

THE COOP SCOOP

1st Quarter 2006

Inside:

- The Skinny 2
- The Kitchen Sink 3
- Manager's Report 3
- We Victory Gardeners 4
- Deep Fryer Goodness 7
- PFC Calendar 8



Derek loads up the new bulk bins



436 S. Burdick Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Phone: (269) 342-5686
Fax: (269) 342-0194

www.peoplesfoodco-op.org

Hours:
Monday thru Saturday
9 a.m. to 8 p.m.



20% Post-Consumer Waste

Renovation Riot Recognition

by Heather Finch, PFC Staffer

How do you put the “fun” back in fundraising? The Co-op knows how, as do those who were lucky enough to attend the Renovation Riot in January.

Donations at the door climbed over \$1,700 as almost 200 people came out to enjoy food, music, and community. A huge thanks goes out to our performers, the Brothers Kalamazov, Ian Gorman, Great Lakes Grass, and the 33rd Street Band. Their performances were amazing, as evidenced by all the smiling and dancing of those in attendance.

Martini's Pizza, Just Good Foods, Water Street Coffee Joint, and the People's own deli provided food for everyone's hungry bellies. A big thanks goes out to these fantastic local kitchens and their dedicated and talented staffs.



PFC grocery manager Joyce Eble unloading the old store

The exciting and highly anticipated raffle came to a surprising conclusion when the owner of Martini's donated four gift certificates on the spot, an excellent addition to

continued on page 4

The Meaning of Membership

By Elizabeth Archerd, Member Services Director, Wedge Community Co-op, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Originally printed in Co-op Consumer News in Nov/Dec 1996, a publication of Twin Cities Natural Food Co-ops, this article provides an excellent history of the food co-op movement and a chronicle of the changes that have taken place across the sector. It should be noted that our membership structure is different than the one discussed in this article: ours is an annual fee with a discount at the register (i.e. discounts are given back before a profit or loss has been established), rather than a paid share with annual dividends. — Chris Dilley

Twenty years ago, membership at natural food cooperatives meant time spent organizing or running the store in exchange for discounts. At some co-ops that is still the case, but as cooperatives have grown and changed, memberships have also changed.

What does it mean to be a co-op member today? When people shop at co-ops, how does that differ from shopping at the privately-owned stores that offer frequent-shopper

programs, or from joining the wholesale clubs that have sprung up? The business community is savvy at borrowing the look and feel of co-ops without offering the substance of our way of doing business.

There are three major ways that cooperatives differ from private sector stores. First, the decision-making process in co-ops is not driven by the desire to increase the wealth of

continued on page 5

THE SKINNY

Insight into the operations and inventory of your People's Food Co-op in downtown Kalamazoo

By Heather Finch, PFC coordinator

The Co-op has opened its doors and arms to welcome everyone into wonderful Post-renovation bliss. Our walls feel warmer, our aisles feel wider, and yes, our product selection has multiplied like rabbits in the spring.

Okay, so maybe that is a bit of an exaggeration. Suffice it to say that we have adapted to our space like raccoons in the city, without using garbage as a supplemental food source.

Delight your senses with health and beauty-aide products from Three Sisters. Though the company is located in New Carlisle, Indiana, one of the sisters is a local here in Kalamazoo. The high standards of their ingredients — nearly all natural and many organic — are reflected in the luxury of their line. Currently we carry their homemade soy candles, shaving soaps, body crèmes, bathing gels, and skin soothers. In this case, the smell is worth a thousand words alone, and we just do not have room in our humble newsletter to say them all.

If you like it hotter than Death Valley in August, spice up your night with locally made hot sauce. Clancy's Fancy has finally made the trip from Ann Arbor back to our shelves, so whether you need it hot or extra-hot, we are prepared to get your sweat going. Also just in from the Keeweenaw Peninsula is Ray's Polish Fire Hot Sauce. Using nearly all-organic ingredients, Ray gets saucy by combining fire and flavor. Some hot sauces are hot just for the sake of making you cry, but the only tears shed with this Polish Fire will be from the beauty of the full-flavored finish.



Grab your gloves, jacket, and charcoal, because it is time to grill, baby! While you are at it, come on down to the Co-op for some marinade, and organic chicken. After quite the battle looking for chicken we could be proud to carry, Nature's Premier in Flint, Michigan, proved to be the king of the roost. If chicken makes your wings flap, then organic, humanely raised, local chicken will make you crow until the cows come home!



To some it was the end of an era; to others it was a cause to rejoice: We have finally phased out bagging and tagging the dried fruits and nuts (down here the lingo is "PFCing," because those little blue labels carried our own "brand-name") and have begun to provide the same products in bulk bins. The difference may seem minor, but it means you as the consumer can more easily choose the amount of product desired, and to our staff and volunteers it means a much more refined, efficient stocking process. We have also replaced our ancient printing scale with a new scale, (well, new to us, old to anyone technology savvy) which allows us to list ingredients along with price, date, and so forth. The deli has never looked more professional!

There you have it, folks, but do not think you have it all. These are just snippets of what you will find at your new, improved, People's Food Co-op of Kalamazoo, Michigan. ☺



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

Magnificent Manager: Chris Dilley

Stellar Staff: Erik Benson, Heather Colburn, Joyce Eble, Heather Finch, Elizabeth Forest, Sara Kozminske, Lisa Merva, David Hughes, Derek Roseboom, Rosie Florian

PFC Board of Directors:

Hether Frayer, *President*
Charles Henderson, *Treasurer*
Eric Benson
Jim Brode
Love Burkett
Jenny Doezema
Sharan Levine



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.

Communications Committee:

Michael Merva, Editor-in-chief
m9merva@wmich.edu
Hether Finch, In-store editor
finch@peoplesfoodco-op.org
Brakeman, Design

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 (269) 342-5686. Contributions are due in the store by the 15th of Feb., May, Aug., and Nov. for the following month's issue.

Note: Opinions expressed in the *Coop Scoop* are those of the authors and not necessarily of the People's Food Co-op. *The Coop Scoop* is not a replacement for a trained healer, please consult with a qualified professional before using any information herein.



Managers Report, 1st Quarter 2006, Renovation Journal

by Chris Dilley, general manager

Wednesday, February 15, 2006

We are somewhat calm at the moment. Heather is upstairs ringing people up. Sara is working hard in the deli to put out beautiful food. Joyce is quietly figuring out how to put all of our groceries on our new shelves. My list of things to do seems just as long as it was a month ago, but the items on the list remind me that somehow, we have to be nearing the end. Soon the doors will be closed, the windows will be papered over, and the contractors will be installing new equipment.

What I have been so incredibly impressed with throughout the renovation process is how our community has come together to make it happen. Ours is a humble store: We have little capital, and although our sales are growing, they are still modest. But we are rich in a different kind of capital: the enthusiastic staff who goes above and beyond everyday; the many people who came

out to the Renovation RIOT!; and the generous folks who have brought in donations or committed to the Co-op with a loan. We just couldn't do it without you! As we gear up to be closed for a week, there are MANY people signed up to be in the store helping us pack up and store groceries, clean, paint, build shelving, and stock shelves with product. Others have volunteered to give us supplies, take old fixtures and provide food to the working volunteers. Thank you all. I am excited to see how this all comes together...

Tuesday, February 21, 2006

After we pulled everything out of the store on Saturday night and Sunday, the contractors showed up. For the past two days, refrigeration people, electricians and plumbers have been hooking up new coolers and installing new lighting. It is very exciting! The walls have been scrubbed. Tomorrow we start painting.

The place looks strange when empty, but somehow kind of pleasant.

Sunday, February 26, 2006

An incredible transformation has taken place over this past week. Our little store, though still little, looks better than it ever has. The boldly colored walls are clean and beautiful. The shelves of groceries run like a spine up the center of the store. The new bulk system takes my breath away. We can stock so much more than before in this cozy, little space. Throughout the week this space has been filled with members of our community; people have come from all directions to help with the store. It fills me with hope, pleasure and gratitude to see this place teeming with such amazing energy. Tomorrow we open the doors to show the entire city what caring, well-organized volunteers can do when they put their mind to it. I could not be prouder to be a part of the Co-op today. ☺

the Kitchen Sink

The Kitchen Sink is a column devoted to interesting events, announcements, any other comments related to the PFC, its people, and its community.

We want to dedicate this space to thank all of the many people that helped us in important ways to make the renovation a success:

Paula Allred, Colleen Arnsaman, Michiko Anderson, Topher Barrett, Tyler Bassett, Theresa Barylark, Erik Benson, Norma Berry, Chris Blanco, Lucy Bland, Beth Bullmer, Martin Burch, Jim Brode, the Brothers Kalamazov, Dru Carter, Eleanore Chadderdon, Heather Colburn, Craig Combs, George Crow, Tobi Hanna-Davies, Katie Davis, Jenny Doezema, Lori Evesque, Heather Finch, Rosie Florian, Hether Frayer, Doug &

Kelly Fry, Suann Good, Ian Gorman, Great Lakes Grass, Mike Gregor, Earl Hall, Crick Haltom, Nancy Hamilton, Bryan Heaney, Lynne & Phillip Heasley, Charles Henderson, Jason Herpst, Frank Horton, David Hughes, Tom Humiston, Jane Irwin, Jeremy Jaynes, Phil Johnson, Just Good Foods, John Kalukitus, Robert Kaufman, Rachel Koetje, Sara Kozminske, Matthew Kurzava, Ryan Kurzava, Aliisa Lahti, Jenny Larese, Cheryl Lesner, Steve Leuty, Sharan Levine, Sean McCann, Lisa Merva, Ethan Morgenstein, Maz Moshubar, Kathleen Mullane, Danika Murray, Sarah Muno, Stephanie Myers, Tom Nehil, Kim Patrie, Mark Patrie & the 33rd Street

Band, Abby Pettit, Andy Pollens, Steve & Robin Pollens, Bradley Post, Dan Renstrom, Derek Roseboom, Pamela Rups, Boone Shear, Christena Smith, Laura Sprague, Angela Stephenson, Steve Sweeney, Eric Sweet, Katy Teeter, John VanHattum, Dan VanSweden, Water Street Coffee Joint, Jon Wert, Darrough West, Dennis Wilcox, Jeff Winkelmann...

...with special thanks to Forrest Duddles for his magnificent cabinetry work, and to the entire staff and board for their passion, vision, and hard work.

We Victory Gardeners

by Lee Arboreal, Eater's Guild Farm

As we emerge from winter the seed catalogs, long since arrived, are now being gathered up from the bathroom floor and opened for serious consideration. The "High Mowing" rack of seed packets was in place at an upstate food co-op a couple of weeks ago, which begged questions of late season planning for early season action. Some thought and moves toward gathering our garden resources now can make our spring planting more like a leisurely stroll through nature.

There is time to gather materials for mulch, trellis and twine if we keep our mission in mind. If about town on foot, bike or car remember to pick-up non-glossy cardboard, refused lumber, straight and sound sticks, wood chips from tree removal and any natural fibers suitable for tying crude fasteners. Don't spend much effort and don't feel this needs doing all at once. Gather as much as you can store and don't worry about taking garden materials out of the recycling stream — gardens have a much higher energy and utility return than recycling.

"Fresh" cardboard, when placed on gardens before transplanting, will both suppress weeds for, and degrade in, one season. It is easy to punch plants into

with a trowel or knife (especially when soaked), will hold in spring moisture, and can be covered with a thin layer of more attractive mulch (wood chips, grass, hay, stones) if you are concerned about the look of cardboard all over the ground. If this is done over well amended, rich looking soil, cardboard will not immobilize nitrogen (a key plant nutrient). If the soil is so-so, a light sprinkling of bird manure or other high nitrogen organic fertilizer (available at garden stores ... about one quart per square meter) under the cardboard should suffice. Your best compost can be added to the planting hole at almost any rate and will repay you with good growth.

Biodegradable fibers or non-coated nails can be used to lash or fasten trellises that can be mulched over in the garden when their utility decomposes. Use your intuition for building trellises for peas, pole beans, cukes and melons, considering angle (75 degrees from the ground allows fruit to hang away from vine for ease of harvest), strength (just

enough), and what the trellis shadows.

Consider Bank St. market for your transplants. Plants like kale, chard, broccoli, cabbage and other hardies can be planted in mid-April or earlier. You're going to have to locate your local farms and buy from their prop houses: maybe the PFC can facilitate? Fedco, High Mowing, Seeds of Change, Johnny's, Turtle Tree and Territorial are all seed houses we've used and recommend. On a final note, when direct-seeding take care to prepare a fine seed bed by raking out large debris. Its best to seed in rows for ease of identification and weeding. Later, we'll talk about scatterin' and shatterin'. All our best from the farm... ☺



Lee Arboreal (on right) with wife Laurie and daughter Iris

Renovation Riot ...

continued from page 1...

the half-share of an Eater's Guild CSA. The co-op appreciates this generosity and thanks all of those who purchased raffle tickets and listened for their names in hushed (well, maybe not hushed, but certainly less noisy) anticipation.

Volunteers helped the evening go smoothly by collecting donations, monitoring the food, and keeping the bar clear, which made for an amazingly easy end-of-the-night clean-up. Thank you to all of the volunteers who were



New coolers and lighting were set by Tuesday evening

willing to share their evening with us.

There is no way an event of this magnitude could be held within the confines of the Co-op, so having Kraftbrau



Forrest Duddles volunteered to create all the new cabinetry for the People's Food Co-op

Brewery at our disposal was of great importance. Many thanks go to the bar and their staff for housing our event and serving us drinks with smiles and speed.

Membership Meaning ...

continued from page 1...

individual shareholders, or even by what is profitable. Secondly, co-ops handle money in a very different way from private stores. They invest in consumer and staff education, and support organic farming and cruelty-free or environmentally sound products made by businesses committed to making life better. Finally, co-ops are a model for social change because they conduct business in a democratic way, with community service as the core value guiding decisions.

What drives a co-op is service to the community that founded it, sustains it, and needs what it has to offer. While profit-driven businesses thrive by selling us the image of ourselves as islands of unique, separate needs, co-ops emphasize the connections between growers and buyers, country and city, animal welfare and food quality, farming practices and environmental/health concerns, co-op and members. By joining a co-op, members commit themselves to a business that serves and reinvests in the community, and exists for no other reason.

Now, owning a business requires investment money and equipment, and in many cases, land and buildings. These are called capital, the essential

things needed to build and sustain the business activity that generates revenues to cover the costs of doing business and, with skill and some luck, accumulate profit.

Social commentators have recently begun to speak of "social capital" — referring to the rich networks of relationships that develop in neighborhoods, schools, churches, and other voluntary associations. This form of capital is essential to build and sustain social institutions that are successful in raising the next generation, caring for the sick and lonely, solving environmental and social problems, and responding to the challenges of living together.

There is another kind of social capital. It is capital as described in the earlier paragraph — the essential things needed to run a business — with a difference: it is defined as capital that is owned by all and should be utilized for the benefit of all. This kind of capital is distinct from private capital (that which is owned by a few and used for the benefit of the few), and is a philosophical foundation of the cooperative ideal. Such capital is a kind of ultimate realization of the cooperative effort, which unfortunately goes unrecognized by many food cooperatives in actual practice. The

very heart of the cooperative model is owning things in common, together, for the common good.

None of us exists separate from society, its history and its institutions. What we do today and how we do it is a result of the decisions and actions taken by the generations that preceded us. Likewise our cooperatives today are the result of efforts of the founders. Their vision and labor helped them to accumulate the good will, money, buildings and equipment we have today. We are building on their work and will pass the co-ops on to another generation of member-owners. With each passing generation, if it's done correctly, co-ops should become stronger, providing more people opportunity to participate in the cooperative economy.

By joining a cooperative, purchasing your shares, shopping there for everything it provides, and electing boards that make wise stewardship decisions about money and resources, we are building social capital — both kinds. We are creating businesses that are owned by all and serve us all. We are part of a rich network of relationships that makes us feel less alone. This is a deeper, bigger, and ultimately more satisfying venture than trying to save a few bucks on groceries. ☺



The new bulk set was first in after the coolers

The idea of building and supporting community is a foundation of the People's Food Co-op, and while we cannot do everything, the way our



Happy Co-op staffers Derek and Elizabeth

community supports us should never be taken for granted. So once again, many, many thanks to everyone who donates time, products, money, or even



Open for business once again

just cheers us up with a smile. We appreciate you, Kalamazoo, and will do everything within our power to continue to serve you. ☺

PFC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Springtime Brings New Changes and New Developments ...

With spring fast approaching, I am sure we are all looking forward to more hours of daylight as all the plants of the earth begin to bloom. Even more exciting than the first buds on the trees, though, is our newly renovated co-op. Similar to the trees in the spring, the co-op's transformation is truly magical. I'd like to commend the entire staff and especially Chris Dilley for his vision, hard work, and never-ending dedication. Without a superhero like Chris in charge, we'd still be shopping in the same old co-op. Chris, thanks for putting incredible amounts of time and energy into moving the renovation project forward with gusto. We appreciate all that you do.

The spring also brings a new year for the PFC Board of Directors. We say goodbye to Carol Snapp and Michelle Swonder, who both resigned

from the board due to increased job responsibilities. Thank you for sharing your experience with the co-op; we appreciate your service. One of our first jobs as a new board is to create a calendar to ensure that we will monitor all of our policies at least once this year. We will decide what our goals are for the following year and designate committees to focus on each of those goals.

I'm looking forward to the guidance that we will receive from the Cooperative Board Leadership Development (CBLD). We were able to join CBLD because of financial support from the National Cooperative Grocers Association (NCGA) Central Corridor. CBLD will provide support to the board in a number of ways: we will receive valuable phone consultation, facilitation and help planning our

full day retreat, and training sessions for new board members. Our consultant, Peg Nolan, will help us set goals and talk us through our problems and concerns. Although we have completed an entire year of Policy Governance, we still have a long way to go before feeling comfortable with this model, so we certainly welcome the support.

The board of directors is elected to serve and represent members. Please feel free to call or e-mail me with comments or thoughts. This spring, consider coming to a board meeting to share ideas or just to observe and see how we operate. We meet every 4th Tuesday of the month and members are always welcome.

Happy Spring!

— *Hether Frayer, board chair*

Do You Have a Co-op Story You Would Like to Share?

Heather Finch is collecting oral histories about the People's Food Co-op of Kalamazoo, Michigan in order to supplement her research on the history of the cooperative movement and the way in which it has built — and been built by — the community surrounding it. If you have a story, special photo, document, know about the foundation of the Co-op, know some great trivia, were a founding member, or have any other information which may contribute to this research, please fill out the following form and return it to the store, either by mail or in person. Heather will contact you either by telephone or e-mail. This is a great chance to contribute your unique knowledge and perspective about the Kalamazoo People's Food Co-op. All inquiries can be directed to Heather at finch@peoplesfoodco-op.org.

People's Food Co-op Historian: Name _____

Telephone number _____ or E-mail address _____

Short description of your involvement with the Co-op you would like to share:



436 S. Burdick St. • Kalamazoo, MI 49007 • (269) 342-5686 • www.peoplesfoodco-op.org

Those Deep-fryers are Good for Something!

by Mike Merva, Scoop editor

Henry Ford saw it as an important part of the automobile industry's future. Both Nazi Germany and the allied powers used it in their equipment during World War II. It is currently used by the US Postal Service, mass transit systems, and agricultural organizations. Over 1,000 fuel stations in Germany alone offer it, and it accounts for 5% of all fuel use in France. But for most people in the United States, "bio-diesel" is still a foreign term.

For others, however, bio-diesel is the key to weaning ourselves off of a dependence on foreign oil. Such is the case for a group of professors and students at Western Michigan University, who have come together to establish the Kalamazoo Fuels BioDiesel Cooperative. "We saw that oil consumption is a major problem in the U.S. and we did not want to wait until someone figured out how to fix the problem for us," explains Casey McKenzie, supplies manager for the cooperative.

Dr. Steve Bertman, a professor of chemistry at WMU, started working with bio-diesel as part of a departmental research project in collaboration with two other chemistry professors, Dr. Marc W. Perkovic and Dr. Brian P. Buffin. McKenzie and another WMU student, Matt Hollander, heard about the research and spoke with Bertman about forming a cooperative structure for distribution of the finished project. As word spread, more students joined the group, helping in various capacities to make the dream of large-scale bio-diesel production a reality.

The process of turning vegetable oil into a fuel suitable for powering one's vehicle is fairly straightforward on the surface. The oil is simply combined with lye and methanol (wood alcohol) to produce a usable diesel fuel. The only byproduct is glycerine, which can be used to make soaps, lotions, toothpaste, & sweeteners, as well as a

number of other products. The tricky part is finding the right proportions of lye and methanol for the specific vegetable oil being used. The process gets more complicated when reusing vegetable oil from restaurant deep-fryers, which must be filtered before use to remove all the food particles. Although used oil is more difficult to deal with, the Kalamazoo Biofuels Co-op decided that it would be pointless to produce the product with fresh oil. McKenzie explains, "We wanted to put as little stress on the environment as possible; it would not make much sense to ignore the most basic environmental pillar of reusing what we already have."

Because of the emphasis on reusing oil, a large part of the project is finding restaurants that are not only willing to give their oil away, but also have oil which is clean enough to use. Although the group has met with resistance, mainly because bio-diesel is still a mystery to most people, they have found some restaurants that are more than willing to give their oil away. According to McKenzie, "Bangkok Flavor has been quite reliable and very generous with their oil, which is in excellent shape and takes very little lye and methanol to convert into usable bio-diesel."

While bio-diesel mixtures can be found at some gas stations in Michigan, most of those fuels have a lower proportion of bio-diesel to petroleum diesel. The co-op's goal is to produce 100% bio-diesel that can be distributed to the public and used in any diesel vehicle. Currently, the fuel is being used in two cars that belong to members of the co-operative. Soon the group expects to provide the community at large with the fuel.

The group got a very pleasant surprise recently when WMU distributed its research money. Just a few days after the group was selling scrap metal in order to buy methanol, they were

awarded \$400,000 by the University to form a sustainable business. Because the money allows room for tremendous growth, they will need both students and non-students alike to help out. "People with business and supply chain management skills who are really interested and committed to alternative fuels are especially needed," says McKenzie. Although the co-op's website is still under construction, interested individuals can go to kzoobiofuels.org to contact the group. The capability to produce large amounts of bio-diesel and distribute it to the community will bring us one step closer to sustainability; hopefully, bio-diesel will soon go from a WMU chemists' dream to the Kalamazoo community's reality.

Additional information for this article was obtained from the website www.ybiofuels.org.

Everyday is Earth Day!

Call and see how to join our **Farm Cooperative**

7943 South 25th St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49048 (269) 323-3629



Veggie Box Offer

Boxes offer you a diverse seasonal collection of our certified organic vegetables, fruit, herbs, and more.

- Get to know who grows your food
- 22 weekly deliveries
May 6 thru Sept. 30.

Single: (1-2 people) \$300
Family: (3-5 people) \$550

To learn more more:
(269) 650-3602 • BDGreens@email.com





436 S. Burdick Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

PSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
KALAMAZOO, MI
PERMIT NO. 271

The Coop Scoop is published by the People's Food Cooperative of Kalamazoo. Copyright 2006 by the People's Food Cooperative of Kalamazoo.



- Additions
- Whole House Remodeling
- Design Consultation
- Custom Furniture

**DESIGN
BUILD
CONTRACTORS**

269-720-5328
David Hyde

**PEOPLE'S
POWER
HOUR**

89.1FM

THURSDAYS
7-8PM

A COLLECTIVELY RUN
WEEKLY RADIO SHOW
WITH ACTIVIST INFO
AND CONVERSATION
ON TIMELY TOPICS.



PFC & Community Events Calendar

Tuesday, March 28
PFC board of directors meeting,
7–9p.m. at the PFC

Tuesday, April 25
PFC board of directors meeting,
7–9p.m. at the PFC

Tuesday, May 23
PFC board of directors meeting,
7–9p.m. at the PFC

Friday, June 2
Grand Re-opening and 33rd Anniversary Celebration:
art, kids activities, entertainment, food and more
from 5–9p.m. in the PFC parking lot.

Tuesday, June 27
PFC board of directors meeting,
7–9p.m. at the PFC

And at anytime, check out our website: www.peoplesfoodco-op.org