



# Co-op News

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

April / May 2006

## Waste Reduction at the Co-op

by **Gary Galbreath**, Staff Member



**D**id you ever wonder why there are so many containers/dumpsters outside of the Co-ops? All but one of those containers is used for recycling. A goal of ours has been to reduce, as much as possible, our impact on the Earth. This includes what we dispose of. As the Recycling Coordinator for the Eastside store, it is my responsibility to ensure that we adhere to this goal. I want to make clear from the beginning that we do not have the capability to accept public recycling and need all the space available for our own recycling. An unfortunate part of my job is to retrieve trash from the recycling containers that customers and others have mistaken for garbage bins. There are several locations in the area that have the space for public recycling containers, including the Thurston County Transfer Station (off exit 111, I-5).

The following is a list of materials that we presently recycle: mixed paper, co-mingled materials (glass, aluminum/tin, #1 and #2 plastic containers, aseptic packaging),

cardboard, plastic shopping type bags and "shrink wrap."

Pacific Disposal, with whom we have a contract, picks up all these materials. The mixed paper and cardboard are picked up twice per week. I joke with my co-workers that I see how much we are selling, not through sales reports, but by how many times I need to jump on the cardboard to compress it just a bit more.

We also have our compost and some waxed produce boxes picked up by local farmers. Unfortunately, the waxed boxes that much of our produce comes in are not recyclable. Local farmers come in during the growing season to reuse boxes, yet we do dispose of MANY of these boxes. We are looking into sending reusable boxes back to the produce companies. Once they become unusable, though, they become refuse. The wax is paraffin, and could be used as fire starters, but I do not know the origin of the paraffin. It has been a long-standing goal of mine to not contribute our waxed produce boxes to any landfill.

Our attempt is to recycle or reuse the materials and packaging that we receive and use in our stores. This includes "packing peanuts," fluorescent bulbs, batteries, bulk nut butter containers, old shopping carts, and even coffee grounds.

Both stores accept clean reusable containers that many shoppers refill with various bulk items. The space is limited, though, and we ask that you keep this in mind when attempting to recycle your containers. This brings up an issue for me. While it is our responsibility as workers at the Co-op to minimize our impact on the earth, you are the member/owners. Do you really need that 8-ounce yogurt that comes in a reusable but non-recyclable package? How much easier is it, really, to pick up a 5-pound bag of potatoes versus picking out 5 pounds of potatoes? Don't you think those Oatios (in bulk) are just as tasty as Breakfast O's (packaged)? I do understand that it's not always easy pumping for your shampoo or body lotion (been there), but doesn't it feel good to know that you will be using that container again?

## The High Cost of New Bags

by **Connie Bunyer**, Staff Member

**M**arch was National Waste Awareness Month, and the Staff members want to honor our members who already contribute to the reduction of waste. You are the ones who bring your own cloth shopping bags, coffee mugs and tea cups, eating utensils, or maybe you carry your groceries home in one of the plentiful boxes generated by your Co-op. Maybe you're not even aware you contribute by these simple actions; believe me, you most certainly do.

Has it ever occurred to you how many plastic and paper bags, soup or salad containers, coffee cups, plastic lids and wooden stirrers, plastic or wheat forks, spoons, knives and straws you go through at your Co-op? Here are a few numbers that may surprise you. The average cost of a plastic or small paper bag is \$.02; #12 paper bags are \$.03; large paper bags with handles are \$.11 and non-handle ones are \$.07 each. At the Westside, we order, on average, 3 bales (500 bags per bale) a week of handled paper bags. At the Eastside,

we order 7 bales a week. As far as plastic bags go, at the Eastside, we order 2-3 cases per month of the flat bags used in produce and bulk that are manually ripped. We order 4-5 cases per month of the pull and pack bags (the ones with tabs) used in the produce department. A case is comprised of 4 rolls of bags, with each roll having around 750 bags on it. At the Westside, we order 3-4 cases of both types of plastic bags. Lastly, the Eastside Co-op's average monthly bill for all of those soup containers with lids, salad boxes, and to-go utensils is \$553.98.

That's just the financial impact on your store. Here are some scary facts about the impact on your environment. Did you know plastic bags are made from oil? That's petroleum, a non-renewable resource, which is shipped here on oil tankers or transported by fuel-guzzling trucks that contribute to global warming emissions. Then, more toxic chemical ingredients spew into our world in the manufacturing process. About 100,000 whales, seals, turtles, and other

marine animals are killed by plastic bags each year! They mistake them for food and either choke or have their digestive systems blocked, resulting in agonizing death. The same fate awaits land animals, domestic and wild, foraging for food. Plastic bags take up to 1,000 years to break down in a landfill. Roadside litter breaks down into tiny bits contaminating our soil and water; those colorful inks are toxic, too.

Well over a billion single-use plastic bags are given out for free each day; over 100 billion are thrown away each year. Some of you may think paper is a more environmentally thoughtful choice; think again. In 1999, 14 million trees were cut to produce the 10 billion paper bags we used as consumers. Paper bags come from one of two places: Canada, where 90% of the timber is old-growth for-



ests, or southeastern United States, where the timber companies are replacing native woodlands with monocultural trees at an alarming rate. The manufacture of paper bags requires virgin timber and more fresh water than any other industry. The processing stage creates numerous polluting by-products in our waterways and produces greenhouse gases. (Ever wonder why Tacoma smells so bad? It's the paper processing plants.) In fact, a study by the Fil and Bag Federation, paper bag production requires more energy concludes that generates more solid waste, creates

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Co-op News

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Westside Store

921 N. Rogers • Olympia, WA 98502  
(360) 754-7666  
Open every day, 9am - 8pm

Eastside Store

3111 Pacific Ave. SE • Olympia, WA 98501 • (360) 956-3870  
Open every day, 9am - 9pm

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.

Acceptance of advertising does not indicate endorsement by the Co-op of the product or service offered.

http://www.olympiafood.coop

Finance Report

How Did We Do Last Year?

by Kitty Koppelman, Staff Member

Sales Growth

Since the Co-op's primary activity is selling things, the biggest financial news of 2005 was probably sales growth. Sales grew at a much higher rate than we expected. Sales growth is projected as a percentage increase above the previous year. When we planned the budget for 2005, we estimated that sales would increase at a rate of 6% at the Westside and 10% at the Eastside. What really happened was that the Westside's sales grew 10% and the Eastside's grew a whopping 17% beyond the previous year. All together, the Co-op's sales grew more than 5% above what we planned for. This translates into longer lines, busier aisles, and lots more shoppers and merchandise moving through the stores!

Margin

Also known as gross revenue, margin is the difference between what we pay for stuff and what we sell it for. In 2005, we budgeted for an estimated average gross margin of 29%. This means that after all discounts, spills, broken bottles, and other incidentals, we expected to pay 71¢ for each dollar's worth of goods that we sold. This would have left us with 29¢, or 29% margin. In 2005, we didn't quite make this goal, but we were close. Overall, the Co-op made 28.48% in margin for 2005. The half of a percentage point we didn't achieve in margin was easily compensated for through our skyrocketed sales growth, so even though things didn't shake down exactly as planned, our overall revenue ended up comfortably in the black.

Expenses

What do we do with that 29¢? We spend it! The expense budgets represent what we expect it will cost the Co-op to operate for the year. The complete budget is much more detailed than what is listed here, so we've categorized and abridged it to make it easier to read and digest. The bookkeepers are happy to share the full details with anyone who is interested in more information. Contact info is at the end of this article.

Community and Marketing expenses include things like ads that we buy, donations we make, the cost of producing the newsletter, and board- and volunteer-related expenses. These budgets were slightly overspent, mostly due to extra donations, including a large one that we made early in 2005 for Tsunami relief.

Staffing expenses include all staff-related costs—wages, taxes, training, and benefits. Staff wages came in slightly higher than budget because increased sales required additional staffing hours. Overall, though, staffing expenses came in well under budget. This was mostly due to our new self-funded insurance plan, for which we budgeted more than we actually spent.

Operations expenses include all other overhead we pay to keep the stores open—utilities, store supplies, insurance, maintenance, repair expenses, and the like. These budgets are very sensitive to sales. For example, if we have more sales transactions than budgeted for, we use more plastic and paper bags. These come out of the Store Supplies budget. Since sales were 5% higher, it follows that Store Supplies are 5% overspent as well. Also, we made some improvements in late 2005 that weren't in the budget, but are included in this expense report—such as the new front doors and shopping carts at the Eastside and the Westside bulk department remodel.

Depreciation and Interest expenses represent the “on-paper” cost of these items. Depreciation is the method of showing the declining value of the Co-op's assets over time. For example, the Co-op pays \$10,000 for a refrigerator. Rather than showing this huge expense all at once, we depreci-

Olympia Food Co-op Sales Growth History

Year	Westside	Eastside
2000	\$2,200,000	\$3,200,000
2001	\$2,400,000	\$3,600,000
2002	\$2,500,000	\$3,800,000
2003	\$2,600,000	\$4,200,000
2004	\$2,800,000	\$4,800,000
2005	\$3,000,000	\$5,500,000

ate it over the expected life of the refrigerator. If we estimate the refrigerator to last ten years, the depreciation expense for that item would be \$1,000 per year. We keep schedules for all of the Co-op's assets, including the buildings and the equipment, and each year we use those schedules to budget for the upcoming year's total depreciation expense. We do basically the same thing for our interest expense. Since we know what the upcoming year's loan payments will be, we can budget for this exactly. The loan principal portion is not represented in the budget, but rather on the Balance Sheet.

The Bottom Line

When we planned the 2005 budget, we expected to show a profit of around \$21,000 for the year. Strong sales, near-budgeted margin, and moderate expenses all contributed to a great bottom line in 2005. We are in the process of officially closing out the year-end books, which includes making all of our income tax adjustments. Stay tuned for the final numbers! Direct your financial questions to me or any of the bookkeepers (Corey, Grace, or Harry) at 357-1106.

2005 Year-end Budget Report			
	Actual	Budgeted	Over/(Under)
Sales (after discounts)	8,497,271	8,040,956	456,315
Cost of Goods Sold	- 6,076,886	- 5,709,079	(367,807)
Gross Sales Revenue	2,420,385	2,331,877	88,508
Other Revenue	17,852	18,020	(168)
Total Revenue	\$2,438,238	\$2,349,897	\$88,340
Community & Marketing	69,478	64,100	5,378
Staffing Expenses	1,871,637	1,887,516	(15,879)
Operations Expenses	342,205	313,620	28,585
Depreciation Expense	48,091	48,091	—
Interest Expense	13,017	13,017	(1,852)
Total Expenses	\$2,344,428	\$2,328,741	\$15,687
Net Income	\$ 93,809	\$ 21,156	\$ 72,653

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# Working Member Profile

## Lilly Love

by **Polly Hawyer**, Staff Member

You may recognize Lilly Love as one of many dependable volunteer cashiers at the Olympia Food Co-op's Eastside store. I arrive at the store on a chilly sunny Tuesday morning to meet Lilly for our interview. In her flashy pants, fleece sweater, and backpack we take our conversation to the break room.

I start by asking Lilly about her life up until now: where she's lived, her family, how long she's been here, and what brought her to Olympia. Lilly was born in Danzig, Germany on January 11, 1932. She tells me about after the war and how her family, after losing everything, was sponsored to move to the United States. One by one, her siblings and parents moved to southern California. She was determined to stay, "I am German. I will stay in Germany," until one day after a fight with her boyfriend, she decided to come to the States, just to visit, and she "forgot to go back." That was in 1958. Shortly after her arrival, she met her husband and started a family in Los Angeles, CA.

We speed ahead to what landed her in Olympia. She tells the story of coming to visit her daughter, who was a volunteer cashier at the time. She fell in love with the Co-op and had to move here. A short time later, her daughter called her and said, "Mom, you have to come here. I found you a house." Lilly bought the house in Olympia over the phone without seeing it, moved here in a van filled with all her stuff, and has lived in that house ever since.

In our conversation Lilly, shares many sources of joy in her life. She emphatically declares her love of gardening, volunteering, and supporting local commerce. Lilly prefers to eat local produce in season, "When I want something out of season,

I say my body doesn't need it." She loves supporting local farms by purchasing a CSA (Community Sustainable Agriculture) share, "It gets you closer to the earth. You see the fields, you walk through the dirt, and visit with the farmers." (A list of local farms with CSA's available can be found in the local Farm Map, located at both stores.)

Lilly tells me about when she started volunteering. Feeling apprehensive about her age (being 65 at the time), she told a staff member, "I'm too old to volunteer," and they urged her to go ahead with her desire to volunteer. That was nine years ago, and she's been cashiering ever since. "I'll retire when I'm 80," Lilly says, laughing.

I asked Lilly her favorite thing about cashiering at the Co-op. She loves having contact with the customers. "When they come through the line, you ask them, 'how do you use this?' and they are very willing to share. I get many recipes."

My final question for Lilly, "Is Love really your last name?" She replies, "Yes, when I divorced my husband I said, 'I'm going to keep the name. You keep the furniture.'"

### Facts about Lilly Love

- Age:** 74
- Years she's been volunteering:** 9
- Favorite fall foods:** Carrots from her garden, kale
- Favorite summer foods:** Watermelon from her Rising River CSA
- Number of times arrested:** 1, on Easter Sunday, 1992, protesting at the Nevada Nuclear Test Site



# Co-op Board of Directors Report

by **John Nason**, Board Member

Spring is finally here, and the Co-op seems busier than ever. We have hired six new Staff members in the past few months, and already new faces are becoming familiar. This latest hiring represents an important step for the Co-op. These are the first Staff hired through the newly improved, streamlined hiring process. The Standing Hiring Committee along with the Hiring Team now accepts applications all year round. They review applications as they come in and recommend interviews at the end of each month. If an applicant has a successful interview, she or he becomes a *finalist*. When Staff recognizes the need to hire, they can then conduct second interviews of all the finalists on file and are ready to hire immediately.

The new system worked very well, and we had a great pool of applicants to choose from. Thanks to all involved in the hiring process for doing such a thorough and thoughtful job. According to their co-workers, the new Staff members are a "wonderful group." They are "focused, engaged, and positive."

The Co-op continues to thrive financially. Last year we did turn a profit, which means a few things at the Co-op: bonuses for staff, donations to other non-profits in the community, and more money in savings. At our December Board meeting, we decided to donate to the following organizations: The Gleaners Coalition, Left Foot Organics, Works in Progress, GRUB, UCAN, Bread & Roses, Stonewall Youth, Olympia Movement For Justice and Peace, Thurston County Food Bank, Books

to Prisoners, YWCA Other Bank, Fertile Ground, Free Geek, the Labor Center at TESC, WROC, Proyecto CIELO, Thurston Santo Tomas Sister City, Tenants Union, The Furniture Bank, Oly Rafah Sister City, and Street Outreach (EGYHOP).

The Board, Staff, and cashiers have been examining and evaluating the cashier system at the Co-op. The Co-op attempts to fill all the available shifts through Volunteer Working Member positions. When shifts are unfilled, we hire on-call paid cashiers to fill the holes. We are mulling over changes in the system ranging from scheduling needs and protocols to compensation. Staff and the cashiers are working on solutions to present to the Board by this summer (we hope).

The GROC continues to meet twice per month. This is the Growth Response Oversight Committee. These are the folks who are coming up with ideas for expansion of the Co-op. The committee is made up of four Staff, two Board members and six members-at-large. The plan is to hold forums with the membership late summer or early fall and put a few options up for a member vote this fall. The committee will have a more detailed timeline for all of this soon.

Thanks for reading this and for participating in the Co-op. If you have any questions or ideas, feel free to show up to one of our meetings. These are held the fourth Wednesday of each month, at 610 Columbia Street SW, in downtown Olympia at 6:30PM.

## Volunteer Events • April-May 2006

Be a hands-on member in your store! Volunteer as a cashier, stocker, cleaner and more. Volunteers earn working member credit, a discount that can be applied towards Co-op purchases. Attend a **Volunteer Intro Tour** (V.I.T.) and tour the store and learn about volunteer opportunities at the Co-op. If you are interested in this volunteering, please attend this ninety-minute orientation.

**Cleaning Parties** happen periodically 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 by scrubbing, wiping, washing, and polishing after the stores are closed. Snacks will be provided for all cleaning parties, and you are encouraged to bring music to listen to.

**Working Member Appreciation BBQ** at Priest Point Park **Saturday, May 20th 1-4pm!**

Westside:	Eastside:
Sunday, April 9, 6-7:30pm—V.I.T.	Wednesday, April 5, 6-7:30pm—V.I.T.
Sunday, April 23, 6-7:30pm—V.I.T.	Saturday, April 15, 1-2:30pm—V.I.T.
Sunday, May 14, 6-7:30pm—V.I.T.	Wednesday, April 19, 6-7:30pm—V.I.T.
Sunday, May 28, 6-7:30pm—V.I.T.	Wednesday, April 26, 6-7:30pm—V.I.T.
	Wednesday, May 3, 6-7:30pm—V.I.T.
	Wednesday, May 10, 6-7:30pm—V.I.T.
	Wednesday, May 24, 6-7:30pm—V.I.T.
	Wednesday, April 19, 8:30-11pm—Bulk Cleaning Party
	Wednesday, May 17, 8:30-11pm—Bulk Cleaning Party

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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## 14th Annual Letter Carriers Food Drive

The National Association of Letter Carriers will be collecting nonperishable food items on Saturday, May 13 for distribution to the Thurston County Food Bank in Olympia, the Sacred Heart Food Pantry in Lacey, and the Saint's Pantry of Shelton. Please place a food donation by your mailbox on Saturday, May 13. Your letter carrier will pick it up and deliver it to the nearest food bank. Help us help our community.



## Cooking Greens

### Steam

*(I love steamed greens topped with a little balsamic vinegar or lemon juice.)*

Kale or Collards: 8-10 minutes  
Chard or Beet Greens: 5-7 minutes, start with stalks  
Spinach: 2-4 minutes

### Sauté

Greens are delicious sautéed in olive oil w/ garlic, red pepper flakes, and chopped nuts  
  
Kale and Collards sauté faster when first steamed lightly.

### Braise

Bring water or broth to a simmer (about 1/2 cup of water for every pound of greens). Add greens and simmer. Cover until greens are tender. If there is extra liquid left over, remove the lid and increase the heat in the last few minutes to cook it off.

### Soups / Grains / Egg Dishes / Casseroles

Greens are a great addition to soups and casseroles. In soups, add them at the end so they don't overcook.

My favorite recipe with greens is quick, easy, cheap, nutritious, and very tasty:

### Potato and Greens Soup

*from American Whole Foods Cuisine by Nikki &David Goldbeck*

3 cups diced potatoes (~ 1lb)  
1 clove garlic cut in half  
4 cups water  
2 cups sliced dark leafy greens  
1 tsp salt  
1 cup diced stale whole grain bread  
2 tbsp olive oil  
pepper

Combine potatoes, garlic, and water in a soup pot and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer until potatoes are not quite tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Add greens and salt, cover and cook until tender.

Remove from heat, add bread, cover, and let stand off the heat for 10 minutes. Stir in oil, season with lots of fresh pepper, and serve. Serves 4

*Note: If you plan to reheat the soup, do not add the bread cubes until you are ready to eat it, otherwise it turns into porridge.*

## Greens

by **Erin Majors**, Staff Member

**G**reens are some of the most delicious, versatile, and nutritious vegetables we sell in the produce department. There are many varieties of greens that can be eaten raw or used in cooking. The Co-op carries a wide variety. We also carry greens such as Arugula, Mustard Greens, Mizuna, Nettle, Sorrel, and Watercress when they are available. Greens are loaded with nutrients, and most are high in vitamin A, vitamin C, folic acid, calcium, potassium, iron, and fiber. Each type of green has its own unique flavor and texture profile. Our best sellers are described below.

**Collard Greens** have smooth, thick, silvery blue-green leaves, which have flat or curled edges, depending on the variety. Collard leaves tend to be chewy with a distinctive, sweet, slightly smoky flavor. They're wonderful cooked, and can also be added to salads if they are chopped fine. The central ribs are tough and are usually not eaten.

**Kale** has thinner leaves than Collard Greens, but shares an assertive and earthy flavor and chewy texture. The stalks are tough and are not usually eaten. The color and shape of Kale leaves vary depending on variety. Lacinato Kale (also known as Dinosaur Kale or Italian Kale) is very dark blue-green with long flat leaves, while Curly Kale is a lighter shade with tightly curled leaves, and Red Kale has (guess what!) a red tinge to the leaves and stems and a slightly sweeter flavor. All varieties of Kale are excellent cooked. Some varieties of Kale also make nice additions to salad.

**Chard** has long light or dark green leaves atop a crisp stalk, which is usually white, yellow or red. Both the leaves and stalks of Chard are edible. Chard has a slightly salty flavor, and the leaves are tasty raw or cooked. The leaves can be used interchangeably with Spinach in most recipes, while the stalks are used much the way Celery is.

**Spinach** is a tender green that has a delicate texture and a sweet flavor. Spinach leaves vary in color and shape by variety—some Spinach has flat, smooth, jade green leaves, while other varieties have leaves that are crinkly and very dark green. Spinach is delicious raw or cooked.

## Sink Volcanoes & other Cleaning Fun

by **Virginia Lange**, Staff

**I** hate cleaning. I would rather change diapers than run a load of dishes. My first job was housekeeping for my family. I hated the job so much that I gave it up to dig ditches. If there was a way to avoid cleaning, I found it. It was probably a little extreme when I used a single cup and a bowl for two months as my only dishes and made my bed so tightly that I only had to make it once a week.

Cleaning dorms for money taught me that heavy chemicals could solve most cleaning situations. However, when working in a printing lab, I picked up allergies to those heavy chemicals. Later, with a couple of kids and a baking habit, cleaning became unavoidable. I began shopping at the Co-op, looking for alternatives to commercial chemicals and hard work. I figure the Earth can also use a break from the chemicals that make me sick.

As a Grocery Co-Manager, I help choose the cleaners we sell at the Westside Co-op. A few years ago, cleaning products were all about citrus. Now we have many products for a variety of uses and many that are alternatives for people with varying (chemical and fragrance) sensitivities. It's fun to try out new products; wait until you smell the ginger-scented soap!

### A few of my tips:

Before cleaning, I protect my hands with a coating of olive oil. It doesn't interact with the cleaning products, and I can pretend I'm cooking instead.

### Wood Floors

Get a big rolling mop bucket and string mop head if you can. The bathtub and an old T-shirt also work well. If you use soap, rinse the floor, as soap residue attracts dirt. The cleaning products you use will also clean out the tub drain. Add any of these to your mop water. Remember to mop with the grain and dry your floor with a towel to avoid damaging the floor. I put a towel under each foot and turn up the stereo.

- 1 cup white vinegar (sold in bulk at the Co-ops) with a splash of lemon or lime juice
- 1 cup Country Save All Purpose Cleaner for filthy floors.
- 1/2 cup of any of the Dr. Bronner's Sal Suds, Bio-Kleen or Bio-Pac Soaps. Remember to rinse the floor.
- Scrub crusty messes with the All Purpose Cleaner or a baking powder and water paste.

### Vinyl Floors

Use the same bucket arrangement you did for wood floors.

- 1 cup white vinegar in water
- 1 cup Country Save All Purpose Cleaner in water
- Bio-Kleen Toilet Scrub is the most amazing floor cleaner! It seems to suck the grime out

of the floor. Use it straight on filthy areas and let it sit for 20 minutes before rinsing. Very slippery until dry or rinsed.

- Baking soda and water paste works well on greasy areas

### Carpet

- Sprinkle baking soda on carpet to absorb odors and grease before vacuuming.
- Diatomaceous earth and borax kill fleas in carpet. You can get the stronger diatomaceous earth at a garden supply store.

### Surfaces

- I use straight vinegar for disinfecting. I prefer the smell of bulk cider vinegar to white.
- Scrub the surface with a baking soda and water paste. Rinse with vinegar-laden rag.
- Country Save All Purpose Cleaner used straight will dissolve melted chocolate and magic marker off a wall.
- Citra-Solv spray cleaner works well for those not allergic.

### Mold

- 1/2 cup of vinegar added to mildewed laundry rinse cycle
- Straight vinegar works better than bleach in most cases.
- I used straight Bac-Out on mold in the back of my car, and it worked quite well.

### Bathrooms

- Sprinkle baking soda on any bathroom surface. Soak sponge in Country Save All

*continued on page 5*





Fun continued from page 4

- Purpose Cleaner and scrub sinks, floors, and tubs.
- Eco Toilet Scrub is the most effective of our toilet cleaners. Bio-Kleen is next, followed by Ecover.
  - Some natural cleaning resources recommend vinegar for toilet stains. I haven't found this effective, especially if the users take vitamins.
  - Don't use hydrogen peroxide to clean the toilet! My experiments produced a lot of ammonia gas.

Laundry

- Remember the vinegar for damp clothes in the hamper.
- My favorite laundry detergent for top-loaders is Country Save liquid. It has a minimal scent and preserves colors. Country Save is based in the Northwest, and its bulk laundry powder is one of our biggest sellers.
- Ecover is great for very chemically sensitive people. They also run their plant with solar power, recycle, and reduce their plastic footprint where possible.
- Bio-Kleen is another Northwest company. Both their liquid and powders are good economical choices.

Windows

- Again, I use diluted vinegar. The newspapers that our mothers taught

- us to use can scratch older windows, so use old T-shirts instead.
- Use ammonia and water if you're not chemically sensitive. (Weird side effect with ammonia is an aluminum-like taste in your mouth.)

Dishes

- Buy a whole gallon of Lifetree Soap and get a pump for the soap. It really cuts down on replacement time when you purchase a gallon.
- Country Save Dish Detergent is the best cleaner. Go easy, it's concentrated.
- Planet Dishwashing Liquid is almost as good as Country Save, and easy on your hands.
- The Eco scented dish soaps work well and are not citrus based.
- The other dish soaps we carry all work fairly well, but not as well as those I mentioned.

Sink Volcanoes

- Pour 3/4-cup baking soda down the drain. Pour down 3/4-cup of vinegar. As the drain begins to "volcano," install the drain plug so the reaction is forced down. Unplug after a few minutes and follow with a few quarts of boiling water.

Thanks to Rachel Donnette at Thurston County Hazardous Waste Program (754-4111), where they have some nifty brochures on natural cleaning and non-toxic art supplies.



Meet the Staff

Rafael Ruiz

by Jennifer Shafer, Editor

Rafael Ruiz is new to the Olympia Food Co-op and to Olympia, Washington. Having lived here since August of 2005 and been employed by the Co-op for about three months, Rafael brings fresh energy to the Puget Sound. Rafael was born and raised in San Diego, where he has also spent his adult life up until now. He was raised by Mexican parents and grew up speaking both Spanish and English. He grew up in a working class neighborhood but attended public school in a wealthy suburb. This dynamic informed him as he began his working life.

After high school, Rafael started out attending community college but found it wasn't the right fit for him. From there he started working for Landmark Theaters as well as sometimes being employed in other jobs simultaneously. One job was at an arts supply store; another was doing maintenance, painting, and building among other things at Centro Cultural de la Raza, a cultural center for Chicanos. He observed a transition in leadership at Centro and saw the Center begin to cater to a more moneyed population than its original community, "class-blind" focus. This was disappointing for Rafael, and he stopped working there. He then took a job at Ranchos, a family-owned organic food store/restaurant. There he was a store clerk and enjoyed the friendly, non-authoritative management style of the owner. The owner encouraged a young community of people to work there and trusted them to run the store. This created a fun and friendly environment for everyone.

Rafael decided to move to Olympia with his partner, who is originally from here. Wanting a change from San Diego, which had become expensive, Rafael has found life in Olympia to be a positive experience from the cost and quality of living to the climate. For him to notice, it took someone else to point out that it had been raining for forty

or so days this winter! He likes the rain, and "the snow was a cool surprise."

Rafael has already taken on frozen management at the Eastside besides working regular floor shifts. His favorite aspect of the Co-op is that it is collectively managed. He likes not having to deal with power issues that arise in traditional employment structures. He really likes the people at the Co-op, particularly his co-workers. He said that at this time, he hasn't reflected much on his experience at the Co-op in terms of learning lessons or wisdom; he is still in a phase of "taking it all in," which is quite understandable. As far as the future of the Co-op goes, he would like to see the Co-op do more outreach, especially focusing on educating and supporting other co-ops in using a collective structure.

When not at the Co-op, Rafael is doing a host of other things including reading, playing Scrabble, flying kites, watching movies, playing sports, hanging with his cats (Max, Arrow, and Apple Jelly), and playing music. He plays guitar, bass, and drums and hopes to find people to play with. He especially likes playing with others who are playful, passionate, and experimental and not necessarily focused on being the best technically.

It is exciting to see someone beginning his "time" in Olympia. Hopefully, it will be a rich and fulfilling experience for Rafael. From what others have told me, Rafael is "genuine, fun, and hardworking."

Of extra interest:

- Hometown:** San Diego, CA  
**Number of siblings:** one older sister and brother, one younger brother  
**Age upon moving to Olympia:** 23  
**Zodiac Sign:** Aries (doesn't follow astrology)  
**Favorite foods:** tamales, anything his parents make (with exceptions since he is now a vegan), pizza, cakes and cookies, the donuts at Mighty O Donuts in Seattle (yes, they are vegan!)  
**Favorite Music:** punk rock, hip hop, Talib Kweli, Lightening Bolt, Propagandi, Mos Def  
**Favorite places in Oly:** Last Word Books (his brother owns the record store in the back), Boston Harbor (and renting boats), the Fifth Ave Bridge (viewing the wildlife)  
**Favorite Places in the world:** Encinata, Mexico, Top of the Hill Park/North Park in San Diego, Jiyoti Bihanga (a restaurant run by followers of Sri Chinmoy), the Mission in San Francisco, Staircase

Committee Meetings

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| April 4—Growth Committee                 | May 2—Growth Committee                 |
| April 6—Outreach and Education Committee | May 4—Outreach and Education Committee |
| April 18—Growth Committee                | May 5—Newsletter Committee             |
| April 19—Finance Committee               | May 15—Growth Committee                |
| April 20—Standing Hiring Committee       | May 17—Finance Committee               |
| April 26—Board of Directors              | May 18—Standing Hiring Committee       |
|  | May 24—Board of Directors              |

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The Co-op News Needs Your Help!

We are seeking help with the distribution of the Co-op News. Distribution happens bi-monthly and entails bringing the News to various businesses and organizations in the local area. Call Kitty at 754-7666 for info.

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## GROC

The Co-op's **Growth Response Oversight Committee** (GROC) has rolled up its sleeves and is at work analyzing current and future growth issues. Look for features on the GROC's work in future newsletters, as well as an upcoming survey to help determine membership preferences regarding growth. At this early stage, though, we want to invite the membership to send in any questions they have about the GROC's work and process and Co-op growth issues in general. We will try to answer all questions both directly, if contact information is provided, as well as through the newsletter. We are also working on opening up our work to the membership through the use of electronic file sharing. Lastly, our meetings are open to the public. If you have any questions, please email them to: [olyfoodcoop@juno.com](mailto:olyfoodcoop@juno.com) or call Harry at the Co-op business office at 357-1106, who will relay them to the GROC.

## Bags *continued from page 1*

more atmospheric emissions, and releases more waterborne wastes than plastic bag production. Need more fun facts to help support change? It costs retailers an estimated \$4 billion every year to give you a free bag to carry home your goods. But, is it really free? Actually, you pay higher prices at the register.

Here in the United States we have made little effort to change the plastic or paper bag dilemma. However, we can learn from more conscientious and progressive countries. Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Italy, Mumbai (formerly Bombay), Taiwan, Bangladesh, India, and South Africa now either prohibit or heavily tax the flimsy plastic bag. They were found clogging drainage and sewage lines, increasing flooding and waterborne diseases, or littering the landscape. Instead, shoppers bring their own bags, baskets, or boxes to market.

How do we break habits and protect our environment? How can we better manage our waste? Buy products that require little or no packaging. Remember our reusable shopping bags and containers for bulk products. Perhaps we should create a punchcard system wherein each time you bring your own bags, containers, and take-out deli utensils and containers, or re-use the boxes at the store, you receive a punch. For each card filled you could get a Co-op dollar. Do we need an extra tax at the register, or should we just outright ban one-time use plastic or even paper bags? That seems so extreme; hopefully not what it will take. What's your take on take-out? Can we consent to control our consumption? This society is all about choices. How will you choose?

The Co-op wants to hear your ideas on this waste management and supplies issue. Find suggestion forms at either store location.

# Greening the Co-op

by **Leon Smith**, Ecological Planning Committee Member

**H**ow green is the Olympia Food Co-op? What would a 100 percent sustainable Co-op look like? What steps should we take to move in that direction? The newly formed Ecological Planning Committee will focus on these questions and will engage the Co-op community in the process.

The need for us to change some of the ways we relate to nature are not new to many Co-op members. I would venture that the Co-op shopper is more ecologically informed and sustainability-savvy than most. However, a couple of facts can put this in context:

- Global Warming caused by human emissions of 'greenhouse' gasses threatens every ecological system on the planet.
- Every major ecological system on the planet is in decline.
- Human population is accelerating the depletion of the planet's non-renewable resources.
- We can stop this.

In fact, societal transformation is happening in many ways. The Olympia Food Coop is on the leading edge of the sustainable food systems movement. The Evergreen State College pays a little extra on its utility bill to have all its power come from renewable sources. Wind power and Bio-fuels are rapidly growing sectors of the energy economy. Corporations have keyed into the appeal of "greenness," and a notable few are undergoing aggressive ecological re-structuring. The president even acknowledged our "addiction to oil" as a potent idea that Americans are concerned about.

What is the best way for us to address these problems? How can we be a force for positive change? Through coordinated ecological action! As our society must transform, we can lead the way in our own lives. This is not about becoming LESS BAD. Reducing the harm is not enough. We need to be ecologically healthy. As we sow the seeds of true sustainability, future generations can reap the harvest when the time comes.

This community effort must flow from a shared vision. What does a 100 percent sustainable Co-op look like? What kind of building? Landscape? Energy? Transportation? We want your help generating this vision!

This shared vision of ecological success can guide an ongoing process of ecological improvement at the Co-op. We will develop a road map to sustainability and have shared language to address problems and criteria for judging our progress. It is a goal of the Ecological Planning Committee to facilitate this process.

How green are we now? We can always do better. One goal of the Committee is to perform an honest assessment of the Co-op's current sustainability level.

We have the unique privilege and opportunity to lead the way in an ecological transformation. The business model of ecological destruction is going the way of the dinosaurs. Let's see if we can help it get there quicker!

*If you are interested in our work, please contact Marie at the Eastside store at 956-3870*

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For more info, please call Jennifer or Jim: 273-5368 or [risingriverfarm@yahoo.com](mailto:risingriverfarm@yahoo.com)

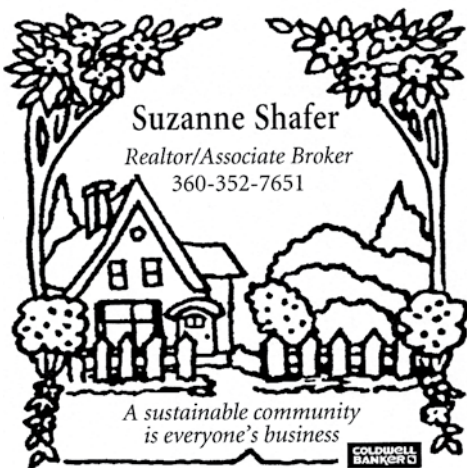


## We no longer sell Blue Sky Soda

**F**rom The Co-op's Product Selection Guidelines: "The Co-op will not carry products whose retail packaging is deemed exploitive or oppressive."

The Co-op has decided to stop carrying Blue Sky Sodas. Blue Sky has changed their packaging to include graphic depictions of ancient symbols and designs which are considered sacred to Native People. The Co-op recognizes that Native People continue to suffer a history of genocide and oppression, and we believe that Blue Sky's commercialization and depiction of these graphics serves to ignore that history and perpetuates the exploitation and oppression of Native culture.

For more information about this issue, please visit the Co-op's website: [www.olympiafood.coop](http://www.olympiafood.coop)



## 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](http://www.olympiafood.coop)

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# The Community Kitchen

The Community Kitchen is an on-going series of free classes co-sponsored by the Olympia Food Co-op and The Olympia Free School.

## Incorporating More Raw and Living Foods into Your Diet for Better Health

**Facilitator:** Cherie King  
**Schedule:** Sundays April 9, 16, 23; 4-5:30pm, Fertile Ground, 311 9th Ave SE.  
**Description:** If you're curious about what raw and living foods are and think that eating raw means a life of only carrot sticks, lettuce, and apples, this is for you! You'll be introduced to raw and living foods by learning to prepare a delicious, full-course live vegan meal over the course of 3 class sessions. Each class will learn to prepare one recipe—comprising a full meal by the end. Snacks served!

## Vegan Baking

**Facilitator:** Audrey Daye  
**Schedule:** April 17, 6-8pm, Fertile Ground, 311 9th Ave SE.  
**Description:** Learn how to make desserts such as vegan banana creme pie, cookies and more! This is a hands-on class where we will bake a number of desserts and have lots to sample!!

## Fair Trade and Shea Butter

**Facilitator:** Olowo-n'djo Tchala  
**Schedule:** May 22nd 6-7:30pm, Free School, 610 Columbia St. SW  
**Description:** Come learn about Alaffia, a fair trade company that works with women in Togo to create amazing products using natural plant products from Africa, which have been used for centuries for their health benefits. This workshop will include a demo of the products.

## Intro to Native Plant Salvage and Drought Resistance

**Gardening:** Rolling Garden tour  
**Facilitator:** Erica Guttman of the Native Plant Salvage Project  
**Schedule:** June 11, 1-4:30pm, meet at Free School, 610 Columbia St SW.

*Please check the Community Kitchen Info boards at the Co-op or on-line at [www.olympiafreeschool.org](http://www.olympiafreeschool.org) for up-to-date info about the schedule of these classes:*

## GM-Free Foods Discussion

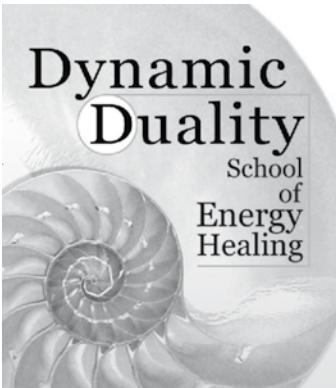
**Facilitator:** Kevin J. Anderson  
**Schedule:** TBA  
**Info:** Kevin is the GM-Free Schools Campaign Director at The Institute for Responsible Technology.

## Pruning

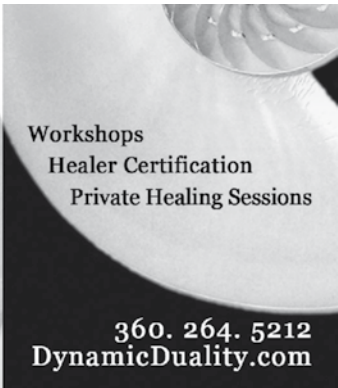
**Facilitator:** Willow Oling  
**Schedule:** TBA  
**Description:** Learn pruning basics from Willow Oling, who is the owner of Sound Gardening and Pest Management and coordinator at the Eastside Community Gardens.

*For more info or to register for classes, please sign up at any of the Community Kitchen info boards or online: [www.olympiafreeschool.org](http://www.olympiafreeschool.org).*

*If you are interested in facilitating a class, please contact Mo at the Eastside Co-op or Beth at [beth@olympiafreeschool.org](mailto:beth@olympiafreeschool.org)*

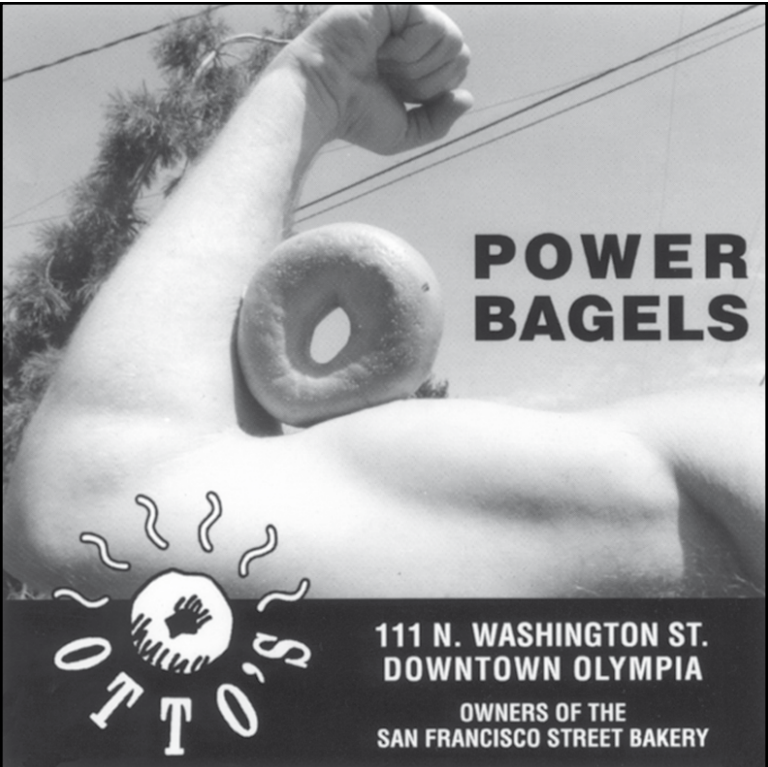


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# Vehicle Buying Tips

by Doty Catlin, TULIP Staff

Tulip Credit Union has a mission to improve financial literacy among our membership and in our community. The confident purchase of a vehicle is an area in which we continue to see people struggle. Here are some tips to help your confidence as you confront this task.

First consider: how much do you want to spend? Most auto financing terms range from 12 to 60 months, and interest rates depend on your credit rating. The amount of your monthly payment depends on how much you borrow, how long you take to repay the loan, and your interest rate. At TULIP, we can help you determine the payment and terms that best fit your budget.

What kind of car are you looking for? Consider your driving habits, vehicle usage, and as mentioned above—your budget. The newspaper is a good place to get an idea of the average market price of the vehicles you like. Look up the Blue Book values of the vehicles you are interested in, as well. Use the Internet; [www.nada.com](http://www.nada.com) is a great resource. The folks at TULIP can also assist you in obtaining a “book value” on vehicles.

Get a pre-approved loan! Once you know what you'd like to spend on a car, come in and apply for a pre-approved auto loan at TULIP. A pre-approved loan is helpful when negotiating the purchase price of a vehicle with a dealer or seller, and you don't have to worry about high-pressure financing!

Get an insurance quote. When you finance a car, you are required to carry full coverage insurance, comprehensive, and collision for the entire life of your loan. Before you decide on a vehicle, be sure to get a quote from your insurance company for the vehicle you're considering. Factor insurance into your monthly budget; insurance

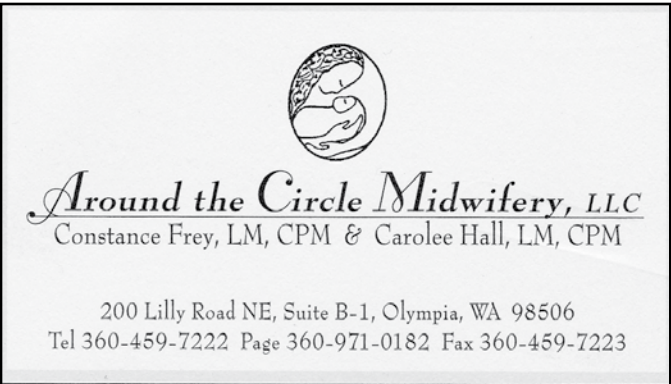
can get pricey, so be aware of the cost before purchasing the vehicle.

Will you be buying from a dealer or a private party seller? There are differences between these purchases. The dealer will most likely offer you financing, so if you haven't arranged financing beforehand, be sure you completely understand the terms before signing anything! Remember, your credit union is your advocate, and we will help ensure you are making the right move. When you finance with a dealer or financial institution, they usually complete all title paperwork and may include sales tax in the total financed cost. If you have a pre-approved loan, the dealer will provide you and your financial institution with a purchase order that outlines the terms of the sale. When buying from a private individual, you are responsible for paying the tax and license fees when you register the vehicle in your name.

GAP insurance and extended warranties are now available at TULIP! GAP Insurance insures you for the difference between what is owed on a vehicle, and what an insurance company says the car is worth at the time of an accident or theft. This is helpful when buying a new car, as value depreciates quickly once it's off the lot. GAP insurance helps to cover the amount you would still owe to a financing company. Protect your investment; ask TULIP about the benefits of GAP insurance and an extended warranty! These products are available at dealerships as well, but prices are typically twice as much or more than the same product at TULIP.

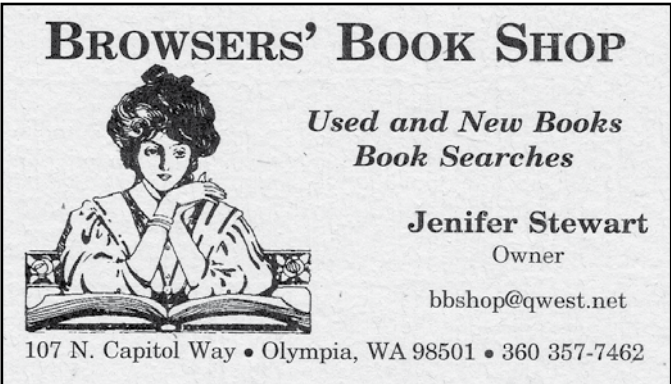
Buying a car can be stressful and frustrating because of the numerous pitfalls that are potentially involved in making an investment of this size. Remember that TULIP—your credit union—can help you every step of the way and hopefully make your vehicle purchase a much more positive experience!

**TULIP Cooperative Credit Union** is located inside the Eastside Co-op. TULIP is open **Monday – Saturday 11 am – 4 pm, and until 8 pm on Wednesdays.** To contact TULIP, call **570-2292**.



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**Submissions:** Contact Jennifer Shafer at (360) 789-7313 or at [olycoopnews@yahoo.com](mailto:olycoopnews@yahoo.com)





# Co-op News

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



## Earth Day Issue

### Cleaning and Greening at the Co-op

### Kids Corner

## What is it?



### What is it?

Deadline: May 1st, 2006

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Guess \_\_\_\_\_

Where do you want to pick up  
your gift certificate?

☐ Eastside

☐ Westside

If you're 10 or under, guess one of the greens in this photo. Fill out the 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: **Dried Cranberries**

## Working Member Appreciation



# BBQ

Saturday, May 20th, 1-4pm,  
Priest Point Park

## Watch this space



We are considering stopping the *What Is It?* feature due to low participation. We could use the space for other *Co-op News* needs, but also like having something for kids. Do you have any ideas? Would you like to write or facilitate this feature? Contact Jennifer at [olycoopnews@yahoo.com](mailto:olycoopnews@yahoo.com), or leave a note for her at either store (a Staff person can put it in the newsletter box).



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