

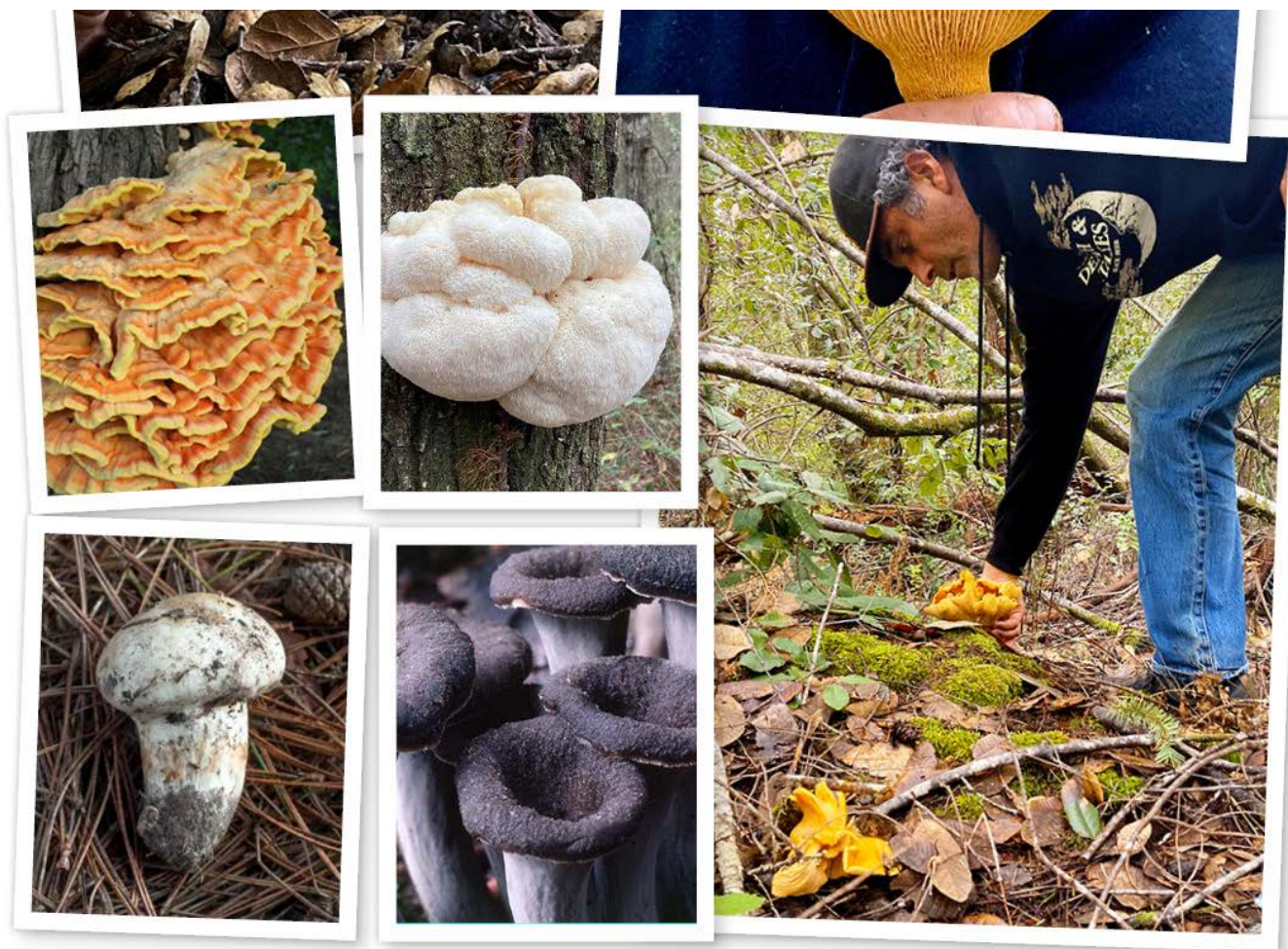


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EVENT: MUSHROOM FORAGING





Paul Sequeira with six of the hundreds of edible wild mushroom varieties that grow in Sonoma County. *Top row:* Porcini (*Boletus Edulis*), Chanterelle. *Middle row:* Chicken of the Woods, Lion's Mane. *Bottom row:* Matsutake, Black Trumpet, gathering Chanterelles.

Wild Mushroom Foraging

This event sold out quickly.

We are planning more meaningful events in 2025

Forage wild mushrooms for Thanksgiving Dinner

On the Saturday before Thanksgiving join Board member Paul Sequeira and friends on a foraging adventure somewhere in Sonoma County. We may hunt matsutakes through the coastal forest of Salt Point State Park or chanterelles in the oaks of Sonoma Mountain.

The exact details and locations will be revealed to participants during the previous week depending on conditions, but wherever we go you are sure to head home with wild Sonoma County mushrooms perfect for your upcoming Thanksgiving feast.

Identification experts will be on hand to ensure you only travel with the good stuff, and to offer lots of tips and tricks for intrepid mycophiliacs. This event will be limited to 20 participants so that everyone's mushrooms can get properly identified and all foragers can get plenty of expert advice. Let's go find some fungi!

Be sure to include a valid email address when you sign up so we can inform you of the meeting time and location. Thank you!



COMMUNITY APPLE PRESS





Guests at The Apple Volunteer Appreciation Party

Another great apple pressing season.

We had another great apple pressing season. Our little piece of the Luther Burbank Experiment Farm remains a slice of heaven, an oasis of down-home apple-pressing fun under the shade of the Sorbus trees planted by Luther Burbank. I often have the sense of stepping into a time warp as I hear the apple cutter grinding up whole apples, the buzz of adults and children going about the yearly routine of pressing apples and filling their containers with pure, golden apple juice. An average of 144 people come to use the press each weekend plus 12 volunteers. It is amazing how smoothly it all works, thanks to our volunteers – and patrons who mostly know the routine.

The season started slowly as the Gravensteins came in late, but it picked up the weekend after the Gravenstein Apple Fair. All in all the apple crop was light this year, and late. Our patrons often commented that one or more of their trees had no apples or that there were only a few apples on some trees, and apple farmers across the West Country reported a light crop.

We pressed about **46,000 pounds** of apples this year, down from 50,000 last year. We noticed fewer time slots empty this year, though, as our new calendar enabled patrons to cancel appointments more easily, which allowed people watching for available slots to fill them.

Appreciation party

We concluded the season with a smashing appreciation party attended by many of our over 100 volunteers. For those volunteers who couldn't make the party a big hand and a hearty thanks to all of you. As they say, "It takes a village" and I'd say, "We've got ourselves a darn good village!" We're looking forward to seeing you all again next year.

By Carole Flaherty



GOOD NEWS, BY RICK

Apple Press receives \$1,000 grant

Thanks to the quick and expert work of Bob Burke, Supervisor Lynda Hopkins just approved a \$1,000 grant to Slow Food Russian River for the 2024 operation of our Community Apple Press. The monies come from the Sonoma County Community Investment Fund.

This financial support is critical. As you may know, the \$4,500 annual grant from the City of Sebastopol we received for many years stopped due to the city's budget deficit. In the past 18 months, individual SFRR events have paid for themselves thanks to a nominal attendance charge. However, the CAP depends entirely on day-to-day patron donations, the Gravenstein Apple Fair costs several thousand dollars and as a non-profit we have administrative costs such as insurance, tax preparation and IT support which reduce our resources.

Please remember you can donate to SFRR online anytime by going to slowfoodrr.org and clicking the Donate button on the Home page. Additionally, if you have fundraising or grant-writing expertise you can share, please go to the Contact Us button on our web page and let us know!

Meanwhile, we extend our thanks to the great work of Bob Burke and to the support of Lynda Hopkins!

By Rick Mead

APPLE PRESS SCHOOL VISITS





School kids love their time at the Apple Press

Our Mission

To provide Sonoma County school groups, especially from underserved communities, a fun and educational Slow Food experience involving pressing fresh apples into apple juice, exploring the diversity of locally grown food, and the history of the land we share on Luther Burbank's Experiment Farm.

It's been a wonderful year at the Community Apple Press, particularly on Fridays when school children come for a fun-filled field trip. They come in cars and busses, 30, 40, 50 and 60+ at a time! It's thrilling, and a bit humbling, as

we volunteers stand in a line, arms open and smiles on our faces, greeting them as they scramble out of cars or climb off buses. I feel so honored to be part of the team of volunteers, all 8 of us, who gather to serve these young ones, to teach them about Luther Burbank, to help them press apples and fill pint containers with their juice to take home, and to gather around picnic tables to observe, taste, and rate an assortment of local apples – plus some homemade syrup and applesauce.

The program was started many years ago by Paula Downing. After her death two years ago Zeno Swijtink took over the program and expanded it to the three part program we have today. This year Richard Baril took the helm with an experienced crew at his side. Richard and his other docents lead the children on a nature hike, pointing out various plants and trees Luther Burbank worked on during his lifetime, many which are familiar to us all, like the Burbank potato, the Santa Rosa Plum, and the Shasta Daisy. The nature walk ended with a visit to the Historical Society Museum.

My helper and I treat up to 20 children at a time to the apple tasting and judging table. Ever seen an apple that looks like the Burbank Potato? These children have. Many local orchards grow russet skinned apples and, if the children's judging is anything to go by, don't judge an apple by its skin because these apples taste good. We also had "The Battle of the Apples", a contest between heirloom Red Delicious apples and modern Red Delicious apples. Guess which won? The heirloom of course, which is crispy and delicious. Our goal is to teach these children about different varieties of local apples and how good they are.

Seven schools came this year, a total of 326 children K-3. We paid for the cost of the bus and pressed about 1,100 pounds of apples. Each child took home a reusable pint container labeled by them with their name and filled with juice they pressed. Every year we have to turn schools away, but we'd like to double up on some days with a group in the morning and an afternoon group as well. To serve more schools we need more volunteers.

About Volunteering

Each shift requires 7-8 volunteers.

We set up around 8:15 am and finish clean up around 12:30 pm.
If we had two shifts, the morning shift would leave around 12:15 and the afternoon shift would be finished with clean up around 4 pm.

We welcome new volunteers; please consider helping us provide these children with a meaningful experience. As one of our volunteers who agreed to "Give it a try" reported, "I didn't think I would like it but I do."

Our website Apple Press Volunteer Calendar will open next July. Then you can sign up as each school is booked.

By Carole Flaherty



CATHERINE'S TURKEY TALK



Fall is in the air

Fall is in the air! The nights are getting crisper and our thoughts turn to preparing for cozy fireside gatherings with family and friends over the upcoming holidays.

But across Sonoma County our young heritage turkey growers are watching over their flocks with care. The turkeys are getting big, and being the adolescents that they are, they preen and prance. The boys spar for dominance, the girls chirp for attention. It's a lively time! As a healthy diversion, every afternoon we take buckets of fallen apples collected from our own and other nearby no-spray orchards to the turkeys so that they too can enjoy the bounty of our beautiful county.

We have stopped taking orders for this season, but every year we hold aside a small margin of birds from sale just in case there are any last-minute losses or damage in processing. We often do have a small number of turkeys available on Thanksgiving week. If you'd like to get on our waitlist to be called that week, please go to [heritageturkeyproject.com](https://www.heritageturkeyproject.com)

By Catherine Thode





Our namesake Sequeira wine came all the way from Portugal to grace our table a few years ago

Holiday Wine Primer

Thanksgiving

The Thanksgiving meal is one of my favorite celebrations of the year. Food is so full of memories, and is so good at making memories. That is why I want to start by encouraging you to take the meal itself seriously and not just check off the boxes. The labor, the making of the meal, is part of the joy, and the conviviality in the kitchen contributes to the love around the table.

Wine for Thanksgiving tends toward autumnal flavors, or wines that pair with autumnal flavors. I would not pour big, intensely structured wines like Cabernet or Chardonnay. Save those for Christmas. Instead go for medium weight whites like Chenin Blanc or Gewurztraminer, and aromatic reds like Pinot Noir, Gamay Noir and Dolcetto. Whites with a little sweetness can handle the savory-sweet dishes without falling apart, and the floral and brownspice flavors in aromatic reds will sing with turkey and salmon. If you want to serve a dessert wine with dessert, stick with the whites, like late harvest Sauvignon Blanc or Muscat.

Christmas / Hannukah

Whatever your tradition happens to be, I'm sure the meal will be packed with robust flavors appropriate for a winter feast. Wines should be likewise robust. Time for a big mouth-filling Chardonnay to pair with Dungeness crab, or that Cabernet you've stashed in the back of your cellar to serve with the prime roast. If you've been saving a few "big guns" for a special occasion, this is it. Winter desserts often pair well with Vintage or Tawny Port, late harvest Zinfandel, or my favorite, Madeira. Don't hold back.

Other Notes for Holiday Wines

Champagne. If you were wondering, the answer is yes. Not just for New Year's Eve. I like it best before sitting down for dinner, especially when served with a cheese board.

Magnums are so much fun with large groups, and they give everyone a chance to taste from the same bottle without having to limit their pours to a mere sip. Time to be festive and pop a big bottle!

Remember that your menu should always dictate the wines you serve, so choose wines you think would complement the intensity and flavors of your meal.

Most of all, don't spend your time analyzing or arguing over which is best or has the highest score or whatever. Yes, please spend at least a brief moment engaging with each wine in your glass. But then focus your attention on the people around the table. They are more the most important part of the feast. Cheers and Happy Holidays!

By Paul Sequeira

LEADERSHIP TEAM



Are you interested in joining our Team?

Our Slow Food chapter has a Leadership Team that coordinates gatherings to:

- Plan events for all of you to meet each other
- Promote biodiversity and locally made foods
- Learn about the national and international Slow Food Movement.

Our team meets monthly for dinner and planning at one of our homes or a local restaurant. We are a small group of folks with similar goals who are working on various projects such as the Free Community Apple Press and the Heritage Turkey project, which you can read about in this newsletter or on our

website.

We are eager for new ideas and hoping that a few of you would be interested in joining our team. If you are, please send us an email so we can meet in person. I would love to take you out for coffee – our treat – and answer your questions! We look forward to hearing from you.

Info@SlowFoodRR.org

By Paula Shatkin



Manzana move is delayed

In late August Ethan Brown, the Executive Director of the Economic Development Collaborative (EDC), organized a walk through the Manzana plant in Graton. Following the walk-through, various agencies have been gathering information and researching possible options for the plant located on 12.5 acres on Green Valley Road. This work is still in progress.

However, in the September 11th edition of the Press Democrat, Manzana announced they are delaying their move and will be processing apples through 2025 and into at least the 1st quarter of 2026. The delay of their move to Washington is welcome as opportunities for the plant continue to be researched.

More info:

Press Democrat article (requires subscription) [Manzana Products delays exit from Sonoma County apple plant](#)

By Carole Flaherty





Cheese tasting at Bohemian Creamery

Thirty-eight of us had a lovely afternoon learning about all the cheeses Bohemian Creamery makes throughout the year. They source all their milk from a few small farms within 30 minutes of Sebastopol. Then they pasteurize the milk at the Creamery and add various cultures or rennet to the milk and age for different periods of time depending on the cheese they are making.

Some cheeses are infused with saffron or goat's milk caramel flavors. The results are delicious.

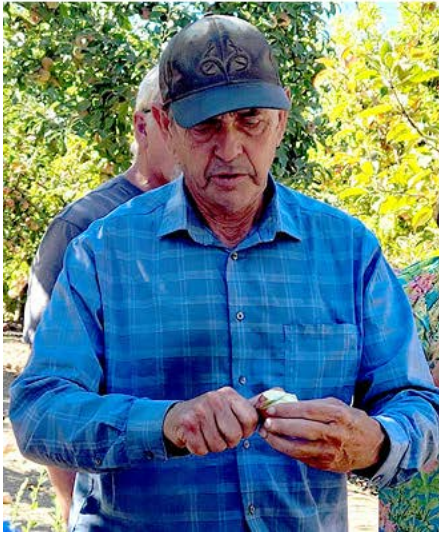
We sampled 12 different cheeses on their patio overlooking Mount St. Helena. Some of us brought wine to share with our fellow SlowFoodies as we discussed our favorite cheeses. We had a wonderful afternoon together and learned something new about cheese!

[Bohemian Creamery website](#)

By Shari Figi

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Hale's Apple Farm Tour and Cider Tasting

Photos from the farm tour on September 30, 2024.

IN THE ORCHARD





Fallen apples. A clean orchard floor is the first line of defense against Codling moths.

Less work and a whole lot of pleasure

I love all the seasons in the orchard, but this time of the year brings less work and a whole lot of pleasure as the apples have been harvested and juiced, bottled and canned or frozen and, perhaps, reduced into syrup or fermented. The big pot that held many gallons of bubbling apples to be cooked until soft then put through the Foley Food Mill and canned has been put away for the year.

Jars of applesauce and apple butter (I put crystallized ginger in mine) are labeled and stacked in the pantry. The dehydrator remains on the counter because it has more work to do, as the last of the Golden Delicious apples still need to be sliced and dried, but soon it will return to the shelf as well.

First line of defense: clean the orchard floor

Out in the orchard the main task is to clean the orchard floor, the first line of defense against Codling Moths. Any old logs or other pieces of wood with bark

on them need to be removed as Codling Moths like to over-winter under the bark. And then there are all the fallen apples! Yikes!

Fallen apples, and grounders, are a perfect place for mature larvae to over-winter before hatching in the spring ready for the 'first flight' of the season. Picking up grounders is not the most fun part of growing apples for most of us, but a necessary one. Putting the apples in a pile is convenient, but it is recommended that such piles be covered by 6" of dirt to keep the larvae from escaping and taking flight as adults. They can be put in compost bins to be taken to a commercial composting site, or you can compost them yourself by putting them through a chipper or cutting them up with another method. They do not over-winter in cut-up apples.

Ok, a little time cleaning the orchard floor and a lot of time enjoying some hot cider with a good book. Repeat until the job is done.

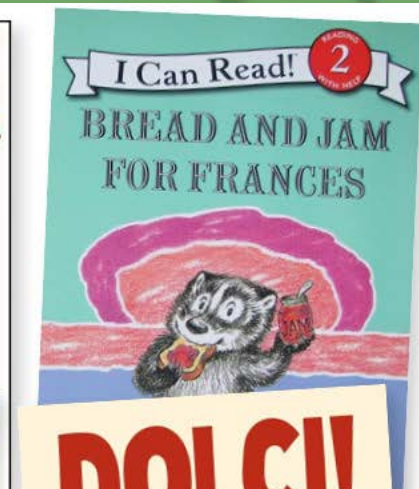
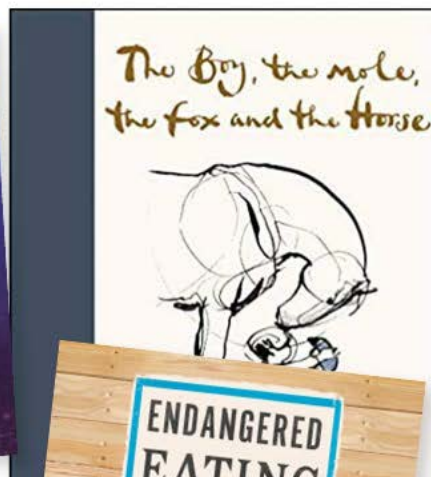
Next newsletter: Pruning.

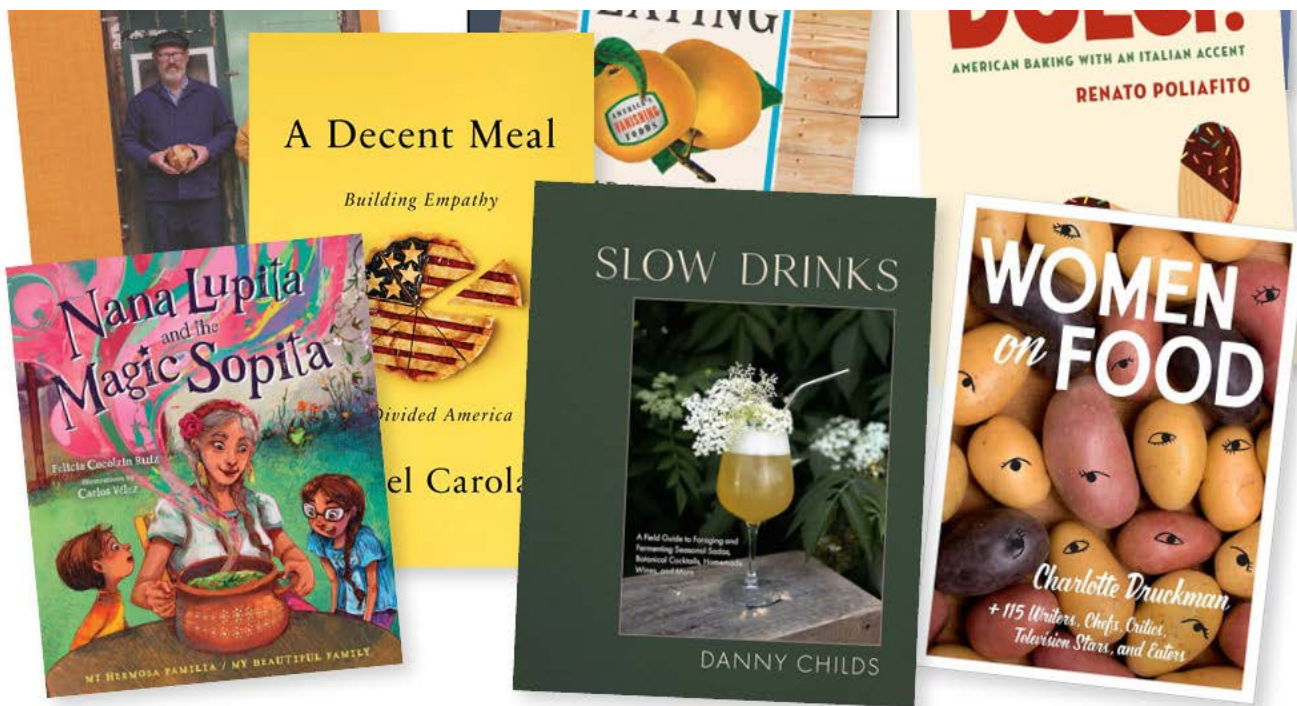
Please watch for your invitation to attend the apple tree pruning seminar/webinar for backyard orchard owners that is being developed by the Master Gardeners and, as requested, is just for you if you have one or more apple trees in your yard.

By Carole Flaherty



FROM SLOW FOOD USA





2024 Holiday book recommendations

From the Slow Food USA website:

For another year, the Slow Books Committee has curated a collection of titles that should top your list when thinking of holiday gifting for anyone on your list – from family and friends to yourself! We all deserve a treat at this magical time of year – especially when it comes to inspiring titles deserving of a place on our bookshelves.

[Go to the book list](#)



FROM SF INTERNATIONAL





Our own Max Caruso traveled to Terra Madre 2024 in Italy

"It was like the food Olympics!"

– *Samantha Ramey of Americana and Estero Café and a first-time attendee*

Participating in Terra Madre 2024 in Turin, Italy the last five days of September was an amazing experience. Thousands of Slow Food delegates from around the world joined hundreds of thousands from Europe to make this 20th anniversary Terra Madre one of the best yet. Like every Slow Food event, it featured incredible food and amazing people who are dedicated to building a better food system.

One new focus introduced at Terra Madre is Slow Food Farms. We have a jump start on the program here in Sonoma County with our Snail of Approval program. Please continue to seek out and support our local Snail businesses and organizations. Keep an eye out for more information on the new Slow Food Farms program.

Sacramento: September, 2025

A very exciting event was announced: Terra Madre of the Americas, coming to

Sacramento in September 2025! Carlo Petrini himself said he would swim across the ocean, if need be to participate. Eddie Mukiibi, current President of Slow Food International, will also be leading this event. Please plan to join us in Sacramento in September! You are also invited to participate in the 2026 Madre gathering in Turin. You won't regret such Slow Food adventures!

By Max Caruso



APPLE RECIPE



Fresh Apple Pound Cake

The Holidays are coming! Doesn't it seem like the holidays come sooner each year?

Now's the time to grab those late-season apples and make them part of your holiday festivities.

The best thing about this family Fresh Apple Pound Cake recipe is that you can use any type of apple. Use all the same or a variety – it just won't matter. So grab a couple of apples and put this pound cake recipe to work!

Ingredients

1 ½ cups vegetable oil
2 cups sugar
3 eggs
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp salt
1 tsp baking soda
2 tsp vanilla
3 large apples (chop in small pieces)
1 cup chopped pecans

Directions

Combine oil, sugar, eggs and beat well
Combine flour, salt and soda
Add dry mixture to creamed mixture
Add vanilla
Fold in apples and nuts
Pour into a greased and floured 10-inch Bundt pan
Bake at 325 for 1 hour and 20 minutes
Cool 20 minutes

**** A funny note at the end of my mother's handwritten recipe ****

“Don't insult the cake with icing!!!”

I tend to agree with her.

Happy holidays from our families to yours.

By Peggy Knoop



VOLUNTEER



Volunteer opportunities!

The SFRR Board can use some help with our

- Communications and Social Media (newsletter, emails, etc.)
- Event Planning (visits to farms? tours of wineries? cheese education? learning about soils?).

If you would like to support either of these activities, we would love to hear from you! Please email info@slowfoodrr.org.

SUGGESTIONS



What do you suggest for SFRR?

- What are your ideas about future SFRR events?
- About topics for this newsletter?
- Farms we should look into for possible tours?
- New food-related businesses we might support?
- Ecological challenges we should research and report on?
- People making a difference in Sonoma County agriculture and food?

Your ideas matter, so please let us know!

Email: Info@SlowFoodRR.org
We look forward to hearing from you!

COMMENTS?



Feedback on our Newsletter.

Most issues include events, reports on past events, tastings, updates, and info from both Slow Food International and Slow Food USA.

What are *your* thoughts?

Email to: Info@SlowFoodRR.org

OUR BOARD



Shari Figi



Carole Flaherty



Peggy Myers Knopp



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Paul Sequeira



Paula Shatkin



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