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 4 Ellsworth Rd.
 Blue Hill, ME 04614

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BLUE HILL CO-OP NEWS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2010

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Is Your Life Too Plastic?

The Marine Educational Research Institute (MERI) recently offered a viewing and discussion of the film: *Bag It! Is Your Life Too Plastic?* The title, "Bag It," refers to the slang use of the term to leave something--to stop doing it. The film is both a humorous and serious investigation into what happens to the plastic that has become ubiquitous in our lives in the last 60 years.

Plastic is created from fossil fuels. It is a particularly handy item, lightweight but sturdy, waterproof, cheap (if you're only counting purchase price), and quite versatile. This film deals particularly with the single-use plastic bag and drinking bottle, items designed to be used once and thrown away.

What happens to this plastic when we "throw it away?" Plastic is a very long lasting substance. It does not biodegrade or compost; it lasts and lasts and ultimately ends up in our trash, which is either buried in landfills or burned so that it releases toxic chemicals into the air. Or, it floats around in a soup of broken-down plastic in our oceans. "Well, what about recycling?" you may say. The notion of recycling is a great marketing ploy that the plastics industry has used as a stamp on its creations, according to the film. The reality is that not much actual recycling happens, even though our intentions may be good. Only plastic labeled #2 is recyclable locally. The short of it is--there is no "away" in throwing plastic away.

There are now five huge gyres of plastic soup floating in our oceans, two in the Pacific, two in the Atlantic, and one in the Indian Ocean. The gyre in the North Pacific is between the size of Texas and the US! In some areas of the oceans, there is 40 times more plastic than plankton. Sea animals may eat the plastic soup, or become

OWNERS' VOICES

DELicious for the Season

Enjoy every day at the Blue Hill Co-op Café, with great food, art, books and company.

Our café offers homemade food and treats at great prices. Made with local or organic ingredients, these dishes are prepared with love, pride, and care.

Morning to night, you will find a great selection of baked goods, entrées, and side dishes to help make your life simpler and healthier. Our lunch specials and sandwich favorites are delicious and ready to pick up or enjoy with hot soup.

The Café crew is busy making complete meals, side dishes, and sweets to tempt all ages. You can pre-order or just pick up (if they're not sold out) any of these classic seasonal items and our standard yummy selections you know and love, including:

- Holiday cookie trays, 2 sizes
- Local acorn squash filled with wild rice stuffing
- Baked, mashed potatoes with cheddar cheese & herbs (vegan, too)
- Spinach and roasted red bell pepper stuffed chicken breasts.
- Saga Blue Cheese with sweet tomato onion chutney
- Cafe stuffing made with Borealis bread
- Roasted squash, potatoes, beets & cranberries
- Apple cranberry oatmeal crisp

The Blue Hill Co-op Café is proud to offer you the best in local cuisine. Thanks so much to all our local farmers, producers, and patrons. We love and appreciate you! Happy Holidayze,

Linda Phillips
Café Manager

on the wall @ the
co-op Café:

December: **Susan and
Joshua Adam**
Oil Paintings

January: **Jessica Harris**
Prints/Paintings

New Items in Bulk

- **Ancient Harvest Quinoa gluten-free elbow pasta**
- **Organic quinoa flakes**
- We're now getting our **organic chocolate espresso beans** from Tierra Farms; their high quality dark chocolate is the best!
- And look for new **tea blends** made especially for us by Mother Bloom Botanicals
- Check for more new products--I have lots of great ideas!

Also note: Unfortunately, Nature's Gate herbal shampoo and herbal conditioner, as well as their purifying soap (all products we carried in bulk), have all been discontinued by the manufacturer. I'm still looking for substitutions, but we will miss these staple products.

And, as always, feel free to bring me any questions, comments, or ideas!

Amy Coppage
Bulk Manager

HABA Healthy Holiday Season

Introducing "MegaFood!" One of our savvy supplement customers has requested for many months MegaFood B Complex, which is the best B Complex he's experienced. After researching the MegaFood product line, I've introduced all of MegaFood's primary products--at a 20% discount during the month of December.

Not only does MegaFood offer a truly whole food supplement that includes the entire vegetable and fruit, skin included, but also each product is rigorously tested to ensure it is herbicide and pesticide free. MegaFood offers a very cost-competitive whole food Vitamin D3, which is far more readily absorbed into the body than standard Vitamin D3 supplements. MegaFood is based in New Hampshire and manufactures its own vitamins in small batches, cultured in nutritional yeast to enhance bio-availability.

Another super holiday HABA sale at the Co-op is 25% off all NOW and Aura Cacia essential oils until the end of the year. Wishing you a healthy and happy New Year!

David Walker
HABA Manager

Notice of Board Meetings

The Co-op Board usually meets on the third Tuesday of each month from 6:30-9:00 p.m. The meetings are held in the Howard Room at the Blue Hill Public Library. They are open to the membership. The next Co-op Board meetings will be held on Dec. 21, 2010, Jan. 18, 2011 and Feb. 15, 2011.

Co-op Board Officers & Members:

President Scott Howell

Vice President John Miller

Treasurer Keith Herklotz

Secretary Ruth Sullivan

Chip Angell

**DEADLINE FOR
FEBRUARY/MARCH ISSUE:
JANUARY 28, 2011**

The Newsletter Team

Ads: Deborah Wiggs; 374-2159

Editor: Marge May

Layout and Design: Michelle Keyo

Staff Liaison: Eileen Mielenhausen

Columnists/Writers:

Stephanie Tourles, Gabrielle Wellman, Allison Watters, and Co-op board & staff

Newsletter articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the board, staff, management, or Newsletter Team.

General Manager:

Karen Doherty

Winter Store Hours

7 a.m.-7 p.m. daily

(207) 374-2165

www.bluehill.coop

Letters to the Editor

The Newsletter Team welcomes input. If you have something you'd like to share with other Co-op owners, please send a letter to: Letters to the Editor, Blue Hill Co-op Community Market, PO Box 1133, Blue Hill, ME 04614, or send an e-mail to newsletter@bluehill.coop. Letters may be edited for style, not content, and should be brief. Please include your name, address, and daytime phone number.

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entangled in it, and die. It is estimated that there are 90% fewer large sea animals now than before our large-scale use of plastic.

Plastic drinking bottles use an incredible amount of petroleum oil to create. If we take one plastic bottle and fill it with oil to represent the amount of fossil fuel used to make the bottle, including transport, it would be half full. In a world where one out of every five humans does not have access to clean drinking water, the industry's created need for bottled water is immoral.

The increase in plastic use in the last decade, 2000-2010, is greater than the increase in its use in the entire previous century, 1900-2000. Plastic use has become so ubiquitous that it is now being found in our bodies and the bodies of many animals. It is especially troubling in its presence in babies. Scientists are linking plastics with the alarming and dramatic rise in rates of Type 2 diabetes, autism, and attention deficit disorders, along with the rise in endocrine and hormonal imbalances that result in lack of fertility and other sexual changes.

Many countries and municipalities have banned or imposed a tax on the use of plastic bags. Ireland's plastic bag tax has resulted in a 90% decline in use of the bags. Bhutan has outlawed plastic bags in order to contribute to its "Gross National Happiness." Local merchants in Modbury, England, got together to voluntarily become plastic bag free. In June of 2009, the United Nations Environmental Report declared that there was simply no justification for single-use plastic bags.

In other countries, the oil and plastics industries must first prove that the chemicals in these products are safe. In the United States, the chemicals in plastic are assumed safe until proven otherwise.

As a result of watching this film and being confronted with all these collected facts, I am shocked and inspired to even further reduce my use of plastics. So, what can we do?

Besides what we already know, such as "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle," it is obvious to me that this public threat ought to be confronted by more than an individual response. Perhaps in our own Blue Hill Co-op and Café we can find an alternative to single-use plastic containers and bags? Biodegradable and compostable bags, cups, plates, etc., are readily available. (See www.biobagusa.com, www.worldcentric.org, and www.ecoproducts.com.)

Some local organizations are getting active, and we can join them. The MERI center is willing to act as a clearinghouse to spearhead a community response to our plastic problem. The Surry Conservation Commission sponsored a discussion on the Blue Hill Transfer Station on Wednesday, December 8 at the Blue Hill Library. The Transfer Station is close to being full and the Transfer Station Committee has hired an engineer to help design a new plan. This is an opportunity to have input into that plan. (FMI, call Nancy Hathaway, 664-6181.)

Thanks for reading, and I hope that together we can "BAG IT!"

Here are some additional resources:

- <http://earth-centric.com>
- <http://trellisearth.com>
- <http://meriresearch.org>

Gabrielle Wellman
Co-op Owner

Transitions

Robin Byrne has resigned as Café Co-Manager after 8+ years of service. We all wish you well in your new endeavors, Robin! Joining our creative cooking staff is Phil Rogers. Cashier/Stocker Jesse Matthiae returns home to Montana in the New Year. We will miss her great smile and good nature.

Holiday Gift Ideas: Shop Co-op!

- Black Dinah Sipping Chocolate with a locally crafted ceramic mug
- Maine maple syrup, Swan's honey, Kountry Kettle preserves, Lucy's Granola, and Fiddler's Green pancake mix
- African market basket filled with Fair Trade coffee, tea, chocolates, fruit and nuts
- Basket filled with organic wine, Tinder Hearth bread, crackers, Seal Cove cheese, local apples and sparkling water
- Café-made holiday breads and cookies
- Natural organic socks, Maine-made soaps, and solar candles
- We' moon calendars for the women in your life
- From our young artisans: Unique Earrings by Elle, Peace Cranes by Adam Witham, Earrings by Forest Barkdollar-Weil
- Essential oils, lip balms, hand lotions and other stocking stuffers
- Locally designed holiday gift cards
- Cookbooks from local authors
- Personalized gift baskets for under \$50
- And much more!

Buy a Co-op Gift Card through the Bay School and 5% will be donated to the school. Call Karen Doherty at 374-2165 or Kathryn Dillon at 374-2187 for more details.

Calendar of Events

Wednesday, December 15: "One Percent Wednesday" 1% of Co-op sales will be donated to the Island Nursing Home, Deer Isle

Friday, December 17 from 11 am-2 pm: Jyang-Lee Kitchens demo at the Co-op. Stop by for free samples of her Asian appetizers and sauces.



Owner Barbara Kennedy suggests some local bread and cheese for your holiday feasting.

Farmer Profile: Backstage Farm

by Allison Watters

With slightly over half an acre in production, Backstage Farm can barely live up to its name as a farm. But what a productive little place it is! Elena Bourakovsky and Bill Raiten lovingly tend their small patch of earth and produce an enormous variety of crops. These range from asparagus to zucchini--as you would find on many other farms, but they also grow items that are hard to find at larger farms such as golden raspberries, sour cherries, gooseberries and currants. The couple uses an extensive cover cropping system and adds seaweed and cow manure from the dairy farm next door to improve their already terrific soil fertility.

Bill had tried farming previously in New Hampshire and loved the way of life but was too busy with his passion for directing in theatres to stay in one place, yet. He met Elena when he was directing a play in Leningrad in the late eighties, and they moved back to Blue Hill where they became occupied with the New Surry Theatre. In 1992, Paul Birdsall (Horsepower Farm) sold Bill and Elena their land, sited in that magical strip along Route 15, near the Blue Hill and Penobscot border, which produces so much of our region's local vegetables.

Bill and Elena gradually increased the number of raised beds they worked each summer until they began to have more food than they could use themselves. So, this past May, Elena painted the sign you now see from the road, and they began to sell produce at home and at the Blue Hill Co-op. Next season, you'll see Bill and Elena at the Blue Hill Farmers' Market, too. If you can't wait that long, look for Elena's delicious lacto-fermented veggies at the Co-op as "Moxie's Dynamite Pickles," "Russian Sauerkraut," and "Dressed Up Pickled Beets" . . . while supplies last.



by Allison Watters

Staff Profile: Anne Berleant



One of the new faces you may have seen behind the counter in the Café kitchen belongs to Anne Berleant. No stranger to working as a cook, Anne has been employed, on and off, in restaurants since she was in high school. She's no stranger to this area, either, as she has been visiting the Blue Hill Peninsula since the eighties and has called Castine "home" for eight years.

Anne tells me that working at the Co-op makes her happy because she enjoys the parade of different faces that pass through the Café, day to day, as the seasons change. In the Café, Anne cooks breakfast, lunch specials, various deli dishes, and is particularly excited to try out new recipes.

These days at her own house, however, she admits that she sticks to kid-friendly staples for her 7-year old son. Even if the meals are simple and heavy on the starch, they are, she promises, all made from scratch.

In other lives, Anne has served as librarian, technical writer, rural mail carrier, legal editor and website designer. She believes wholeheartedly in people making positive changes for themselves and, for the time being, Anne is happy to have found that the Co-op is the change she needed in her own life.

From Star Trek to Star Tech

I've been the POS (Point-of-Sale system) Coordinator at the Co-op for over two months now. It's been an incredible rush getting to know everyone, learning about the products we sell, and helping everyone out with their technical issues. Everyone has been incredibly friendly and helpful--I really appreciate it! If you have a question, concern, or idea about how we can use our computer technology to make your co-op experience more pleasant and productive, please let me know! I can be reached in person, by phone, or by e-mail.

Mark Ford,
POS Coordinator/Tech Support
techsupport@bluehill.coop



2010-11 Board of Directors, standing (l. to r.): Chip Angell, Scott Howell, Keith Herklotz; seated: Ruth Sullivan, John Miller.