

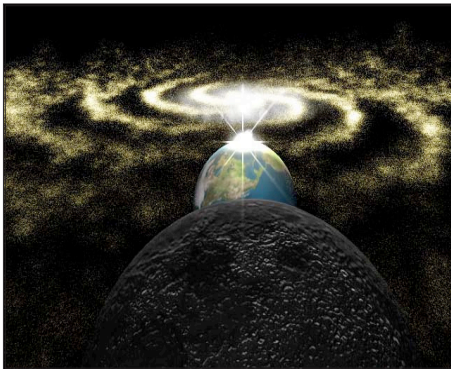
CO-OP Digest

January/February 2011

North Country Food Cooperative

For the community. By the community.

Solstice Solace by Jeff Cochran



The Sun's loving energy is now on its way north up the earth's axis to fill the now sleeping seeds with the power to grow, root down, stalk up, bloom fruit we will pick with our hands to feed our people. The hibernating insects and animals will emerge due to the Sun's loving life force. The migrating birds will return. Lovely, Miraculous.

The daily Sun travels east to west across the sky; Sunrise to Sunset. The Sun awakens us, its energy is alive in our bodies as we tend to our daily work, as we express our characters in all our relations. The Sun sets and we sleep.

In the sky, the Sun of the year travels south-north-south. During a year's time we experience the Sun as the power to grow. The Sun's life force we witness as the seasons of life: spring, summer, fall, winter, The cycle of human life: youth, adult, elder, ancestor, and the cycle of plant life: seeds blossom, bear fruit, fall to the earth, and give their seeds. Acknowledging this, Black Elk speaks of the green hoop and Christians hang Christmas wreaths.

The knowledge that the one Sun we see in the sky travels in two directions

east to west and north to south is the origin of the cross in the center of the circle: The Medicine Wheel. The Sun's rays touch the circle of earthen life in the four directions. Just so, we know the Sun existing in our lives in four very unique ways which we can give directional identities.

The eternal Sun is the Sun that runs through the center of the earth and is the earth's solar axis. This Sun is the unseen Sun. It is the earth's electromagnetic field. It is known around the world as The Tree of Life, the unseen tree that all earthen life depends upon. It is associated with the north because we can see it as the Aurora Borealis, The Northern Lights.

The eastern Sun is the Sun we see, the Sun that dawns in the east, its light filling our bodies with energy, awakening us to the new day. It is the visible Sun and the visible rainbow of colors we see with our eyes. Under this one Sunlight, whose energy lives in our bodies, we take action to express our character.

Because spring's life awakening comes from the south, the southern Sun is acknowledged as the Sun's energy in us, as the power to grow cells, to grow bodies, to heal wounds.

The fourth Sun is the Sun of our mental life. The Sun's energy in us gives us the power to imagine, to make images with our minds. Then with the Sun's life force in our bodies we can take action in the Sun's daily light and make things we have imagined come into the world of our common senses.

These four Suns: the Sun as visible light-the spectrum of daily life, the Sun in our bodies as the power to grow bodies and to heal wounds, the Sun of our mental life, and the invisible and inaudible Sun

of the electromagnetic field of light-these four Suns - are one Sun. O' Lovely Sun, thank you Sun! Say, for being 93 million miles away you sure do get a lot done down here on earth! We the people get to witness these four very different experiences of the Sun's life alive in our lives - as our lives - just by having been born, a precious gift, a solace on the solstice.

Physicists discovered how to describe and then to tap into the earth's electromagnetic field in the mid 1800's. Physicists, inventors, and manufacturers brought electricity to our cities and covered the earth in telecommunications machinery and the electromagnetic waves they emit--radios, TVs, computers, cell phones etc. And traveling through the sky, in between them on electromagnetic waves are inaudible words and invisible images and all that these machines do for us exists as waving rays of Sunlight that our species learned to make travel through machinery. And with a holistic awareness of our earth, all of these machines are plugged into one 93 million mile extension cord. Solar. Miraculous.

My wife and I wrapped our Christmas tree in lights just as our species has wrapped the whole earthen evergreen in city lights. That is a religious ritual.

So here comes the visible Sun rising north daily. Here comes the invisible life force of the Sun rising north with the power to grow life. Many thanks to you, Sun. It is Lovely to be here with you.

More than any symbol or science can say, we have the one Sun, living with us and within us. As divine as any prayer we have our life to share. Blessings to you in the light, in the life, in the law and in the love of the Sun of 2011.

Gluten-Free Food Preparation - The "Cootie" Concept

by Shari Olmstead



It's a New Year, and of course many of us are making New Year's Resolutions. Making promises that we will take better care of ourselves, exercise more and of course eat healthier. For people diagnosed with celiac disease, gluten intolerance or other conditions that improve by cutting out gluten (a protein in the grains- wheat, rye and barley), this might be the perfect time to bite the bullet and start following that gluten free diet your doctor advised.

So you load your fridge and cupboards up with fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry or fish, cheese and maybe some rice or potatoes. Add some pure spices, butter or olive oil and you can easily make any number of gourmet feasts. Add to that a gluten free pasta (Tinkyada brand is especially good), or use a gluten-free baking mix to whip up some biscuits and no one would know you had a dietary restriction. The coop section with gluten free foods is growing larger every day, making the diet easier and easier to follow without feeling deprived.

BUT... (and yes there is always a but right?) although the gluten free diet encompasses a large variety of great foods it also involves careful preparation and storage when contact with foods containing gluten is possible. This makes it different from say a diabetic or lactose free diet. Remember back to your childhood and think "cooties", and the whole cross-contamination concept is easier to understand.

The saying for celiacs goes, "One molecule is as bad as a million". It's been proven that even 1/8 of a teaspoon, --literally crumbs, of food like crackers or bread, can cause visible damage in a celiac's gut or bring on a multitude of symptoms. That's why any contact of gluten free foods with foods containing gluten -also known as "cross contamination"- must always be avoided. Since gluten is viewed by the body as a foreign invader similar to bacteria or a virus, it doesn't take much gluten for a celiac's immune system to react.

For anyone preparing gluten-free food for themselves, a family member or friend, this practice sounds confusing at

first, but gets easier once you wrap your head around the concept and practice a little. It's like learning to drive a car. At first you wonder how the heck you can remember everything and do it all right. After some practice you can do it easily, but are always careful so you avoid accidents --just like driving!

Listed below are several ways that gluten can sneak into what would have been a gluten-free diet. Preparation, baking/cooking and storage of foods must always be done with a vigilant eye. A gluten-free meal or food that is not carefully prepared to avoid all gluten might as well not bother at all. Gluten should be avoided even in the smallest amounts-even down to worrying about crumbs.

- Toasters-Gluten free bread needs to have its own toaster to avoid crumbs from regular bread. Even better, a "dedicated" toaster oven works great to accommodate toast, bagels and many other snacks safely.

- Food preparation areas like counter tops need to be clean and free of crumbs, flour or any particles of unsafe foods. Keeping counters clean is a good habit to get into in a celiac household. At my house one section of counter is mine and considered a gluten-free area. It's off limits to my husband's sandwich making, pizza creating or pretzel snacks although he wipes up crumbs and messes asap to be safe.

- Shared condiments like peanut butter, mayonnaise, mustard, butter, etc need to be dipped into with a clean knife with no double-dipping once the knife has touched bread that has gluten. Crumbs left behind will cause problems even if a celiac doesn't feel symptoms right away. If a jar gets contaminated by accident, mark it with a red sticker or with an obvious "X" as a reminder that it can't be used safely with gluten free (GF) food anymore.

- Separate condiments if possible, can be the easier way to deal with them. Squeeze bottles work great with some condiments. Just have a consistent system that is understood and agreed on by all.

- GF foods, containers and pans can be labeled with stickers, or marked with permanent marker to easily identify which is and isn't gluten free (GF).

- Colanders for regular pasta and porous containers that can absorb food or sauces with gluten shouldn't be used for GF foods if at all possible. Separate ones for GF foods are needed and can be identified by marking somehow or can be a different color. At the very least they should be cleaned thoroughly before use with GF foods. Plastic Rubbermaid type containers can have a permanent marker "X" drawn on them if they are used for foods that had gluten so they aren't used mistakenly for GF foods.

- Pots, pans and baking pans can be used by everyone as long as they are able to be totally scrubbed clean in between. Non-stick pans that are scratched and scraped can't be shared

and aren't safe anyway once their surface is marred.

- Fried foods need to be cooked in oil that has not also fried foods containing gluten. For example french fries are gluten free, but are contaminated if they are fried in oil that has cooked breaded onion rings. Some restaurants have separate or "dedicated" fryers so that french fries can be safely eaten by those on a gluten free diet.

- Shared cooking utensils, (like using a spoon that mixed macaroni salad to stir potato salad) are a no-no, since gluten can easily transfer into the gluten-free food and make someone ill. Remember-even the smallest bit can cause problems!

Those are some of the basics to start with. Once you put the concept of "cross-contamination" together with your growing knowledge of which foods are gluten-free, you can continue to apply it as you cook, bake and prepare your gluten free snacks and meals. Practice makes perfect.... just remember "cooties" and you'll do fine.

Ode de Cocoa

by Melissa Hart



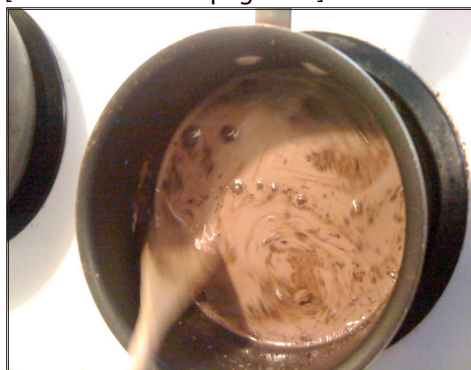
This holiday season, I gave a lot of money to Lake Champlain Chocolates. The coop carries a line of delicious hot chocolate mixes made by the Burlington-based company, and I treated not only myself but friends and family with giving the gift of cocoa.

We all know that cocoa in its pure form is good for us, with all the antioxidants. Cocoa and dark chocolate may keep high blood pressure down, research finds. Plus it gives the mood a boost on a dreary day. Combine that goodness with a winter warmer: heated the old-fashioned way in a saucepan with milk, and it's a double boost. Spike it up with a splash of spiced rum or peppermint schnapps and we're in business.

What I'm particularly hooked on is the chai-spiced mix, so I did a search online to figure out how to make it from scratch. All these ingredients are available at the coop and while I've yet to try this myself, I'm particularly looking forward to the ginger whipped cream.

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Ingredients:

- 4 cups low-fat (1%) milk
- 3/4 cup bittersweet chocolate chips
- 10 cardamom pods, coarsely cracked
- 1/2 teaspoon whole allspice, cracked
- 2 cinnamon sticks, broken in half
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 5 tablespoons (packed) golden brown sugar, divided
- 6 quarter-size slices fresh ginger plus 1/2 teaspoon grated peeled fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, divided
- 1/2 cup chilled whipping cream

To make:

Combine first 6 ingredients, 4 tablespoons brown sugar, and ginger slices in medium saucepan. Bring almost to simmer, whisking frequently. Remove from heat; cover and steep 10 minutes. Mix in 1/2 teaspoon vanilla.

Meanwhile, whisk cream, remaining 1 tablespoon brown sugar, grated ginger, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon vanilla in medium bowl to peaks.

Strain hot chocolate. Ladle into 6 mugs. Top each with dollop of ginger cream. Serves 6.



Recipe courtesy of epicurious.com.

Movie Nights @ the Co-op January/February Films:

by Andy MacDougall



Hey cinephiles, we have some 'reel' special presentations for you over the next two months, and true to Co-op form, we'll be going "organic" in the process! What do we mean by that? Glad you asked!

In addition to honest-to-goodness celluloid, rather than DVD, we're offering immersion in a long-lost form of Technicolor known to insiders as "IB (imbibition) Tech" whose unique, stained-glass tones and textures have NEVER been approximated via state-of-the-art video technology, nor ever will be.

It's like the difference between hearing a studio recording and attending a live concert.....the only way to truly experience the magic in question is to attend a screening of an actual "IB Tech" film print!

And presto, at 7 p.m. on the evenings of Saturday, Jan. 29th and Saturday, Feb. 26th, upstairs in the Co-op, you can do just that!

In January we'll be showcasing a super-elusive, stunning "IB Tech" print of the Oscar-winning favorite THE THIEF OF BAGDAD.

This is an outrageously rare, dazzlingly gorgeous three-strip, dye-transfer IB TECHNICOLOR 16mm print of the 1940 remake of the 1926 silent (b/w) "Thief of Bagdad."

No less than six prominent directors, including Michael ("The Red Shoes") Powell and the Korda brothers, Alexander and Zoltan ("The Jungle Book"), helped realize this ultimate screen version of the ultimate Arabian Nights fantasy.

More than any other film(s) in their

illustrious careers, this legendary matinee favorite proves what showmen these directors were, sparing no expense to please film buffs and give us a (vintage) Bagdad bazaar-sized bundle of entertainment on the silver screen. Here they manage to deliver a film that is presumably more fun than actually going to an old-style Persian bazaar - and certainly as colorful!

Witness jaw-droppingly lavish processions of Persian royalty sporting a proverbial cast of thousands; death-defying aerial sequences, and other ahead-of-their-time special effects including a spectacular centerpiece wherein titular star Sabu uncorks the awesome djinn of the lamp (Rex Ingram) into the world after slumbering for 2,000 years. Add a trail-blazing music score by the great Miklos Rosza and other highly influential elements informing fantasy cinema for decades to come, and you have an overflowing helping of cinematic splendor.

And it is all a true feast for the eyes in dripping, dazzling, truly eye-popping IB TECHNICOLOR, 1940s style!



Movies like this are what "IB Tech" was all about - if you've never seen this film in true Technicolor, then you have NEVER truly seen it! Swoon over stunningly lovely femme fatale June Duprez's green bridal veil which rivals the most vivid emerald imaginable; behold

lead villain Conrad Veidt's richly crimson turban; gasp at the sky-blue complexion of the evil six-armed goddess Kahli (the original Blue Meanie!), all with hues so pronounced that you almost seem to be dreaming them!

Every costume's meticulously fashioned colors seem to have been painstakingly selected to compliment each other, creating spectacular color schemes that need the magical, fantasy world of IB Technicolor to bring them alive (remember, this was back in the days when color consultants took great care to bring the most pleasing combination of striking colors vividly to life).

To reiterate, truly a good ol' fashioned "organic" experience with no cyber-culture contaminants whatsoever!

Winner of Oscars for Best Art Direction, Best Cinematography, Best Special Effects, and nominated for Best Original Score. Again, to be screened at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 29th, upstairs at the North Country Co-op.

In February we will present part two of our tribute to "IB Tech" in a slightly different context, by hosting a long overdue rediscovery of the sadly neglected 1954 sagebrush saga, *THE OUTLAW STALLION*. Take the gist of the preceding description of the glory of "IB Tech" and apply it to the following description from imdb.com, and you know you're in for yet another 'reel' treat of an evening at the movies, guaranteed.....

"Gorgeous scenery, familiar stars, and a spirited plot make this one just as enjoyable as many other Columbia westerns from the 1950s.

Roy Roberts is great as the rotten villain. Phil Carey is the hero who teams up with sweetheart Dorothy Patrick and Billy Gray ("The Day the Earth Stood Still") to stop bad guys from illegally capturing wild horses in Utah. Gray does a fine job in a very interesting role.

Sci-fi fans will recognize musical themes used extensively in "Earth vs. the Flying Saucers" and "20 Million Miles to Earth" during two battles between a black stallion and the titular white stallion. Columbia reused these frequently during the 1950s. But there isn't an inch of stock footage in this film, unlike the afore-mentioned sci-fi classics. It's 100% pure American West. If you're a Western fan, you'll enjoy this one. And you haven't lived until you've

seen the part in which an abused horse ties a man to a tree and gets its revenge on the low-down side-winder!

All in all, not your typically predictable Western . . . no sir, partner!"



We might add that a couple members from ISoMST3K's crackerjack team of wisequackers will be on hand to gently rib any hokey/corny elements with hilarious commentary, so how's that for a deal-sweetener!

To be screened at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 26th, upstairs at the North Country Co-op, on glorious celluloid, not DVD. See you at the movies!

What's the Deal with Fermentation!?

by Adam DeFayette



Kefir. Kumbucha. Kimchi. Kraut. And of course Yogurt and Booze of every kind. What exactly is going on here? Fermented, or "Cultured", food products are all the rage, and you're

probably scratching your head asking WHY? WHY? WHY? And "What's in it for me?" Well then, let's get started.

Like many scientific concepts, fermentation can get complicated. I'll keep it simple here, because I'm not very smart. *Warning: everything from here forward may be inaccurate.*

Try this. When food "goes bad," in a bad way, we also say it's "rotting." Fermentation is basically where the rotting is "going good." Fementation is an action - the action of particular micro-organisms digesting and converting particular foods under particular conditions into something new and (often) improved. Cabbage becomes kraut, milk becomes yogurt. This is alchemy.

This stuff tastes STRONG! All of it. What's the deal? Well, it's alive - it's living food. In all of these food products, there's a microbial party going on at the microscopic level. Tiny organisms do their good work, digesting aspects of cabbage (kraut), milk (yogurt and kefir), or the soybean (miso). We eat the product of their ongoing digestion. When you eat these foods you get a couple of unique benefits from the organisms (bacteria) that got there first. For starters, it's easier to digest because the microbes have already gotten it started. Second, the bacteria itself is good for you - that's why it's referred to as "beneficial" bacteria. This bacteria is delivered directly to your digestive system where it continues to exist "symbiotically," helping you to further break down and digest your food. This same beneficial bacteria also protects us from potentially dangerous organisms - such as salmonella and e. coli, which in a healthy gut (populated with healthy organisms) don't get an invitation to the party. Remarkably, beneficial bacteria even manage to make the food it rides in on more nutritious: as they go through their life cycles, these organisms create B vitamins, including folic acid, riboflavin, niacin, thiamin and biotin. Sounds like the back of a multi-vitamin bottle, right? Exactly.

Reader, it is a new year. If you've turned your nose up at this stuff before, resolve to try again. If you're already eating this stuff, eat more. Every culture on earth is doing it.