

Our 20th Year!

# VEGETARIAN · · ADVOCATE

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Rochester, NY USA

## A VEGETARIAN DIET

What is it, and Why?

If you are not a vegetarian or a member of RAVS, this column is for you. Here are some of the basics.

What is a vegetarian? A *vegetarian*, traditionally, is someone who eats no flesh foods: no meat, poultry or fish. A *vegan* is a vegetarian who goes further and eats no animal products: no eggs or dairy products.

Why do people choose to eat this way? Every vegetarian has a story to tell, but basically the reasons to avoid animal foods are these: for your health, for the animals, and for the planet. Every day there are new findings that a plant-based diet is best for health. The standard American diet (SAD), which revolves around meat and animal products, results in poor health for people, suffering for animals, waste of resources, and devastation for the environment. But changing your diet can be hard and people who want to change often need help.

If you want to move in the right direction, the Vegetarian Society (RAVS) can help you. We are here to provide information and support. Be sure to ask for our pamphlet, *Going Vegetarian in the Rochester, NY Area*. You do not need to be a vegetarian to give us a call, to attend our meetings, or even to join our group. Nor do you need to be a member to attend our meetings; guests are always welcome. You only need to follow our "vegan rule" for the dinner meetings (see box on p. 2 for full explanation), and there is a \$3 guest fee for non-members. If you want to participate, give us a call at (585) 234-8750, or come to a meeting. You will find us helpful and welcoming. ❖

## CHANGE CAN HAPPEN

The Monitor (McAllen, Texas)

November 7, 2008

by Ingrid E. Newkirk, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

When President-elect Barack Obama was born, numerous states would have prohibited his black Kenyan father from marrying his white Kansan mother. The Voting Rights Act was still a few years away, and the Supreme Court's order to desegregate schools was being fought tooth and nail. Look at how far we have come. Who alive then would have believed that just a few short decades later, Americans would elect their first black president?

We have broken through a significant barrier, but we cannot stop there. We must now break down the barrier that prevents us from caring about all the "others" who are "not like us," regardless of race, regardless of gender -and regardless of species.

Prejudice and oppression come about because of a belief that "we" are important and that "they" are not.

In the days of slavery, for example, not so long ago, some people honestly believed that African men did not feel pain as white men do, that African women did not experience maternal love as white women do. And so it was quite acceptable to brand men's faces with a hot iron and to auction off slaves' children and send them vast distances away from their mothers. All evidence was to the contrary, yet highly educated people defied their own eyes and ears and common sense by denying the facts before them. Society accepted this horrible exploitation, and then, as now, it takes courage to break away from the norm, even when the norm is ugly and wrong.

Today, we have abolished human slavery, at least in theory. But we continue to enslave all the others who happen not to be exactly like us but who, if we are honest with ourselves, show us that they experience maternal love as we do, that if you burn them, they feel the same pain as we do, that they desire freedom from shackles as we do.

In their natural homes, elephants live in complex multigenerational social groups, mourn their dead and remember friends and relatives from years past.

Yet we tear them away from their families, confine them with chains to stinking, squalid boxcars and beat them into performing ridiculous tricks for our amusement.

Rats are detested, yet even these tiny animals, mammals like us, have been found to giggle (in frequencies that can't be heard by the human ear) when they are tickled and will risk their own lives to save other rats, especially when the rats in peril are babies. Although no mouse or rat bankrupted our economy, invaded Iraq or set poison out for us, we dismiss their feelings as inconsequential and somehow beneath our consideration.

Mother pigs sing to their young while nursing, and newborn piglets run joyfully toward their mothers' voices. On factory farms, a sow spends her entire life surrounded by the cold metal bars of a space so small that she can never turn around or take even two steps. Chickens raised for the table fare even worse and have their beaks seared off with a hot blade. They will never enjoy the warmth of a nest or the affectionate nuzzle of a mate.

The time has come to stop thinking of animal rights as distracting or less deserving of our energy than other struggles for social justice. As Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." All oppression, prejudice, violence and cruelty are wrong and must be rejected no matter how novel the idea or how inconvenient the task.

And for those who think that we will never be able to achieve the dream of liberation from oppression, not just for human beings but for all beings, regardless of race or gender or species, I have just three words for you: Yes. We. Can.

About the writer: Ingrid E. Newkirk is the president of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals and author of the new book "One Can Make a Difference." Readers may write to her at PETA, 501 Front Street, Norfolk, Va. 23510; www.peta.org. ❖

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**ROCHESTER AREA VEGETARIAN SOCIETY**

## Coordinators:

Ted D. Barnett, M.D.  
Carol H. Barnett, Ph.D., J.D.

## Board of Directors:

Shelley Adams	Leena Isac
Carol H. Barnett	Ken McBride
Ted D. Barnett	Daryl Odhner
Ellie Cherin	Ted Potter
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Bob Zimmermann	

*Vegetarian Advocate* Staff:

## Editors:

Carol and Ted Barnett

## Contributors:

Voracious Vegan	Shelley Adams
Poetry	Bruce Ross, Ph.D.
Logo	Bern Berg

## RAVS Staff:

Treasurer:	Ken McBride
Website:	Ted Potter, Bob Zimmermann
Library:	Leena Isac
Cooking Instruction:	Wendy Gilmore

The **Rochester Area Vegetarian Society** is a non-profit, tax-exempt, non-sectarian, all-volunteer educational organization dedicated to promoting the joy, compassion and life enhancing possibilities of a vegetarian lifestyle. We are an educational resource for those interested in any aspect of vegetarianism. We provide support to our members through social events that include monthly gatherings with a shared meal and programs on topics important to our members. Membership in RAVS is open to all vegetarians, as well as to those who, while not vegetarian, wish to support the goals of the group.

DUES: Individual Membership, \$20 per year; Joint Membership, \$35 per year; Student/Fixed Income Membership, \$10. Membership includes receipt of the *Vegetarian Advocate* and free attendance at our monthly dinner meetings. A membership application can be found at the back of this issue.

**Contacting RAVS:**

- P.O. Box 20185, Rochester, NY 14602
- E-mail: drveggie@aol.com
- Website: www.rochesterveg.org
- 24 hour voicemail and events calendar:

**(585) 234-8750**

**RAVS RULES FOR SHARE-A-DISH MEALS**

All dishes must be completely **vegan**. They may *not* contain any *meat, poultry, fish eggs, dairy products or honey*. This rule guarantees that everyone can eat everything (allergies and preferences aside).

Please watch out for *gelatin* (a meat by-product) and *hidden milk products*, such as *whhey* in cookies, crackers, bread and margarine and *casein* or *caseinate* in "non-dairy" soy cheese, coffee creamer and whipped topping. Also be alert for *eggs* in baked goods, mayonnaise and salad dressings, and *honey* in breads, pastries and preserves.

Please prepare a 4x6 card with your name, the name of the dish and a list of all ingredients. Write the recipe on the back of the card and indicate where the recipe came from or if it was original. Prepare enough to serve a crowd. Please bring your own table setting as well as a serving utensil. If you don't feel like cooking, you may bring fruit, cider, tortilla chips and salsa, green salad, fruit salad, etc. Non-members must pay a \$3 guest fee, which is applied to your membership if you join that day.

**IF YOU ARE NEW TO RAVS**

**You don't need to be a vegetarian, or a member of RAVS, to attend one of our events.** All we ask is that you bring vegan food to our dinner meetings. You don't need to inform us beforehand that you will be attending. The box above, and the calendar and directions on the back page of the newsletter, tell you what you need to know in order to attend. Call 234-8750 if you have further questions.

**MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

Membership in RAVS entitles you to receive the *Vegetarian Advocate* (published four times a year) and any other mailings, usually notices of upcoming events. It also entitles you to free admission to monthly events (except restaurant meals); others pay a \$3 guest fee. Members can borrow audio and video tapes for a \$10 deposit; members and non-members as well can purchase books and other materials at a discount at meetings.

An important benefit of membership is **half-priced** membership in two national vegetarian organizations. Below we give information, including membership costs **before** the discount is taken. Simply state in a letter that you are a member of RAVS, which is an affiliate.

**North American Vegetarian Society**

P.O. Box 72  
Dolgeville, NY 13329  
Tel: (518) 568-7970  
Fax: (518) 568-7979

E-mail: navs@telenet.net

Website: www.navs-online.org

Individual membership (annual): \$22

Family membership: \$28

Publication: *Vegetarian Voice*

**Vegetarian Resource Group**

P.O. Box 1463  
Baltimore, MD 21203  
Tel: (410) 366-VEGE  
Fax: (410) 366-8804  
E-mail: vrg@vrg.org  
Website: www.vrg.org  
Membership (annual): \$20  
Publication: *Vegetarian Journal*  
(quarterly)

These are both excellent groups, and both have mail-order bookshops which are included in the publication they will send you when you join.

Another not-so-tangible benefit of your membership is to others, namely, the people we reach through our community education efforts, which are funded by your dues. Pamphlets we distribute at an outreach table at a health or environmental fair cost money. That's why your membership and renewal are important even if we never see you at a meeting — though of course, we hope we do. ❖

**BOOK ORDERS FROM RAVS**

A number of vegetarian books and cookbooks are available from RAVS at 10% off list price. Books can be purchased at every RAVS meeting. We also have T-shirts and tote bags for sale, and members can borrow videos for a \$10 deposit.

Anyone interested in buying or ordering books between meetings may call **Leena Isac**, RAVS librarian, at 249-0171.

**WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!!**

Like any volunteer group, we can always use your help. If you can assist with the newsletter, outreach, publicity, dinners, programs, guest speakers or anything else imaginable, please call **234-8750**. ❖

## VEGETARIAN SOCIETY UPDATE

by Carol H. Barnett

Happy New Year everyone!

In October of 1989, about a dozen people gathered at a meeting organized by **Stanley M. Sapon** and **Rhoda Sapon**, for the very first share-a-dish dinner of what was to become the Rochester Area Vegetarian Society. The group has grown, stabilized, and endured, but in its fundamental elements it remains today what it was then: a support group for vegetarians who meet once a month to share vegan food and an educational program, but who also strive to reach out to the larger community with information and encouragement to make vegetarian choices. We hope to honor and celebrate the founding of RAVS with a series of riveting programs in our anniversary year.

Our November 2008 program was a lecture on the history of official U.S. dietary recommendations (e.g. food groups), given by our own **Ted D. Barnett, M.D.** The takeaway message seemed to be that the person who wishes to make healthy eating choices must be his or her own Department of Agriculture (as John Robbins once put it). RAVS helps to provide the necessary information, as we did in December with a talk by **Michael Greger, M.D.** on "The Latest in Nutrition 2008." As always, Dr. Greger was a fount of information with a generous dose of humor. Those who missed the lecture or wish to share it with others may purchase a DVD of the lecture for \$3; and print copies of Dr. Greger's nutrition recommendations are available (free) at any RAVS meeting.

In January 2009, we enjoyed a showing of films from Movies on a Shoestring, courtesy of **Ellie Cherin**. We were entertained and moved by the dangers of smoking and ketosis, the virtues of composting, and the fate of a self-described "lavo-octo-vegetarian." We thank our audience for bearing with a few technological glitches and this deviation from the usual seriousness of our programs. We need to have fun once in a while, and we hope you did.

In upcoming months we look forward to a lecture on water rights by **Wayne Howard**; a showing of "The Story of Stuff"; our traditional 2<sup>nd</sup> night Passover celebration; and a fundraiser dinner at the Shanghai Restaurant. See the calendar on the back page for details.

RAVS outreach in recent months included a table at **MetroJustice's** Alternative Fair. Thanks to **Shelley Adams, Carol Barnett, Ellie Cherin, Wendy Gilmore, Leena Isac, Phil Johnson, Ken McBride, Lauren McDonald, Karl Obine, Daryl** and

**Maggie Odhner**, and **Bob Zimmermann** for staffing, and to **Ellie Cherin, Lauren McDonald, Maggie Odhner**, and **Mary Parson** for providing homemade vegan baked goods to sell.

More recently, **Wendy Gilmore** taught a cooking course on Vegan Valentine at Rush Public Library. Wendy will be teaching, along with Binet Fink, a class on Vegan Passover and Easter, on Saturday March 7 from 2 to 3:30 PM at Pittsford Community Library. Call 248-6275 to register. And in June, **Sandy Baker** will teach the 4-part Food for Life cooking course at the Tops International Cooking School on Mt. Read Boulevard. Call 663-5449 to register.

We look forward to celebrating our anniversary year with you and spreading the word about the merits of a vegetarian diet.

**OUR CONDOLENCES** to the family of **Edward French**, a longtime vegetarian and longtime member of RAVS who died on December 5. We valued his warmth, his kindness, and his teasing but gentle wit. Edward, an Episcopal minister, embodied all that is compassionate and conscientious. He was a wonderful human being, and we will miss him very much. Donations in his memory may be made to: Water for Sudan, Inc., P.O. Box 25551, Rochester, NY 14625.

**OUR CONDOLENCES** to **Rachel O'Donnell** and **Adam Hayes** on the loss of their daughter, **Corrina Joy O'Donnell**, who died just before birth on December 7. If you would like to make a gift in her memory, Adam and Rachel would be grateful for donations to Meg Grindrod Midwifery, 1501 East Avenue, Suite 211, Rochester, NY 14610. Our sympathy and abiding love are with Adam and Rachel.

We request **DONATIONS** to the RAVS April restaurant fundraiser. Any items that would be appropriate for a raffle or silent auction are welcome. If you would like to donate an item, bring it to the February or March meeting, or e-mail Wendy Gilmore at [wsgrla@rit.edu](mailto:wsgrla@rit.edu) with a description.

**A VICTORY** We are pleased to report that the "educational" project of raising and slaughtering chickens in the classrooms of Canandaigua High School has been curtailed, apparently in response, at least in part, to adverse media coverage including letters to the editors of various newspapers, and letters of protest to the New York State Department of Education.

**VEGAN COMPANY** **EverYoung Natural Foods**, co-owned by RAVS member **Jerry Lisson** with Charleen Venette, is expanding into a new 2,000 sq. ft. space in Sodus, NY. EverYoung makes organic vegan muffins and cookies, available at Lori's Natural Foods and elsewhere, and plans to

add nutritional supplements to its product list. Visit [www.everyyoungnaturalfoods.com](http://www.everyyoungnaturalfoods.com)

**VEGAN DHA SOURCES** In his December talk, Dr. Michael Greger recommended daily consumption of vegan DHA, which does not appear to be available off the shelf at any local natural food store. You may order vegan DHA from [veganstore.com](http://veganstore.com) (Pangea) or from [veganessentials.com](http://veganessentials.com); you may also place an order for regular delivery of vegan DHA (as well as vegan vitamin D, vitamin B12, and other supplements) from [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

**VEGAN BAKERY OPENS!** RAVS member **Jeaninne Ottman** has opened **Eco Bella Bakery** at 732 South Ave., 503-2488. Hours are Thurs.-Fri.-Sat. 7AM-2PM and Sun. 8AM-12 noon. Eco Bella will offer a wide variety of baked goods, all vegan or gluten-free vegan; before long it will offer vegan breakfast sandwiches and vegan soup and sandwiches for lunch. Stop by!

**WINTER FARMERS MARKET** The Long Season Farmers Market is a monthly indoor winter farmers market focused on local and sustainable foods. Participating growers and producers will be selling a wide range of storage crops such as potatoes, winter squashes, carrots, apples, winter greens, and herbs. There will also be prepared foods to eat on site. The market runs 4 to 7 PM Feb. 19, March 19, April 16, and May 21 at Artisan Church, 1235 S. Clinton Ave. (there were also dates in Dec. and Jan.). For more information, call 241-0088 or 474-6532.

**VEGAN RAVIOLI** made by Pasta Classics is available at the winter shed in the Rochester Public Market. Vince Tripi, 303-0004, is a local representative.

**HEARD IT ON THE RADIO** The Ed Schultz show, a liberal talk radio show on AM1520, has a feature called "recession busters" in which small businesses call in and tout their products. On 11/21/08, a Nashville-based company called to say it makes and ships 5 varieties of carrot cake. The citrus orange variety is vegan. Each 8-inch cake costs \$29.95, ships for \$60 total. A bit pricey, but maybe if you are in Nashville... Or visit [worldsbestcarrotcake.com](http://worldsbestcarrotcake.com).

**RESTAURANT TO TRY** RAVS members, as well as the "Insider" newspaper on 11/14/08, have recommended **Orange Glory Café** at 240 East Ave., 232-7340, open 11 AM through 3 PM Mon.- Fri. You can always get a vegan roasted veggie sandwich with portabello mushrooms, peppers, artichokes, and balsamic vinegar, and often vegan black bean or lentil soup. ❖

**RAVS 24 HOUR VOICE MAIL:  
(585) 234-8750**

**IN THE NEWS**

**DAIRY SURPLUS** A New York Times article on 1/1/09 called "As Recession Deepens, So Does Milk Surplus" says the demand for dairy is "stalling" amid the global economic slowdown and credit crisis, resulting in an oversupply of cows and "a glut of milk." To date, the government has agreed to buy \$91 million of milk powder or 111.6 million pounds. Much of this milk will eventually be used in government nutrition programs such as the school lunch program. Many critics argue that price support programs are antiquated and keep farmers from responding to economic signals such as change in demand. These and other subsidies prevent a "level playing field" in which consumers would have to pay the true price of animal products.

**TOXIC EMISSIONS FROM ANIMAL AGRICULTURE** A New York Times article on 12/3/08 by Elisabeth Rosenthal, entitled "As More Eat Meat, a Bid to Cut Emissions," discusses fledgling efforts to reduce emissions of methane and other greenhouse gases from the meat industry. There are trillions of farm animals worldwide, and they generate 18% of emissions that lead to global warming, more than all forms of transportation combined; in fact, "every step of producing meat creates emissions." And ever-greater numbers of people around the world are eating more meat, a "profound trend" which will probably be slowed but not reversed by the global economic downturn. Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, the head of the Nobel Prize-winning U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, recommends that, instead of trying to neutralize methane and other toxic emissions, we should simply generate less: "He says people should eat less meat to control their carbon footprints." The medical journal *The Lancet* and Britain's Food Ethics Council agree with this position, because of benefits to human health as well as the environment.

**PUBLIC LANDS RANCHING-COUNTING THE COST** Mike Hudak, Ph.D. the director of Public Lands without Livestock (and RAVS speaker on more than one occasion) recently performed the first-ever assessment of the estimated contribution to global warming by the cattle grazing on 260 million acres of federal public lands. Relying on conversion data provided by the EPA, he concludes that public lands ranching annually produces the equivalent of the annual greenhouse emissions from 675,630 passenger vehicles; or the equivalent of CO2 emissions from more than 418 million gallons of gasoline; or the equivalent of the annual CO2 emissions from the electricity use of 488,601 homes. More examples can be found at mikehudak.com.

**KUDOS TO THE SIERRA CLUB** In December 2008, Linda De Stefano wrote in a

letter to the Syracuse Post-Standard that environmental organizations and the mainstream media have been right to promote locally grown food, but "they have largely ignored another powerful way of reducing the amount of greenhouse gases, which cause global warming and dangerous climate change." (i.e. vegan diet). But DeStefano reports a breakthrough: in the Jan.-Feb. 2009 issue of *Sierra*, the national magazine of the Sierra Club, columnist Paul Rauber says that "switching from beef to veggies one day a week . . . would reduce your carbon footprint more than if you bought all of your food locally." Accompanying the article is a bar graph showing red meat as the greatest food producer of greenhouse gases, with dairy a close second. DeStefano chairs the Biodiversity/Vegetarian Outreach Committee of the Atlantic Chapter of the Sierra Club. For more info about the environmental benefits of vegetarian diet, contact ldestefano@twcny.rr.com

**NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, TOO** The Jan.-Feb. 2009 issue of *Audubon*, also the journal of a mainstream environmental organization, has a piece by Mike Tidwell called "The Low-Carbon Diet." This remarkable article squarely advocates vegetarian diet. "Simply put," Tidwell writes, "raising beef, pigs, sheep, chicken, and eggs is very, very energy intensive." Vegans use 250 gallons less oil per year than meat-eaters; "egg-and-cheese-eating vegetarians" use 160 gallons less. Tidwell says we need to reduce U.S. meat consumption by 75% to protect the climate, and voluntary vegetarianism is only a start: "what we really need are national *policies* that encourage lower meat consumption by everyone. This could be achieved using fees or other market mechanisms that properly price greenhouse-gas emissions according to the harm they cause. . . . the cost of meat could rise. The good news is we would finally have a fair and honest way to judge its danger, and thus more incentives to . . . switch to a healthy and convenient vegetarian diet of the sort I've joyfully embraced for years."

**CONSERVATIVE PAPER GIVES NOD TO ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE** On 1/9/09, a Wall Street Journal article in the Opinion section called "Alternative Medicine is Mainstream," was written by four scientists, including Dean Ornish and Andrew Weil, both medical doctors and proponents of a near-vegan plant-based diet. The authors point out that current health care is really "disease care." They write: "*The latest studies show that our bodies have a remarkable capacity to begin healing, and much more quickly than we had once realized, if we address the lifestyle factors that often cause . . . chronic disease. Many people tend to think of breakthroughs in medicine as a new drug, laser or*

*high-tech surgical procedure. They often have a hard time believing that the simple choices that we make in our lifestyle . . . can be as powerful as drugs or surgery. But they often are. And in many instances, they're even more powerful.*" [Italics added] The authors say that "simple, low-tech and low-cost interventions" such as "plant-based diets" are effective. (Thanks to Peggy Weston Byrd and Carol Tomet of Heartbeats for Life for this reference.)

**MORE MAINSTREAM COVERAGE** *Spry*, a magazine insert in the D&C (October 2008) reported in its health news that, according to a University of Utah study, eating Mexican food can reduce breast cancer risk by 32%, and eating Mediterranean cuisine can reduce that risk by 24%. The lead researcher, Maureen Murtaugh speculates that "compounds in legumes and veggies may play a role."

**TO PRESERVE MUSCLE (AND BONES), EAT SALADS** *Science News*, March 29, 2008 reported on a study by researchers at the federal Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging, at Tufts University, on the prevention of fractures. Since strong muscles help prevent falls, the researchers correlated muscle mass with diet, and found that the more potassium the participants consumed, the more muscle they had. Fruits and vegetables are the primary source of dietary potassium. Potassium-heavy diets, which are more alkaline than acid, also protect bones by tending not to leach calcium stored in bones.

**TOO MUCH FLEX?** The D&C carried an article in the Living Section on 10/14/08 on a registered dietitian, Dawn Jackson Blatner of Chicago, a "vegetarian who cheats" and has written a book on what she calls the "flexitarian diet." Blatner does offer some valuable advice for those who are coming over from the meat-eating side. She points out that the important thing is "eating more healthful vegetarian foods, such as beans, nuts, whole grains and produce." Vegetarians usually weigh 15% less than their meat-eating friends, and they tend to have lower rates of heart disease, diabetes and cancer and to live longer. Blatner deflates the myth that a vegetarian diet costs more because of all the fruits and vegetables: "Meat is one of the most expensive items on a grocery bill, so swapping meat for veggie proteins such as beans and tofu can save you big money."

**VEGETARIAN KIDS** An Associated Press medical writer reported on 1/11/09 that the number of U.S. children who avoid meat is about 1 in 200 or .5%. The estimate, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, was based on a survey of about 9,000 adults reporting on children. Other surveys suggest the rate could be 4 to 6 times as high among  
(Continued on page 5)

### An Open Letter to President Obama

This letter by Greg Lawson, President of the Vegetarian Society of El Paso, Texas, is reprinted with his permission.

Dear President Obama,

I am a concerned citizen.

During your campaign, you said that Senator McCain's plan to reduce federal spending was a hatchet job and you would prefer to use a scalpel. I also seem to recall that you said special interest groups and their lobbyists will not have an ear in your administration.

With this in mind, please allow me to suggest some places to use such a scalpel.

Ranching on public lands is a welfare service for a special interest group; that is, cattle ranchers, who provide less than 3% of the beef consumed in our country. The cost to the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to administer public lands grazing programs is approximated at close to a billion dollars each year. The fees paid by ranchers recover only a small percentage of the cost of the programs. Cattle ranchers pay one tenth of the market value of private grazing lands, paying \$35 a month per cow/calf pair. Either up the fees to fair market value or, even better, eliminate grazing on public lands and save a billion dollars each and every year.

Public lands grazing leads to other problems as well. We spend tens of millions of dollars each year to kill the bison of Yellowstone National Park so that the bison don't compete for grass on the grazing allotments that surround the park. These public lands are used by fewer than a dozen cattle ranchers in order to graze a couple of hundred cows. Close the grazing allotments around Yellowstone and save those millions spent to kill the bison.

Wildlife Services is an agency that is part of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). As a service to a special interest group (livestock ranchers), this federal agency spends forty million dollars each year to kill animals that are considered pests to ranchers. Eliminate this program and save millions.

During the debates, you talked about the urgency of fixing climate change, Social Security and Medicare. I have a few more suggestions to address these problems.

Health care in our country costs ap-

proximately 2 trillion dollars a year. If the White House and the USDA were to recommend strongly that people adopt a vegan diet and end the alliance with animal agribusiness, perhaps solving these problems would be easier.

The National School Lunch Program serves approximately 30.5 million lunches per day at a cost of \$8.7 billion a year. Each year the USDA purchases hundreds of millions of dollars worth of excess dairy products, pork, beef, and other high-fat, high-cholesterol animal products, primarily as an economic benefit to the meat and dairy industries. The USDA allocates between 60 and 70 percent of food program procurement expenditures to meat, dairy and egg products, while providing less than 5 percent to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. Let's stop supporting the meat and dairy industries to the detriment of our children's health. We can save money in the process.

During the debates, you suggested that we should all tighten our belts to deal with the current economic crisis. Instead, I suggest that you urge people to eat more lentils and other beans, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Then we wouldn't have to tighten our belts so much.

I know it might seem simplistic, but the fact is that a plant-based diet is an important part of the solution to the problems we face. A vegan diet is much less energy intensive and will help save our national resources. The United Nations recognized in 2006 that a meat-centered diet is a major cause of greenhouse gases, more so than all forms of transportation combined. The meat production and distribution system uses close to one-third of all the fossil fuels we use in this country. Urge a vegan diet, help reduce the effects of climate change, and save billions in the process. This is change we need.

The U.S. obesity rate continues to grow, leading to health problems across the board for all ages and of all the major illnesses that affect our citizens. Many major studies have linked animal products to several forms of cancer and to heart disease. Urge a vegan diet and you will certainly reduce part of that 2 trillion a year cost for health care.

There is one drawback to my last suggestion. A vegan diet will probably increase the life expectancy of Americans. This will

require the Social Security system to be fixed as soon as possible.

Thank you, President Obama, and if you would like any other advice, I'm here for you. ❖

*(Continued from page 4)*

older teens. Anecdotally, adolescent vegetarianism seems to be rising, thanks in part to YouTube videos of animal suffering.

**NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE** The D&C reported on the Wonderful Weekend of Oz in Fayetteville, NY (outside Syracuse), home of author L. Frank Baum's wife. Baum "spent endless hours chewing over ideas" with his mother-in-law Matilda Gage, "from the women's vote to her vegetarian diet." 10/6/08

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**D&C** On 11/24/08, the Monday before Thanksgiving, William Cassok of Rochester wrote that everyone has the power to "pardon" a turkey on Thanksgiving, and gave several reasons to do so, including "You won't have to call Poultry Hotline to keep your family alive," "You won't sweat the environment and food resources devastation guilt trip," "You won't spend a sleepless night wondering how the turkey lived or died," and "Your body will appreciate a holiday from saturated fat, cholesterol and hormones." Cassok wrote: "My family's Thanksgiving dinner will include a tofurky, lentil roast, mashed potatoes, corn stuffing, stuffed squash, chestnut soup, candied yams, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie and carrot cake." (RAVS is offering a bounty to anyone who can bring this gentleman to a meeting!)

**New York Times** On 1/26/09, Bonnie Lane Webber of New York, NY wrote: "Let's tell people of the quantum leap in energy efficiency that could be accomplished by eating less meat . . . It's easy to cut meat consumption if you start with one day a week of no meat. People will be pleasantly surprised at how delicious vegetarian food can taste."

**City Newspaper** On 12/24/09, RAVS member Andy Dunning gave a number of ideas for revitalizing Rochester, such as building apartments in the High Falls area for college kids, with ample transportation to and from schools; rapid-rail service between Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse; and a "beautiful tower" downtown, perhaps 25 stories high, from which to view our beautiful setting. ❖

**Membership Update: New Members:** Uta Allers, Beth Garver Beha, Peggy Weston Byrd, Chelsea Cook, Debra Couch & Sanjog Misra, Esther Doan, Gloria & Steven Foster, Dan McElwee, Andy Nahas, Christina Nicholson, Alexis & Todd Stubbe, Joy Vandling, Lynn Yolevich. **Membership Renewals:** Sandy Baker, Lois & Greg Baum, Honey Bloch, Jerry Hanss, Audrey Kramer & Alex Chernavsky, Alan Kusler, Naomi Pless, Burt Spiller, Sharon Townley. This list reflects payments received up to 1/31/09. If you think your payment should have been received by that date and you are not on the list, please call 234-8750. ❖

## HEALTH NEWS

### Report from the Seventh Day Adventist Study

The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine periodically has a phone-in Doctor's Forum. The program on 1/7/09 featured **Dr. Gary Fraser**, a cardiologist from New Zealand who also holds a Masters in Public Health and a Ph.D. in Epidemiology. Dr. Fraser reported on the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) study of more than 34,000 Californian Adventists conducted from 1976 to 1988. Adherents to this religion see the care of the body as a religious virtue, and about half of them are vegetarians; on the other hand, there is a wide range of adherence within the group, providing a built-in comparison group and making "a great natural experiment." Fraser found that the vegans and vegetarians were 18 to 32 lb. lighter than meat-eaters of the same height, "a huge difference"; Fraser says this corresponds with findings from the studies of British vegetarians. Fraser said the study showed that the strongest predictor of body mass index (BMI) was "energy-adjusted protein intake." That is, with calorie intake being equal in the comparison, the more meat and dairy people consumed, the more they weighed. Fraser said that vegetable sources of protein do not have this effect; in other words, only animal protein has this tendency to make people heavier. It is notable that fat does not seem to be the culprit. Fraser also said that dietary fiber was negatively correlated with weight gain.

Fraser discussed the longevity findings of the study, which concluded that adherence to five factors can add 10 years of life, with each factor "roughly and independently" contributing a couple of years of extra life. The five factors are: being vegetarian; nut consumption; not smoking and never having smoked; regular physical activity; and medium BMI. The study also concluded that extra quantity of life was not gained at the expense of quality; in other words, those who gained extra years were not "lingering on" but were relatively free of chronic disease.

Although Fraser said that associations between diet and cancer were in some cases probable or inconclusive, there was one unmistakable connection: non-vegetarians have a 85% greater incidence of colon cancer than vegetarians, and this is "conclusive." Regarding the findings on nuts, Fraser stated that the 1992 data showed that those who eat nuts 4 or 5 times

a week ("frequent small amounts") have only half the risk of heart attack of those who don't. Since then, carefully controlled feeding studies have confirmed this finding. Those who consume nuts are also slimmer than those who do not. Possible explanations include the satiety value of nuts, and the types of fatty acids in nuts (mono- and polyunsaturated) which may be less likely to be stored as fat.

Fraser answered several questions from his audience of doctors. Asked whether occasional meat consumption is consistent with these benefits, he said that cutting down is a "good step" but not as good as becoming vegetarian. Dr. Michael Greger called in with a question about overall mortality of vegans in the Adventist II study, which studied thousands of vegans, many more than in the original study. Fraser admitted that vegans enjoyed greater advantages in diabetes, high blood pressure, and cardio health than did ovo-lacto-vegetarians, but not a big advantage of mortality. [Your editor wants to know: what were they dying of? Dr. Greger would probably say it has something to do with intakes of vitamin B12, vitamin D, and DHA.]

Another questioner wanted to know how soon those who convert to vegetarianism can see results; Fraser replied that this is not well studied, but the impact seems to be discernible after 5 years. To a question about possible ill effects of phytoestrogens in soy on children raised vegetarian, Fraser replied that about half of SDA's eat soy "at Asian levels" without experiencing any problems. Another questioner wondered whether it made a difference whether nuts were raw or roasted; Fraser said that even when nuts are roasted in added oils, there is little negative impact, because the nuts absorb very little oil and the fatty acids in the nuts themselves are not harmed by heat. [We would note, however, that freshness is key; you should store nuts in the refrigerator or freezer.] To the question whether these positive effects of vegetarian diet will be changed by the multitude of commercial processed foods on the market that cater to vegetarians and vegans, Fraser admitted that significant consumption of these food items may have health impacts and will have to be monitored in future studies.

For copies of Dr. Fraser's work, contact [drveggie@aol.com](mailto:drveggie@aol.com). For Dr. Greger's nutritional advice, visit [DrGreger.org](http://DrGreger.org) or ask for his nutrition handout at our next RAVS meeting. ❖

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## HAIKU

not minding one bit  
a loon in the choppy waves  
beyond the pier

trees  
their clear reflection  
in the muddy river

spring dusk . . .  
two kittens stare out the window  
into it

by Bruce Ross

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## RECIPE CORNER

One of our favorite cookbooks is *The Joy of Vegan Baking* by **Colleen Patrick-Goudreau**. This gorgeous coffee-table-worthy book, printed on glossy stock and loaded with full-color photos, was voted Cookbook of the Year in 2007 by the readers of VegNews magazine and is a steal at \$20. The 125-plus recipes cover all of the standards you might want to veganize—everything from Peach Melba to Rugelach to Baklava. The recipe below would be perfect for a Valentine's Day treat.

### MEXICAN WEDDING COOKIES

Also called Russian Tea Cakes, Snowdrops (C. Patrick-Goudreau, *Joy of Vegan Baking*)  
(Yield: 3 dozen cookies)

1 c non-hydrogenated, nondairy margarine  
[such as Earth Balance]  
¼ c granulated sugar  
2 t vanilla extract  
2 c unbleached all-purpose flour, sifted  
2 c raw pecans, finely chopped  
2 c confectioner's sugar, sifted

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Line 3 cookie sheets with parchment paper or use 3 non-stick [or lightly oiled] cookie sheets. With an electric hand mixer or by hand, cream the butter, granulated sugar, and vanilla until light and fluffy, 1 to 2 min. Add the flour, and mix until thoroughly combined. Add the chopped nuts and mix until well blended, about 30 seconds. Measure out generously rounded teaspoonfuls of dough and roll them into balls. Place the balls about 1 inch apart on the cookie sheet. Bake until they just begin to turn golden, about 30 min. To test for doneness, remove one cookie from the sheet and cut it in half. There should be no doughy strip in the center. Roll the cookies in the confectioner's sugar while they are still warm, then cool on the cookie sheets. Serve when cooled.

**VEGAN VALENTINE CANDY**  
from The Voracious Vegan  
**CHOCOLATE WALNUT BARK**

- 2 (4-oz) chunks of dairy free cooking chocolate
- 2 cups coarsely chopped walnuts

Melt chocolate in top of a double boiler over hot water (not boiling). Remove from heat when melted. Stir in nuts. Spread in greased 8-inch square cake pan. Cool until firm. Cut into squares.

**CAROB CANDY**

- ½ cup maple syrup
- ½ cup creamy peanut butter
- ½ cup unsweetened carob powder
- 1 cup roasted soybeans
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup flaked coconut

In a saucepan stir together maple syrup and peanut butter over low heat until melted.

Remove from heat; stir in carob powder until well blended. Stir in soybeans and raisins and ¾ cup of the coconut until well coated. Press mixture into 9x5x3 inch loaf pan lined with waxed paper. Sprinkle top of candy with remaining coconut.

Cover; chill until firm. Cut into squares. Cover and refrigerate. Makes 24 pieces. ❖

**Top 10 Vegan Health Tips**  
(excerpted from chooseveg.com, a website of Mercy for Animals)

1. Include B12 in your diet, in the form of a multivitamin or other supplement, or fortified foods such as some cereals and soymilks. B12 protects the nervous system and also lowers homocysteine levels, thus protecting against heart disease.
2. Consume more Omega 3 fatty acids, found in walnuts, canola oil, hemp seeds, and flaxseeds. For maximum absorption and freshness, flax seeds should be ground up and either consumed promptly or stored in refrigerator or freezer.
3. Eat your greens!
4. Calcium: high-calcium vegan foods include greens such as collards, kale and broccoli; calcium-fortified soymilk and orange juice and calcium-set tofu; tahini; almonds; and blackstrap molasses.
5. Vitamin D: people living in our latitude should take a supplement or fortified foods with vitamin D. Vitamin D2 is vegan-derived (but not D3).
6. Pay attention to iodine, needed for healthy thyroid function. The most reliable vegan sources are seaweed and iodized table salt.
7. Include beans and lentils in your diet.
8. Choose whole foods over processed foods.

9. Exercise!
10. Be a HAPPY VEGAN! Don't underestimate the power your attitude has over both mental and physical health. Staying positive is essential for both ourselves and the lives of animals. ❖



**RAVS SEDER** The 16th annual RAVS vegan seder will be held on the 2nd night of Passover, Thursday, April 9th, 2009, at the Brighton Town Park Lodge, 777 Westfall Road. Please call to reserve at 234-8750. Please bring a dish that is vegan and also conforms to the Passover tradition. No wheat is allowed (e.g., no pasta, bread or cookies) except matzoh products such as farfel and matzoh meal—but no egg matzoh! Other grains such as rice are also excluded. Beans, potatoes, vegetables and fruits are fine. For details on time and place, see p. 8.

If you are not a RAVS member, **PLEASE JOIN.** If you are a member, **PLEASE LOOK AT THE EXPIRATION DATE ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL.**

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE ROCHESTER AREA VEGETARIAN SOCIETY:**

P.O. BOX 20185, ROCHESTER, NY, 14602-0185  
(585) 234-8750

Membership in the **Rochester Area Vegetarian Society** is open to all vegetarians, as well as to those who support the goals of vegetarianism and the society. RAVS' by-laws define vegetarianism as the practice of living without the use of flesh, fish or fowl, with the ideal of complete independence from animal products.

Members are entitled to admission to monthly events, and discounts on the purchase of books and other material available from RAVS. Members receive the *Vegetarian Advocate*, published three or four times a year, plus periodic notification of events. Members may borrow videos for a \$10 deposit and they are eligible for half-priced membership in the **North American Vegetarian Society** which includes a subscription to the *Vegetarian Voice* and in the **Vegetarian Resource Group** which includes a subscription to the *Vegetarian Journal*.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20/year Individual Membership          | Amount enclosed \$_____.   | Any amount over basic membership is tax deductible. Please make check payable to <b>Rochester Area Vegetarian Society</b> . |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35/year Joint membership, one address  | <input type="checkbox"/> I have a vegan lifestyle.                                 |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10/year Student/Fixed income           | <input type="checkbox"/> I have a vegan diet.                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Ornish diet  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$17/year Joint fixed income             | <input type="checkbox"/> I am an ovo-lacto vegetarian.                             |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50/year Contributing membership        | <input type="checkbox"/> I am not yet a vegetarian but would like to support RAVS. |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$75/year Sustaining membership          | Primary interest in vegetarianism:   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100/year Patron                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment   | <input type="checkbox"/> I/we am/are willing to volunteer to help RAVS.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$7/year <i>Vegetarian Advocate</i> only | <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Rights   |   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Health  |   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:  |   |



## ***RAVS Twentieth Anniversary Year !!!!!***

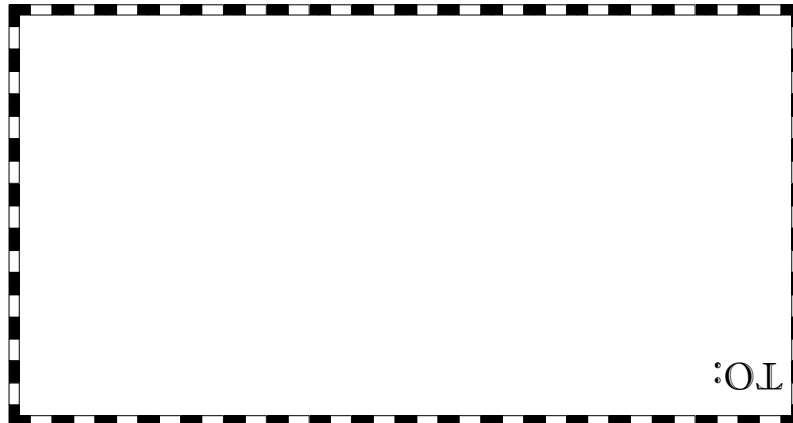
### **Rochester Area Vegetarian Society upcoming events:**

- ⇒ **February 15, 2009\*** (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday) **Worldwide Water Supplies: Commodity or Human Right?** with **Wayne Howard**, Chair, Sierra Club Great Lakes Committee, NY State, Atlantic Chapter.
- ⇒ **March 15, 2009\*** (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday) **“The Story of Stuff”**: Short Film followed by Discussion
- ⇒ **April 9, 2009** (Thursday) **16<sup>th</sup> Annual RAVS 2<sup>nd</sup> Night Seder** (shared event with Jewish Humanist group) Brighton Town Park Lodge. Doors open 5:00 PM; Service 6:00 PM followed by share-a-dish meal. See p. 7 for more information about meal. Volunteers needed for set-up and clean-up. Call 234-8750 to reserve.
- ⇒ **April 19, 2009** (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday) **Gourmet Chinese Banquet and Fundraiser**, Shanghai Restaurant, 2920 W. Henrietta Rd. 4:30 PM Cash Bar and Silent Auction of items from Wizard of Clay and others. 6:00 PM Banquet. \$20 per person, \$15 students and fixed income. Call 234-8750 to reserve, and send checks made out to “RAVS” to RAVS, P.O. Box 20185, Rochester, NY 14602-0185.

**\*Indicates a regular meeting.** Unless otherwise indicated, regular meetings are held on the third Sunday of the month at the Brighton Town Park Lodge, 5:30 PM Vegan Share-a-Dish Dinner, 7:00 PM Program.

**Directions to Brighton Town Park Lodge:** 777 Westfall Rd. between E. Henrietta Rd. (15A) and S. Clinton Rd. From 390, take Exit 16 onto 15A and go north to traffic light. Turn right on Westfall Road. Lodge is on south side on “Haudenosaunee Trail.”

**Hear the latest from our events calendar, 24 hours a day! Call 234-8750**



ROCHESTER AREA VEGETARIAN SOCIETY  
 BOX 20185  
 ROCHESTER, NY  
 14602