



Co-op News

A bi-monthly publication for members of the Olympia Food Co-op and its surrounding communities

December 2005 / January 2006

A Report From the 2005 Annual Membership Meeting

by **Joanne McCaughan**, Board Member



(Top): Co-op BOD members Shon Forsyth, Jason Baghboudarian and Gail Sullivan lead discussion at the Annual Membership Meeting; (Middle): Members enjoy lunch at the Annual Membership Meeting; (Bottom): Tenth Avenue Trio entertains meeting-goers; (Upper right): BOD member Samantha Chandler makes a presentation.

PHOTOS—David Nowitz

Each fall, the Co-op Board of Directors hosts the Annual Membership Meeting, as provided for in our Bylaws. For 2005, the meeting was held the afternoon of October 23, at the Olympia Ballroom. Turnout was low, with fewer than 50 members in attendance throughout the course of the event. While this can be seen as a good thing, because it means that there is no special controversy or concern among the membership, it can also be viewed as disappointing because this is a time when members get a comprehensive look at the previous year's activities of the Board.

Music, provided by the Tenth Avenue Trio, flowed for the first hour or so as folks assembled and began to grab a bite to eat. The three singers provided a nice backdrop for the members, with an eclectic blend of folk and "standard Zen." Also present were some representatives from TULIP Credit Union, including Darlene Morales, who provided information about the successful growth of that organization, now at 675 members. TULIP has been located at the Eastside Co-op since it opened two years ago, and Darlene stated, "TULIP is a good fit with the Co-op." Annual meeting attendees were reminded that any Co-op member may become a member of TULIP, regardless of income level. Otherwise, services are available only to low-income residents of Thurston County. At this time, the credit union offers savings and checking accounts, small personal loans, automobile loans, and also offers debit cards.

Once the business part of the meeting commenced, board member Gail Sullivan facilitated the event. A substantial part of the discussion was centered on the proposed changes to the Bylaws that had been brought forward as a result of action by members at the Annual Meeting in 2003. The proposed revisions were developed through a process involving the establishment of a

Bylaws Committee, with additional work by the Board, prior to being sent to the membership for a vote. At the Annual Meeting, the focus was primarily on Part Four of the suggested revisions, which would establish a member-initiated ballot process.

To illustrate how that process would work, the Board and several members participated in a role-play that quite effectively provided meeting participants a way to imagine such a scenario. Using fictional issues like the potential sale of marijuana as an herbal remedy, the Board told the member they could not pursue that course because it would be illegal. Another scene had a woman asking that the Board begin selling breast milk at the stores, and while perhaps not illegal, there may be important storage issues involved. The Board asked that member to do more research and return with information. In another hypothetical situation, the expansion of the kids' play area, the member was directed to take the issue to Staff who deal with facilities questions. The point here is that every issue brought up would not become an initiative.

Finally, to illustrate the type of situation that might rise to the level of getting onto a ballot, the skit was completed with a member requesting that the Co-op carry organic bulk tobacco. As it was not illegal, nor a Staff issue alone, nor was it too complicated, in this example the Board determined they would provide the process for getting the issue on the ballot. The use of this kind of dramatic technique was very effective in illustrating the ins and outs of the process, and provided those at the meeting with a better understanding of how it would work if it were passed. Some at the meeting raised concerns that the process may go too far and could limit the authority of the Board. However, the Board clarified that they did not take a position for or against the proposal;



they provided the proposed process for determination by the membership, at the request of the membership. It was noted that members should not "just check a box" on the ballot, but they should really "think about this" and the impact it could have.

Other information shared at the meeting included the work done by the Board regarding Long Range Planning. Since sales at both stores have done exceptionally well, with double-digit growth over the last five years, the focus now is on expansion. Since bigger is not always better, the Board has developed a Growth Committee to work over the next nine months to identify healthy ways for the Co-op to grow and the steps that need to be taken to help that happen. Committee members were being solicited from among the membership to volunteer for positions that would bring forward proposals. Members of the Co-op are eligible to serve on committees, whether special committees like Growth, or the standing committees like Education and Outreach, Finance, Newsletter, Farm Committee, and the Personnel Committee.

The Board would like to extend a sincere thank-you to all those who joined us for this meeting. If you have ideas or suggestions on how to increase meeting attendance, please be sure to contact us. We usually meet on the last Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. However, the November Board meeting will be December 1st. Beginning December 1st, we will meet at the new Co-op office location: 610 Columbia Street SW in downtown Olympia.

Co-op News

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Both Co-ops are open every day of the year, except New Year's Day, January 1st, for inventory.

The purpose of the Olympia Food Co-op is to contribute to the health and well-being of people by providing wholesome foods and other goods and services, accessible to all through a locally-oriented, collectively managed, not-for-profit cooperative organization that relies on consensus decision-making. We strive to make human effects on the earth and its inhabitants positive and renewing and to encourage economic and social justice. Our goals are to:

- **Provide** information about food
- **Make** good food accessible to more people
- **Support** efforts to increase democratic process
- **Support** efforts to foster a socially and economically egalitarian society
- **Provide** information about collective process and consensus decision-making
- **Support** local production
- **See** to the long-term health of the business
- **Assist** in the development of local community resources.

Opinions expressed in the **Co-op News** are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Co-op Staff, Board of Directors, Co-op Advertisers or anyone else. Co-op members are welcome to respond.

The **Co-op News** is published on a bi-monthly basis and comes out in February, April, June, August, October and December. Please contact the editor, Jennifer Shafer, at 360-789-7313 or at olycoopnews@yahoo.com to discuss your article idea or advertising inquiry. You may also leave messages in the newsletter box at either Co-op or mail them to either store, Attention: Co-op News.

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Co-op Donations

By **Grace Cox**, Staff Member

There are many joyful things about working at the Co-op, and one of the most joyful things that I get to do is coordinate the donations budget. I love giving money away, and I love that our members and customers provide us with the opportunity to support our community and the many frontline projects and non-profit agencies that save lives everyday.

Every year, the Co-op allocates a certain amount of money in the operating budget to be used for donations. In profitable years, the Board of Directors also allocates 10% of the profits to community donations. This year, the operating budget included \$5,000 for donations, and the Board will distribute an additional \$9,400. We also use a significant portion of our advertising dollars to sponsor community events and important community services.

For the last several years, fundraising for non-profits has been particularly difficult. Government social service programs get cut back further each year, creating a larger and larger demand for basics like food and shelter. In 2004, many good-hearted progressives used their personal donations budgets on the presidential campaign. Immediately following the campaign season, the tsunami hit Indonesia. This fall, Katrina, Rita, and now, the horrifying earthquake in Pakistan have all created huge needs for financial resources. Gas prices are high, and dollars are tight. As local retailers face big box competition, even that pool of donation money has shrunk some. We feel very lucky and privileged to be

able to continue to donate resources to our community and the world.

I get 5-20 requests for donations every week. I slice our \$5,000 budget as thin as possible. Some organizations get on-going donations to support their kitchens, such as Media Island and the Safeplace shelter. We have donated to United Community AIDS Network, Bread and Roses, Stonewall Youth, Olympia Film Society/Capitol Theater, Special Olympics, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Olympia Movement for Justice & Peace, Procession of the Species, Thurston-Santo Tomas Sister County Association, Proyecto CIELO ESL classes, Evergreen Coalition Against Sexual Assault, LASO, Dispute Resolution, several schools and childcare centers, and many others. We also used this budget to match community fund-raising events for Tsunami Relief, Katrina Relief, and Kashmir Earthquake Relief.

We have used our advertising money to sponsor large and small community events, including the Bicycle Commuter Contest, Mud Bay Jugglers 25th Anniversary Benefit Show for Bread and Roses, Olympia Film Festival, and Olympia Teen Fest, to name just a few. We also underwrite local broadcast of *Democracy Now!* and support *Works In Progress*, *Sitting Duck*, the *Senior News*, the

Green Pages, and many event programs with our ad dollars.

With the exception of the disaster relief efforts, the vast majority of our donations are made to local organizations. Our budget is too small to make donations to individuals, so we work with organizations that work with individual needs. We do not donate to national charities with huge fund-raising overhead, international fronts for the CIA, specific religions, and rarely donate to those "sexier" charities that have a much easier time raising funds.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for contributing to the Co-op's financial stability that allows us to make these donations and support our community. We'd also like to thank the thousands of volunteers who donate their time to these incredible community organizations. You save lives every day.





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We'd like to recognize the following working members for volunteering this year:

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Volunteer Events December-January 2006

Be a hands-on member in your store! Volunteer as a cashier, stocker, cleaner, and more. Attend a **Volunteer Intro Tour** (V.I.T.). Tour the store and learn about volunteer opportunities at the Co-op. If you are interested in volunteering, please attend this 1½ hour orientation.

Cleaning Parties happen every month at each store. They're a great way to volunteer three hours of time and get to know your Co-op. Help us get the stores looking spic & span. Come help us scrub, wipe, wash, polish and clean the stores after they're closed. Snacks are provided for all cleaning parties, and you're encouraged to bring music you'd like to listen to.

Save the Date for Winter **Inventory**. Volunteer where you really count—Co-op Inventory. Inventory is a fun and easy way to help out. The next inventory will be Sunday, **January 1st at 2 pm**. We do inventory at both stores four times a year. Please join us for food, friends and fun, while we count everything in the store.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 December 6pm Eastside VIT 8pm Westside Cleaning Party	5	6	7 6:30pm Westside VIT	8 6pm Eastside Cleaning Party	9	10 1pm Eastside VIT
11 6pm Westside VIT 8pm Westside Cleaning Party	12	13 6pm Eastside VIT	14	15	16	17
18 8pm Westside Cleaning Party	19	20	21 6:30 pm Westside VIT 8:30pm Eastside Bulk Cleaning	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 8pm Westside Cleaning Party	29	30	31
1 January 2pm Eastside Inventory 2pm Westside Inventory	2	3	4 6:30pm Westside VIT 8pm Westside Cleaning Party	5 6pm Eastside VIT	6	7
8 6pm Westside VIT 8pm Westside Cleaning Party	9 6pm Eastside Cleaning Party	10	11	12 6pm Eastside VIT	13	14 1pm Eastside VIT
15 8pm Westside Cleaning Party	16	17	18 6:30pm Westside VIT 8:30pm Eastside Bulk Cleaning	19 6pm Eastside VIT	20	21
22 6pm Westside VIT 8pm Westside Cleaning Party	23	24	25	26 6pm Eastside VIT	27	28 Volunteer Party 6-9pm Westside Bowling Lanes
29 8pm Westside Cleaning Party	30	31	1 February	2	3	4

For more information about volunteering at the Co-op, please contact Polly or Eunsil at the Eastside store, (360) 956-3870 or Tatiana or Bec at the Westside store, (360) 754-7666. Or stop by either store to get more information, fill out a volunteer application, or sign up for an upcoming event.

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Every culture has traditions of sharing food. Here are some interesting recipes gathered from many sources.

The following recipes are reprinted from www.indian-countrytoday.com, courtesy of Dale Carson, a Wampanoag cook of legendary powwow foods and historic feasts. Visit the website to read lots of great tips and stories.

Pumpkin Bread Pudding

6 eggs
2 cups milk
1/3 cup heavy cream
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
1 tablespoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon allspice
1 teaspoon fresh-ground nutmeg
1 1/2 cups sugar
3 cups pumpkin puree, canned or fresh
4 cups day-old cornbread in large chunks
2 cups raisins, regular or golden

Sauce:

2 cups brown sugar, packed
2 sticks unsalted butter
1/2 cup maple syrup
1 1/2 cups water

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Put the first nine ingredients (through pumpkin) in a large bowl, and mix together well. Grease a glass or ceramic baking pan and put the cornbread chunks and raisins in it. Pour the pumpkin mixture over this, and let it stand for 15 minutes or so. Put the baking pan in a larger roasting-type pan and fill this with one inch of water to keep the pudding from scorching. Cover pudding with foil and bake for 1 1/2 hours. Remove foil and continue to bake until firm to the touch. Remove from oven and cool.

For extra-delicious sauce, combine brown sugar, butter, syrup, and water in a saucepan. Bring to a boil and stir until it feels like thick maple syrup. Serve the hot sauce over cold pudding.

Sweet Potato Pudding

1/4 cup butter
2 eggs
4 cups grated sweet potatoes
2 cups cream or buttermilk
1 tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. grated orange peel
1/2 tsp. nutmeg, grated

A Guide to Potluck and Party Food

By **Maureen Tobin**, Staff Member

How often have you been invited to a potluck and felt stressed about going because you didn't know what to bring? Or have you dreamed of throwing a fun gathering but don't want to spend hours in the kitchen preparing? Just about everyone I know has been there, but our busy lives don't mean we have to forgo getting together with friends. With the help of ideas from seasoned potluck participants, you can get in the spirit of sharing food without great effort.



Part of the fun of a potluck is the unknown quality, the expectation that a variety of dishes will appear, and everyone will be satisfied. Often this is the case, but I have definitely shown up to potlucks featuring seven green salads or five kinds of brownies and no main dishes. Therefore, a little bit of planning and organization can do a lot to ensure a varied and balanced dinner.

If you are the host, you may want to create a theme (Greek, Indian, Japanese, comfort foods, etc) or, as you invite people, give them a menu category to fill (appetizer, salad, dessert, beverage). It can be a good idea to know a little about who is coming, whether there are many or just a few who avoid meat, fish, or dairy, and whether anyone has allergies to wheat, soy, etc. It's nice to include everyone and make sure that each person

has at least a couple of things to eat. And of course there are those who don't usually cook and will enjoy the assignment of bringing drinks, crackers, or flowers.

When I am hosting, I like to make a main dish and provide something snacky as well as a basic beverage or two. This way, if nothing else in those categories shows up, people will at least have something to munch on and drink while chatting and something hearty and filling later. An example would be chips and salsa, a big pot of chili, and some lemonade and beer or wine.

Another nice touch is to bake some bread or rolls, which fills your home with good scents and doesn't have to be too complicated (cornbread and biscuits are quick). Even

continued on page 7

Preheat oven to 350 deg. Beat the eggs and butter together in large bowl. Add the rest of the ingredients, and mix together well. Grease a shallow glass or ceramic baking dish, and pour the mixture into it. Bake for 1 1/2 hours. The top should be golden brown and the center firm to the touch.

Wild Rice Soup

1/2 cup butter (or substitute)
1/2 cup onion, chopped
1/2 cup celery, chopped
1/2 cup green bell pepper, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup mushrooms, sliced (any variety)
1 carrot, shredded
1/4 cup flour
1/2 cup wild rice, uncooked
4-6 cups stock (chicken or vegetable)
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup light cream (optional)
2 Tbl. dry sherry (optional)

Melt the butter in a large soup pot over medium heat. Add the onions, celery, green pepper, and garlic, and sauté about 5 minutes. Add to this the mushrooms and carrots, and sauté for another 2-3 minutes. Sprinkle flour over the vegetable mixture,

and cook another 2 minutes, stirring constantly.

Now add the wild rice and stock to the pot; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer for about an hour until the rice is well cooked. Season with salt and pepper. Before serving, stir in the cream and sherry if desired.

Tzimmes

A "complicated Yiddish stew" loosely translates to "fun, excitement, brouhaha"

Reprinted courtesy of *Goddess in the Kitchen* by Margie Lapanja, with some feedback and additions from Michael

1 1/2 lb prunes, pitted, or raisins
3 cups boiling water
2 Tbs. oil
3 pounds beef, cubed (or use ground beef alternative, or tofu)
2 onions, diced
1 1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
3 sweet potatoes, peeled and quartered
4 carrots, peeled and sliced
1/2 cup honey
2 whole cloves or a pinch ground cloves
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice

Wash the prunes, pour the boiling water over them, and soak for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, in a large heavy pot over medium-high heat, heat the oil, and brown the beef and onions. Add the salt and pepper, reduce heat, and cook over low heat, covered, for 30 minutes.

Stir in the remaining ingredients, including the "prune water," and cook, covered, on low heat for an additional 90 minutes. Serves 6 or more.

Broiled Pineapple Slices with Pistachios

A fun party dessert

(NOTE: If you can't find fresh ripe pineapple, try with mango or cantaloupe)

1/4 cup honey or maple syrup
2 Tbs. fresh lime juice
2 Tbs. chopped fresh mint leaves
8 slices (1/2 in. thick) fresh pineapple
2 Tbs. chopped pistachios

In small bowl, mix maple syrup, lime juice, and mint leaves. Just before serving, preheat broiler. Put pineapple slices on baking sheet. Broil 4-6 inches from heat source until just beginning to brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer

pineapple to plates. Pour syrup over fruit and sprinkle with pistachio nuts. Serve with scoop of ice cream if desired.

The Lentil Lada

Reprinted from *Cooking with the Dead* by Elizabeth Zipern

1 pound black beans, cooked and spiced with cumin and chili powder to taste

1 pound lentils, cooked
2 cups raw brown rice
2 cups quinoa
1-2 cups steamed vegetables
salsa and enchilada sauce, (homemade or store bought)
whole wheat tortillas

Brown quinoa in a skillet, add 2 cups water, simmer. Cook brown rice. When both have absorbed their water, add black beans, cooked lentils, and steamed vegetables altogether in large pot. Simmer to mix flavors.

Lay a tortilla in the bottom of a casserole dish, scoop mixture into its center. Repeat with several more tortillas, or enough to line and fill casserole dish. Top with enchilada sauce and tofu and/or cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes, serve with chips and salsa.



Meet the Staff

Pat Maley

by Jen Shafer, Co-op News Editor

Pat Maley has been a friendly face at the Co-op for almost sixteen years. First hired in 1990, when the collective consisted of 9 people and the Westside store, Pat has been a steady contributor to sound customer service. On Sunday nights at the Westside, you can hear his familiar bellow

as he counts down the minutes to the store's closing. Pat works a variety of shifts including produce, deli, and floor shifts. He also manages some of the banking. When Pat is not at the Co-op, he is busy balancing his career as an audio engineer with that of being a father.

For longer than he has worked at the Co-op, Pat has had a small recording studio located first in a chicken coop on the now-defunct Yogurt Farm to the current location inside the Capitol Theater. For years, he helped local musicians to record and often release their own music either through his label, Yoyo Recordings, or on other independent labels. With the help of current Co-op staff member Michelle Noel, among others, Pat put on the notorious Yoyo-a-Gogo Music Festivals, which happened in the 1990's and early 2000's. He still runs his label but also keeps busy with recording bands, producing the Gillian Welch concerts, and contracting with the State of Washington's Department of Information Services.

One of his favorite things about the Co-op is how much the Co-op is loved by its membership. Repeatedly, he hears from former Olympians, who now shop at other co-ops, that "there is no place like the Olympia Food Co-op."

When asked about the greatest lessons learned at the Co-op, he replied, "No matter how good at communication you think you may be, there is always something more to learn and improve." He also has learned that it is important to be pro-active in taking responsibility for your actions in an effort to learn and grow within the collective.

Things he hopes to see at the Co-op in the future include a new store which embraces the Co-op's mission statement by being a "green" building composed of recycled and sustainably-harvested and/or created products, alternative energy resources, and ergonomically-designed features for both Staff and membership.

Interesting Tidbits:

- Hometown: Medford Lakes, NJ (southern NJ)
Number of siblings: 5
Age upon moving to Olympia: 19
Favorite foods: lacinato kale, chicken soup, pie
Favorite music: music made by friends, music made with his family, the Mountain Goats to name one band of many
Hobbies: photography, walking, listening to community and public radio
Zodiac sign: Capricorn
Favorite places in Olympia: McLane Creek, Capitol Theater, his home, ABC House
Favorite places in the world: Second Beach-La Push, Ruby Beach, Australia, Ireland, Pacific Northwest, New England



The Co-op is always accepting employment applications for Staff collective positions.

Applications and information are available at the stores, or can be downloaded from the Co-op's website: www.olympiafood.coop



Meet the Staff

Marie Poland

by Jen Shafer, Co-op News Editor

Putting her business degree to good use is Staff member, Marie Poland. Having earned one at WWU, Marie has been practicing community-minded business for more than five

years. Besides working at the Co-op as a grocery manager at the Eastside and serving on a handful of the Co-op's developmental committees, Marie also co-produces the Your Money Matters Coupon Book, now in its fifth edition. The coupon book offers discounts for local businesses within the South Sound and fosters local economy by encouraging people to keep their money in the hands of smaller, local businesses versus going to larger, corporate businesses which take money elsewhere.

Marie worked in the corporate, computer world in Seattle for several years before leaving for a nine-month travel throughout Southeast Asia. She then moved to Olympia, where she was employed by Media Island, and now the Olympia Food Co-op for the last five years. Currently, she runs a private astrology practice called Around the Wheel Astrology and the production company Women Rock (which produces the coupon book) with partner Diane Pisco.

One of her favorite things about the Co-op is working in a collective. She says, "We do our best to be as inclusive as possible, to hear all voices even when one differs from another." She also likes that a circular type of decision-making (consensus vs. hierarchy) allows the unique nature of each person to unfold. She loves all the people involved, with a special mention of the kids that come to shop at the stores.

Greatest lessons learned at the Co-op for Marie have to do with the anti-oppression and diversity training the Staff and Board participate in. She has learned to see her own privilege and oppression as well as to see others' struggles more clearly. In a similar vein, it has helped her to take responsibility for her actions in the workplace. With a collective, it is not helpful to blame; she needs to take initiative and sometimes be her own authority. This has caused her to take personal inventory of her skills and to figure out where she is most useful.

Her vision for the Co-op's future is being inclusive when figuring out how to grow, using sustainable technologies to grow, and creating a larger store with neighborhood satellite stores. She jokes that "bicycle-powered blenders for smoothies would be fun."

Lastly, Marie would like to see cottage industries/locally-made products being a larger force at the Co-op than they already are. She even envisions a label "community-supporting," a possible step beyond "fairly-traded." A visionary businesswoman is an important person to have around!

Interesting Tidbits:

- Hometown: Renton, WA
Number of siblings: 3 lovely and adoring sisters
Favorite foods: blueberry pancakes, bacon, Thai and Indian food, dates, Calmyrna figs
Hobbies: astrology, hiking, magic
Favorite music: just about everything, folk, old-time, Dead Can Dance, Tune Stranglers
Zodiac sign: Aquarius
Favorite places in Olympia: Watershed Park, old house on Pattison Lake
Favorite places in the world: Mt. Rainier, Nisqually Basin, Varnassa, India, Koh Phi Phi Island, Thailand

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Budget Planning Keeps the Co-op Healthy and Strong

By **Kitty Koppelman**, Staff Member

Why Plan?

One of the duties of the Co-op's Board of Directors is to approve the annual operating budget. Sounds simple enough, but to get to that moment of approval (or rejection), lots of other things need to happen first. At the time this goes to print, the Staff and Board will be well on our way to having our 2006 operating budget prepared. Every year, the Co-op goes through the process of financial planning for the upcoming year's operation. The budget is broken down into both revenue (from sales) and expenses. The planning process helps ensure that we make realistic, attainable plans, allows everyone in the organization to be on the same page about what we are trying to accomplish financially throughout the year, and gives us a mechanism for holding ourselves accountable for staying on that page.

Sales and Margin

Sales projections are the first piece of the puzzle and drive all the assumptions that follow. Early in the planning process, the Co-op's bookkeepers lead discussions with department managers to develop sales and margin goals by specific merchandise department. This is done by examining sales and margin performance history for several preceding years, considering factors that might impact the coming year's performance, and then ultimately, making a best guess. At the same time as individual departments are carrying out this process, the Co-op's Finance Committee does the same for the store as a whole. Next, the entire staff looks at all of these projections and gives their input.

Expenses

The expense planning process starts with Staff. Individual Staff people are responsible for proposing, monitoring, and reporting

on budgets that are associated with their specific job duties. In the fall, these Staff people look at the Year-to-Date performance of their budgets and propose the coming year's budget. The biggest of these expenses is the labor budget, representing more than ¾ of the total expenses. For this item, there is a small committee of staff who work on addressing all of the details of this nearly two million-dollar budget, and make a proposal to the entire staff to agree on the plan. Once all of the expenses are proposed, the Co-op's bookkeepers compile all of the individual expense budget proposals into a draft of the total expenses for the coming year.

Cash and Liquidity

Another factor that needs to be considered in the planning process is cash. The system of simply budgeting for income and expenses doesn't take into account other factors that are pertinent to a business, such as loan payments and capital improvements. These items are not considered expenses because rather than being used up after they're purchased (like, for example, utility costs), they add to the value of the business and are expressed as such on the balance sheet. These items are planned for in a separate projection known as "Cash Flow." The Cash Flow projection is designed to give a complete view of all actual cash in and out for the coming year. This helps us know that we will have enough cash on hand to carry out all the other plans in the budget.

Putting it All Together

Now that all involved parties have made their first "best guess" on their area of expertise, the bookkeepers put it all together to see how it looks as a whole. If everything fits together as it needs to, it then goes

to the Staff and Finance Committee as a complete draft for consent. And finally, the Board of Directors has their opportunity to approve it, too.

How Did We Do?

After we've done all this planning and the year begins, we want to see how it all actually plays out. We keep track of all this on a quarterly basis. Every three months, the Staff, Finance Committee, and Board of Directors review budget reports to monitor our progress. We use these reports to help us make adjustments to the remainder of the budget year, and to help us plan for next year.

At its simplest, the Co-op's budget is like a tube. Sales come in one end, and expenses go out the other end. The planning process entails making a best guess at how wide the tube will be and how much will go through it over the course of a year. All of this guessing helps us to direct how we

How it Works

Merchandise sales are what produces our margin revenue, and the margin revenue is what is used to pay for the expenses. Margin is what is left from sales after we pay for the things we sold.

Sales - Cost of Goods Sold = Gross Margin

Margin revenue is used to pay for all of the expenses of running the stores. The Co-op typically budgets for a break-even (zero profit) budget.

Gross Margin - Expenses = Profit

want to carry out our operations and gives us a way to measure our success. We may not always guess correctly, but by carrying out the process, we have the opportunity to learn how to guess better next time.

If you have any questions about the budgeting process or anything else financial, please feel free to contact me or any of the bookkeepers at 357-1106

January-September 2005 Budget Report			
	Actual	Budgeted	Over/(Under)
Sales (after discounts)	6,249,965	5,886,743	363,222
Cost of Goods Sold	-4,470,177	-4,179,587	(290,590)
Gross Revenue from Sales	1,779,787	1,707,155	72,632
Other Revenue	20,536	18,765	1,771
Total Revenue	1,800,324	1,725,920	74,403
Community & Marketing Expenses	50,247	59,000	(8,753)
Staffing Expenses	1,432,976	1,411,694	21,282
Operations Expenses	241,010	219,892	21,118
Depreciation Expense	36,068	36,068	—
Interest Expense	10,019	11,871	(1,852)
Total Expenses	1,770,320	1,738,525	31,795
Net Income	\$ 30,004	\$ (12,604)	\$ 42,608

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Buy an ad in the Co-op News!!

Business Card: \$45 single run \$35 for two or more consecutive	Double Business Card: \$75 single run \$65 for two or more consecutive	Circulation: 5-6,000 bi-monthly to Co-op members and to local, community distribution points.
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Submissions: Contact Jennifer Shafer at (360)-789-7313 or at olycoopnews@yahoo.com

more simple is to rely on a good, local business to provide fresh bread and perhaps a cake or pie. If you are gathering to celebrate something in particular, like a birthday or going away party, it's a good idea to make a dazzling dessert, or ask someone specifically to bring one.

If you are worried that you won't have enough plates, cups, wine glasses or utensils, you can ask people to bring their own, though it might work better to just ask a good friend to bring a bunch (that way you only have two kitchen's stuff to sort through). If you're going all out, you can always rent dishes, which don't even have to be washed. Other things to think about ahead of time are warming up the oven to keep hot food hot, making extra ice or buying a bag, having some extra bowls, serving spoons, and napkins ready, and having candles burning to welcome guests with a festive atmosphere.

As a guest to a potluck, the biggest pressure is what to bring. If you have time to cook, preparing something ahead of time can be helpful. Choose a dish meant to be served room temperature or cold, or put the dish together and plan on heating it in the oven or microwave (you can usually do this at the party). Many appetizers need only 10 minutes in the oven to have a hot and impressive treat, and there is an array of non-cooking options for those with short time. Crackers or bread with hummus, cheese, olives, or fruit is always a good standby. Then there are those baby carrots; what else are they for besides party food? Any such dipping vegetable can be used with bean spreads and dips that are store-bought or homemade.

You may want to make an ingredient list for your dish, or bring copies of the recipe for sharing. Don't use your best china for potluck dishes, as things do tend to get broken when lots of people are around. Putting your name underneath the dish can help it be returned to you later. And last, remember food safety and don't let perishable foods sit out for long periods of time; two hours is usually the maximum before food becomes dangerous.

Favorite potluck offerings
(informal survey of staff members & friends):

- Chunk of blue cheese with honey drizzled over it generously; serve with bread (Mo)
- Something I want to eat, usually with meat (Grace)
- Sliced polenta rounds with roasted red peppers and blue cheese, baked in oven (Kim)
- Sliced baguette with pesto and Brie, baked in oven (Angie)
- Big pot of Chai with rice milk (Kristin)
- Cherry tomatoes stuffed with gorgonzola, pistachio, cream cheese and pepper (Cali)
- Juice punch with 2 bottles juice and sparkling water, slices of fruit, and of course chocolate (Tara)
- Interesting, traditional native recipes (Gary)
- Deli bar salads (Michael)
- Cold noodle salad or salmon (Todd)
- Beer (Kitty)

Board Report

By **Jodi Boe**, Board Member

In September, the Board met to plan for and organize the October 23 Annual Membership Meeting at the Olympia Ballroom. Board members discussed the best way to present their most recent work around instigating, managing, and organizing change. This is always an exciting time of year for presenting and receiving member feedback.

The instigation of change begins with the newly forming Growth Response Oversight Committee (GROC). Soon, Board members, Staff, and Members at-large will become a group to oversee the growth of the Co-op. This endeavor is going to be exciting and challenging for everyone involved. This committee will seek input and determine the best route for Co-op growth: new store, more stores, bigger stores, smaller stores, etc. Samantha Chandler and Jason Baghboudarian will serve on the committee from the Board. A third board member may be added after the board elections.

The managing of change came in many forms including Bylaws changes, new hiring procedures, and capital plans projects. The Bylaws changes included a member-initiated ballot process proposed by the Bylaws Committee. It is currently being voted upon by the members. There was good discussion about these changes at the annual meeting. The Board has spent more time on this issue than any other over the past year. All are interested to see how the members vote.

At the October meeting, the Board approved the new Hiring Handbook presented by Kitty Koppelman. The Board was impressed with the handbook and spent some time examining the anti-oppression document. The handbook will be put to good use as the Co-op prepares to hire new staff.

Also at the October meeting, the Board consented to the proposed Capital Improvements Projects. The Staff compiled a list of capital improvement needs, keeping in mind that the growth of the Co-op should affect their priorities list. Both stores will see some much-needed improvements in 2006, like a new front door at the Eastside store and new produce and bulk bins at the Westside store.

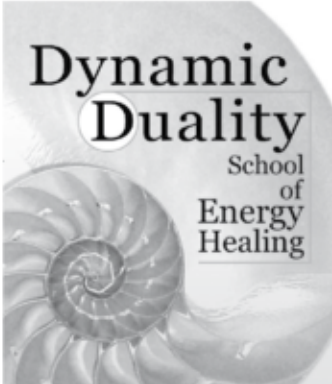
The Board finished the October meeting by brainstorming a list of organizations to be recipients of donations from the Co-op. This is a result of the Co-op policy that states that part of the Co-op's profits will be distributed in community and staff bonuses. The staff bonuses are distributed to Staff equally, based on hours worked. The community bonuses are given at the discretion of the Board. We now have a list of local organizations that we will prioritize by the November meeting and finalize by the end of the year.

Another big change for the Board will be a new meeting space. The Co-op business office and meeting space is moving to 608 Columbia St., SW in downtown Olympia. The Co op will be sharing the space with

the Free School. Our next meeting will be at the new office on December 1, at 7:00 pm. This is the November meeting postponed a week due to Thanksgiving. There will be another meeting on December 22, which is the actual December meeting.

Committee Meetings

- December 1
Board of Directors
(November meeting)
- December 1
Outreach and Education Committee
- December 15
Standing Hiring Committee
- December 21
Finance Committee
- December 22
Board of Directors
- January 5
Outreach and Education Committee
- January 13
Newsletter Committee
- January 18
Finance Committee
- January 19
Standing Hiring Committee
- January 26
Board of Directors




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Co-op News

A bi-monthly publication for members of the Olympia Food Co-op and its surrounding communities

December 2005 / January 2006

Thank You, Working Members!

The Co-op wouldn't be the same without your help!



Pictured (clockwise from upper right): Stocker, Colleen Chambers-Iverson; Cheese packager, Robin Moore; Cashier, Alan Mountjoy-Venning; Cashier, Craig Arnold. Photos by: Pat Maley and David Nowitz

Working Member Bowling Party

Saturday, January 28th, 6-9pm

All Volunteers are invited to our next Working Member Party. It will be on Saturday, January 28th, 2006 from 6-9pm at Westside Lanes in west Olympia. Join us for fun, food, and bowling! We will be mailing invitations to all our working members as well as posting information around the Co-op. We can't wait to celebrate you and all the hard work you donate to your Co-op.



Kids Corner

What is it?



If you're 10 or under, guess what Co-op bulk food is used as "sand" at Olympia's Hands-On Children's Museum. Fill out this form and put it in the *What is it?* box in the Co-op office. Enter once per newsletter. Guess correctly, and you'll win a \$1.00 gift certificate to spend at the Co-op! The answer to last issue's *What is it?* was: **Eggplant**

Congratulations: Jayden L., age 5 • Annaliese G., age 7 • Olivia G., age 8 • Fuchsia D., age 6 • Natalie, age 10 • Ashley K., age 11 • Maize, age 10 • Hannah T., age 5 • Jasmine, age 7 • Lexi D., age 7.

What is it?

Deadline: January 2nd, 2006

Name _____

Age _____

Guess _____

Where do you want to pick up your gift certificate?

☐ Eastside

☐ Westside

2005 Co-op Election Results

This year's balloting included Bylaws changes as well as Board of Directors elections. We received 200 ballots and of those, 183 were counted as valid ballots, and 17 were unverifiable. A ballot cannot be counted if we are unable to determine whether the person casting the ballot is a member of the Co-op. If you do not put your name on the envelope, or if your name does not appear in our membership database, we cannot count your ballot.

The Bylaws changes that were proposed were all accepted. Ballot measure #4, which included the member initiative measures, had the most opposition, but was still voted in. The Bylaws will be amended to reflect the changes that have been adopted. Before the member-initiated ballot process is officially in place, the Board will need to finalize the structures to support that system. The Board will inform the membership as soon as that system is ready.

Board elections: Jason Baghboudarian was elected for a two-year term. He was appointed to the Board last spring to replace

Ryan McLaughlin, who resigned from the board. Kathy Strauss is the other candidate to win the election this year. Congratulations, Jason! Welcome to the Board, Kathy!

Election Results—183 total verified ballots

Ballot Measures

Ballot Measure #1— Yes	154	No	8
Ballot Measure #2— Yes	150	No	9
Ballot Measure #3— Yes	152	No	7
Ballot Measure #4— Yes	98	No	60
Ballot Measure #5— Yes	145	No	12
Ballot Measure #6— Yes	142	No	10
Ballot Measure #7— Yes	140	No	15
Ballot Measure #8— Yes	149	No	7
Ballot Measure #9— Yes	142	No	15
Ballot Measure #10— Yes	151	No	5

Board of Directors

Mel Bilodeau—39 votes

Jason Baghboudarian—137 votes

Jake Rosenblum—41 votes

Kathy Strauss—127 votes



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