Sarah Phelan
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This issue, we’ve focused a lot on how to live your best life. It starts with the food you eat to fuel your body, so we’ve included a few recipes to inspire you. Being physically active is important too, so we’ve highlighted a number of ways to treat your body right, especially as going to the gym gets harder during the summer. There’s a new shop in town focused on urban homesteading supplies and educating locals on forgotten homesteading skills.

Living your best life means taking time to care for yourself as well. That’s why I’ve put together a little DIY wellness retreat how-to, as a reminder to take care of yourself, because we here at Radish think you’re worth it.
Do you dream of getting away for a weekend? Spending your morning doing yoga, your afternoon lying in a hammock in the woods, and your evening doing goal-setting and affirmations? Taking time to unplug, stepping back from daily responsibilities and focusing on yourself is not just a luxury, it is a necessity for maintaining mental clarity and keeping stress in check. Even if you can’t get away to a retreat center doesn’t mean you can’t make one for yourself. Here are some suggestions for a do-it-yourself wellness retreat.

1. Create an intentional space.

Going to a retreat center is a wonderful experience, but sometimes financial and travel situations get in the way. Thankfully, you don’t have to go far to create your own retreat space. You could rent a cabin or an apartment, pitch your tent and camp, or even ask a friend if you can stay in their basement for the weekend. Another option – use a room in your own home. Put a sign on the door saying “Retreat Center” and make sure everyone knows not to bother you when you’re in there.

Create a peaceful and relaxing ambiance for yourself. Outfit the room or cabin with soft lighting, calming music, candles, tea, essential oils, fuzzy blankets, anything that makes you calm and comfortable. Keep your phone and computer out of your retreat space; this is time for you to reconnect with yourself. Keep a stash of pens, pencils and markers around so you’ll always be ready for your journal.

2. Make a rough schedule.

While you don’t have to follow it to a T, having a rough schedule will make sure you are spending your retreat time in retreat. If you do get sidetracked, it can help pull you back into retreat mode. It is meant to be a guide, not a rule book, so if you find yourself spending two or three more hours outside by the river, so be it. This time is meant for you to do what you need to recharge.

Things to consider adding to your weekend retreat schedule: new classes at your gym (or a new gym), journal time, adult coloring, hiking or biking, try a new recipe, meditation time, reading a book, making candles, writing letters or poems. Fill your schedule with activities that make you feel your best self.

Don’t forget to add some down time to your schedule. Leave room for reflection and spontaneous activities, or more time to read your book or finishing your coloring page. It’s just as important to unwind as it is to do yoga or go biking.

3. Create a menu ahead of time and have groceries stocked and ready.

Think of the types of food you would expect to eat at a spa – muesli or granola, kale salads, soups, fresh fruit, infused waters. You can pre-make meals so they’re ready to go on your weekend, or plan in cooking time if that’s something you enjoy. If you don’t enjoy cooking and it will detract from your retreat experience, grab pre-made food from the deli at a co-op or grocery store. Infused waters are an easy way to feel special. Simply chop up a cucumber or some citrus fruits and add it to a pitcher, your water bottle, or a glass and fill with water.

4. Invite a friend or two.

Having an accountability partner is a great way to make sure you actually give yourself the retreat you need. Don’t spend your whole time gossiping or watching reality tv, but follow your retreat schedule. Having more people will also help offset the cost of a cabin rental or food purchases, and it may also make you more accountable for following the schedule.

The most important thing to remember is that this retreat is all about you. Do what makes you happy, what fills you with joy, and you’ll return rejuvenated and ready to reconnect.
Kinstretch:
Stretching and beyond

By Nicole L. Czarnomski

Kinstretch is a class that enhances your abilities as an athlete and helps treat injuries and orthopedic pain caused from your specific lifestyle. Kinstretch is a derivative of Functional Range Conditioning (FRC), a comprehensive joint training system based on scientific principals and research. The goals of FRC training include mobility development, joint strength and integrity, connective tissue resilience, and body control.

The purpose of mobility development is to maximize your body's movement safely, efficiently, and effectively. Developing joint strength helps improve mobility and movement which leads to a reduction of pain and injury. These goals are critical if and when weight is added to any movement. If you are unable to get into a position or range of motion, you cannot add weight without risking injury.

Because Kinstretch is designed to open up new ranges of motion for your joints, it's not meant to be a replacement or alternative to regular fitness classes or routines. It is a concept designed to enhance your abilities and makes exercising easier.

Dr. Andreo Spina, founder of Kinstretch said, "Kinstretch has a built-in self-assessment system allowing you to evaluate your own joints on a daily basis and anticipate injuries that might occur." With this knowledge, you can guide your training based on how your joints are feeling and functioning.
Taking a Kinstretch Class

Philip Kish (pictured left and below) teaches a Kinstretch class on Sundays at 9 a.m. at CrossFit Detour, 945 37th Ave. NW in Rochester. Because the workout is new to town, Kish creates classes that are accessible for all levels. Classes teach you the scientific research in mobility training and utilizes very little equipment.

Kinstretch is based on body weight exercises that will enhance your life and eliminate chronic pain or help you become a better athlete. “Kinstretch helps counteract the things we do in our daily lives that are harmful to our bodies,” Kish said. “Many of us sit behind a desk at least five hours a day, then we drive home and sit on the couch and watch television.” This is detrimental to our hips and back.

The benefit of taking a Kinstretch class is that it challenges all body parts. The positions require slow and deliberate movements for the neck, shoulders, hips, elbows, ankles, toes, and other joints. “If you get a muscle cramp or your body starts shaking while holding a position, that is a good thing,” Kish said. “It means you’re challenging your body.”

What to Bring to a Kinstretch Session

Wear something comfortable that will allow your body to move freely. Shoes are not necessary; in fact, they may hinder certain movements. Kish teaches the class without shoes or socks, though you may want to wear socks.

Most facilities have the padded mats and equipment needed for class, but you may want to call before your first class. You can always bring your own mat, Kinstretch balls, and Kinstretch blocks. And, like any exercise class, bring water for hydration.

Who’s doing it?

There are several professional sports organizations, including the Chicago Cubs and the Seattle Mariners, who have adopted Kinstretch. There are also health and fitness companies embracing the method, as well as amateur athletes and individuals who suffer from chronic pain and injuries. There isn’t a specific population of people that Kinstretch targets; it’s designed for human beings in general.

Optimal Movement

Kish also works one on one with people at Optimal Movement, a business he started in 2016. He said there are many people who come to him with chronic shoulder issues, arthritis, migraines, low back pain, carpal tunnel syndrome, or post-op treatments.

Kish teaches clients Kinstretch exercises to focus on the client’s needs. You may only need to meet with him once a week to ask questions or demonstrate the positions he provides to ensure proper form. He said, “You can do these exercises in about 10 to 12 minutes each day.”

“It’s like a prescription,” Kish said. “I provide the exercises and follow up emails throughout the week that may incorporate more information and video demonstrations to enhance the client’s care.”

Nicole Czarnomski is a regular Radish contributor.
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Get inspiralized
Recipes for the spiralizer and beyond

Zucchini season is upon us, and we’ve rounded up some of our favorite recipes using one of our favorite tools, the spiralizer! But fear not, we’ve also got a muffin recipe that only needs a cheese grater if you haven’t delved into the art of spiralized veggies.

**Buddha bowl with beet and sweet potato spirals**
Makes enough for a single serving

- 1/2 cup cooked quinoa
- 1/4 cup chickpeas
- 1 beet, spiralized
- 1 small sweet potato, spiralized
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small avocado
- Handful spinach
- 2 Tbsp. tahini
- 2-3 tsp. water
- Splash of lemon juice

Heat 1 1/2 Tbsp. oil in a small skillet over medium heat. Once warm, add sweet potato spirals and cook until tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Remove from the pan, then add 1 1/2 Tbsp. oil to heat over medium. Add beet spirals, and cook until softened, about 3 minutes.

Assemble Buddha bowl
Add quinoa, beet and sweet potato spirals, and spinach into a bowl. Top with chickpeas and avocado. To make tahini dressing, whisk together tahini, water and lemon juice. Drizzle over your Buddha bowl, and enjoy.

**French Onion Zoodle Bake**
(Pictured Above)
Reprinted with permission from ClimbingGrierMountain.com

Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 40 minutes
Serves 4

**Ingredients:**
- 2 1/2 cups zucchini noodles (or two medium sized zucchinis)
- 1 small yellow onion, sliced thinly
- 1 tsp. granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. fresh thyme, chopped, plus more for garnish
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup beef broth
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 cup fontina cheese, grated

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a skillet preheated to medium heat, melt butter. Place onion into skillet and cook for a few minutes. Add salt, pepper, sugar, Worcestershire sauce, and thyme. Stir and cook for another couple of minutes. Add beef broth and cook until onions are golden brown about 12 minutes. Make sure to stir occasionally to keep the onions from burning.

Next, spray a 5x8 baking dish with non-stick cooking spray. In a large bowl combine zucchini noodles and French onion mixture. Pour the French onion zoodle mixture into the dish and garnish top with Fontina cheese. Place in the oven and bake for about 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and cool slightly before serving. Garnish with fresh thyme if desired. Also, there is a probability that liquid from the zucchini will appear. If so, just drain it off carefully with a spoon before serving. Enjoy!

**Apple Carrot Zucchini Muffins**

1 cup sugar
2 flax eggs
1 cup oil
3 cups flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 cup shredded zucchini
1 cup shredded apple
1 cup shredded carrot

There’s no need to peel or squeeze water from zucchini, apples or carrots. Fill full but don’t pack tightly. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line muffin tins with cupcake liners.

In a large bowl, mix sugar, flax egg and oil.

In another bowl, whisk together flour, salt, baking soda and cinnamon. Slowly add to the sugar mixture; it will be very thick.

Mix in zucchini, apple and carrots. Fill muffin tins 2/3 full, and bake 20-25 minutes until golden brown, or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
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Sarah Phelan didn't plan on opening a shop in Forager when she met with owner Annie Henderson. She had been picking the brains of area business owners with the idea of starting her own business in five years or so. At their meeting, Henderson asked Phelan, why not have your own shop here? A few months later, The Root Cellar had its grand opening, and Phelan was officially a small business owner.

The shop is a haven for people who enjoy cooking, preserving and gardening, along with those who like the idea but not the actual process. Phelan sells urban homesteading supplies and gifts, everything from cookbooks and canning jars to posters and potholders. "The niche is urban homesteading stuff for any size homestead ... and then just a lot of fun, cute, socially-conscious, environmentally-conscious kitchen décor and stuff," said Phelan.

Beyond the supplies, Phelan wants to teach the skills associated with urban homesteading. That's why she began her Vintage Living Lessons series.

Classes take place the third Wednesday of every month. The first six classes, which began in May, feature Phelan and Diane Lutkze, another urban homesteader, along with some of the chefs from Forager. The first series all focuses on food preservation: think canning and freezing but also dehydrating, jam making, fermenting and more.

"Diane and I will teach the core skill of it," said Phelan, "and the Forager chefs are coming in to do a cooking, hand-on demo" of how to use the food once it's been preserved.

Phelan is partnering with a few local farms at the Rochester Downtown Farmers Market to give class attendees a discount on bulk purchases on certain items the weekend after the class, so they can immediately use their new skill and start saving food. And they also may have a take away surprise from the classes, such as kombucha SCOBYs and sourdough starters.

Class sizes are limited, but you can get in on the action for $25, or enter our Radish giveaway. We're giving away two tickets to every class! See next page for more details.

Vintage Living Lessons will continue beyond these first six lessons. Phelan tossed out ideas like soap, cheese or bread making during late fall and early winter, and gardening classes as winter starts to turn to spring, and continuing that cycle through the year.

Phelan's goal with her business is to help create a community for those interested in similar subjects. "My hope is to create relationships using the classes as a catalyst to get to know people in town who are interested in similar things," she said. It's a place she hopes people will come to gather.
Simple steps towards a more sustainable life

Start meeting your #homesteadinggoals

by Sarah Phelan, owner of The Root Cellar Urban Homestead Supply Co.

Let’s face it, life is busy and change is hard. As much as you wish you could live a sustainable lifestyle someday, you don’t have the time or energy to even know where to begin. Lucky for you, someday is today. Here are some simple steps to take, bringing you closer to the sustainable life you imagine.

Find a friend
They say it takes a village and we’re better together. They weren’t lying! Perhaps you’re not keen on the idea of backyard poultry, but you love growing tomatoes. Perhaps you love the idea of making your own yummy snacks at home, but a dehydrator is outside your budget. Finding friends to homestead lightens everyone’s load. Go in on a bulk order from a farmer or a pricier kitchen appliance. Swap your heirloom tomatoes with those farm fresh eggs from a friend or neighbor. Host a pickle canning party where everyone goes home with jars of pickles. A huge slice of the sustainable life is the community you build around it.

Find a farmer
Even without your own garden, you can eat locally grown, nutritious food. Building relationships with local farmers gets you the inside scoop on where your food is coming from, and often has perks to boot (i.e., bulk order discounts for that canning party). Introduce yourself to a farmer at this weekend’s market, and build a lasting relationship that ensures a sustainable future for small-scale agriculture in Rochester, and for the contents of your fridge.

Ferment that
Whether we’re talking kombucha or some kraut, fermenting unlocks a world of good for your body and your pocket book. Homebrewed kombucha is insanely cheaper than store bought and is the easiest fermented beverage to brew and take care of. Fermenting your vegetables will unlock their nutrients, pack them with probiotics, and save you money by not tossing out perishable produce (kraut, kimchi and the like can last well over 6 months in your fridge and only get better with time). If you’re feeling ambitious, try your hand at a sourdough culture.

Forget the chemicals
Make a commitment to go chemical free in your yard and household cleaners. These small changes save our bees, our water, and our lungs, and don’t involve extra time or money. A homemade cleaner of vinegar, water, and a touch of dish soap is pennies on the dollar versus the stuff in stores, and is much safer to use with children around. Embrace the weeds and feed the bees. Future generations will thank you.

Sarah Phelan is the owner of The Root Cellar, a store with a curated mix of do-it-yourself urban homesteading supplies and gifts, as well as homesteading and cooking classes and events.

Win TWO TICKETS to the next Vintage Living Lesson on June 21

This month’s theme is jam

Learn how to do your own water bath canning to preserve the delicious sweet fruits of summer for the rest of the year.

To enter, email aroe@radishmagazine.com by June 16 with your favorite fruit to be entered.
Type “instant pot cooking craze” into Google and you get 79,000,000 results.

That’s almost 80 million results, people! This is indeed a craze, and Rochester isn’t immune. Local cooks are going wild for the Instant Pot and to hear them tell it, this is a wondrous fad.

During one Amazon Prime Day, the online retailer’s annual 24-hour sales event, one of the top-selling products in the US was the Instant Pot, a multi-function electric cooker. More than 215,000 of them were snapped up in the US on that single day, according to the BBC. That the item outsold TVs and tablets may come as a surprise to many, but not to its legions of fans.

“It’s my new favorite kitchen gadget,” says Leanne Deyo, 34, of Rochester. “It’s fun.”
First available in 2010, the Instant Pot became a veritable craze in recent years, a success built through social media word-of-mouth instead of traditional advertising. The official Instant Pot Facebook group is 465,000-people strong, and there are thousands of other online enthusiasts. Fans share recipes and tips for making everything from soups, stews and chili to hard-boiled eggs, popcorn and yogurt in the countertop appliance.

“Pressure cookers seem to have gone away,” Deyo says. “They seem to have been an older method of cooking, but this has kind of brought it back around. It’s something younger generations are getting into. Any time you can find ways to make cooking at home easier, it’s going to help people.”

Deyo bought a 6-quart Instant Pot in January. She says it took some getting used to – lots of buttons and settings – but she quickly found the community Facebook forum where she could get questions answered and read about successful recipes. Many Instant Pot cooks also turn online to This Old Gal for tips and tricks.

Deyo’s favorite dish so far is crème brûlée. She’s also made beef roast and ribs. Next up is cheesecake.

“I do use a crock pot but I don’t like to use a crock pot when I’m away from home,” Deyo says. “I really like the fact that with some of these recipes, you can throw into the pressure cooker and it’s done within an hour or an hour and a half.”

Cathy Wheeler of Rochester was introduced to the Instant Pot by a foodie friend, and was so won over that for Christmas, she got both of her sisters a pot. Like Deyo, Wheeler appreciates the efficiency of the Instant Pot. The shrimp paella pictured on the left (ingredients pictured below) is just one of her favorite Instant Pot meals. The recipe is linked online, as well as Cathy’s recommended substitutions. Total cooking time: 10 minutes. Doesn’t get much better than that!

If she wasn’t already in love with it, she was totally won over on Thanksgiving when her oven failed to cook her turkey adequately. She threw it into the Instant Pot and 35 minutes later, Thanksgiving dinner was served – complete with a cooked turkey.

Renee Berg is a Rochester freelance writer and works at NAMI SE MN as a Peer Support and Communications Specialist. She champions mental health care awareness.
In today's social climate, it can be easy to feel like nothing you do has much of an effect on the rest of the world. It's hard to find time to get involved or engage in community conversations, and even when you do, you may not directly see the fruits of your labor. But even the way you shop can be a way to engage in social change.

The fair trade movement is one easy way for consumers to get involved and make a difference, not only in their own communities but in communities around the world. And while the words “fair trade” may sound like just another trendy phrase, the socially-conscious concept behind them is quite simple. Fair trade is a way for consumers to know that the products they are purchasing were raised and purchased ethically. Fair trade federations, such as Fair Trade USA, certify products like coffee, tea and herbs, fresh fruit and vegetables, wine, apparel, and other ingredients are sourced and purchased responsibly. Any product sporting the “Fair Trade Certified” logo meets the standards for responsible trade and sustainable agriculture.

Still not convinced? Here are five more reasons you should be shopping fair trade, as well as some local places you can find fair trade products.

Madeline Allen received her MFA in creative nonfiction from Eastern Washington University. She is now a freelance writer living in Rochester.

Five Reasons to Shop Fair Trade

By Madeline Allen

1. Your money is helping people. Fair Trade Certified products were sourced responsibly and purchased from family farms around the world who depend on the income from their harvest to live. Anytime you buy a Fair Trade Certified product, you know your money is directly benefiting the people who produced it and helping them to continue their livelihood.

Try: People’s Food Co-op, with a great variety of Fair Trade Certified ingredients to make your next meal a socially conscious one.

2. You know where your products are coming from. Fair trade products are imported from places that adhere to strict standards about work environment. Farmers under fair trade have a right to unionize, work conditions are closely monitored, and slave or child labor is strictly prohibited. When you buy fair trade, you are supporting increased awareness over conditions for workers all over the world.

Try: Freedom Boutique at Dwell Local, where all products are made by or benefit people freed from human trafficking, slavery, and abuse.

3. You are supporting sustainability efforts around the world. The fair trade movement is focused on advancing sustainable agriculture practices. As demand for commodities has increased, focus on responsible farming has decreased. Fair trade practices implement a return to traditional farming practices and strict regulations on agro-ecological practices, particularly when it comes to products like coffee. Fair trade certification also bans the use of GMOs (genetically modified organisms).

Try: Dunn Brothers Coffee, offering a selection of Fair Trade Certified, sustainably grown coffee.

4. Your reach extends beyond our borders. While we’ve recently seen emphasis put on products made in America, fair trade products are imported from countries where our dollars can also do a lot of good. Fair trade certified products come from 70 developing countries all across the world. When you purchase these products, you are helping communities improve their education systems, business practices, and healthcare. Fair trade is the ethically responsible way to buy imported goods.

Try: Soul Purpose Boutique, offering both fair trade and local goods for your house and your wardrobe.

5. You are helping to grow the movement. The more people who shop and promote fair trade products, the more momentum it gets. A socially conscious shopping experience doesn’t have to be a novelty, and it will only get easier with fair trade products becoming more popular and accessible to everyday consumers. If people continue to shop fair trade, the way trade is conducted can shift on a global scale, benefiting both consumers and producers.

For more information on the fair trade movement, visit www.fairtradeusa.org.
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Chuck  Liz
Summertime is glorious in Minnesota, though it may wreak havoc on your workout schedule. Many people find it hard to get to the gym consistently, as their schedules become filled with baseball games, music concerts, and other outdoor activities. No matter how busy you are, there are always opportunities to keep up on your fitness.

For starters, find an accountability partner. If you know you won’t go on your own, find a friend who will exercise with you. This tip works all year long, but especially when the brilliant blue skies are more than enough to lure you from the treadmill at your gym.

Start small, says Emily Watkins, owner of and personal trainer at Empowered Wellness in Rochester. “Don’t think you have to go hard right away. It might be something as small as I’m putting on my workout clothes today. Don’t even tell yourself you’re going to go workout. Once you’re dressed, you may find you’re more likely to get out and get active.”

Ditch the dumbbells. Bill Villarreal, fitness center director at Edge Fitness Inc. in Rochester, says there are plenty of exercises you can do with just body weight. “Squats, lunges, push-ups, planks, and sit-ups are some of the most common body weight exercises for strength training,” he says. Don’t forget about simple cardio exercises like walking, jogging, or even taking the stairs. “There is also a measurable amount of exercise with hobbies such as gardening, golfing, swimming, and other outdoor recreation,” he adds.

It doesn’t take much. If you’re new to exercise, start with 20-30 minutes 3 times per week, says Watkins. Work your way up to 20-30 minutes 5-7 days a week. Villarreal echoes this sentiment. “Once you put yourself on a routine and stick with it for a while, you will find yourself not wanting to miss.”
Emily Watkins shares this simple workout to get your heart rate up without hitting the gym.

WARM UP
Take a brisk 5-minute walk. Circle your shoulders and legs to warm up those joints. Gently twist your body from side to side. Do some very shallow squats.

DO 2 OR 3 SETS OF 10 REPS OF THE FOLLOWING EXERCISES

THE BASICS
If you can only do 2 exercises, do squats and push-ups. No equipment needed, and you can do them anywhere!

Squats
Ensure that your knees stay behind your toes, and push your butt back until your thighs are parallel to the ground.

Push-ups
Do these on the ground or on a raised surface such as a bench or even against a tree.

THE ICING ON THE CAKE
Many parents spend lots of time at parks during the summer months. Instead of sitting on the bench while your child plays, lace up your tennis shoes and get in a bit of a workout. This workout is great even if you don’t have kids.

1. Pull-ups
The Full Monty. Hang from a bar and pull your shoulders down so they feel very strong and secure. Work towards pulling yourself up, even if you only are able to move a couple of inches. Work on this, and you’ll see yourself able to pull up more and more.

2. Junior Pull-ups
Find a bar between knee and hip height. Grab on and extend your legs long so that your body is facing the sky. Pull your chest up towards the bar.

3. Swing Knee Tucks
Get into a plank position with your feet on a swing. Using your abs, pull your knees into your chest.

4. Hanging Crunch
Hang from a bar, keeping your shoulders pulled down. Pull your knees up to your chest. Work towards being able to pull extended legs up as high as you can and control bringing them back down.

5. Step-ups
Find an elevated surface, like a step to a playground or a bench. Step up, putting your weight in your heel. Step back down with the foot you led with. Repeat on that leg to complete your reps, then switch lead legs.

6. Dips
Sit on that same bench. Put the palms of your hands on the bench with your fingers facing your body and shift your weight off of the bench. Keeping your elbows in tight, bend your arms and then push back up.

COOL DOWN
Walk around for 5 minutes, and stretch. Take a big step back with one leg and bend your front knee as you reach your arms forward. Repeat on the other side. Clasp your hands behind you and pull back as you open your chest wide. Bend forward with knees bent, resting your upper body on your legs. Relax your neck, allowing your head to hang. Work towards straightening your legs. Stretch your neck by reaching your ear toward your shoulder and repeat on the other side.

Photos by Ken Klotzbach
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The Pappas Family Celebrates 71 Years of Ownership.
Jessica Joyce is new, new, new. New to Rochester as of October. New to managing a farmers market. And new to serving as market manager for the Rochester Downtown Farmers Market.

"I haven't slept much in the last week because I'm so excited," Joyce said as she began her new job. "I've been learning a lot about local produce and how great it is. It's a 100 percent good sell to bring local produce to the market."

Joyce replaces outgoing market manager David Kotsonas, who went to the St. Paul Farmers Market earlier this spring. During his tenure at the RDFM, Kotsonas built a strong, community-focused market that saw significant growth, with crowds surging to 6,000 people. The market was ranked No. 1 in the state in a 2014 Star Tribune "Best of Minnesota" reader's poll.

"The market is built up and doing really well," said vendor Bob Kappers, of Kappers Big Red Barn, a milk producer in Chatfield. "As long as (Joyce) keeps that going, we'll be fine."

Joyce arrived at an opportune time, right as the summer market was beginning. She said she was willing to be there early, and late, ready to handle what needs handling, she said.

Joyce, 26, moved to Rochester in October with her partner, who is a student at Mayo Medical School through 2019. The two were married May 13 in Colorado; Joyce took a short time off for wedding festivities, but was back at it in no time.

Since moving to Rochester last fall, Joyce has been immersing herself in local life through volunteering. She volunteers at Welch Village on the ski patrol and at Hawthorne Education Center. That's where she was when the RDFM Board of Directors president called to offer her the market manager job.

From the first time she read about the job, Joyce said she had a "butterfly moment." She found the job posting on the market website, applied, and was hired soon after.

Though she doesn't have market manager experience, Joyce firmly believes the job is the perfect fit. "It's possibly what I've been hoping to do for my entire career and I just haven't settled into it yet," she said. "I've always been a behind-the-scenes worker. Also, I'm just really passionate about the ideals of the market — sustainable foods, bringing health to the community, and helping people make the healthy choices they've wanted to make."

Joyce said she was impressed that the market is a grower's market, meaning all the vendors grow or make the products they sell; there is no wholesaling or reselling allowed.

"The market has been active for more than 30 years, and is a strong one, vendors say.

"I think it's a great market," said Tonya Sanner of Firefly Berries in Rochester, which sells a variety of berries, grapes, jams, jellies, honey, and, this year, natural-dyed yarn. "We get a lot of traffic and customers are always interested in new, original fruits and vegetables. They seem to genuinely care about where their food comes from, which is a great thing."
New book about 10 plants that have transformed Minnesota

It's hard to imagine what the Midwest would look like without corn, soybeans, wheat and alfalfa. Those aren't the only plants that have changed our landscape, though. Nor have they done it all by themselves — a whole cast of characters have helped make our most important plants what they are.

In "Ten Plants That Changed Minnesota" by Mary Hockenberry Meyer and Susan Davis Price, the experts tell the stories of plants that have revolutionized the state's environmental and economic landscape, not to mention the land itself.

The 10 plants, chosen by experts out of a pool of nearly 100 different plants nominated by citizens, might not be what you'd expect.

They are:
- Alfalfa
- American elm
- Apples
- Corn
- Lawns and turfgrass
- Purple loosestrife
- Soybeans
- Wheat
- White Pine
- Wild rice

It's no surprise that common field crops made the list. A drive around Minnesota shows fields upon fields of them. At the same time, while many homes have lawns, that's not a plant most would think of as transformational. But Meyer and Price argue for lawns' importance in establishing the looks of Minnesota's homes.

With each plant, Meyer and Price examine its history of being introduced to Minnesota, along with the people who did so; the plant's economic role in the state; its environmental affects; fun facts; the plant's cultural significance; and what Minnesota citizens have to say about it.

You'll learn things like: Apples are members of the rose family. Alfalfa's roots can grown down as far as 49 feet. Purple loosestrife has been used to treat dysentery. Wheat is grown on more land area worldwide than any other crop.

These plants also have their controversies. For instance, purple loosestrife has been declared a noxious weed, but it's a favorite of honeybees. Twenty-seven percent of southern Minnesota's lakes and rivers contain higher levels of nitrates that exceed the drinking water threshold. Wheat was once king of Minnesota crops, but when disease struck, farmers were no longer able to sustain it. The fallow land left by the monoculture turned to dust during the Great Depression.

Meyer and Price's aim in writing the book is to bring more awareness to the natural world, which increasingly gets ignored as people spend more time on screens than outside. But we are all affected by plants, whether we know it or not.

"Utilizing these plants is not a neutral activity but one that has consequences," Price wrote in her opening words. "We hope with this book to create a renewed appreciation of the integral role plants have in our politics, our economies, our environments and our quality of life."

Brita Moore is the assistant managing editor of Agri-News, a weekly agriculture-focused newspaper. She graduated from Luther College in 2014 and enjoys playing cello and making friends in the area.
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My name is Gary and music is my life. I beat cancer, but a staph infection in my neck had me in constant pain. I saw all kinds of doctors. Nothing helped.

It started to look like I’d have to wear one of those cages on my head for the rest of my life. Fortunately, I was referred to OMC’s Advanced Wound Healing Clinic. They recommended hyperbaric oxygen treatment. Advanced stuff. Three months later, I was singing a different tune.

- Gary