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VOLUME 8, ISSUE 7

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business@raleighdowntowner.com

GENERAL OFFICE INQUIRIES:
business@raleighdowntowner.com

PUBLISHER Crash Gregg
FOUNDERS Sig Hutchinson, Randall Gregg
NEWS EDITOR Melissa Santos
FOOD EDITOR Brian Adornetto
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LEAD PHOTOGRAPHER Thomas M. Way
PHOTOGRAPHERS Randy Bryant, Rodney Boles,
Nancy Thomas, Darryl Morrow

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COVER PHOTO: *Celebrity chef and restaurateur Ashley Christensen (Poole's Diner, Beasley's Chicken + Honey, Chuck's, Fox Liquor Bar) mimics the famous American Gothic painting by Grant Wood.*

PHOTO BY THOMAS M. WAY



Puzzle answers from page 20

SOME OF OUR DISTRIBUTION LOCATIONS

These are just a few of the places where the *Downtowner* is available each month. With our 100% pickup rate, many locations run out after a couple of weeks. If you can't find a copy, visit our website and read the current PDF available online. You can catch up on past issues too. If you have suggestions for another location where you'd like to see the *Downtowner*, email us at delivery@raleighdowntowner.com. We love hearing from our readers!

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NC Museum of History
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Contemporary Art Museum

MIDTOWN/NORTH/OTHER

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Carolina Ballet office
Q Shack (North Hills)
Glo de Vie Medspa (North Hills)
Whole Foods
Margaux's

HERBIVORE, OMNIVORE, CARNIVORE? Locavore!

BY JENNIFER HALWEIL

You know that moment where you open your fridge and realize the veggies you bought just two days ago are already starting to turn brown? The sad reality is that most of the food products in your supermarket trekked halfway around the world before finding their way into your home. Along the way, these foods lost nutrients and freshness, leaving a trail of carbon emissions in their traveling wake.

Most of us realize this when we read the food labels and learn that our pears are from Peru and our avocados are from Mexico, but it's not just produce that is sourced abroad. According to the Department of Agriculture, nearly 80 percent of all fish are imported from outside the US, and despite North Carolina's eminent BBQ culture, most of our meats (beef, chicken, lamb) are sourced from outside of North Carolina, as well. The environmental and carbon impacts of all this travel and packaging are glaring; the US is the second largest energy consuming country in the world, and our number two biggest energy drain is transportation, which burns through one-third of our total energy.

investing in local economy through supporting nearby farmers and local job creation, which in turn insulates communities from the recession; increasing environmental sustainability by reducing the detrimental environmental impacts of transporting foods over long distances; improving the overall health of individuals in local communities, since foods grown locally are fresher and contain more nutrients.

Josh Whiton, co-founder of the **Raleigh City Farm**, a plot of land in downtown Raleigh that enables members of the Raleigh community to grow food locally, describes his reasoning behind the Raleigh City Farm project:

"[Local farming] is good for America; it's good for the planet. By extension, it's good for your local neighborhood as well. The food grown on the plot of land at the corner of Franklin and Blount is actually going to be more nutritious than the stuff at Whole Foods, which has taken five to ten days to get there, losing a lot of nutrients along the way."

Aside from the benefits the farm provides, it also brings Josh a lot of personal happiness. "The farm

Joining the Locavore Movement

Practicing a locavore diet in Raleigh is relatively easy. There are numerous restaurants that source local food, a variety of farmer's markets that feature local farm vendors, several group co-ops and community-supported agriculture groups, as well as a variety of local farms that feature everything from strawberry picking to pumpkin patches. For more information on how to source local food and join the locavore movement, check out our detailed list of options below.

Restaurants

A Louisiana native, Chef Brian Battistella has stayed closed to his roots, creating classic New Orleans style dishes sourced from farms and fishermen located in the Southeast. Housed at 200 East Martin Street in downtown Raleigh, his restaurant **Battistella's** is the perfect place to check out pecan-crusted NC catfish. Other inexpensive local delicacies include Country Fried Steak sourced from Rare Earth Farms, a member of the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association that raises all natural, grass-fed beef.

Another Southern, local classic is **Poole's Diner** on 426 South McDowell Street. Their menu, arranged by Chef Ashley Christensen, is so locally focused that it changes weekly, sometimes even daily. In fact, as you enter the restaurant, the first thing you'll notice is the chalkboard menu that lets Poole's Downtown Diner adjust to local growers' offerings at the wipe of an eraser.

Not in the mood for Southern classics? **Jibarra**, located at 327 West Davie Street, jazzes up traditional Mexican fare with modern ingredients and style. Chef Oscar Diaz tells us that he uses as many local ingredients as possible in their menu. As much as 70-80% of Jibarra's menu items are locally sourced.

My personal favorite is **Café Helios** on Glenwood South. Their slogan is, "We live and breathe hand-crafted coffee and local, fresh fare," and they deliver on this principle. This coffee shop is the perfect place to grab a healthy, local breakfast or lunch. My favorites include their grilled cheese with avocado, and yogurt with fruit, which contains apples in addition to the standard berries that come with most yogurt fruit dishes.

If you're looking for something on the high end, **Zely & Ritz** is one local Raleigh restaurant highly committed to organic, fresh and local fare. They list the NC farms where their food is sourced on their website, and their fine dining features a healthy mix



Volunteers at the downtown Raleigh City Farm garden

Fifty years ago most people consumed food produced within a 200-mile radius of where they lived. Today, the typical American family uses food sourced thousands of miles away, and hauled via truck, rail and even ship. In response to this shifting farm paradigm, the locavore diet has begun to emerge, encouraging Americans to once again eat food sourced from local farms.

The reasons to adopt a locavore diet abound:

itself is beautiful and the pictures of food growing in the city are beautiful." Psychologists have found that most people find pictures of nature and being among nature more relaxing than being surrounded by urban environments that lack greenery. Josh raises an often overlooked reason to support local farming—local farms don't just improve physical health, they also improve our psychological well-being.

of NC seafood, pork, beef and lamb with a variety of vegetarian options also on the menu.

Honorable mention goes to **Green Planet Catering**. Technically it's not a restaurant, but this locally-owned business is the perfect catering option for local, sustainable sourced food. Owner Daniel Whittaker is one of the most passionate "greenovators" I have ever met and was named 2011's Green Advocate of the Year. Whether you're planning a wedding, corporate event, or in my case, the 2009 Hillsborough Street Festival, Green Planet Catering offers a wide array of eco-food options perfect for any size event and budget.

I would be remiss not to mention **Market Restaurant** where Chef Chad McIntyre embraces all-natural ingredients and to prove it, you might catch him in his T-shirt that reads "I eat local because I can." Located at 938 North Blount Street in the beautiful Mordecai neighborhood, their menu is seasonal and currently features summer classics including Kale Chips, Grilled Avocado Salad and Squash Latkes.

Local Farmers Markets

The **Saturday Market**, runs every Saturday until November 17th from 9am to 1pm, and is a great way to spend a Saturday morning. Located at 301 Kinsey Street in Boylan Heights near the Boylan Avenue bridge, this scenic market features beautiful



Brian Battistella juggles tomatoes at the State Farmers Market, where he buys many of the ingredients for his restaurant.

tomatoes, butter beans, field peas, garlic, broccoli, cucumbers, and corn and a great view of downtown Raleigh. In addition, you can pickup some of Bill Hickman's famous Lemon Tahini sauce.

Need a suggestion for what to cook with all that newfound fresh food? Bill Hickman kindly gave us one of his favorite recipes:

Rice Noodles with Lemon Tahini

½ jar Bill's Lemon Tahini

- 1 package of rice noodles
- 1 roasted red bell pepper
- 3 sprigs spring onion
- 1 Tbs toasted sesame seeds

Cook rice noodles according to directions, rinse and cool. Toss in Bill's Lemon Tahini and roasted red bell pepper. Stir until noodles are coated. Garnish with chopped spring onions and toasted sesame seeds.

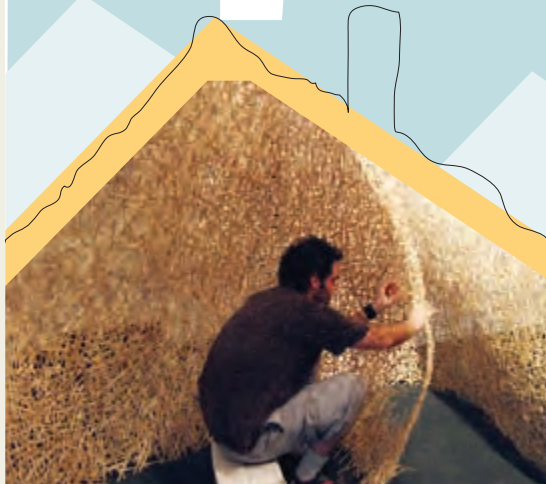
From 10:30am–1pm, the LoMo Market truck swings by the Saturday Market bringing meats, dairy, eggs, fish, fruits, vegetables, baked goods, and "grab and go" prepared foods. Their extensive local farm partners include: produce from Coon Rock Farms, meats from Farm Hand Foods, seafood from Dock to Door, produce from Vollmer Farms and Hilltop Farms, hot sauces from Guna's, baked goods from Scratch, cheeses and eggs from Elodie, dumplings from Sarah Cecilia's Good Food, eggs from Latta Farms, and lots of tasty treats from Triangle Raw Foods.

The **Raleigh Downtown Farmers Market** is the perfect place to grab breakfast foods or brunch. Live music provides the soundtrack accompaniment to chef demonstrations, making for a unique event.

Open rain or shine (April 28th–October 27th) at City Plaza on Fayetteville Street, this Wednesday market features a wide array of jellies, baked goods, berries, honey, cheese, eggs, and bacon from 10am–2pm. This is also the perfect place to pick up ingredients for a >>>

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Summer Artist-in-Residence

Artspace welcomes **Jonathan Brilliant** as the 2012 Summer Artist-in-Residence. For the month of July, Jonathan will welcome visitors to his temporary studio, Artspace's Gallery One, while he focuses on creating a large-scale installation comprised on simple objects such as coffee stirrers and plastic coffee lids.





first class seafood dinner—with a variety of local herb vendors, and fresh seafood from the Outer Banks sold onsite.

Visit <http://bitly.com/marketcheck> to find if a particular item is currently available or sold at the market, so you can pick up some last minute groceries for dinner during your afternoon lunch break.

Raleigh's oldest farmers market is **City Market Produce**, nestled on the corner of East Davie and Blake Streets within the City Market cobblestone drives behind Artspace. Run by Ricky Davis and Charlie Coats, it is part of the historic City Market, a downtown collective of boutiques, restaurants, and shops established in 1914. The produce store's large, open air space is shared between the two owners.

The sign perched on the wall outside states the name and operating hours—nothing fancy, but the store's delicious-looking food advertises itself on tables under the awning, tempting and beckoning shoppers inside. A stack of enormous watermelons sits alongside ears of corn and rows of fresh vegetables.

City Market Produce is open year-round and sells local in-season produce. "In the summertime, when we can get local, it's all local," says Davis, who recommended the hand-shelled butterbeans, "If you haven't had them, you're missing out!" The store's space is filled with fresh fruit, vegetables and



preserves. "We sell all kind of shell peas, butterbeans, corn, fruits, all the country stuff while it's in season, and all kinds of jams and jellies and pickles. We offer some of everything," says Coats.

You can call Charlie at 919.834.8801 or Ricky at 919.961.2570 for more information on what's in season. They're open every Thursday through Saturday year round, 7am to 6pm.

By far, the largest farmers market is still the **State Farmers Market**. Located at 1201 Agriculture Street off Lake Wheeler Rd., this 2-acre features produce, meats, bakery items, crafts, soaps, and outdoor architectural elements (such as planters and fountains). Open Monday through Saturday 5am-6pm, and Sundays from 8am until 6pm, the

State Farmers Market provides Raleigh the opportunity to skip the grocery store all together.

Farmers Markets are not just places to buy food. Several markets provide educational opportunities, including the **NCSU Farmers Market** and **Inter-Faith Food Shuttle's Young Farmers Market**.

Located at D.H. Hill Library in the Brickyard, just a hop, skip and a jump from Hillsborough Street, the **NCSU Farmers Market** features a huge educational component, often hosting composting fairs, petting zoos and other information sessions during their Wednesday events September through November and

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including strawberries, cantaloupe, corn, cucumbers, peppers, potatoes, pumpkins, squash, tomatoes, and watermelon. They're open Monday through Saturday from 8am-6pm and Sunday afternoons from 1pm to 4pm. Visit their farm April 15th through October to enjoy NC's amazing outdoor weather and an afternoon of wholesome food gathering.



Local farms are not all produce gathering stations. **Carousel Farms** at 5800 Louisburg Road features horse trails, lessons and farm tours, as well as a rodeo every Tuesday night from May through September. Their pony rides and calf scramble provide a great opportunity for kids to learn about animals up-close and personal.

Composting

Local farming and urban farms both require nutrient-rich, healthy soil. The best way to create healthy soil is by composting. The average household produces more than 500 pounds of organic waste a year, with only two percent of that presently composted. There is a huge opportunity to divert this waste from overcrowded landfills, reduce greenhouse gases and improve local soil quality in the process. For more information on how you can compost here in the Triangle check out these local guys at www.compostnow.org.

Urban Farming

Urban farming may become the single greatest way to alleviate hunger and poverty issues globally. Fifty percent of the world's population presently lives in cities, and low-income urban dwellers spend approximately half of their income each year on food. Imagine a world where instead of food stamp handouts that barely cover the costs of unhealthy, calorie-dense items like ramen and other pre-processed foods, low-income communities were given plots of land and the seeds necessary to start an urban

farm. Families could bond together, growing their own nutrient-rich, fresh (and free) food.

The benefits of urban farming are apparent with lower costs of producing food. There is an abundance of vacant lots and rooftops in urban environments that could easily support farming. These farms could in turn provide an empowering opportunity for communities to come together to create sustainable food cycles that eliminate hunger and provide meaningful labor.

City farms are springing up across the country and the Raleigh City Farm just held their first harvest and food stand offering in downtown Raleigh. Their "Dig Where You Live" campaign helps illustrate several of the benefits associated with local and urban farming, including the fact that digging, planting, watering, and growing plants provides the perfect social Saturday exercise activity to meet new friends

or bond as a family. To get involved check out the calendar on their website: <http://raleighcityfarm.com/calendar/> and come out to a meet-up, volunteer workday or produce sale. Locavores unite!

Jenn Halweil is a writer with an entrepreneurial spirit with a passion for filmmaking, social ventures and all things green. Comments on this article? Email her at jennh@raleighdowntowner.com



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This Month's Reader Rewards

- Five \$25 gift cards to **Revolver Consignment Boutique** located at 124 Glenwood Avenue near Hillsborough Street. Why pay full price for designer jeans, dresses, shoes and more for men and women?! Plus, shop online now too at www.revolverboutique.com.
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- Ten \$15 gift certificates to **NOFO @ the Pig** located at 21014 Fairview Road in Five Points. At NOFO, you'll find an eclectic mix of furniture, gifts, antiques, books, kitchen, toys, and more, plus an award-winning restaurant. www.nofo.com
- Four \$25 gift certificates to **Jibarra Mexican Restaurant** in the historic Warehouse District. Traditional Mexican dishes + contemporary presentation = amazing results. www.jibarra.net
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From the Publisher

The buying-local trend has been on the rise lately for many industries, especially when it comes to food. More and more restaurants feature

locally-grown produce and meats on their menus, residential gardens have become more popular and the local farmer is once again an important part of the socio-economic supply. Nothing tastes better than freshly sourced ingredients and the best place to find them is usually a neighborhood market that gets its inventory directly from local

farms. For those who don't have room or time to plant and maintain their own garden, community gardens are also becoming more prevalent. Even chickens are getting in on the act with downtown chicken coops hatching all over. They even have

their own Tour D'Coop each year (<http://tourd-coop.com>). Hopefully, these aren't just trends, but a new way of living healthy, sustainable and local.

By buying local, we know the origin of our food, what's in it (or more importantly, what's NOT in it), and we also save on shipping costs. Be sure to read about some of the local farm co-ops in this issue, eat at restaurants who use local ingredients, volunteer in a community garden, or grow your own right in your backyard or balcony and share with your neighbors and friends. Every bit can add up to a big difference and the extra can be donated to the Food Bank to help those in need.

For those of you who pay attention to details, you'll notice this is Issue 7. Don't worry, you didn't miss Issue 6. Since the office fire put us so far behind our recent publish dates, we thought it would be best (and less confusing) to skip Issue 6 and jump to Issue 7 so the date more adequately matches our normal mid-month delivery.

Things are slowly getting into back their groove here at the *Downtowner*. After losing everything in the fire, old-fashioned hard work is paying off and each day is a little easier than the last. We'd like to again thank everyone for all the help, support and well wishes. A particularly big "Thank You" to Doro Taylor and John O'Neal at CityGate for our great new office space in downtown.

We're proud to serve our 72,000+ readers each month and help promote all the great things about downtown, Raleigh and the Triangle. Here's to a great rest of the year.

Cheers,

CRASH GREGG
Publisher, *Raleigh Downtowner Magazine*
publisher@raleighdowntowner.com





Posta Tuscan Grille

BY BRIAN ADORNETTO, FOOD EDITOR | PHOTOS BY CRASH GREGG

First, let's clear up a few things. Despite popular belief, Posta Tuscan Grille is neither owned nor operated by Marriott. While it is located on the far left side of the hotel's lobby, the restaurant itself is free standing and merely leases the space from the Marriott's owners. Another misconception about Posta is that the Betti Brothers are in the kitchen running the place. For a time that was true. However, they left for uptown Atlanta long ago.

The people presently running Posta Tuscan Grille are Manager Jacki Hyatt and Executive Chef Michael Dugarian. In a recent change of management, they were commissioned to elevate the restaurant to new heights. Hyatt, who earned her Master's Degree at the University of Connecticut, has thrived in bed and breakfasts, country clubs and resorts from Massachusetts to Florida. And after watching her interact with the restaurant's patrons, I can attest that her



Chef Michael Dugarian

enthusiasm and spark are contagious.

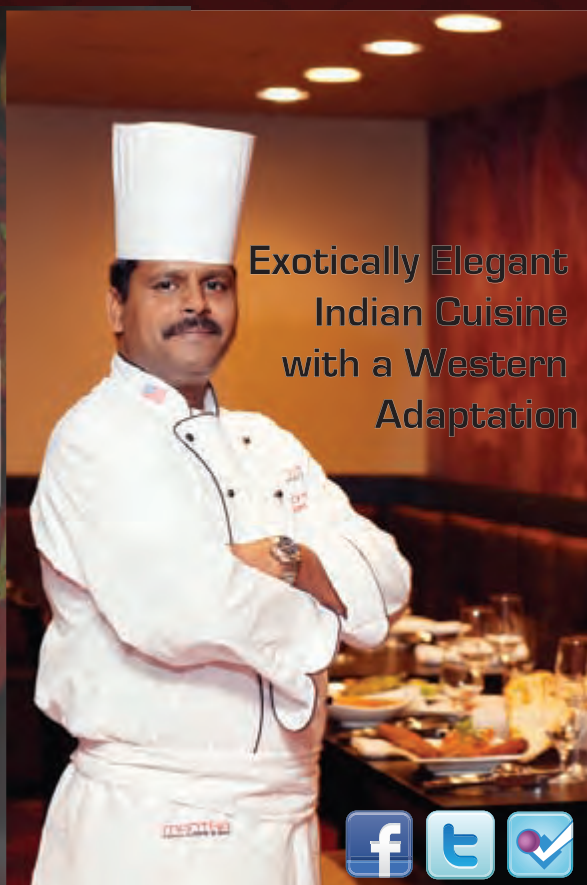
Chef Dugarian has spent the last 12 years commandeering the bustling kitchens of the Washington Nationals and Orlando Convention Center. His philosophy of bringing simple, clean flavors to your plate has begun to take hold at Posta. He has implemented a new "all day" menu featuring lighter, smaller plates in the bar and lounge. He has also started introducing new menu items in the main dining room and is in the process of partnering with local farmers to feature farmers' market specials and hold "farm to fork" dinners.

Although there have been many changes at Posta, the stunning decor remains the same. A massive rectangular bar, tall communal tables and lounging banquettes offer a stately greeting, and candlelit tables, dark wood wainscoting and orange-yellow hues in the main dining room give off a formal, finessed look.

Posta's dinner menu is broken down into five

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sections: Antipasto (appetizers), Insalata e Zuppa (salad and soup), Pasta e Risotto, Secondi (entrees with sides), and From the Grill. The antipasto section includes items such as Seared Scallops with chickpea puree (\$10) and Eggplant Parmigiana (\$12). The golden brown scallops are served atop a rich, creamy chickpea puree. Think a thinner Italian style hummus. Hearty chunks of eggplant are cooked, tossed in a mild tomato sauce, placed in a heatproof ramekin, and topped with fresh mozzarella. The ramekin is then placed under the broiler and cooked until the cheese is brown and crusty. Favorites such as Mixed Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette (\$7), Caprese Salad (\$9), and Minestrone (\$6) make appearances in the salad and soup category. The next section contains dishes like Spaghetti with Tomato Sauce (\$17), Seafood Risotto (\$29), and housemade Ravioli (\$21). The ravioli is a stand out. The soft delicate pillows of cheese and fresh spinach are free form and rustic, yet extremely elegant.

Under the Secondi heading, you'll find entrees like Filet of Sea Bass (\$34) and Veal Scaloppini (\$28). Oven roasted yet still moist, the sea bass is currently served with a silky white wine and butter pan sauce, while the veal is bathed



in tomato sauce and topped with Fontina and Parmigiano Reggiano cheese. The From the Grill section touches on the usual suspects including Rack of Lamb (\$17/\$27) and Filet Mignon (\$32). These can be paired with your choice of sauce and contorni (sides \$4/\$7). Among the list of

sides are Cannellini Beans, Roasted Fingerling Potatoes, and Sautéed Swiss Chard. The white Italian beans are cooked in a thin tomato sauce and tossed with fresh herbs, whereas the tender chard is mixed with roasted tomatoes, adding depth and punch to the greens.

The dessert menu contains Italian classics such as Panna Cotta, Tiramisu and Budino. Posta's Panna cotta is a cold, creamy vanilla flan like custard. In stark contrast, the chocolate Nudino is warm, gooey and decadent like a Lava Cake.

Posta Tuscan Grille has been a fixture downtown for a while and has seen profound change all around it. Its new team has the ability to bring out its full potential.

Brian is a culinary instructor, food writer and chef. His business, Love at First Bite, specializes in private cooking classes and intimate dinners. For more information, please visit www.loveatfirstbite.net. Brian can be reached at brian@raleighdowntowner.com.

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Reader emails. We love ‘em! We get hundreds every month from our wonderful readers. Some ask for recommendations on places to eat, some are looking for venue ideas to host a party or a charity event, others asking about parking or offer story ideas. But we have to admit our favorites are the emails telling us why you read the Downtowner.

Our Reader Rewards program is designed to thank our readers for being part of the Downtowner family and making us the most read magazine per-issue in the Triangle (and that goes for weeklies too). Our 100% pick up rate is what makes it all the difference.

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Now button on the center right and join our Reader Rewards giveaways to win lots of free stuff. Feel free to leave comments for us and we’ll include them in this column. We work hard to make the Downtowner a worthy publication for our 70,000+ monthly readers and we love to hear suggestions, ideas and anything else you’d like to include. We love our readers as much as they love the *Downtowner*.

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Where’s it @?



Do you know where this photo was taken? Visit www.raleighdowntowner.com/where to send in your answer and you could win a Downtowner T-shirt. We’ll select a random winner from the correct answers. (Answers can be the spot where the photo was taken FROM or the SUBJECT of the photo. It’s just for fun, so we’re not picky).

Don’t worry, we have new T-shirt designs coming soon you can order in case you don’t win. They’re just \$15, with \$7.50 of each shirt going to local charities. Cool shirts for a good cause. What could be better?



<<<

Congratulations to **Elizabeth Sinclair** who was the first to identify last month’s clue as the massive iron gates by Marbles Kids Museum at 201 East Hargett that lead into walkway of the IMAX Theater. The “whisper” gates (and benches) feature interwoven hollow sound tubes where visitors can talk into one end and hear in another. They were built by sculptor NC Jim Gallucci and were inspired by his daughter Madeline and are meant to inspire interaction with his art and with others.

Our runner-up winners were Clair Winholt,, Angel Tybee, Doug Mortensen, and Latissa Smith. Thanks for entering and be sure to try your guess with this month’s clue.

Bringing Cool to Raleigh

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY GEORGE CHUNN

Summer nights are officially cool, thanks to The Art of Cool Project (AOCP). Founded by trumpeter Albert Strong IV and Cicely Mitchell in historically jazz-rich Durham, The Art of Cool Project is blowing its smooth jazz sounds east into downtown Raleigh. Synthesizing jazz music in an art setting, The AOCP is giving the blossoming audience of mature and hip nightlife seekers a new alternative to the nighttime scene.



Art of Cool Project co-founder Al Strong

Strong, a Washington, D.C. native, was influenced and surrounded by music from a very early age. His grandmother played the earth organ at prayer groups when he was young and even then, he was “inspired by the spirit she evoked” when she played. He used to tag along with his grandmother who was part of a program that created a steel band for at-risk youth in Washington D.C. When he walked home from school, he would watch the older musicians at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts rehearsing and was inspired by the young men studying and playing jazz. He still remembers being given his first Clifford Brown record by one of the older musicians attending the school. At the age of 15, he auditioned and

was invited to attend the school himself. While at The Duke Ellington School of the Arts, musicians such as Wynton Marsalis and Terence Blanchard would frequently mentor and hold clinics for the students. Strong also played with the school’s jazz band that traveled internationally and performed in countries across the world. It was then Strong decided playing music is what he wanted to do.

In addition to performing, Strong is also working to promote the future of jazz in the area. He is currently a Jazz music professor at Saint Augustine University as well as an adjunct professor at Shaw University and North Carolina Central University. He believes that the success of the genre in the area will increase as the population increases. He acknowledges that part of gaining traction in the area will be the support that people show by attending more performances. “We want people to not only enjoy the music; we want them to experience it in a live setting.” Through the Art of Cool Project, Strong and Mitchell partner with local venues to showcase both art and music.

A non-profit organization, the AOCP has quietly become the premier advocate for established and up-and-coming jazz musicians and art galleries in the area. Since August 2011, the AOCP has presented 13 concerts in local art galleries in Raleigh and Durham, most of which have been to standing-room-only crowds. Performances in downtown Raleigh are every first Friday of the



Art of Cool Project staff and volunteers

month at Flanders Art Gallery as well as every first and third Thursday and second and fourth Saturday at C Grace Lounge. Some of the jazz artists featured include The Al Strong Quintet, The Beast, and local favorites Shana Tucker and Peter Lamb and the Wolves. “We are part of a musical movement in the Triangle and the call is an excellent opportunity for emerging artists, as well as established acts, to get in front of new faces and be reviewed by industry professionals,” says Cicely Mitchell. Judging by concert turnouts, the AOCP is buzzing a new tune downtown.



A recent sold-out standing-room-only AOCP crowd at Flanders Gallery

Although jazz has had a strong following—as evidenced by area radio stations programming—it has yet to emerge from the background of the downtown scene in Raleigh. Until now. Through art and jazz/neo-soul, the AOCP is bringing together a mix of culture aficionados together for fantastic evenings. For this socially diverse crowd, it’s more about the art, music and conversation more than the drinks and dance. You don’t have to be cool to experience it, but you sure will feel cool afterwards.

So on the hot nights this summer, grab your friends or significant other and get your chill on with events sponsored by the Art of Cool Project. The forecast for Downtown Raleigh will be officially cool. For more information on concerts and upcoming events visit them on the web at www.theartofcoolproject.com.

George is a writer and account manager for Downtown Magazine. Drop him a line to learn more about promoting your business in the Downtowner, george@raleighdowntowner.com.

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Adam and Brett pose by their newly opened Downtown Dental office on Fayetteville Street (www.thedowntowndentists.com)



Mary & Diana at a recent party at Mosaic Wine Lounge



Mary-Ann Baldwin, Clymer Cease, Jr. and Mayor Nancy McFarlane at an Artsposure sponsor luncheon



Guests at the Art of Cool Project's jazz show at Flanders Gallery



Keith working the wheels on the patio at Mosaic



Stephanie out for her bachelorette party at London Bridge Pub

AROUNDTOWNAROUNDTOWNAROUNDTOWN

The 4th of July all-day event attracted one fo the largest crowds ever to fill downtown Fayetteville Street





At the State Farmers Market: Nicole from Tart's, the girls from Johnston Farms and Logan from Langdon Farms (various Around Town photos by Randy Bryant)



Quentin Jones and Russ Thompson perform at the Downtown Farmers Market on City Plaza



Mirabel among the flowers at the Raleigh Rose Garden



Natalie, Marcia, Patti & Heather perform during First Friday

AROUNDTOWNAROUNDTOWNAROUNDTOWN



Donald picks up an order during Krispy Kreme's 75th anniversary party while a happy customer enjoys a warm doughnut fresh off the line

Readers at the Roast Grill in downtown



Noah strikes a familiar pose by the statue of Opie and Andy Taylor at Pullen Park



Joey and Kayla at London Bridge Pub



DJs at Mosaic Wine Lounge



Fire Wok BY BRIAN ADORNETTO, FOOD EDITOR



While it might seem like an odd match on the surface, the Fire Wok partnership between the Lees and the Longos is no coincidence. Kevin Lee, the guiding force behind Panda Properties Sino, LLC, has been operating Chinese restaurants from Cary to Morrisville for over 15 years. Mario Longo and his son, Michael, have earned their reputations by running Vic's Ristorante in City Market and La Volta in the Progress Energy Building near City Plaza. The two families are good friends, frequenting each other's restaurants for years and watching each other's children grow up and join the hospitality business.



Mario Longo

The Longos had been kicking around the idea of opening up another restaurant for quite a while, and even though they had their eye on the vacant spot across from Vic's—Krispy Kreme's former outpost—they didn't really know what kind of restaurant they wanted to open. Then, one night it hit Michael. "Do you know what we need downtown? A Chinese take out place, a fast one," he recalls saying to his father. The next day they called Lee, and now downtown Raleigh finally has a quick-serve Asian restaurant, Fire Wok.

With the goal of accommodating the food needs of the growing work force in and around City Center, Fire Wok joins several food court mainstays in what

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I'm Harv Wells and I would welcome the opportunity to assist you in this emerging market.

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is literally becoming the Fayetteville Street Mall.

What separates this quick-serve from the others, however, is that all of the food at Fire Wok is made in-house using fresh vegetables. As you wait to place or pick up your order, you can see the cooks frying large batches of rice, steaming string beans and cooking noodles for the lo mein.

\$5.99 gives you a choice of any two menu items plus fried rice. That's more food than most people finish in one sitting. The menu features entrees such as Sesame Chicken, Kung Pao Shrimp, General Tso's Chicken, Vegetable Lo Mein, and Chicken with Broccoli. Sides include two spring rolls, green beans, and mixed vegetables. If that's too much food for you, Fire Wok offers Crab Rangoons



and Dumplings (\$3.45), Egg Drop Soup, Miso Soup, and Hot and Sour Soup (\$2.25). You'll also find pre-made sushi, not unlike what you'd encounter at Harris Teeter, made onsite from fresh ingredients.

If you're on a tight schedule for lunch, have a large order, or want to bring something home for dinner, you can place your order on Fire Wok's website and arrange for pick up or delivery. For something different, fresh, and fast, stop by Fire Wok. You'll get a lot of bang for your buck. 🍲



Brian is a culinary instructor, food writer and personal chef. His business, Love at First Bite, specializes in private cooking classes and intimate dinners. For more information, please visit Brian at www.loveatfirstbite.net. Brian can be reached for comment at brian@raleighdowntowner.com.

Fire Wok

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WRITERS WANTED

The Raleigh Downtowner Magazine is searching for the shiznit of contributing writers for web + print. If you're passionate about any of the topics below, or have another idea for a column, send us an email to writers@raleighdowntowner.com.

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LOCAL HISTORY

Lassiter Mill

BY SAMANTHA SMITH

Many Raleigh citizens are familiar with the park at the intersection of Old Lassiter Mill Road and Lassiter Mill Road on Crabtree Creek. Over the years, generations of Raleigh families have explored, fished, swam, and canoed in this area. Characterized by its roaring dam and prominent surrounding houses, the park is also home to the remains of historic Lassiter Mill—a once prominent and flourishing mill that serviced the people and businesses of Raleigh for many years. The natural beauty of the site coupled with its historic legacy of Raleigh enterprise makes it a unique feature to Raleigh's landscape. Although Lassiter Mill's success as a park is merited, the iconic

dam located near the mill is more than a beautiful location for children and families to enjoy; historically the dam was the powerhouse behind Raleigh's bread-making machine.

Lassiter Mill was a huge supplier of several meal-based products during the 20th century—the mill was literally the breadbasket of

Raleigh for several decades. Their catalogue included yellow and coarse cornmeal, flour, hushpuppy mix, feed, and other varied items. Purchases were catalogued in a large brown book, which is now located in the archives of the Raleigh City Museum. The book includes handwritten local phone numbers for people and businesses as well as a ledger for transactions. Lassiter Mill served an

The Museum is temporarily closed and is tentatively scheduled to reopen to the public in mid-August.

important need in the Raleigh community and represented industrialization, business and economic advancement.

The legacy of Lassiter Mill is apparent. Its historical footprint extends beyond the name of the modern day streets in the area. The mill is and will be forever etched in Raleigh's collective memory as one of the major centers of business in the 20th century. Along with the memory of the prominent mill, the Lassiter name lives on today in the progeny of Cornelius Jesse Lassiter who established the mill on April 25, 1909. The Raleigh City Museum holds several artifacts from the mill in its archives, including stamps reading "50 lbs. Net Lassiter Corn Meal/ Lassiter Milling Company/ Raleigh, NC 27609," "Coarse,"

and "Yellow" for the different kinds of meal. The museum also has a classic Lassiter's Corn Meal Bag, ledgers, receipts, and checks related to the mill. Each item is a testament to a time that once was—all pieces that fit into the interconnected web of Raleigh's history as a city and as a hotbed of industry and innovation. 📖

The Raleigh City Museum is located at 220 Fayetteville Street in downtown Raleigh. The Museum is temporarily closed as part of the transition from private management to public management. The museum is tentatively scheduled to reopen to the public in mid-August.

"There is a significant amount of remodeling required," said Museum Administrator Troy Burton. "In reviewing options, we determined it was in the best interest of the public to close the museum while this construction is taking place. We are truly excited and humbled for this opportunity and are confident the public will respond positively to the museum and our programs when we reopen in August."

The Raleigh City Museum will be managed by the Historical Resources and Museum Program within the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Burton serves as administrator of the program, which also includes the Borden Building, Dr. M.T. Pope House, Fred Fletcher Amphitheater, Latta House and University Site, Mordecai Historic Park, The Raleigh Trolley, and Tucker House.

For more information on the Raleigh City Museum transition, visit the City of Raleigh website at www.raleighnc.gov and enter "Raleigh City Museum" in the search window. Interested parties also may contact Mr. Burton at troy.burton@raleighnc.gov or 919.996.4772.



Various artifacts used by Lassiter Mill



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DRINKING SIMPLY

BY JEFF BRAMWELL



Being fresh off a much needed vacation that took me through some of my favorite wine regions in France and Italy, you might think I'd be obsessed with all the world-class wine I tasted or would

have loved to taste. Instead, one of the best takeaways from this trip—despite the wine-centric nature of the vacation—was letting the wine take a back seat to what was happening at the moment when the time was right.

After the frantic fun of Paris and a side trip to Champagne filled with marathon meals and the city-wide hikes necessary to offset the daily caloric intake, arriving in laid-back Provence was pure perfection. Following a brief but enjoyable visit to the wine producer Commanderie de la Bargemone (my official “house rosé” ‘til the end of summer), the destination was Cassis, a tucked-away harbor town about a half an hour and a world away from Marseille, France's second-largest city. It doesn't take much to achieve happiness while you're hanging out here; eat some tuna tartare and calamari, add another bottle or three of rosé, and just sit for hours and watch the sun set over the rolling waves of the Mediterranean. The wine doesn't have to be world class, and it'll probably only cost you about five dollars a glass, but I guarantee you it's the best thing you could possibly wish for at that very moment.

This experience was echoed when I got to Lake Garda in Italy's northeastern Veneto region, the home of Prosecco, among many other wines. Driving around Verona is, it turns out, is not my favorite way to relax. One-way streets that seem only wide enough to be pedestrian alleyways are the norm, and although it may not be fast-paced driving, it's a stressful town to get around in nonetheless. So once again, the refuge of waterfront dining and drinking was the antidote. This time around it was an equally inexpensive, simple red wine paired with a pizza topped with pepperoni, capers and whole black olives. Bardolino, the less serious sibling to better-known Valpolicella, with its light and fruity flavors, is not trying to be the star of any meal. It's happy to play a supporting role. Not a lot of this is even exported to the U.S., but inexpensive Valpolicella will do the trick nicely at your next pizza night.



My point here, besides reliving these experiences in an effort to return to my happy place, is to celebrate what I call “one note” wines. Wines that aren't trying to deliver boatloads of complexity, layers of flavor or age-worthy structure, but rather do one thing and do it well. There are a lot of simple wines out there, but few of them pull off this simple task for the right price.

The crowd favorite value red wine of the past several years, Malbec, has been going through some growing pains lately. Some wineries have gone down the same road that led to the demise of Australian Shiraz's popularity, making wines with syrupy flavors, overly soft tannins and ever-inflating price tags. Other producers have been complacent, riding the wave of the grape's popularity without delivering the goods, even at an everyday price. Inexpensive is great, but you'd better be getting something for your money. There's still plenty of good Malbec out there, it's just that now you have to navigate through the hordes of underwhelming bottles that have worked their way into the U.S. over the past few years. As an alternative source for similar flavors, I'd recommend checking out Tochucho's blend of Garnacha and Tempranillo grapes from Madrid in Spain. For a very modest \$8.99, it delivers juicy, dark raspberry flavors and an easy-going texture that will outperform the majority of similarly priced Malbecs.

This will be old news for anyone that's ever asked for a wine to take along on their beach vacation, but with the hot weather setting up shop in Raleigh for the next several months there's really no beating Vinho Verde from Portugal. This lightly spritzzy white wine, laced with lemon and lime zest flavors, is the ultimate thirst-quencher by the pool or after mowing the lawn. And it's low enough in alcohol that if you finish off a bottle (okay, maybe you should split it with a friend) while you're getting the grill started, you'll still be lively enough to enjoy the rest of your evening.

Jeff Bramwell is a co-owner of The Raleigh Wine Shop, located at 126 Glenwood Ave, as well as the author of *VinoBurger*, a cookbook that combines wine country-inspired dishes in burger form with easy-to-grasp wine education. Drop Jeff a line at Jeff@TheRaleighWineShop.com.

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Creating a Diversity of Housing Opportunities in the 21st Century

BY GREGG WARREN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, DHIC, INC.

The Urban Design Center's Creating Great Places June lunch forum raised some interesting questions about "Housing in the 21st Century" in Raleigh, particularly downtown. Decent affordable housing is integral to Raleigh's competitive advantage and its ability to attract and retain the many businesses and cultural institutions that rely on lower-wage workers to be successful. But with the scarcity and escalating price of land—and federal subsidies and private financing on the decline—opportunities for affordable housing are becoming more difficult to find.



The renovated Murphey School, now home to 48 apartments and Burning Coal Theatre

DHIC, Inc., Raleigh's largest and oldest non-profit developer of affordable housing, grapples with this problem every day as we look for new and innovative partnerships for delivering affordable housing options downtown. An example of innovation is the historic Prairie Building on South Wilmington Street. We renovated this building in 2000, creating our offices plus eleven light-filled apartments for people earning less than 60 percent of area median income—people like teachers,

artists, culinary workers and entry-level professionals. We saw this as a win-win for everyone, not only for meeting our office needs, but also for providing affordable, downtown living for individuals with modest incomes. After all, these are the people that work hard every day to make downtown the destination we all envision it to be and appreciate. Why shouldn't they have the option of living here, too?

There also are historically significant neighborhoods near downtown that with proper planning and stewardship, can yield new affordable housing opportunities while retaining important, diverse, long-time residents such as our elders and the African-American community of southeast Raleigh. That's why DHIC renovated the historic Murphey School, located on the edge of Oakwood, into 48 apartments for seniors. Many of its residents grew up in the neighborhood and went to school there as children. Murphey School has recently undergone a renewal of common areas including green features for cost savings and healthy living such as the first solar thermal panels on a Raleigh historic building.

Carlton Place, a mixed-income, mixed-use community on East Davie Street is another example of DHIC's successful efforts to create affordable housing downtown. Featuring 80 apartments and flexible commercial space just a five-minute walk from Fayetteville Street, Carlton Place provides safe, high-quality housing for families with limited means as well as market rate apartments. For aspiring homeowners, we are beginning a 10-unit row house project on South Person and East Lenoir later this year. This development will offer affordable homeownership opportunities that fit well into

the newly designated South Person/South Blount Historic Overlay District.

None of this housing could have been possible without cooperative, collaborative partnerships, planning and financial support from the City of Raleigh, Wake County, and the private sector, including our newest banks: Wells Fargo and PNC. And we can't forget the support of Raleigh leaders and residents who made the Housing Bonds possible this year. DHIC is able to leverage resources and partners due in large part to our emphasis on high quality design and construction that adds value to neighborhoods and attracts new development and revitalization efforts alongside our own. Like we said, it's a win-win for everyone. 🏡



Carlton Place, just a five minute walk to downtown, offers 80 mixed-income apartments

Interested in learning more? Subscribe to our e-newsletter at www.dhic.org, or friend us on Facebook!

See the June, 20, 2012 Creating Great Places Urban Design Center Forum at www.raleighnc.gov/portal/portal/cor/ext/RTNVideos



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DOWNTOWN

From the Downtown



SNAPSHOT

Raleigh Alliance



Dear Reader,

In this edition we are learning about the creative ways our communities are connecting with local farms. Each year the Downtown Raleigh Alliance strives to deliver high quality events such as the Raleigh Downtown Farmers' Market which brings together thousands of downtown employees, residents, chefs, and visitors with local growers and food artisans every Wednesday between April and October.

I am excited to announce the Raleigh Downtown Farmers' Market's next great special event, "Cheese Please!" which will take place on Wednesday, August 1st from 10am-2pm at City Plaza on the 400 block of Fayetteville Street. This will be a local celebration of cheese and is supported in part by the American Cheese Society. Plan to visit City Plaza and meet some of North Carolina's finest cheese makers and experience a grilled cheese cook off, local beer and cheese pairings, live music programmed by Hopscotch, local lunch vendors, and fresh produce, meats, and artisan baked goods. For more information check out the market's website, www.RaleighEatLocal.com.

The Downtown Raleigh Alliance's mission is to continue the revitalization of downtown by enhancing the investments of the public and private sectors through five performance services: Clean & Safe Ambassadors, Marketing & Events, Economic Development, Public Space Management, and Membership & Advocacy.

To learn more about downtown events, parking, maps, and the free R-LINE circulator bus visit www.YouRHere.com.

Please enjoy this issue of the *Downtowner Magazine*.

DAVID DIAZ
President and CEO, Downtown Raleigh Alliance
www.YouRHere.com

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