

The Market Provides Community

Markets provide a profound role within a community, and the Lancaster County Farmers Market in Strafford is no exception. Working behind the counter at S. Clyde Weaver has given me a bird's-eye view to watch this happen again and again. I see neighbors meet, stop and have a talk. Sometimes there are friends who have not seen each other for a very long time, discover each other at market, and then start talking and catching up with each other's lives, all happening in a natural way. When storms occur, the Market buzzes with the stories of lost electric and flooding. Living is shared.

How well I remember the Saturday morning following the 9/11 tragedy in 2001. Each Saturday morning, as we prepare for the busy market day, there is often a "buzz" in the Market as people come in not only to shop but also to enjoy breakfast, have coffee and sit with friends. But on that morning, the buzz was unusual. The aisles were full of people, and the interaction that happens in Market with people talking to each other was in full force. I remember working and thinking, we are really busy today. One of our customers mentioned to me that they had just visited a large supermarket in Wayne, and that the store was quite empty. That statement crystallized for me what I had known before but had just accepted —the importance of community at Market. We humans have a need for community in some shape or form; uncertainty and fear increases that need. Market can provide an amazing setting by providing a non-threatening space to share life with each other. It has been a pleasure to share in the lives of our customers over the 27 years that I have worked at S. Clyde Weaver. — *Bruce Martin*

Bruce Martin, a certified cheese expert from Mt. Joy, Pa, is co-manager of the S. Clyde Weaver stand at the Strafford Market.



Bruce Martin, cheese expert and co-manager of the S. Clyde Weaver stand at the Strafford Market, prepares wedges of Dutch Vlaskaas for the day's sales. *Courtesy of Roger D. Thorne.*