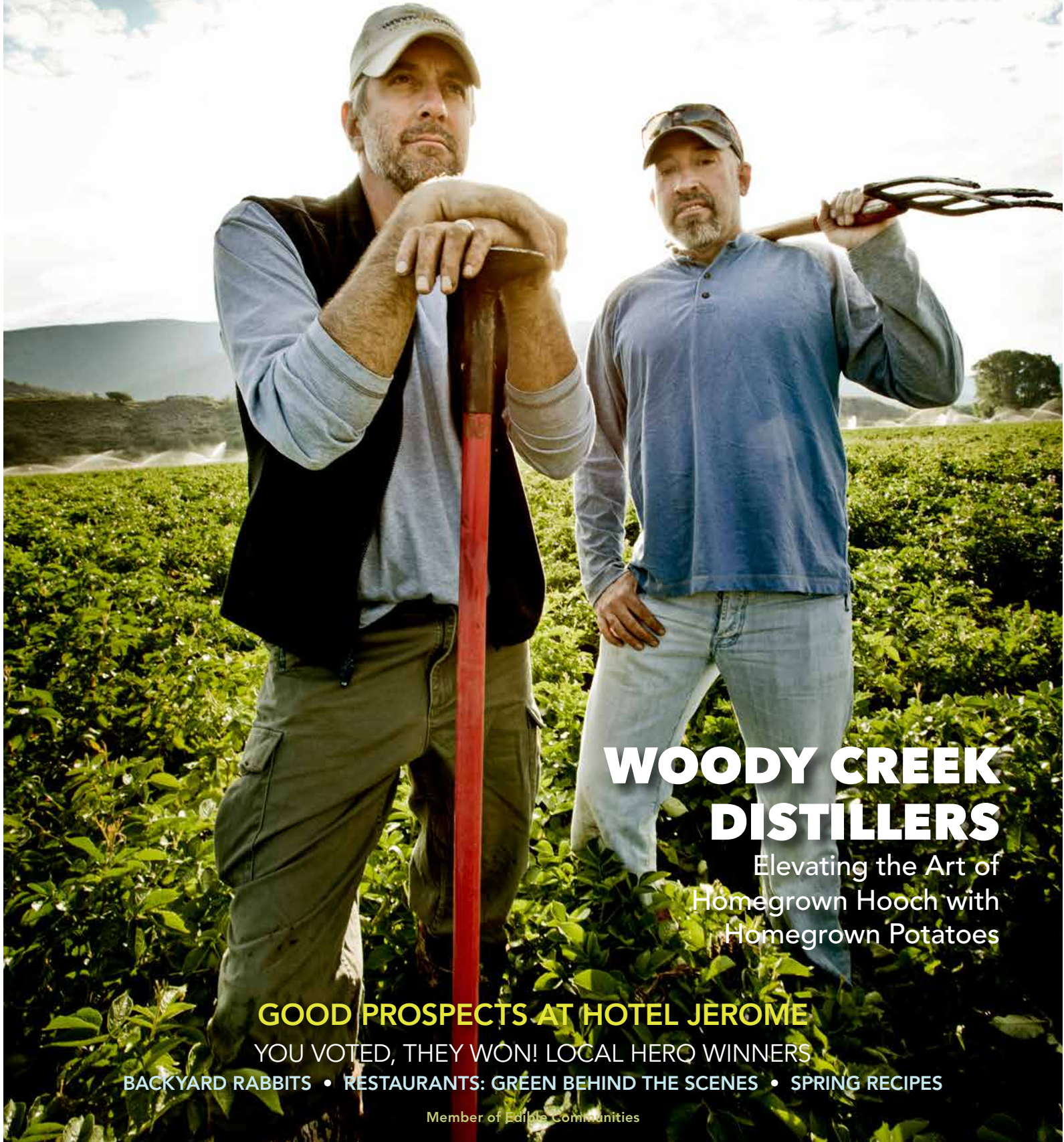


edible ASPEN[®]

CELEBRATING THE ABUNDANCE OF LOCAL FOODS IN THE ROARING FORK VALLEY AND NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES
NO. 22 **SPRING 2013**



WOODY CREEK DISTILLERS

Elevating the Art of
Homegrown Hooch with
Homegrown Potatoes

GOOD PROSPECTS AT HOTEL JEROME

YOU VOTED, THEY WON! LOCAL HERO WINNERS

BACKYARD RABBITS • RESTAURANTS: GREEN BEHIND THE SCENES • SPRING RECIPES

Member of Edible Communities

YOU VOTED, THEY WON!

Profiles from the leading edge of the local food scene.

Each fall, edibleASPEN invites the public to vote for those who are making a difference in our local food community. We host online open voting in each of the following categories. This year, the individuals and businesses listed below received the most nominations. Please join us in celebrating these winners in the edibleASPEN region for their outstanding contributions to the local foods movement!



FOR FARMERS, WINTER IS traditionally the time to rest, fix equipment and plan for next year. For Tom, Sarah and daughter Theresa Rumery (and the other 30-odd employees of Osage Gardens in New Castle), winter is the time to farm.

Of course, so are spring, summer and fall: In 2012 Osage celebrated its 20th year of four-season farming in Western Colorado.

Osage, which specializes in culinary herbs sold in supermarkets throughout Colorado, also operates an innovative "free choice" community-supported agriculture (CSA) program that has been a hit with customers from Aspen to Rifle.

Members pay up front for the season, but whereas a traditional CSA provides a fixed weekly box of produce, Osage members are given the freedom to choose their own food from the Osage Farm store or a selection of farmers' markets.

"We just did it to give people more freedom and flexibility, and I know our customers seem to like it a lot," says Theresa,

who manages sales for the farm.

The free choice model banishes some of the most common laments associated with CSAs: "It's too much food!" "How do I cook this?" or "I'm always out of town!"

Yet it does have one disadvantage: "One of the things we liked about the traditional CSA was that it forced people to try new items," Theresa says.

To encourage that, the farmers at Osage run specials almost every week on whatever's most abundant on the farm.

They also stock a wide range of Colorado products at their Little Red Farm Store in Newcastle and are contemplating opening a similar store in Glenwood Springs.

"We'd like to make local food more available year-round," says Theresa.

OsageGardens.com.



CHEF/RESTAURANT:
MARK FISCHER
OF THE PULLMAN

ABOUT A YEAR AFTER MARK FISCHER OPENED THE Pullman restaurant in Glenwood Springs, he finally put roast bone marrow on the menu.

It was an auspicious occasion because the dish is good, but also because it served as another example of what the restaurant has done so many times since opening its doors across from the train station in Glenwood Springs: expanded and educated the palates of local eaters.

Porcini-braised North Fork rabbit, crispy veal sweetbreads and truffled housemade pork rinds are just a few of the ways that the Pullman has introduced nose-to-tail eating to diners in the Roaring Fork Valley.

Fischer, who also owns the wildly popular Phat

Thai restaurant in Carbondale (he recently opened another in Denver), became a household name in Western Slope dining circles with his restaurant Six89, which he opened in Carbondale in 1998 and closed in 2012.

At Six89, Fischer was known for building his menus around the availability of local products. It's a safe bet that he'll maintain that focus when he opens yet another restaurant this spring, in an airy, expansive space directly across from Phat Thai in Carbondale.

"I haven't been in the kitchen as much lately," says Fischer, noting that he's been busy planning the new place. "But I'll get to spend 80 hours in the kitchen again soon!"

The as-yet-unnamed eatery, he says, "will have a lot of Six89 DNA. But the food will be very different. The bottom line is that it all needs to be tasty."

Learn more at ThePullmanGWS.com.



FOOD ARTISAN:
IN THE SOUP

YALONDA LONG ONCE MADE SOUP FOR THE rapper P-Diddy. When he ate it, he told her that he could "taste the love."

Long's soups may contain a lot of love, but a range of other emotions inspired their names. Long founded the company after her career as a real estate agent imploded with the housing market in 2008, and she gave her soups names like Bankrupt Butternut and Tempestuous Tomato.

These days, Long thinks a lot about how to keep the taste of love alive. In the three years since she founded the organic soup company In The Soup and began selling at the Basalt Winter

Market, her little kitchen creation has grown. A lot.

Today, Long's line of prepared soups can be found in Kroger, Vitamin Cottage and Whole Foods stores throughout Colorado. She has the product manufactured in Denver, closer to many of her Front Range stores. She's got a partner: boyfriend and former Olympic skier Casey Puckett. And she's testing new soups all the time: Her latest releases are exotic varieties like Thai coconut and Indian curry.

Today, Long is working to hit the sweet spot of scale, a level of distribution large enough to make money but small enough to keep love as an essential ingredient.

"The slow-food, small-batch touch is what I was worried about losing when I let go of the reins," she says. "I want to introduce a brand that has beauty and consistency, but is being produced on a scale where you can maintain quality."

Learn more at Food4OrganicThought.com.



RICHARD ROSENFELD HAS a counterintuitive approach to the tea business.

For one thing, he's quick to offer tips that enhance your tea-drinking experience, even if they don't necessarily enhance his bottom line.

"The Chinese believe that good teas withstand multiple washes," he says, meaning that the same leaves can be used several times throughout the day. And certain black teas, he believes, actually get better with age, so you may want to steep your old tea before heading to the store for more.

Since 2004, Rosenfeld's Basalt-based company has sourced

whole-leaf organic teas from farmers around the world, but in 2011 Rosenfeld did something else that was counterintuitive: He ended the company's participation in the Fair Trade USA program, which sets "fair" prices that companies must pay their suppliers in developing countries.

"We are already paying a premium for our tea," he says. "We feel confident that we are trading fairly, and this way even less of it goes to the middleman."

Last year, the company also launched a new line of English-style tea called Paisley, which is certified organic and sticking with the Fair Trade label as well.

And the Whole Foods Market in Basalt will soon be selling its whole-leaf teas in bulk.

Two Leaves may be an international company—its tea is packed in China and North America and shipped around the world—but Rosenfeld is taking what he calls an "organic" approach to future growth.

"We're not looking to raise a bunch of capital [to expand]," he says. "We live here in the Valley."

Learn more at TwoLeavesTea.com.



IT'S BEEN A WHIRLWIND YEAR for Sarah and Andrew Helsley, owners of The Cheese Shop in Aspen. They've taken over their first business, immersed themselves in the world of artisan products and gotten a trial-by-fire introduction to the vagaries of running a small company.

"The food side, we knew, but the rest of it is new to us," says Sarah. "We were lucky, because we were able to walk in to something that already had a following and put our own stamp on it."

The Helsleys bought the Cheese Shop from Michele Kiley and Marco Cingolani, who left to start the Aspen restaurant Justice Snow's. Although their concept is the same—a large selection of fine cheeses and cured meats, shelves full of artisan products—the new owners started from scratch in rebuilding their inventory.

The result is a selection broad enough to please any gourmand. Colorado cheeses on offer include Avalanche goat cheese, James Ranch cow's milk cheese from Durango and Haystack Mountain goat cheese out of Longmont. There's also Cabot clothbound cheddar and a selection of cheeses from the famed cellars of Jasper Hill in northern Vermont.

For the lunch crowd, the shop offers a selection of sandwiches and salads along with a "Crock-Pot D'jour" featuring dishes like

chicken potpie, seafood gumbo and pork green chili pozole.

Both Sarah and Andrew worked at Montagna under former head chef Ryan Hardy, an enthusiastic advocate of local sourcing, pickling and curing.

"It gave us an appreciation for the work that goes into these homemade products," says Sarah. "It's not easy."

Learn more at AspenCheeseShop.com.






IF YOU STAND ON THE VIEWING deck in the farmyard at Aspen T.R.E.E., you can see the top of Independence Pass. It's the headwaters of the Roaring Fork River, and an important part of Eden Vardy's lesson plan.

Vardy, 26, is the executive director of Aspen T.R.E.E. (Together Regenerating the Environment through Education), a nonprofit group based at Cozy Point Ranch outside of Aspen. In the four years since Vardy founded the group,

Aspen T.R.E.E. has become an integral part of Aspen's local food scene.

The group maintains a farmyard that's home to chickens, turkeys, alpacas and goats, puts on a pre-Thanksgiving community meal that attracts well over 1,000 people, helps organize the Aspen Eco-Fest every summer, runs a seven-member chicken co-op that will soon double in size and maintains a booth at the Aspen Saturday Market. Vardy is also planning to build a 42-foot-diameter grow-dome for vegetable production this spring and run a vegetable co-op (shared labor, shared produce) out of that facility.

But the cornerstone of the group's mission is education, and that's where the view of Independence Pass comes into play. Every summer, Aspen T.R.E.E runs a camp for 7- to 14-year-olds at its Cozy Point Farmyard. Vardy is certified to teach permaculture, an agricultural discipline that emphasizes zero-waste solutions and whole-systems thinking. He takes each new group of students to the viewing deck, points to the pass and describes how the water that flows from there irrigates our farms, which in turn yield the food that fuels our bodies. It's a profound lesson in the intricate web of connections that are the foundation of our food system. 

Learn more at Aspen-Tree.org.

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