

Ridgetop Runner

Connecting the Farm School Community

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February Fun and Italy Updates!

Although it's the shortest month of the year, the next twenty-nine days promise to be a busy time on the farm. The Program for Visiting Schools at Sentinel Elm Farm will get rolling after its winter break, and the apprentices at Maggie's Farm will be setting out for a month-long adventure on an Italian farm in Tuscany. Does that mean a hiatus for the *Ridgetop Runner*? Never fear! Although I'll be joining the gang in Europe, I'll be sending back weekly Italy Updates to share some of our adventures overseas with the rest of the Farm School family. Since I'll be out of the local loop for a while, I've also compiled for this issue of the *Runner* a grab bag of interesting things going on in central and western Massachusetts throughout February. Enjoy!

Barre Film Series

What are local people doing to save the world? That's the question asked by the organizers of the Barre Film Series at the Listening Yoga Studio in Barre Center, just twenty minutes from Athol, and this Friday they'll be getting some answers. Every first and third Friday of the month at 7 p.m., the group hosts an ongoing independent film series. This week, they'll be screening *TED: The Future We Will Create*, a tour of the world-changing projects featured at the famous annual Technology, Entertainment, and Design Conference in California. Afterwards, they've invited Kelley O'Connor from the Mass Local Food Coop to share some of the inspiration behind her project and how it helps local residents in the Bay State. Check it out at <http://barrefilm.org>.

Local Eating Hits Home

Winter can be a real challenge for anyone in New England committed to eating locally, but luckily the farmers and food activists of Franklin County are willing to lend a hand. The first week of February is Winter Fare, a whole host of events to promote the out-of-season appreciation of locally produced foods. The opening event is a Groundhog Day Farmers Market this Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in

the Greenfield Second Congregational Church in downtown Greenfield. The market will feature storage crops, dairy products, honey, pickles, preserves, and other winter foods all made in central and western Massachusetts. There will also be workshops and displays with tips on how to eat locally all year long. Visit their website for a full list of events: <http://www.riverlandfarm.com/winterfare>.

Silver Chord Bowl

For seventeen years, Northampton has livened up the month with its "Four Sundays in February" series of cultural events. The fun begins this Sunday, February 2, at 2 p.m. with the Silver Chord Bowl, a showcase of the best college *a capella* groups from the Northeast. Smith College will host groups from Connecticut College, Amherst, Dartmouth, Rutgers, Tufts, and UMass in John M. Greene Hall on the Smith campus. Tickets are \$10 in advance (call 413-587-1269) or \$12 at the door.

Bruce's Browser

On Friday, February 15, at 7 p.m., our beloved Bruce's Browser right here in Athol will celebrate Black History Month with the award-winning documentary *Brother Outsider*, the story of civil rights activist Bayard Rustin.