

Who We Are

2008 NEW BOARD MEMBERS:

Leslie Allen is the Commercial Horticulture Program Coordinator at the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension. "I moved to Nevada in 2003, and quickly fell in love with the simple beauty of the Great Basin. I am an avid naturalist, and studied ecology in college. It wasn't until recently, when I read Michael Pollan's Omnivore's Dilemma, that I really began to understand the full impact of conventional, industrial agriculture on our people and the environment. I strongly believe in the positive link between healthy food and healthy people, and the link between healthy farming and a healthy planet. I am committed to building the capacity of our local food system, and I am excited to help strengthen GBCFC's role in a robust local food system."

Derek Brown "I've been active with the co-op (and, before that, Sound & Fury Records) for about a year and a half. I live in a house that is offered up as a venue for shows/ community events. We also do the food gathering & preparation for Reno Food Not Bombs out of the house, serving this food to the area's homeless and hungry twice a week. If you're interested in helping out, food preparation takes place at 528 Sinclair St. at 10am every Sunday, and we serve at 12noon at Fisherman's Park on Galletti and 3pm at Barbara Bennet Park On Arlington."

Nicholas Hinz "I Moved to the Reno area in 2001 for graduate school at UNR. Currently, I work as a research geologist at UNR where I make geologic maps, study the tectonic and volcanic history of Nevada, and work with the Great Basin Center for Geothermal Energy. Previously, I've worked on watershed restoration projects in northern California and as a bike mechanic in many localities. I love the outdoors, traveling, cycling, and most importantly eating fresh, in-season, locally-grown food. We are very fortunate to have the GBFC as a source for obtaining fresh local food in our community along with our CSA and farmer's markets. I'm excited to be involved with fostering growth of our co-op through working with our board members and greater co-op community."

Barbara Greene

"Hi,
my name is Barbara Greene and I moved to the Reno area 1 year ago from Washington State. I retired from a 27 year career as a Lieutenant with the Olympia Fire Department. I currently live in Washoe Valley with my husband and our big yellow lab. We have two great sons aged 20 and 23 who live in Seattle and San Francisco. The last 14 years we have lived on a 5 acre farm near the Hood Canal that I certified organic in 2002, through the WSDA. I raised poultry for eggs and meat, dairy goats, sheep, Galloway beef cattle, apples, stone fruit, grapes, vegetables, flowers and herbs. A small diverse farm designed along Permaculture lines with Biodynamic leanings that was also Salmon Safe Certified. Over the years I have served on my local farmer's market board, The Tilth Producers of Washington board, been elected as Fire Commissioner for Black Lake FPD, and helped start a very small local food buying club. I love growing plants and raising livestock. I believe we each have the responsibility to consider how our food choices impact the planet and one another. Towards that end, I work to educate those who are curious, about how our food is produced and the connection between our food and the environment. I am honored to have been elected to serve on the board of the GBCFC and look forward to helping build our community!"

Melissa Kent "

I live and work in Washoe Valley as a caretaker and writer. My husband Dale and I have a cookbook coming out in March 2009, Tassajara: Dinners and Desserts-- collection of vegetarian recipes from Tassajara Zen Mountain Center, the retreat center where we lived for 7 years before moving back to Nevada. I am part of the Monday veggie crew and serve on the Board as the Worker Collective-Board liaison. I believe that clean, safe, healthy food is not a privilege but a right and am excited to help build a local food movement in the Great Basin."

2008 CONTINUING BOARD MEMBERS:

Laura Fillmore lives with her husband and four children in Dresslerville, Nevada, and teaches K-12 art at Smith Valley School. She is pursuing a graduate degree in discipline-based art education, and is one of the founders of Responsibility.Earth.Art.Learning. (R.E.A.L.), an organic gardening, arts, and literacy collaborative in east Reno. An activist artist, she is originally from Missouri, where she grew up with a grandmother who was an organic gardener and who "never broke the organic chain".

Philip Moore

"I began exploring sustainable living and sustainable food after my son was diagnosed with life-threatening food allergies. The tie between the industrial food system and my son's allergies was too obvious to ignore and led me to explore other facets of our lifestyles and how they could be modified to make them more healthful and sustainabl. This led me to begin working in local food with a passion. I worked with the local chapter of the Sierra Club on their sustainable food program and helped to organize the local food system network in Reno. I believe that having a year-round outlet for local and sustainable foods is a critical part of developing a sustainable community. I have been working on the board of the GBCFC to make that vision become a reality."

Laurie Gardner teaches English and government at TMCC High School. She has previously served on the Rainshadow Board of Directors and looks forward to another opportunity to work with and support her community.

Casey Jo Robbins "I was raised in San Diego and have always had a love and respect of the outdoors in its natural state. I moved to Lake Tahoe as a young adult which only increased my appreciation for the outdoors. My hobbies include skiing, biking, snow shoeing, hiking and kayaking. I have done a great deal of volunteer work over the years primarily with teens. This included camp counselor for the YMCA, big sister at a home for delinquent girls, to teaching and promoting concerts for a church youth group. I have over twenty years of management experience, primarily in the casino industry. My passions for the last few years have been growing in nutritional health and environmental issues, which through Earth Day Events led me to the CSA last year and in turn to the coop when it opened. I have been actively involved with the coop for one year on various committees as well as working in the store on Mondays. I have a genuine desire to see the coop succeed and believe in its community building potential."

Marcia and Steve Litsinger -- PHOTO COMING SOON!!!

Marcia and Steve Litsinger are the owners and operators of Churchill Butte Organics in Lyon County, Nevada. They have lived on their 40 desert acres for over 25 years and have been operating a Certified Organic 30 member CSA since 1998. The Litsinger's farm is completely off-grid, powered by solar energy and fed by a well and spring located on the property. They cultivate just under an acre of land for organic production using the French-intensive method. For this reason, they consider themselves Market Gardeners, though they are widely known in Northern Nevada for being pioneers in the state's organic farming community.

Marcia is responsible for the horticulture aspect of the business, as she grows a wide variety of organic vegetables, herbs, native plants, and flowers. Steve operates the marketing, financial, and maintenance side of the business. Together they have worked tirelessly in the community to educate consumers on organic food issues, organic gardening methods, and sustainable living practices. They have participated in school gardens, farmer's markets, various workshops, and Marcia holds the position of Vice-chair on the Nevada Organic Council. The Litsingers are deeply devoted to organics and work hard contributing to the public's understanding of sustainable agriculture for the health of the consumer, the environment, and the community.

Kelly Reuss, Applied Kinesiologist resides in Floriston, North Lake Tahoe CA currently. She graduated from the C C C District in 93 with her CMT and AA and received multiple honors programs appointments such as assistant professor for human Anatomy Physiology at OCC and S.C.U.B.A. assistant at GWC in 79 at 15 years of age. Dr. Kelly practiced in Big Bear Lake CA from 2001-2004 and was naturally attracted to snowboarding where she was introduced to the 4 season sports capital of so-lo-Cal high altitude training and living. Dr. Kelly continues to be a professional lecturer and teaching assistant to multidisciplinary groups providing CEU's for medical professionals and, various community and int'l associations. She also began more volunteer work with local people and businesses like the snowboard of directors position and various committees at the Great Basin Food Coop. Email to kellyreuss@yahoo.com or call my home anytime at 530-582-5639

Amber Sallaberry -- Workers' Collective Representative for the BOD, see BIO below.

PAST BOARD MEMBERS:

Isha Echols, Rick Lattin, Rya Kirby, Mary Ferguson, Michael (Mojo) Tchudi, Joe Ferguson, Jana Vanderhaar, Keli Brown, Elizabeth Balmin, John Hadder, and Marshall Liddle.

WORKERS' COLLECTIVE STAFF MEMBERS:

Antoinette Ortega "Though a transplant from the Bay Area, California, I have been a Nevada resident long enough to call it my home. I received my Bachelor's Degree from the University of Nevada, Reno in 2007, with a major in Art and a minor in Geography. I have participated with many community groups such as [con]temporary gallery, the Holland Project, and Big Brothers Big Sisters. I feel that as individuals we all have the ability to make and create a place that we want to live in whether it be through heading a fundraising double dutch team, or sewing a circus tent in someone's backyard. It all starts with community, and what better way to get together that through FOOD! Reno is a great place to meet and eat!"

Nicole Sallaberry

Bio coming Soon...

Amber Sallaberry "I was born and raised in Reno, NV. I am a sixth generation Nevadan who can trace my lineage back to a long line of growers, producers, farmers, and regional botanists. My interest in sustainable and local food systems did not present itself through these familial lines of work, instead I discovered the importance of creating a local infrastructure for "home" grown whole foods through social justice and mental health issues. My research and subsequent understanding of the effects that irradiated, preservative-laden, and chemically toxic foods can have on all life systems including the human mind and body were the primary catalysts in my becoming a food activist. In delving further into the global and national systems by which we grow, harvest, produce and trade edible commodities I came to understand more about the exploitation and degradation of our land and our peoples' who work the land. Through this I became interested in helping to create socially and environmentally just food systems that are accessible to ALL people, regardless of their personal demographics and/or socio-economic backgrounds. I am one of the original co-founders of the Great Basin Community Food Co-op (Fall, 2005). My educational background prior to this endeavor consisted of studies in: Performance Art, Social Activism, Psychology, Writing, and Women's Studies. I went back to school in January 2008 at the Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA to pursue an education in Cooperative Business Management, Co-op Financial Procedure, International Fair Trade Issues, and Local Food Security Issues. In June 2008 I returned to Reno and the GBCFC after acquiring a one year (Fall 2008-Spring 2009) independent contract/internship with Grace Cox, National Cooperative Grocers Association board member and Olympia Food Co-op Workers Collective Financial/Accounting staff member. I feel grateful to be a part of the State of Nevada's only currently existing food co-op and I hope that we continue to find the resources that our co-op needs to become a sustainable, accessible, and affordable food source for our entire community.

Justin Morales -- "B

orn and raised in Reno,
I first took interest in the food I was eating through music and literature, my first real exposure to the "food industry" was my first job at Subway. I was quite surprised to see how things we're both prepared and served in such a careless and disconnected fashion. It was through this exposure that I first discovered Natural and Organic Foods. It was because of this confusing and awful experience that I started working at Wild Oats/Whole Foods where I worked for the last five years. In my time there I learned many things about the difference between "conventional" super markets and natural markets. I acquired many skills in my time there that give me a great overall understanding of how to run a sustainable food based operation. In my time working for WO/WF I became more and more disappointed with common practices of an establishment who's aesthetic is built on a "progressive" more advanced approach to this industry. In the Winter of 2008, Amber, Nicole, and Toni all gave me an opportunity to join the Worker's Collective. I see this opportunity as something very special that was much needed in my life. I am very excited about the future of the co-op and I plan to do everything in my power to make sure that this much needed outlet for local food can and will succeed as long as we really want it to"

2005 CO-FOUNDERS:

Pauline Hamilton

"I was born in Chile and moved to NYC when I was 20. I put myself through college and grad school while assisting the Cultural Attaché of Chile to other United Nations, performing simultaneous translation in the courts, and working as project manager for a couple of interactive software developer companies in the City. After 20 years in the big Apple my destiny brought me to the Biggest Little City in the world. The purpose then, was to relocate my company that supplied the Organic food industries with raw medicinal herbs, spices and veggies. I think that being able to eat fresh, local and organic is as important as the air we breath up here in the Sierras. At the co-op we are being proactive and have taken self responsibility to come up with solutions for developing urban agriculture, bringing in local farmers and offering an ethical and socially responsible way of shopping for natural foods."

Genevieve Morgan

studied Environmental Policy at the University of Nevada, Reno and she loves all things outdoors. She is concerned with many of the dangerous trends in our current food system, particularly the rise of genetic modification and corporate takeover of family farms. She has a special place in her heart for Nevada farms and would like to do her part to help them prosper.

Melissa and Eric Nixon

Melissa and Eric met 6 years ago in Sonoma County, CA. Since then they have lived in Washington State and Minnesota State where they enjoyed being members of the local food cooperative and a small family owned CSA. While Melissa's background lies mostly in retail management, Eric has experience working at a food cooperative, small, eco-friendly restaurants, and Whole Foods (the national grocery giant of the natural foods industry). After moving to Nevada, the Nixons became interested in helping to start a member-owned food cooperative reminiscent of the ones they belonged to in other states for many reasons. They are motivated by a desire to fresh, all organic, local food to their family's table and to participate in a sustainable and responsible lifestyle in order to preserve our natural environment for their children.

Amber and Nicole Sallaberry

We are sixth generation Nevadans and the oldest two sisters of seven children. We were born and raised in Reno, NV. Our Basque Grandpa, 'Itachi' and our Dad used to keep us busy as kids by making us pick up rocks, push alfalfa bails, and learn how to drive large tractors and industrial farm equipment on our ranch past Bordertown Casino, highway 395 north. We pretty much did everything possible to avoid the ranch work and instead built homes and forts in the bushes that lined the creek along the road that heads up to Dog Valley. Our Mom is a teacher who places a lot of value on learning and education...her stance allowed us to lobby for additional homework hours, which saved us from hours of outdoor manual labor. During our "homework" sessions we often found ourselves plotting out the ideal grocery store, one where everything was in bulk and there was absolutely no packaging. Nicole was badly obsessed with and felt threatened by the world of TRASH. She made sure that she properly recycled everything that she personally used. Anything that couldn't be recycled or reused she would save and turn into clothes, art projects, or collections. No joke, she had a series of drawers, chests, and clear coffee tables filled with bottle caps, wrappers, empty lighters, wax coated tea bags, and then some!!

Both sisters moved up to the Northwest in the fall of 2000. Amber pursued an undergraduate degree at the Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA where she studied performance art, experimental theater, womens studies, and creative writing. Nicole stationed in Seattle, WA and traveled to and from various permaculture farms in the NW and Canada doing internships and learning how to build Cobb homes. We both learned about and joined our local food co-ops and both sisters became interested in different angles of local food movements and food security issues. In 2003 we moved home to Reno and began growing food and raising chickens at our residence off of Wells Ave. After the second abundant harvest year, we became interested in figuring out how to create an outlet for local and/or urban foods in Reno, NV. Then we met the Nixons and began working on the co-op.

Sasha Verbillis-Kolp

community developer, refugee specialist, organic farmer, a partner in developing the food co-op revolution in Reno!