by and share your ideas
pertaining to the Co-op's expansion
project.

Free Film Screening **In the Spirit of Cooperation**



Celebrating 100 years of cooperatives
that build a better world, this film
features 7 co-op stories including
Seattle, Western Massachusetts,
Mississippi, and international projects in
Mozambique and East Timor. 60 mins.

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

Location: The Ark, Viroqua

Short discussion following the film.

Anxiety - Depression - Relationship Conflict
 Couples - Individuals - Teens
 Mindfulness Based Psychotherapy



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Happy New Year!
from Lance, Wisp & all of us



Marta W. Engel, D.V.M.
Janna Kottke, D.V.M.
Laura Buss, D.V.M.



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2017 classes with Lyrea Crawford



Sensing Hands
January 27-29, 2017
Massage Therapists:
Do you need last minute
Wisconsin CEU's?



You can refine your palpation skills right here in the local area. Learn to distinguish subtle tensions in muscle, fascia, nerves, blood vessels, organs and bone. Transform the way you approach a bodywork session!
23 hours of NCBTMB CEU's
Open to Massage Therapists and other professionals.

Coherency Training

February 17-19, 2017

FREE Intro at 7 PM on February 17th
Restore balance, inner quiet and clarity.
Move toward full system integration with these simple,
yet profoundly effective meditative techniques.



Aligned for Vitality

March 31-April 2, 2017

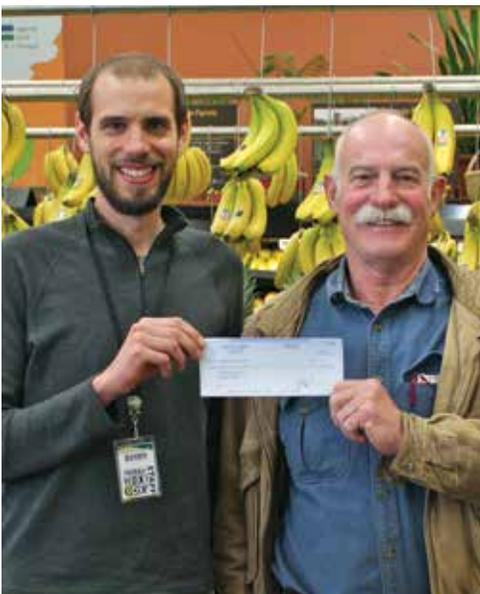
Open to anyone interested in optimal body alignment. Class emphasizes yoga/self-care info.
23 hours of NCBTMB & Yoga Alliance CEU's



All classes taught by Lyrea Crawford at the Vitality Center in the LaFarge/Hillsboro area. A map and complete info at
www.lyreacrawford.com • 608-383-3589

1% Wednesday

We donate 1% of the store's total sales to the top owner-selected nonprofit organizations in our community on the 2nd Wednesday, every month!



SEPTEMBER 2016

Valley Stewardship Network

Outreach Coordinator Bjorn Bergman presents a \$367 donation check to VSN Board President Tom Lukens

OCTOBER 2016

Vernon County Farm to School Program

Bjorn Bergman presents a \$406 donation check to Viroqua Area Schools District Administrator Kehl Arnon

NOVEMBER 2016

VFC Co-op Community Fund (CCF)

Marketing Manager Charlene Elderkin presents a \$350 donation check to VFC Board Member Peter Bergquist

Find out how you can get your local nonprofit nominated for the 1% Wednesday Donation Program by visiting our website: viroquafood.coop/community-outreach

Expansion Update ...continued from page 3

efforts. Funded activities should lead to measurable benefits in job opportunities, property values, and leveraged investment by local and private partners.¹ We're a good fit for this grant and have an excellent chance of securing it.

Our primary and secondary loans will be a combination of local and cooperative lending institutions, respectively; the same as when we funded the relocation project in 2005. We're also working on Focus

on Energy programs and other potential USDA grants.

If you are interested in greater detail, attend one of the Board events (details on page 3), reach out to our Board of Directors on our website, or contact me directly. Watch for more information on the Expansion Updates page of our website.

¹<http://s.coop/25o12>

EXPANSION TIMELINE

Engagement & Organizational Reorganization			Design & Financing		Construction & Readiness		
2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017		
Long-Term Vision & Strategy	Organizational Alignment on Long-Term Vision	Discovery, Feasibility & Due Diligence	Feasibility & Due Diligence	Design & Approvals	Business Plan & Capitalization	Site Work & Construction	Operational Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East parking lot addition - 2011 • Board discussion on growth & capacity • Owner/Member Survey • Office reorganization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term strategy • Owner engagement with Community Conversation - ongoing • Backroom expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Study • Owner/Member Survey • Management, Board & Staff engagement - ongoing • Owner engagement - ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire NCG Development Co-op Consulting group • Project announcement • Site selection • Property due diligence • Select general contractor/architect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept site plans • Purchase site • Center Ave. city variance • Owner/Member Survey • Environmental reviews • Parking lot construction • Market Study updated • Design development • Store layout development • Pro forma draft • Format final decision • Bank selection • Loan authorization • Final store layout • City approvals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize criteria • Format scenarios - assess directions • Finalize pro forma • Capitalization Strategy • Business Plan • Secure NMTC • Owner Capital Campaign • Hire key staffing positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction documents issued • Permits • Pricing • Construction contract • Groundbreaking • Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational Chart finalized • Finalize department plans & implement • Order & install equipment • Marketing & PR campaign • Job fair & orientations • Ribbon cutting • Grand opening

we are here →



Capital Campaign Launch
 coming
 January 2017
 Watch our website
 for details

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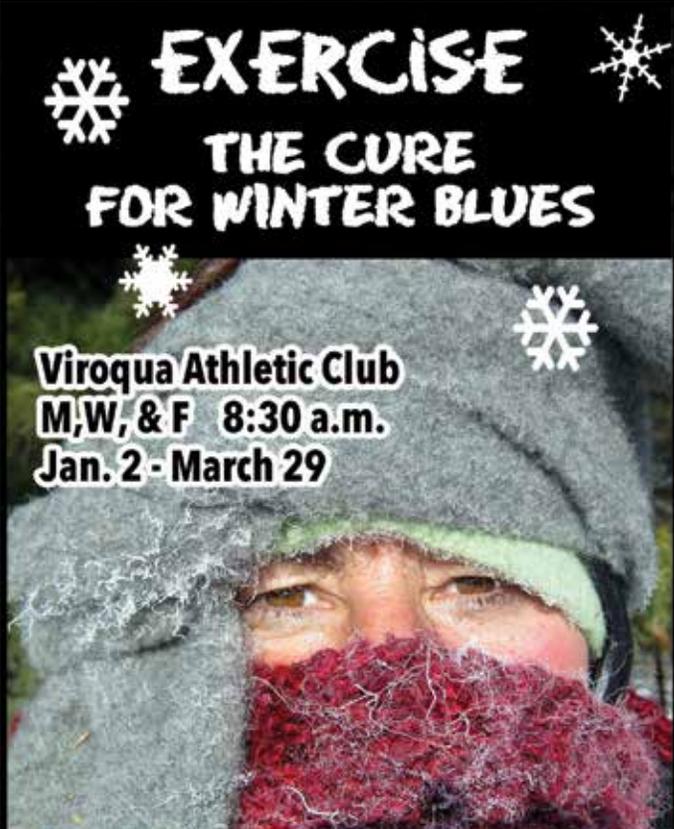
VIVA
Gallery
artist cooperative

Paintings, Jewelry, Textiles, Pottery, Photography, Wood, Metal

November and December is VIVA's Holiday Market featuring art and one-of-a-kind gifts from 33 local artists.

January 5th is the 1st Thursday Reception featuring new art from our members in the theme ART Inspires ART.

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