

GRIST FOR THE MILL

Dear Eater:

Spring has arrived across the Iowa River Valley, despite winter's protestations in April. We hope this third issue of *Edible Iowa River Valley* makes you as excited about the growing season as we are!

It's farmers' market time and we've got market fever! In 2004, Iowa had 160 farmers' markets, which gave us the great honor of having the most markets per capita in the nation. Since then, more markets have been added in the state, and in these pages, we have a list of where you can find one near you and what's in season when you get there. Eugenia Gratto chats with the market masters of small town Washington and large city Des Moines, to see how they make market magic. Then, Criss Roberts launches a new series *This Season: Week by Week*, which helps you take all that seasonal goodness from your market or garden to your table, with the help of Iowa's best chefs. *This Season: Week By Week* starts in this issue with a salute to spinach, and will be a weekly feature on our website www.EdibleIowaRiverValley.com every Wednesday through October. Bookmark it and stay fresh in your kitchen.

Also on the table in this issue, hunt for some of spring's early arrivals like fiddleheads and morels, get a taste of Gary Guthrie's incredible carrots, and pay a visit to Maquoketa, where a few small farmers are keeping up with local demand. You'll learn how buying local food on a large scale has set Bartel's Lutheran Retirement Home in Waverly apart and made its patrons happy.

Jennifer Hemmingsen is also getting ready for season with the Iowa Barbecue Society, which serves no swine before it's time, and Rob Cline continues his popular *Behind Closed Doors* series by raiding the fridge of *Corridor Business Journal* publisher John Lohman (their absent Latin notwithstanding). Folklorist Riki Saltzman winds her way through the heart of the Iowa River Valley on an Edible journey from Pella to Grinnell, while Mallory Smith continues to give you the inside scoop on Iowa's Buy Fresh Buy Local Campaign.

And the big news from the region is that as we went to press, we learned that the Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Coalition, profiled in this issue's *Edible Endeavors*, received their grant from the W.K Kellogg Foundation to continue their groundbreaking work in cultivating a sustainable food system. We're toasting them, and all of the area's delicious offerings, with a shot of Al Capone's favorite whiskey, Iowa's own Templeton Rye. And this time, it's legal as well as remarkably smooth.

Thanks for bellying up to the bar for another round of *Edible Iowa River Valley*. Please be sure to drop us a line to let us know how we're doing or to clue us in on some hidden culinary gem. We're always on the hunt for the best flavors of Iowa and our next issue will be out in August. In the meantime, do be sure to pat our advertising partners on the back for helping us get the tastes of Iowa to you. Without them we'd be as bland as, well, bland can be.

With Relish,
Wendy Wasserman
Kurt Michael Friese



AN EDIBLE CORRECTION

We do our best to keep things accurate, but sometimes we don't quite succeed. Last issue, we mistakenly led you astray with some phone numbers. If you are looking for bison from Jordan Creek Bison, note that the correct phone number is 319.624. 3535. Those looking for local meats at The Phoenix Cafe in Grinnell will need this number: 641.236.3657. Many apologies!

