

THE COOP SCOOP

1st Quarter 2002

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PEOPLE'S FOOD CO-OP

436 S. Burdick Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Phone: 616.342.5686
Fax: 616.342.0194

Email: kalpfc@yahoo.com
www.peoplesfoodco-op.org

Hours:
Daily 9am–7pm
Wednesdays 'til 8pm
Sundays Noon–6pm



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Vote: Board of Directors Elections 2002

Members, you will soon be receiving a ballot in your mailbox. Yep, that's right, a ballot. It is time to vote in a new batch of directors to replace the veterans who have served you so well over the past two years. We are very grateful for their commitment to and passion for this community. And, they are leaving and need to be replaced.

Your ballot will show two important items:

1) *A referendum for expansion of the PFC board of directors from 7 members to 12.* We feel that in order to adequately serve the needs

of our membership, to research and execute an expansion, and to adequately support the manager and staff we need more bodies.

2) *A ballot for 2002 board elections.* You will find statements of candidacy written by each candidate explaining their qualifications and vision for the Co-op. Read them carefully and choose your favorite nine. Ballots are due back to the Co-op no later than 7 pm, March 28, 2002.

Thanks for doing your part to keep our community vibrant and strong.

Moving, Expanding and Getting Involved

General Manager's Report by Sue St. Onge

People's had another successful year last year. We ended the year in the black, and were able to buy new equipment and pay better wages to our staff. We are proud of these accomplishments and continue to work to build a healthier co-op. This year, we will continue to invest in equipment for the store, allowing us to expand our bulk selections. We are also looking to buy some new shelves, which will allow for additional grocery, vitamins, and health and beauty aid products. We are working very hard toward a day when our members never need to go anywhere else to meet their families' shopping needs.

In planning for our economic future, the Co-op should be guided by the principle that growth is necessary for survival. We must continually seek new markets and offer more services to our members and community as a whole. In order to direct our future, the co-op should make every attempt to own rather than lease equipment and real estate.

With that, our approach to finding a new site has shifted. We are now looking into buying a building, rather than leasing. This is a long and arduous process, but will ultimately allow the Co-op to actually invest it's capital directly into our own future.

Finally, after over 30 years of business, it is possible for the Co-op, with it's newfound stability, to greatly influence and impact our community. We hope that our membership will recognize the importance of providing the tools to help our community move towards sustainability, and find a way to become involved. It is undeniably true that if we want to influence the world, we must "think globally and **act** locally". We are offering all a chance to do just that in the Kalamazoo area. Please decide now that you can make a difference. To find out how: just call and tell me what your interests are. I will direct you toward programs that will help us reach our mutual goals.

PEOPLE'S FOOD CO-OP

The mission of the People's Food Co-op of Kalamazoo is to provide good, safe food to the community at reasonable prices and to educate the community about issues related to food, health and environmental responsibility.

PFC General Manager: Sue St. Onge

PFC Staff: Eric Benson, Lucy Bland, Ryan Buxman, Elizabeth Forest, Alex Means, Andrew McCroskey, Benji Mogg, Wendy Ouellette, and Maria Panone

PFC Board of Directors:

Chris Dilley, president; Cori Somers, secretary; Fred Royce, treasurer; Susan McHugh; Earl Hall; Leslie Newman



The *Coop Scoop* provides a quarterly forum for communication between the membership, staff, board and community about issues related to the store, our mission and our community.

Editor: Chris Dilley

Indispensable Volunteers: Peter Brakeman, Derek Bell, Anne Hensley, Cathy Dernay, Bill Caskey, Timothy Gallagher, and the inimitable Chip Chowzen, Channel 9 Star Meteorologist, who was kind enough to do dopplers for this entire issue. *Thanks to all of you!*

If you are interested in advertising, carrying the *Scoop* at your establishment, or helping out with production of the *Coop Scoop* contact Chris Dilley at pickle@net-link.net or 381-2716. Contributions due in the store by the 15th of Feb., May, Aug., and Nov. for the following month's issue.



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Co-op Happenings

PFC Environmental Education Series

March: Gardening with Kids—Cathy Dernay, the Co-op Garden manager, will discuss creative and fun projects to do with children in the garden that celebrate nature and cultivate wonder. Wednesday, March 13, 2002, 7pm at the Kalamazoo Public Library, 3rd Floor, Van Deusen Room

April: The Scoop on GMOs—Activists Elizabeth Forest and Chris Dilley discuss what genetic engineering is and how these new organisms affect our food supply and our environment. Wednesday, April 10, 2002, 7pm at the Kalamazoo Public Library, 3rd Floor, Van Deusen Room

May: Clean Water—Mary Powers, Drain Commissioner for Kalamazoo County, discusses our water supply, the Kalamazoo River clean up and more. Date and time to be announced.

June: Herbal Medicinals—Presenter Maya Cordes, recently returned from study at a school of herbal medicine in the southwest, shares her wisdom. Date and time to be announced.

Member Participation 2002

On the counter at the store you will find a form that lets you tell us how you want

to get involved. You'll find everything from volunteering in the Co-op Garden to serving on the membership committee. There's even space for skills and hobbies.

You'll feel great about getting involved. Come on in and fill one out. Thanks!

MEMBER PARTICIPATION 2002

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Are you interested in running for the board of directors?
 YES NO

Please check all volunteer areas you are interested in:
 in the store Co-op Garden
 People's Education for a Sustainable Future
 events (Island Pres., Taste of Kalamazoo, etc.)
 Earth Day or Spring/Fall Gatherings
 Coop Shop (advising, selling info, mailing, etc.)

Please check the committees you are interested in:
 Membership Education/Marketing
 Volunteer Physical/Relocation
 Personnel Finance

Please write interests, hobbies and skills on back.

Road R.A.G.E. Returns

Friday, April 19, 2002 is a very special day. Not only because it is 2 days before the Spring Gathering and just one day before 4/20. No, it is special because it is the day that the Road R.A.G.E., that traveling band of info-pranksters hits town again. You might remember their radical cheerleading, keen wit and poignant skits from last year's KCGI Benefit. If you weren't there, then you missed out.

This year, they are adding puppetry to the mix as they educate about the dangers of genetically modified organisms and the corporate inter-



ests that engender them. The performance will be at the Space, 527 E. Michigan, at 7:30 pm. We are looking for sponsors (companies or individuals) to help defray travel and promotional costs. Call Anne Hensley at 349-1789 if you want to help or need info. See you there!

Spring Gathering

This year's Spring Gathering, **April ?? at Kraftbrau**, will be a benefit for the newly formed education corporation People's Education for a Sustainable Future. There will be music and food, kids activities and, of course, Kraftbrau beer. This year there will also be a bake sale to benefit the Co-op Garden, and local green organizations will have a chance to introduce you to all the wonderful things this community has to offer. Look for more details in the store over the next month.

THE SKINNY

Things We Think You Should Know about Your Co-op

by Wendy Ouellette and Lucy Bland, staff members

Maple syrup ...

When it comes to maple syrup, I definitely say buy in bulk and go local! Not only does it feel good to cut down on shipping, support your neighbors, and save a buck or two, but our syrup is truly 100% maple syrup. Commercial syrup brands are mostly corn syrup — ew! — and contain as low as 1% maple syrup!

As far as grades go, the only difference between A and B is color. Grade B (the kind PFC has in bulk) is stronger in flavor and is usually favored in baking while grade A is lighter and used more for pancakes. It's all really just a personal preference.

Maple syrup is great to sweeten anything from oatmeal, grits, granola and mochi and can always be used as a replacement for sugar. (Wendy)

NOW vitamins ...

Our main vitamin manufacturer, NOW Foods, received its Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) certification in July 2000. This program ensures that all elements of the manufacturing process



are reviewed to provide reasonable assurance that processes

are sufficiently controlled so that products meet their purported quality and serves as a means of self-assessment to the dietary supplement industry. (Wendy)

The herb section ...

As you may have noticed the herb section of the store has been a bit messy. Some medicinal herbs have been discontinued and replaced with cooking spices. These herbs simply do not sell enough for us to maintain a good rotation of fresh product. However, we're exploring ways to keep medicinal herbs accessible to our customers — they can be such an impor-

tant part of maintaining good health.

Soon the cooking herbs and spices will be grouped together, and separated from the medicinals. This, along with highlighting different herbs periodically, will make using our medicinal herbs easier. (Lucy)

Staff product picks ...

Maria — Colloidal Silver: it safely (for you) kills anything that's bad for you, both internally and externally.

Benji — Frozen food. Also, he's been overheard lately muttering that our distributor is now carrying dried banana strips (not just chips) and dried mango.

Lucy — Natural dried pineapple.

Ryan — Guayachi Yerba Maté, and now carrying hemp seeds in bulk.

Andy — Cabbage—red or green.

Wendy — Bulk dandelion leek miso.

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Garden News

by Cathy Dernay, garden manager

The anticipation of Spring coming is in the air. The colorful seed catalogs flooding my mail box remind me that it's really not that far away. Actually, the seeds for the garden have arrived and I've started some seeds indoors and I'm helping to prepare the greenhouse for the season. Tiller's International has been so generous as to share their greenhouse space with us this season.

The planning for the garden continues on: what to grow, where to grow it and how much to grow. I'm striving for diversity and companion planting as much as possible.

The preparing of the garden beds will be happening soon and I'll definitely be calling on volunteers to help.

As many of you may have heard or seen the poster in the Coop, I want to "pedal" the produce to the market. I am asking for contributions to obtain a bike trailer in exchange for credit at the Coop table at the farmer's market. Anyone interested can call me or drop a check off at the store.

I'm in the process of working on a collaboration with Edison middle school. They are starting an after school garden program this year and want to partner up with us on some projects during the season. Anyone interested in taking an active role in this incredible opportunity should contact me soon.

Thanks again to all who have helped with the garden so far. I'm looking forward to a great growing season.

Wish List: wheel barrow, garden tools, compost, straw

There is more about Pedal-Powered Produce on p.5. Cathy will also be a speaker for the PFC Education Series on March 13, 2002 at 7pm in the Kalamazoo Public Library, 3rd Floor Van Deusen Room. See Co-op Happenings on p.2 for more details. The Co-op Garden is located at 2119 N. Westnedge at the home of Conrad Kaufman, to whom we are eternally grateful. Contact Cathy for more information at 381-2716.

The Need for Fun in Critical Times

by Rick Stahlhut

A lot of activists are getting a bit serious these days. We've been promised an Orwellian war without end. The Bill of Rights is being treated like so much toilet paper. Dissent is not illegal yet, but sure feels like it. There's so much to do.

But in the midst of the nastiness, we need some fun. Really. This is critical for even (or especially) the most hard-core activist.

Activists are under much more stress than the average citizen in times like these — as can be deduced from research in the field of social psychology by Solomon Asch and others.

In the early 1950's, Asch asked people to judge how lines of different lengths matched up to a reference line. After hearing a number of "other subjects" (actually in on the experiment) give the same incorrect answer to what should have been obvious questions, many people sided with the bogus majority. Some caved in because they thought their perceptions must be wrong — others, because they wanted to be accepted by the group.

The implications of Asch's experiments are serious. First, they show how difficult it is for people to stand up to group pressure. Dissent on the length of a line is easier than dissent on US foreign policy — yet many still failed. Second, they showed group pressure

alone can make people doubt their own senses. Winston Smith was right: as long as you can say $2 + 2 = 4$, the rest does follow. But when the group says $2 + 2 = 5$, it's easy to think you're crazy.

Thus, bucking authority and group norms takes its toll. Most who do will experience alienation (and often self-doubt) until they return to the group norm or leave the group.

There is one key remedy to alienation from the mainstream: the support of like-minded people. The opposition will try to divide and isolate us ("You are either with us or against us"). In response, we must create safe group spaces for those whose values place them at odds with real or manufactured societal norms.

Without social groups, we also won't attract new members. Long-time activist and author Michael Albert

attributes much of the success of the activist movements in the 1960's to the fact that the political dissenters were also the "in-crowd." "Regular" people were attracted to social gatherings where they met activists and gradually learned the Awful Truth in doses they could handle. This is also confirmed by social psychology research: without group support, individuals are highly resistant to new perspectives. So fun is not fluff. It is vital for our survival individually and our growth as a movement.

It's a paradox — during the most critical times, we need the most fun and social support. So call up your friends and organize a party. Meet down at The Space or get involved with the community center collective that is growing out of what used to be 124 W. Lovell.

The opposition is in this for the long haul. We can't afford to burn out now. Never get isolated!

Rick Stahlhut lives in Kalamazoo and may be reached at stahlhut@net-link.net



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Kalamazoo's Space and Community Center

The Space

by Anne Hensley, member

By now you've heard there's another coffee shop in town, but it's what you don't know about the Space that might be of interest to you.

In 1999 a group of artists and musicians came together to form the Kalamazoo Arts Collective (KAC). Frustrated by a lack of networking in local cultural communities, the collective set out to build a cooperative public forum for creative ventures. "There's so much talent in Kalamazoo," said Greg Schweser, KAC cofounder, "I felt people needed a launch pad for their ideas."

After two years of mapping out plans and seven months remodeling the site, the Space finally opened its doors in September of 2001. Owned and operated by Schweser, Brennan Sang, Micah deBoer, Brian Frain, Chris Moore, Chafe Hensley, Rachel Smoltz, and a host of volunteers, the Space is an all ages venue,

offering a varied selection of music and theatre 3-4 nights a week. With monthly art shows in the café, biweekly appearances by Stunt Weasel (Kalamazoo's improv comedy troupe), and even the occasional women's wrestling night, the crowd is always exciting and colorful. "Since its inception, this town has been filled with diverse and eccentric personalities," said Sang, "and we just want to provide a place where people can feel comfortable expressing whatever it is they're passionate about."

In keeping with an ethic of social awareness and responsibility, the Space is the only coffee shop in town serving all organic coffee, espresso, and tea, and Fair Trade certified when available. While business has been going "surprisingly well" as Hensley put it, the owners aren't on a road to riches. The KAC members volunteer 40+ hours a week just to keep the doors open.

Interested yet? Come down and help sustain your local arts community. For show dates and info call 553-5555.

Be on the Lookout: Collective Community Center

by Lucy Bland, staff member

A new community center collective is forming right here in Kalamazoo! A group of 8-10 individuals are, as we speak, hammering out the details of this soon-to-be non-commercial atmosphere of learning and relaxation.

This is just what our city needs! The most pressing need of the collective is a place to house the community center. If you know of any buildings or office space for rent in the downtown area contact Noah at 381-0045.

Both the community center and the Space are true collectives where all who are involved are volunteers. You can support them proudly!



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Call Cathy, the PFC garden manager, at 381-2716 for more info or just stop into the store and drop off a check by March 31, 2002!

Co-op In Space!

by Timothy Gallagher, member

Co-op WebMaster Trevor Darnell began working at the Kalamazoo People's Food Co-op in June of '96 because he loved shopping there. During this time he became bookkeeper and was involved in its incorporation and the initial election of a board of directors. Although Trevor is now a full-time student and employee of CyberMIND, his love of the Co-op inspired him to launch it into cyberspace.

www.peoplesfoodco-op.org has been on the Web for about four months. "It is still in its infancy stage and we are still filling in the content," says Trevor. And the exciting thing is that there is a wide open space to fill! Hosted by CyberMIND for \$10.00 per month, the internet provider offers plenty of storage space for small businesses like the Co-op. That's why Trevor is



looking for help. Busy with school and job, there is only so much time that he can devote to the Web site. Trevor needs others with a flair for designing Web pages which will showcase new ideas.

These ideas center around products and education. Wouldn't it be great to know what fresh delicious produce is ready? The recent acquisition of a new and faster computer will allow Co-op workers to update prices and availability. They dream of having a system which will give live updates of the inventory, but the cost of hardware upgrades prohibits that for now.

Trevor encourages people to visit the Web site and contribute all sorts of ideas. He can be contacted through the Co-op and at his email address: tdarnell@cybermind.biz

For the cyber-savvy, don't forget that you can now save paper by getting your Scoop as a PDF via email. Just send a request to pickle@net-link.net.

Permaculture Corner

by Jay Tatara, member

Water: Don't let it run off without ya.

Living amongst the Great Lakes we take fresh water for granted. Living as close as we do to the Kalamazoo River should remind us what happens when we do that. We pump water all over the place, while allowing the water that comes down from the sky right where we live, to mix with gasoline and go down the storm drains. A key to more sustainable future of course is conservation of water: toilet dams, low-flow showerheads etc. Information on this is widely available so we won't belabor this point. Another less ascetic approach is collecting water; you get all the water goodness with none of the water guilt!

Every thousand feet of roof space mixed with one inch of rain produces right around 625 gallons of water. A typical home around here probably captures around 40,000 gallons a year. Capturing even a small fraction of this run-off is a significant resource. Water collected in this manner is relatively clean — just a little dust, some leaf bits, and maybe a little bird poop. You don't want to drink it, but it's perfect for watering your garden, getting mud off your hands, washing the car, and many other uses. Ask yourself how many of your water uses (including flushing the toilet) require potable water?

The roof and the downspouts are the easy part, it's the collecting device that is kinda tricky. Collecting devices can be everything from a fifty gallon barrel to thousand gallon cisterns, the smaller the collecting device the less tricky it becomes. Crucial to this whole scheme though is how you intend to utilize it. If having the water flow out of a spigot will be useful (often it is), then you'll have to hold the water up or have a pump. If you're going to hold it up remember that water is heavy, make the stand for your fifty gallon container stout.

A more sustainable future will require us to become more than passive bystanders to the water cycle. Next time you're downtown, take a gander at all those roofs, all those water collection sites, all that water! Conservation is important — but water is wonderful, and enjoying it allows you to appreciate it.

Jay is with the Kalamazoo Permaculture Learning Rhizome. Check out *Introduction to Permaculture* by Bill Mollison for more on permaculture.



Bruce Schultz

REALTOR®

Email: bschultz@precar.com
Website: www.precar.com

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Book Review: *Affluenza*

Affluenza
By John DeGraaf,
David Wann,
and Thomas H.
Naylor

by Anne Hensley,
member



“The Joneses have surrendered: ‘We give up. So please stop trying to keep up with us.’” And so begins *Affluenza*, a bold examination of over-consumption and its dire effects. Authors John DeGraaf, David Wann, and Thomas H. Naylor define affluenza as a “painful, contagious, socially transmitted condition of overload, debt, anxiety, and waste resulting from the dogged pursuit of more.” They explore how a buy more, use more, eat more culture threatens our health, our families, our communities, and our environment.

Affluenza begins by identifying some symptoms of this “all-consuming epidemic.” While simultaneously whimsical and deeply serious, DeGraaf et al chronicle every aspect of our lives, from “shopping fever” and “swollen expectations” to “family convulsions” and “community chills.” Their tongue-in-cheek style makes it easier to swallow the sour statistics. “Though [Americans] comprise only 4.7 percent of the earth’s people, we account for

twenty-five percent of it’s global warming greenhouse gas emissions...The average American spends four hours a week shopping and forty minutes a week talking to their children.” By citing such varied sources as Maslow, George Carlin, Karl Marx, Ivanna Trump and Dr. James Dobson, *Affluenza* demonstrates that there is not one organism on this planet that’s immune. Unpleasant as it may seem, this peril may be the only true common ground we have to meet on.

In a common ground, however, there is finally hope. After dredging us through cause and effect of generations of gross negligence, *Affluenza* offers an escape from this physical and spiritual landfill we’ve created. With tips on everything from making our homes more efficient to finding and connecting with our communities, it’s difficult to imagine that you won’t find something in this book to enhance your life.

I approached this book assuming it couldn’t tell me much more than I already know and heed in my daily life. I buy locally, recycle and conserve. I expected it to arm me with facts that I would then use to barrage my friends and family with when they bought a new Nike sweatshirt. I had no idea how enlightening the “cures” of voluntary simplicity and “the new frugality” would be.

Sharply witty, moving, and informative, *Affluenza* is a catalyst to a simpler, more meaningful life. I urge you to get your hands on a copy. I hesitate to tell you to rush out and buy it, but if you do, make sure to flout the epidemic of rampant commercialism and pass it on to everyone you know. Or you’re welcome to borrow mine.

Have you read a good book that you think the membership might find interesting? Write a review. For more information contact Chris Dilley at pickle@net-link.net or 381-2716.

You Can Recycle More of Your Waste Than Ever!

Neu-Co/Plastic Central, located at 1807 North Pitcher Street, is now accepting the following at no charge:

- clean cups and tubs marked with a recycle 2 or 5 symbol
- clean #2 or #4 grocery bags
- many things already taken through the city such as papers, metal cans, #2 plastic bottles and jugs (no glass)



Neu-Co/Plastic Central uses the recovered plastic as feedstock for the production of plastic pallets, benches, picnic tables, fence posts and other plastic lumber products sold at their Kalamazoo facility. Plastic is very hard on this planet, but at least there is a way to reuse it rather than throw it in a landfill. For that we can be grateful.

Note: currently in the Kalamazoo area there is no recycling outlet for #6 food grade styrofoam packaging or styrofoam cups, though packing forms and peanuts are accepted at Pak Mail, Mail Boxes Etc, Mail Etc, and Mail Room.

For a full guide of recycling opportunities in Kalamazoo County call the County Recycling Office at 384-8110 or check out www.kalcounty.com/recycling.

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New Education Non-Profit Started

by David Schmidt, member and PESF board member

People's Education for a Sustainable Future is on the page now. On paper that is. In January a group of eight (more on them later) filed Articles of Incorporation with the State of Michigan, the first step to establishing a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

As a group, PESF shares the values of Co-op members for healthy lifestyle choices. Rather than selling food and environmentally friendly products, however, we want to help educate people on methods to lessen human impact on the earth's resources. Things like chemicals used in growing food and fossil fuels used in the distribution of foods were discussed at meetings in

January and February.

As we all have seen, the earth needs our help. The old less-is-more motto is alive and gaining momentum across the country. As this awareness grows, People's Education for a Sustainable Future can be a resource for healthy environmental alternatives. The choices we make today can have positive effects on the land, water, air, and food we enjoy tomorrow. There will be more to come as we organize events, fund raisers and forums for further discussions. If you have questions contact Elizabeth Forrest @ 383-0596 or David Schmidt @ 388-4219.

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PFC Events Calendar:

- Mar 12 **Board Meeting**
PFC, 7pm
- Mar 13 **People's Food Co-op Education Series:
Gardening with Kids**
More in Co-op Happenings, p.2
7pm—Kalamazoo Public Library,
3rd Floor, Van Deusen Room
- Mar 28 **Board Election
Ballots Due at PFC**
- April 10 **People's Food Co-op Education Series:
The Scoop on GMOs**
More in Co-op Happenings, p.2
7pm—Kalamazoo Public Library,
3rd Floor, Van Deusen Room
- April 9 **Board Meeting**
PFC, 7pm
- April 19 **Road R.A.G.E.**
The Space, 7:30pm (see p.2)
- April ?? **Spring Gathering**
This year's event is a benefit
for the newly formed People's
Education for a Sustainable Future.
More in Co-op Happenings, p.2
Kraftbrau, 2pm-Midnight
- May 14 **Board Meeting**
PFC, 7pm

If you have items you wish to see included in the Events Calendar please send them to pickle@net-link.net or drop it at the Co-op, Attn: *Coop Scoop*.

PEOPLE'S FOOD CO-OP

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