

# LIVING NATURALLY

a community newsletter



**PÂTISSERIE 46  
PARTNERSHIP**

**ELEVATE YOUR  
PUMPKIN PIE**

**SAVE THE DATE FOR  
HOLIDAY PREVIEW**

**FALL / HOLIDAY 2021**



# CO-OP HAPPENINGS

## LIVING NATURALLY FALL / HOLIDAY 2021

Nick Seeberger  
CEO

Ashley Greywitt  
Marketing Brand Manager

Susie Hessburg  
Communications Specialist

Brienna Schleusner  
Community Relations &  
Marketing Specialist

**Store Hours**  
8 a.m. – 9 p.m. Daily

**Drive-Thru Window Hours**  
7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Daily

**Holiday Hours:**

Nov. 25 – Closed  
Dec. 24 – 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Dec. 25 – Closed  
Dec. 31 – 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
Jan. 1 – 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Get the latest deals and news from the co-op by signing up for our e-newsletter at: [valleynaturalfoods.com](http://valleynaturalfoods.com)



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Tips for making cheese and chocolate fondues

Valley Natural Foods Co-op works in partnership with the South Metro community to support health and well-being through education and expertise in local, sustainable food and wellness services.

— Valley Natural Foods Mission Statement

## CEO UPDATE Nick Seeberger

Back in September, my family and I visited a local orchard to pick a bounty of apples and select our pumpkins for jack-o-lanterns. These orchard visits are a cherished ritual for us and one of many ways we celebrate the transition from summer to fall and winter. Many of our other autumn rituals focus on baking and roasting. Among our Sunday night favorites are homemade biscuits, roasted squash soup, roasted salmon or chicken, and apple crisp.

Besides being a deeply satisfying family experience, it's stirring for me to know that our squash was grown by St. Croix Growers and Wisconsin Growers Cooperative, the butter and milk in my biscuits came from Wisconsin-based Organic Valley, the salmon was wild-caught by the women-owned Misty Fjord Seafood Producers, and the chicken was raised by Kadejan. Not only do these farmers and producers provide superb quality products, supporting them boosts our local economy and enriches our community. As you begin planning for the holidays, celebrating Minnesota's "Theater of Seasons," the co-op is here for you with the best food you can put on your plate.

In this edition of Living Naturally you will find information to elevate your fall traditions. Rose Street Patisserie is a new local vendor on our shelves offering incredible fresh-baked French style breads and baguettes that pair nicely with many of the artisanal delights you will find in our well-stocked cheese island.



On the topic of cheese, we offer some tasty fondue tips on page 14. With the holidays rapidly approaching, Valley Natural Foods is here to make your planning a little easier! Be sure to mark your calendar to attend our annual Holiday Preview – see the back cover for details.

I want to encourage everyone to shop early for any holiday must-haves as we, and all retailers, face supply chain uncertainty. We have many direct, local relationships with suppliers which allowed us to keep a variety of high-demand products in-stock while other retailers could not. That said, there are certain commodities and packaging issues that may have an impact on some suppliers, putting a strain on inventory for certain holiday staples. We are working to help you out by bringing those staples in early this season so you can stock up in advance to ensure your celebrations will include your traditional seasonal foods.

Happy Holidays to all!

Nick Seeberger

# LETTER from the board



The cooler nights and shorter days have arrived and that also means our co-op's produce department comes alive with the wonderful seasonal produce such as local apples, sweet potatoes and winter squash. This truly is my favorite season and is a time to celebrate the harvest as we prepare for another Minnesota winter ahead.

My family really enjoys the variety of squashes this time of year. Each one has something new to offer and keeps us creating memorable and enjoyable meals together. A few of our favorites this year have been our homemade pumpkin gnocchi with wild harvested mushrooms, baked Delicata squash with a harissa glaze or a delightful Parmesan crusted Carnival squash baked to perfection. What we love is that there is a seemingly endless variety of local winter squashes available at the co-op so our menu can be something different each day. It's definitely a great time of year to try something new and take advantage of all the local offerings at the co-op.

Autumn isn't just about food; we also celebrate our co-op with the annual member-owner meeting held each year at this time. And due to COVID-19, for the second year in a row we held a virtual annual meeting via the Zoom platform. We had another great turnout and I want to thank everyone who joined us live or was able to view the recorded version from our website.

The results of our board election were also announced during the meeting in which we shared the news that two of our directors, DeAnne Shea and Kate Ward were not seeking re-election. It's been an honor working alongside DeAnne and Kate for several years now as their contributions have helped make our co-op a success. You will both be deeply missed on the team!

Congratulations to our newly elected directors; Shannon Rios Paulson, Bryan Root, Gary Sankary and Amy Simpson. I look forward to working together as we continue to refine our vision and goals for Valley Natural Foods and do our part to help the co-op continue to have a positive impact in our community.

Stay healthy, stay safe,  
  
Mark Mosiniak  
Valley Natural Foods Board President

Have an idea or questions for the VNF Board? Send us an email at [board@valleynaturalfoods.com](mailto:board@valleynaturalfoods.com)

# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## REGISTER ROUND-UP

A LOOK BACK AT SHOPPER CONTRIBUTION TOTALS FROM OUR PREVIOUS QUARTER

September



\$4,164

BrainPower in a Backpack is a weekend hunger relief program providing weekend food packages for District 191 students in preschool, elementary, middle school and high school whose families struggle to put enough food on the table.

August



\$4,089

Contributions supported the Eastview Community Foundation's Random Acts of kindness program. This program provides funds to 12 district schools to help meet the critical needs of students with limited means. they help students purchase lunches, winter clothing and school supplies.

July



\$4,514

360 Communities operates two Lewis House Shelters that provide emergency housing and assistance to individuals and families escaping from domestic or sexual violence. At the Lewis House, trained advocates offer emotional support, safety planning, referrals to community resources and help in navigating the court system.

## Congratulations and Welcome, New and Re-elected Board Members!



Bryan Root



Shannon Rios Paulsen



Gary Sankary



Amy Simpson



## Food Donations 498 lbs.

Food donations were collected throughout the months of July, August and September for the Open Door Pantry in Eagan.

THANK YOU VNF SHOPPERS, FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY!

# Squash it Like it's Hot!

## Air Fryer Edition

It's back! Winter squash season is in full swing, offering an abundance of local and organic varieties. Here are the best ways to cook your squash to its perfect consistency with the convenience and time saving use of an air fryer! If you don't have an air fryer, use the same temperatures in a regular oven, and add about 10–20 minutes to the cooking times, or until squash is tender. (Cooking times and temperatures may vary, depending on air fryer or oven used.)

### Spaghetti Squash

1. Make sure your spaghetti squash will fit in your air fryer, sizes will vary!
2. Cut the ends of your squash and cut it in half. Scoop out the seeds in the middle with a spoon.
3. Rub oil around the squash and season to your taste.
4. Pierce around the inside with a fork.
5. Air Fry cut side up at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes or until tender.
6. Using a fork, scrape squash into strands and toss with your favorite pasta sauce! Or, keep it simple with a little butter or olive oil, freshly ground pepper, and top with some finely shredded Parmesan cheese and a sprinkle of fresh herbs for color. Simply delicious!



### Acorn Squash

1. Cut your acorn squash in half and scoop out all of the seeds in the center with a spoon and coat the whole squash with your favorite cooking oil.
2. Place your squash half cut side down (you can line your air fryer pan with foil or parchment paper to avoid messes.) Heat the air fryer to 325 degrees and cook for 20 minutes.
3. Open and flip up, sprinkle with butter and brown sugar. Air fry for another 10-15 minutes or until softened throughout.
4. You can drizzle with a little maple syrup for extra sweetness.



### Butternut Squash

1. Cut fresh butternut squash in half, remove skin and scoop out seeds using a spoon. Cut into bite-sized cubes and season to taste with your favorite cooking oil and seasonings.
2. Air Fry at 400 degrees for 18-20 minutes, shaking tray regularly for even roasting. Cook until tender to the bite.



# Patisserie Partnership

A letter from founder John Kraus  
Patisserie 46 and Rose Street Patisserie



Dear Co-op Member-Owners and Customers,

I wanted to introduce myself and tell you a bit about my business partner, CEO Elizabeth Rose. We've wanted to get our breads into the co-ops for at least 10 years, and we are so thrilled and proud to be here, it's a real milestone in our journey!

I grew up in Paducah, Kentucky, and began my career at culinary school in London, followed by years working in restaurants there, in Nashville, and in Chicago. Next, my love of sharing the craft and techniques I learned in school and from others led me to a decade teaching at the French Pastry School in Chicago. Ultimately, I decided I wanted to create a really great neighborhood bakery and found an ideal spot at the corner of 46th and Grand in South Minneapolis. Patisserie 46 opened in 2010 and we're pleased to report that it's been that bustling destination I dreamed of – a place where friends can gather and take time out of their busy lives, eat something delicious, and relax and be in the moment.

I've been fortunate to work with and learn from some of the best pastry chefs in the world, and my induction as one of just 100 chefs in the Relais Desserts Group, and as the only American-born chef to do so, is one of the highlights of my career.

But believe me: crafting the best loaf of bread or most delicious cookie is just as important to me as building the fanciest fussiest pastry in a competition.

Elizabeth joined me to help with design work for our second location, Rose Street Patisserie. What happened next is that we fell in love. I'm so glad that since those early days, she has brought her keen eye and experience designing for luxury brands in New York, and her impressive business acumen to all that she does. I focus on everything you taste, and she focuses on pretty much everything else. Having her as my partner and wife as we grow our business (and a couple of teenage boys) is really a wonderful thing. Thanks to her expert leadership and my talented team, operations have grown exponentially over the past few years, including multiple locations and a busy wholesale business.

I'm especially proud of The Bread Lab, our production and training facility in the Rathskeller Building on West 7th Street in Saint Paul. It makes my heart sing every time I bring in a new person, someone who will get up in the middle of the night like I do, and go to work, in order to create those breads, croissants, pastries, cookies, and cakes for you. We love that you love them because that's why we do it. We call our offerings "authentically French minus the airfare," and hope you'll check out our items as you do your shopping.

Elizabeth and I are huge fans of the co-ops, and send our deepest thanks to you all for being members. Your support is deeply appreciated by our farmers, growers, makers, and small businesses like mine.

Gratefully,

John Kraus  
Founder, Patisserie 46 and Rose Street Patisserie

## CROISSANT CRAVINGS at your Co-op!

Here at Valley Natural Foods, we feel so fortunate to have daily deliveries of Patisserie 46 croissants and pastries on our shelves! We couldn't agree more with their motto "authentically French minus the airfare" as we feel Patisserie 46 crafts some of the finest baked goods you'll ever enjoy locally. Stop by and browse our deli bakery case to discover the addition of new seasonal offerings, now arriving with the usual delectable deliveries.

Speaking of croissants, did you know our deli offers fresh sandwiches to-go made with the Patisserie's classic croissants? You can find them in the deli service case.



*"Authentically French minus the airfare"*

### VNF STAFF FAVORITES

#### ALMOND CROISSANT

*"The taste brings me right back to childhood memories in my home country of Morocco, like it was yesterday!"*  
– Mehdi, Scanning Specialist

#### CHOCOLATE CROISSANT

*"The chocolate croissant is a very delectable treat with the perfect amount of sweetness to start my morning."*  
– William, Accounting

#### CINNAMON ROLL

*"I love the light, sweet, crispy texture, and the taste reminds me of a mini donut!"*  
– Dan, Front End Supervisor

#### HAM & GRUYERE CROISSANT

*"The buttery croissant dough complements the subtleness of the Gruyere cheese and features a nice finish with the saltiness of the ham."*  
– David, Front End Shift Lead



# WORLD CLASS BREADS at your Co-op!

Rose Street Patisserie breads are baked and delivered daily. Look for these artisan-crafted loaves on our bread shelves near the deli area!



Olive Sourdough



Traditional Baguette



Miche



Multi Grain



Pain Au Levain

## VNF STAFF FAVORITES

### PAIN AU LEVAIN

"I like to keep it simple and just tear off a chunk and dip in a good olive oil"  
– Mallory, Center Store Wellness Lead

### MICHE

"Perfect for any meal or snack with any kind of topping after toasting"  
– Aimee, Center Store Supervisor

### OLIVE SOURDOUGH

"If you lightly toast and butter a slice, you won't need anything else except a moment to savor the flavors"  
– Susie, Marketing Dept.



Challah

# Cinnamon Babka French Toast

Recipe from Chef John Kraus

One of our favorite things is to bring you specialties each season. As we head into autumn and winter, we bring you our Cinnamon Babka. It's a wonderful bread that can be enjoyed any time of day – it's a treat, but not too sweet or heavy. It originates in Eastern Europe, and you can find versions of it in different countries and cultures. We're sharing a recipe with you to turn your leftover Babka into French toast (we can't resist bringing things back to France) and hope you can savor it with friends and family some chilly morning, and linger over conversation and laughter. That's what it's all about.



Note: This special holiday Babka will be available after Thanksgiving. While we wait for this holiday specialty, Challah will serve as an excellent substitute for the Babka.

- 1 loaf Cinnamon Babka or Challah
- 3 whole eggs
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon Ceylon cinnamon
- 1 cup milk



- 1 cup heavy cream
- Pinch of sea salt
- ½ vanilla bean pod (cut in half lengthwise, and seeds scraped away from pod with the back of a knife)
- Butter (for cooking)

First, put on your favorite apron!

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Slice the Babka or Challah into 1-inch slices.

Crack eggs into a large mixing bowl.

Add the cinnamon and sugar to the eggs and mix it all together.

In a separate bowl, combine the milk, heavy cream, sea salt, and the scraped vanilla bean seeds.

Stream in the cream mixture into the egg mixture while whisking to combine.

Melt some butter in a pan or griddle over medium heat to coat the cooking surface.

Soak slices of babka in the custard and place on the cooking surface – It should sizzle a little.

Peek to check the color of the first side and when it is golden brown, flip and cook the other side. (If it starts to get too dark, lower the cooking temperature.)

Transfer to baking sheet and continue with remaining slices.

Finish the French toast in the 350 degree oven for about 8 minutes so it is cooked through.

Enjoy!



# ELEVATE YOUR

# PUMPKIN PIE

Pumpkin is one of our favorite holiday ingredients! Here are two fun recipes to try if you want to give your pumpkin desserts a little something extra!

## Pumpkin Fluff Parfaits

Throughout the years, our easy pumpkin fluff recipe was always a hit during our holiday season in-store demos! In case you've been missing it, here's the recipe that's perfect for parfaits, a topping, a pie filling or just licking the spoon!

### For 4-6 servings

- 1 can organic pumpkin pie mix (not the plain variety)
- 2 cups dairy or dairy-free heavy whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla

Combine whipping cream, sugar and vanilla in a chilled mixing bowl. Using an electric beater, whip cream mixture until just stiff. With rubber spatula, gently fold in pumpkin pie mix until blended.

Gather up small mason jars, parfait glasses or dessert cups.

Layer with your favorite pumpkin pairings.

We love:

- whipped cream
- crushed graham crackers
- granola
- crumbled chocolate or ginger cookies

Garnish with:

- mini chocolate chips
- candied ginger
- pumpkin seeds
- cinnamon or chai dusting

## Pumpkin Fluff Pie

Spoon pumpkin fluff into a graham cracker, chocolate cookie or other ready-to-eat pie crust.

Freeze pie until firm. Cut into individual servings and garnish with toppings. Pumpkin

Fluff is also delicious heaped into Valley's Own Bakehouse gluten-free tart shells.

Garnish and freeze before serving.



## Chai-Spiced Pumpkin Pie

### For the Chai Spice Mixture:

- 2-3 teaspoons ground cinnamon  
*(we love Ceylon cinnamon for optimal flavor)*
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/2-1 teaspoon ground black pepper  
*(depending on your spice preference)*

### For the Pie Filling:

- 1 15-oz. can plain organic pumpkin puree
- 2 eggs
- 1 recipe chai spice mixture
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 12 oz. can evaporated milk
- 2 9" frozen regular, gluten-free, or homemade pie crusts  
*(frozen gluten-free pie crusts from Valley's Own Bakehouse work great in this recipe)*

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Blend all ingredients together until smooth - a large blender or food processor works great. If using electric beaters, pre-beat the eggs in a large bowl. Add the pumpkin puree and the spices to the eggs and blend well. Add remaining ingredients and blend until smooth.

Divide filling evenly into the two pie crusts. Bake for about 10 minutes at 425 degrees, and then reduce oven temperature to 350 degrees and continue baking for 35 to 40 minutes more or until filling doesn't jiggle when pan is tapped. (Ovens will vary, so check pies a few times toward the end of baking time.) Allow to cool before serving.

Optional: Garnish individual slices with whipped cream and sprinkle with cinnamon.



# Fondue? Can Do!

The fun thing about fondue recipes is you can completely make them your own! Get creative and get to cooking with cheese and chocolate for a festive and interactive dinner that will bring the family together around your holiday table. Just be sure not to double dip, no matter how tempting that may be!

For the best fondue results, use good quality cheese. Visit our cheese island in the deli area where you will find a fantastic selection of local and imported cheese that would perform well in the fondue pot!

## Cheese Fondue Ratio

Cheese One (about 2 cups) – choose Cheddar, Swiss or Gruyère

Cheese Two (about 1-1½ cups) – choose Raclette, Swiss, Cheddar, Gruyère or Gouda

Optional Cheese Three (about ½ -1 cup) – choose for extra flavors: Parmesan, Mozzarella, Fontina, or Gorgonzola

1-2 cups of liquid: Beer, dry white wine, milk, low-salt chicken or veggie broth (add a squeeze of lemon juice if using broth for the liquid)

Seasonings to taste: Garlic, onion powder, salt and pepper to taste. Freshly grated nutmeg is great with white wine fondue

1-2 tablespoons cornstarch or arrowroot powder (for thickening as desired)

Toppings and stir-ins: Sliced scallions, pesto, chopped fresh jalapeño, spinach, artichoke hearts – the possibilities are endless!

To ensure a smooth fondue, coarsely grate the cheese with a grater or food processor. In a bowl, mix grated cheeses with the cornstarch or arrowroot, tossing until all cheese is well-coated. Using a large heavy saucepan, bring the liquid over medium-low heat to a gentle simmer. Stir in the cheese a little at a time and continue stirring to keep the mixture smooth. Stir in your desired topping and transfer to a fondue pot or heavy warmed serving bowl. Start dipping with your favorite cheese pairings!

## Chocolate Fondue Ratio

1½ cups (one 12 oz. bag) chocolate chips (White, dark, milk, butterscotch or peanut butter chips. Mix as many types of chips as desired to 1½ cups total)

½ cup heavy cream or dairy-free alternative

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 tablespoon coconut oil

Toppings and stir-ins: Sea salt, caramel, crunchy peanut butter, nuts, rice cereal, toffee candy

In a heavy saucepan, bring the cream and vanilla to barely a simmer. Stir in chips and keep stirring until they have melted. Add the coconut oil and stir until smooth. Blend in your desired toppings, and transfer to a fondue pot or warmed bowl. Enjoy with your favorite chocolate pairings!

### Cheese Pairings:

- Cooked meatballs
- Cured meats, sliced or cubed
- Cooked thick bacon pieces
- Cooked steak, cubed
- Cooked whole shrimp
- Cubed rustic breads or baguettes slices
- Steamed broccoli or cauliflower florets
- Bell pepper slices
- Cherry tomatoes
- Roasted sliced potatoes
- Brussels sprouts
- Pickles
- Cubed apple (great in a cheddar blend)
- Big pastas, cooked (ravioli, farfalle, etc.)



### Chocolate Pairings:

- Fresh & frozen fruit chunks
- Cubed apple or pears
- Whole grapes
- Marshmallows
- Cubed cake
- Cubed Challah bread
- Cookie dough chunks
- Cheesecake squares
- Graham crackers
- Pretzels
- Potato chips



*JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL*

# **HOLIDAY PREVIEW EVENT**



**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6 • 11 A.M.–2 P.M.**

- Sample from our Holiday Catering Menu including traditional and vegan options. Place your Holiday Bundle preorder on November 6 & 7 and save \$10
- Enjoy special offers, giveaways, recipe ideas and more
- Place your whole, natural or organic turkey preorder and save \$5
- Find more details on our Facebook event page and on our website

