



# The Swarthmore Co-op NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2009

Serving the Community Since 1937

## Happy Holidays!



Ah, the Holidays are here! There is hustle and bustle in the atmosphere. Everyone is jittery with excitement. There's so much to do! Planning, hosting family and friends, buying gifts, decorating, and fitting in some time to sit back and enjoy this delicious season.

At the Co-op, we are pretty excited about the season too. We have wonderful new products and ideas to help you out while you prepare for your family celebrations. This newsletter will give you a glimpse at what we are doing at the Co-op to make this a December to remember.



### Deck the Halls

At the Co-op, we don't waste any time getting a jump on the Holiday season. Rick, our produce buyer and merchandiser, has beautiful, fresh wreathes and garland for decorating your home, inside and out. Garland and colorful poinsettias too! All brought in from local producers.

Need a table center piece? No problem. We will be continuing to bring in fresh, cut floral bouquets that will add color and life to your kitchen or dining room. How about some edible decorations? Get the most out of our fresh produce by creating a table center piece that can then be converted into a delightful side dish later in the week.

**Interview with Local  
Gardner, Carol Kennedy**  
*See Page 5*

### Holiday Foods

After the gifts are bought, the halls are decked; it's time to think about the food. The expectations around the holidays are high and the Co-op is ready to deliver.

Our chef, Barbara, is cooking up some fantastic prepared sides that will compliment your main dishes. All the traditional favorites you love, as well as some unique flavor combinations that will surprise and delight your guests. Find our Holiday sides menu on our website and posted by the prepared foods case.

The freshest meats and seafood are here for you as well. We will even prepare your main course for you, if you like. *Continued on page 2*

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## **Holiday Gifts for One and All**

With the season comes gift giving and we have been busy creating gift ideas that we think you will love. The Co-op has a brand new line of gift baskets that can be picked up at the store, or custom made to your specifications. Our baskets contain an assortment of products that we carry in the store, local, international, organic, or gourmet. Introduce your friends and family to some of your favorite store products by giving them a Co-op Gift basket this year.

Throughout the fall, we have been introducing new products that we think will make great presents, either for you or your loved ones!

*Here are some of the new items and lines you will find:*



**Andes Gifts**—"Changing women's lives one garment at a time." This is the motto of a great, fair trade company that has partnered with hundreds of knitting co-operatives in the highlands of South America, adapting the traditional Andean knitting techniques for designing and producing beautiful, one-of-a-kind knit accessories for adults and children. The women who knit the products designed by Andes Gifts are paid a fair, living wage that allows them to provide for their families in an otherwise very depressed, impoverished area. Andes Gifts is making a huge difference in the lives of rural Bolivian and Peruvian families, and we are proud to partner with them in their efforts. Visit their website for more information: [www.andesgifts.com](http://www.andesgifts.com)

Currently, the Co-op is carrying several varieties of child and adult size knit hats and gloves, scarves, purses, and animal finger puppets. These make great stocking stuffers and warm, thoughtful gifts that come complete with a life changing story behind them.

**Aubrey Organics**—In our last newsletter, we introduced you to Badger Bath and Body Products. We have another line of all natural B and B products to tell you about. Aubrey Organics has been around for quite sometime, making the best all natural skin, hair, and body products that a person can buy. Aubrey uses only the finest herbal ingredients, vitamins and plant extracts and mixes their products by hand in small batches to ensure quality in all their goods. They never use animal cruelty in testing their products and they believe in educating their clients and consumers so they can make well informed decisions in choosing Aubrey products. To find out more about Aubrey Organics, visit [www.aubreyorganics.com](http://www.aubreyorganics.com)



You can find Aubrey Organics at the Co-op. We are currently carrying several varieties of shampoo and conditioners, body lotions and moisturizers, as well as all natural deodorants. Try some today and discover the Aubrey difference. *Continued on page 4*

### *Holiday Foods Continued*

Maybe you just need some tips on cooking or seasoning. Our staff is here to help. Be sure to call ahead and order your poultry, beef, pork, seafood, and wild game. Check our website for a full list of our meat and seafood offerings.

With all the hustle and bustle, sometimes you just can't do everything done. Our catering services can provide you with the extra time you need by taking the pressure of cooking off your plate. Whether it's a sandwich tray, appetizer tray, or a full entrée with the works, we have you covered. Click here for pricing and more information about our catering options.



## A Word from the Board

By Jeff Painter, Co-op Board President

First, let me extend blessings of the season to you and your family. While 2009 was a challenging year for the Swarthmore Co-op and many of us, we are very thankful for your continuing support and patronage. As a board, we have re-doubled our efforts to drive member satisfaction and operational profitability. Believe me, we listen carefully to each and every member suggestion to improve our service to you.

The Co-op is always looking for board leadership for the store. I view a vibrant and diverse group of Directors as an important stability marker for the Co-op. If you are interested or would like to suggest another member, I invite you to contact me directly regarding leadership roles to help push the store forward. I can be contacted directly at [jeffpainter1@comcast.net](mailto:jeffpainter1@comcast.net).

The Co-op is also in the middle of a membership campaign. The addition of new members strengthens our presence and helps us to extend benefits to all members. In 2009, we have focused on sharpening the membership value proposition. Now, more than ever, it makes sense to encourage your friends and neighbors to join the Swarthmore Co-op.

My goals for the Swarthmore Co-op in 2010 are to improve our service and value proposition to you, our loyal members. Specific areas that we will focus on include:

- Continuing to improve top-line sales and profitability for the store
- Increasing our membership and enhancing the membership value proposition
- Increasing outreach to the community and continuing our efforts to aid Town Center revitalization in Swarthmore
- Updating our computer and Point-of-Sale (POS) systems
- Using information to drive better decision-making.

Again, thank you for your on-going support and patronage. Members are the reason why the Co-op has been able to serve the community for 73 years.

Thanks,

Jeff Painter  
Co-op Board of Directors, President

### **Sweet Potato Coconut Casserole** *Family recipe by Fay Zeiders*

40 oz. can of yams  
3 eggs  
1/2 C. brown sugar  
salt  
1/2 C butter  
1/2 tsp Vanilla  
1/2 C shredded coconut  
1 can of evaporated milk  
Bag of mini marshmallows (optional)

Mix together all ingredients (except marshmallows) with a blender until smooth.  
Bake in a 7 x 11 casserole dish for 45 minutes @ 350 F.  
Cover the top of the casserole with mini marshmallows and bake for another 30 minutes or until marshmallows are golden brown.  
An optional add-in: Chopped pecans for some crunch. Add about 1/2 C.

Visit [www.swarthmore.coop](http://www.swarthmore.coop) for more great Holiday recipes!

## Upcoming Events

Look forward to the following Co-op sponsored events:

**Saturday, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> 11- 3pm—Holiday Tasting Table.** Stop by the Co-op to sample a wide variety of holiday offerings.

**Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> —Seasonal Serenades.** Co-op employee, Connor Ambrose will be bringing his singing group to work with him to show off their musical talent. Come and enjoy music while you shop!

**Dec. 19 and 20<sup>th</sup>—Silvertones Concerts.** Back by popular demand, the Silvertones choir will be performing at the Co-op.

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## Holiday Savings at the Co-op

**One Village Coffee—**Try One Village's Columbia blend, \$9.99/lb during December!

**Co-op Membership--**Join the Co-op in December and get *twelve 10% discount coupons* for the next twelve months!

**Bulk Order Discounts--**When you order a full case of a product, you receive *10% off the case price*. A great deal for those everyday necessities!

**Shurfine Brand Grocery Products--** Look for savings on everyday items such as Shurfine brand flour, sugar, cereal and canned veggies compared to the name brands.

*Gifts for One and All continued*

**Way Out Wax**—Way Out Wax was founded in 1992 with a vision to produce hand-crafted works of art utilizing socially and environmentally responsible business practices. Based out of Vermont, this company is passionate about bringing good health and natural balance. Their high quality candles use eco-friendly processes. They even use 100% natural packaging made of compostable cornstarch plastic.



The candle lovers in your life will love these purely eco-friendly wax creations. We carry a variety of sizes and scents that will delight you and yours.



**Éclat Chocolate**—Éclat Chocolates are a chocolate connoisseur's delight. This local company is based out of West Chester, PA and is run and operated by master Chocolatier, Chris Curtin. Using his knowledge and education that has taken him around the globe to the finest chocolate manufacturers, he has crafted his own flavors and creations that remind you why chocolate is oh so fantastic.

**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:** Chris is bringing his fresh truffles and caramels to the Co-op on Dec. 15th. He will have a limited supply, so make sure you stop by and pick some up before they are gone! Call us to pre-order.

If you have a chocolate lover in your family, consider Chris chocolates as a gift—stocking stuffer or as a beautiful basket one can enjoy even after the season. Visit [www.eclatchocolate.com](http://www.eclatchocolate.com) for more info.

### **Maggie's Organic Apparel and Gifts--**

Maggie's Organics / Clean Clothes mission is to produce and provide comfortable, durable, affordable and beautiful articles of apparel and accessories made from materials that restore, sustain and enhance the resources, including human, from which they are made. Maggie's uses fair trade practices with their workers, ensuring safe and healthy environments for all producers. This company seeks environmental sustainability along with social responsibility.



We carry a wide variety of Maggie's functional organics, from socks and tights, to scarves and body suits for babies. We also have Maggie's Co-op Animals....these stuffed figurines are made by Opportunity Threads, which is a worker owned co-op that uses up the leftover organic fabric scraps that cannot be used for Maggie's clothing products.

## **Holidays on the Hill**

By Melanie Young, Co-op Board Member



Ever wonder what the Swarthmore College campus does to prepare for the holidays? The students, of course, are studying hard for finals and the end of the fall semester which is December 18th. The community as a whole has two community service projects that have become a tradition at Swarthmore: The Giving Tree and Adopt-A-Family.

The Giving Tree Project is a way for the Swarthmore community to donate gifts for families in need during the holiday season. The Giving Trees are placed at various locations around campus. The trees are decorated with paper ornaments that have instructions on how to give a gift. Those who would like to participate and give a gift during the holiday season choose one or more ornaments and purchase a gift for the recipient listed on the front of the ornament. All gifts are collected at the College Bookstore before being distributed.

The Adopt-a-Family Project, a program of PathwaysPA, allows an individual, family, department, or group of friends to adopt a specific family and buy gifts from a wish list completed by the family members. After registering to adopt a family, a Pathways coordinator contacts the person or group with the wish list from the adopted family.

Another tradition is called Winter Gathering. The College celebrates employees who have reached significant years of service to the institution with a ceremony and festive gathering. And of course there are lots of other winter holiday celebrations and activities including a wreath making class at the Scott Arboretum and a celebration of Kwanza sponsored by the Black Cultural Center.

## **Local Gardening – An Interview with Carol Kennedy**

By Sarah Chenkin

**Carol Kennedy**, the librarian for the middle school in the Garnet Valley School District, is one of the many Coop members residing in Swarthmore with a vegetable garden in her backyard. I decided I would interview her for the Coop Newsletter to give you all a chance to get to know her better. I visited her home one Monday evening while she was preparing a meal for her and her husband, Don. The Kennedy home is a modest two-story home on 1/4 acre of land. The front yard is beautifully kept, and inside, the home is spotlessly clean, homey, and inviting. There are plants growing inside, and outside I can see a beautiful deck and pergola, and beyond, raised beds and herbs.

### **What are you making for dinner, Carol?**

We are having a vegetable stir fry of Swiss chard, kale, Egyptian walking onions, green peppers and thyme, all from our garden. The oil is from the Coop, as is the salt and our tea. We are also having beans with our stir fry from Winter Harvest.

### **How big is your garden?**

We have about 600 square feet of space, including five 4x10 raised beds.

### **What did you grow this year?**

Well, let's see -- beans, tomatoes (cherry and regular), peppers, acorn and crookneck squash, kale, Swiss chard, parsley, potatoes, sweet potatoes, beets, carrots, cucumbers, asparagus, garlic, Egyptian walking onions, white bunching onions, thyme, rosemary, dill, oregano, basil (2 types) sage, bergamot, black currants, red and black raspberries, calendulas and nasturtiums (the kind with edible leaves and blossoms), spinach, New Zealand spinach, and Jerusalem artichokes, among other things.

### **Wow, you must have a lot of sun in your yard.**

Actually, there isn't much sun -- our whole yard is surrounded by trees. We only get about six hours of direct sun in the sunniest spots.

### **What gave you the idea to start a garden?**

We were part of a sustainability reading group. We were reading "The Natural Step for Communities: How Cities and Towns Can Change to Sustainable Practices," by Sarah James and Torbjorn Lahti, a book about how communities in Sweden are moving toward a sustainable lifestyle. We learned that much of our food travels over 3,000 miles to get to our tables. We also learned about the depletion of oil and other fossil fuels, and the fact that our agricultural and transportation systems are heavily dependent on these resources, the supply of which could be seriously compromised at any time.

We were alarmed by what we read. We seriously considered moving to an ecovillage. However, we both have jobs, friends and family here, and moving wasn't really an option.

So we decided to try to see how much food we could grow in our own backyard. One of the members of our reading group, Bryn Richard, is a landscape architect, and offered to help us design a garden that would be successful, based on the limited availability of sunlight. She helped us plan our raised beds and suggested perennial fruits and other edibles that would require modest care. She also encouraged us to learn about permaculture and to install rain barrels to maximize our use of natural resources.

**How long did it take to learn how to garden?** Don grew up in a big family with a garden, and in their case, growing food was not optional. There were six kids and very little money. Every meal had something in it that was grown in the garden, fresh or canned. His dad had gotten into organic gardening in his 70s. So Don already knew a bit about gardening. This is our third year with the garden, and we are beginning to learn about where each kind of plant grows best. We have tried new things every year. This year it was New Zealand spinach, which is not really spinach, but a kind of delicious green that grows with little sun and is frost resistant. *Continued on page 6*

## **Contributing to the Co-op Newsletter**

Do you love to write?  
How about take pictures?  
Maybe you just LOVE the  
Co-op!

We are asking our Co-op  
members and shoppers to  
submit their writings and pic-  
tures for upcoming  
newsletters.

If you would like to do that or  
need more information, please  
call the store or email us.

## **A Meeting of Cooperative Minds**

By Amelia Furman, Co-op Staff Member

As a food cooperative, we are always looking at ways to improve our business and one of the best resources for doing so, is to talk with fellow business owners who are also operating under the Cooperative principles and business model. This past Sunday, board members and staff members of several local co-ops came together at the Newark Natural Foods Co-op in Newark, DE, to learn from each other and to talk about how we can build a network for our resources.

After a tour of the newly renovated and expanded Newark Co-op, General Manager, Karen Taylor, invited us to a pot-luck lunch where all the participants were free to meet and converse with other cooperative staff and board members. The participating Co-ops included Weaver's Way in Mt. Airy, PA, Selene Co-op in Media, PA, George Street Co-op in New Brunswick, NJ, Newark Co-op in Newark, DE, and the Kensington Community Co-op, in Philadelphia, PA. Each co-op has different areas of focus and varying goals, but we have in common a passion for the cooperative movement, local business, and sustainability.

After our delightful lunch, we started the formal part of our afternoon meeting. Susie Brandt, the Newark Board President, presided over the meeting with a simple agenda of forming answers to the questions involving the definition of our network organization (what are we? What do we hope to accomplish? ). Finding answers will take some time, but the discussion was lively and inspiring. A regional network of co-ops has the potential to profit local co-ops on several levels—economically, politically, and socially.

This new organization will be meeting on a quarterly basis. The next meeting will be hosted by the Swarthmore Co-op and the Selene Co-op. We look forward to sharing our beautiful store and town with the other cooperatives in our region.

The Co-operative movement is gaining steam once again and we are excited to be catching the winds of change. It should be a pretty wild ride!

*Interview with Carol Kennedy continued*



**Does all your food come from the COOP or your garden?** No. Actually, we are also members of a Farm-to-City group ([www.farmtocity.org](http://www.farmtocity.org)) called Winter Harvest. We log onto the web and order a variety of winter vegetables, meats, cheeses, jams, dried legumes, and herbs from them. They are delivered to a nearby home for distribution each week. We get honey from a local beekeeper who lives in Swarthmore.

**Can others with shady yards hope to grow food, as you have done?** Definitely, as long as you have some sun, and can plan your garden to take the best possible advantage of the sun, soil, and water you do have.

*Interviewer was Sarah Chenkin, PhD, a Swarthmore resident who is also a beekeeper and organic gardener.*



### **Cranberry Relish**

#### *Ingredients:*

- 1 lb of fresh cranberries
- 1 orange
- 3 apples (only remove the core)
- 1/4 of 1 orange rind
- 1 can crushed pineapple
- 2 c. granulated sugar

#### *Directions:*

Grind first four ingredients together in a food grinder.

Add the crushed pineapple and sugar. Stir and chill for several hours before serving.

*Family recipe from Mrs. Lester Nace*

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**Happy  
Holidays  
From The  
Co-op!**