

Waterwheel tea offers flavorful, local, healthy options for tea lovers

Stephanie Kalina-Metzger
Staff Reporter/Dillsburg Banner

The “buy local, shop local” movement continues to gain momentum with each passing year and yet consumers still tend to rely on commercial teas produced in far-flung areas like China, India and Sri Lanka.

Dillsburg resident Beth Foster, owner of Waterwheel Tea, is hoping to change that with her locally sourced, organic teas that appeal to a variety of tastes.

How It All Started

When Beth Foster joined an organic food club several years ago, she dedicated herself to serving her family dishes made with local, healthy ingredients. “For an entire year, we decided to eat only what local farmers produced,” she said. When the frigid weather gripped Pennsylvania, Foster found herself relying on her creativity to keep the family’s interest as they tired of the limited options available in the dead of winter. “I then started experimenting with the herbs the club offered.”

As Foster became increasingly familiar with which herbs worked together, she began creating teas. Her husband Don, daughter Sarah and son Boaz, gave the teas a thumbs up, as did friends who tasted her creations. Foster enjoyed the positive reactions and the process so much that it soon became her passion and in the spring of 2014, Waterwheel Tea was born.

“After the tea business became a hit, I found a like-minded farmer in Hellam who grows organically and harvests sustainably,” said

Foster, who offers caffeine free, herbal teas with fun names like “candy tea,” made from chocolate mint, which, according to Foster alleviates insomnia and helps strengthen bones. “Bunny tea,” one of her most popular teas to date and also her daughter’s favorite, combines garden mint and baby carrot tops and acts as an anti-inflammatory, while helping to strengthen kidneys.

“My initial focus was to make my teas fun and tasty for my kids. Later I learned the health benefits,” said Foster.

Other teas like her “Luau Tea,” made with Burdock root, is said to cleanse the liver and stabilize blood sugar and “Skinny Tea,” made with yacon and chickweed, is touted as an appetite suppressant.

What makes Foster’s tea stand apart from some of the others that consumers can purchase at the supermarket is that she doesn’t cut her products, or use fillers like commercial tea companies do. “All the leaves are still whole and some of the roots are in larger pieces. You can use my teabags more than one time and with my loose teas, you can use those portions twice as well.”

Her herbal tea blends are offered in either eight-serving packages (in biodegradable/organic tea bags) for \$5, or two-serving packages for \$2. All single-ingredient herbal teas are packaged in either 20-serving packages (loose tea) for \$10, eight-serving packages (in biodegradable/organic tea bags) for \$5, or two-serving packages (in biodegradable/organic tea bags) for \$2.



Dillsburg resident Beth Foster, owner of Waterwheel Tea.

Foster sells her products online and at various farmers markets such as Adams-Ricci in Enola every Thursday, the Linglestown organic farmers market on Sundays through September and at Farmers on the Square in Carlisle on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month. For inquisitive customers who visit her table at any of the above markets, Foster is a wealth of knowledge and available to answer any questions, or offer samples to those who like to try before they buy. Foster offers a different fresh brew each week, which she sells in Grolsch style, returnable bottles that buyers can bring back for a discount on their next bottle purchase. “In my bottled teas, I use organic cane sugar—just enough to brighten the flavor,” she said.

Teas vary according to season and she updates her

website every 10 days so that visitors will have timely information on current offerings.

The businesswoman, whose goal is to “make tea drinking fun again,” says her favorite part of operating Waterwheel Tea is making people happy. “The added bonus is that it helps with their health as well,” she said.

5k Recovery Walk to be held

JFT Recovery and Veterans Support Services, Inc. will be holding the second annual Recovery Walk 2015 on September 26 at Logan Park, 172 Logan Rd., Dillsburg. Registration is held 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. with the walk beginning at 10 a.m. In September, which is National Recovery Month, many large cities hold recovery walks to raise funds for the recovery community. It is estimated that one in four families are affected by mental health / or substance abuse disorders. JFT is raising funds and awareness for those suffering with addiction. Everyone is welcome, those with experience or loved ones in recovery, even if you are not walking but want to spread awareness. JFT is a non-profit organization and can be contacted by calling Steve Barndt at 880-8068.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sept. 25 - The next Dancing Feet singles dance at the Elks Lodge in Carlisle is scheduled for 8 to 11:30 p.m. The doors open at 7:30 p.m. and the cost is only \$10. D.J. Lay Back Lenny will be playing a large variety of dance music. For more information visit Facebook.com/dancingfeetsingles, or call 462-5591.

Sept. 26 - Dillsburg Farmers Market is open for the season at 117 N. Baltimore Street, Dillsburg. Local produce and specialty foods offered. 8 a.m. to noon.

Sept. 26 - The Annual Dillsburg Girls Softball Pork Barbecue will be held beginning at 4 p.m. at the Logan Park Pavilion. Dinner will include pork barbecue, baked beans, cole slaw, mac and cheese, potato roll and a bottle of water. Price is \$12 for adult meals, \$6 for kids, 6 and under will be free. Hot dogs will be available for kids. Visit their website at www.leaguelineup.com/dgsa.

Sept. 26 & 27 - Brain Balance Achievement Center Sweet Potato Freys at 2300 Carlisle Road, York, noon to 5 p.m.

Sept. 30 - The Mechanicsburg Museum Association is presenting Stephen A. Runkle speaking on “The Philadelphia Campaign of the Revolutionary War”. Refreshments are provided. For further information please call the Museum office at 697-6088.

Oct. 1 - Country and Blue Grass Jam at Franklinton Community Fire Company, 107 Baltimore Road, Franklinton. Kitchen opens at 5 p.m. Admission to jam is \$3. For more information call 432-1464.

Oct. 2 - A soup and bake sale will be held at Barrens Lutheran Church Social Hall, 232 Krolltown Rd., Dillsburg, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Homemade soups, sandwiches, baked goods and pies will be available. The event is sponsored by York County Farm Women Group #17, Dillsburg. For more information call 357-0060.

Oct. 3 - Dillsburg Farmers Market is open for the season at 117 N. Baltimore Street, Dillsburg. Local produce and specialty foods offered. 8 a.m. to noon.

Oct. 3 and 4 - Sweet Potato Freys will hold a sale at Coover Park along Rt. 15 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Oct. 5 - The Dillsburg Garden Club will hold its monthly meeting at 7 p.m. at the Maple Shade Barn, 35 Greenbrier Road, Dillsburg. The program for the evening will be “Herbs of the Season: Lure, Trivia, and a Wee Bit of Magic, Too.” This informative program on herbs of the Halloween season will be presented by Susanna Reppert-Brill of The Rosemary House in Mechanicsburg. Refreshments and a brief business meeting will follow the program. Newcomers are invited to attend. For more information call 432-3519.

Oct. 8 - Country and Blue Grass Jam at Franklinton Community Fire Company, 107 Baltimore Road, Franklinton. Kitchen opens at 5 p.m. Admission to jam is \$3. For more information call 432-1464.

Oct. 10 - It’s a Felt-a-Thon at the Maple Shade Barn on from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Just in time for the fall season, instructor Debra Tilly will lead participants through three fall felting projects, a pumpkin, a black cat and a witch. The all day event costs \$75 per person and includes material, a light lunch and snacks. Maple Shade Barn, headquarters of the Northern York Historical and Preservation Society, is located at 35 Greenbrier Lane, Dillsburg. Class size is limited and pre-registration is required. For more information or to register call 752-8124.

Oct. 11 - A Zumba Party to benefit Grace United Methodist Church Wellsville will be held on Sunday from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Wellsville Fire Company. Cost is \$10. There will be lots of raffle prizes so bring additional cash. For more information contact Zumba instructor Laura Mellott.

Oct. 11 - Church World Service will sponsor their Pinchot Park Crop Walk for Hunger on Sunday, at Pinchot Park. They will be joined this year with the Lewisberry Crop Walk. The walks start at the Conewago Day Use (York side off Alpine Road). Registration starts at 1 p.m. and the walk begins at 1:30 p.m. To register online or start a team go to www.hunger.cwsglobal.org. Sponsor forms are available at this site or make online donations.

Oct. 10 - A “Musical Celebration” benefits the new Dillsburg Public Library. The program will be held at Christ Lutheran Church, 15 South Filey’s Road, Dillsburg, at 7 p.m. The program will highlight music of both sacred and secular styles. The Dillsburg Brass, CASA Charter School students and many other professional area musicians will be featured. A history of the library will be presented that highlights the journey of the Library. Refreshments will follow with an opportunity to share your past Library involvement, and the chance to be recorded. Pictures are also welcomed. All donations collected will support the renovation of the new Library building at 204 Mumper Lane. For additional information, please contact Christ Lutheran church at 432-4878 week day mornings, the Dillsburg Library, 432-5613, the Dillsburg Women’s Club, Mary Bressler at steelermbcb@comcast.net or email Carole Knisely, Music Director for Christ Lutheran Church (Filey’s) Dillsburg at cknisely3@comcast.net

Oct. 10 - DeSouza Brown is hosting the 3rd Annual Chicken Barbecue Fundraiser for Ronald McDonald House. Included in the meal is half a chicken, baked potato, butter, and applesauce. Drinks will also be available by voluntary donation. Contact Megan Frye for pre-sale tickets at 657-0840 ext. 310 or mrfrye@DeSouzaBrown.com.

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Oct. 13 to 17 - Dillsburg Farmers Fair – five days of activities visit dillsburgfarmersfair.org

Oct. 17 - Trindle Spring Lutheran Church in Mechanicsburg invites the community to attend Trindle Day from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Trindle Spring Campus located at 14 State Road Mechanicsburg. The day will feature a sale of chicken corn soup, pies made-to-order, canned and baked goods, a huge yard sale, and crafts of all kinds. The Central PA Blood Bank be here from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please give the gift of life and give blood.

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