

Please note:

The downloadable version of the *Costco Connection* is temporarily provided without advertisements. We are working to correct this.

**Thank you,
Costco Connection team**

Tasty toast toppers ★ Author Ann Patchett ★ Marvelous Montreal

COSTCO **Connection**®

THE MAGAZINE FOR COSTCO MEMBERS

New paths

Navigating the
discovery or
rediscovery of
a new direction
later in life



AUGUST 2023



EVERYDAY LIVING

Back-to-school checklist

ZOA Energy drinks

Buyers' picks

COSTCO Connection[®] *August*

August 2023 | Volume 38 | Number 8

Table of Contents

COVER STORY

24 **Second chapters**

Following their passion, these Costco members found success and fulfillment in new careers.
by Will Fifield, T. Foster Jones



SPECIAL SECTION: EVERYDAY LIVING

34 **Household help**

Back-to-school checklist
by Michele Wojciechowski

Supplier spotlight: ZOA
by Dan Jones

Buyers' picks

Table of Contents *August*

Up Front

COSTCO LIFE

- 12 For August**
World Plant Milk Day, peach galette recipe, calling all creative gardeners and more.

DEPARTMENTS

- 7 Publisher's Note**
- 9 Member Comments**
- 14 Tech Connection**
Tech items for students.
by Christine Persaud
- 18 Travel Connection**
Montreal is a cosmopolitan city with a rich history.
by Jim Byers
- 20 Member Poll**
How do you stay in touch with your childhood friends?
- 101 Member Connection**
Creative Costco shopping using cargo bikes.
by Stephanie E. Ponder

12



54



Lifestyle

FOR YOUR HEALTH

- 50 Exercise your child's brain**
Physical activity has a positive impact on brain activity and mental wellness.
by Deborah S. Molchan
- 54 Foods for skin protection**
Consuming certain foods boosts your body's natural sun protection factor.
by Hillary Sachs

FOR YOUR TABLE

- 60 On-the-go cereal**
These cereal-based treats put a sweet spin on snacks.
by Christina Guerrero
- 66 Toast toppers**
Toast and topping combos for a host of different flavors.
by Christina Guerrero
- 70 Supplier spotlight: Grimmway Farms**
Rod and Bob Grimm's baby carrot business has grown up.
by Julie Kendrick

FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT

- 77 Author spotlight: Tom Lake**
Ann Patchett talks about her novel's meditation on love and the lives parents led before children.
by Judi Ketteler
- + *Redouté: Book of Flowers*,
by Pierre-Joseph Redouté.

101



Shopping

INSIDE COSTCO

- 80 Buying Smart: Caskets and urns**
Quality and reliability at a sensitive time.
by Ellen Ryan
- 83 Costco Next**
Costco Next adds more suppliers and variety to the program.
by T. Foster Jones
- 87 Costco Services: Shutterfly**
Shutterfly offers Costco members exclusive savings on personalized photo products.
by Dan Jones
- 90 Treasure Hunt**
A sampling of what's in the warehouses and at Costco.com.
- 95 Special Events**
Exciting products offered for a short time.

80



PUBLISHER Sandy Torrey storrey@costco.com

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Stephanie E. Ponder 425-427-7134 sponder@costco.com

EDITORS

U.S. Will Fifield wfifield@costco.com

Canada Christina Guerrero cguerrero2@costco.com

REPORTERS

Shelley Crenshaw screnshaw@costco.com

Dan Jones daniel.jones@costco.com

Jen Madera jjmadera@costco.com

COPY EDITORS

Cindy Hutchinson, Shana McNally, Whitney Seneker

CONTRIBUTORS

Jim Byers, T. Foster Jones, Julie Kendrick, Judi Ketteler,

Deborah S. Molchan, Christine Persaud, Ellen Ryan,

Hillary Sachs, Michele Wojciechowski

ART DIRECTOR Lory Williams lwilliams@costco.com

ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTORS

David Schneider dschneider@costco.com

Brenda Shecter bshecter@costco.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Ken Broman, Steven Lait, Megan Lees, Chris Rusnak

EDITORIAL PRODUCTION MANAGER

Antolin Matsuda amatsuda@costco.com

PRINT, PAPER AND PREPRESS MANAGER

MaryAnne Robbers mrobbes@costco.com

PRINT PRODUCTION SPECIALIST

Grace Clark graceclark@costco.com

PUBLISHING ADVERTISING MANAGER

Kathi Tipper-Holgersen 425-313-6581 ktipper@costco.com

ASSISTANT ADVERTISING MANAGER

Susan Detlor 425-313-6916 sdetlor@costco.com

ADVERTISING SPECIALIST

Raven Stackhouse 425-416-1632 rstackhouse@costco.com

ADVERTISING COORDINATOR

Aliw Moral 425-313-2558 mmoral@costco.com

ADVERTISING COPYWRITER Bill Urlevich

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION SPECIALIST Josh Livingston

ADVERTISING GRAPHIC DESIGNER Christina Muñoz-Moye

NATIONAL ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE

Michael Colonna 973-664-7797

michael.colonna@mediapartnersgroupplc.net

BUSINESS MANAGER Jane Johnson

CIRCULATION MANAGER Rossie Cruz rcruz@costco.com

CIRCULATION COORDINATOR Luke Okada

ONLINE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

Dorothy Strakele connection@costco.com

COSTCO WHOLESALE

P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088

999 Lake Drive, Issaquah, WA 98027

Fax: 425-313-6718 Email: connection@costco.com

SUBSCRIPTION CHANGES

The *Costco Connection* is mailed to Primary Executive members. You can change your subscription via live chat or mail. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for processing.

LIVE CHAT Go to Costco.com, click on "Customer Service" and then "Live Chat."

MAIL Membership Processing, P.O. Box 34783, Seattle, WA 98124-1088



The *Costco Connection* is published by Costco Wholesale. All editorial material, including editorial comments, opinion and statements of fact appearing in this publication, represents the views of the respective authors and does not necessarily carry the endorsement of Costco Wholesale or its officers. Information in the *Costco Connection* is gathered from sources considered to be reliable, but the accuracy of all information cannot be guaranteed. The publication of any advertisements is not to be construed as an endorsement of the product or service offered unless it is specifically stated in the ad that there is such approval or endorsement. Products advertised may not be available at all locations at the time of publication. Publishing offices are located at 999 Lake Drive, Issaquah, WA 98027. Copyright © 2023 Costco Wholesale.

NW BALA SD

**PUBLISHER'S
NOTE**

Second paths

Most of us are lucky if we can find and follow one career path to fulfill and sustain us, something that brings meaning to our lives and gives us a reason to get up each morning. We take pleasure and pride in following that path, evolving and growing with the job while at the same time putting our imprint on it and making it our own.

However, that doesn't mean we are all so singularly focused as to have just one passion, one path we want to follow. We may have two, three or several ideas of the directions we would like our lives to take. At some point, most of us had to choose one, and forgo those other ideas.

Consequently, no matter how fulfilling our careers may be, for many there is an unscratched itch at the back of our minds, a "what if" question about the path or paths not taken.

The Costco members featured in this issue's cover story have sought out and followed up on their "what ifs." At a point in life when many are winding down their careers, these folks have discovered or rediscovered long-dormant passions that have ignited a burst of energy and propelled them into new, meaningful directions.

Life is short. We want to make the most of our time here. To do that means constantly stretching and reaching in many directions. These Costco members provide an inspiring example that it's never too late to follow your passion, your stars, your bliss.

What's your "what if"? ■



© COSTCO PHOTO STUDIO



Sandy Torrey is Senior Vice President, Corporate Membership, Marketing and Publisher, *Costco Connection*.

Coming next month Costco celebrates 40 years of national and international expansion. Plus, a look at the growth of Kirkland Signature™.

Follow us on





© RAWPIXEL.COM / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

We all belong

I truly appreciated your cover photo of the July 2023 issue. The photo presents diversity and inclusivity (well, you did not have any 75-year-olds like me in it, but I will give you a pass). Pictures do matter and this one speaks volumes about Costco's values.

Cindy Coe, via email

Sustainable packaging

We appreciate that you are now packaging mixed nuts in bags. We were running out of ways to repurpose all of those plastic jars.

Caroline Bonfield, Albion, California

I strongly support your closer study of packaging to reduce waste and save resources. I find articles about Costco's efficiencies such as the July issue's Buying Smart ["Spotlight on packaging"] interesting and helpful.

Richard Giesbret, via email

Fun in Florida

In response to your July article on the Gulf Coast, I wanted to let you know that our family just spent a week in the Florida Keys. Every time a family member would admire something that one of us had, the response would be "I got it at Costco." This got to be a joke by the end of the

week because so many of our items were purchased there. Some of the highlights: bathing suits, beach towels, coolers, cooler bags, food, snacks, skorts, books, sunscreen, sunglasses and new tires for the truck to pull the boat.

Suzanne Engelmeier, Orlando, Florida

In praise of Costco weddings

I really enjoyed the June issue's cover story ["Weddings by Costco"] with your beautiful photos of wedding couples and the ideas and suggestions for having a wonderful wedding and honeymoon.

Every article was well done and full of good information!

Jeanine Seyler, Surprise, Arizona

From Twitter

Costco has Wildbrine kraut on sale. They just had an article [in the July issue] about Wildbrine in their magazine!

Jim Brown, @4abalancedyou

Quick & Easy THE COSTCO WAY



Watermelon Salad & Lemonade Soda

Juicy watermelon adds fruity flavor to two refreshing recipes. View this recipe and others at Costco.com. Search: Quick & Easy and click "Soups & Salads."



Advertising and products

All advertisements will indicate whether a product is available in a Costco warehouse, at Costco.com or both. Products are scheduled to be available at the time of publication unless otherwise noted. Items may not be available in all locations and selection can vary. Costco.com carries many of the products available at the warehouses and much more. Prices may vary in AK, HI, PR and at Costco.com. Applicable tax laws may require sales tax on pre-discounted prices. These taxes are in addition to product price.

Digital edition

Access the magazine online each month at Costco.com (search "Costco Connection").

Talk to us

Do you have a comment about something you read in the *Connection*? Please send a note, including your full name, phone number and address, to:

EMAIL

connection@costco.com

MAIL

Costco Connection
P.O. Box 34088
Seattle, WA 98124-1088

A twist on milk

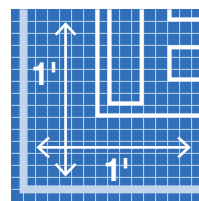
World Plant Milk Day (August 22) celebrates dairy alternatives, such as soy, almond, oat and coconut milk. Lactose-free, nutritious, plant-based options can be found in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.

Back story

PLANT-BASED MILK is created by grinding a bean or nut, then adding water, flavors, vitamins and minerals. Some people turn to plant-based milk due to an intolerance or allergy to cow's milk, including lactose intolerance. Since no animal products are

used to make them, dairy alternatives are also part of a vegan lifestyle. While many prefer plant milk for being low in fat, free of cholesterol and rich in calcium, others just like the taste. A (plant-based) milk moustache is just a bonus!

Costco warehouses contained approximately 122.5 million square feet of operating floor space worldwide at the end of 2022.



KEN BROMAN

GREEN THUMBS

Calling all creative gardeners

If you are an avid gardener and you use products from Costco to design a creative, fun garden, we'd love to hear from you. Send an email to jjmadera@costco.com with your pictures and the story behind them. Please put "Creative garden" in the subject line.



© ASIER / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

TIPTOE THROUGH THE TULIPS

In full bloom

The tulip bulbs that Suzanne Durand of Gilbertville, Massachusetts, purchased from Costco last year yielded these beautiful results. "I was truly rewarded!" she says. Find bulbs in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.



TASTE OF SUMMER

Brown Sugar and Nutmeg Peach Galette

1¾ cups all-purpose flour
2 Tbsp granulated sugar
¼ tsp baking powder
½ cup salted butter, cold
3 oz cream cheese, cold
1½ tsp apple cider vinegar
3½ Tbsp heavy cream
3 cups peaches, sliced
⅓ cup brown sugar
1 tsp nutmeg

Combine flour, sugar and baking powder in a food processor bowl. Pulse a few times to combine. Slice butter and cream cheese. Add slices 1 to 2 at a time, pulsing a few times after each addition. Add vinegar and cream. Pulse until mixture comes together into a dough. Lightly form into a ball and place on a piece of plastic wrap. Flatten slightly and wrap securely. Place in refrigerator for 30 minutes. Remove and place on a piece of lightly floured parchment. Roll dough into a ¼-inch-thick rectangle. Place the dough and parchment on a baking sheet and set aside.

Preheat oven to 350 F. Combine peaches, brown sugar and nutmeg in a medium bowl. Toss to combine. Layer peaches on dough, leaving a 2-inch edge around the peaches. Reserve any leftover liquid. Fold the edges in over the peaches. Bake for 45 minutes. Brush reserved liquid over top of crust and peaches. Return to oven and bake an additional 10 to 15 minutes, or until crust is golden brown.

Recipe courtesy of Traci Crossland (bakerstable.net)



© CAYLIE CROSSLAND

According to educational support firm McKinsey & Company, students with access to technology report higher academic results.

Set for success

Quality tech gear can help your college-bound student make the most of higher education



JOHN THOMSON

Christine Persaud is a Toronto-based freelance writer. Her work has appeared in *Digital Trends*, *Reviewed-USA Today*, *XDA*, *Android Central* and at Wifihifi.com.



COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find a selection of computers, tablets, smart speakers, mobile phones, wearables, televisions and a host of other school-related supplies in your local Costco warehouse and at Costco.com.



by CHRISTINE PERSAUD

Even though it feels like summer just began, it's already time to start thinking about back to school. If you will be sending your child off to college or university, sending them with quality tech tools can help them succeed.

The powerhouse

A laptop is a key piece of gear. It should have a sizable high definition screen while being lightweight and easy to carry all day. A two-in-one touch-screen model that flips into tablet mode for taking notes may be useful. The computer should have at least 8GB of RAM for multitasking, and at least 128GB of storage for files, apps, software and more. All-day battery life is important, too. A set of wireless noise-canceling headphones can make focusing while studying much easier for many students.

Don't ignore hard copies

An all-in-one printer that can copy and scan can help by providing printed backups, and comes in handy when reviewing hard copy reports, making handouts and even sharing scanned handwritten notes for group projects. The best option is a refillable ink printer that comes with up to a two-year supply of ink.

Speaker of the house

Help your student get to class on time by investing in a smart speaker that can double as an alarm clock and can be set with reminders of class schedules and assignment deadlines. It can even help with research through voice-activated queries.

Smart wearables

Add a fitness tracker or smartwatch to your student's toolkit and they can keep on top of schedules right from their wrist. Some also monitor health and wellness stats, like stress levels, heart rate and sleep. Many wearables offer mindfulness and breathing exercises, too, which can be useful for students who manage heavy workloads.

A way to unwind

Everyone needs downtime, even students. With a small TV and a streaming stick (and an appropriate service subscription), your student can watch TV shows, movies, sporting events and more when they need to unwind.

Properly equipping your student with good tech gear is a key step to setting them up for success. ■

Many ways to learn

College students can benefit from digital learning, whether that means accessing some course materials online or signing up for online courses.

In 2016, 81% of college students said digital learning technology helped them improve their grades, according to Statista.

Face-to-face instruction is important, but students also

need the right tools to facilitate learning from anywhere and to encourage a healthy school-life balance that makes room for downtime.—CP

Marvelous Montreal

This cosmopolitan, charming and cutting-edge city has a rich history

by JIM BYERS



COURTESY OF JIM BYERS

Jim Byers has been covering travel for national and international publications for 15 years, and was the travel editor at the *Toronto Star*, Canada's largest newspaper.



Montreal. Even a 42-year Toronto resident like me is happy to concede that there's something different about this cosmopolitan Canadian city, which lies across the U.S. border, north of Vermont. People seem to dress smarter here. The festivals are cutting edge. And the food is fantastic. Here's a look.

Neighborhoods

Just north of downtown, both Plateau and Mile End are known for funky restaurants, boutique shopping and residents who feel a real sense of pride in their corner of the city.

A little west of downtown, Saint-Henri and Little Burgundy are home to fine dining spots, art galleries and independent shops. A recent *Time Out* magazine poll named Rue Wellington in Verdun as the world's coolest street. It's got everything from Cambodian cuisine and Japanese-style lattes to trendy, locally made clothes.

Montreal's Underground City is a unique subterranean treat. It's an

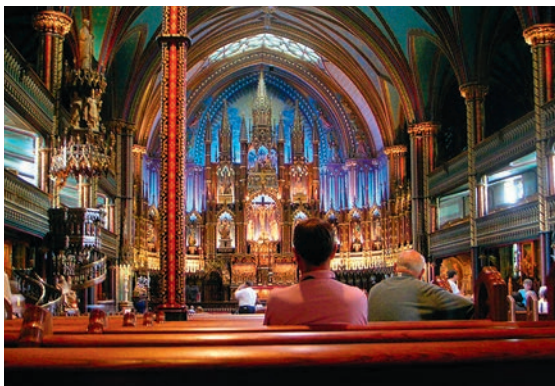
amazing system of belowground shops, movie theaters and restaurants that measures some 20 miles in length. Look for RESO signs in the Underground City to help navigate the labyrinth.

Food

Montreal has plenty of high-end restaurants. But the city's best-known products are a trio of inexpensive delights that just about anyone can afford. Montreal-style bagels are amazing—a chewy treat that's dipped in honey water before baking in a wood-fired oven. There are two places in the city—St-Viateur and Fairmount—that are the most famous for their bagels, and they're only a few blocks apart in the Mile End area.

Another great export from Quebec is poutine—French fries covered with brown gravy and cheese curds.

The third foodie fave in town is the smoked meat sandwich, which is similar to pastrami. The most famous place for smoked meat is Schwartz's Deli, a 95-year-old Montreal tradition.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: © YVONIS2; LUSTIL; COLIN / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Clockwise from left:
Montreal skyline; Montreal's
Notre-Dame Basilica;
La Grande Roue de Montreal.

Nature

Expansive Mount Royal Park was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, the man behind the plan for Central Park in New York City. There are endless leafy paths and wide open, grassy meadows. Rent an electric bike in town and head up the hill for marvelous views of the city, with the mountains of Vermont in the distance. The fall colors in the park are astonishing, and there are small lakes and waterways throughout the city, which is on an island in the St. Lawrence River.

A bike ride along the Lachine Canal is another great way to see the city. You also can rent canoes, kayaks, pedal boats and electric boats.

The waterfront and Old Montreal

Old Montreal's cobblestone streets and narrow roads are lined with restaurants, art galleries and engaging shops. The Pointe-à-Callière museum tells the story of Montreal and has ruins that date back to the 1600s.

No visit to the city is complete without seeing Notre-Dame Basilica, with its brightly colored interior and soaring arches.

Montreal's waterfront is a delight. Summer brings crowds of locals and visitors who lick ice cream cones, ride the giant Ferris wheel (*La Grande Roue*) and boost their heart rates with an overwater zip line. ■

COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco Travel offers Montreal vacation packages, as well as cruises, vacation packages, rental cars and hotel-only options for destinations in the United States and around the world. To learn more, visit CostcoTravel.com or call 1-877-849-2730.

On the west coast

As long as you're looking north of the border, consider Vancouver, British Columbia. The downtown peninsula is nearly surrounded by water, and features glorious bays

for waterside walks. Stanley Park is one of the world's best urban parks. Granville Island has a terrific market, as well as kayak rentals. Then, take a drive on the glorious Sea-to-Sky Highway and enjoy a day or two in Whistler, home to the

2010 Winter Olympic Games. The pedestrian village is a great place to stroll in every season. There's also world-class golf and fine resorts, plus the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre, which focuses on indigenous Canadians.—JB



How do you stay in touch with your childhood friends?

Costco members respond to our poll, posted to Costco's Facebook page

Annual "Golf Camp" with guys I've known since we were 8 years old. We're all now 65+ and have gotten together [for] the last 27 years for a long week-end of golf and barbecue.

Kevin J. Fitzpatrick

I text my friend of 23 years at least weekly to check in and see how she and her family are doing. It's rare that we get to see each other, but we always pick up right where we left off.

Sharva Pruitt

Does sending funny memes and TikToks to each other count?

Christi Battles Mehringer

Since most of my childhood friends live more than 1,300 miles from me, I like to stay in touch with them via phone calls, emails, texts and handwritten letters. When I am in town, I see them for a meal or social event.

Camille Pimentel

We keep in touch every week through a book club and we will synchronize a Netflix movie night once every few months.

Stephanie Solin

Carrier pigeon.

Kate Ward



LEFT TO RIGHT: © WOODBOARD; LEMBERGVECTOR / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Friendship fact

According to the American Psychological Association, an old friend may appreciate you reaching out more than you think.

How to stay connected

Looking for ways to stay in touch with your childhood friends? Check out the following tips:

- Watch a show together. Some streaming apps allow users to watch programs at the same time, so you can view your favorite movies and TV series with your friends no matter the distance.
- Video call a friend for a virtual happy hour. Enjoy a night with friends from the comfort of your couch!
- Have friends in the area? Check out a new restaurant together, or revisit an old favorite.



Watch for the poll at [Facebook.com/Costco](https://www.facebook.com/Costco). Or weigh in at connection@costco.com, with subject line "Poll."

Second chapters

A new life chapter may be motivated by the desire to fulfill a long-held passion, inspired by a chance encounter, or even set into motion by an illness or setback. These “second chapter” Costco members all had one thing in common: a mindset open to opportunity.

stories edited by **Will Fifield** and **T. Foster Jones**

“I turned 85 in May. I always thought of woodworking as a hobby. Now, after 14 years as a bank executive, then 45 years as a real estate broker, I have time to really get to know wood in its thousands of colors, textures, densities and uses.

“I work with ancient olive wood that comes from Jerusalem, and new, sustainable wood cultured and grown recently. Once cut down, a tree is dead and lost to usefulness unless something beautiful and useful is made from it.

“I created a small company I call Wood That Would Last. I make jewelry/ keepsake boxes, furniture and everything in between. The goal I have is to make a tree have a life past its growing years.

“I also teach woodworking to youngsters who may not have access to life-skills training, or lack the resources such as time, money or a woodworking shop.

“If you have a hobby or anything that has sustained you in body and spirit up to now, go for it!”

MEMBER MAURICE CLIFTON

LOCATION BOISE, IDAHO

CAREERS BANK EXECUTIVE
AND REALTOR
TURNED
WOODWORKER



CONTINUED ON PAGE 26



Maurice Clifton

© JASON MCADAM



MEMBER JANICE BOOTH

LOCATION JEFFERSON, NORTH CAROLINA

CAREERS NONPROFIT ORGANIZER
TURNED ART TEACHER

“After spending decades at the helm of three national nonprofits, I retired in 2009.

“My second chapter—the one that makes me feel like a kid again—is teaching the art of acrylic pouring to kids (12 and up), seniors in assisted living facilities and at a local art school.

“Nothing has lit me up as much as this has. I love seeing the smiles and delight on their faces. They can’t believe how beautiful their paintings are! I love that they get permission to just let go of expectations, doubts and rules, and just play with paint like they were a kid with nothing to worry about.

“In my former career, I had so many deadlines and fires to put out, with hardly time to take a breath. Now, I encourage my students to be patient and simply be in the moment.

“I have applied those philosophies to my own approach to life. As a result, I can take the time to let things evolve on their own. It’s a freedom that still feels novel—and wonderful.

“Second chapters are a great gift, not to be squandered. It’s been a great start and I can’t wait to see where it goes.”

MEMBER CATHI COLAS

LOCATION PINE, COLORADO

CAREERS VARIOUS PROFESSIONS
TURNED AUDIOBOOK NARRATOR

After pursuing a variety of vocations—yoga teacher, vet tech, personal trainer, groomer, customer service—Cathi Colas says she finally found what she was looking for when she turned 53.



Clockwise from top: Janice Booth (far right) with her students Leila Springs and Heather Lalann; Jib Liska; Cathi Colas.

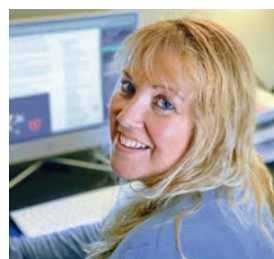


“I know this sounds cliché, but find your passion—the thing that lights you up inside, the thing that makes you want to leap out of bed in the morning.”

—JANICE BOOTH ★
Costco Member

“Ever since I was a child, I always wanted to act but never had the confidence to really put myself out there. That dream never really went away, but how could I act without being seen?” Her lightbulb answer: audiobook narration.

“I started in 2017 and now have over 60 books on Audible, from self-help to mysteries, detective novels, classic literature and more,” she says, adding that she has also branched out into other areas of the industry, such as coaching and audio editing. “I now have a full-time career doing what I always dreamed of doing, just coming at it from a different angle.”



© MATTHEW LOWERY

MIND YOUR FEELINGS

“I believe that there is something in the core of our being waiting to be discovered that has the potential to light up ourselves and our world,” says Jill Thomas, who left the retail world to become a mental health counselor.

“I would encourage anyone who feels unfulfilled in their career or life to look deeply into themselves and find what might feed their soul. What is important to you? Think about your hopes and dreams. Is there anything that you can do that would resemble them?”

— Jill Thomas,
Retail professional
turned mental
health counselor,
Trail Creek, Indiana

MEMBER JIB LISKA

LOCATION HARBOR SPRINGS, MICHIGAN

CAREERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER
TURNED BAKER

“I am an elementary school teacher by trade, but left the profession to raise my children and never went back. Over time, I cooked and baked more and more—taking on catering jobs, etc.

“I didn’t even realize I was heading into a new career because it happened over such a long period of time. Ten years ago, I opened my own bakery—My Sister’s Bake Shop.

“In an unintentional nod to my school teaching days, my shop is open September through May, then closed in the summer when I attend our local farmers market.

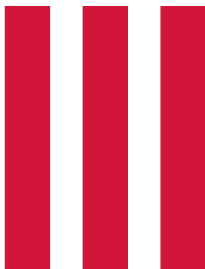
“My advice for others considering a career shift would be to learn all you can about your new venture and take baby steps to be sure you like the direction you are going. Seek advice and feedback from friends and family—you may not like everything they have to say, but they have your best interests in mind.

“I never in a million years thought I would be doing what I do, but I absolutely love it!”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28



COUNTER-CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: © KATHLEEN JANOWIAK; © CATHI COLAS; © MARCIE WOLF; ABUZZ CREATIVE



MEMBER JARED GUNNERSON

LOCATION SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

CAREERS ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT
TURNED PAINTER

Until 2018, Jared Gunnerson spent nearly 20 years as an environmental resource consultant for an international firm based outside of Washington, D.C. Suffering from burnout and needing to be at home more with his wife, and his son who has autism, he decided to leave his career behind.

He began to paint original works of art, rediscovering an artistic passion he had when he was young. It quickly turned into a full-time business—he now shows regularly at art festivals throughout the western U.S. “Switching careers fulfilled a lifelong dream of becoming a professional artist—it has felt like coming home,” says Gunnerson. “The work is often hard and frustrating but I’ve never felt so complete as I do now. I have gained an entirely different perspective on life.

“For anyone considering making a change, life is too short to wait,” he says. “The sooner you make the leap the better. Find and surround yourself with people who can support you during this scary, yet incredible transition. I wouldn’t have been able to do it without an extremely supportive wife, and extended family and close friends. Be true to yourself, trust yourself and make an extraordinary leap of faith.”

MEMBER SKY BERGMAN

LOCATION SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA

CAREERS PHOTOGRAPHY PROFESSOR
TURNED DOCUMENTARIAN

After a 30-year career in teaching, Sky Bergman became a filmmaker and activist. “I realized that I had fulfilled my teaching career and decided to look through a different creative lens,” says Bergman.

Motivated by her 100-year-old grandmother, and approaching her own 50-year milestone, the former professor of photog-



COUNTER-CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: JARED GUNNERSON, SUSAN MILLER AND SKY BERGMAN. © FIN SMITH; © JESS LAZAR

Clockwise from top: Jared Gunnerson, Susan Miller and Sky Bergman.



raphy and video started working on her first film, *Lives Well Lived*. The film, which aired on PBS, celebrates the wit and wisdom of adults ages 75 to 100 who are living their lives to the fullest.

Bergman is now working on her encore career full-time, creating films and projects that inspire and foster inter-generational connections.

"I have always believed that if you have a passion for something, you can make it happen," says Bergman. "Living with purpose is the drive that keeps us going and feeds our curiosity. Our sense of purpose can change over time depending on our life circumstances. My advice to anyone contemplating a career shift would be to follow your passion."

MEMBER SUSAN MILLER

LOCATION NEW YORK CITY

CAREERS FILM, BOOK AND CARTOON PRODUCER TURNED COLLEGE PROFESSOR

In November 2021, Susan Miller received a call that led to "a crazy and exciting" new career adventure. "I was asked if I would consider becoming a full-time professor at the University of Michigan," says Miller.

Adhering to her motto of "crazy might just work," eight weeks later, at age 63, she launched a brand-new career as a college professor, passing along the business and marketing wisdom she has accrued as an entrepreneur.

"Starting a new career at the same time that many of my friends were retiring has been energizing and gratifying," says Miller, who teaches business communications and coaches MBA students. "Taking on a new professional challenge can open you up to finding energy, joy and satisfaction.

"I realize that new chapters can be written at any age—you are never too old or too late in your career to try something totally new.

"For me it worked out beyond anything I could have imagined." ■



© HEFF

HACKING INTO THE PAST

Starting a second chapter doesn't necessarily mean closing the book on the first. Sometimes, you just have to dig a little. Literally.

"I've worked in technology and cybersecurity nearly all my life, but recently started a second career as a paleontologist," explains Matt Heff. "This summer I will be joining a University of Utah expedition to Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument to dig up *T. rex* fossils!

"The world of cybersecurity is a high-paced workplace. Chasing a lifelong passion like paleontology helps me find balance, as well as follow my passion, experience personal growth, and discover something new and meaningful to our planet."—TFJ



School days

Tips and checklists to equip your students when classes resume

COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find back-to-school supplies in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.

by MICHELE WOJCIECHOWSKI

Before you know it, you'll be setting up that sign your kids have held since kindergarten to take those all-important first-day-of-school photos.

But first, make sure that they're prepared with school supplies.

Costco member Caroline Farkas, a former classroom educator and the founder of the educational company Doodles and Digits, LLC, says shopping early is crucial. "My students usually had preferences about what types of items they liked—favorite colors or certain styles," she says. "August usually also has the best back-to-school sales!"

Farkas recommends a general list of school supplies for students of all ages.

For specific age groups, Costco member Julie Cole, co-founder of Mabel's Labels and an award-winning and bestselling parenting author, advises, "Having a list and starting early means you don't have to rush around at the last minute." You also avoid the risk of items being sold out before the first day of school.

The following lists, organized by level of education, can help you pick up everything you need (for a discussion of tech items for college students see *Tech Connection* on page 14). ■

Michele Wojciechowski is a Baltimore, Maryland-based freelancer.

GENERAL SUPPLY LIST

- ☐ Backpack
- ☐ Pencils, No. 2, sharpened
- ☐ Supply or pencil pouch
- ☐ Eraser or eraser caps
- ☐ Package of loose-leaf paper
- ☐ Headphones
- ☐ Pocket folders
- ☐ Spiral notebook
- ☐ Disinfectant wipes (for classroom use)
- ☐ Tissues (for personal and classroom use)
- ☐ Healthy food for snacks, breakfast and lunch

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- ☐ 1 pair of blunt 5-inch scissors
- ☐ 24-count crayons
- ☐ 1 pack of colored pencils
- ☐ 8-pack of washable markers
- ☐ 4 oz of school glue
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ 2 1-inch hardback vinyl binders
- ☐ 1 4-pack of chisel-tip dry-erase markers
- ☐ 2 composition books
- ☐ 1 box of resealable sandwich bags

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- ☐ 1 pair of sharp 5-inch scissors
- ☐ 1 pack of black or blue pens
- ☐ 1 pack of colored pencils
- ☐ Pencil sharpener
- ☐ Plastic school box
- ☐ 1-pack of chisel-tip dry-erase markers
- ☐ 2 1-inch hardback vinyl binders
- ☐ 5 1-inch three-ring binders
- ☐ 5 packs of subject dividers
- ☐ 2 composition notebooks
- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Ruler
- ☐ Protractor
- ☐ Agenda/day planner
- ☐ Calculator
- ☐ Loose-leaf and graph paper
- ☐ 1 ream of computer paper

HIGH SCHOOL

- ☐ Mechanical pencils
- ☐ No. 2 pencils
- ☐ Composition notebooks
- ☐ Loose-leaf and graph paper
- ☐ Three-ring binders
- ☐ Three-hole punch
- ☐ Binder dividers
- ☐ Binder reinforcements
- ☐ Pocket folders
- ☐ Pencil case
- ☐ Student planner
- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Scientific calculator
- ☐ Sticky notes
- ☐ USB drive

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY

- ☐ Disinfecting wipes/cleaning supplies (for move-in day)
- ☐ Shower caddy
- ☐ Flip-flops or shower shoes
- ☐ Bathrobe and slippers
- ☐ Bath towels
- ☐ Medications/first-aid kit/sanitary products
- ☐ Clothing hangers
- ☐ Alarm clock
- ☐ Extension cord and power strip
- ☐ Laundry basket or bag
- ☐ Laundry detergent
- ☐ Noise-canceling headphones
- ☐ Bedding—including a mattress cover (dorm beds can be nonstandard sizes)
- ☐ Fan
- ☐ Small fridge
- ☐ Printer
- ☐ Computer paper
- ☐ Thumbtacks for bulletin board
- ☐ Clothing for all seasons
- ☐ Desk lamp
- ☐ Pictures from home
- ☐ Decorations for bedroom—posters, throw pillows, etc.



FROM LEFT: © BILLIONPHOTOS.COM; NOMAD_SOUL / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Back-to-school shopping tips

Label items. Former educator Caroline Farkas says it's easy to misplace supplies in the classroom. Make sure everyone knows what belongs to your kids.

Pack easy-open items. Farkas also says that children often have trouble opening certain items at recess or lunchtime. "Packing items your student can open independently will guarantee that they don't have to wait to eat," she says.

Match the backpack to the child. Julie Cole, mother of six and co-founder of Mabel's Labels, says to be sure your child's backpack is large enough for what they'll need to bring home, but not too big for them to carry.—MW



Energy solution

Costco supplier ZOA offers a drink for active people

by DAN JONES



Energy and output go hand in hand. People turn to energy drinks to boost their get-up-and-go and mental focus. Actor Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson, along with entrepreneur and professional fitness coach Dave Rienzi, film producer and businesswoman Dany Garcia and investor John Shulman, had a clear vision of what a good energy drink should be as they worked toward developing their brand, ZOA Energy.

Rienzi says they had been thinking about the energy drink category for years but weren’t able to find products that had what they wanted, given their active lifestyles. After 18 months of formulating and testing with a team of specialists, they were happy with the beverage they’d created. The group launched ZOA in March 2021.

Active ingredients

Each 12-ounce can of ZOA Energy contains 160 milligrams of caffeine, along with 10 calories and 2 grams of carbohydrates. In comparison, an 8-ounce cup of coffee typically has between 80 and 100 milligrams of caffeine, according to the Food and Drug Administration.

“ZOA Energy is created with green tea leaves and green coffee beans,” Rienzi notes. “These natural forms of caffeine provide energy to fuel your day, and our formula offers zero sugar and 100% of your daily value of vitamin C.”



Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson

The beverage also contains an electrolyte formulation with magnesium, sodium and potassium.

“ZOA was founded by passionate people who believe in the power of positive energy, and the impact it can have on people when they harness it,” Garcia says.

What about the name?

“The word ZOA is a made-up word that is derived from the Polynesian word *toa*, which translates to *warrior*,” Johnson says. “As founders, we originally chose to call the brand TOA Energy, but in the eleventh hour, we realized we wanted an energy brand that served all consumers from A to Z, so TOA became ZOA.”

If numbers mean anything, the brand is catching on. “In our first full year, ZOA achieved incredible growth in retail sales, becoming a \$100 million brand,” Shulman tells the *Connection*.

It all adds up to form a tasty drink made by high-performing individuals. ■

GIVING BACK

ZOA Energy launched its Fuel Something Bigger Storytelling Series this summer. The campaign promotes the brand while sharing the stories of inspiring people and philanthropic organizations across its social channels.—DJ

COSTCO CONNECTION

The ZOA Zero Sugar Energy Drink Variety 12-count pack (Item 1705231; featuring tropical punch, wild orange and white peach) is in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.



Buyers' picks

Product selections from
Costco's buying team



Jacob Vosper



Ryan Carter



Danielle Ramirez

Kirkland Signature Ultra Shine Dishwashing Liquid

Cleaning up after a big family dinner or a party can be a chore, but this product makes washing dishes a little easier for me. With a no-phosphate formulation, it's tough on grease but easy on my hands. It also has an odor-eliminating technology and a fresh scent. 90 fl oz. Item 1684499. Warehouses/Costco.com.

—Jacob Vosper



Lysol Laundry Sanitizer

This laundry sanitizer reassures me that all of my laundry—even my work clothes and workout gear—are getting thoroughly cleaned. It doesn't contain any bleach, and it can be used with both your white and color loads, including most towels, bed sheets, baby and kids' clothing, and even delicates. 150 fl oz. Item 2203187. Warehouses/Costco.com.

—Ryan Carter



Glad Press'n Seal

This multipurpose plastic food wrap helps keep your summer picnic foods fresh with an airtight seal and comes in handy if you ever lose a container lid. The leakproof, microwave-safe wrap, which comes in a three-pack, clings tightly over surfaces such as plastic and wood—and can also seal to itself to make custom bags. Each roll measures 140 square feet. Item 350086. Warehouses only.—Danielle Ramirez

Move it to use it

Exercise may be just the prescription for your child's mental health

by DEBORAH S. MOLCHAN



Deborah S. Molchan is a licensed psychologist in Pennsylvania who facilitates therapy with children and adults.

COURTESY OF DRS. BROWN AND MOLCHAN



COSTCO CONNECTION

Exercise equipment and active games are available in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.

Your child has been struggling with stress. When you ask your child's pediatrician for solutions, she hands you a script reading, "Aerobic exercise at a moderate intensity for 20 to 30 minutes to manage mood and improve focus." If that sounds odd, you may be surprised various healthcare providers now write scripts like this routinely. In fact, a 2023 review of 41 studies that was published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* found exercise effective in treating clinical depression.

Exercise and brain neurons

For children and adults alike, exercise promotes the creation of neurons, which is called neurogenesis, and supports neuroplasticity. During exercise, a protein called brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) becomes elevated. Preliminary research suggests that BDNF activates the growth of

brain neurons and synapses, which improves focus and memory and boosts mood. Exercise increases dopamine, serotonin and norepinephrine—all neurotransmitters targeted by antidepressants. Exercise also activates our prefrontal cortex and improves our ability to plan, evaluate and work better.

Improved test performance

Children who exercise also achieve better test scores. A report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that reviewed 50 studies substantiated that physical exercise improves academic achievement and standardized test scores.

Eighth-grade students in Naperville Central High School in Illinois literally put that theory to the test. Naperville School District adopted "Zero Hour P.E.," an hourlong before-school physical education program that combined aerobic exercise and heart-rate monitor use for remedial



learning students. The students subsequently scored No. 1 in science and No. 6 in math worldwide (compared to 38 countries) on the Trends in International Mathematics/Science Study comparative assessment, and they showed dramatic literacy improvements as well. Dr. John Ratey, associate clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, notes that the results of Naperville School District's physical education program transformed their students into "the fittest in the nation —and also some of the smartest."

Exercise and ADHD

For children who struggle with ADHD (attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder), medicine can be effective; however, children may still be challenged with forgetfulness, distraction and disorganization. Ratey prescribes exercise to the patients he treats, including those

diagnosed with ADHD. A 2022 scholarly publication in the *Biomedical Journal* further indicates that children with a diagnosis of ADHD who engage in 20 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise achieved improved executive functioning skills. However, for the best results, a 2012 study in the *Journal of Attention Disorders* recommends that children and teens aim for 45 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic activity three times a week for at least 10 weeks to improve thinking skills and behavior.

Help with anxiety

Anxious children especially benefit from exercise with friends, as connections boost serotonin levels. When the happy neurotransmitter serotonin is boosted through exercise with others, anxious children are likelier to adopt exercise as a regular habit. Parents might want to share with children that moderate-intensity exercise will elevate their heart rate, similar to what they might experience when they are feeling nervous. Yet, an exercise-induced heart rate is medicine to help with calming, not a sign to worry.

Ratey offers us all a prescriptive truth, "Exercise is the single-best thing you can do for your brain in terms of mood, memory and learning." ■



EXERCISE TIPS

When adults support a child's effort toward improved brain health through exercise, necessary lifelong habits are formed.

Make exercise a before-school and pre-homework habit.

Parents can use encouraging words such as "Let's get our hearts pumping. School is easier when we exercise and turn on our brains." A 2017 study by the National Institutes of Health recommends 15 minutes of exercise in the morning to positively impact elementary school children's academic performance.

Take mindful exercise breaks.

Teachers, when you notice your students' attention is waning, try a brain break. Participate with students in doing jumping jacks followed by three slow breaths.

—DSM

LEFT: © STOCK.ADOBE.COM; ABOVE: © HAPPYPICTURES / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Avoid the burn

Help boost your body's natural sun protection factor through your diet

by HILLARY SACHS



© JESSICA REISS PHOTOGRAPHY

Hillary Sachs (hillarysachsnutrition.com) is a dietitian in Scotch Plains, New Jersey.



The sun's power gives energy to all living things. It increases our vitamin D levels and helps maintain proper circadian rhythms and cortisol levels. However, exposure to its UV rays is the primary cause of skin cancer. Most skin care experts agree that sunscreen and sun-protective gear are the best ways to minimize UV damage while in direct sunlight. You can also help protect your skin from the inside, as including certain foods in your diet may also increase your body's natural sun protection factor (SPF). Here's a look.

Carotenoids

Carotenoids give foods their orange, yellow and red colors. Think carrots, pumpkin, squash, pears, peppers and even egg yolks. There is evidence that

carotenoids may help alleviate UVA skin damage and provide skin protection from the sun. Dietary sources—like those mentioned—are recommended. According to an article published in *Photochemical & Photobiological Sciences*, even just a half-cup of carotenoid-rich foods per day can make a difference in your skin's natural ability to protect itself from the sun. Note: When you eat carotenoid-rich foods, you absorb more of the phytochemical through cooked foods—like tomato paste, tomato sauce, cooked carrots, etc.—rather than through raw sources.

Lycopene

Lycopene is a carotenoid that gives many fruits and vegetables their red color. Think watermelons, tomatoes, grapefruits, guavas, papayas and red peppers. Lycopene is touted for many health benefits, including



© SEMENTSOVA321 / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

protection against prostate cancer, but few realize that it also may increase the body's natural SPF and protect against oxidative damage caused by the sun. In a 12-week study, daily intake of 8 to 16 milligrams (mg) of lycopene, from either food (there is about 8 mg of lycopene in 1 cup of cooked tomatoes, according to a study from Rutgers) or supplements, helped reduce the intensity of skin redness following exposure to UV rays by 40% to 50%. A 2011 study published in the *Journal of Nanobiotechnology* found that a combination of lycopene and propolis

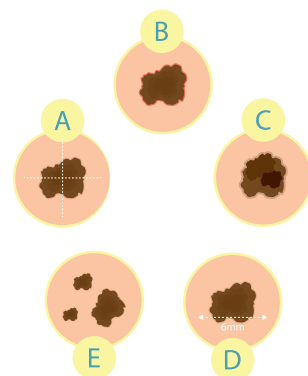
(a substance derived from beeswax and resins and waxes from tree buds, and touted for its health benefits) applied topically improved the skin's ability to block UV rays. Note: Lycopene is fat soluble, so it needs to be eaten with a source of fat to absorb it.

Resveratrol

Resveratrol, the polyphenol found in red grapes, has been cited by several studies as increasing the body's SPF. In a small human study published in 2022, it was found that one-third of all volunteers had greater resistance to UV radiation after consuming a grape powder equivalent to three servings of grapes (about 2¼ cups) per day for two weeks. The mechanism is still being explored; it may have to do with changes to the microbiome and activation of certain genes. ■

COSTCO CONNECTION

You'll find foods rich in carotenoids, lycopene and resveratrol, as well as sunglasses, SPF lotions and sprays, and sun-protective clothing, in Costco warehouses and at Costco.com.



© RUMRUAY / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Perform skin self-exams

Think "ABCDE" to remind yourself what to look for:

Asymmetry. If the shape of one half doesn't match the other half

Border. Irregular, ragged, notched or blurred edges

Color. Areas of uneven coloring, including black, brown, tan, white, gray, red, pink or blue

Diameter. A change in size

Evolving. A mole that has changed over a few weeks or months

In addition, get an annual skin exam and take vitamin D through supplements as needed.—HS

Tried and true

While increasing consumption of foods that can boost your natural SPF can be helpful, nothing can take the place of formal skin protection:

- Wear clothing that protects as much skin as possible, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses.
- Limit direct sun exposure during midday, between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Wear broad-spectrum sunscreen that provides protection against both UVA and UVB rays, with an SPF of at least 30. Reapply as directed.
- Avoid tanning beds and sunlamps.—HS



Fruit Ring Doughnuts

Fruit Ring Doughnuts

2 cups fruit ring cereal, divided, plus more for topping

1 cup flour

2 tsp baking powder

½ tsp salt

⅓ cup granulated sugar

½ cup buttermilk

¼ cup butter, melted

1 large egg

2 tsp vanilla extract

1 tsp food coloring

GLAZE

1 cup powdered sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 Tbsp milk

2 oz cream cheese, softened

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Spray a 6- to 8-count doughnut pan with cooking spray; set aside.

Finely crush 1 cup cereal with a rolling pin in a zip-close bag (yields approximately ½ cup). Place the crushed cereal, flour, baking powder and salt in a large mixing bowl; whisk to combine. Create a well in the center of the dry ingredients. Put the sugar, buttermilk, melted butter, egg, vanilla extract and food coloring in the well. Whisk the wet ingredients, then gradually combine all the ingredients. The mixture will be thick. Using a spatula, fold in the remaining 1 cup whole cereal.

Use a pastry bag to pipe the batter equally into the pan. Bake 9 to 10 minutes, until the doughnuts bounce back when lightly touched. Turn out onto a wire rack; cool.

Prepare the glaze: Place all ingredients in a small saucepan on medium-low heat. Use a rubber spatula to stir constantly until the glaze becomes uniform and smooth.

Once the doughnuts are cool enough to handle, dip them into the glaze, place back on the wire rack and top with extra cereal. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Recipe courtesy of Karly Campbell (bunsinmyoven.com)

Beyond breakfast

Cereal makes a fun and colorful snack

Whether you prefer flakes, rings or crispy rice, there's a cereal for everyone. There's no need to confine this breakfast staple to the most important meal of the day, though. These three recipes let you take cereal on your commute, pack it as an afternoon snack or even as a birthday—or other celebration—treat. Try them with your favorite brands.—*Christina Guerrero*

Birthday Cake Crispy Rice Treats

6 Tbsp salted butter, plus more for greasing pan
6 cups mini marshmallows, divided
¼ tsp vanilla extract
¼ tsp almond extract
½ cup dry confetti cake mix
6 cups crispy rice cereal or preferred cereal
1 cup white chocolate
½ tsp coconut oil
Candy sprinkles, to top the treats

Line a 9 x 9-inch pan with foil or parchment paper, then grease with butter or cooking spray.

Melt butter in a large pot over low heat. Add 5 cups of marshmallows, stir until melted, then add vanilla extract, almond extract and cake mix. Stir again until the ingredients are completely combined and melted together.

Remove the pot from heat; stir in the crispy rice cereal until the marshmallow mixture completely coats the cereal. Stir in the remaining 1 cup marshmallows until evenly distributed.

Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and gently press it into the pan until evenly distributed.

In a microwave-safe bowl, melt the white chocolate and coconut oil together in 30-second intervals until the chocolate is smooth and melted.

Pour the chocolate over the pressed mixture, then spread out evenly. Top with sprinkles. Let sit for 30 to 60 minutes before slicing into squares. Makes 16 servings.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Kathryn Donangelo (kathrynskitchenblog.com)



Peanut Butter Cereal Bars

¾ cup peanut butter or preferred nut butter
3 cups ring, small-flakes or crispy rice cereal of choice
½ cup agave, honey or brown rice syrup
½ tsp salt (optional)
3 Tbsp protein powder (optional)
½ cup white chocolate chips, melted (optional)

Line an 8-inch pan with wax or parchment paper. If needed, gently warm nut butter in the microwave or on the stovetop until it can be easily stirred. Stir all ingredients, except white chocolate chips, in a large bowl. Pour the mixture into the pan; spread evenly. Place a second sheet of wax or parchment paper over the top, then press the cereal down firmly into the pan (to keep the cereal bars from falling apart after cutting later). Remove wax or parchment paper. Spread melted white chocolate chips over the top. Freeze for 30 minutes or until firm enough to slice into bars. Cover leftovers. Store in the refrigerator or a cool, dry place. Makes 9 bars.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Katie Higgins (chocolatecoveredkatie.com)

COSTCO CONNECTION

A variety of cereal is available in all Costco warehouses. Groceries are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.com.

Toast toppers

Don't settle for just bread and butter

If you're looking for breakfast options, you have many great choices. Try combining your favorite spreads with fruits and veggies. Or, experiment with baguettes, muffins or naan instead of your go-to bread. These tasty pairings will help you get your morning off to a unique start.

—Christina Guerrero



Wise Owl Fruity Toast

Spread peanut butter or other nut butter over an open-faced English muffin or a muffin sliced in half. Decorate with sliced bananas, blueberries and hulled, sliced strawberries.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Wendy Mallins (daisiesandpie.co.uk)

Berry Breakfast Toast



Combine ½ cup ricotta, 1 tsp honey and ½ tsp vanilla extract in a small bowl. Spread mixture on sliced and toasted crusty bread. Top with fresh berries, drizzle with honey and garnish with fresh mint.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Lori Monte (thekitchenwhisperer.net)



Cucumber and Tzatziki Hummus Naan Toast

Slather a generous amount of hummus on a mini naan. Top with sliced cucumbers, tzatziki sauce and fresh chopped dill. Season with salt and pepper, if preferred.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Katya Kurmayev (littlebroken.com)

BLT Avocado Toast

Mash fresh avocado on toast, then top with arugula, fresh basil leaves, sliced tomato, a poached egg and bacon. Season with salt and pepper.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Tiffany La Forge (parsnipsandpastries.com)



Nutty Monkey Bagel



Combine chocolate hazelnut spread with almond butter in a small bowl until smooth. Spread onto sliced and toasted bagel halves. Top with sliced bananas, nuts and a drizzle of maple syrup.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Aubrie Cornelius (theblondchef.com)

Cottage Cheese Tomato Baguette

Scoop cottage cheese over a horizontally sliced and toasted baguette. Top with sliced tomatoes, a sprinkle of chopped chives and a drizzle of olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Danielle Oron (iwillnoteatoysters.com)



COSTCO CONNECTION

Various types of breads and toppings are available in most Costco warehouses. Groceries are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.com.



LEFT: © AFRICA STUDIO; ILLUSTRATION: © ELIZAVETA ROZHKOVA / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Crunch time

Costco's baby carrot supplier grows up to be one of the largest carrot producers in the industry

by JULIE KENDRICK

Two brothers, Rod and Bob Grimm, ran a roadside produce stand in the early 1960s in Anaheim, California. As their small business grew, the brothers incorporated and, in 1969, began doing business as Grimmway Farms. They eventually moved operations to Bakersfield, California, a region that, according to the University of California, Davis, is responsible for more than 80% of the United States' carrot harvests each year.

In-vogue veggies

And then—big news in an industry not known for fads—everyone suddenly became interested in tiny carrots. In the

1990s, baby carrots began turning up everywhere from crudité platters to school lunches. Grimmway Farms made acquisitions that established it as the world's largest producer of carrots.

Deep roots

Grimmway Farms has come a long way from those produce stand beginnings, but its roots are still deep in California soil. Their team of multigenerational farmers is passionate about what they do and incredibly proud of providing nutritious, vitamin-packed produce to their customers.

"To be a farmer, you have to be an optimist," says Jeff Huckaby, the organization's president and CEO. "I'm proud to be the fourth generation in a line of 'farmer-optimists' in my family, all of whom have dedicated their lives to agriculture. I've always had a passion for this business, but never more so than today. We proudly keep our commitment to the principles planted by our founders, and we all remain focused on the three P's—people, products and planet—which remain at the heart of our business." ■

Julie Kendrick is a freelance writer who lives in Minnesota. Follow her on Twitter @KendrickWorks.

COSTCO CONNECTION

Organic carrots and organic baby carrots can be found in Costco warehouses. Groceries are available for delivery through Costco Grocery at Costco.com.



Oven-Roasted Ranch Carrots

1/3 cup olive oil
1 packet (1 oz) dried ranch seasoning
1/4 cup parsley, chopped
1 Tbsp brown sugar
Salt and pepper, to taste
8 oz Cal-Organic Baby Carrots

Preheat oven to 350 F.

In a small bowl, mix the olive oil, ranch seasoning, parsley, brown sugar, salt and pepper until fully combined. Add the carrots; mix evenly. Spread the carrots onto a parchment-lined baking sheet; bake for 25 minutes or until caramelized and tender. Makes 4 servings.

Recipes and recipe photos courtesy of Grimmway Farms



Four-Herb Parisian Carrot Salad

1 lb Cal-Organic Baby Carrots
1/4 cup fresh dill, chopped
1/4 cup fresh oregano, chopped
3 Tbsp lemon juice
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 Tbsp sugar
1 Tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
1 tsp dried tarragon
1 tsp lemon peel
1 head of romaine lettuce



Place carrots in a saucepan of boiling water. Return to boil; cook 5 minutes or until tender-crisp. Drain and rinse the carrots under cold running water. Combine the carrots with all ingredients except lettuce; toss well for 2 minutes to bruise the herbs and bring out the flavors. Cover and chill. To serve, plate the mixture over romaine leaves or toss together in a salad bowl. Makes 4 servings.



© SYDA PRODUCTIONS / STOCK ADOBE.COM

Honoring memories

There are many considerations when purchasing a casket or urn for a loved one

by ELLEN RYAN



RICHARD STUMPE

Ellen Ryan fills this month's consumer reporter slot with this behind-the-scenes look at a Costco program. Email questions about this article to connection@costco.com.



Think of Costco products, and most members probably think “great value.” But when it comes to a sensitive area, such as funeral supplies (caskets and urns), other important factors are involved: Quality. Reliability. Selection. Peace of mind. Here’s a look.

Reliability and timeliness

“When someone is purchasing a casket, it is typically needed very quickly,” says Michael Holley, a Costco buyer. As such, delivery within 24 to 48 hours of ordering becomes all the more critical for funeral services. It’s part of Holley’s job to assess suppliers thoroughly: Do they

keep products in stock? Do they have multiple warehouse locations and a strong carrier network to ensure on-time delivery?

Costco suppliers Prime Casket Company and Titan Casket do. Their high quality standards have led to long-standing relationships with Costco.

Materials and service

Another essential attribute is quality. At Costco Next, buyer Parker Viydo checks into the quality of funeral products Costco sells. Both Titan and Prime caskets use premium-weight steel.

Suppliers need to be transparent about just-in-time inventory and materials sourcing—and just as transparent should anything go wrong.



Left: Titan has seen more Costco members opting for colorful caskets. **Right:** Urns are also available through the program.

Like Viydo, Holley works closely with casket suppliers to guard against any damage as well: “There’s no time to replace this product. It’s not like buying a television,” says Holley.

Peace of mind is a major factor in Costco’s well-known customer service. “As buyers we make sure our suppliers will provide our members with a quality product at the best possible price. We do this by choosing reputable companies that share in our goal of taking care of our members,” says Holley.

“If a member reaches out to a supplier and isn’t contacted within 24 hours—or realistically, a few hours—that’s a problem,” Viydo says. “Titan and Prime consistently go above and beyond with communication.”

Personalized choices

Selection is important. This is where Costco Next comes in (see “More with Costco Next”). Its extended storefront, as Viydo calls it, allows members to access a wide variety of options.

With funeral products, “People are looking for a little more personalization that speaks to who the loved one was,” Holley says. Costco has started offering a Prime casket called the Prime Rose because of requests for a product in pink velvet. “It’s our most popular nationwide,” says Prime president Jeffrey Vaynberg.

Joshua Siegel, Titan co-founder and COO, says, “Our Military Select casket line has been our most popular. Recently, we’ve been delighted to see members purchasing a wider variety of our more unique colors—red and purple—and styles.”

Value is still a factor

Circling back to value, both manufacturers offer products at Costco.com at competitive prices. “Negotiation leads to significant savings for our members,” Viydo says.

All of this speaks to the strong connections Costco forges with suppliers on behalf of members. “We are privileged to cater to diverse and informed Costco members,” says Siegel. “Our job is to reduce stress and be an alternative voice to the funeral director, and we treat every member as though they were part of our family—that’s what they deserve during a difficult time.”

Vaynberg agrees: “Aligning with Costco’s mission, our objective is to furnish Costco members with a distinctive and personalized experience, high quality, prompt delivery and exceptional value.” In putting all this together, he says, “it’s a real pleasure and honor to work with Costco.” ■



MORE WITH COSTCO NEXT

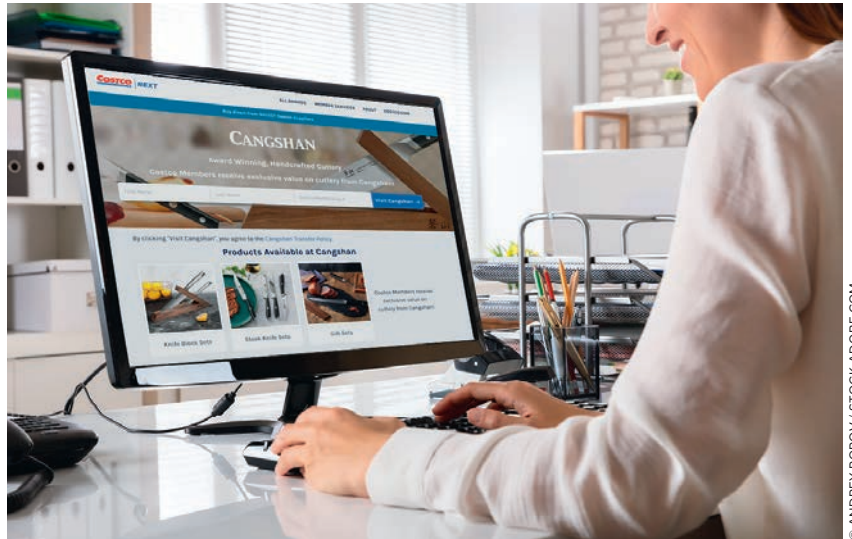
Costco Next provides members with more options of casket colors, styles and varieties, as well as a variety of cremation urns, says buyer Parker Viydo. “You’ll find a variety of cremation urns on Costco Next—choices in everything from materials to colors to designs.” Urn choices include brass with nickel accents, aluminum with enamel or mother of pearl, among others. There’s even a rectangular urn of carved, stained hardwood suitable for a pet. At Costco.com, search “funeral” and follow the links.—ER

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TITAN CASKET

What's next?

Costco Next adds more suppliers and new services

by T. FOSTER JONES



© ANDREY POPOV / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Since its inception, one of Costco's goals has been to look for new ways to enhance the value of your Costco membership. Costco Next meets that goal by providing Costco members access to more variety from their favorite suppliers. Here's a look.

What's Costco Next?

Simply put, Costco Next is a program that lets Costco members buy directly from a wide range of select brands at an exclusive Costco price.

Supplier categories run from art and personal beauty products, to clothing, home goods, electronics and accessories, indoor/outdoor lighting, luggage, pet products, sporting goods, home improvement items and more. Costco Next even offers live trees and plants, fully installed studio sheds and caskets (for more about the casket and urn program, see "Honoring memories" on page 80).

"The list of suppliers continues to grow," says Costco Next buyer Robert Poole. Some of the new suppliers include IQ Bar (allergy-friendly protein bars and drink mixes),

Barebones (high-end outdoor goods) and Travelpro (a quality line of luggage).

What's new on Costco Next?

Costco Next has also added new services: Capture and E-Z Up.

"Capture is the digital media transfer service formally under the Costco Photo umbrella," says Poole. The service allows members to mail in media of all kinds: photos, videos, film, slides and more and have them converted to digital formats.

E-Z Up is a new service for small businesses, schools, sports teams or anyone needing to get their logo and name in front of people. "This allows customization of event shelters, banners and table covers," says Costco Next buyer Parker Viydo.

Poole says the Costco Next program will continue to add more suppliers and services. "We encourage Costco members to check back frequently to discover what's new and take advantage of exciting new deals." ■

How it works

At Costco.com, search "Costco Next" or visit CostcoNext.com directly. Enter your membership

number and check out the exclusive items and prices.

"At Costco Next, selecting the brand or category will take you to the supplier's website to see the great member

values direct from Costco's curated list of suppliers," says Costco Next buyer Robert Poole.—TFJ

SPONSORED CONTENT

Capture the moment

Costco supplier Shutterfly has members' custom photo needs covered

by DAN JONES

Around 1.81 trillion photos are taken worldwide every year, which equals 57,246 per second, or 5 billion per day, according to photography website Phototutorial.com. That's a lot of memories waiting to be shared. Enter Shutterfly, a photo company that offers Costco members exclusive savings on personalized products and custom designs.

The *Connection* recently caught up with Corey Conklin, vice president of customer success at Shutterfly, to discuss how the company is helping Costco members make the most of their pictures.

Costco Connection What is Shutterfly?

Corey Conklin With more than 600 curated products, Shutterfly is the one-stop shop to bring your photos to life through our custom photo printing, photo books, holiday cards, gifts, wall art, home decor and more. With so many beautiful products and expertly crafted designs to choose from, you'll always find the one that inspires you. Choose from a variety of materials, like canvas and metal. Add a personal touch to home accents with personalized pillows and blankets, kitchen essentials, drinkware and more—with styles to match every aesthetic. Whether you make something in minutes, customize every detail or shop artist-designed items, you'll love what arrives on your doorstep.



COURTESY OF © SHUTTERFLY

CC What benefits does Shutterfly offer to Costco members?

CC Costco members get an exclusive discount of 51% off regularly priced orders (automatically applied at checkout), plus free economy shipping on orders over \$49 every time you shop at Shutterfly. Terms and restrictions apply. Getting set up is easy—just go to Accounts.shutterfly.com/welcomeCostco, enter your Costco membership number and link to your existing Shutterfly account or create a new one.

CC Does Shutterfly have any helpful tools or services to make shopping easier?

CC Shutterfly offers a variety of tools and services to make designing and mailing affordable, quick and easy, including having your photo books designed by a pro with Free 24-Hour Designer Service. And you can easily add recipients to your envelopes with the Free Personal Address Book Service, plus a Mail for Me Service to have your cards mailed for 99 cents each.

CC Is there anything else members should know about Shutterfly?

CC Shutterfly's unique and personalized items are a great option if you're looking for creative ideas and new ways to preserve your memories and stay connected with loved ones. With so many products and designs to choose from, you're sure to find the perfect item to commemorate your special moments. ■

COSTCO CONNECTION

To learn more about Shutterfly's range of services, visit Costco.com/Photo. For member service, call 1-833-636-2712 (available weekdays, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and weekends, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pacific Time). Browse other Costco Services by visiting Costco.com and clicking on "Services."



Sony - A80CL Series - 4K UHD OLED TV

Billions of accurate colors and pure OLED black makes everything you watch and play come to life with natural hues and shades, powered by the intelligent Cognitive Processor XR™. Available in 55", 65", 77" and 83". Selection varies by location. Item numbers vary by screen size. **Warehouses/Costco.com.**



Dyson V15 Detect Total Clean Extra Stick Vacuum

Provides power and intelligence for whole-home, deep cleaning versatility. The LCD screen displays particles picked up. Includes 10 accessories. Item 1711427.

Warehouses/Costco.com.

The latest Costco finds



Berkshire Heirloom Throw

Snuggle up in this 60" x 70" luxurious oversized throw. It is pleasantly plush, ultra-gentle on the skin and available in four colors. Item 1685882.

Warehouses/Costco.com.



Splendid Ladies' 2-Piece Lounge Set

Sizes: XS-XXL. Colors: stamped star (blue), green stripe and speckled heart (gray). Sizes and colors vary by location. Item 1697659. **Warehouses/Costco.com.**



Character Kids' 3-Piece Jacket Set

Each set includes coordinating jacket, tee and pant. Choose from Spider-Man, Batman, Barbie and Minnie Mouse. Sizes: 3T–7. Sizes and character designs vary by location. Item 1710374.

Warehouses/Costco.com.

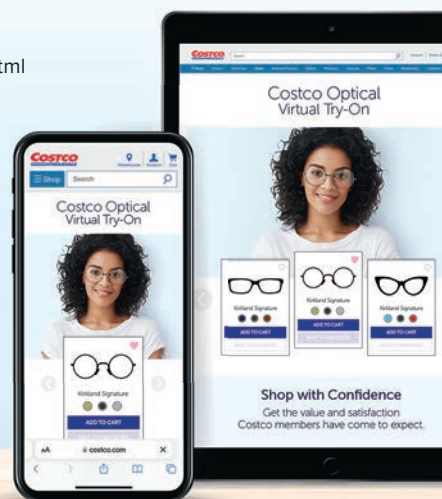


Kirkland Signature Energy Shot or Extra Strength Energy Shot 48-Bottle Variety Pack

Both items now feature upgraded caffeine content. Flavors have also changed. Regular has berry and pomegranate, and Extra Strength has berry and blue raspberry. Item 1711796 (Regular), 1711799 (Extra Strength). **Warehouses/Costco.com.**

Costco Optical Virtual Glasses Try-On

Visit [Costco.com/Optical.html](https://www.costco.com/Optical.html) to virtually try on your next pair of glasses today! Select from over 150 styles, most available in multiple colors. Then, upload your current prescription, select your lens type and material, and receive your new glasses delivered to your door.



SONDORS MadMods Cafe 24" Moped Style eBike

It's more than an eBike, it's a system that features motorcycle-inspired, interchangeable configurations. Customize to your individual style with accessory kits that include seats, bars, headlights and tires, compatible across all models. **CostcoNext.com only.**

COSTCO
WHOLESALE
NEXT

FROM LEFT: DAN PILVER; AUSTIN KUPKE



FROM LEFT: LUKE DISTELHORST; NAYAN PATEL

Wheely convenient

If you think you need a car or truck to visit your local Costco warehouse, you might be surprised. Costco members across the U.S. are using cargo bikes to make their trips.

Cargo bikes are designed to carry or deliver loads of goods. For example, Tim Gilbery of Kirkland, Washington, shared

a photo of 200 pounds of Costco goods strapped to his bike.

Stylianos Karolidis of Queens, New York, says he got his cargo bike in 2022 specifically for trips to Costco. “I go about once a week and am always surprised by how much I can haul back,” he says.

For Gillian Burgess, her cargo bike adds convenience to her shopping trips. “I live in Arlington, Virginia, and find that biking is the best way to get to the Pentagon City Costco,” she says.

—Stephanie E. Ponder

Clockwise from top left: Loaded bike in Bend, Oregon; Austin Kupke of Orlando, Florida; Nayan Patel of San Jose, California; Luke Distelhorst of Edmonds, Washington.