

APRIL-JUNE 2022

CO-OP TIONS

TIPS TO OWN YOUR HEALTH

BOOST YOUR IMMUNITY

Gifts of
Love



Celebrating Women &
Living Black History



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SEVOLUTION: TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON.

By Ahzjah Netjer Simons, Cooperative Director/GM
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As the seasons change, so do we. With the change of the seasons come new beginnings. Letting go of the old allows space for the new to arrive. In my life experience thus far, these sayings hold very true, with the master saying, the only thing that remains constant is change. Sometimes we fight change and resist the acceptance of a new season. But I have found that when we can embrace a new

season, our lives and all circumstances unfold in graceful and unexpected ways we could not ever have imagined. When making the decision to put my hat in the ring to become the next General Manager of Sevananda, I had made an even more important decision shortly prior to that. That decision was to be willing to step into the unknown, whatever that would bring. Next thing I knew I was applying for the position and was selected to be the next General Manager/Cooperative Director for the Sevananda community and family. There were new contributions to be made, new relationships to establish, and new efficiencies and conveniences to be added to the store and new programs to offer our community for that season. It is such exciting work!

The next evolution of Sevananda is here and a new season is upon us. Since the onset of Covid 19, we have seen much of the unexpected take place and it has taken humankind to the depths of themselves to meet the challenges and to face it. We learned that we were not “immune” to these challenges although we anticipated that we would be. For many globally and locally, it was a horrible experience with tremendous loss of loved ones, jobs, homes, and all losses that can be had. For some, the pandemic also became the catalyst of positive change that was needed and accelerated changes being ushered into reality. For co-ops in particular, some co-ops soared during the pandemic, while others ceased to exist. And many like us, are holding in the gap of between, on the cusp of either

potentiality. We never thought we could implement online shopping until we had to. And we did it quickly. Suddenly all the obstacles were just overcome. We made it happen. There are lots of examples of this for Sevananda and for other individuals and businesses. Changes and dreams deferred became realities in record time. I’m so proud of all of the work our management team and staff have accomplished over that last few years. Especially because they were accomplished against very challenging times and odds. The staff and management courageously faced it all. And because of their work we can say, Sevananda is still here!!

After 15 years of service and 5 years in the General Manager seat, serving here in different roles, learning, growing, and transforming as an individual and co-op professional, I’ve made the bittersweet decision to embrace a new season in my life and depart my role as General Manager of Sevananda. What an amazing journey it has been. And as I always say, “What a ride!” I can’t think of any other group of people I would have wanted to share the journey with other than the Sevananda family, our warriors of light and stellar humans. What an honor it has been to serve in this role at the helm of one of the largest retail food co-ops in Georgia and the southeast. I’ve heard it described as an icon and as an institution. I’ve heard people say they used to come here as children with their parents, years ago and they return as adults and shoppers or apply for jobs here. Many staff leave and return as they grow and evolve in other areas, just to return to the feeling of community and home that lives here. One of my favorite stories is that visitors will say they came here from states across the nation or that they remembered visiting years ago and was looking forward to returning. My favorite to hear is “I love Sevananda” .

“I love Sevananda”! I hear it again and again. It’s always been music to my ears and I’m sure to the ears of those who serve here or have spent time serving here year after year. Those

words make the challenges and triumphs, all worthwhile. Sevananda has been through some rough waters, especially this last year and thankfully we're still standing. Our sister co-op, Daily Grocery in Athens, Georgia is also persevering to make it through, but still here and also taking action to strive forward. We're the last two retail food co-ops still standing in Georgia and I suspect that during a global pandemic, it's partially because of that love from our community that we are still here.

Despite the challenges, kicks, punches, falls, supply chain issues, labor transitions, transportation and more, it's love that has kept us alive. Those who love our products, our staff, the cooperative model, and all the parts that Sevananda continue to lift up and stand for. Like all businesses, we are not immune to challenges and unique upsets. It's part of the journey. With the support of our member-owners, shoppers and community, we have come through many storms. Keeping staff morale up, revisioning our future and how we and our community rally around to support and respond will allow the co-op to sustain forward. This model is something that is always a work in progress. The cooperative principles and values are high level ideals, but certainly achievable with focus, dedication and commitment to making them realized. Reaching to master them is always our goal. Sometimes we hit the mark, sometimes we don't, but we'll always keep reaching for our best.

In October we sent out letters to our member-owners regarding our financial condition and concerns that we could stay afloat amidst the latest challenges facing us. With the support of many of our shoppers and member-owners shopping the co-op, we saw increased sales to support our turnaround and recovery plans, but sales will need to increase more to sustain current costs/labor/etc. There is more work to do and we are still in need of your support to complete that work. We have co-op partners such as NCG that are also supporting us with bridge funds, training, and onsite coaching while we work internally to make necessary improvements. We're grateful for their support and greatly appreciate them. Things are improving slowly but as we got here slowly, it takes time to reverse and reset. I'll be working with the leadership team and the Board to formulate plans, including an interim GM team, as well as secure additional operational leadership to support the store operations, and drive the turnaround plan we are currently implementing. Our member-owners, shoppers, vendors, Board each have a critical role to play in its implementation and success. We have put strong support in place with our co-op partners and we'll be adding more to assist and continue our work to set Sevananda up for longer-term sustained success! It will take time, but with patience, focus, unity, and new energy, new plans, and your love and

support, a new Sevananda era will be ushered in!

With the support of NCG and Columinate partnerships, we are working to continue improving operational efficiencies and utilize better tools to support us in the new norm. We have applied for additional grants and loan funding. Marketing efforts are being relaunched as getting the word out about Sevananda and attracting new customers is also key. We're recruiting all skills and talents from within our member-owner base and shopper base, to support us forward, so please continue to share your talents with us and we'll be happy to find a way to apply them to our continued efforts and growth. We'll be ushering in new talent with fresh ideas and talent including leadership levels. So you'll see some more new faces. Some of you are also volunteering again and some of you have donated your dollars and time. We are very grateful! We welcome it all and want to sincerely thank you!

We're excited to announce the return of our bakery items, reopening of our salad bar, our bulk departments, our cafe, new projects, initiatives, training plans, personnel, and a new way forward are all in the works. Onsite demos, events, and classes begin the first week of March! Shopping the co-op is the easiest way you can support. Of course gift cards are also a great way to support and share your Sevananda love!

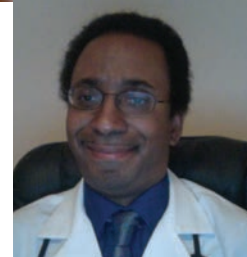
Virtual efforts will also continue Sevananda's mission to empower the community to improve its health and well-being. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our management team, staff, and Board for doing the work consistently to keep Sevananda firmly planted in our community for those who live there and for those hundreds visiting for the first time each year. This was hard work before the pandemic and the work has only increased in intensity now that we live in a pandemic world with many shifting and changing landscapes. Our staff and management team has been stellar! The Sevananda family is resilient and excited to continue to be that special place you all know and love. Please continue to shop the co-op! That is the foundation which makes everything else possible. We are all committed to continue doing our part to steer the Sevananda ship to sustainable success and continue serving you! And with your support we can continue to stay alive for many more years to come!

Be sure to visit our website and social media channels, and subscribe to our enews and/or you tube channel, to stay abreast of all the goings on and important updates as we move forward on our path of success!

Stay safe and be well.
In Joyful Service,
Ahzjah



BOLSTER YOUR **IMMUNE SYSTEM** WITH THESE **FOODS** DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS



By Dr. Paul Dabney

In the midst of COVID-19, we hear frequently about the importance of sheltering at home, practicing social distancing when in public, washing our hands, and other protective health measures. But how can we be even more proactive in defending ourselves against this pandemic virus? A powerful way is to pay special attention to our daily diet, especially consuming foods that are high in antioxidants, which research shows can strengthen the immune system against infectious diseases like COVID-19, says Dr. Paul Dabney, NMD, MPH, M.Ed.

Green Leafy Vegetables— Leafy vegetables (e.g., kale, lettuce, and spinach) are packed with nutrients and antioxidants that help in the healing respiratory infections and protect the body against infectious agents.

Mushrooms—Mushrooms (such as Shiitake, Reishi, and Turkey tails) contains a specific compound called beta-glucans, which is responsible for immunomodulatory properties, protect against bacteria and viruses, lower inflammation, and reduce phlegm.

Matcha Green Tea—As you are drinking your daily cup of matcha green tea, you are supplying your body with powerful compounds to fight bacterial and viral infections and lower stress levels. For example, matcha contains an amino acid called theanine, which reduces stress. It

is important to understand that high stress levels can suppress your immune system, leaving you vulnerable to pathogenic attacks.

What makes matcha a great immune booster than regular green tea? It contains over 100 times more antioxidants, which helps in boosting the immune system. To harness more positive benefits of matcha, researchers suggest you add citrus juice to increases bioavailability of antioxidants by more than 5 times!

Citrus Foods— Citrus food (such as oranges, lemons, berries, kiwi, broccoli, bell peppers) are packed with vitamin C and antioxidants, both of which can support the immune system and lower inflammatory response, thus, promoting a speedy recovery.

Foods High in Zinc—Zinc is an amazing mineral because is not only capable of reducing the severity and duration of viral infections, but it can significantly impact on supporting the immune system, promote healing, reduce inflammation, and lower anxiety. Foods high in zinc are beef, shrimp, eggs, shellfish, cooked greens, pinto beans, flax and pumpkin seeds, and chickpeas.

Foods High in Selenium—Selenium acts as an antioxidant that binds free radicals to protect cells against oxidative stress and degeneration, and can modulate the immune

system. Fresh garlic, Brazil nuts, yellow fin tuna, pork, beef, mushrooms, and oatmeal are some examples of foods high in selenium.

The Power of Lectin Proteins—In an article in the journal BioMed Research International (2018), researchers Mazalovska and Kouokam provide compelling information on the anti-viral properties of lectins. These are carbohydrate-binding proteins found in bananas and other fruits, and also in many other plant foods such as beans, peanuts, potatoes, tomatoes, lentils, and grains. Lectins, the scientists report, were found to prevent viral transmissions ranging from HIV, Ebola, hepatitis C, herpes simplex virus type 2, influenza viruses, to the COVID-19 infection.

Ginger—Ginger is well known for its anti-nausea abilities and improving digestion. However, ginger also has unique properties that can be supportive against COVID-19, including alleviating respiratory symptoms, boost immune support to fight viral and bacterial infection, and lowering inflammation.

Bone Broth— Bone broth is the end result when you slowly boil bones and tissue from such sources as beef, chicken or lamb for a long period of time. The process may not sound appealing, but bone broth is packed with health nutrients

and an essential (body does not make) amino acid called L-Glutamine. This amino acid is responsible for modulating the immune system in the gut (70-80 % of immune system is in the gut), reducing inflammation, healing damaged tissue, and lowers stress. If you do not want to make your own bone broth, you can purchase it from your local store.

Foods Rich in Quercetin—Quercetin is a type of bioflavonoid or antioxidant that can be found in high amounts in leafy green vegetables, oregano, chili peppers, buckwheat, citrus fruits, apples, peppers, red onions, and broccoli. Quercetin can be effective towards COVID-19 because it stabilizes the immune response and lowers inflammation. Most importantly, recent research studies by Khaerunnisa et al (2020) has shown quercetin can serve as excellent antiviral agent by preventing coronaviruses from docking and entering cells; therefore, this powerful bioflavonoid can offset the formation of a cytokine storm— a severe, and often fatal, inflammatory condition where organs (e.g., lungs and kidney) are flooded with immune cells in response to a pathogenic infection.

As many of us are homebound these days, do not forget to spend quality time outdoors each day to increase your intake of Vitamin D3 from sunlight.



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CLEANSE &
RESET?

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GREETINGS FELLOW MEMBER-OWNERS & OUR VALUED PATRONS:

Over the past three months, we've all been discussing and dealing with the financial challenges our beloved Sevananda Cooperative is facing. We've made some strides the past two months with the help of the National Grocer's Coop, a cooperative created FOR cooperative groceries like us, whose membership includes access to assistance by a team of experts in the areas of grocery retail and cooperative grocery business principles, at times when businesses like ours need that kind of support to remain alive and thriving.

One of the main facets of cooperative grocery business principles that drives how our organization runs is the governance model used by the organization to manage, or "govern," the organization. The most common model of Governance utilized by Boards of cooperative grocery businesses in the United States is called The Policy Governance Model, developed by John and Miriam Carver.

As our member-owners and valued customers are continuing to receive updates from our General Manager, Ahzjah, regarding Sevananda's recovery process, your Board of Directors thought it would be the perfect time to provide some information on the basic principles of the

Policy Governance Model to understand how and why we are engaged in the recovery process in the ways you see us engaged.

Your Sevananda Board of Directors has been a declared Policy Governance Board since 1995, when the Board worked personally with John Carver to implement this model of governance. Over the past three years, your Board of Directors has been engaged in extensive training in our governance model to assure we can implement and maintain this model of governance with fidelity. As we were entering the time of the pandemic, the board invested in three of our Directors on the board at the time, to engage in an 8-month training in Policy Governance Proficiency. The training was offered by the leading international organization in Policy Governance, called Govern For Impact. To remain fiscally prudent, the board invested in 3 directors to attend the training as opposed to the full board.

It was the decision of the board that those remaining would utilize the each-one-teach-one model to help strengthen Policy Governance in action.

These 10 principles, and the knowledge in how to apply them to board and organizational governance, are what drive how your Board does business. For those who attend monthly board meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, you can see some of the ways these principles look in action.

PRINCIPLES OF POLICY GOVERNANCE

1. Ownership: The board exists to act as the informed voice and agent of the owners. All owners are stakeholders, but not all stakeholders are owners.

2. Position of the board: The board is a distinct link in the chain of empowerment and accountability within the cooperative. The owners empower the board through the bylaws, and the board is accountable to owners for the success of the cooperative. In turn, the board empowers and holds management accountable, delegating authority to management through Ends and Executive Limitations policies.

3. Board Holism: The authority of the board belongs to the whole. To say that the board "speaks with one voice" means that the board's authority is a group authority. The "voice" of the board is expressed through the written policy decisions. Directors can work to persuade and influence the board in its deliberations and decision-making; beyond that, individual directors or subsets of the board have no authority to instruct staff.

4. Board Means Policies: The board defines in writing the job results, practices, delegation style, and

“THESE 10 PRINCIPLES, AND THE KNOWLEDGE IN HOW TO APPLY THEM TO BOARD AND ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE, ARE WHAT DRIVE HOW YOUR BOARD DOES BUSINESS.”

discipline that make up its own job. These are board means decisions, categorized as Governance Process policies and Board-Management Delegation policies, which incorporate the will of the member-owner body as expressed through organizational Bylaws.

5. Clarity and Coherence of Delegation: The board unambiguously identifies the authority and responsibility of any person (e.g., GM or board president) or committee to whom the board delegates. No individual director, officer, or committee can be delegated responsibility that interferes with or duplicates responsibility delegated to the GM, violates any of the Policy Governance principles, or the Board’s own policies or organizational Bylaws.

6. Ends Policies: The board defines in writing the cooperative’s purpose in terms of: intended effects/benefits to be produced, intended recipients of those benefits, and (if desired) the intended cost-benefit or priority of those benefits. (Any decisions about issues that don’t fit the definition of Ends are means decisions.)

7. Executive Limitations Policies: The board defines in writing its expectations about the means of the cooperative. Rather than prescribing board-chosen means, Executive Limitation policies define limits on operational means – essentially, defining boundaries on the GM’s authority. Executive Limitation policies describe means that are not allowed even if they are effective. The board retains the authority to make decisions that are outside of the GM’s authority. These are Executive Limitations policies.

8. Policy Sizes: The board decides the four types of policies first at the broadest, most inclusive level. The board can then further define each policy in further levels of detail until reaching a point at which the board can accept any reasonable interpretation of the written policy. They replace, at the board level, more traditional documents such as mission statements, strategic plans, and budgets.


9. Any Reasonable Interpretation: More detailed decisions about Ends and operational means are delegated to the GM, who has the right to use any reasonable interpretation of the board’s written

policies. A reasonable interpretation will include more detailed and/or clarified meaning of the board’s policy, along with operational definitions (the metrics and benchmarks used to gauge accomplishment), typically defined in the “Reasonable Interpretation” section of the GM Monitoring Document provided to the board on a board designated schedule.


10. Monitoring: The board must check to ensure that the cooperative has achieved (or made progress toward) the Ends while operating within the Executive Limitation boundaries. The board judges the GM’s interpretation and operational definition for reasonableness, and judges whether the data demonstrates accomplishment of that interpretation and operational definition. The ongoing monitoring of Ends and Executive Limitations policies constitutes the GM’s performance evaluation. The board must monitor its own (remove own) performance according to the stated board means policies.

(adapted from <https://columinate.coop/policy-governance-quick-guide/>)


As our cooperative continues to recover and move forward to thrive and build, our commitment is to both continue the work of implementing these Policy Governance principles with fidelity and consistency to govern Sevananda, and to further educate our member-owners in our system of governance, so that you know exactly how to be engaged in the governance of your cooperative and your responsibilities as member-owners of our beloved cooperative.




Board of Directors




~ We look forward to strengthening the present and actively creating a bright future!




Wanique Shabazz




Jerrilyn Bell




Jasmin McMorris



Jasmine Simone



Malissa Fortune



Stanton Winston

In Beloved Service &
The Spirit of Cooperation
Your Sevananda Board of Directors



OUR INCREDIBLE IMMUNE SYSTEM!

What is it
How does it work
When & Why does it work?

The immune system is a combination of components of blood cells (made in bone marrow), the lymphatic system, (spleen and the thymus) and proteins that work together to protect the body from outside invaders. The body is continually warding off these invaders.

Fungi – Organisms that are most effective invading moist warm areas of the body, such as between the toes. The body tries to fight back by bringing antibodies to the site, via the blood, as part of the immune response.

Viruses – Viruses are so small (only 0.00001 mm in diameter) 2000 times smaller than a dust mite. They are very efficient at entering the respiratory and gastro-intestinal tracts. Blood is able to fight viruses by delivering antibodies to the affected area.

Multi-cellular invaders – Parasites! The blood attacks them with specialized white cells called “eosinophils.” They need specialized herbs or medicines to kill them.

Single cell invaders – Bacteria and protozoans are found, ingested and killed by white blood cell phagocytes. Invading microbes cause the production of phagocytes at the infected area.

The single cell invaders are coated with antibodies and ingested.

Some of the defensive components of blood that are part of the immune system and response:

- Phagocytes
- T-lymphocytes
- B-lymphocytes
- Killer cells & (NK) Natural killer cells Interferons

The immune system is on duty during common allergic responses to everything from food, chemicals, fabrics, peanuts, hay fever, dust mites, bees or stress!

Our immune system is wide ranging and remarkable and we just have to support it in the best ways by:

- Detoxing our bodies
- Getting ample rest
- Exercising daily to keep our systems strong
- Relieving stress

Eating strengthening food and supportive herbs like: Elderberry, Vitamin C, (Oranges, Pineapple, Grapefruit), Echinacea, Alfalfa, Astragalus, Mushrooms like Reishi & Shitake, Pau d’arco are some of the herbs that stimulate parts of the Immune System.

Enhance your immune system by consciously working with it and adding probiotics, enzymes, and



Dr. Eshe

essential fatty acids (EFA’s) like cod liver oil, 3-6-9 oil or hemp oil. Our bodies do so much for us without us directing it. Let’s give it a boost by giving our body what it needs!

In that thought of what has given us so much, I want to thank Sevananda for over 25 years of supporting me as a pioneer in what I do while providing herbal support to the community. As a member and a vendor, I also want to thank Sevananda for carrying my herbal products. I LOVE Sevananda!!

I’ve met life-long clients that continue to feel blessed to have been in Sevananda, at the same time, when I was doing a talk in the Herb Department. They have made their love for herbs and Dr. HerbSistah Herbals part of their healthy herbal lifestyle and passed this wisdom on to their friends and family.

When I started this journey, there were not African-American Herbalists easily available to pattern myself after. So, in the way that I lived, I looked to Her-story (Madam C.J. Walker, Ida B. Wells, Mary McCloud Bethune, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman) to create a new thing! And Sevananda supported my different new thing!

I am most grateful for Sevananda and all of you. Love y’all forever!

Check out my new video on how I started on my Youtube Channel – Dr. HerbSistah

As winter carries on, sweater-weather brings the craving for comfort foods to share with friends and family. Here is a recipe to help you celebrate the season and until we see spring again.



ROASTED CARROTS WITH LEMON-TAHINI KALE

By Chef Asata Reid | Serves 4

Note: Sweet potatoes or winter squash (such as butternut or acorn) can be substituted for the carrots. Adjust the cooking time according to the thickness of the vegetables being roasted.

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees F.
2. In a mixing bowl toss the carrots in 1 Tbsp of olive oil. Then season with the ginger, coriander, cumin, salt and pepper. Transfer carrots to a baking pan and roast for 15-20 minutes, or until somewhat softened and caramelized.

Ingredients

- 1 lb carrots, cut in half and then into spears
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- ¼ tsp ground ginger
- ¼ tsp ground coriander
- ¼ tsp ground cumin
- 1 bunch kale, washed and torn into bite sized pieces
- 2 cloves garlic, minced

- 1 Tbsp tahini
- Juice from 1 lemon (about ¼ cup)
- 1 Tbsp dijon mustard
- 2 Tbsp parsley chopped
- ¼ cup chopped roasted pistachios
- Salt and pepper to taste

3. While the carrots roast, combine the remaining 2 Tbsp of olive oil with the minced garlic, lemon juice and tahini. Stir to combine and season with salt and pepper.

4. Pour ⅔ of the dressing over the kale and massage the dressing into the kale using your hands. Set aside the remaining ⅓ dressing.

5. Remove the carrots from the oven and transfer back into the mixing bowl. Toss with remaining dressing and chopped parsley and let cool slightly.

6. Arrange the massaged kale on a platter. Top with roasted carrots, and garnish with chopped pistachios. Serve at room temperature or slightly chilled.

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Please Wear Gloves & Mask At All Times!

THE GIFT OF LOVE

By Asata Reid, MPH MS Ed
www.chefasata.com



By now you've probably heard of the supply chain shortages that are affecting the availability of store-purchased items and web-based material goods. How do these shortages impact your intention to celebrate special days with loved ones? As Spring approaches, how will you share "the season of love" with the spirit of giving, nurturing and life?

These "interesting times," as a friend of mine puts it, give us an opportunity to be still and look deeply into ourselves to find the root of our motivations for giving, and to thoughtfully consider those we love, as well as their wants and needs. When we take time to think about what and why we give, and what and how our loved ones like to receive, it gives us a chance to connect on a whole new, deeper and meaningful level. The intention behind the spirit of giving is as much a part of a gift as the gift itself.

Perhaps you've heard of the *Five Love Languages*, a book by Gary Chapman? His book suggests there are five "languages" that people respond to when it comes to giving and receiving love. They are:

Words of Affirmation like saying "I love you," "I'm proud of you," or "You look great!"

Quality Time like spending time together doing something or nothing.

Physical Touch like hugs and cuddling, hand squeezes, intimacy.

Acts of Service like cooking for you, cleaning your car, creating a pleasant environment.

Receiving Gifts like flowers, candy, clothing, or other items.

“THE INTENTION BEHIND THE SPIRIT OF GIVING IS AS MUCH A PART OF A GIFT AS THE GIFT ITSELF.”

These five languages (or possibly combinations of them) are a great place to start when thinking about how you like to give love, and how others you care about like to receive messages of love. Knowing your love language, and the love language of those you care for, allows you to make intentional, personalized efforts to exchange affection whether it is through actions, words, gifts, touch or time.

This helps everyone feel seen, valued and appreciated. For example, let's look at a couple named Sokka and Yue. Yue may best receive love through physical touch, while Sokka communicates love by giving and receiving gifts. If Yue, who has repeatedly said "You don't have to get me anything," receives tickets to fly to Miami for a weekend getaway, she may think it's a nice trip, but she may not emotionally connect to the gift. Sokka, who would love to receive a gift like a destination trip, may be disappointed by Yue's luke-warm reaction. After all, he scrimped and saved to get those tickets! And this is how intentions get misunderstood and feelings get hurt.

However, if we change the scenario and Sokka, who loves to give and receive gifts, considers how Yue really likes to communicate love (physical touch), then he may see an opportunity to not just give a gift which would satisfy his own love language, but do it in a way that connects to his mate emotionally.

For example, Sokka could set up an evening of romantic, intimate massage at home accompanied by natural oils and scents purchased at Sevananda. He could add intentionality and personality to the ambiance with hand crafted candles in Yue's favorite scent, and a soft soundtrack recorded by her favorite local musician. After the message the two could cuddle up and read from a book of poetry from a local author, or watch some Netflix together while snuggled up under a new blanket in Yue's favorite colors made by indigenous women and purchased through fair trade agreements, causes that matter to Yue.

All of those small thoughtful details plus a night of relaxing physical touch will definitely be meaningful to Yue, and will satisfy the giving nature of Sokka.

Giving in this way is a big win for several reasons:

- 1) it shows the thoughtfulness of the gift by the giver;
- 2) it considers the wants and needs of the person receiving the gift;
- 3) it is a way to connect meaningfully through gifts of action and intention, even if material items are included; and
- 4) it provides a way to give and receive love that is personal and not relegated solely to the realm of material objects.

Of course tailoring the giving experience through the languages of love doesn't have to be just for romantic couples. If you stop and think about the people you love, and their possible love languages, you can create a giving experience steeped in appreciation for who they are and what you love most about them.

For wonderful gifts of love that promote health, connectivity and intentional purchasing, visit Sevananda in person or online. Remember to get your Sevananda Gift Cards for giving as well!



Asata Reid is a lifetime member of the Sevananda community. Over the years she has held roles through the School of Common Health, writing and editing for Co-Options, creating recipes for the hot bar and cold case, and conducting cooking classes and demos. As community health educator, she is the Chef/CEO of Life Chef LLC and the founder of the non-profit Feed the People Co. Like Sevananda, her mission is to serve.

WHAT'S NEW AT SEVANANDA

I Love Sev

Greetings Family,

Gregory Smith here, and I want to tell you a little about my Sevananada experience. I started my vegan journey Jan 1, 2016. I just moved to Atlanta (Kirkwood community) from Jacksonville, Florida. A friend of mine told me that Sevananada was the place to go to assist with my vegan journey.

I took a trip to the store to get food for the first time. They happened to be serving breakfast and had one of my favorites! (Pancakes). Those pancakes were so amazing I ate them and came back for more. The guy at the hot bar (Desmond) started laughing at me and said, "Bro, I know you didn't eat all of that food that quick." We immediately started laughing and I told him this was my first day beginning vegan and those pancakes tasted like my Grandma's pancakes! Desmond and I immediately became cool after that.

As time went on I started meeting other employees and eventually formed a strong bond. A few months went by then somehow I ended up in the best/my favorite department of the store! (Wellness). There I was introduced to herbs that would forever change my life, my family, and my friends. I started taking all kinds of different herbs, sending the herbal blends



back home to my family to help with many health conditions that they were dealing with. Three to four years later, I have over 20 family members and friends consuming herbs and being health conscious.

Without Sevananada I don't think that would be possible. In 2016, I started out as a customer at Sevananada. Fast forward four years later, and now Sevananada is a family to me. I love the employees, food, and all of the herbs they provide. I have been volunteering, unofficially, at the store for two years now, dropping in and helping customers find what they need, or however I could assist. I truly enjoy being around the staff and assisting customers in the store. Now we're making it official! Badge and all!

My favorite thing to do is paying the tabs for the elderly customers. They have a special place in my heart. In the future, I would like to establish a program through my non-profit organization (Global Entrepreneur Group Foundation Inc.) to cover the grocery expenses for all elderly people that shop in the store.

Sincerely,
Gregory Smith

SEVANANDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear Member Owners and Shopper,

On Sunday, February 20, at a Special Call meeting, the Board of Directors accepted the resignation of our current General Manager Ahzjah Simons. We'd like to thank her for all her years of service and appreciate her many contributions and accomplishments which served to support Sevananda during her tenure. As Sevananda still stands on the other side of the Covid -19 global pandemic is a testament to her leadership, management team and staff at a critical juncture in our existence. We wish her well and success in her every endeavor.

As Ahzjah transitions out and supports interim transitions, we are looking forward to new beginnings at Sevananda and to continuing the strong recovery plan currently underway. The Board will move forward with adopting a formal succession plan transferring to an Interim General Manager team. We will provide an update in the coming days as we complete that process.

In Service,
Wanique Shabazz
President, Sevananda Board of Directors
On behalf of Sevananda Board of Directors

FIGHTING FOOD INSECURITY: **LOCAL CO-OPS HELP INCREASE FOOD ACCESS**

By Hannah E. Jones

In two of the state's most populous counties — Fulton and DeKalb — 11.3 percent and 10.5 percent of residents, respectively, are food insecure, meaning they lack consistent access to food. The issue is persistent in urban and rural areas throughout the state, according to 2019 data from Feeding America. However, local food cooperatives are looking to change that.

Rather than waiting on a corporate solution, these entities are able to address the community's needs in real time. A cooperative business model typically allows room for many owners and members with voting power, and provides access to materials at an affordable rate.



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AT URBAN RECIPE, "EVERYBODY HAS A PART THEY PLAY," ONE MEMBER SAID IN A VIDEO (PHOTO COURTESY OF URBAN RECIPE)

Urban Recipe provides free food to low-income residents, following the widely-recognized seven principles for co-ops. The organization operates as an umbrella for eight co-ops that serve Atlanta and the metro area.

To receive the food, folks must go through orientation and submit a statement of need. Once that is completed, they are automatically a member. Members aren't owners because the Urban Recipe model is intentionally free-of-charge, but they can vote and serve on a members-only committee.

Executive Director Jeremy Lewis sees the co-op system as a long-term solution to fighting food insecurity.

Members are instrumental in packaging and distributing the supplies every two weeks. The biweekly group effort helps foster a connection that goes deeper than just the food.



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“What we oftentimes see is people who go to a pantry in need of emergency food aid,” Lewis said. “It is a good response in a person’s state of crisis, but if they’re in a place that they need more long term sustained support, we’re able to really make sure that worry that initially drove them to going to a food pantry, now they not only have enough food, but they’re going to have a group of people to get to know... and they develop real relationships.”

One member became involved with Urban Recipe when she had 11 people in her home to feed. Without the co-op, she would be in the hospital from stress, she said in a video on their website.

“Everything is real personal there; it’s like having an extended family,” the member, who chose to remain anonymous, said. “It’s always a blessing to go to the co-op because you’re always getting something you need extra besides the food. You’re going to get some spiritual food; you’re going to get a little love.”

The Atlanta Community Food Bank donates a majority of the food, and the amount of food that each member receives is based on the size of their family. This personal touch allows Urban Recipe to distribute five to seven times more food to their members compared to food pantry recipients, according to Lewis.

The folks with Market 166 are also considering an alternate food source in the East Point area. Market 166 is a grocery and kitchen co-op in the beginning phases of potentially becoming Atlanta’s second grocery co-op, alongside the well-established Sevananda.

Some of the Market 166 team gathered last month to talk strategy. The grocery co-op is still accepting new owners.



AT URBAN RECIPE, “EVERYBODY HAS A PART THEY PLAY,” ONE MEMBER SAID IN A VIDEO (PHOTO COURTESY OF URBAN RECIPE)

The co-op has about 265 ownership shares, with owners counted by the household so everyone can receive the benefits. They’re nearing the 300 mark, where the team will create a business plan and market analysis, and they’ll choose a physical location once reaching about 450 owners.

Market 166 Board Chair Permeil Dass has been involved since its inception in 2018, and as a resident of East Point, she envisions better food options for her community.

“If you went into the grocery stores, it was not a community feel. It was very clear that it was an outside corporate group that is [focused on] profits over people,” Dass said. “We don’t believe organic should just be for a certain class of people. Everyone should be able to have access to it at an affordable price on a transit line or something that people can get to easily.”

Besides providing access to affordable fresh food, community involvement is another main priority for the organization. The team’s plans include a commercial kitchen, open to small local businesses and an event space.

“The concern for community and centering on community is huge,” Vice-Chair Abby Tennenbaum said. “And I think



that the cooperative provides an opportunity for people to meaningfully participate in helping to create a community that we want to see and build something that our community is currently lacking.

Secretary Xander Flood agreed, adding that the grassroots nature of Market 166 will benefit the area's economic growth.

“Because it’s a community-owned organization, all of the profits from whatever grocery business we run are either returned to our owners or reinvested in the community. It stays right here in southwest Atlanta,” Flood said.

There are also co-ops that support the starting point of our food systems — agriculture. The West Georgia Farmers Cooperative (WGFC), founded in 1966, is a co-op that buys food from local farmers and combines the goods to sell to large buyers. This system allows folks with smaller farms to accommodate more business.

The co-op also aids in buying farming supplies, which are more affordable when purchased in bulk.

Eric Simpson became a member in 2011 and now serves on the board of directors. Simpson has a small farm called New Eden Ecosystem, consisting of vegetables and farm animals like chicken and sheep.

Simpson appreciates the co-op system because of its “democratic model.”

“I love the collectivity of the model because it allows groups with modest resources to aggregate and to expand much quicker than an individual entity would be able to with limited resources,” Simpson said. “[Because of WGFC] I’ve been able to meet people and develop some other skills such as consultations and grant writings.”

These groups are working to create a food system that works for their community, rather than the other way around.

What do you think about the co-op model? Do you have other ideas for increasing access to affordable food?



HerbNFood Hub Club gives you more ways to save at Sevananda right away with additional discounts, rewards, prizes, and even earning Sev bucks with a purchase of select items, simply by shopping the co-op!

HerbNFood Preferred, pilot program is also coming this spring/summer, and you can make special pre-orders online and pickup! Lastly If you sign up for HerbNFood Preferred Prime, this summer/fall, you also be able to have your special orders delivered and scheduled with a free initial virtual consultation to stay healthy and well!

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