

pea soup

Winter 2018



**More to
Discover**

Check out finishing touches
coming to the VFC on page 3

Board News & Views

Peter Bergquist, Board of Directors

Our new and expanded store is here! Thank you for sticking with us through this major project. A big thank you to our investors, owner-members, and community who made this project a possibility. Thank you for your patience while our deli was put on hold for several months, and recalibrating when our entrance changed locations on any given week during construction.

Our amazing co-op staff deserves a special thanks. Staff had to work in a dynamic and constantly changing work environment. We are grateful to have such qualified and dedicated staff. It is through our experienced management team and staff that we can deliver the high quality of service you find at the Co-op.

The Board welcomes our newly-elected Director Elizabeth Tigan. We are lucky to have VFC Owners with diverse backgrounds who are willing to volunteer their time toward the stewardship of the Co-op. The Board is elected by VFC Owners to serve and represent their interests. We want to hear what our owners like about the Co-op and what they would like to see change as we grow into our new space. We encourage everyone who would like to learn more about Co-op governance to attend our meetings and events.

This next year there will be three open seats on the Board. If you have thought about serving on the Board, please let us know by attending a Board meeting, or one of our Coffee with the Board events (see pg. 17-18 for dates). There is no better way to serve your Co-op than to join the Board.

The Co-op exists to serve our community; our local producers, VFC Owners, and any community members who shop at our store for healthy and organic foods. I am most excited about our new Co-op Community Room to be a catalyst to bring people together who share an interest in good food and a vision to build a stronger and more diverse community. The Co-op will continue to be the meeting and eating place that we have all come to love and remain part of the vitality of this unique community.

Please join the Board and VFC Staff for our Holiday Open House on Friday December 14 for great food and music (see pg. 18 for more information).

L to R: Aurora Boyd, Mike Link, Larry Homstad, Karen Mischel, Eric Snowdeal, Elizabeth Tigan, Peter Bergquist



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mike Link, *President*
Karen Mischel, *Vice President*
Peter Bergquist, *Secretary*
Larry Homstad
Eric Snowdeal III
Aurora Boyd
Elizabeth Tigan

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: vfcbod@viroquafood.coop

PEA SOUP PUBLICATION TEAM

Charlene Elderkin
Design, Writing, Editing, Advertising
Shana Meshbeshier
Photography, Editing, Writing, Design
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
Ad deadline for Spring: January 28
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.

Cover Photo Credit: Drew Shonka

DOWNLOAD THE PEA SOUP

viroquafood.coop/members/vfc-publications/

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So Much More to Come!

Jan Rasikas, General Manager

Congratulations to our Co-op Community!

We made it past the construction phase of the expansion and we're on our way to enjoying the spacious new Co-op. It was exciting to see our community turn out for the Grand Reopening Celebration; what a wonderful way to kick off the next chapter of VFC. New owners joined, we had record sales, and every one of our partners in this endeavor came to wish us well.

I am truly moved by the dedication VFC owners show to keep our mission at the forefront of all we do – supporting locally grown and produced foods, buying organic, and creating the community center we longed for when we defined our mission goals 20 years ago.

And how about those Solar Panels! Many thanks to Ethos Green

Power and crew for making alternative energy a reality at the Co-op.

But, are we done yet? The answer is a resounding NO! There's so much more to do to finish the expanded space and create a warm and inviting co-op. In the weeks to come, you'll notice the finishing touches planned for our new space. Like, the messages and connection to our food that distinguish the Co-op from other grocery retailers. Visual reminders of our mission, local farmer profiles, our local designation of a 100-mile radius around Viroqua, and the local non-profit organizations we support as a membership are still coming. And of course, signs to help us find our favorite foods are on the way!

Next spring, we'll complete the graphics planned for the windows facing Main Street to help travelers

recognize us as a grocery store, and add large planters to distinguish the pedestrian areas from the parking lot. It's great to see the plan come together for the large outdoor area to the left of the front doors, now filled with organically-raised Christmas trees without taking up parking spaces to do it. This area will hold our garden center and outdoor events in the future.

How are we doing so far, you may ask? Good news here; the project was three months longer than planned due to delays on equipment deliveries, but still came in slightly under budget. And we are meeting our sales projections as well. Woot!

Thank you VFC community! You are the reason we have a strong local and organic food economy in Viroqua.

Finishing Touches

Fun artwork!



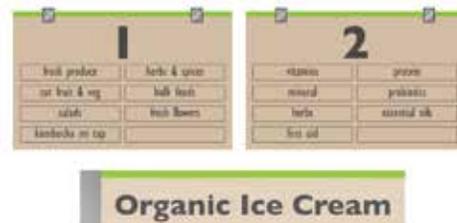
Colorful window graphics



Our co-op values



Wayfinding signs





Local Producer Profile

GoMacro

Located on high ground near the Kickapoo River in Viola, Wisconsin, GoMacro is a local hometown success story. The company is owned and operated by mother and daughter team of Amelia Kirchoff and Jola Sonkin. Their MacroBars are a staple on our shelves and on the shelves of over 25,000 retailers across the country.

GoMacro MacroBars are a raw, vegan, gluten-free, and certified organic protein bar that is a great workout boost, delicious snack, and a quick meal on the go. Each bar is a mix of nut or seed butter (peanut, almond, cashew, sunflower), brown rice syrup, and other additions like fruit, chocolate, coffee, etc. VFC always carries around 10-12 varieties of their bars, with our best sellers being their Protein Pleasure (Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip), Sunny Uplift (Cherries and Berries) and Sweet Awakening (Mocha Chocolate Chip) bars.

GoMacro was a positive outcome from Kirchoff's health struggles. In 2003, Amelia was diagnosed with breast cancer. Instead of taking cancer suppressing drugs following surgery, Amelia decided to follow



a strict macrobiotic diet that focused on eating organic whole grains, vegetables and beans to heal. She also had a deep love of baking, so she transferred her new macrobiotic diet to her favorite sweets. Amelia began to develop recipes for a variety of delicious macrobiotic pies, cakes and cookies using unrefined sweeteners like maple syrup and brown rice syrup. Jola's husband Alex tried some of her macrobiotic cookies and thought they were delicious. He recommended that Amelia and Jola sell them to health food stores.

From that sample and conversation, GoMacro was born. Amelia and Jola started small at first making GoMacro cookies in their commercial kitchen in their barn on their farm outside of Viola. They sold their first cookies to retailers in 2004. After a few years they began making no-bake, raw macrobars for the first time.

In 2011, they outgrew the capacity of their on-farm kitchen and they took the leap and moved the business to the west side of Viola to a 5,000 square foot building that was formerly home to a furniture company. Since the move, they have had explosive growth. They expanded the building in 2014 (7,000 additional sq. ft.) and 2015 (4,800 additional sq. ft.) to help keep pace with demand for their organic energy bars. In Autumn 2018, they completed their largest expansion yet of 21,000 sq. ft. – which includes new offices, more warehouse space, new loading docks, and new employee locker rooms and fitness center.

The company hasn't cut corners when it comes to sustainability with their expanded facility. The design of the building intentionally took advantage of the structure's southern sun exposure. They worked with Ethos Green Power of Viroqua to design and install 840 solar panels that provide around 2/3 of the power required for the facility. Beyond that, the building has high efficiency LED lighting with occupancy sensors that help reduce energy needs.

It is hard to believe that this small hometown company, that had seven employees and made 760,000 bars in 2012, now has over 90 employees and is expected to make over 30 million bars by the end 2018.

Next time you are at the VFC and need a quick snack, pick up a few GoMacro MacroBars and know that you are supporting a local organic company that employs many of our neighbors.

This small hometown company, that had seven employees and made 760,000 bars in 2012, now has over 90 employees and is expected to make over 30 million bars by the end 2018.



Grand Reopening Celebration



The VFC Grand Reopening Nov. 8-10 was a great success! People came from near and far to attend free classes in our new Co-op Community Room, sample food from local vendors and save money with amazing flash sales. Photographer extraordinaire Drew Shonka was on site to capture the fun.





Pump up the Jam and Cheese

In search of an appetizer for easy entertaining? Pairing jam and cheese offers endless possibilities.

By Mandy Makinen

In the tradition of foods that hit that harmonious spot between sweet and salty comes an idea so easy, so elegant, yet based on two staples most Americans have on hand: cheese and jam. This may sound like an unlikely duet, but after you sample a few of these pairings you might just change your tune.

These combinations work for an elegant cheese plate, served with crackers or slices of baguette, but some pairings are also nice for a jazzed-up grilled cheese sandwich. While most jams and jellies are made with fruits, savory preserves like pepper jelly, tomato jam and red onion marmalade are also excellent natural pairs for a variety of cheeses. Look for these specialty items in the jams and jellies aisle, but be sure to check out the cheese department for unique spreads as well.



A strong combination

Generally speaking, strongly flavored cheeses pair well with assertively flavored jams, and the opposite is also true: Mild cheeses marry well with delicately flavored jams. If you neglect this rule, you run the risk of one flavor dominating, thus losing some of that magic that happens when good flavors complement each other. Try these assertive combinations:

Bold pairings

Blue cheese or Gouda with marmalade, black currant, peach, plum, or red onion jam

Aged cheddar with apple jelly, apple butter, huckleberry or tomato jam

Manchego cheese with blueberry jam or its traditional Spanish pairing, quince jelly (membrillo)



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Easy, breezy brie

Similar to goat cheese, the mild flavor and luxurious mouthfeel of brie cheese pairs well with nearly any sweet or savory jam. When in doubt, go with red fruits:

Brie and red fruits

Brie and strawberry jam is a perennial favorite with or without a glass of Champagne

Brie and cherry preserves — try them baked together in puff pastry

Brie with red currant jelly is perfect on a fresh baguette

Go for the goat

Fresh goat cheese, or *chevre*, seems like it was made for jam — a spreadable, smooth cheese with just enough tang to keep it on the savory side. In a pinch, nearly all jams pair with goat cheese, here are a few favorites:

Goat cheese combos

Goat cheese and fig jam (add caramelized onions and you've got the makings of a sandwich)

Goat cheese with cranberry sauce or jelly is excellent on a turkey sandwich

Goat cheese and marmalade (orange, lemon or grapefruit)

Cheesy dessert ideas

Mascarpone, a rich and smooth fresh Italian cheese, is delicious with just about any jam. It's less tangy and more spreadable than cream cheese and has a mild, creamy flavor. Here are some suggestions for pairing this delectable cheese:

Elegant desserts

Mascarpone with blueberry jam and fresh baguette or brioche buns

Mascarpone with strawberry jam and shortbread cookies

Mascarpone with lemon curd and oat crackers

You can experiment with new combinations using whatever cheeses and preserves you have on hand at home until you find the combo that hits all the right notes.



Give Yourself a High Five

Simplify your life with these hearty High Five recipes — delicious dishes made with only five main ingredients.

Potato Lasagna

Servings: 4 – 6. Prep time: 1 hour; 30 minutes active.

The High Five

- 3 medium potatoes, scrubbed clean
- 1 pound part skim ricotta cheese
- 2 cups shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 stalk broccoli, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 2 cups thick spaghetti sauce

Pantry and Kitchen Items

- 1 tablespoon olive oil

1. Heat the oven to 400°F. Drizzle olive oil in a 2-quart baking dish and tilt dish until the bottom has been evenly coated. Set aside.
2. Place potatoes in a pot and cover with cold water, then place on the stove over high heat. Bring to a boil and cook for about 20 minutes, then check the tenderness of the potatoes by piercing with a paring knife. When they are tender but not falling apart, remove from heat and drain. When cool enough to handle, slice potatoes into 1/3-inch thick rounds.
3. Line a fine mesh strainer with two layers of paper towels, place over a bowl, and dollop the ricotta on the paper towels. Gently pat the cheese and let stand to drain off as much liquid as possible, at least 20 minutes. Scrape the cheese into a medium bowl and stir in 1/2 cup of the Parmesan.
4. Assemble the casserole: Place a layer of sliced potatoes on the bottom of the prepared pan. Dollop the ricotta mixture over the potatoes and spread to make an even layer. Sprinkle the broccoli over the ricotta and press gently to make a level surface. Cover the broccoli and ricotta with the remaining potato slices, then top with spaghetti sauce and spread evenly. Cover the sauce with the remaining Parmesan cheese.
5. Bake lasagna, uncovered, for 30 minutes. The sauce will be bubbling vigorously around the edges and the cheese will be golden brown. Let stand 5–10 minutes before slicing.



Broccoli and Cheddar Rice Casserole

Servings: 6. Prep time: 55 minutes; 25 minutes active.

The High Five (Four!)

- 1 cup basmati rice
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 8 ounces cheddar cheese, shredded, divided
- 4 cups broccoli florets

Pantry and Kitchen Items

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 ½ cups water
- 1 teaspoon salt, divided
- 2 tablespoons flour

1. Heat the oven to 375°F and lightly oil a 2-quart baking dish.
2. In a 1-quart pot, bring the water to a boil and add the basmati rice and half of the salt. Return to a boil, cover tightly, and reduce the heat to low. Cook for about 15 minutes, until all the water is absorbed. Take off the heat, fluff and let stand for 5 minutes, then scrape into the prepared baking dish in a pile to cool.
3. In a small saucepan, whisk the flour and milk and place over medium heat. Whisk until the milk starts to boil and thicken slightly, take off the heat and pour over the rice.
4. Sprinkle in all but half a cup of the cheese and add the broccoli, then stir to combine. Pat the mixture flat with the back of your spoon and top with the remaining cheese.
5. Bake, uncovered, for 25 to 30 minutes, until the top is golden brown and melty. Serve warm.



Baked Salmon Provençal with Olives

Servings: 4. Prep time: 35 minutes; 5 minutes active.

The High Five

- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ¼ cup Greek olives, coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoon fresh rosemary, chopped
- ¼ cup white wine
- 1 pound salmon filet, cut in four portions

Pantry and Kitchen Items

- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- ½ teaspoon coarse salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat the oven to 400°F. Lightly oil a 9-inch square pan or small casserole.
2. Pour 1 tablespoon of the olive oil into the pan, and add the cherry tomatoes, olives, rosemary and white wine; toss to mix. Place in oven and roast for 15 minutes.
3. Place the salmon filet, skin side down, on the vegetable mixture, then salt and pepper the salmon portions and drizzle with remaining olive oil. Return to the oven and bake for 15 minutes, until the salmon flakes when pierced with a paring knife.

An elegant entrée that's effortless — just some tomatoes, rosemary and wine, and the heat of the oven makes a flavorful sauce.

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VFC News

Microloan Applications – Due January 18, 2019

The VFC Microlending Committee is pleased to announce that the 2019 Microloan Applications are now available online at:

www.viroquafood.coop/you-own-it/microlending-initiative

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 \$3,000 (local = within 100-mile radius of VFC). 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 18 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



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



Flash Sales – Deep Discounts for All Customers

If you haven't caught one of these incredible sales in the Co-op yet, be on the lookout! Flash sales are a one-day opportunity to get seasonal specials – often as low as “BOGO” – otherwise known as *buy one, get one free!*

We post these flash sales to our social media pages when we get a lot of a product at a great price and pass the savings on to you. The deep discount is only good for one day and while supplies last!

Next time you shop, be sure to keep an eye out for these bright red and yellow signs. They are only posted the day the item is on sale. If you are looking for other ways to save, don't forget to pick up our weekly Co+op Deals flyer – and look for purple basic tags for everyday low prices, too!

Co-op Community Room Availability

We had a terrific test run hosting classes in our Co-op Community Room during the VFC Grand Reopening, which now is used regularly for extra seating during lunch and/or dinner hours. During the celebration, we used the space for free cooking/food making tutorials, cleared the furniture for yoga and movement classes, as well as hosted a reception with VFC Class C Share Investors.

It's like we broke a bottle over the new bow and are sailing into the sunset with a beautiful new space. We received some questions about how we are planning to utilize the room going forward. For the near future, this space will be available for VFC affiliated offerings (free movies in the winter, monthly Board or weekly staff meetings, discounted Driftless Folk School classes, etc.). If your organization is affiliated/mission aligned with the VFC and you're curious about renting this space, submit a request to Bjorn Bergman at:

bjorn.bergman@viroquafood.coop



VFC Cooperative Community Fund Grant Recipients

We are pleased to announce the recipients of our first-ever VFC Cooperative Community Fund (CCF) Grant!* Both of the organizations have projects that work with local food, the local food economy, and students. The Ferryville Farmers Market project focuses on mentoring students on the early stages of food production by way of planting, growing and selling food. The Youth Initiative High School students learn about the later stages of food production through entrepreneurial and culinary skills by running *Food for Thought*, a food truck business that also raises money for the school.

Ferryville Farmers Market

A \$500 grant was awarded to the Ferryville Farmers Market for a youth grower/vendor initiative, which recruits Middle School Students from home school, public and private schools of the region to be growers and sellers at the Ferryville Farmers Market.



Sherry Quamme from Ferryville Farmers Market receives \$500 grant for FFM

Members of the Ferryville Farmers Market who are produce sellers will partner with interested students to mentor the students as they choose their seeds, determine optimal growing conditions, grow seedlings for starter plants and transplanting.

By introducing students to being a Farmers Market Vendor, the business opportunity is understood through experience. Having success at growing and selling will be a motivation to learn more, develop the business concepts and be rewarded through experiencing and seeing results. In turn, the students as vendors expand what is available and offered at the Market which grows the Market's reputation. Customers have a natural tendency to want to support students. It is a positive environment for students as they learn about business concepts, such as: planning, marketing, merchandising, and customer service.

Youth Initiative High School

A \$500 grant was awarded to YIHS for their school kitchen and the *Food For Thought* (FFT) program. FFT is a food truck business run and operated by students, whose mission is to teach students culinary and entrepreneurial skills and doubles as a school fundraiser. FFT is committed



Susan Nesbit from Youth Initiative High School receives \$500 grant for FFT

to sourcing organic ingredients from local farmers as much as possible.

FFT appears each year at the Driftless Music Festival, the Driftless Art Festival, the Harvest Parade and other local events.

YIHS will use the grant money toward the purchase of necessary supplies and equipment for the FFT program, including cookware and knives.

**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 viroquafood.coop/ccf*

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WE MAKE ORDER OUT OF CHAOS

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

Give Where You Live



AUGUST 2018

Door of Hope

VFC Outreach Coordinator Bjorn Bergman presents a donation of \$294 to Brittany Becker of Door of Hope.

SEPTEMBER 2018

Youth Initiative High School

Customer Service Staff Member Anna Rodriguez presents a donation of \$1,739 to Matt Voz of Youth Initiative High School.

OCTOBER 2018

Cooperative Community Fund

VFC Marketing Manager Charlene Elderkin presents a donation of \$750 to Mike Link for the VFC Co-op Community Fund (see pg. 13 for details).

Find more information about our owner-elected nonprofit by visiting our website at: www.viroquafood.coop/community-outreach

2019 Give Where You Live Schedule

Thank you to VFC Owners for voting in the Give Where You Live Donations Program (formerly known as 1% Wednesday). The following schedule is a list of the 2019 nonprofit recipients:

January	Living Faith Food Pantry	July	Driftless Community Radio / WDRT
February	Couleecap	August	Youth Initiative High School
March	Vernon Trails	September	Viroqua Farm to School
April	Community Hunger Solutions	October	VFC Co-op Community Fund
May	Driftless Humane Society	November	Bethel Butikk Food Pantry
June	Viroqua Farmers Market	December	Kickapoo Valley Reserve (KVR)

Calendar of Events

For details, visit our event calendar at: www.viroquafood.coop/about/events

December 2017

Give Where You Live WDRT – Driftless Community Radio

Round up any day this month.

Savings for Owners Owner Discount Days

15% off Meat Dept. (fresh & frozen)

December 4 - 6

Driftless Folk School Class Making Ring Sausage

\$10 off for VFC Owners

Saturday, December 8, 1:00-4:30pm

driftlessfolkschool.org

Driftless Folk School Class Venison Sausage & Curing

\$10 off for VFC Owners

Sunday, December 9, 1:00-4:30pm

driftlessfolkschool.org

In-store Event Holiday Open House

See sidebar for details, page 15

Friday, December 14, 2-6pm

In-store Savings Wellness Wednesday

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

Wednesday, December 19

Store Hours December 24

Open 7am-7pm

December 25 CLOSED

December 31 Open 7am-9pm

January 2018

Give Where You Live Living Faith Food Pantry

Round up any day this month.

Store Hours January 1, 2018

Open 8am-7pm

Savings for Owners Owner Discount Days

15% off all supplements, homeopathic & herbal formulas from the wellness aisles

January 8 - 10



In-store Savings Wellness Wednesday

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

Wednesday, January 16

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.

Location: Co-op Community Room

Thursday, January 17, 6-8pm

VFC Board Event Coffee with the Board

Free coffee and scones with the Board

Location: VFC Indoor Seating Area

Saturday, January 19, 9-11am

February 2018

Give Where You Live Couleecap

Round up any day this month.

Savings for Owners Owner Discount Days

15% off all body care products

February 5 - 7



VFC Board Event Coffee with the Board

Free coffee and scones with the Board

Location: VFC Indoor Seating Area

Saturday, February 16, 9-11am

In-store Savings Wellness Wednesday

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

Wednesday, February 20

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.

Location: Co-op Community Room

Thursday, February 21, 6-8pm



VFC Holiday Open House

Friday, December 14 • 2-6PM

Enjoy a Variety of Free Samples
Listen to Live Music in our Seating Area



Enter to win a variety of prizes!



Fresh pies made from scratch at the VFC Bakery

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

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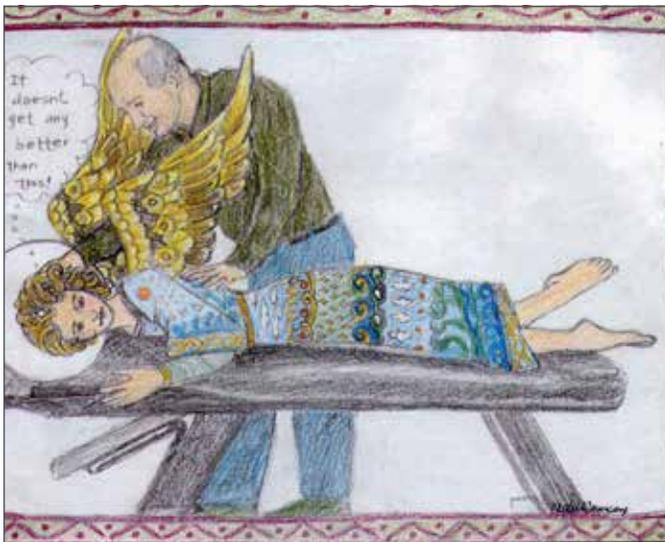
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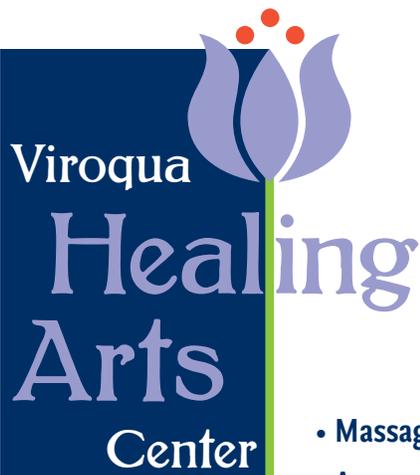
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Dec. 6th: **Viva's Artisan Market**
January 3rd: **Featuring new work by Viva Artists**
February 7th: **Salem Minegar- ink, collage**

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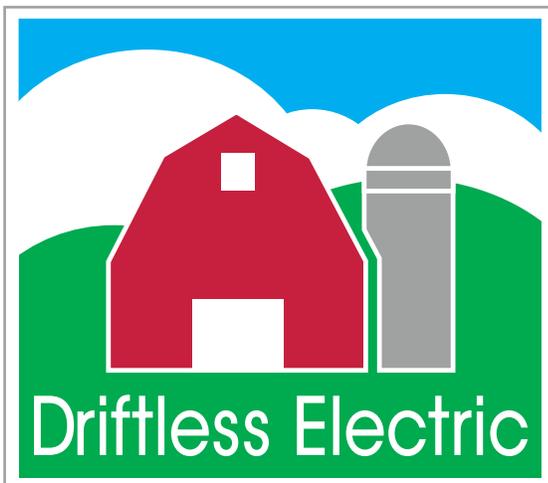
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