



# Co-op Shopper

Spring 2019

LA CROSSE • ROCHESTER • WWW.PFC.COOP • FRESH PRODUCE • GROCERY • DELI • BISTRO

La Crosse  
store remodel:  
Grand  
Reopening  
April 4!

9 Bee stories  
14 Class listings  
19 Cheese Challenge returns!

The *Co-op Shopper* is published by the People's Food Co-op of La Crosse and Rochester, 315 Fifth Avenue S, La Crosse, WI 54601 and 519 1st Avenue SW, Rochester, MN 55902.

The *Co-op Shopper* serves to educate shoppers about food issues, community activities and events, co-ops in general, and membership in the PFC. The views expressed are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent those of the People's Food Co-op or its membership.

The *Co-op Shopper* is printed on recycled paper. All articles and pictures submitted for publication become property of People's Food Co-op. PFC reserves the right to refuse publication of any article for any reason.

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## KNOW YOUR BOARD

Cynthia Carr  
Jacob Davidson  
Tessa Leung **president**  
Laurie Logan  
Monica Lunde **treasurer**  
Andrea Niesen  
Verna Simon **vice president**  
Lisa Wiste  
Contact the board at board@pfc.coop

## Upcoming board of directors' meetings

February 28, 4:30: Rochester  
March 28, 4:30: La Crosse  
(Powell Place)  
April 25, 4:30: Rochester

# TAKE OWNERSHIP

**Our Mission:** To build community, grow a loyal and thriving ownership, and be the best fresh food market in the country.

Become a member/owner of La Crosse and Rochester's only community owned grocery store!

## OWNERSHIP BENEFITS

- A 5% discount on 12 shopping trips per year.
- Monthly member/owner only specials. Preorder by the case and take an additional 10% case discount.
- Reduced rates on co-op cooking, gardening, and wellness classes.
- Have a say! Vote on co-op issues and elect or run for the board of directors.
- Share in our profits. Profits from our co-op go back into our business, back to our community, or to owners in proportion to how much they spend (patronage refund)!
- The *Co-op Shopper* mailed to your door. Learn about local farms and food, stay up to date on co-op happenings, community classes, owner specials, and more! The *Co-op Shopper* is published quarterly.
- Two stores, one co-op. Use your ownership benefits at both La Crosse and Rochester locations!
- Ownership is yours! If you decide not to be a member/owner any more, simply request an equity refund with a simple form.

## IT'S EASY TO JOIN

- **Household:** Make a \$100 one-time payment for the primary member, plus \$25 each for up to two additional adults living in the same household who wish to utilize ownership benefits. The primary member/owner may make changes to the ownership at any time. An installment plan is available.
- **Business/Organization:** Business owners who use the co-op for their business purchases may want to choose this option. Make a \$100 one-time payment for the primary member/owner, plus \$25 each for up to two additional adults.
- **Special Circumstance:** PFC is committed to food access for all. Therefore, PFC offers full member/owner benefits for a one-time payment of \$25 to people for whom \$100 is a barrier.

## STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

College students with a valid student ID may sign up for a one-year membership (September–August). Cost is \$10 per year. Students receive all owner benefits except the right to vote, run for the board, and receive patronage refunds.

**Join Today!** Ask any cashier for a member/owner packet. It's quick and easy to sign up!

**Cover photo:** Coneflower with pollinator. *Photo courtesy of Seed Savers Exchange.*

# WHAT'S NEW AT PEOPLE'S FOOD CO-OP

## Staff picks for new items in the store!

### Rochester: Karl's pick, "Pride of the Fleurieu" Cabernet Sauvignon

For my selection I am picking Dandelion Vineyards "Pride of the Fleurieu" Cabernet Sauvignon. It sells in our store for \$24.99 per bottle, and comes from the McLaren Vale in Australia.



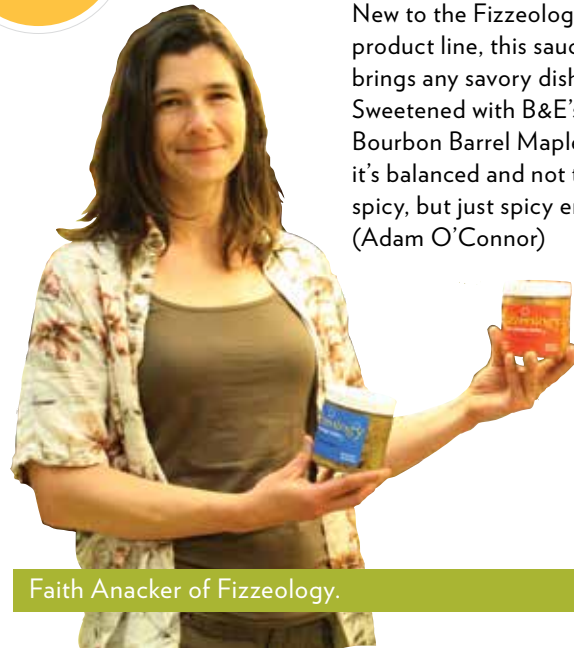
Grown on the Strangers Ranch Vineyard, the vines are cooled by breezes from the great southern ocean and Lake Alexandria. The low rainfalls and rich soils produce a rich full-bodied wine.

Selected bunches were hand picked by family and friends in the third week of March and gently crushed into open-top fermenters. After 14 days of fermentation the wine was basket pressed into French oak barriques for 18 months' maturation and then bottled, to capture the essence of the vineyard. This cabernet will reward cellaring and decanting.

The nose is scented blueberries, cassis, and anise aromas, as well as baking spice, cedar, and blackberry. Rich, deep, blueberry, fig, black plums, and milk chocolate flavors. Tobacco, spearmint, and soft, powdery cabernet tannins, softened by smooth mouth filling fruit before a really extended finish. Really an exceptional red wine, available at Rochester's Wine, Beer, & Spirits department now. (Karl Erie)



### La Crosse: Adam's pick, Fizzeology Hot Sauce



New to the Fizeology product line, this sauce brings any savory dish to life! Sweetened with B&E's Trees Bourbon Barrel Maple Syrup, it's balanced and not too spicy, but just spicy enough. (Adam O'Connor)

Faith Anacker of Fizeology.



### Congratulations to MOSES Farmers of the Year

Joyce Ford and Jim Riddle  
Blue Fruit Farm, Winona, MN

Thank you for leading the organic movement for 30 years!  
From your friends, farmers, and co-op owners at  
People's Food Co-op and Bluff Country Co-op



MOSES Organic Farm Conference meets  
February 21-23, 2019 at the La Crosse  
Center in La Crosse, Wis. More information  
and registration at: [mosesorganic.org/  
conference/](http://mosesorganic.org/conference/)



# PFC BOARD REPORT



Verna Simon,  
Vice President

**H**ello, Fellow Owners, and Happy 2019! Your board and co-op staff are ready for a new year of challenges and successes, and we hope you are, too.

People's Food Co-op achieved a few milestones and made a few changes in 2018. We started the La Crosse store renovation, it's looking good. We held two tremendous People's Picnics in October and had a great turnout at the Annual Owner Meeting in December. And we now have more than 10,000 owners! This is very exciting because it shows the faith that you have in PFC, and it bodes well for our future as we tackle changing food trends and new competitors.

There is some lingering election business to which we must attend. At the time of the election last fall, we had candidates enough to compete for the seats available (three seats, four candidates). The election went well, and we had a terrific voter turnout (over 10%! We thank you for your participation!). As you may have seen in a few posts, our new and returning board members are Cynthia Carr, Tessa Leung, and Lisa Wiste. Congratulations to all of you!

But of course, life's events come at us without warning. Wale Elegbede and Paul Sims have each resigned their seats, effective December 2018, due to conflicts with other obligations. Both have

left the board in good standing. Thanks to Paul (five years) and to Wale (two years) for your board service.

These two seats each have one year remaining, until December 31, 2019. The board has decided to make a one-year appointment for one of the seats. Doing this allows us to continue the bylaw-prescribed election cycle, with three seats elected each year. We decided to leave the second seat open at this time. Owners who are interested in joining the board and want to learn more about our work are invited to attend board meetings before deciding to run for a full 3-year term.

The first open seat will go to the fourth-highest vote-getter of the 2018 elections. Candidate Jacob Davidson accepted the offer of a one-year appointment. Please welcome Jacob to the Board of Directors!

The work of the board is important and we take it seriously. We work to represent your interests as owners, shoppers, and community members. We hope to appoint directors who are willing and able to help us in our efforts. If you are interested in being a board member, please apply to run for the board during the next election cycle. Applications are available starting July 1 and due by August 31. Elections are held in November–December. It is not too early to start planning for the next election! Contact us at [board@pfc.coop](mailto:board@pfc.coop) with questions.

Beyond running for the board, know that there are other ways to participate in helping the People's Food Co-op succeed.

- Continue to make suggestions. We can improve only if you show us the way. You can contact the co-op through the in-store suggestion box or through the website, any of our social media, or face to face with our staff.
- Continue to sing the co-op's praises! If we are doing something you like (or love), let everyone know.
- Continue to shop! We can do our good work in the store and in the community only if we have the funds to operate.
- Become a Co-op Ambassador. We plan to roll out an Ambassador program this spring, so stay tuned.

As always, we are excited to start this new year with you! Have a terrific 2019 and we'll see you at the co-op!

—Verna Simon



PFC board of directors at the 2018 annual meeting (l to r): Monica Lunde, Tessa Leung, Andrea Niesen, Laurie Logan, Heidi Blanke, Verna Simon.



# PFC BOARD REPORT



Lizzy Haywood,  
general manager

**P**eople's Food Co-op is waltzing into 2019 with lots of great plans, and we are delighted to have all of you along as dance partners! Thank you for making our co-op community such a fun and rewarding place.

## Reducing plastic use

First up this year was our initiative to reduce the use of plastics used at the co-op. Plastic grocery bags are now available upon request but paper will be the default bagging option. We have lots of compostable and recycled alternatives, too.

Cooperative businesses have sustainability in their DNA. As people-centered businesses, cooperatives reflect the values of owners. Limiting plastic use is a direct response to our owners' collective call for better sustainability measures at People's Food Co-op.

Five reasons that *now* is the time to reduce the use of plastics at the co-op:

1. People's Food Co-op is people working together to create a sustainable community. That means we need to be leaders in protecting the environment.
2. Owners and shoppers have asked the co-op to reduce plastic use.
3. Reducing the overall use of plastic across stores will cut pollution and protect our environment.
4. We can positively influence our communities through leadership in waste reduction *and* in meeting our owners' needs.
5. We now have better quality paper bags with sturdier handles and compostable waxed-paper options, too.

Cutting back on other plastics is part of our future. This is the start of a learning process that we are taking with you, our co-op shoppers. Please continue to share your feedback and ideas with us as we continue this sustainability journey. All paper and plastic production has environmental downsides. There is no perfectly sustainable new bag. We encourage everyone to reuse bags whenever possible.

What other sustainability measures are in practice at your co-op?

- Compostable dinnerware, food boxes, and straws (both stores will have washable dinnerware after the remodel)
- Tons of food donated to six to ten food pantries every year
- Tons of food put into local and industrial compost every year
- LED lights throughout both stores, including overhead and in our refrigerated and frozen cases
- Energy recovery systems used for heating water (both stores) and cooling (Rochester)
- Use of sustainably harvested woods in our display cases
- Bike-friendly business efforts (and awards!) in Rochester
- Availability of compostable straws and compostable dinnerware at the delis.

## Renovations in the La Crosse deli

In La Crosse you've seen by now the major progress toward finishing the deli renovations. We will reopen in March with a new hot buffet, daily lunch specials, and made-to-order bratwurst sandwiches. Everyone is invited to our Grand Reopening Party on Thursday, April 4. Mark your calendar!

PFC staff have been going the extra mile to make this remodel as pleasant as possible when you're shopping. I want to thank all our La Crosse team for putting up with noise and dust, and especially for being patient during these months. We see the end in sight, and it is abundant with delicious food, made by hand here every day.

For all the details on the renovations, watch the website and your email for weekly updates.

## Everyone welcome

We love cooking for you and hope you have been able to join us for our weekly Community Meal in each store! Every Wednesday the whole community can get a delicious house-made meal for \$5. These events are a great way to introduce your friends or family to the fun that comes with being part of the co-op, so bring them along! There's room for everyone at the co-op, because *everyone is welcome*.

## HEY, NEW MEMBER/OWNERS!

If you became a PFC owner during our Fall Drive and you have not picked up your shirt or hat, one is waiting for you in the store! Stop down with your coupon and pick it up!

# BOARD ELECTION RESULTS



Cynthia Carr



Tessa Leung



Lisa Wiste

**W**e are pleased to announce the results of the recent elections. First, thank you to everyone who took part in this democratic endeavor. We had the best participation in many years, with over 1,000 votes cast. That's over 10% of our total ownership—congratulations!

The following were elected to serve three-year terms as directors: Cynthia Carr, Tessa Leung, and Lisa Wiste.

—2019 People's Food Co-op Board



**Earth Fair**  
LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN

Step up to **GREEN** in 2019!

**FREE FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!**  
**Sunday, April 28, 2019**  
11am–5 pm at Myrick Park & Myrick Park Center

- Farmers' market
- Food booths
- Live music
- Healing arts room
- Children's activities
- Door prizes
- Grand green prizes
- Recycling Fair 10–3
- Shuttle trolley
- ...and much more!

Poster contest for grades 3–5  
Download form at  
[www.EarthFairLaCrosse.com](http://www.EarthFairLaCrosse.com)

Presented by these  
celebrating partners









[www.EarthFairLaCrosse.com](http://www.EarthFairLaCrosse.com)

**FREE**

# Earth Day

**PFC-ROCHESTER  
BLOCK PARTY  
& ART FAIR**

**SUNDAY  
APRIL 28  
2-6 P.M.**

Join us for bands, food,  
beer, and fun. People's Food  
Co-op parking lot,  
519 1st Avenue SW, Rochester



**SAVE THE DATE!**

**EARTH  
FEST**



**APRIL 22 - 28, 2019**

Featuring the EarthFest Expo on April 27 at the RCTC Fieldhouse

For more information, follow us on social media and visit our website.

[EarthfestRochesterMN.org](http://EarthfestRochesterMN.org)  
[EarthfestRochester@gmail.com](mailto:EarthfestRochester@gmail.com)



## PFC—ROCHESTER'S MARCH FOOD DRIVE

**F**or the sixth consecutive year, People's Food Co-op—Rochester will join our fellow co-ops throughout the state to collect food and raise funds for MN FoodShare's March Campaign. Every year, the March Campaign brings together hundreds of Minnesota organizations, businesses, and places of worship to help keep 300 food shelves statewide stocked throughout the year.

PFC joins Minnesota FoodShare in envisioning a Minnesota where all residents have access to healthy food and no one suffers from hunger. The March Campaign addresses those issues directly, and we'd love to have you join the fight against hunger. By increasing awareness and advocating for long-term solutions to hunger in our communities, together we can meet the needs of those who need it most.

Our efforts will go to supporting Channel One and Southeast MN food shelves. In addition to Beans for Bags, PFC will be selling pre-made bags for Channel One and collecting food for



Community Food Response. Shoppers will also have the option to round up their bill at check out. Thanks to all of you for your donations make co-ops the biggest contributor in the state.

For more information, visit Minnesota FoodShare's website at [www.mnfoodshare.org/marchcampaign](http://www.mnfoodshare.org/marchcampaign), or contact Brad Smith, PFC member services outreach manager, [brad.smith@pfc.coop](mailto:brad.smith@pfc.coop).



The Expo will feature gardening exhibits, rain barrel painting competition, food, and neighborhood conviviality.

More information is available here: [washburnneighborhood.wordpress.com](http://washburnneighborhood.wordpress.com)

## Annual Garden Expo! La Crosse

**Saturday, March 2, 10:30 a.m.–2 p.m.**

14th Annual Washburn Garden Expo  
at Lincoln Middle School,  
510 S. 9th Street in La Crosse

The Washburn Neighborhood Association brings back old favorites like our rain barrel contest and auction, luncheon, door prizes, and Mayo's mobile teaching kitchen, while adding a refreshing new layout, mini-sessions every 30 minutes, and expanded exhibitor options.

Join us for fun, food, and learning with businesses and organizations that promote green and healthy living. The Expo includes something for the entire family.

Event is free to the public.



# BEE STORIES

## Messing with the bees

Aristotle didn't believe bees made honey. He thought the bees collected honey from flowers and grasses. Honey formed in the air and gathered like dew on the petals. It was the condensation of rainbows—according to the father of Western science. Maybe in Aristotle's day they had more rainbows.

PFC, unfortunately, can't rely on rainbows. In Rochester, our honey comes from three local producers: Metz's Hart-Land Honey, The Bee Shed, and Hiawatha Honey. "Bulk honey is a huge seller at the store," says Karla Meyer, PFC—Rochester's store manager.

None of our suppliers produce organic honey. No beekeeper I've talked to or read about believes that such a thing exists. Bees wander around too much, so it's not possible to certify that every plant they've visited for pollen and nectar hasn't been sprayed with pesticide.

In La Crosse, Gentle Breeze has been one of People's Food Co-op's local suppliers of honey for over 20 years.

No one is exactly sure, though, when the bees started working with people. "Domesticated?" Eugene Woller of Gentle Breeze laughs. "Bees aren't domesticated. They'll co-operate with you, but they're not a domestic animal."

That co-operation started a long time ago as agriculture spread and bees stepped in as pollinators, going about their task of collecting nectar and pollen for food. Crops dependent on honeybee pollination amount to about a third of what we eat—including almonds, apples, blueberries, cranberries, cherries, asparagus, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, onions, pumpkins, squash, sunflowers, and soybeans. The honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) is not native to North America. It was brought to this continent by the European colonists and proceeded westward a few miles ahead of the settlements.

Eugene Woller has been working with honeybees since 1965. He started with 11 hives and now has close to 700. They get about 120 pounds of honey from each hive, "sometimes 200 pounds." Besides honey, Gentle Breeze also extracts wax from the hives to make candles and for bulk wax sales. "You get stung some. Some days are good and you only get 30 stings," Eugene says.

**"You get stung some. Some days are good and you only get 30 stings."**



"Kings and commoners alike consume the bees' product for the sake of their health; it is much sought-after and loved by all."  
—The Aberdeen Bestiary, c. 1200 c.e.

Rochester's Bee Shed has been supplying People's Food Co-op with honey since 2014. Partners Chris Schad and John Shonyo have been

keeping bees since 2008 or so. They each started with two hives. They have more than 100 now. We sat down for a chat in late December at their small warehouse, not to say, bee shed.

Chris: "Our original intention was to sell bee equipment for bee keepers. I wanted to do honey production. The co-op was one of the first stores we talked to about selling our honey."

"And as we've grown the bee side of the business," John says, "we had less time for equipment retail."

The Bee Shed no longer offers bee equipment, but they do have classes on beekeeping. They also do mentoring and prairie restoration work. Class information is on their website at [www.thebeeshed.com](http://www.thebeeshed.com).

### The pollinator sideline

One hundred years ago, most beekeepers were only in it for the honey. Pollination was a favor done for local farmers. Beginning in the 1940s though, after the end of the World War II, beekeepers started renting out their hives to farmers and getting paid for it. This was encouraged by the USDA. Postwar, as chemicals developed for the war industry were diverted to pesticides, the local, native beneficial insects that had always been the nation's primary pollinators began to disappear. The USDA settled on the honeybee as the replacement. Farmers would have a single pollinator that could be trucked from farm to farm for all our crops. What could go wrong?

In early 2005, beekeepers began reporting a disturbing behavior in their hives. The bees would abandon the hive, leaving queen, brood, and piles of honey. The beekeeper would open the hive and find it empty. Odder still, other insects and bees who typically

*Continued on next page.*



raid such stores would leave the abandoned honey alone. The syndrome came to be known as colony collapse disorder (CCD).

One side effect of the arrival of CCD in 2005 was that it made it painfully clear how important bees are to farm production. The sudden shortage of bees tripled the price growers would pay beekeepers to ship their hives to California. Most honeybee pollinator operations are much larger than the Bee Shed or Gentle Breeze, with thousands of hives on trucks going from Florida to Texas to California, then up through Oregon and Washington—following the seasons, and constantly keeping their bees at work. But by 2006, there weren't enough bees to be had and even small operators' hives were in demand.

Gentle Breeze has 300 hives—half their colonies—in California now. Even a small outfit like the Bee Shed has gotten into the pollinator business. “In October, we sent 36 hives to Los Banos, California for the almond season,” Chris says. “Seventy-five percent of all honeybees in the U.S. are in California for the almonds now.”

Some crops are dependent on honeybees for their success. Almonds are the most well-known example. In early spring, when the almond trees blossom, honeybee hives are set up in the groves to pollinate the flowers and collect the pollen and nectar that the bees use to make honey. This honey is not sold commercially, but the bees consume it in their late spring preparation and brooding for the summer season when they return to Minnesota and Wisconsin. That summer honey is harvested by Gentle Breeze and the Bee Shed for retail sale.

Bees have been in trouble for a number of years. Since the arrival of CCD, the number of colonies lost each year has only gone up. Beekeepers now lose about 30% of their hives every winter, three times as many as a decade ago. Losses of up to 90% are not uncommon. The Bee Shed, for example, lost 25% of its hives last summer. Chris: “That’s unspeakable.”

“I’ve seen more CCD in the last five years than before,” Eugene Woller notes.

The price of replacing the lost bees has gone up as well. A “cage of bees [a box of several hundred bees with a queen] has gone from \$7 to \$175. And you won’t find any feral bees anymore like you could at one time. You won’t find any honey trees out there like you used to,” John Shonyo says.



The Bee Shed makes honey. Chris Schad and John Shonyo.

“I feel for the commercial beekeepers,” Chris says. “The big guys with thousands of colonies and dozens of employees. Imagine a cattle farmer, or dairy farmer, losing 25% of their livestock every year.”

No one factor has been identified as the cause of honeybees’ decline. Instead, as University of Minnesota entomologist Marla Spivak notes, “Multiple interacting factors” are now at play in the loss of honeybees. New types of pesticides, loss of forage for bees to feed on in our monocropping agriculture, outbreaks of bee parasites and viruses, and climate change are all elements in honeybee decline.

The multiple factors at play have made CCD a difficult mystery to solve. Government regulators rely on sound science and reproducible field tests. This has led scientists to suffer something of a colony collapse themselves as they try to isolate individual factors for a foraging animal that flies at random over a five-mile radius gathering food from dozens of locations.

Neonicotinoids (neonics)—new systemic pesticides—have been blamed for the bee losses, but the EPA has not been able to isolate the chemicals as the cause in spite of CCD’s coincidental appearance after the market release of the neonic clothianidin in 2004.

An EPA official told the authors of the book *Vanishing Bees* that the EPA “has no formal means of assessing sublethal and interactive effects of pesticides on pollinators.”

### Loss of pasture

We live in a landscape increasingly formed to human needs. Weeds are food for bees and other pollinators. Monocrop agriculture represents a vast food desert for bees. Farms at one time grew a variety of plants that flowered at different times of the season. Now, one type of plant will be the only food source for miles. The almond fields of California, for example, produce 80% of the world’s almonds. For a few weeks in the spring, the farms have an abundance of food for the bees, but afterwards, there’s no other forage as farmers keep ground plants closely

mowed to facilitate mechanical harvesting of the almonds.

Additionally, as farmers have been encouraged to plant “fenceline to fenceline,” verges and bottomlands have been put into production, reducing the wild forage that bees (native and honeybees) need to survive. As Chris Schad notes, “The lower swales of farmland are gone. They’ve ripped those out and put in tiles and planted them.

“We work with Northwoods Orchard,” Chris continues. “They do a lot for pollinators. They’re putting in vetch, buckwheat. And they leave the dandelions alone. We have bees at Quarry Hill and we have them in two county parks. We’re trying to get bees into downtown Rochester, trying to build a coalition with different organizations downtown.”

## Mites and disease

In recent decades a bee parasite has spread across the country’s hives. A small mite infests bee hives and bites through the bee’s skin (both the bee larva and adult bee), to feed. The bite is bad enough, but to add injury to insult, the presence of such parasites increases the incidence of viral disease that will weaken or kill the bee. As Chris notes, “It’s not the tick bite that will make [a human] sick, it’s the Lyme disease that does it. The mites transmit viruses. There are probably 20 different viruses out there and they’re getting stronger.”

“The mites don’t kill outright—they weaken the bee,” John Shonyo adds. “And mite resistance to our remedies is increasing.”

## Climate change

Changes in temperature will alter the blooming of plants. Insects that have evolved to hatch and work in sync with plants will show up too late or too early for the flowers they are evolved to pollinate.

Insects that have evolved in climates without strong temperature swings are more susceptible to disruption when the climate changes. For example, scientist Brad Lister reported in *The Guardian* newspaper recently, “between 1985 and

2017, 98% of ground insects and 80% of the canopy insects had vanished from the Puerto Rican rain forest.”

On his return to the Puerto Rican forest where he had done his research 35 years before, he immediately noticed that the place was eerily quiet. The birds were gone. “It’s all connected,” he said. “When the invertebrates are declining, the entire food web is going to suffer and degrade. It is a system-wide effect.”

Eugene Woller reports that the increased incidence of wet weather has affected his bees. “This year the varroa mites were bad [in the hives] because of the wet weather. The bees didn’t get out to get all the goldenrod pollen they should have. If it rains and rains like that, the queen stops laying eggs and the mites get in and lay their eggs in the cells. The mites suck the fat off the bees and the bees die without that fat in the winter. Usually, we have honey flow into September, but not this year.”

“Rain events wash out pollen,” Chris says. “So you won’t have any comb production. And as they stay active longer into the year, the amount of food they’ll need to get through the winter goes up.”

## Pesticides

“Monocultures invite pests,” Marla Spivak notes, “which then call out pesticides.”

In Central Illinois, a conventional soybean farmer showed me around his new tractor. There was still seed from a recent planting in the planter’s hopper and a few seeds were scattered on the floor of the shed. They are a bright purple color. The size of a Tic-Tac, they looked more like a candy than a seed.

“The seed’s inside that coating,” the farmer said. “They’re planted with the pesticide jacket. That’s the default on seeds now. That’s just how they sell them.”

The new neonic pesticides are systemic. They’re planted with the seeds and as the plant grows, the pesticide is incorporated into the fiber (and pollen and nectar) of the plant. The dose an individual bee picks up from the plant’s nectar may not kill her, but it may be enough to disorient her—making it more difficult for her to find her way back to the hive.

A healthy bee might survive such sublethal doses, but not one already stressed with parasites, viruses, and lack of food. Research is only now beginning to understand the persistence of chemicals and pesticides in the environment. Analyses of bees’ wax has found 118 different chemicals—some of which haven’t been used for decades, such as

*Continued on next page.*



Some bees at Gentle Breeze with Tim Woller.

## Save the pollinators

The story isn't all so grim. It's relatively easy to support your neighborhood bees and other pollinating insects. Plant flowers! And vegetables! And take a beekeeping class—okay, that one might require more work. We asked our honey and flower suppliers what gardeners should plant to help native bees, honeybees, and other insects.

### Seed Savers Exchange

The horticulturists at Seed Savers in Decorah suggested local gardeners should consider planting

Flowers—things like bee balm, sunflowers, borage, and coneflowers

Edible garden plants—squash, beans, raspberries, apples, peppers

Herbs—basil, thyme

### The Bee Shed

The folks at the Bee Shed in Rochester urge us to go native. “A lot of nursery plants are bred to look nice, but they're an ecological desert for a bee. Plant asters!”

### Gentle Breeze

Eugene Woller recommends lavender, sweet clover (yellow or white: It's very hardy and has a good root system—good for the soil), basswood trees have good pollen yield, and flowering crab trees are good.

### University of Minnesota Bee Lab

The folks at the UM Bee Lab have put together a list of plants that bees will visit in Minnesota. These are flowers that are particularly attractive to bees and can be easily integrated into most landscapes. The list may be found here: [www.beelab.umn.edu](http://www.beelab.umn.edu).



A native Wisconsin bee. *Andrena geranii*, a northernish species that appears to be a specialist on...geraniums. Photo by Aaman Dengis and Brooke Alexander, USGS Bee Monitoring Lab.

DDT. The synergistic effect of these multiple chemicals has not been well studied; these sublethal or indirect doses—are not studied.

Humans like honeybees, but we really don't like insects. We dislike them so much we'll spend \$65 billion a year on pesticides to kill them, worldwide. Bees, though, are particularly vulnerable to pesticides. Insects that eat plants, such as grasshoppers, have evolved to get around plant defenses. When a grasshoppers encounter a new pesticide, the animal will be set back for a few generations while they develop an immunity to the new poison. Bees, which have evolved to service flowers, aren't evolved to respond to plant defenses as rapidly.

### Trouble with the natives

One might wonder: if honeybees are in danger, why don't we simply use some of the thousands of native bees for pollination of our crops? After all, there are more than 20,000 different kinds of bees. Only a few of those species build hives and make honey. Most bees are solitaires, making their nests in bare earth or hollows in trees and small branches. And pollination isn't done only by bees—butterflies, some moths and beetles, and others—are pollinators of plants. There are thousands upon thousands of different pollinator insect species. Or at least there were.

Whatever decline the honeybee suffers, the native population of bees follows. Nobody quite knows for sure, as nobody has really been tracking native bee populations overall. Scientist are finally starting to notice that some things have gone missing. The total number of insects lost in the regions where people did pay attention seems to be at least 80%. The first study published in 2014 was done in Germany and a more recent study was done in Puerto Rico.

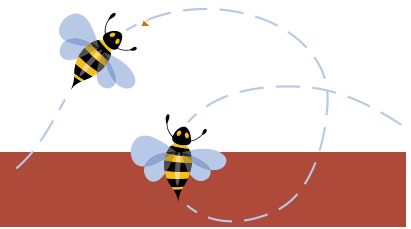
We haven't noticed the decline of native pollinators before, officially, because scientists tend to specialize in single species or groups, not total insects in a region. Quantitative studies were seen as uninteresting and not worth funding. Also, humans don't seem to notice diminishment as much as absence. When you drive now across Iowa on a summer's night, count the bug strikes on your windshield. There may be a half dozen streaks, but it's not the plastering that your parents' car would have experienced a generation ago. Things have changed. The insects go and the birds follow.

The USDA was an early booster of chemically dependent agriculture and recognized the importance of the honeybee as a pollinator of landscapes under the new chemical regime. As noted in *Vanishing Bees*, already in 1951, the USDA recognized that the native, local pollinators were being replaced by the honeybee. In fact, that was stated policy. In that year, USDA's bee scientist E.F. Phillips wrote:

“Increased use of insecticides has often resulted in the reduction of beneficial insects in such areas, honeybees suffering with the others.... More recently there has been an increase in the use of insecticides on field crops, and the decline in beneficial insects has been even more pronounced than in orchards, because of the

*Continued on next page.*

# NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS



## Slow and Mindful Yoga— La Crosse

Yoga with instructor Jacline McKimmy is back! Class meets at PFC every Wednesday at 9 a.m. Please contact Jacline at [jaclineandtonydance@gmail.com](mailto:jaclineandtonydance@gmail.com) for more information. No registration needed, drop-in class. \$10/week.

## Rochester WinterFest, January 24–February 24, 2019

WinterFest brings a wide variety of activities to the Rochester area so all can enjoy the cabin fever days of winter! There is something for everyone, young or old, indoors or out. Annually, WinterFest brings together more than 6,500 attendees at more than 30 events presented by more than 20 local organizations. For event listings: [www.rochesterwinterfest.com/](http://www.rochesterwinterfest.com/)

## La Crosse Reads

The La Crosse Public Library, UW-L, Gundersen, and others have partnered to bring the novel *The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir* by Kao Kalia Yang to our community to read and discuss. La Crosse Reads will feature guest speakers and programs April–June 2019—including some hosted at PFC. Ask PFC's Member Services Manager, Linda Riddle, or Peter Gorski in produce for more details, or visit [www.lacrossereads.com](http://www.lacrossereads.com).

## Natural Egg Dye Class in La Crescent!

Linda Riddle, PFC—La Crosse's member services manager, will lead a class on dyeing eggs the natural way through La Crescent Community Ed! It is for kids of all ages and *you* can sign up, but you have

to contact La Crescent Community Ed, not PFC! Class is held Saturday morning, April 6 from 9–11 a.m. in the Middle School Art Room. [www.isd300.k12.mn.us/community-education](http://www.isd300.k12.mn.us/community-education).

## Sixth Annual Bike Swap— Rochester

Saturday, May 18, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at PFC. Join PFC and Pata de Perro for our annual bike swap. Bring your used bikes (and a \$10 donation) to sell or donate. Or if you are looking for a bike, come down and see what sellers and Pata de Perro have to offer. More details to come in the next newsletter, or check [www.pfc.coop](http://www.pfc.coop).

*Bees, continued.*

more effective applications by modern equipment, the greater effectiveness of modern insecticides, and because of the unrestricted areas that permit application on every square inch.... Clearly from now on many orchardists and seed growers cannot insure adequate population or effective pollination without using honeybees."

In the last 70 years, the number of honeybee colonies in the U.S. has declined overall from 4.5 to 2 million, while the honeybee became the critical pollinator of industrial agriculture.

"You know, we used to have all kinds of bees," Eugene Woller says. "Now we have only three. We want a perfect apple—but if you spray everything, you aren't going to have any apples at all. The insecticide accumulates in the hive; after ten years you have to throw the frames away."

—Kevin Ducey

## Selected references

*"The Insect Apocalypse Is Here: What happens—and who notices—when an invisible fact of life goes missing?"* *The New York Times Magazine* (cover story). Brooke Jarvis. 27 November 2018.

*A Short History of the Honey Bee*. E. Readicker-Henderson and Ilona. 2009.

*Buzz: The Nature and Necessity of Bees*. Thor Hanson. 2018.

*Our Native Bees*. Paige Embry. 2018.

*Vanishing Bees: Science, Politics, and Honeybee Health*. Sainath Suryanarayanan and D.L. Kleinman. 2017.

Marla Spivak's TED Talk may be accessed here: [https://www.ted.com/talks/marla\\_spivak\\_why\\_bees\\_are\\_disappearing?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/marla_spivak_why_bees_are_disappearing?language=en).

"Insect collapse: 'We are destroying our life support systems,'" *The Guardian Newspaper* online accessed 14 January 2019.



## BEDDING PLANTS FOR SPRING



People's Food Co-op—La Crosse's local supplier Dave Miles expects he will have organic bedding plants in the store by late April.

Dave's plants have been favorites at PFC for years, and business has been good. "I think more and more people are looking for organic plants. They want to know what they're eating."

New this year, PFC—Rochester will be selling starter plants from a Rochester supplier, Pearson Organics.

# Spring

## COMMUNITY CLASSES

La Crosse location

### March and April Classes!

It's been a while and I can't wait to get back into the Community Room with our friends! Check out the listings! —Linda Riddle

### It's time to tap!

*Thursday, February 28 • 6–7:30 p.m. • with Jarad Barkheim*  
Join Jarad, co-owner of Coulee Region Ecoscapes, and his crew to learn about tapping trees to extract sap and then how to cook the sap down into delicious syrup! We will focus on the maples but learn about other syrup-producing trees. Everyone will get to taste homemade syrup and leave with knowledge, printed guide, and a tree-tapping kit. Many people have made their own syrup after taking Jarad's class! \$15 members; \$25 nonmembers.

### DIY bath teas

*Thursday, March 7 • 6–7:30 p.m. • with Sara Kujak*  
Join Sara, owner of Driftless Body Works, to learn the essence of bath teas—what they are, what properties they can hold, how they are made. Try some different blends and make your own to take home! Bring your own decorative bottle or jar if you would like. \$15 members; \$25 nonmembers.

### Trip to Phuket

*Wednesday, March 13 • 5:30–8 p.m. • with Shawn McManus*  
Join Shawn, owner of Savory Creations, for an exciting evening of hands-on learning about Thai foods! He'll tell stories, share tips for prepping the foods, and work with you to create an authentic meal of Thai cuisine. Our wine guy, Patrick Kelly, will select a wine to enjoy with the meal. Must be 21 to take this class. \$25 members; \$35 nonmembers.

### A tour of Italian wines

*Thursday, March 14 • 6–7:30 p.m. • with Todd Wohlert*  
Our next class will take you on a full tour of the Italian "boot" plus venture out to the two islands. Explore some of the jewels of the Mediterranean with wines that have been enjoyed for centuries. As with every wine class, delicious and complimentary appetizers will be served. Must be 21 to take this class. \$25 members; \$35 nonmembers.

### Theta healing arts: Understanding your intuitions

*Wednesday, March 20 • 6–7:30 p.m. • with Nedra Blietz*  
We are all spiritual beings having a human experience, and our senses go beyond the physical. Join Nedra Blietz, Energy Healer and Intuitive, for an evening of exploration. Learn about your energy body, including chakras, and how your psychic abilities relate to your energy body. Whether you are aware of it or not, everyone has these intuitive/psychic abilities. Learn what they

are, how use them and how you can develop these abilities, if you desire. \$15 members; \$25 nonmembers.

### Learn to make goat's milk soap!

*Thursday, March 28 • 6–7:30 p.m. • with Shanna McCann*  
The owner of Simple Soaps for Simple Folks comes back to ask this question: *Looking to learn about saponification?* Get together with your friends, family, or coworkers to get some hands-on experience. We'll do a short, educational half hour on the difference between handmade and commercial soaps and then get down to the dirty with batching cold-process goat milk soaps. Two bars of the soaps we batch together will go home with you, too. Make sure you wear clothes you are not afraid to get dirty, and bring a bath towel with you. We'll provide the molds. \$15 members; \$25 nonmembers.

### Healthy Indian cooking

*Tuesday, April 9 • 6–7:30 p.m. • with Puja Mehta*  
Join Puja, owner of Indian Meal Kits, for an evening of chopping and cooking a healthy Indian meal typically served in Indian homes. You will learn the spices—how and when to add them. Puja will share some of her experiences in this authentic and enjoyable class. \$15 members; \$25 nonmembers.

### CBD magic

*Wednesday, April 10 • 6:00–7:30 p.m. • Ryan Mustone*  
Have you heard about CBD oil and wondered if it could be right for you? Ryan of Plus+CBD Oil will answer all your questions with in-depth information. He will lead "Hemp Derived CBD 101." Everyone will leave with printed information and FREE samples of Plus+CBD Oil products. Free, pre-registration required.

### Homemade pestos!

*Thursday, April 11 • 6–7:30 p.m. • with Lindsay Moe*  
Learn the basics of pestos and variations on them. Join Lindsay Moe, food blogger of the Live-In Kitchen to learn the basics of making homemade pesto as well as how to experiment with different ingredients and flavors. You'll receive tips on how to store and freeze pesto as well as several recipes for making pesto at home. This is a great way to get ready for planning your summer garden! \$15 members; \$25 nonmembers.

### Learn to make goat milk soap! (Again!)

*Thursday, April 26 • 6–7:30 p.m. • with Shanna McCann*  
Shanna will be back to do Round Two of her goat milk soaps! The description is the same as for the March 28 class—if you can't make it to one, sign up for the other! \$15 members; \$25 nonmembers.

- Register in person or by phone.
- Payment is due at the time of registration.
- La Crosse: 608-784-5798, Rochester: 507-289-9061

Check the PFC website for upcoming classes and events! [www.pfc.coop](http://www.pfc.coop)

## Rochester location

### Inesscents Salvation CBD

Friday, March 22 • 3–6 p.m. • with Kirsten Hayman

Kirsten Hayman, Hippocratic Sales Representative, will be in our Rochester store to provide education and allow you to experience Inesscents Salvation CBD Skin Salves, Elixirs, and Beauty Care for yourself. Inesscents Salvation products are made with high potency CBD extract, organic locally grown herbs, and organic sustainably sourced essential oils. All Inesscents items will be sale priced at 20% off during March (2/27–4/2), so it's a great time to try them.

**Class policies:** All classes require preregistration. Classes with fewer than eight registered 24 hours before class time will be canceled or rescheduled. All cancellations made by preregistered participants must be made 48 hours before class time to qualify for a refund. Dishes may be subject to change at instructor's discretion.

Find information about Rochester classes and others on our website [www.pfc.coop](http://www.pfc.coop), Facebook, and on [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com)!



*community meal*

**\$ 5**

**4–7 p.m.**

House-made Co-op's Own™ entree with a fresh side!

**WEDNESDAYS**

**Rochester & La Crosse**

## LA CROSSE BEEKEEPING CLASS 2019

Seven sessions with beekeeping experts Bob Hoffman and Oscar Carlson from February to September, walking you through what to buy to get started as a beekeeper, how to nurture the bees through their first working season, and how to keep them alive through the winter.

The first three classes will take place in the People's Food Co-op Community Room on Saturdays, February 2, February 16, and March 2, from 9–11 a.m.

This class *is not* a PFC class. You cannot register for the class through PFC; you must go directly through the website for Bob Hoffman and Oscar Carlson. PFC is happy to support their efforts! Class registration at: [www.lacrossebeekeepingclass.com](http://www.lacrossebeekeepingclass.com).

This class guides a beekeeper through the year with just-in-time learning classes spread throughout the beekeeping season. You have access to lifelong beekeepers' experience and knowledge to mentor you through your questions and unique experiences when you need it.

Beekeeping can be thought of as more of an art than a science. We don't have all the answers or do everything the same.



Bee guys Bob Hoffman and Oscar Carlson.

Beekeeping is an individually based experience, depending on where your bees are and what you are keeping them for—pollination, producing queens, a honey source, environmental concerns, or just plain fun.

Supplemental videos and class materials will be made available after the initial class for reference. Beekeeping class is \$100—three indoor sessions, four outdoor sessions.

# OWNER SPECIALS

## FEBRUARY

**SARTORI**

Local

**Merlot BellaVitano**



**\$1.00 OFF/ea**

5.3 oz



**WESTBY**

Local

**Sour Cream**  
**\$1.50 OFF**

12 oz

**R**emember to use your member discounts (5% off, 12 times a year). You can combine your member discount with these member-only specials for even more discounted savings. Last year, PFC owners saved over \$227,889 using the 5% discount at the register.

**WINE SPECIALS**

**20% OFF**  
**Wine of the Month**

Look for the red tags in the wine department!

**GRANDY OATS**

**High Antioxidant**  
**Trail Mix**  
**\$5.00 OFF/lb**

reg. price \$12.99

## MARCH

**KICKAPOO GOLD**



**Maple Syrup**  
**\$5.00 OFF**

16 oz.,  
reg. price \$14.99

Local



**SNO PAC**

Local

**Frozen Peas**  
**HALF OFF**

10 oz.

**REMINDER TO MEMBERS**

If you have moved, changed phone numbers, married, divorced, etc., please notify the co-op by filling out a membership change form at the service desk. Thank you for keeping us up to date!

**KERRYGOLD**

**Irish Dubliner**  
**\$1.00 OFF/ea**

7 oz.

**LOTUS FOODS**



**White Jasmine Rice**  
**\$1.00 OFF/lb**

## APRIL

**FIELD DAY**



**Pasta**  
**60¢ OFF**

16 oz., reg. price \$1.99



**PASTURE PRIDE**

Local

**Sharp Cheddar**  
**\$1.00 OFF/ea**

16 oz.

**KEMPS**

Local

**Half & Half**  
**60¢ OFF**

16 oz., reg. price \$1.99

**BULK**



**Coconut Rolled Dates**  
**\$2.00 OFF/lb**

reg. price \$5.99

Take advantage of these sales all month long, or preorder by the case to take an additional 10% off!



Take advantage of these sales all month long,  
or preorder by the case to take an additional 10% off!

**USDA ORGANIC**

**FIELD DAY**

**Oatmeal Packets**  
**\$1.50 OFF**  
11 oz., reg. price \$3.99

**USDA ORGANIC**

**SALAD GIRL** *Local*

**Salad Dressing**  
**\$3.00 OFF**  
8 oz., reg. price \$6.99

**USDA ORGANIC**

**SNO PAC** *Local*



*Organic before organic was cool.*  
— Pete Gengler,  
Sno Pac

**EO**

**Liquid Hand Soap**  
**HALF PRICE**  
12 fl oz., reg. price \$7.99

**CO-OP'S OWN™**

**Magnesium Glycinate**  
**HALF OFF**  
400 mg., 90 ct., reg. price \$15.99

**Frozen Squash**  
**70¢ OFF**  
10 oz., reg. price \$1.99

**JAM SHOPPE** *Local*

**Fruit Spreads and Jams**  
**\$1.50 OFF**  
16 oz., reg. price \$4.99

**WINE SPECIALS**



**Wine of the Month**  
**20% OFF**  
look for the red tags in the wine department!

**KEMPS** *Local*

**Orange Juice**  
**\$1.00 OFF**  
64 oz., reg. price \$3.69

**CO-OP'S OWN™**

**Kelp**  
**HALF PRICE**  
225 mcg., 100 ct., reg. price \$6.69

**INESSENTS**

**CBD Skin Salve**  
**\$6 OFF \$10 OFF**  
40-50 mg. sale reg. price \$15.69 | 1/2 fl oz.-80-100 mg. reg. price \$24.99

**WINE SPECIALS**

**20% OFF**  
**Wine of the Month**  
look for the red tags in the wine department!

**USDA ORGANIC**

**SNO PAC** *Local*

**Frozen Tri-Colored Peppers**  
**90¢ OFF**  
10 oz., reg. price \$2.69

**USDA ORGANIC**

**WISCO POP** *Local*

**\$1.00 OFF**  
12 oz., reg. price \$2.69

**JASON**

**Body Wash**  
**\$5.00 OFF/ea**  
30 fl oz., reg. price \$12.99

**USDA ORGANIC**

**CO-OP'S OWN**

**Ashwagandha**  
**HALF PRICE**  
500 mg., 50 ct., reg. price \$21.99



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**MINNESOTA**  
EST 1858

## YOU ARE INVITED TO ENTER THE 2019 CHEESE BRACKET CHALLENGE!

Join us three Saturdays in March (3/16, 3/23, 3/30) from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for PFC's 2019 Cheese Bracket Challenge, this year combining our two stores for one great competition. Cheeses from far and wide and close to home will be tasted and judged by you to determine your co-op's 2019 Grand Champion Cheese!

Get to know the great cheese available at your co-op by participating in store. You decide the winner at your co-op.

Starting March 1 download the official 2019 PFC Cheese Bracket Challenge (available on PFC's website and Facebook page). Predict the winners of each round by filling out a complete bracket. Submit your complete

bracket to customer service by the 2 p.m. deadline March 16.

PFC's Cheese Challenge new to you? You can still pickup a bracket in-store during the first round of competition—just submit before the deadline! Keep up with the challenge on social media and through the posted bracket in-store.

One grand prize winner will be chosen from completely correct entries on Sunday, March 30. Winner will receive a cheese basket created by PFC staff..



## International Women's Day

*March 8, People's Food Co-op's 2019  
International Women's Day Celebration—La Crosse*

Hackberry's Bistro in La Crosse on Friday evening, March 8, will be *the* place for lively discussion as we celebrate women—women's lives, women's work and women's value! Once again, International Women's Day provides a platform for learning from women locally and understanding how we are all connected globally.

**Celebrate the creativity, determination, and skills of women supporting women!**

Join women in the community for a very special International Women's Day event. The 2019 international theme is "Balance for Better, a focus on how gender

equity make life better for all!" We will lift up the concept with a panel of women who farm and hear their perspectives on women in agriculture worldwide. Join your friends for delicious hors d'oeuvre, a cash bar, and the best conversation in the tri-state area!

Doors open at 6 p.m., panel at 6:30. Event is free and open to the public. RSVP suggested: call La Crosse customer service. Donations to the Land Stewardship Project will be accepted.

Residents from both Rochester and La Crosse are invited to attend.

## People's Food Co-op

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[www.pfc.coop](http://www.pfc.coop)

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608.784.5798 (La Crosse)  
507.289.9061 (Rochester)

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requested

## FOOD FOR Thought

I cannot imagine a problem of  
greater urgency for humanity than  
the ongoing loss of biological diversity.

— E.O. Wilson,  
*The Diversity of Life*

# HACKBERRY'S

## Bistro

ABOVE THE CO-OP!



## Join us for Easter brunch!

Sunday, April 21, 2017

Seatings at 9 a.m., 11 a.m., & 1 p.m.

Reservations required: 608-784-5798 ext. 2202

Menu and pricing at: [www.pfc.coop/calendar/event/easter-brunch-la-crosse1/](http://www.pfc.coop/calendar/event/easter-brunch-la-crosse1/)