



SONOMA COUNTY NORTH NEWSLETTER, Winter 2018



Carlo Petrini in Sonoma County



Carlo at the Raven Theater in Healdsburg



Hoshi gaki--massaged and dried persimmons

2017 Was a Busy Year!

Founded in 1997 as one of the first chapters in the US, we celebrated our 20th anniversary this year.

And during 2017, we were busy! Your chapter hosted 20 events, including farm visits, tastings, hands-on classes, in-home meals, a lakeside picnic, a Terra Madre dinner, and a Bodega Red potato feast. We collaborated with local food system and cultural organizations such as Slow Food Russian River, the School Garden

Network, Farmer's Guild/CAFF, and Roots of Change; we also supported local farms, food businesses, and restaurants.

In addition to these events, our seven chapter [projects](#) continue to thrive:

- The **Bodega Red Potato project** obtained Presidium status from Slow Food International to focus on increasing the cultivation and sales of the potato;
- The **Local Farmer project** funded two young farmers with grants to improve their farming businesses;
- The **School Gardens project** provided Ark of Taste seeds to 4 farmers and seedlings to 9 school, after-school, and community gardens;
- The new **Snail of Approval** project awarded Snails to 7 restaurants in Sonoma County that reflect the Slow values of "good, clean, and fair." (To learn more about this project, go to [Snail of Approval](#). If you have a favorite restaurant to recommend, email us at snailofapprovalsc@gmail.com.)

- The chapter sponsored a master's degree student from the University of Padua, Italy and supported her research into Slow Food in the United States, the Bodega Red potato and the Gravenstein apple.

We **raised approximately \$5,500** through events and a series of 100-mile dinners in private homes. With these funds, we helped some survivors of the wildfires:

- \$1,000 to the Farmer's Guild/CAFF Fire Relief Fund for farmers
- \$1,000 to one of our member farmers whose farm and home were destroyed
- \$200 in supplies and propane to feed the community at Bayer Farms

We also sent three members to Slow Food Nations in Denver and set aside funds for delegates to travel to Italy's Terra Madre in 2018.

**We hope many more of you will join us on any of the initiatives above!
Contact us at slowfoodsonomacountynorth@gmail.com.**



Chapter founder Barbara Bowman, "Pioneers" Elissa Rubin-Mahon and Jerry Craven, Founder Jan Mettler



Making a garden at the probation camp

We Were Pioneers, and We Turned 20 This Year!

In the beginning, a Slow Food chapter was called a convivium as a nod to conviviality, sharing at the table. As one of the first convivia formed in the United States, we celebrated our 20th anniversary at the annual spring meeting!

Founding members Barbara Bowman and Jan Mettler and “pioneers” Jerry Craven, Bill Hawn, and Elissa Rubin-Mahon shared stories and our early history with us. Very few current members knew of the old days and the inception of important traditions that make us who we are today.

It all began with Carlo—Carlo Petrini, the charismatic visionary who founded Slow Food in Italy under threat of a McDonald’s at the foot of the Spanish Steps in Rome. Slow Food was founded on the dual principles of pleasure and justice. Carlo believed fervently that **“Slow life is a value; and pleasure is a way of being at one with oneself and others.” He recognized that food traditions are our most deeply held memories, the fabric of each person’s culture. “Without agriculture, there would be no culture.”**

Our convivium, Sonoma County North, was founded in 1997 with a goal to stay small and connected. Communication with members was personal--by telephone and mail. Printed invitations to events were beautifully designed by Yolla Bolly Press. Hands-on mini-events were low-cost and recognized the talents of members who taught their skills. And because we were one of the first chapters established in the United States, we continued a close relationship with Carlo, who visited Sonoma County many times.

“We joined early on because Slow Food reflected our own values: we wanted to re-establish what we remembered about cooking and growing food from our parents and grandparents, and recapture the flavors of childhood. We were concerned about pesticides in our food. We were committed to social justice. When Evelyn Cheatham was chef at the Sonoma County probation camp, she created a garden to supplement the menu and teach young men who were incarcerated about growing and eating fresh food. We worked with young men in the garden, and donated supplies and funds.” --Elissa Rubin-Mahon

The chapter developed a close relationship with the New Orleans chapter, and helped to raise funds for fishers, shrimpers, crabbers, oyster gatherers, and strawberry growers after Hurricane Katrina.

From the beginning, **the chapter was committed to the Ark of Taste.** We created the “Ark Trunk,” a travelling display of Ark housed in two large (and very heavy!) vintage suitcases (i.e., no wheels). We travelled throughout the East Bay to regional food events to make tangible the concept of the Ark of Taste.

The spirit of these early relationships and initiatives remains strong in our chapter, even as membership has increased and communication is now electronic and less personal. Our leadership team remains small, hands-on, and close. Our support for local farmers has grown and diversified. Early key fundraisers, such as the Ark dinner and Tastes & Tales of Terra Madre, continue. Our commitment to educating others about endangered products and traditions through the Ark of Taste is unwavering. And we stay connected to the international Slow community by participating in the biannual Terra Madre celebration in Italy.

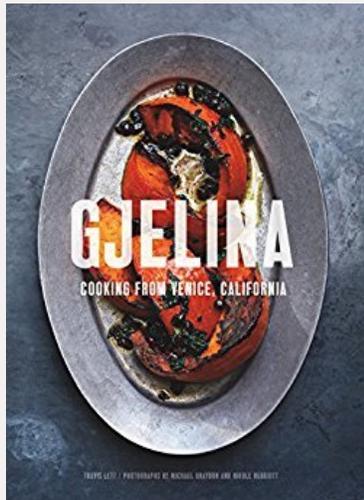
We have a history that we don’t want to lose. Look up some of those early members and ask them for stories of the past.

Publicity for Member Producers

Are you a chapter member with a food-related business? If so, we want to let people know about your business.

We have recently updated our Producer web page to include 15 descriptions of local food-related businesses owned by members of our chapter. **If you are a member and we missed your business, please let us know so we can include you.**

[Check out our current producers.](#)



Do You Want to Share Your Favorite Cookbook?

Do you have a cookbook you love to use—because it evokes a particular country or flavor profile, memories of your childhood, or special friends? Would you like to create a menu from this cookbook with a small number of other enthusiasts? If so, let us know!

A recurring mini-event we call **Around the Slow Table** is a small dinner party of 8-10 people who come together to share a meal from a selected cookbook. The host selects a cookbook, each guest prepares a dish from it, and the evening delivers good food, lively company, and discussion of the meal and the cookbook.

We would like to schedule one or two small dinners this year for our members to get to know each other better, and **we want to hear from you if you'd like to pick a cookbook and host a meal in your home. We'll do the rest!** slowfoodsonomacountynorth@gmail.com

Mark These Upcoming Chapter Events

An invitation to each event is mailed approximately three weeks prior to the event, at which time you may register.

Sausage-Making with Marie and Sydney

February, Date TBD, 10 am, Cloverdale

Slow Books: Insatiable, by Gael Greene

March 21, 5:30 pm, Healdsburg

Tour of Gourmet Mushrooms, Sebastopol

April, date and time TBD

Farm-to-Table Dinner

May 12, 5 pm, Geyserville

Tour of Kicking Bull Farms, Sonoma

June, date and time TBD

Welcome to Chapter Members Who Joined in 2017!

Carla Barber

Lisa Brew-Miller

Claudia Clow

Nick Colby

Edwin and Lisa Ellis

Melinda Frances

Anne Gradek

Heidi Herrmann

Maraya Jones

Johanna Lieblein

Lynda McDaniel

Denaire, Harrison, Mike, and Elliott Nixon

David Pew

Randy Powell

Jill Sartori

Amy Schaefer

Brent Schlender and Lorna Jacoby-Schlender

Bailey Selfridge

Joey Smith

Karin Warnelius-Miller

Gina Willis

**Our apologies if we forgot to list you--and please let us know!
slowfoodsonomacountynorth@gmail.com.**



Why Join Slow Food—or Renew Your Membership?

Slow Food members and donors are the lifeblood of this organization, providing a majority of the financial support to power our global movement. Your devotion to living Slow helps make “good, clean and fair food for all” a reality.

When you join Slow Food, you become part of a global community that is “going Slow”—celebrating and championing regional foods and food traditions, supporting farmers, creating school and community gardens, and joining members from disparate ends of the food system in debate and common cause.

You also become a member of our smaller, local community of northern Sonoma County and can support and participate in monthly events and our projects: the Ark of Taste; grants for Local Farmers; gardens in schools and after-school programs; an exchange program with Mayan women in Guatemala; Slow Harvest gleaning; and Snail of Approval awards to restaurants and producers. In California you automatically become a member of Slow Food California, which is especially active in supporting statewide and local food policies that reflect the Slow philosophy.

[Join or renew your membership online](#) and put Sonoma County North-CA as your chapter. If you prefer to renew by check locally, please contact slowfoodsonomacountynorth@gmail.com.



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