



THE LATEST BUZZ FROM THE BIRCHWOOD CAFE

good real food

June • 2009

3311 East 25th Street • Minneapolis • 612 722 4474 • www.birchwoodcafe.com

What's Happening/Birchwood Buzz

Wed June 3rd FRESH the Movie! Birchwood Cafe w/IATP (the Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy), LSP (Land Stewardship Project), the Twin Cities Natural Foods Co-ops, Bryant Lake Bowl, and Haberman and Associates are pleased as punch to present **FRESH @ the River-view Theatre 7pm**. **FRESH** features urban farmer/activist Will Allen of Growing Power, the recipient of a 2008 MacArthur Genius Grant, and sustainable farmer and entrepreneur Joel Salatin of *Omnivore's Dilemma* fame. I love this film because it offers inspiring stories of real-life local foods heroes working hard every day toward a shared vision of an American food system that is environmentally sustainable, socially just, healthy, and great-tasting too. And if warm fuzzies and inspiration aren't enough, we'll be serving Hope Creamery butter on the popcorn! There will be a panel discussion following the film and afterwards you are all invited back to the Birchwood for a post-screening local foods & Summit beer reception (\$10) to keep the conversation going. Tickets are \$10 online @ www.freshthemovie.com.

Tues June 9th Tuesdays just got better!

Tuesdays have been pretty darn good; hard to beat 1/2 price bottles of wine. But wait... there's more: starting Tuesday, June 9th, we'll be mixing in live music too! Meet Five Story Igloo: Eric Struves on upright bass, Chris Hepila on drums and Kristen Froebel, of Brass Messenger fame, on sax. And you thought Mondays (1/2 price wine w/ Scott Davie's Flamenco guitar and John Devine's Sax-y jazz) were your favorite night of the week!

Thurs June 11th Electric Fetus "Minneconomy"

At Birchwood we ♥ local food (from local farmers), local artists (featured on our walls) & local music. So we're thrilled to team up with the Electric Fetus for their June "Minneconomy", a new "shop local" initiative that brings local artisans and musicians together with local food & beverages to strengthen our local economy. Birchwood will be the "local food"—we'll be featuring local Thousand Hills Beef samples, local Summit beer & other tasty treats @ 6:30 pm. The "artisans" are Empoword, a cool company that makes one word tees & mugs. Choose your word—bliss, breathe, gratitude—and Empoword will empower you to choose your attitude and direct your life. (My daughter Lily LOVES her "giggle" onesie—it works for her AND for me). And the music? Halloween Alaska & Lookbook will perform—you won't want to miss it! And don't forget your wallet, it's the Fetus's 41st Anniversary Sale. Hope to see you there!

Sun June 21st Good Real Dad's DAY BRUNCH 9am-2pm

He has enough ties—treat Dad to a tasty brunch instead! Green Eggs & Ham (poached eggs with sorrel hollandaise), Brioche French Toast with roasted nectarines and cherries, and Thousand Hills Steak & Egg Sandwich with Chimmichurri & Avocado, 9 am to 2pm! Bring him back for dinner for our **Dad's Day "Burger and a Beer"** special! 5-8pm. Your choice of 2 burgers & a Pitcher of Beer for \$30. We love you Dad!

Wed June 24th Toast & Taste in the Gardens Calling all local foods fans! On Wednesday June 24th from 6-9pm, come stroll the magnificent gardens at the MN Landscape Arboretum as they come alive at dusk, sampling fabulous local restaurant cuisine (Birchwood, Corner Table, Craftsman, Barquette, Vincent, The Strip Club and more...), sipping local wines & brews, and enjoying everything from cooking demos to live local jazz. Tickets @ arboretum.umn.edu/toastandtaste.aspx or call 952-443-1400 ext 7046

Simple Good and Tasty No, it's not a new tagline for the Birchwood... but it could be because it fits in more ways than one. Two months ago I found myself seated at the Craftsman for dinner, with Marshall, Jimmy, and 32 other folks we didn't know. All we knew was what we saw on Facebook: a group of people were gathering for a "Local Food" Dinner. I was curious to see how Facebook could be used to gather like minded folks. Because of that, and because we love Mike Phillips and local food, we decided to go. It was a true community experience; we had fabulous food, meaningful conversation, and met many new friends, including the evening's host Lee Zukor. Lee is a newfound Local Food-ophile and all around good guy, as well as the voice behind a smart new food blog (www.simplegoodandtasty.com). He truly is the "guy with an eye on all things local and food," and his blog is building REAL community, not just the cyber kind. His first local foods dinner at the Craftsman was such a hit that he organized event #2 for May at the Birchwood; 34 folks came and listened intently to Jimmy, Marshall, & I when we talked about local sourcing for our menu. His blog also helped spread the word for our May Riverbend Farm onion planting; we turned out 20 plus folks, planted 42,000 onions, shared a delicious lunch, strengthened our ties—to each other and to a REAL farm—and connected to where our food comes from. Not bad for a day's work! The next SGT dinner is Tues. June 23rd at Heartland, details at simplegoodandtasty.com. The Simple Good & Tasty mantra sums it up pretty well: "We will never trade delicious foods for healthy ones; we're convinced we can have both". At Birchwood we couldn't agree more because our GOOD REAL FOOD is SIMPLE GOOD & TASTY.

Local ART, on the patio?! You betcha. Hard NOT to notice our beautiful new custom planters, a surprise gift from friend and metal sculptor Andrew MacGuffie. Andrew has worked with metal for over 15 years, earned an MFA from the U of MN, exhibited in many states, and runs his own art installation business, MacGuffie Rigging. He has built sculptures in Canada and France, installing work for artists such as Beverly Pepper & Mark Di Suvero. And now for the Birchwood Café! What looks from the outside like a path of clear intention, Andrew would call a happy accident; he says that "making sculpture has brought him the best things in life." You too can have custom planters—give a shout to macguffierigging@gmail.com

Innumerable measures bring us this food... we should know how it comes to us ~zen meal prayer



C A F E

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Birchwood All Star Amanda!

Amanda moved to the Twin Cities just over a year ago and fortunately for us, applied and was hired at the Birchwood immediately. Talking with Amanda about her first year reminded me of how quickly the Birchwood became (to use her words) my “Minneapolis Family” when I moved here fresh from school (7 years ago!). At Birchwood I was able to find steady roots for myself, which allowed me to take on some grand and joyful changes (i.e. marriage and buying a first home). I feel gratified to know that others share my feelings of home and support. I’m happy to know that the Birchwood Family (customers, staff, farmers and friends) continues to foster good people doing great things. We are grateful for Amanda for the heart, humor and hard work she brings to our community. We know she’ll continue to grow with us!-eli

What is your favorite thing about working at the Birchwood? The people who work here, the atmosphere and the food. The Birchwood is my Minneapolis Family – this was the first place I went in town and the first job I had since moving from Kentucky.

What was your favorite day @ Birchwood? I liked working the 13th anniversary dinner. It was nice to see all the regulars in a different setting, everyone was really stoked about the Birchwood and it made me feel good about working here. We all had a great time and went out after to celebrate.

What is your dream job? I would like to write books.

What kind? Cook books and Comic books. The cookbook would be a vegan cookbook, called “It’s Good” because people expect vegan food not to be good *AND* when I used to ask my mom what was for dinner, she always said “It’s Good!” and never said what it was.

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up? I told my pre-school teacher I wanted to be a peacock.

Where are you from? Southern Indiana – I’m a Hoosier.

What is a Hoosier? Nobody knows, and that’s the truth.

Why did you move to the cities? It’s a long story. I was basically looking for a change, my boyfriend mentioned MN (he used to live in Minneapolis). I said it was too cold, but here I am.

Was it a tough move? Not really, the winter was tough.

What do you like about Minneapolis? The friends I’ve made and the summer is beautiful. I like that it’s very bike friendly.

What is something you do when you’re not at work? Lately, play with my new (3 month old) kitty, Blue.

If you could be on any reality TV show, which one would it be and why? Top Chef (if it was vegan). Maybe Animal COPS.

If you had to be on dancing with the stars, who would your partner be? Stefan from Top Chef.

What cartoon character are you the most similar to? “Rocko” from Rocko’s Modern Life. I used to tape it on Nickelodeon and edit out the commercials.

Which other twin city restaurants do you like? The Ecolopolitan. I like the Red Avocado Pizza.

Favorite Birchwood coffee drink? Maple Soy Cold Press

Favorite Birchwood Dessert? Vegan Crisp.

What would be your Hollywood theme song? Staying Alive – I love Saturday Night Fever!

If you could have any superpower, what would it be? A way to manipulate time so I could procrastinate.

Is there any Birchwood Employee you’d like to give a shout out to. Thad, because we’re pals!

What’s something you have learned while working here? I’ve learned a lot about how food gets from the farm to the plate.

Do you have any hidden skills or tricks? I can say the alphabet backwards really fast. (I timed her – 4.3 seconds!)

Marshall Matters

What a Spring! And what a difference a year can make. Last winter seemed to drag on and on well into June, thereby shortening the windows of seasonality for Spring produce, including those wonderful morels we all (except Tracy) love so much. Picture me last May, trying my best to be a Mushroom Ninja, plodding through the woods of Kinnickinnic State Park, eyes on the ground, digging through the ferns in search of the friendly fungus, yet knowing in the back of my mind that the weather conditions weren’t quite right. High hopes of loading up with mushrooms for our weekend fish special were replaced by hard cold reality: I was just one nerd trudging the woods with empty bags. But a new year has come. We’ve had a bit of rain, some sun, and warm humidity. A few weeks ago mom called and told me the backyard lilacs had bloomed and I knew it was time...the morels are here! Now I know they’re growing around the Cities, but since foraging has become so popular it has become nearly impossible find more than a couple pounds, since everyone wants a slice o’ the Mushroom Pie. After last year’s failure I was bound and determined, more than ever, to really pull off a big score and I knew just where to go: a good chef friend’s parents’ home of 100 acres in Holmen, WI. With a few Birchwood coworkers and a friend from Sanctuary, we started our day with a hearty Birchwood breakfast, packed a lunch, and headed out on a 163 mile drive to spend the day foraging (with Mr. & Mrs. Buley’s permission of course). We spent our first few hours discouraged, finding a meager handful of shrooms. We took a break, strategized a bit, then set out for the southernmost valley and stuck to the side facing north, our hopes lifted by the multitude of dead elms dotting the hillside (morels grow specifically from soil above the roots a select few types of trees). Within 20 minutes, our luck changed. Suddenly shouts of “I found one!” and “I found one too!” were followed by “I found 10!” and “hey there’s like 20 over here!” We were surrounded, and I was flooded by a sense of pride that this spring delicacy would be on our menu this weekend. Pride and a newfound sense of job security—Tracy joked earlier that I’d no longer have a job if I came back empty handed! After a pound for Mr. & Mrs. Buley, and Ray’s share for Sanctuary, there remained 25 pounds (!!!) of morels for the Birchwood. We picked until there was no more sunlight, and everyone was able to sleep very well with the pride of knowing that we had become Mushroom Ninjas that day.

Where is the Birchwood Cafe? ... and where does their food come from?

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Mon thru Fri • 7am - 10pm
 Sat • 8am - 10pm Sun 9am - 10pm C A F E
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