



THE CAMBRIDGE FOOD CO-OP

Wholesome, affordable foods in a spirit of respect for each other and our world

FEBRUARY 2014 NEWSLETTER

Message from the Board

Pulling together—part of our history—and our future.

On February 9, our Co-op co-sponsored a benefit for Loaves and Fishes / Cambridge Food Pantry. The program included a compelling presentation by Jim Bartholomew, Director of Loaves and Fishes, and a showing of *A Place at the Table*. This film about hunger in America brought new insights about the serious and complex nature of the problem to even the most well-informed.

More than 10 community groups had come together to organize and support this event, led by the Co-op's Peg Winship and Sarah McMillan, with essential help from member Kate Kotfila. The planning process was a lot of hard work, complicated by the fact that most of the groups had never worked together before. But the result was well worth the effort. Those of us who attended went home with an urgent desire to pull together with the rest of the community to alleviate the problem of food insecurity in our neighborhood and across the country.

The ideal of working together for the good of all is the spirit upon which the Co-op was founded, and it is our trusty road map for moving forward. Look how far we've travelled since our beginnings as a food buying club back in the 1970's. But the experience of helping with the food pantry benefit has given me new appreciation for what it takes for diverse groups or individuals to come together, and work together, to achieve a common goal.

Looking at our relatively large, complicated, but stable Co-op, I've been thinking about how much effort has gone into, and continues to go into, each of our accomplishments. In our Co-op, we have longtime members, brand new members, and lots of people in between. We all share common goals relating to wholesome food, but some of us do not have much else in common. And each of us goes through various levels of interest, energy, and commitment to the life of the Co-op over the years.

We all know that working together can get messy. It's easy to get impatient or discouraged at times. But we always seem to have people who remember our road map and pull us all back on track. Then we all keep trying.



And as we actually pull together, so grows our will to pull together. The results can be astounding! We create something which is far greater than the sum of its parts. That is what I think every time I walk through the Co-op doors. What a privilege it is to be a part of this great group effort. How lucky we all are to have this opportunity to pull together.

Speaking of pulling together, let us know what you are thinking, so we can work together more effectively. Here are some ways for you to ***Raise Your Voice:***

- LEAVE A SUGGESTION in the box attached to the wall by the front door.
- EMAIL us at villcoop@gmail.com
- COME TO BOARD & MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS. Board meetings are held the last Wednesday of the month, but NOT EVERY month. So make sure to watch for announcements, or check the Bulletin Board. Membership meetings are intended to be held at least twice a year, and we HOPE to add more.
- CHECK THE CO-OP WEBSITE. We are working to make the website up-to-date with Co-op happenings. In future newsletters, we hope you will see new menus and links which can be used to access all the latest Board news, Committee progress, and product information.
- CHECK THE BULLETIN BOARD AND THE POST BEHIND THE CASH REGISTER. For the digitally-challenged, we try to post important information there. However, the usual complaint applies: space is unfortunately very limited, and competition for posting space is fierce.

Susan Sullivan, Board Chair



MANAGER'S NEWS FROM YOUR CO-OP

A LOT LESS FOAM. We have a new Kombucha dispenser which has three taps, allowing for one additional flavor. It also has a lot less foam when filling a container.

CHECK OUT THE CHANGES. We have been moving things around in the store to make room for another spice display, so that we can move our spices from plastic to glass jars. Also, we have been trying to make our floor space feel more open and inviting so come in and check out the changes.

THANK YOU. Inventory has been done! Thank you to all who chipped in to count and tally goods. Without your help, I would still be counting.

FEBRUARY SPECIAL. We are running a special (15% off) on a new product that is a perfect cold weather food. "100 Mile Pies" are made by Susan Quillio in the Spoonful Kitchen. These frozen "pot" pies are made with ingredients sourced as much as possible within 100 miles. Savory, tasty, and easy, they are ready to pop in the oven and enjoy.



Cory McMillan, Co-op Manager

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 1: The Annual Meeting for the entire membership of the Co-op will be held on Saturday afternoon, March 1. As of this writing, the precise time and venue are to be determined, and will be announced via eblast and in-store postings. The Finance Committee will go over the 2014 Budget proposal. Board and staff will report out on the status of projects begun since the last meeting. The Board and staff will seek input and direction from members about current and future plans.

OUTREACH PROJECTS: Sarah McMillan and Peg Winship have offered to help organize efforts by the Co-op to reach out to, and partner with, other community groups around the issue of healthy food and food education. The benefit for the food pantry was a wonderful start. They would appreciate ideas and willing workers to bring more such events to fruition. Contact Peg or Sarah at margaretwinship@me.com or smcmillan@burrburton.org.

THINGS TO COME: We hope that in the near future we will have more information about exciting outreach projects and also about the inner workings of the Co-op available on our website. In the meantime, the updated list of Board Members and Staff is posted on the Co-op Bulletin Board, with spare copies available in the office.

THE NEW OFFICERS OF THE CO-OP BOARD OF ADVISORS

Chair, Susan Sullivan

Vice-Chair, Isaac Labish

Treasurer, Kendal Dwyer

Co-Chair of Finance Committee, Hannah Stevens

Secretary, Ron Anderson



FROM THE RIND

SOFT—VERY SOFT—CHEESE AT THE CO-OP

Soft cheeses – creamy and spreadable – all start with milk that is heated. Then a “starter” is added--anything from lemon juice or vinegar to a commercially-prepared additive. This group of cheeses includes cream cheese, ricotta, cottage cheese, crème fraiche, some mozzarella, some goat cheeses, and mascarpone. They tend to combine well with a wide variety of flavors, from sweet to savory. Some are used as toppings for rich desserts, or enrichments for soups and stews. They are also quite easy to prepare at home, using a guide such as *The Home Creamery*, by K. Farrell-Kingsley (Storey Publishing, 2008).

We are concentrating on one delicious softy: mascarpone. You can make it at home, or purchase it at your co-op. We will be carrying it during the second half of February. Mascarpone is a cow's milk product with a high butterfat content (30-46%). It is smooth and quite dense, and its taste has been described as a cross between heavy cream and a good-quality cream cheese. It is the essential ingredient for one of Italy's most famous recent exports, "tiramisu," which means "pick me up" and likely refers to the presence of strong espresso coffee in this unctuous dessert. Find a recipe for "tiramisu" below.



RECIPES FROM THE CO-OP

Here is an unusual and delicious cake, borrowed shamelessly word-for-word from Deb Perelman's delightful cookbook and web site "The Smitten Kitchen". If you don't know her, you may want to check her out! NOTE: This recipe is not for children. As the author points out, the red wine in the recipe does not entirely cook away. So put your adult dinner guests in a great mood, despite the winter.

Red Wine Velvet Cake with Whipped Mascarpone

This is a red velvet cake with NO red food coloring, the main ingredient of the commercial version.

Preheat oven to 325. Line 3 cake pans (9") with parchment paper, then grease and flour both bottoms and sides.

CAKE: Cream 2 sticks unsalted butter at room temperature until smooth. Add 2 cups firmly-packed brown sugar and 2/3 cup granulated sugar. Beat until fluffy (3 minutes or so in an electric mixer). Add 4 large eggs, at room temperature, and beat well. Then add 2 cups red wine (your choice) and 2 tsp. vanilla extract.

Sift 2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour with 1 1/3 cup Dutch cocoa, 1/2 tsp. baking soda, 1 tsp. baking powder, 3/4 tsp. ground cinnamon, and 3/4 tsp. salt, together right over the wet ingredients. Mix until 3/4 combined and then fold the rest together with a rubber spatula. Divide batter between the 3 pans (about 2 1/2 cups of batter per pan). Bake 25 minutes until cake tester comes out clean. The top of each cake should be shiny and smooth. Let cool 10 minutes, then flip onto a rack to finish cooling.

If cakes are domed a bit, you can even by trimming the tops with a long, serrated knife.

FILLING: Beat 16 oz. mascarpone in a medium bowl with 2 1/3 cups confectioners sugar, a pinch of salt, and 1/4 tsp. vanilla extract, at medium speed until light and fluffy.

ASSEMBLE: Cover first layer of cake (on cake platter), with approximately 1/3 of the filling, then repeat. Do not frost sides. Chill until ready to serve.

COLD WEATHER PICK ME UP

We think that enduring this endless winter requires the compensation of a stimulating meal, culminating in the ultimate “pick me up”, tirami su!

We begin with an aromatic vegetarian chili that will warm your February evening. It is delicious just made, but even better if it sits, refrigerated, for a day. The rich vinaigrette on the salad lends itself to any mixture of greens, especially some of the winter bitters such as radicchio and chicory. The tirami su can be made with liquor or without, though strong espresso coffee is a must!

Vegetarian Chili

The secret to this recipe is cooking your own beans! Soak $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dried chickpeas and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup dried kidney beans separately, overnight (or use the quick soak method). Drain and rinse. Put in separate pans and cover with water by $1\frac{1}{2}$ ".

2 Tbs olive oil	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. freshly ground pepper
2 cups chopped onion	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup dry red wine
2 carrots in $\frac{1}{4}$ " dice	$\frac{1}{2}$ c bulgur
2 stalks celery in $\frac{1}{4}$ " dice	3 Tbs tomato paste
1 garlic clove, minced	1 tsp. chili powder
$3\frac{1}{2}$ cups (12oz.) white mushrooms chopped	1 tsp. ground coriander
1 red bell pepper in $\frac{1}{4}$ " dice	1 Tbs ground cumin
1 Tbs Worcestershire sauce	2 tsp dried oregano
1 can (28 oz) crushed tomatoes (* use Muir Glen fire-roasted)	Coarse salt
1 fresh jalapeno chili, seeded & chopped	

Simmer until tender (chickpeas should take a bit longer, up to an hour).

Heat oil in a large pot (6 qt) over medium-high heat. Add onions, carrots, celery and garlic. Cook, stirring, until onion is translucent. Add mushrooms and peppers. Cook until peppers are just tender. Stir in tomato paste, spices, oregano, 2 tsp. salt, pepper, Worcestershire and wine. Add crushed tomatoes, $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups water, chick peas, kidney beans, and bulgur. Bring to a simmer and simmer gently for 30 minutes.

Serve with chopped fresh cilantro, grated cheddar and crème fraiche or sour cream.

[Adapted from a published recipe attributed to the photographer Helen Norman]

Anna's Vinaigrette (For a Green Salad)

The amount of extra virgin olive oil and balsamic vinegar are entirely to taste.

Extra virgin olive oil
Balsamic vinegar
1 medium garlic clove, finely diced
1 scant tsp. whole grain mustard

Combine and stir briskly. If you are using delicate greens, substitute lemon juice for the vinegar.



Tirami Su ("Pick Me Up")

3 Tbs strong espresso coffee (powdered instant espresso is fine)
Optional: 1 Tbs brandy or grappa
3 large eggs at room temperature, separated
½ c. sugar (ideally vanilla sugar)
8 oz. mascarpone at room temp.
About 24 lady fingers (ideally "savoardi," the Italian version)
1 oz. grated bittersweet chocolate

Combine coffee (and brandy) in small bowl and set aside.

Whisk egg whites until stiff and glossy but not dry, set aside.

Whisk egg yolks with sugar until thick and lemon-colored. Add mascarpone and whisk to blend. Carefully fold in egg whites with a spatula.

Place a single layer of half the ladyfingers on a flat platter or in a 10" square baking dish. Dip pastry brush in coffee and soak biscuits with the liquid. Spread about ½ the mascarpone over the biscuits and sprinkle on half the chocolate. Repeat process with a second layer, though leave second sprinkling of chocolate for serving time. Cover and refrigerate 3 hours or overnight. NOTE: Optional to put in freezer for 30 minutes before serving to have a firmer, more chilled dessert.

Source: Patricia Wells, Trattoria, Wm. Morrow, 1993

FROM COOP MEMBER [ED BRUSKE'S FOOD BLOG](#)

HOW ABOUT RUTABAGA SOUFFLÉ?

Think of late winter dishes you most dread, and mashed rutabaga probably springs first to mind. What was that vaguely bitter orange stuff Aunt Tilly was so fond of anyway? Outside Minnesota, rutabagas have all the appeal of a dead skunk on the highway.

Or do you have to be Scandinavian to love this under-appreciated root? Rutabaga have such a long love affair with the northern countries they've acquired the nickname "Swedes." In fact, a couple of years ago while I was traveling the U.S. documenting our school lunch disaster, the Swedish government invited me to Stockholm to sample the school food there. Invariably I encountered cafeteria "salad bars" dominated by cabbage, potatoes, and rutabaga prepared a dozen different ways.



As far as Swedish schools are concerned, kids can hardly get enough potatoes and rutabaga.

But can a root vegetable the size of a slow-pitch softball really be edible? I wasn't sold until I stumbled upon a February 1991 issue of the late *Gourmet* magazine in which an entire section was devoted to recipes for rutabaga and its smaller, paler cousin, the turnip. Was it a gag? I wondered. Apparently, I had a thing or two to learn, and one recipe in particular has stuck with me all these years later: rutabaga soufflé.

Turns out soufflés are not so terribly difficult as legend would have it. You do need a few mixing bowls, and a straight-sided soufflé dish certainly helps. But if you can beat egg whites to stiff peaks—well, you're almost there. Soufflés can be sweet for dessert or savory for a side dish. Make a roux with butter and flour, add milk and the flavoring (in this case mashed rutabaga) and fold in your beaten egg whites. Voila!

Next time you raid your root cellar, see if you don't have a rutabaga yearning to be elevated into something sublime. This is high season for storage vegetables. Rutabaga are not terribly difficult to grow, either. We harvested them out of the vegetable garden we kept in front of our house in the District of Columbia, just two miles from the White House. Oh, and the greens are delicious as well, I discovered. I started using them instead of spinach in my lasagna.

Rutabaga soufflé

Butter and dust a soufflé dish with bread crumbs. Fit a collar around the dish that rises at least 2 inches above the rim. We use aluminum foil and a paper clip for this, or parchment paper and staples.

Peel and cut 1 rutabaga into 1 pound of cubes. Place in a large saucepan, cover generously with water and season with salt. Bring to a boil, then lower heat; cover and continue to cook until the rutabaga is very tender. Drain and squeeze the rutabaga through a ricer (or mash) into a large mixing bowl. Set aside.



You can use the same saucepan to make your roux. Melt 4 tablespoons butter over moderately high heat. Add 4 tablespoons all-purpose flour, mix well, and cook, stirring with a whisk for a couple of minutes. Lower the heat if necessary. You don't want the flour to brown. Slowly whisk in 1 cup milk. Bring to a boil, then lower heat and cook, stirring frequently, until the roux is thick. Add 3 ounces sharp cheddar cheese and stir continuously until the cheese is completely melted. Season with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt (or to taste) and a generous pinch of freshly grated nutmeg. Remove from heat to cool a bit, then stir in 4 egg yolks, one yolk at a time. Adjust seasoning.

Scrape the roux mix into the bowl with the riced rutabaga. Mix well and set aside.

In a separate large mixing bowl, whisk 6 eggs whites with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cream of tartar into stiff peaks. Fold $\frac{1}{4}$ of the beaten whites gently into the rutabaga mix. Add the rest of the whites to the rutabaga mix and fold these in until completely incorporated. Use a light hand with the folding, as it is the air you have beaten into the whites that makes your soufflé rise. Pour the mix into the prepared soufflé dish and place on a baking sheet in a 325° oven. Bake for approximately 70 minutes, or until the top of the soufflé is golden and the soufflé is cooked through in the middle.

We made this soufflé last night and served it with dinner next to a Caesar salad. Even daughter liked it, judging by the second helping she took. I guarantee that if you make this soufflé, you'll become a rutabaga lover as well.

Go Swedes!