



December 2023

heart beet

A Pulse on What's Happening at the **Viroqua Food Co+op**



2024 Recipients

In October, co-op owners nominated 40 organizations to the Give Where You Live ballot. This November, we had a record-breaking turnout for the GWYL election! The 2024 Give Where You Live recipients are the eleven organizations that won the most votes, plus, the Viroqua Food Co+op Cooperative Community Fund. Thank you to all who support GWYL. **Together, we make a positive impact in our community. Keep rounding up!**

January Red Lou Library

February Kickapoo Valley Forest School

March Friends of Vernon County Parks and Forests

April Sleep In Heavenly Peace

May WDRT

June Living Faith Food Pantry

July Community Hunger Solutions

August Vernon Trails

September Youth Initiative High School

October Cooperative Community Fund

November Friends of Kickapoo Valley Reserve

December Driftless Humane Society

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elizabeth Tigan, President
Andrew Anderson, Vice President
Olive Reynolds, Secretary/Treasurer
Peter Bergquist
Bjorn Bergman
Shana Meshbesher
Dustin Skelley

GENERAL MANAGER

Jan Rasikas

The Board meets at 6:30pm on the 3rd Monday of each month. Meetings are currently hosted in person or online. Changes are posted on the VFC website. To make a presentation or ask questions at a meeting, please contact a Board member 10 days in advance. Contact the Board at: www.viroquafood.coop/board-of-directors

The Heart Beet is intended as a vehicle for communication among VFC 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.

The Heart Beet is printed and available in-store monthly. A digital copy is available online at:

viroquafood.coop/newsletters

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Bayberry Balsam: The Legend

Chris Lutz, Sun Leaf Naturals



Each fall, SunLeaf Naturals President and Master Formulator Teresa Andrys begins a new process of gathering, evaluating, and blending the raw materials needed to create our signature holiday aroma, BayBerry Balsam. The aroma can be described as the harmonious collision of several unique balsam fir oils, plus spicy clove and precious bayberry essence – a truly special natural ingredient. But what is bayberry anyway, and what makes it unique?

Gift the Gift of Food!



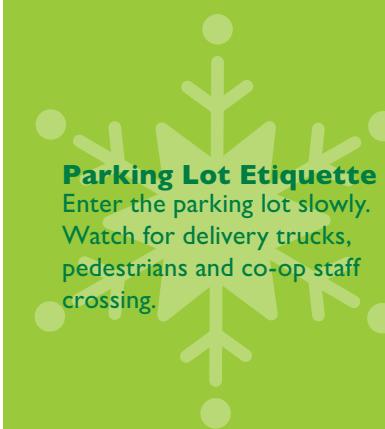
Co-op gift cards make great gifts! You can purchase them two ways:

1. At the customer service desk or any staffed register at the co-op.
2. Online at <https://www.viroquafood.coop/gift-card>

Gift cards purchased online can be mailed to you or the recipient.

Order before December 8th to ensure delivery by December 24th.

There is something for everyone at the co-op!



Red Gold

Bayberry, or Myrica, is a genus of several dozen species of related plants, most of which are evergreen. These plants produce crimson red berries, but despite their alluring appearance, they are coated with a natural wax, making them indigestible to most hungry predators. American Colonists realized that boiling bayberry fruits removed their green-tinted wax coating, which could then be siphoned off and used to make candles. Beyond merely providing light, they were also beautifully aromatic.

The Tradition

Bayberry candles were said to burn more brightly than other candles available during the Colonial Era; therefore, they were reserved for special occasions, like holiday celebrations. It was perhaps for this reason that they became associated with good fortune – as the saying went, "Bayberry candles burned to the socket, bring health to the home and wealth to the pocket."

Reprinted with permission from Sun Leaf Naturals.

Honoring the Spirit of the Bayberry Candle

Given the history and symbolism of the bayberry candle, there's no more appropriate time than the holiday season to celebrate it with our own modern version. At SunLeaf, we've combined the wax and essence of bayberry with other traditional holiday notes, like warming clove and aromatic balsam fir, to create an aroma bouquet that is truly evocative of this season. And although our BayBerry Balsam Candle in Glass and Votive Candle Set are perhaps the most literal translations of the bayberry tradition, we also offer an assortment of accompanying products, from our Pure Essential Oil Reed Diffuser to our Pure Essential Oil Aroma and Room Mist. As you celebrate the season of Pure Joy, we hope you'll add bayberry as a timeless symbol of good fortune. Enjoy!



Gifts for Everyone



Time for Tea

Start with unique locally crafted teas, then add the accessories. Try Four Elements Organic White Pine and Sacred Blossom Tiger Teas, then add a purple tea pot with person-ali-tea!



For Kids

Lions (ornament), puzzles and chocolate coins, oh my! These gifts for the little ones are sure to bring joy!



Chocolate Lovers

A charming snowflake mug stars in this classic gift. Add hot cocoa mix, peppermint marshmallows and Seattle Chocolate Truffles for a decadent lift!



Self-Care Starter Kit

Give the gift of relaxation with an aromatherapy diffuser. Add fragrant oils and an eye pillow, to make it extra special.



For the Baker

Pick holiday themed cookie cutters, fragrant fresh spices, and Madagascar vanilla to start. Then, add Meadowlark Farm and Mill Flour to make a bakers dream come true!



For the Chef

Choose a cookbook and let your gift grow from there. Try a locally crafted pot holder from Pot Holders Inc., gourmet peppercorns in a pinch pot and a whimsical wooden spoon.



Coffee Lovers

Pair a package of locally roasted Wonderstate coffee with a French press for the perfect cup. Then, add a woodland holiday mug and a beeswax candle for a fun and folky twist!

Build personalized gifts at the co-op, for everyone on your list.



Celebration of Cheese

Cheese boards are a stunning addition to any holiday gathering.

Holiday cheese boards are great for gatherings because you can build them with a little something for everyone. Create your own beautiful board with these basic tips.

1. Select your cheese. Cheese is the anchor of your display. Pick a nice variety of colors, flavors and textures. Cut hard cheese into cubes or slices. **2. Add charcuterie.** Salami, prosciutto and other cured meats work well. Use bite sized portions.

3. Select something briny. Choose your favorite olives, or pickled vegetables. If the ingredients are in liquid, put them in small bowls or ramekins. **4. Add a little sweetness.** Honey, dried fruit, fresh grapes, jams and compotes all work beautifully to compliment the salty, savory cheese. **5. Build in breads and crackers.** Use thinly sliced baguettes and artisan crackers. **6. Garnish** Add salted nuts and fresh herbs to fill in the spaces. **7. Add utensils.** Use small forks and cheese knives so guests can indulge!

Locally Inspired:



Round River Distilling

Viroqua, Wisconsin

Round River Distilling is dedicated to creating craft spirits using locally sourced ingredients from our friend and farmer up the road. With a distillery planned for Viroqua, WI and their own whiskey recipes aging in barrels, they fill their time collaborating with other Wisconsin distillers to create one of a kind whiskey blends for the retail market.

Holiday Cocktails

Delightful recipes begin with local ingredients.

Hot Buttered Bourbon

Serves 2.

1 cup apple cider
2 tablespoons unsalted butter (softened)
1 tablespoon honey
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger
1 lemon round
pinch of nutmeg
4 ounces Round River Distilling Bourbon

Recipe submitted by Round River Distilling.

1. Bring cider to a gentle simmer in a small sauce pan over low heat.
2. Add the other ingredients while stirring.
3. Remove pan from heat, whisk in the bourbon, and serve immediately. Garnish with cinnamon sticks.



Serving Suggestion

Garnish with cinnamon sticks.



Cranberry Citrus Maple Bourbon

with Embark Maple | Viroqua, Wisconsin

Serves 4.



1 cup Embark Bourbon Barrel Aged Maple Syrup
2 cups cranberries
3 sticks cinnamon
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup bourbon
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup lemon juice
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lime juice
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup orange juice
Ice

Optional: Add rosemary to garnish.

1. In a saucepan, combine cranberries, maple syrup, and cinnamon sticks.
2. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Cook until berries soften and begin to burst, around 10 minutes.
3. Let mixture cool, then strain it, removing cranberry skins.
4. In a shaker, combine ice, bourbon, lemon, lime and orange juice with cranberry syrup. Shake, share, and enjoy!

Recipe submitted by Embark Maple.



Sweet Sap Tea Mocktail

with Gist | Viroqua, Wisconsin

Serves 2.



1 ounce pure maple syrup (Maple Valley or B&E's are our favorites!)
4 ounces fresh squeezed orange juice (about 2 medium oranges)
2 wide strips of fresh orange peel
8 ounces GIST Oolong with Calendula
Few dashes orange bitters
Ice

Make it a cocktail: 4 ounces La Crosse Distilling Co. High Rye Light Whiskey

1. Before juicing oranges, use a paring knife or off-set peeler to peel a large strip of orange peel over two rocks glasses.
2. Fold and press a peel over each glass to release oils and toss a peel in each glass. Juice oranges.
3. Combine maple syrup, orange juice and optional booze in a quart jar with a lid.
4. Fill with ice and shake for 15 seconds. Stir in Gist and pour contents into prepared glasses with ice, top with a few dashes orange bitters and enjoy!

Recipe submitted by Gist.

Recipe by Dani Lind. Photography by Jim Klousia

Celebration Desserts



Mandarin Orange Cake

Serves 8. Total time: 1 hour (active: 25 min)

Cake

8 small mandarin oranges (clementines, tangerines or satsumas)
1 ½ cups all-purpose flour

1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt

1 cup sugar

3 large eggs

½ cup olive oil
Glaze

1 cup powdered sugar

2 tablespoons mandarin orange juice

- Preheat the oven to 350 F. Generously grease and flour a nine-inch Bundt pan and reserve.
- Use a fine grater to produce one tablespoon of orange zest, then juice the oranges to make ½ cup juice for the cake and two tablespoons for the glaze. Reserve.
- In a large bowl, combine the flour, baking powder,

baking soda and salt and whisk to mix.

- In a medium bowl combine the sugar and eggs and whisk until light and lemon colored, about two minutes by hand. Whisk in the oil and orange zest and ½ cup juice. Pour the egg mixture into the flour mixture and whisk until smooth.
- Use a rubber spatula to scrape the batter into the prepared Bundt pan, and smooth the top.
- Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out with no wet batter.
- Cool on a rack for five minutes, then loosen the sides of the cake with a paring knife. Place a large plate or cake stand on top of the pan, then flip, unmolding the cake onto the plate. Let cool completely.
- While the cake cools, place the powdered sugar in a glass measuring cup and stir in the remaining orange juice to make a pourable glaze. Drizzle the glaze over the cake.
- Keep the cake tightly covered at room temperature for up to three days.

Reprinted by permission from grocery.coop.



Pear Galette

Serves 4. Total time: 30 min

Dough

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon sugar
½ teaspoon salt
2 large eggs (1 for dough, 1 for egg wash)
1 teaspoon milk
5 tablespoons butter, cold and cut into small pieces

Filling

2 tablespoons apricot jam
2 large Anjou pears
1 tablespoon butter, melted
2 teaspoons sugar
Pinch of ground nutmeg

- To make the dough, whisk together flour, sugar, and salt in a large bowl. Cut in the butter with a pastry cutter or fingers until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. In a small bowl, whisk together one egg and milk. Add half of the egg and milk mixture to the dough and mix to incorporate. Mix in the remaining egg and milk, and make the dough into a flat disk. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. After refrigeration, roll out the dough into a 9 to 10-inch circle and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Brush the top surface of the dough with the apricot jam, and return it to the refrigerator until the pears are ready.
- Preheat oven to 425°F. While the oven is heating, quarter and core the pears, then slice them lengthwise into quarter-inch slices. Place the pear slices in a fan shape on the chilled circle of dough, leaving a 1 ½-inch border. Drizzle melted butter over the pears and then sprinkle with sugar and nutmeg. Gently fold the edge of the dough up and over the pears to form a rim. In a small bowl, beat the remaining egg and brush the rim and edges of the dough with the beaten egg. Place the galette in the oven and bake for about 25 minutes until the edges are browning. Let rest a few minutes before slicing.



Tangerine Cranberry Oatmeal Cookies

Serves 34 cookies. Total time: 45 min (active: 20 min)

1 ½ cups rolled oats
1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
½ teaspoon baking soda
¼ teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
1 stick butter
1 cup brown sugar
1 large egg
1 tangerine, zest and juice (approximately 1 tablespoon zest and ¼ cup juice)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup dried cranberries

- Heat the oven to 350°F. Line 2 large sheet pans with parchment paper. In a medium bowl, combine the oats, flour, baking soda, salt and tangerine zest and toss to combine. In a large bowl cream the butter. Add the brown sugar and beat until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add the egg and beat until combined. Beat in the tangerine juice and vanilla; the mixture will appear to have curdled slightly. Stir in the flour mixture until well-mixed, then stir in the cranberries.
- Form heaping tablespoon-sized portions of dough and place on the sheet pans, about 3 inches apart. Don't flatten the cookies—they will spread on their own. Bake for 6 minutes, then rotate the pans, reversing their positions in the oven. Bake for 6 minutes longer. Cool for at least 5 minutes before using a spatula to transfer the cookies to the racks to finish cooling completely. Repeat the baking process with the remaining dough.
- These cookies keep, tightly covered, for up to a week at room temperature.

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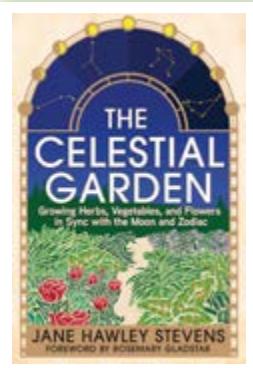


Round up in December for the Kickapoo Valley Reserve

The land in the Kickapoo Valley Reserve shall be protected, preserved, and enhanced so that its unique environmental, scenic, and cultural features provide opportunities for the use and enjoyment of visitors to the Reserve. The Reserve will be promoted as a unique example of the Driftless Area Ecoregion and as a destination for low-impact tourism and education.



Dec. 13th | Wednesday
2-5 pm



Book Signing | Jane Hawley Stevens

Insight, ideas, and inspiration abound in this highly practical guide to growing successfully in harmony with the moon, the Earth, and other planetary influences.

Planting by the moon is an age-old gardening tradition, but did you know that the cycles of the moon and the zodiac can be a powerful tool to improve your success with all kinds of gardening tasks? In *The Celestial Garden*, longtime gardener and herbalist Jane Hawley Stevens explains how the movement of the moon through the constellations of the zodiac provides a detailed calendar of optimal times for planting seeds, roots, and transplants, as well as for pruning, weeding, propagation, harvesting, and even starting new garden projects or throwing garden parties.



7am - 7pm



closed



7am - 8pm



10am - 6pm