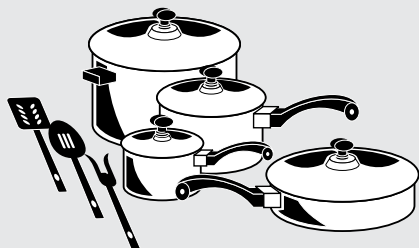


**Cooperative Grocery**

# NEWS BITES

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## Welcome New Co-op Members!

From February 6 to March 6 we held our most successful Membership Drive ever. We welcome 121 new member-owners to Open Harvest. Our new Front End Manager Annie Lovato led the team with encouragement and brings fresh energy and passion for the co-op to the front end. The cashiers shared their knowledge and enthusiasm for the co-op with customers in a friendly manner and more people joined up than ever before!

## Developing Farming Microbusinesses

*By Leslie Pillen, Community CROPS Farm Manager*

The Community CROPS beginning farmer training program and farm training site (located just a few miles west of Lincoln) have been progressively developing over the past few years. Program participants, who are largely immigrant or refugee families and individuals, work with CROPS to start and develop their own market farm businesses. As market farmers, participants grow a wide array of vegetable, fruit and herb crops for sale at area farmers' markets and to supportive local businesses. Among the local businesses that support CROPS farmers is Open Harvest.

In 2007, Open Harvest purchased a variety of vegetables from the farmers in CROPS' training program. These sales were immensely beneficial to the farmers for a number of reasons. Financially, vegetable sales enabled them to provide for their families. Some of the farmers have past injuries which prohibit them from working a full-time job, so the opportunity to work at their own pace on the farm is invaluable. Open Harvest helps make this possible for them by supporting them through purchasing their produce. The relationships that have been formed between CROPS staff and farmers, and Open Harvest staff and customers are also important for strengthening local community. Where else can you shop and also "get to know your farmer?"

We at CROPS are very excited for the 2008 growing season. We have been working with Produce Manager Deslie Ervin to develop contracts for CROPS farmers to grow and sell a variety of produce items to Open

Harvest. This is great news for the farmers because it provides them with the opportunity to grow food knowing that there is a guaranteed market for it. It reduces the uncertainty frequently involved with market farming. The farmers are also glad to know that their community supports them in their efforts to grow healthy, diverse crops for local markets.



Deslie shares organic seed potatoes with Leslie Pillen for planting season.

*Photo credit Jim Nelson.*

We firmly stand behind the belief that local agriculture systems can help create a healthy community, healthy families and individuals, and a healthy local economy. We appreciate the commitment which Open Harvest has made to further developing and supporting local agriculture through sourcing locally-grown produce at their store. Be sure to look for CROPS-grown produce on the shelves of Open Harvest this growing season!

**News Bites** is a quarterly publication of Open Harvest Cooperative Grocery  
1618 South Street  
Lincoln, NE 68502  
402-475-9069

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Leslie Pillen, Amber Ham

### **2008 Board of Directors**

Keith Dubas, Chair  
Dave Eckmann  
Alene Swinehart  
Maggie Pleskac  
Tim Arkebauer  
David Murphy  
Miles Bryant  
Ingrid Kirst  
Mary Jane Gruba  
Robert Hutkins  
Gail Kendall  
Carla McCullough  
Sara Moshman  
Scott Renken

The Board of Directors meets the first Monday of the month at 6:30pm. Members are welcome to attend. If you would like to join us, call Keith Dubas at 438-0171.

### **Open Harvest Mission Statement:**

The goal of Open Harvest is to provide good health through good nutrition. Open Harvest provides high quality and natural foods with a high level of service and a reasonable price to the community of Lincoln. Open Harvest is a member-owned retail cooperative dedicated to equitable employment practices, support of local producers, consumer education, and sustainable agricultural practices.

*News Bites* is archived at  
www.openharvest.coop  
and at the Nebraska State  
Historical Society.

*Printed with soy-based ink on  
30% PCW recycled paper*

# Samples from the GM

*By Jim Nelson, General Manager*

We are regaining our sales increases that were interrupted by the construction of South Street last summer. For our third quarter (Jan, Feb, March) of this year, we have almost regained our pre-construction sales increases. For the week of March 3-9, Open Harvest set an all time one-week sales record. We have been able to maintain profitability for the last two quarters. This is extremely important as it helps us to be in a strong position to acquire funds for a possible re-location and for the long term health of the co-op.

Our expansion efforts continue. Some times it seems we are writing another chapter in our log regarding finding a new home for Open Harvest. We continue to kick over rocks, and drive around South Lincoln and look for possibilities. We are talking to developers as well as brokers. With our continued efforts we will discover the correct space for the future of Open Harvest.



You will notice in the near future an expansion of meat items in our Meat/Seafood Department. We have identified a local supplier that can provide us with Natural Beef products and allow us to support our local farmers. Open Harvest has been supporting local since 1975.

We continue to be very pleased with your response to our efforts at promoting Veriflora fresh cut flowers which are produced in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. We thank you for your support.

Open Harvest will also continue to offer a website coupon monthly. Each month one department will have a money saving coupon on the website. Check it out.

As I hope you have noticed while shopping in your co-op, we now have an on-going sampling program. We have four sampling stations out on the store floor. Our plans are to increase our sampling program. I hope you enjoy tasting new foods and gain some menu ideas.

In the near future, we plan to hold some specific sampling days where we will have people walking around offering you samples of goodies. We will be offering more new healthy foods for you to provide to your friends and family.

Other activities we plan to bring you this year include a bulk goods sale, an outdoor produce sale, more cheese sampling sessions, a Fall Harvest sale, a parking lot sale, a health and beauty aids/supplement sale and new holiday menu ideas. **These events are tentative and subject to change.** The bottom line is, we will have plenty of activities and reasons for you to visit your co-op.



Customers enjoy sampling cheese selections. *Photo credit Bryant Selko.*

# Board Responsibilities

By Keith Dubas, Board Chair

Why do we dedicate our time to working on the Board of Directors for your co-op?

Working for the common good, participating and directing a system as basic as our food system are some reasons given by the dedicated members of the board. The sense that most all good things come from communal efforts is another. The word cooperation is central to that concept. The people that serve on the board come from many different backgrounds. While there are common grounds for participation, each individual on the board has their own personal reasons. For some it concern for the health of themselves or a loved one. Some like the friendly, social feeling of the store, while others simply like wonderful food choices. For me, it is all of the above.

## Board Elections

Elections take place in June and it is important for member-owners to begin thinking now about participating in our coop at a higher level beyond shopping at the store. Many of our current board members have served for multiple 3 year terms. With any board, the injection of new energy can serve to give the current members a fresh and broader perspective. There is a benefit in experienced board members overlapping with newly elected board members in passing along process and history.

Currently the board numbers 14. Last year's election was unprecedented with the addition of six new board members, all of which admirably volunteered. We have presently several committees acting on board issues.

## Expansion

The Expansion Committee serves at the will of the General Manager. Made up of both board members and co-op members-at-large, this committee has reviewed options, locations, and financial data in pursuing the desire to expand and relocate. With the new General Manager leading the committee, the idea of a move is still viable. The success in proceeding along this path will be finding a space that will meet the needs of the co-op and its membership while being financially feasible. While there are encouraging possibilities ahead, past pursuits have proven to be too much financial challenge for the co-op at this time.

## Policy

The Policy Committee reviews the board policies each month. The board adopted the use of Policy Governance as a means for the board to direct the co-op without micromanaging the store. The board realizes that it is not equipped to manage the daily happenings of a grocery store. Policy Governance allows the board to set benchmarks that the General Manager reports on, permitting the board to then determine compliance or non compliance with the policies.

## Finance

The Finance Committee specifically reviews the quarterly reports provided by the General Manager. The quarterly reports breakdown into multiple lines of analysis. These committee members help to put the financial numbers into everyday layman's terms that assist the rest of the board in understanding the gist of the report.

## Member Loans

The charge of this committee is to develop and manage a members' loan campaign. The loans that are generated from their efforts will be used to affect the expansion and relocation of the co-op. Presently this committee is working on setting up the terms and conditions and levels of participation for the loans. Legal review of the campaign and the loan commitments will take place prior to the actual start of the campaign.

As the board's work progresses through the year, there are other needs for short term committees such as the Annual Membership Meeting. These ad hoc committees generally exist for shortened periods of time and have a definitive focus.

## Can you be of Service?

As we begin planning for elections, the board hopes that you will begin thinking how you might begin to take part in a leadership role at our 33-year-old Open Harvest Cooperative. If you are interested in exploring the possibility of running for the board or if you know of someone that you think would be a potential Board member, call me, Keith Dubas at 438-0171.

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# Eating Well

## Yogurt Breakfast Salad

From Jackie Barnhardt

- 1 Tablespoon dried cranberries
- 1 Tablespoon almonds, sliced or slivered
- 1 Tablespoon ground flax seeds
- 1 organic apple, peach, banana or pear, diced
- 8 oz yogurt

Fold all ingredients together and enjoy one of the best ways to start your day. Or, you can blend just the dry ingredients the night before and add the fruit and yogurt in the morning.

## Cardamom Lavender Bars

From Bonnie Bake

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1-3/4 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon cardamom
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

For dusting cake top:

- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon dried lavender flowers

Butter a 13 inch x 9 inch pan and dust it with powdered sugar. Cream butter and sugar together. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Sift dry ingredients together and stir half into batter. Add sour cream and vanilla, then stir in the other half of the dry ingredients.

Pour mixture into pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Place on a wire rack and cool to room temperature. Once cooled, cut cake into 2 inch squares. Combine 3/4 cup sugar and 1 tablespoon lavender in food processor or coffee grinder; blend into a fine powder. Sift this powder over top of cubed cake.

## Mango Salsa

*This is great with tortilla chips. I have also used it for a topping for grilled salmon, which is delicious. – Bonnie Bake.*

- 2 ripe mangos
- 1 teaspoon. lime zest
- 2 teaspoons lime juice
- 2 teaspoon fresh chopped basil
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper

Combine all ingredients and refrigerate.

## Reharvesting: Open Harvest's Food Recovery Program

By Amber Ham, Health and Fitness Grant Coordinator at F St Rec

Introduction by Pama Heikes

Food Recovery is a program that promotes the usage and donation of food products that are still edible but no longer saleable. Examples of this would be produce with a small bruise, foods that are pulled from the shelf on the expiration date but are still edible on that day, or a special order that did not get picked up. Open Harvest's "From Garden to Table" Community Food Project grant promotes the development and strengthening of partnerships with primary grant partners, Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department and Community CROPS. Open Harvest also makes Food Recovery donations to other community-based organizations including Food Net and The Gathering Place.

Every Tuesday Amber Ham meets with Produce Manager Deslie Ervin at Open Harvest and collects on average 70 pounds of food ranging from mint leaves, to pears, to baby red bananas. Amber unloads the food at F Street where everything is divided into separate bags.

The food recovery program at F Street Rec is a wonderful new way to expand low-income children and adults' understanding of fresh vegetables and fruits. Duane Wunderlich, head chef at F Street Community Center, picks various items that he may use for lunch, dinner, or the children's snack during the week. Duane cooks lunch for the seniors Monday through Friday with food donated from the Food Recovery Program. He also cooks dinner for the children Monday-Friday with food donated from the Recovery Program or the Food Bank.

Amber often takes about 20 pounds of fresh fruit to schools and recreation centers throughout Lincoln where she teaches health, fitness, cooking, nutrition, and gardening. Any produce that is not used by F Street is then set out for local community citizens to take. F Street Community Center is open 7 days/week and provides various services such as discounted bus passes, food distribution from the Food Bank, drop-in after-school care, free computer usage, tutoring, English Language Learners Classes, etc. Being located in the "core" of Lincoln, F Street provides services like no other recreation center and caters to the low-income and New American populations. The Food Recovery Program is just one asset to the center.

The Food Recovery Program allows children access to fresh fruits and vegetables, a commodity not often received at home. More importantly, the children don't frown on a few bruised apples and pears—they are happy to bite into an actual pear instead of one that has been in a can of heavy high fructose syrup sitting on a shelf for months. Low-income children and adults are constantly exposed to high sugar foods, as they are more easily accessible and affordable. If children can begin to learn about these high sugar foods and understand healthier foods, then society may see a decrease in the number of overweight and obese children.

## Sign up for a Garden Plot

Community CROPS garden plot applications are now being accepted for locations all over Lincoln. Sign up now to reserve your space so you can grow food all summer long! Volunteers also welcomed. For further information see [www.communitycrops.org](http://www.communitycrops.org) or call 474-9802.



Jim Larsen, Dairy and Cheese Manager brings you a world of cheese flavors May 22.  
Photo credit Bryant Selko.

## How Many Miles to Your Plate?

Just how far does most food travel to reach your plate? Most likely, much further than you realize. Consider these facts on the long and winding journey non-local food travels from farm to fork:

- Ten percent of all fossil fuel energy consumption in the United States is due to food processing, transportation, storage and preparation. (Horrigan, Leo, et al. 2002)
- Processed food in the United States travels more than 1,300 miles on average to reach consumers. (National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service, 2008)
- On average, produce travels more than 1,500 miles from the industrial farm to the plate. (National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service, 2008)
- On average, an American meal usually consists of ingredients from five different countries. (Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, 2007)
- Typically, food spends seven to 14 days on trucks and in transit to reach American consumers. (Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, 2007)
- Smaller family-owned farms typically reinvest more into the local economy by purchasing goods and services available within their region, rather than through large bulk distributors outside the region. (Worldwatch Institute, 2002)

Open Harvest sources local foods as much as possible. Look for new signs coming soon in our produce department counting miles from local farms to our co-op.

## 2008 Spring Cooking Classes

*Classes will be held in May, 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the Trinity United Methodist Church at 16th and A Streets.\**

### **Growing and Cooking with Herbs Tuesday May 6**

Culinary herbs are easy to grow and use! Long-time member and past president of the Nebraska Herbal Society, Bonnie Bake, will share herbal info with you. She will show you how to care for bedding plants and prepare easy delicious herbal recipes. Find out how rewarding and tasty it is to bring herbs from your own garden to your dinner table!

### **Kombucha Crazy! Tuesday May 20**

Learn the history, art and craft of making this traditionally fermented drink. Discussion will include the health benefits as well as some of the myths of kombucha. A few of starter cultures will be available from instructor Elenor Sodergren.

### **Cheese Sampler Thursday May 22**

Explore a wide variety of international, domestic, and local cheese. Sample and compare an array of cheeses and discover the nuances of exotic flavors. Instructed by Open Harvest Dairy Manager Jim Larson.

### **Fresh Spring Salads Thursday May 29**

Tired of the same old salad? Are you looking for new fresh ideas to invigorate your menu and your body? Join Janet Buck R. D. and learn to make your salads more exciting using spring garden vegetables and creative toppings, including healthy nuts. Janet will include recipes for appetizing, healthy salad dressings.

*\*This is the last session at this facility as the church is relocating. We are looking for another health department approved kitchen facility in the area suitable for classes. If you have a recommendation, call Jackie 475-9033.*

### **Registration for Natural Foods Cooking Classes Spring 2008**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (eve) \_\_\_\_\_

Check classes desired

May 6 Herbs  May 22 Cheese Sampler

May 20 Kombucha  May 29 Fresh Spring Salads

Member-owner: \$15 per class. Member number \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Member-owner: \$20 per class

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (do not send cash)

Visa, MC or Discover# \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration \_\_\_\_\_

Your payment secures your seat. No walk-ins, please.

Send payment to: Open Harvest. Attn: Jackie

1618 South St. Lincoln, NE 68502

CANCELLATION POLICY: If you need to cancel, please contact Open Harvest at least 24 hours prior to class if you want a refund.

A processing fee of \$5 per class will be deducted.

# Welcome New Team Members!

We welcome new folks to our management team since wintertime. Annie Lovato says, "As the new Front End Manager I am happy to say that our staff has been working hard at providing helpful and positive customer service. Our business has increased wonderfully so plan on seeing a staffed 3rd checker express lane on the week-ends and also extra help with bagging. Thank you for your patience and loyalty."



Annie rings up Will's purchases. *Photo credit Bryant Selko.*

The Grocery Department has expanded with the promotion of Kelsi Swanson to Merchandising Manager and Pam Hetrick to Purchasing Manager. Christophe Bossaert is now the Stock Manager. Mike Meile is still our freezer buyer. The staff meets the evening trucks and stocks late night for better efficiency. The Gluten-Free section has been integrated into the rest of the store. Gluten Free items can be identified by purple shelf tags that label them as so. Kelsi says, "We are continually striv-

ing to meet our customer requests as they come to us. Customer suggestions are always welcome and we hope to continually bring in newer and better selections to our customers. As our team settles into our new positions our goal is to better our communication and keep the shelves full."

Alex Wolfe is the new Meat and Seafood Manager in as of February. After much effort to source local natural packaged beef, Alex recently picked up NaturAll beef from David City, Nebraska. NaturAll is calf raised Angus from the Metzner Cattle Company. At this time we carry steaks, BBQ and original Beef Jerky. Open Harvest sources local beef, bison, lamb, chicken, trout, and ostrich. Look for more local meat in the coming months.

Our dairy department has experienced rapid growth and we have create a new Dairy and Cheese Manager position. Jim Larsen has been promoted to fill this role. Jim will be offering a Cheese Sampler class in May. Don't miss this delicious chance!



Pam, Christophe, and Kelsi keep the grocery department running smoothly. *Photo credit Bryant Selko.*

## What's New Around the Store

### Deli

Deli Manager Lee Hanson invites you to view our look Check out the new breakfast items including vegetarian "Gimme Lean" sausage biscuits and gravy, quiche, and eggbakes. Each month we rotate flavored hummus: roasted garlic, kalmata, herbed spice, sundried tomato, roasted red pepper, spiced chipotle, pesto, green olive. For dessert, try the tart lime and lemon pies.

### Bakery

In February, the Bakery began production of made-from-scratch cinnamon rolls. Made with the dough of our popular whole wheat bread and organic Korintje cinnamon, it is a sweet and satisfying way to start your day. Currently available in the early morning on most days of the week.

### Health and Beauty

We have new Burt's Bees products for spring. Come and try the new body butter, body bars, and Men's cologne. Check out Aura Cacia essential oil blends, Zum soaps and lotions, and wood pin hair brushes.

### Supplements

Emergen-C has new flavors! Try Acai Berry, Pink Lemonade, Tropical, and MSM Lite. Simple Medicinals has a unique oral spray delivery system. Boiron has an expanded range of single homeopathic remedies. More new products include: homeopathics from Heel, Nordic Natural's liquid cod liver oil, specialty supplements from Solgar, Renew Life, Kal, and New Chapter. We have many more new products. Ask us about them!

# Fresh Cut Flowers from VeriFlora

Open Harvest has chosen to bring you VeriFlora products for you to enjoy and share without compromising social responsibility and environmental protection. When you choose a VeriFlora product, you are contributing to a global movement to encourage companies to become sustainable. Already, this has resulted in significant and positive change for farmers, farm workers, and the environment. Since Open Harvest began carrying VeriFlora, contacts with local growers have been made. Our Produce Manager Deslie says, "Feel free to feel good buying VeriFlora!"

The VeriFlora certification establishes procedures for verifying agricultural production and handling practices, from soil preparation and seed planting through production, harvest, and post-harvest distribution. The program is administered by Scientific Certification Systems (SCS), a leader in third party certification services and standards development. To be certified, growers and handlers must meet rigorous performance criteria in sustainable crop



Cashier Randi appreciates veriflora flowers.

*Photo credit Bryant Selko.*

production, ecosystem protection, resource conservation and energy efficiency, integrated waste management, fair labor practices, community benefits, and product quality.

The SCS standard includes the most stringent protocols for agrochemical use among all flower label programs. Growers must eliminate the use of all agrochemicals classified as extremely hazardous or highly hazardous by the World Health Organization. The standard sets down specific requirements to ensure the safe storage of hazardous wastes and agrochemicals. Growers are required to develop a plan for converting to organic pest management and soil fertility practices over time. The standard contains extensive ecosystem and water quality protection measures to ensure that farmers are not damaging surrounding wildlife and habitats as a result of their

production. Social responsibility requirements are included to ensure a fair, equitable and safe workplace that often extends beyond the requirements of local or national laws. For more information, see [www.veriflora.com](http://www.veriflora.com) and [www.scs-certified.com](http://www.scs-certified.com).

## ***Eat your Colors at the earth wellness festival***

*by Jackie Barnhardt, Outreach and Membership Director*

On March 20, Open Harvest presented Eat Your Colors at the earth wellness festival, an annual science fair at Southeast Community College for fifth graders. Nearly 3000 Lancaster County youth and 150 teachers attend the 2 day event focusing on learning activities about land, water, air and living resources. 86 students from Rousseau, West Lincoln schools participated in Eat your Colors.

In 25 minutes, groups of 22-24 students came through the Open Harvest classroom and played three activities. For Eat Your Colors, students learned about how chlorophyll makes vegetables green and how lycopene in tomatoes and red fruit and vegetables provide antioxidants. They learned how antioxidants help protect their cells. We also asked students where colors came from in candy and sodas and encouraged them to consider why they were in there and if they helped their bodies to grow. We talked about other colors in fruits and vegetables that would be good choices to eat and sampled a variety of organic colorful fruit and vegetables from the co-op.

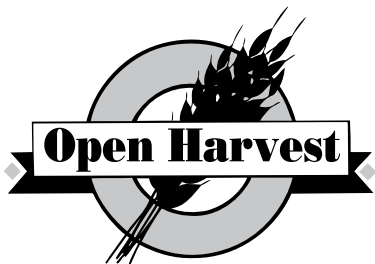
Kumquats were a favorite. Many children had not had these before and really enjoyed the sweet and sour tang of this exotic fruit. It is difficult to describe the vision of a dozen beautiful faces of children from various cultural

backgrounds biting into kumquats for the first time. What fun!

A guessing game was played where kids reached into a pillow case to identify a variety of vegetables or fruits. Prizes of chocolate earth balls were awarded for guessing the more challenging eggplant and zucchini. Foods Libs, a variation of the Mad Libs word game was played where students filled in words about helping their mom recycle.

Students also learned about definitions of USDA organic and that there is not a certified definition for "natural". At Open Harvest, we have been defining our natural foods as not having artificial flavors, colors or preservatives added since we opened in 1975. Students were encouraged to use thinking skills and read labels carefully. They found out about food cooperative enterprises and how our co-op was founded.

The earth wellness festival is an environmental education program conceived in 1994. Organizers work closely with local schools to ensure the activities and materials correspond with their fifth-grade curriculum. The students participate in a culminating activity with raptors from the World Bird Sanctuary from St. Louis, Missouri.



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## **Eat as if Your Life Depends on It!**

**Tuesday, May 13, 7-8:30 pm**

**Trinity United Methodist Church 16th and A Streets**

Open Harvest invites Dr. Kevin Coughlin for a discussion and a look at what to eat — and what not to eat. In a culture surrounded by “food” we CAN see each meal as a way to nourish our bodies and spirits. Eating need not be a battleground of guilt and confusion. We will explore that challenge with common sense and innovation. Open Harvest will provide samples of recommended nutritious foods. This program is FREE.

Dr. Coughlin is a UNMC graduate who did his Family Medicine training in Lincoln. After practicing in Geneva, Neb. he returned to Lincoln and was a full-time ER doctor for ten years. In 1998 he returned to Primary Care and



pursued his interest in Alternative and Complementary Medicine. This vision resulted in a two-year fellowship with Dr. Andrew Weil at the University of Arizona Program in Integrative Medicine in Tucson. He continues as an active alumnus of PIM and an enthusiastic advocate of Integrative Medicine.

Dr. Coughlin has also trained in Medical Acupuncture through the Helms Medical Institute/UCLA. His current practice, Heart & Health Solutions, is acupuncture only — with principles of Integrative nutrition, herbal supplementation and lifestyle management incorporated.

## **Living Well with Diabetes**

**Tuesday, June 10, 7-8:30 pm**  
**Trinity United Methodist Church**  
**16th and A Streets**

Open Harvest invites Tracie Foreman to present a program on “Living Well with Diabetes.” Living with diabetes can be a balancing act for even the most regimented individuals. The disease is at times complicated, confusing and frustrating at best. Learning the basics, the tried and true techniques and the deal breakers with diabetes can set the tone for how well we live with this disease.

Tracie is an Aging Specialist/Health Educator with the Lincoln Area Agency on Aging/Lifetime Health Program, and is insulin dependent.