PEA SOUP IS A PUBLICATION OF **VIROQUA FOOD CO+OP**

pea soup

Summer 2020



New Traditions Homestead

Farming in harmony with the land . . .pg 4

Board News & Views

Olive Reynolds, VFC Board Member

It was exactly one year ago when I was approached about running for the Viroqua Food Co+op's Board of Directors. I have so much love for this community and all that it has to offer. It has an accepting nature that nurtures and supports the growth of individuals and families. The Viroqua Food Co+op is a priceless centerpiece to Southwest Wisconsin and strives to enrich the lives of all of those it touches whether as a visitor, a shopper, a local community member, or a farmer.

When the opportunity to run for the board was suggested to me, it was like a light just turned on, I absolutely could not let this opportunity pass me by. I had been looking for ways to give back and get more involved with the community and the Co-op offered me that chance to be a part of something bigger than myself.

Everyone on the board is so knowledgeable and passionate about the organic food and cooperative movements. As a VFC Board Member, I have received training and education on a number of different disciplines so that I may better serve the Board and our members. In addition to the education provided, I am able to draw on my own unique background to aid in decisions that directly affect our member-owned store. All of us board members have diverse backgrounds, educations, and experiences that we pull from to contemplate the future of VFC and the effect it will have on Viroqua and surrounding communities that rely on the Co-op. I have grown so much since joining the Board and am beyond thankful to be a part of something as fantastic as the Viroqua Food Co+op.

Election time for the VFC Board of Directors is approaching again. There are three open seats to fill on the Board this year. If you are considering candidacy, check out page 14 or this webpage for more information: www.viroquafood.coop/run-for-vfc-board. **Applications are due June 30.**

It goes without saying that this year has been an unprecedented one and it is far from over. Though through it all, I have seen such strength and resolve from our community and VFC.

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



Table of Contents

New Traditions Farmstead. . . . 4-5
Bread Recipes. 6-7
Sourdough Recipes 8-9
Easy Seasonal Cooking 10-11
VFC News 12
The Necessity of Local Farms . . .13
Quarantine Quips 16-20
Give Where You Live 12, 21
Backyard BINGO. 22-23

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Eric Snowdeal, *Treasurer*
Elizabeth Tigan, *Secretary*
Olive Reynolds
Aurora Boyd
Karen Mischel

The Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30pm. Temporarily, meetings are hosted online. 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

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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 the VFC.

The Pea Soup is published quarterly.
DOWNLOAD THE PEA SOUP

Cover Photo Credit: Haley Stafslien

Cooperation Will Get Us Through

Jan Rasikas, General Manager

The pandemic has opened the eyes of the public to larger complexities of the supply chain and how readily we took its near-flawless performance for granted. VFC is a resilient business based on long-term relationships with our local farmers and food producers – but as you've seen, local farms are impacted by the pandemic too. The Co-op's retail shelves support farmers and protect the strength of our local food economy. Fresh organic produce, local organic eggs and local/regional grass-fed meats are in good supply here!

VFC will continue with our safety protocols by following CDC and Vernon County Health Department guidelines. This national crisis brought a new level of respect and appreciation to grocery workers everywhere. Our own community saw VFC rise to the occasion; we support vulnerable folks by creating specific hours to reduce exposure; by launching a Curbside Pick-up program; by sanitizing thoroughly every day; and by going the *second* extra mile in customer service. We are diligent and vigorous in reducing risk for staff, customers, and the essential business we own together – the Co-op. So many of you have shared your appreciation with us. Thank you!

Co-op employees interact with hundreds of customers per day and during a pandemic, this can cause stress and anxiety. As a customer, wearing a face covering and practicing 6 feet of distancing with our employees are two small things you can do to support the essential workers here at the Co-op. We recognize the risk of exposure in the workplace with "hero pay" to our staff – for 12 weeks now at the time of writing this.

Please wear a face covering while shopping at the Viroqua Food Co+op. We understand that not everyone feels comfortable wearing a mask for a variety of complex reasons. VFC requires staff to wear a face covering while on shift. As a shopper, we hope you will too in order to minimize the spread of infection and to show solidarity with our employees. We have a supply of free cloth masks available at the Service Counter at the entrance, please ask a staff person if you would like one. **We do require that you wear a mask or covering during the first hour of business, 9-10am,** reserved for shoppers who are 65+ years, those who are at-risk – or shopping on behalf of those who are at-risk with health issues. Please use our Co+op Curbside Program if you cannot wear a mask during the 9-10am hour.

It's not over yet! Changes are ahead for the economy, and the way we shop will certainly be different. We all are forming new routines for life and work, and we know many in our community who face challenges created by the wake of COVID-19. VFC is here for you.

VFC will adapt to serve our community while maintaining safe practices. Using our resources carefully and with intention is at the forefront of our planning. You can count on us to source fresh healthy foods for your families and provide what you need to grow your garden. Watch the bulk and deli departments for changes as restrictions lift (or tighten). Be well, and be safe Viroqua!

My mask protects you.
Your mask protects me.



Please wear a face covering while shopping at the VFC.



Local Producer Profile

New Traditions Homestead

Robert and Summer Schulz are the owners and operators of New Traditions Homestead located in rural Hillsboro. "I have been involved in gardening since a child. Our family always had a big garden and I feel it stuck with me," shared Robert. He started growing his own market garden when he was in high school and college and would sell to local restaurants in his hometown. "I've always enjoyed the process of starting, tending, and harvesting produce. Growing food is essential and it offers a sense of self-sufficiency that I believe is important for anyone to truly feel secure in life."

The Schulz's moved to their homestead in 2004 and started building infrastructure and growing organic produce. "Our greatest farming philosophy is to be in harmony with the land," says Robert. "It is our intention to allow the land to stay in it's natural state, while



Our greatest farming philosophy is to be in harmony with the land....to allow the land to stay in it's natural state while producing food for the community.

producing food for the community. We work our fields with draft horses. We do not use ag-plastics in our fields (we use paper, straw, and hay mulch). All of our weed control is done by horse cultivation or by hand."

They now have an established homestead that includes their solar powered off-grid home, about 3-4 acres of organic produce production, as well as a working blacksmithing studio where Robert teaches classes and does custom ironwork on commission.

Aside from the produce fields, Robert and Summer are grazing 25+ acres and making certified organic hay. As Summer states, "The most current exciting project we have going is working with natural water systems. We are building mini-swales, diverting rainwater to improve run-off, building small catchment ponds, etc. We feel it's important to do our best to keep the water and nutrients on our land!"

Viroqua Food Co+op was their first retail outlet for their produce and continues to be a big market for New Traditions. Today, they offer a full selection of seasonal organic produce, including their main crops of onions, garlic, spinach, kale, collards, chard, winter squash, parsley, cilantro, beets, potatoes, tomatoes, and ornamental gourds. Robert's favorite crop to grow and eat is garlic. "It's one of the first crops I grew. I have a variety I've been growing for over 20 years. It's beautiful, easy to grow, tasty, and healthy." His favorite way to eat garlic is simple – raw on anything.

Beyond being dedicated to honoring the natural world in how they farm, Robert and Summer are committed to being an important part of their community in rural Hillsboro. As their farm sales have increased steadily over the years, they realized that they could also help their neighboring farmers. They have started aggregating produce and other farm products from neighbors and bringing them to market with their own produce. "It has become an awesome example of how working with your neighbors can be a great benefit for everyone involved. It's playing a role as a village member to benefit more than ourselves. We can support more farms than just our own, while offering more diverse product to the broader community." Additionally, in this model, New Traditions and neighboring farms do not need to overwork their land to produce the volume of product they are able to market. It allows multiple small farms to keep their fields and production at a smaller level, which spreads out the intensity of growing food across the land.

This fall, New Traditions and neighboring farms are coming together to offer winter storage shares of local foods at the end of the season. The share will include options of potatoes, onions, garlic, winter squash, beets, carrots, turnips, maple syrup, honey, and meat (beef and pork). Get in touch with Robert if you are interested at: gardensandiron@yahoo.com

The next time you see New Traditions Homestead products in the VFC Produce section, be sure to pick some up – and know that you are supporting Robert and Summer, and their dedication to farming in harmony with the land.








Mmmmmm!
Bread



Slow-Cooker Whole Wheat Bread

Servings: 10 slices (1 loaf). Prep time: 3 hours, 30 minutes; 20 minutes active.

1 ½ cups lukewarm water
½ teaspoon instant dry yeast
1 tablespoon honey
2 cups whole wheat flour
2 cups unbleached flour
1 teaspoon salt

1. Place a piece of parchment paper in the cooker, covering the bottom and at least part way up the sides.
2. In a large bowl, stir the water, yeast and honey. Let the yeast bubble a bit; it should be foamy in about 5 minutes. Add the flours and salt and stir with a wooden spoon until the dough is stiff, then switch to kneading with your hand. In the bowl or on a lightly floured counter, knead the dough for about 5 minutes.
3. Form the dough into a round ball and place in the slow cooker on the parchment paper. Cover and let stand for 1 hour to rise.
4. Turn the cooker on high and cook for 2 hours. Use an instant-read thermometer to test the temperature of the middle of the loaf; it is baked through at 180-200°F. If the loaf has not reached that temperature, cover and cook for another 15 minutes, until it reaches 180°F.
5. Use the parchment to lift the finished loaf out of the cooker, and cool on a rack.



Irish Soda Bread

Servings: 12 slices (1 loaf). Prep time: 1 hour; 20 minutes active.

1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon caraway seeds
6 tablespoons cold butter
¾ cup buttermilk, plus 2 tablespoons for brushing the top
¼ cup honey
½ cup raisins or currants

1. Heat oven to 375°F. Mix flour, baking soda, salt and caraway seeds in large bowl. Use the large holes of a grater to grate the cold butter into the dry mixture, then toss until it resembles coarse crumbs.
2. Add ¾ cup buttermilk and honey to flour mixture; stir to make soft dough. Press the dough together; it will be dense like biscuit dough. If some of the mixture is too dry to incorporate into the dough, sprinkle in an extra tablespoon or so of buttermilk just to moisten loose flour. Stir in raisins.
3. Shape into rounded disk about 8 inches across and place on greased cookie sheet. Brush top with the reserved buttermilk. If desired, cut an "X" in the top with a sharp knife. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes, until golden brown and crusty. Keeps tightly wrapped at room temperature for three or four days.



Care and Feeding of your Sourdough Starter

by Laura Poe Mathes, RD

What to do when the supply of yeast is sporadic? Now's the time to try sourdough bread!

To create your own sourdough breads at home, you need to begin with a starter. The following guidelines are to make a 100% hydration starter, meaning it is made strictly with equal parts flour and water, by weight. You can use white, whole wheat, rye or a 50/50 blend of white and wheat flours for your starter. For best results, use unbleached, unenriched flour, and non-chlorinated water.

Ingredients here are measured by weight rather than volume to ensure the most accuracy in baking – accounting for different kinds of flours and even scooping methods – to produce the best bake possible. If you are wanting to get serious about quality baking, I cannot recommend using "weight instead of volume" enough. Kitchen scales can be easily obtained through most online retailers of culinary accessories.

In a small mixing bowl or glass jar, mix equal parts (by weight, not volume) of flour and water together and stir well. I typically use 75 grams flour and 75 grams water. Cover with a cloth and let sit at room temperature for two to three days. If your kitchen is cooler than typical room temperature, then it may take a few extra days to get your starter going. When you start to notice bubbles forming and a tangy smell coming from the mixture, it is time to begin feeding it.

Every day for the next three to five days, discard all but 75 grams of your starter. Then mix in 75 grams each of flour and water and stir well. You want the mixture to have the consistency of pancake batter, so if needed, add a little more flour or water to get it to the right thickness. Cover with the towel again and let sit at room temperature.

After several days, the mixture will become bubbly with a sweet and fruity smell a few hours after feeding, and it will go through a cycle of rising and falling between feedings. It is now ready to use in recipes.

If you bake regularly, then you can store your starter at room temperature. Kept this way, the starter would need to be fed one to two times per day, depending on how warm your kitchen is; a warmer kitchen will likely lend itself to two daily feedings. Again, discard all but 75 grams of starter before each feeding, and then proceed with equal parts flour and water. ***Don't throw away that starter, though!*** If you don't have a friend to give it to, it's great to use in pancakes, waffles and even tortillas!

If you only bake occasionally (once a week or so), store your starter in the refrigerator in a covered container. To re-activate it, feed it the day before you plan to bake. It will be ready to use when it bubbles and goes through the rise and fall cycle after feeding. A dry crust or brown liquid may form on the top of the starter when stored this way, but it can still be used. Simply discard the top layer and continue to use the starter as usual….

Continue reading the rest of this wonderful article about sourdough starters and other homemade breads by visiting Edible Madison, issue Winter 2017.

Poe Mathes, Laura. "Caring for a Sourdough Starter." Edible Madison. December 2, 2017. http://ediblemadison.com/articles/view/sourdough-starter.

Put that excess starter to use!

With folks staying at home with more time to experiment in the kitchen, many are turning to sourdough baking as their new hobby. But, with this renewed interest in nutrient-dense, traditionally-leavened bread, comes the issue of what to do with the sourdough discard. Some "waste" is inherent in the process of feeding a sourdough starter: you start by discarding half of the starter, then feed it equal parts flour and water by weight. This can be done daily for regular bakers or, in my case, one to times per week for less frequent baking.

Between uses, the starter can be stored in the refrigerator until I am ready to feed it and bake with it. The discarding step is done to keep your starter at a reasonable size and to keep microbial balance in the starter as well.

Instead of tossing the starter in the trash, save it up to use in other recipes, such as waffles, quick breads (such as banana bread or cornbread), cakes and cookies, scones, biscuits, and fritters. Or, save it to pass on to a friend who may want to start making sourdough themselves. Either way, do your best to prevent food waste by putting that extra starter to good use… May I suggest some tasty sourdough pancakes to get started?



For more traditional food recipes, upcoming workshops, newsletter sign-up and information on nutrition counseling services, visit my website at www.laurapoerd.com to connect and learn more.

Sourdough Pancakes

Serves 4* // Click here for full recipe on Laura's blog!

½ cup sourdough starter discard – active or from fridge
1 cup warm water (about 75° F)
1½ cups flour (whole wheat, white, spelt, or a combo)
3 eggs, lightly whisked
¼ cup milk
4 Tbsp melted butter, cooled
½ tsp vanilla extract
2 Tbsp real maple syrup
½ tsp fine sea salt
½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp baking soda
Pinch of cinnamon
2 tsp apple cider vinegar or lemon juice
Butter for cooking the pancakes
Optional: berries, chopped nuts, bananas, dark chocolate chips

1. The night before you plan to make pancakes (if making them for breakfast; otherwise, do this 4-8 hours before pancake time): Stir together the starter, water, and flour in a bowl. Cover with a cloth and let sit on the counter overnight.
2. In the morning, or just prior to making the pancakes: In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, melted butter, vanilla, and maple syrup until smooth.
3. Gently fold in the flour/starter mix, being careful not to deflate the air bubbles built up during the overnight fermentation.
4. Sprinkle in the salt, baking powder and soda, and the cinnamon. Gently stir into the batter.
5. Just prior to making the pancakes, stir in the vinegar or lemon juice.
6. Heat a skillet to medium-high heat. Add plenty of butter to grease the pan.
7. Using a ⅓ measuring cup, ladle the batter onto the hot pan. Cook on the first side until the pancake is covered in small bubbles, about 2 minutes. (If using add-ins, dot these evenly across the top of the pancake just prior to flipping to the second side.)
8. Flip the pancake and cook another minute or so, until the middle is cooked through but not overcooked or burnt.
9. Remove from the pan and keep warm until serving. Continue with the rest of the batter until all is used.
10. Serve with plenty of butter and maple syrup, or your favorite pancake fixings.

**Feel free to double or triple recipe to serve a bigger crowd or to freeze and serve anytime you get the hankering for a pancake. Simply heat up in a skillet for a few minutes before serving and you are good to go.*



Easy Seasonal Cooking

by Johanna Doren, FairShare CSA Coalition

Eating farm-fresh local food has been a reliable way to keep our fridges stocked through the pandemic. A crucial component of eating locally and seasonally is that it also supports sustainable farming practices; allows for better freshness, taste, and nutrition; and reduces greenhouse gas emissions due to less transportation and need for growing crops indoors. But now you might be asking yourself: What veggies are available locally this time of year? What is kohlrabi? Can you really eat turnip greens? (Yes!)

This is where the fun of eating with nature's fluctuations begins. The unique variety of offerings you'll find at farmers markets or food co-ops in the Driftless region lends you nearly endless options for kitchen experiments. Start simple with something new – roast your root vegetables (e.g., carrots, kohlrabi, beets) with oil, salt, and pepper – to highlight the natural flavors. Or, thinly slice raw vegetables and toss them with a light vinaigrette to achieve an impressive crunch. Adding herbs to a dish will invigorate it exponentially. Incorporate new vegetables into your favorite comfort foods (try a Shepard's Pie with parsnips instead of potatoes, or make a pasta sauce out of sautéed summer squash). Best piece of advice? ***Ask your farmer how they prepare their vegetables!***

Amidst the chaos of your fridge can come creative solutions. Too many cucumbers? Try out a pickle recipe before they get too rubbery. Be realistic with yourself. If you know you won't use the parsley before it goes yellow, chop it up, put it in an ice tray, cover with water or oil, and freeze into handy herb cubes. Eating in step with the farmers' harvest means you get to invest in your winter storage, too. And, most of all, don't be afraid of adventure!

FairShare CSA Coalition's cookbooks *From Asparagus to Zucchini* and *Farm-Fresh and Fast* provide seasonal recipe ideas, cooking tips, and storage guides to make the most out of your bounty.





Butter-glazed Turnips & Greens

4-6 servings // Vegetarian // Side Dish or Appetizer

1-2 lbs turnips, peeled and diced into 1" cubes
3 Tbsp butter
Greens from the turnips, or ~¾ lbs spinach
Salt for cooking water
Salt & freshly ground black pepper to taste

1. Fill large pot with water, add some salt, then bring it to a boil over medium-high heat.
2. Drop turnips into water and cook until they're crisp-tender, 10-12 minutes. Drain.
3. Melt butter in a large, deep skillet, then add the boiled turnip cubes.
4. Cook, stirring occasionally, until they begin to brown. Add the greens, cover with lid, and cook until the greens wilt.
5. Remove lid and let the moisture steam off. Season with salt and pepper and serve hot.

Source: *Farm-Fresh and Fast*

This effortless recipe allows the sweet earthiness of root vegetables to shine. It works equally well with rutabagas, kohlrabi, or carrots.

Two-way Street Beets

6 Servings // Vegetarian // Side Dish or Appetizer

2 bunches small beets, with greentops
Juice of 1 orange
1 Tbsp butter, softened
1 tsp peanut oil
1 tsp dark sesame oil
1 tsp hot chili oil
1-2 Tbsp soy sauce
Pepper to taste

1. Cut beets off stems. Gently scrub beets and wash the greens.
2. Cut stems into 3" pieces. Coarsely chop greens; set aside stems and greens in separate piles.
3. Steam beets until tender, 20-30 minutes. Cool briefly, slip off skins and cut into wedges.
4. Toss with orange juice, butter, and pepper to taste; cover and keep warm.
5. Meanwhile, heat heavy skillet over medium flame. Add oils. Add stems; saute 2-3 minutes.
6. Add greens; cook, tossing often, until limp. Toss in soy sauce and pepper to taste.
7. Arrange beets over greens on platter.

Source: *From Asparagus to Zucchini*

VFC News

Run for the VFC Board of Directors

Now is the time to run for a position on the VFC Board of Directors. The four qualifications to become a Board candidate are:

- Attend board meeting on June 15 or August 17
- Commitment to attend monthly meetings beginning in October; 10 monthly meetings/year
- Read Prospective Board Member Packet and fill out the entire application
- Ownership paid in full and in applicant's name

There are three open seats on the VFC Board. Two seats will serve a 3-year term, and one serves a remaining 2-year term. If you are interested in running for the Board, read more about the position and download a 2020 Prospective Board Member Packet on our Board webpage at: www.viroquafood.coop/run-for-vfc-board

Applications are due by 5pm on Tuesday, June 30. Voting takes place online September 14 through October 14, 2020. Watch our website for details!

Nominate Your Favorite Nonprofits for Give Where You Live – 2021

VFC's *Give Where You Live* donations program allows our owners and shoppers to "round up" to the nearest dollar for the nonprofit of the month each time they check out. These organizations are elected by VFC Owners through a yearly ballot. VFC Owners may nominate local community organizations that have 501c3 status to be on the annual ballot.

Nominated organizations must have missions that are consistent with VFC's mission and co-op principles. Political organizations are not included. Religious organizations that offer services (such as a food pantry) may be included – as long as those services are open to all and not used for proselytizing. Organizations with a low vote count for two consecutive years will be removed from the ballot.

All nominations must be emailed by August 24, 2020 to marketing@viroquafood.coop**.** Voting takes place in October and is conducted online only. ***Be sure that the VFC has your current contact information since VFC Owners will receive a weblink via postcard and/or email.*** Owners vote for up to five organizations on the ballot. Results are announced in the Winter Pea Soup and online at: viroquafood.coop/community-outreach





Local Farmers Creating Resilient Communities

by Johanna Doren, FairShare CSA Coalition

It's an incredible understatement to say that global pandemics are humbling. They force us to step back and pinpoint what we deem "essential," to acknowledge the people and services we cannot function without. Farmers – specifically those who grow nutritious food for their community – undoubtedly fall into this category. And they have already been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Local farmers are tightly woven into the Viroqua area's rich local food and farming culture. The closure of schools, farmers' markets, and restaurants, however, eliminated significant income streams for farms, causing harsh financial hardship. Farmers must now make difficult decisions about the upcoming growing season and whether they can find new markets for their product. A group of analysts at Agri-Pulse, a food and agriculture policy journal, estimate an economic loss of up to $1.32 billion between March and May 2020 due to local and regional food market closures.

At the same time, a strong local food system is precisely the answer to creating a self-sustaining, nourished, and healthy community. As extreme situations highlight the importance of indispensable resources, this global pandemic has shown how crucial local food systems are and will continue to be. Decentralized local producers and distributors have proven to be more agile than their national counterparts, quickly pivoting in response to this crisis. In addition, a shortened supply chain helps us ensure that fewer hands touch our food. Buying from a local farmer allows us to ask what specific precautions they are taking to ensure on-farm safety.

So what can you, as a consumer, do to sustain our local food system while staying safe and healthy?

1. **Buy Locally Grown Produce and Products When You Shop:** Look for the green local signs throughout the Co-op.
2. **Become a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Member:** Joining a CSA is a fantastic way to buy local food directly from a farmer. You purchase a "share" in early spring or summer which helps the farmer pay for supplies, seeds, and employees. Then the farmer delivers a box of their products to you regularly throughout the growing season. Farms offer both traditional farmer-selected boxes and customizable options. Find a CSA farm and available options at csacoalition.org and use the Farm Search to narrow down your options based on location, season, share size, home delivery availability, and more. VFC is a drop site for local CSA Small Family Farm located outside of La Farge.
3. **Participate in Farmers' Markets Innovations:** While farmers' markets in Viroqua are closed until June 13, there are alternatives to buying locally, such as the Viroqua Virtual Farmers Market Facebook Group to order local food directly from local farms. Many local farmers are now using online ordering systems and home delivery. For news about the market reopening, see the Viroqua Chamber Main Street Facebook page.
4. **Support Local Food Pantries and Organizations that Help Distribute Local Food to those in Need:** Local food pantries Living Faith Food Pantry (Viroqua) and Bethel Buttikk Food Pantry (Westby) are super important organizations to help get food to those in need. Additionally, Community Hunger Solutions (Viroqua) works with area farmers to get produce seconds to those in need.
5. **Patronize Programs That Give Back:** For example, buying "Neighbor Loaves" bread made with at least 50% locally grown grain from participating bakeries like Kickapoo Café – Viroqua. Neighbor Loaves are distributed to local food pantries.
6. **Viroqua Stronger Together Relief Grant Fund:** Consider making a donation to this fund to help local businesses that have been impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Thus far they have distributed $45,000 to help keep local business in Viroqua open. Learn more: https://supportsmall.net/pages/stronger-together-relief-grant

This time urges us to go back to our roots, before we made assumptions that any food we wanted would always be available. Just as we hold our friends and family close (through video chat) and look out for the neighbors we previously considered acquaintances, the same goes for our farmers. When we feel nearly powerless to stop this health, economic, and emotional crisis, it is vital to realize that we can have an important impact. We can strengthen our local networks of food growers, producers, and distributors – not only to serve our immediate needs while we tread water, but also to prepare us for life moving forward, with or without a global pandemic.

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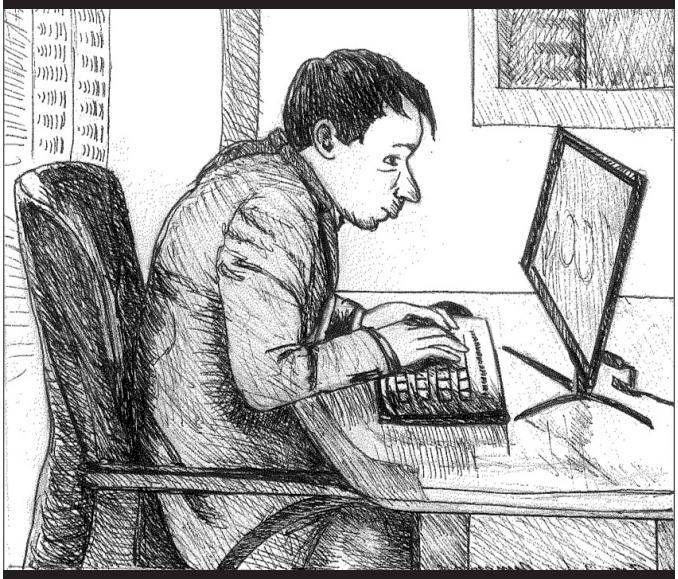

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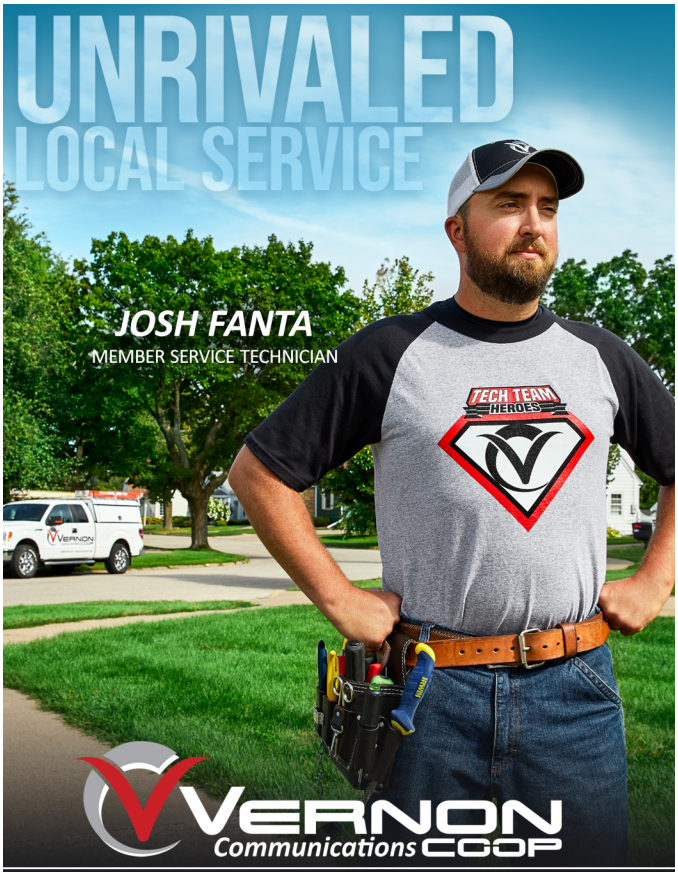

JOSH FANTA
MEMBER SERVICE TECHNICIAN

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Quarantine Quips

We asked VFC shoppers to share how they've been making the most of their extra time while staying safe at home.



We've been cooking more from scratch and trying out new and elaborate recipes. Two nights ago were "crab cakes with a spiced aioli and steamed artichokes," last night was "homemade stuffed crust pizzas!" Putting love into how we nourish ourselves and sharing meals together has made a big difference during this time.

Erin Ford

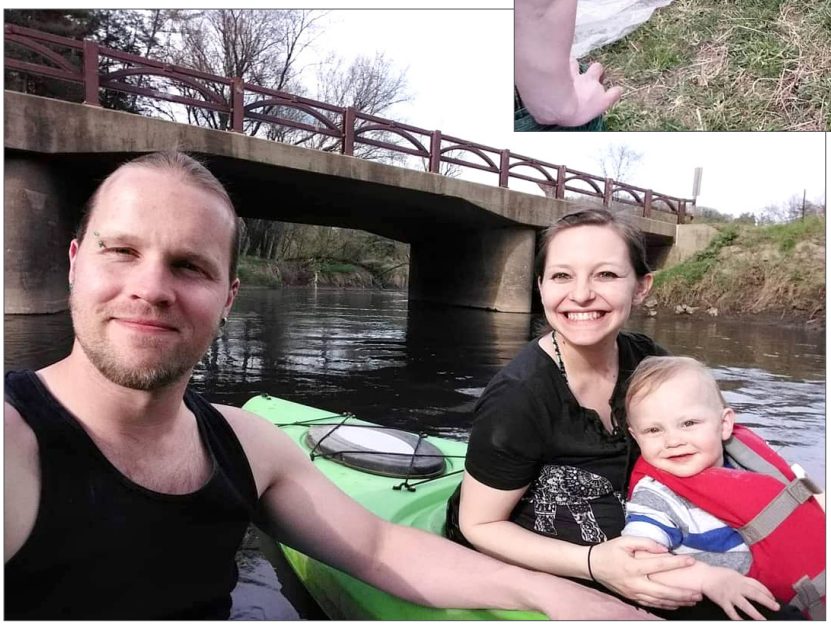
I have a deep need to work with my hands. A neighbor gave me three boxes of scrap wood, and I knew I wanted to do something with the wood besides burn it. Over the course of three weeks I created a 108-piece series titled "Viral Mantra." I used a woodburning tool, colored pencils and polycrylic coating. Some day I hope to share them. Thank you.

Frank Wildingway



1. Started a strawberry bed this year! Looking forward to fresh, local, yummy strawberries from our front yard for our little ones for years to come! Next we'll plant blueberry bushes! Yummy





2. Our family activity: Took our 15 month old kayaking while being 29 weeks pregnant! It was a success!

Melissa Stussy

We are keeping our sanity during quarantine by spending lots of time outside! Especially at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve! We're working on all of the outdoor projects on our farm right now.

Emily Stevenson



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#VFCQuarantineQuips continued...



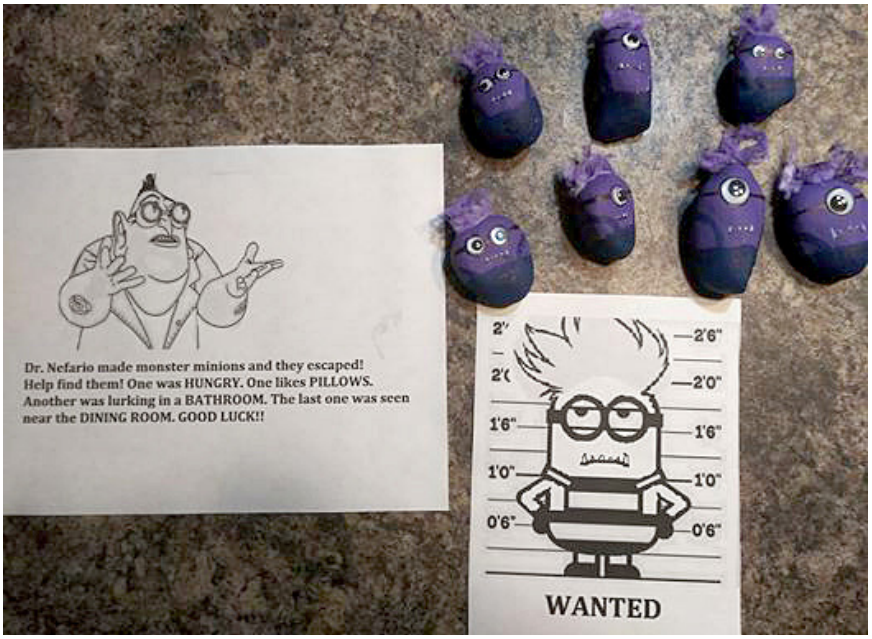
1. To stave off cabin fever and the quarantine-fifteen, I've gotten back into running for the first time since my son was born. I'm also taking him out hiking on the weekends to explore local trails and enjoy the fresh air.

2. A boy and his barbecue:
a love story
My toddler knows the plant is called rhubarb, but for some reason he insists on referring to it as "barbecue." We check our barbecue's progress daily; he sweetly pats the leaves, knows we eat only the stalks and has been asking if it is ready yet since the first sprouts appeared. On walks around town he can (loudly) identify who else has barbecue growing in their yard. So far banana-rhubarb muffins have been a big hit!

Lindsay Waldron & Daniel

I work with challenged people so I do this. I make a hunt with rocks I paint and hide them around the house with clues.

Pandoraa Bachss





1. More farm art this weekend! Old fan blade...refuse piece of oak...and, bam! #classcredit

2. Farmer Matt's recent mailbox upgrade is getting a boost. Thanks, J, for your creative talents! The 'Griff Run' icon...AND, J can use this as his weekly art project for school.

Shawna Connor



We bought a new homestead outside of Rising Sun right before quarantine went into effect and added two new Australian Shepherd puppies into the mix of our family life that already has a 4 year old and 1 year old to keep us on our toes. In the evening after dinner I find myself in a new routine of walking the pups through the woods to help myself decompress from a day full of unpacking, keeping the house together and entertaining two wild little boys while my partner is away as an #essentialworker, and help the puppies burn off some energy too.

Enjoying life in this way was something I haven't been able to do for a long time working full time, commuting, hustling bustling and rushing all over. Self isolating with my family has had a serious silver lining. My life is better. I was made for this and it only took a world wide pandemic to show me the real value in life includes a lot more sunsets, dirt-covered smiling toddlers, puppies and a whole lot less drive time.

Emily Schendel



. . . continued on page 20

#VFCQuarantineQuips continued...



Foraging our yard has given new life in this last week. The fresh air and sunshine lift me up. The violets and dandelions gladden my heart. The meditation of picking plants calms my mind. If this pandemic has taught me anything, it's to be fully prepared for cold and flu season. I dont want to get caught unprepared again so I'm starting already beginning with this Sore Throat Honey. Violets are a strong but gentle herb, perfect for little coughers...

To make, fill a jar with fresh violets and mix very well with honey. Top off the jar if needed. It will be ready in a few weeks. You can leave flowers in or strain them out for long term storage. It will remain good indefinitely. Mix with warm water when you or your little one feels the twinge of a sore throat starting. I plan to strain and steep again with sage once that starts growing.

Harmonie O'Laughlin







"Round Up" for Local Nonprofits to Make a Bigger Impact

Give Where You Live



FEBRUARY 2020

Driftless Humane Society

VFC staff present a $3,790 check to Linda Kica, Executive Director of DHS.

Providing animal rescue, animal placement and animal protection. Dritfless Humane Society is funded by memberships, donations, bequests and user fees.



MARCH 2020

Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School

VFC staff present a $2,535 check to Robin Kottke, Development Director of PRWS.

An independent, joyful, holistic education for the head, heart, and hands. PRWS provides a full Waldorf education, preschool thru grade 8, with an organic school garden and organic hot lunch program.



APRIL 2020

Viroqua Farmers Market

VFC staff display a $1,796 check to Viroqua Farmers Market.

The market begins June 13. All market vendors are within a 100-mile radius of Viroqua. More details posted on Viroqua Chamber Main Street Facebook page!

2020 Give Where You Live Summer Schedule

June	**Community Hunger Solutions**	**August**	**Youth Initiative High School**
July	**WDRT Driftless Community Radio**	**September**	**Viroqua Farm to School**

Visit www.viroquafood.coop/community-outreach for a complete schedule.

for kids!

Backyard Bingo

B	I	N	G	O
something crawling	a warm breeze	four leaf clover	buzzing bee	yellow dandelion
flying bird	fallen branch	squirrel in a tree	paw prints	bird feather
two smooth rocks	human footprints	**FREE SPACE**	mud	something soft
dirt	something you can eat	fluffy dandelion	bumblebee	bird nest
something square	five acorns	water	three different flowers	growing moss

for kids!

Neighborhood Bingo

B	I	N	G	O
stop sign	swings in a park	something stacked	white fence	sidewalk chalk art
tree roots	blue door	purple flowers	fun mailbox	basketball hoop
two smooth rocks	cool treehouse	**FREE SPACE**	bench	fire hydrant
pool	something strong	street light	yellow house	dog on a walk
something square	white lines on the street	the number 7	three different leaves	a warm breeze

Viroqua food co-op

609 N Main St, Viroqua WI 54665

open daily 10am-8pm
for all customers

open daily 9-10am
for seniors &
at-risk shoppers only

wellness wednesday

All customers take **10% off** supplements, homeopathic & herbal formulas every third Wednesday of each month!

