

## Farm and Member News

**The BIG News**—If you missed the annual members' meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> Feb, then you may not have heard the biggest news of all. Our wonderful farmers, Amy and Chris, are leaving!!!!!! Many folks were in tears at the meeting (I know I was). Amy understandably wants to spend more time home-schooling their fabulous kids Hannah and Nora; and Chris has



been offered a property-manager position at Open Connections, a home-schooling resource (nice sort of symmetry there!). Amy will be doing part-time work as consultant and gardener with a group called Greener Partners. She'll help set up educational gardens at Tyler Arboretum and other places, as well as consult on organizing a tiny 10-member CSA at Waterloo Mills. We'll miss them terribly as farmers, but they'll be around the Farm—they'll have a workshare, advise the incoming farmers (two full-time new farmers—the interview process is underway), and remain on the Core Group, which still will meet at their house. (photo: M. Parsons)

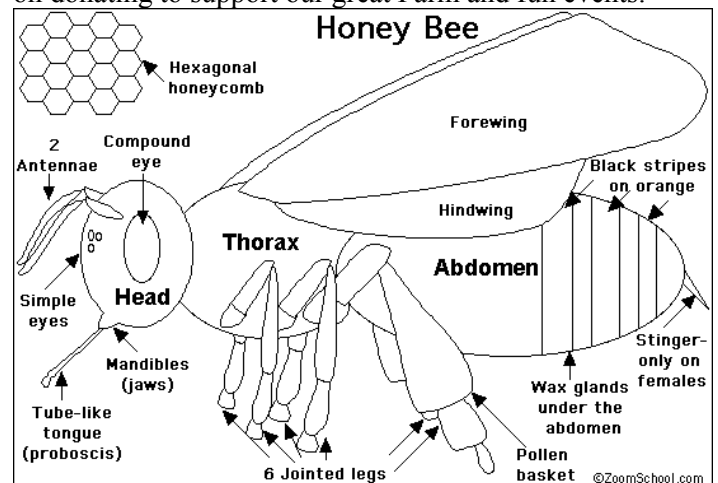
*Thank you beyond measure, Amy and Chris, for seven wonderful Farm seasons with you!!! You guys are the best!!! Your work and your spirits are the essence of goodness, humor, and great abundance.*

**Square Dance and Live Auction—Save the Date!!**—Our primary fundraiser will be **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May** this year, at the **Media Community Center**. Save the date! But the form of the event is different this year. Rather than our usual silent auction of many individual items, we'll have the multi-talented Eric Lienhard as a live auctioneer, working with fewer but bigger items! Questions? Call Amy at 610-558-6799 or email at [ajohnson@osfphila.org](mailto:ajohnson@osfphila.org).

**Volunteers Needed for the Dance & Auction Committee**  
The committee that's organizing this big fundraising event could really use a few more members to help work out

the myriad details of such an important get-together. *We'd be thrilled if you would volunteer to help, either a lot or even a little!* For anything you can do, call or email Amy (610-558-6799 or [ajohnson@osfphila.org](mailto:ajohnson@osfphila.org)).

**Honeybee or Worm?** Which do you want to be? Both are equally important to the functioning of the Farm! What I'm talking about is our request to get folks to donate money for the Square Dance and Live Auction. You can donate at three levels: **Honeybees** donate \$25, **Ladybugs** give \$20, and **Earthworms** (those hard workers behind—or underneath?—the scenes) donate \$15!! **Be on the lookout for a letter** to all the members giving you details on donating to support our great Farm and fun events.



(picture source—check out the learning opportunities for kids on this site!)

**Bill Nelling's Peace Pole**—Please save the date, **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May**, for our celebration of Bill Nelling and his legacy of peace. 5<sup>th</sup> May is the one-year anniversary of his death, and **how** we miss him—I can't believe it's been a year since we've seen his cheery, industrious self around the Farm. On the 10<sup>th</sup>, we'll be erecting a Peace Pole in the Children's Garden in his honor and memory. We think it's a fitting memorial for a man so committed to nature and to peace. We'll have more details in the April *Root*.





**Seedlings!**—Chris told me that the seedlings for our spring crops have been started—all sorts of tender spring greens—lettuces, arugula, tat soi, cruciferous veggies (i.e., in the cabbage family), beets, flowers, perennial herbs, and so forth. Spring truly is springing up and springing forth! (*Cabbage*, from Platearius, *Le Livre des Simple Médicines*, 13<sup>th</sup> c)

**Extending the Deer Fence**—As Chris and Amy announced at our February members' meeting, the Sisters have approved the expense to extend the electric deer fencing (which uses solar power) around the entire Farm. It should be completed this spring. That's great, as there was some concern that if the deer couldn't get into the Farm from the woodland edges, they would simply leap across Red Hill Road, thus endangering motorists. Please feel free to volunteer if you'd like to help Chris with this daunting task. (email [ajohnson@osfphila.org](mailto:ajohnson@osfphila.org))

**New "Dresses" for the High Tunnels!**—The high tunnels, where many of our more delicious crops are grown (like heirloom tomatoes and other goodies), will be "dressed" in new plastic covers this year. That's quite an undertaking, requiring the assistance of our workshare members and anyone who wants to volunteer!

**2008 Workshops from IMBY Misty Hollow**—Sally and Jim Hammerman run a small, workshare-only CSA at their home (IMBY=In My Back Yard!) in Westtown, PA.

Each year they sponsor a wonderful series of workshops on all sorts of garden and farming topics, from flower arranging to preserving your food for the winter! Red Hill Farm members not only are eligible to sign up for these, but we get a 15% discount on the cost of each event. You needn't be a member of IMBY to participate. **The April workshop is "Garden Gastronomy I:**

**Dandelion Wine and Wild Salads,**" 19<sup>th</sup> April from 10 am to 1 pm, while **May is "Healing in the Garden I: Soaps & Salves,"** with guest artists Jennifer Ryan & Maggie Juliano. For details or sign up, go to IMBY (<http://www.imbymistyhollow.com/>) and click on "08 Workshops," just under the page header; or call 610-717-6949, or email [IMBYmistyhollow@mac.com](mailto:IMBYmistyhollow@mac.com).



**Local & Regional Environmental Events**—New Red Hill member Eric Lienhard has sent us a whole list of local and regional events about ecology and the environment! **Thank you so much, Eric!** (If you don't recall, Eric was the fellow making balloon animals at this past year's Harvest Fest!) He works for **Greeley and Hansen**, a firm of environmental engineers and urban designers in Wilmington, DE (see [here](#)). As well, Eric is on the Board of the **Partnership of the Delaware Estuary** (see [here](#)). For a newsletter from the Delaware Estuary, see [here](#).

- ❖ **Ongoing until 12<sup>th</sup> April** is the traveling exhibit, "**Native Waters: Sharing the Source,**" at the St. Jones Reserve, at 818 Kitts Hummock Rd., Dover, DE. The show combines modern science with Native-American perceptions of water and life. For more info, see [here](#) or call 302-739-3436.
- ❖ **29<sup>th</sup> March:** head on down to the **Delaware Great Green Expo**, which highlights local and regional businesses offering "green" solutions in everyday life. Organized by Clear Channel, it includes live music, art, demonstrations, organic foods, & more! For detailed info, see [here](#).
- ❖ **19<sup>th</sup> April** is the **Christina River Watershed Cleanup** in northern Delaware, 9:00 am to 1:00 p.m., throughout Newcastle County. For more, call Shirley Posey at 302-838-1897 or see [here](#).
- ❖ **19<sup>th</sup> April to 3<sup>rd</sup> May:** These are the dates for the "**Pick It Up PA Days,**" organized by Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. There are 1000s of projects to choose from all across the state, so check it out on their website, [here!](#)



- ❖ **26<sup>th</sup> April:** The 24<sup>th</sup> annual **Darby Creek/Cobbs Creek Cleanup**, sponsored by the Darby Creek Valley Association (see [here](#)), takes place on this date throughout the Darby Creek valley. If you know an area of the creek that needs cleaning, you can organize a clean-up crew for that area. "**DCVA can help with publicity, t-shirts, bags, and gloves, but the work itself is done by... 100s of volunteers who love the creek.**" For info, 610-683-0788.

15 Mar 2008

## A “Stellar” Growing Project for Kids

If you're a teacher, or if you want to get your own kids involved in an experiment in growing, check out the “Tomatosphere” project online! (See [here](#).) It involves a blind study in which kids are sent tomato seeds, some of which have been exposed to conditions of interplanetary travel, and some of which have not. They germinate them & describe their results w/o knowing which kind of seed they have. It's suitable for elementary & middle school. The goals of the project are multiple, including issues of nutrition, the needs of growing plants, and science education vis-à-vis astronomy and space travel. Cool!!



(picture credit)

## Further to Westland/Hallmark Downer Cows



Downer Cow Left to Suffer in Stockyard Parking Lot (photo courtesy of [www.nodowners.org](http://www.nodowners.org), “A Farm Sanctuary Campaign”)

Food-illness lawyer **Bill Marler** has followed the revolting developments of the Westland/Hallmark meat recall, the largest ever in history (143,000,000 lbs, much of it targeted for schools and other public programs—see [here](#) for last month's *Root* essay about this [page 3]). As you might expect, there are conflicts between commercial and animal-rights interests in the question of using “downer [non-ambulatory] cows” in the food supply. *Animal groups like Farm Sanctuary* (see [here](#)) support a total ban on downers entering the food chain for a number of

reasons: 1) downers are more likely to be infected with central nervous system illnesses like BSE (mad cow disease) and other harmful conditions; 2) “[The] ban lessens animal suffering - Due to their size and weight, it is very difficult to move a downed cow humanely. Non-ambulatory animals are frequently subjected to... pain and distress during movement from one location to another. This mistreatment... results in injuries ranging from bruises and abrasions to broken bones and torn ligaments. Downed animals...rarely receive veterinary attention. Stockyards are reluctant to call veterinarians because they do not own the animals....Because downers are immobile, they cannot get to food and water. They may lie for hours or even days without having their most basic needs met, and many die of gross neglect”; 3) the economic impact of the ban is minimal, as the profit realized on a downer cow is less than \$30; 4) the public wants the ban, and many farmers also support it, recognizing the public's revulsion when such egregious violations of simple compassion come to light; and 5) nationally known agricultural veterinarians, such as **Dr. Temple Grandin**, suggest that 90% of the instances of downer cows (and other livestock) can be prevented with proper care on the farm—a ban on downer livestock in the food chain would encourage such proper care. When it cannot be prevented, animals should be euthanized without being moved from the farm (for more about on-farm euthanasia, see [here](#) [viewer discretion advised]). For all of this and more, see the 2004 Farm Sanctuary Campaign letter to the FDA [here](#). For thoughtful essays on the economics of downer cattle, see Bill Marler's posts [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

The latter post ([here](#)), dated 12<sup>th</sup> March, notes that Westland/Hallmark President Steven Mendell, after being forced by a Congressional panel to watch videos of animal abuse at his plant, admitted that cattle were slaughtered illegally there. According to Marler, Mendell watched the videos “head-in-hand,” though in the photo below he doesn't appear to be feeling deep remorse.



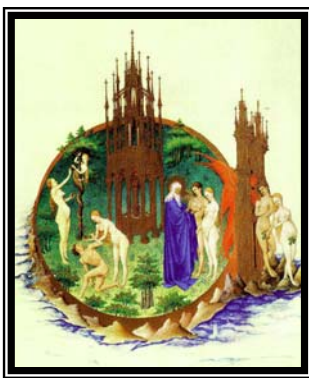
(photo credit)

A word on **Dr. Temple Grandin**. Born autistic, this remarkable woman went on to become a professor at Colorado State's vet school and a world-famous specialist in the humane treatment of livestock animals, including the design of humane slaughter facilities. While that may sound like a contradiction in terms, if you've ever had a beloved pet put down, you know there's a right and a wrong way to do it. Her home page is [here](#), and her page on animal rights and welfare [here](#). I strongly recommend that anyone who eats meat or dairy take a look, as it's good to know what's involved in getting that food to your plate. "Looking away" from the process seems cowardly, to me at least. (Click on the picture for info on Grandin's ideas.)



## Vegans in Paradise

OK, here I am again, splashing through theological waters where I have no right to be! Last month, searching for Lenten recipes, I began to wonder what Christians ate in their earliest years around the Mediterranean. That led me to wonder what Jesus ate, which led me, in turn, to the discovery that **we were created vegan, according to the Bible!** In **Genesis I: 27-30** (Revised Standard Version),



God gave dominion over animals to Adam and Eve, yet God specified that both the human and animal food supply was plant-based. (Clearly "dominion" did not, at that point, give us the right to eat animals.) "*So God created man in his own image....male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful*

*and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'* And God said, '*Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, I have given every green plant for food.'* And so it was."

After the Expulsion from the Garden and eventual Flood, however, God delivered all the animals to Noah as food: "*The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast...; into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything.*" Hence, humans began to eat beasts, fish, birds, and things that crawl; only they were forbidden from eating their "flesh with its life, that is, its blood" (one of the bases for Jewish dietary law). (Painting: Limbourg Brothers, *Fall of Man and Expulsion*, ca 1416, *Musée Condé*, Chantilly, France)

## Easter, Equinox, and New Life

Easter, which is closely linked with Jewish Passover symbolically, occurs this year about as far away from Passover as chronologically possible. Easter is the only lunar-determined Christian holiday, falling on the first Sunday after the first 14<sup>th</sup> day of the moon (the Paschal full moon) after the **spring equinox**, the date when daylight and darkness are equal (which is 19<sup>th</sup> March in the U.S. this year). That places Easter this year on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, and it won't fall on that date again until the year 2160!!!! **Passover** occurs on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the Jewish month *Nisan*, beginning this year at sundown on 19<sup>th</sup> April. *Nisan* is the Biblical new year of the Jewish calendar. Both Easter and Passover celebrate new life, which is one way they're linked. As well, the Last Supper of Jesus before the Crucifixion is generally described as a Passover meal, while the first Easter occurred three days after Christ's death, at the Resurrection.

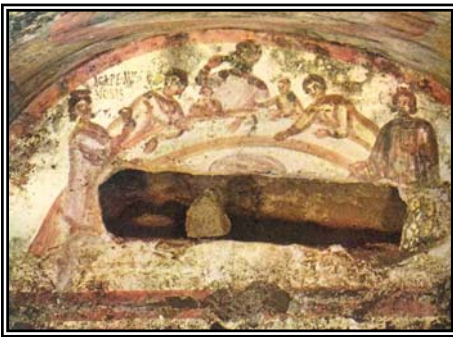


Elaine Thompson, AP, *Paschal Full Moon, Idaho* ([source](#))

The Paschal full moon thus is the first full moon of spring, the season when, in the northern hemisphere, life returns to the earth. Native Americans called this moon "the Full Worm moon," because the ground softens at this time and worm castings reappear; some tribes called it the Full Crow moon, as crows' cawing announces spring, or the Full Sap moon, the time for maple-sugaring (see [here](#)).

## Was Jesus Vegetarian, as PETA Suggests?

The short answer is no. This is based partly on Jesus' Jewish heritage, as the majority of Jews ate some meat—indeed, Passover prescribes lamb as part of the celebration (Exodus XII: 1-10), along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Few Jews would break God's dietary commands. And yet in those days, meat was a luxury item; working-class people like Jesus would have eaten



meat only occasionally or on holy days. The staple foods were bread, vegetables, fruit, honey, fish, olives, and wine or water. Yet even simple meals were significant. As

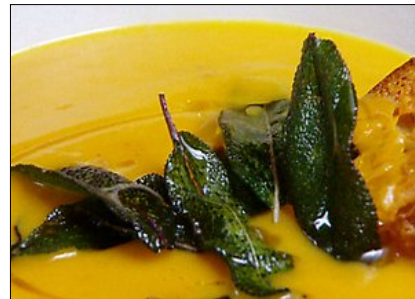
one writer notes, *“To share a meal was to declare a friendship. The chief place of honour was at the host's right hand, and the next most important was at his left.....Meals were eaten sitting on the floor, [with] the food placed in the middle.”* ([source](#)) (Fresco from the Catacomb of Sts. Marcellinus and Peter, Rome)

Other fragmentary evidence is found in the Bible. Jewish Levitical dietary restrictions are described in Leviticus XI—the types of meats, fish, birds, and insects that were proper for Jews to eat (including locust, bald locust, cricket, and grasshopper). In John VI: 9, Jesus multiplied loaves of barley bread and fish for the multitudes. Presumably he ate such foods himself, especially as a majority of his disciples were fishermen. It can be inferred from Luke that Jesus ate lamb, for it says *“Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying ‘Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it.’”* (Luke XXII: 7-8) He drank wine, for he said at the Last Supper that *“from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God comes.”* (Luke XXII: 18) And the post-Easter Jesus ate broiled fish and honeycomb, to show his followers that he was not a ghost. (Luke XXIV: 42) Perhaps more importantly, though, Jesus was pragmatic. As he told the disciples, *“Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you.”* (Luke X: 8) And even more radically, Jesus said to the Pharisees, *“[It is] not what goes into the*

*mouth that defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.... Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and so passes on? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a man.”* (Matt XV: 10-18) (See [here](#) for one of the PETA [People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals] campaigns w/ Jesus as vegetarian.)

## Superb Squash Soup w/ the Best Parmesan

**CROUTONS**—What's fascinating about this *Jamie Oliver*



recipe (serves 8) is his insistence that the **butternut squash can be cooked with the hard outer rind on**; in the cooking process, the skin gets all soft and chewy, easy to blend smooth with a blender or

food processor! That makes cooking squash much easier!!

- ❖ Olive oil
- ❖ 16 fresh sage leaves
- ❖ 2 red onions, peeled & chopped
- ❖ 2 sticks celery, trimmed & chopped
- ❖ 2 carrots, peeled & chopped
- ❖ 4 cloves garlic, peeled & chopped
- ❖ leaves from 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
- ❖ ½ fresh red chile to taste, seeded & chopped fine
- ❖ sea salt & fresh-ground pepper
- ❖ 4¼ lbs butternut squash, halved, seeded, & cut in chunks [with the rind still on]
- ❖ 2 quarts stock (chicken or veg)

### For croutons

- ❖ olive oil
- ❖ 16 slices ciabatta or other hearty country bread
- ❖ 1 chunk parmesan, for grating

Put large saucepan on medium & add “a couple glugs” of olive oil. Add sage leaves & fry for 30 sec, till dark green & crisp. Remove w/ slotted spoon to bowl lined w/ towels. Add onion, celery, carrot, garlic, rosemary, chile, & salt & pepper to taste. Cook gently ~10 min, till veggies are soft & sweet. Add squash & stock, bring to boil, & simmer ~30 min. Meanwhile make croutons. Drizzle a little oil over bread slices & press some Parmesan [vegans could try “Parma”] onto each side. Place in non-stick pan w/ no oil & fry till golden on both sides. When squash is soft & cooked thru [test w/ knife or fork], whiz soup w/ immersion blender or pour in standard blender in batches

and pulse till smooth [be careful w/ hot liquid—let it cool for 5 min before blending in batches!]. Season to taste. Put soup servings in bowls, adding 2 croutons & some sage leaves to each. Drizzle w/ extra oil [if desired]. ([source](#))

## Pasta w/ Arugula, White Beans, & Walnuts—serves 4

- ❖ 12 oz farfalle (bow-tie pasta)
- ❖ coarse salt & ground pepper
- ❖ 4 garlic cloves, peeled & thinly sliced
- ❖ 4 tbsp butter [or olive oil]
- ❖ 1 lb baby arugula
- ❖ 1 can cannellini beans, rinsed & drained [or equivalent amount cooked, dried white beans]
- ❖ 1/3 cup walnut pieces, toasted in pan if desired

Cook pasta in large pot of salted water till *al dente*. Reserve ½ cup cooking water, drain pasta, & set aside. Put pasta pot on medium heat. Add garlic & 1 tbsp butter [or oil]. Cook, stirring, till garlic is fragrant, ~2 min. Add arugula to pot; toss till just wilted. Add beans, pasta, & remaining butter [or oil]; season w/ salt/pepper. Toss, adding enough cooking water to the mix to help coat the pasta. Garnish w/ walnuts. (*Everyday Food*, April 08)

**Ethiopian Injera (Bread)**—In Ethiopia, *injera*—a large, round, flat bread—is used both as a “plate” for other foods & a “scooper” for those foods. At the end of the meal, any remaining *injera* is eaten. It’s traditionally made w/ the tiny grain *teff*. Most online recipes call for less authentic wheat flour, but I did find one for teff!!

- ❖ ¾ cup teff, ground fine either in a flour mill or in a blender—if using the blender, moisten the grain first in 3½ cups water
- ❖ salt
- ❖ sunflower or other oil

If you used a flour mill to grind the teff, mix the teff flour w/ 3½ cups of water.



Otherwise proceed with the teff/water mix you made in the blender. Put the teff & water in a bowl covered w/ dishtowel, at room temp, until it bubbles & turns sour—this may take as

long as 3 days. The fermenting mix should be the consistency of pancake batter. Stir in salt, a little at a time, till you can barely detect the taste. Lightly oil an 8-9” skillet (or larger if you want) & heat on medium. Then proceed as you would w/ normal pancakes or crepes. Pour in enough batter to cover bottom of skillet, spreading batter around by turning & rotating skillet in air. (Use a bit

more batter than for a crepe, but less than for a pancake.) Cook briefly, till holes form in injera & the edges lift from the pan. Remove & let cool. Makes 10-12. ([source](#); [photo](#))

## Baked Pasta Casserole—Serves 8

- ❖ olive oil
- ❖ ¾ lb whole wheat pasta shells [I’d probably use a full lb]
- ❖ 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- ❖ 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- ❖ 4 cups well chopped fresh spinach [or other tender spring greens]
- ❖ 1½ cups sliced almonds, lightly toasted
- ❖ zest of 2 lemons [the outer yellow skin, not rind]
- ❖ 8 oz mozzarella, shredded in small pieces

Preheat oven to 375. Butter/oil large casserole dish or baking pan (equivalent to about a 13x9” pan). Boil pasta in salted water per package instructions. Drain, toss w/ a glug of olive oil, & set aside. Meanwhile, heat a bit of oil in skillet on medium-high. Sauté onions w/ couple pinches of salt for a few min (or for deeper flavor, let them get dark & caramelized). Stir in garlic. Stir in spinach & cook for ~20 sec, just till spinach collapses a bit. Remove from heat & stir in 1 cup almonds & half the zest. Add spinach mix to pasta & stir very well, at least a minute. Sprinkle bottom of casserole w/ remaining zest. Add layer of pasta, then some cheese, then more pasta, then cheese. Finish w/ cheese on top. Cover w/ foil & bake 30 min, till cheese is bubbly. Sprinkle w/ remaining almonds. ([source](#))



Bix, *Frozen Bubbles*, 2008 (click photo for larger image; see [here](#) for source)

“...When it’s over, I want to say: all my life  
I was a bride married to amazement.  
I was the bridegroom, taking the world into my arms.”  
(excerpted from Mary Oliver, *When Death Comes*; see [here](#))