

# LocalsGuide

The Cool Newspaper

August 2009

Visit: [LocalsGuide.com](http://LocalsGuide.com)



## Annie Hoy

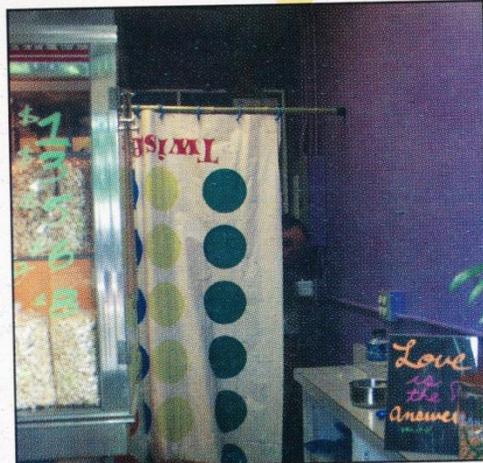
Ashland Food Co-op

By Shields Bialasik

*First off I would like to thank you and all the veterans of the Ashland Food Co-op. The co-op stands as a strong model for how a community food cooperative can function and as I understand it, you have played a role in this for a long time.*

**Shields:** Can you give us a little history of the Ashland Food Co-op. When and how it was started?

**Annie:** Ashland Food Co-op started out as a Buvina Club in 1972. Many food co-ops started



Turtle, Is that you?

## Turtle's Beejie Hut

*It makes Bento look Palacial*

By LocalsGuide

**I** Love food. When there's an open bag of snacks within reach, somehow it all disappears, I had stopped eating it – thinking that it was junk food and bad for me – so I decided to do something about making a snack that was more wholesome and yet super tasty. I took kettle corn and improved upon it, using only the best organic ingredients, like non GMO corn from California and fairly-traded raw, evaporated cane juice instead of bleached white sugar. I also use ancient sea salt from Utah from when it was at the bottom of the ocean. Last I heard, Utah is now high and dry – or at least dry.

see **turtle** Page 9

## Help Ashland Thrive

Ten Things You Can Do!

By Karen Jeffery

**“W**e're tiptoeing into sustainability,” Tom Ward joked the other day at a permaculture workshop. But we all knew it was true. We're definitely taking our time learning new habits to serve ourselves and our community better in these tough times, and we can do better. In fact with few (if any) safety nets in place, we need to help each other, and leaving more of our money in Ashland is one place to start. As unemployment rises to 14% (some say it's over 25% if the long term unemployed and underemployed are taken into account), raising our awareness of spending and hiring locally is paramount. For too long we've been hearing the giant sucking sound of our dollars going off to Wall Street...or China, rather than the sweet music of economic sustainability in our own valley.

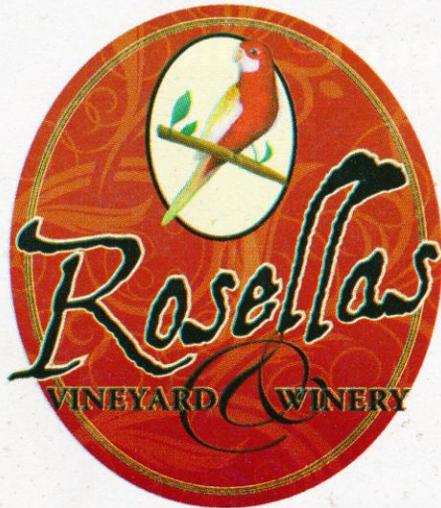
I agree wholeheartedly with our Mayor, who recently said: “The best thing you can do for yourself is strengthen your community.” But beyond the obvious: spend less, clean up any credit and start saving, do the

# LocalsGuide

Media Has Evolved

September 2009

Visit: [.com](#)



If you want it...  
**GO GET IT!**

*An Interview With Sandi Garoutte of Rosella's Vineyard & Winery*

"To venture out into the unknown is a brave thing. To have a dream and chase it is a brave thing. To sit back and wait for life to happen to you frightens the hell out of me. If you want it...go get it. Some will try, some will fail, but to never have tried at all is failure. We love what we do. We do it earnestly, honestly and with great passion. Everyone should be so lucky." - Sandi Garoutte



## Bohemia 2.0

by Michael Kerr

When Bohemia Gallery & Framing moved down the street to its new location at 552 'A' Street this past April, owners Inger Jorgensen and Nicole Hurley were concerned. Even though they were growing out of their old spot and the new space was much larger (the lack of wall space was always a challenge in the industrial, window-laden design of the old building at the corner of Pioneer and 'A' they say), the two wondered whether their clients would follow them or how people would respond to the very different, yet more classic "gallery-like," atmosphere. They needn't have worried, says Hurley. "The response has been overwhelming."

see **Bohemia** Page 6

## Helping Ashland Thrive - Part II *Economic Energizers...multiplied.*

By Karen Jeffery

Hopefully we're all making strides to change the music from the grand sucking sound to the sweet smell of community success, and here's where the economic multiplier effect can really take off. This Keynesian principle can be our own economic stimulus package...if we work it. "Evidence suggests that every dollar spent at a locally owned business generates two to four times more economic benefit - measured in income, wealth, jobs, and tax revenue - than a dollar spent at a globally owned business." - The size of the local multiplier depends on the percentage spent within the community. The less spent - the more leaks - the smaller the effect. And it gets better as more people sign on to spend and re-spend in our own town, keeping more dollars re-circulating in the community.

## 10 Things We Can Do...to help Ashland Thrive

PART I of an economic sustainability study

“We’re tiptoeing into sustainability,” Tom Ward joked the other day at a permaculture workshop. But we all knew it was true. We’re definitely taking our time learning new habits to serve ourselves and our community better in these tough times, and we can do better. In fact with few (if any) safety nets in place, we need to help each other, and leaving more of our money in Ashland is one place to start. As unemployment rises to 14% (some say it’s over 25% if the long term unemployed and underemployed are taken into account), raising our awareness of spending and hiring locally is paramount. For too long we’ve been hearing the giant sucking sound of our dollars going off to Wall Street...or China, rather than the sweet music of economic sustainability in our own valley.

I agree wholeheartedly with our Mayor, who recently said: “The best thing you can do for yourself is strengthen your community.” But beyond the obvious: spend less, clean up any credit and start saving, do the R words (reduce – reuse – repair – restore – renew – replenish – regenerate – recycle – reinvest – reconnect – revision), and much of what many of us are already doing, how can we help ourselves and our town? By being aware of all our spending, banking, hiring, and other habits – habits that have to change if we are to continue to experience and transform the Ashland we know and love.

It seems pretty easy for those of us already conditioned to take our bags to the market, recycle our newspapers, bottles, cans, etc. But do we shop as close to the source as possible? Keep the money circulating right here at home? Ask our friends to help out too? That would mean using our own back yards and the Farmers Market as first food sources, followed by Ashland’s own Co-op, then local markets, and lastly grocery chains – which send profits back to their headquarters, leaving the Valley forever. By sourcing food locally we maximize our money’s impact while minimizing fuel usage and CO2 production, since produce from the supermarket travels over 90% farther than locally-grown food.

Recirculating money locally for as long as possible is a key to sustaining ourselves and our community. Due to the economic multiplier effect, every dollar which stays here in Ashland grows exponentially. Obviously the more people spend locally, the more the benefit. But most dollars sent away go for good. So while some say they shop online or out of town to save money, they do so at the peril of their community...and themselves. Just imagine if each of us increased our local spending from 50 to 80 percent. That 30% more than doubles the effect. Our businesses would be thriving...and hiring (hopefully locally), we wouldn’t ‘need’ the meals tax, alternative transportation would be easy, safety nets would expand, and all of us would be enriched.

After our local Citizens Council researched alternative economic models and met with valley bankers to discuss their business practices, I decided to switch my bank account to one which, instead of being part of the problem is part of the solution. Instead of my money going to shareholders on Wall Street and paying huge salaries and bonuses to the bosses, a local credit union circulates funds into car loans, home improvements, and student loans for my neighbors right here in town. Any surpluses accrue to members here in the valley...not shareholders elsewhere.

Have you ever watched the traffic jam of cars leaving Ashland for Medford and parts north at the end of the work day? Lots of businesses here hire from other areas, leaving many unemployed or under-employed right here. I called several businesses and the big 5, and none had a mandate, policy or preference to spending or hiring locally. Wouldn't that be prudent?

Rebecca Adamson, Cherokee leader admonishes: "Apply your values to every dollar you spend. We find abundance through hard times when we find each other". When we do these things – live by our values and include others, we're empowered. And we're less fearful about what happens on wall street when we take care of main street.

Here are some practical steps all Ashlanders can take:

1. Live within your limits, seasons
2. Go green!! Walk and bike, weatherize your home, use energy-saving bulbs and appliances (and turn 'em off), cold wash/hang dry...
3. Grow some food (and extra for friends and neighbors)
4. Shop locally ~ Farmers' Market, Co-op, garage sales, thrifts, locally owned markets and shops (doing what you can to shorten the supply chain multiplies benefits, is better for the environment, and recirculates money through our community)
5. Use cash when you shop. That 4-5% the credit/debit card companies charge the local business could be the difference between laying off one of your neighbors or keeping the business in profits
6. Bank locally (credit unions and smaller banks are more socially responsible than major corporations and keep the dollars here).
7. Invest locally (have you bought a solar panel? helped a student or a start-up?)
8. Communicate with family, friends, community, land...be in relationship
9. If you an employer, hire locally (and pay at least the living wage of \$12.96 per hour)
10. Ask the local businesses you support to re-think hiring, procuring, and investing policies to benefit our community

Don't forget to keep informed locally and globally about economic and sustainability issues (have you been to a Transition Town meeting?) and take positive action whenever you can, re-think systems, volunteer, try random acts of kindness...the list is endless really.

Until we're part of the solution, we're part of the problem so ask yourself regularly: how will my actions affect my community and our commonwealth. To transform, we can (and must) support our community. Not only can we turn this economy around, we can thrive again here in our little paradise.

More about the multiplier effect and Ashland's Big 5 next time...  
In the meantime, take the Rx and watch what happens.

---

## **PART II ~ Helping Ashland Thrive**

Economic Energizers...multiplied.

Hopefully we're all making strides to change the music from the grand sucking sound to the sweet smell of community success, and here's where the economic multiplier effect can really take off. This Keynesian principle can be our own economic stimulus package...if we work it.

“Evidence suggests that every dollar spent at a locally own business generates two to four times more economic benefit – measured in income, wealth, jobs, and tax revenue – than a dollar spent at a globally owned business.” \* The size of the local multiplier depends on the percentage spent within the community. The less spent – the more leaks – the smaller the effect. And it gets better as more people sign on to spend and re-spend in our own town, keeping more dollars re-circulating in the community.

I began thinking about the effects of my own spending and banking efforts – buying locally instead of outside Ashland or online, using cash instead of credit cards, keeping my money here in the valley instead of sending it off to big city corporations...and their rich CEOs, investing in local businesses, solar panels, etc...instead of wall street. Still, doing all I could, I had very little effect.

My daughter, on the other hand, is raising a family of seven (plus my granddog). Her family would have considerably more impact by buying locally. And if we all did it...well, just imagine. But what about the really BIG spenders in our town...the BIG FIVE. Their influence would have major impacts.

So I called the Chamber of Commerce to inquire further about these top five economic engines of Ashland – the City of Ashland, Southern Oregon University, Ashland Community Hospital, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and Ashland Public Schools. I then followed up with numerous phone interviews with their various representatives, inquiring of each about their policies and procedures regarding spending and hiring locally. Although for the most part they were ‘encouraging’ some and some were trying here and there...and many had recycling and green-up programs in place, none had policies, mandates or preferences to either spend or hire locally. NONE.

Although each thought it a good idea and something to think about, NONE mandated doing these things that would help our town thrive. The results were mixed, from problems with bidding processes (City – might want to dialogue with State) to lack of local supply (ACH – may be an opportunity here) to really not much thought about it (too busy chopping programs and employees). Basically many just bought from suppliers they had used for years and hired talent or minimum wage earners wherever they could find them...which may have worked for them in the past, but these times require special action.

With over \$250 million in combined budgets, and employing nearly 2,500 people, these five have enormous power to influence outcomes in our small community...and every incentive to do so. Rooted in Ashland, they have self-interest in keeping Ashland healthy, safe, and strong. Ashland is their home too.

When I looked for a model of sustainability, it wasn’t hard. Since 1972 the Ashland Food Co-op, right here in the heart of our community, has been doing lots of things well, embraces consciousness of these principles, and shows how big business can do the right things. With \$22 million in annual sales (putting them 6<sup>th</sup>) and employing 140 (and paying a living wage!), the Co-op also embeds into our town, educating growers and farmers, cooks, the general public, and supporting the schools and the hungry with over \$50,000 in community grants. Oregon Business Magazine says our Co-op is one of the “top 50 best places to work” and “best green biz”. Coops – put members and workers first, locals...not shareholders. They invest locally and prove that it’s

good business to do the right thing. Co-ops by their nature understand collaborative and supportive relationships. Things we need in these times.

Maybe if our big five changed some of their practices, more locals could actually go back to college, purchase Shakespeare tickets, keep the multiplier effect affecting. Maybe the next time you support one of the big five (or any of our local businesses), you can mention how great it would be if they directed their purchases to local businesses, hired from within our community, sourced from the Valley, banked here too (in a bank that kept the funds recycled in our town). Imagine if each of the big 5 spent just a few million more here in Ashland...and we kept it recirculating. It would be a game changer. Little fixes, even just an awareness in each department and employee, could transform our town...with more jobs, better jobs, fewer hungry or homeless, healthier citizens and businesses...and a thriving town.

What if instead of our cities offering lax standards and tax breaks to big companies, they offered incentives to worker-owned businesses, co-ops, start-ups, locally-owned small businesses? Mandated a living wage (\$12.96 per hour in Ashland)? Reminded citizens to spend and hire locally? What would happen if we could harness the economic power and impact of our anchor institutions? If we increased earnings in our community and decreased expenditures outside. (then multiplied that by three...or seven!) Huge value is added as more citizens and organizations rally around supporting our local economy...and keeping the dollars home.

So do your part first. Then encourage family and friends and speak up where you work and shop to help Ashland thrive. Together we can better our future.

\* Michael Shuman, YES! Magazine.