



# THE Co-op News

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

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2013

## A Special Feature: Volunteer Program at Olympia Food Co-op

By **Desdra Dawning**, Co-op Member

Consumer grocery store co-ops come in many shapes and sizes. While they may all adhere to the Cooperative Principles, how they are structured can vary considerably. Olympia Food Co-op, its first storefront opening in 1975, not only follows those principles today, but also continues to uphold its original values and structure. In matters of decision-making, it continues to depend on consensus rather than the more corporate top-down approach that is sometimes adopted by cooperatives today. And in its strong support of social and economic justice, it has held to its volunteer-based work force while many other food cooperatives have not. With a membership of more than 20,000, it represents a large portion of the population of this capital

city area, including people with a wide variety of needs and abilities.

The Co-op has always aimed at creating a welcoming atmosphere for everyone, regardless of gender, race, class, size, ability, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, and personal preferences. The volunteer program today seeks to include members from that diverse population and serves as a bedrock for the continued health and financial success of our Co-op by offering those in the Olympia area the opportunity for community involvement, skill-building, and a role-model-education in how to live cooperatively in this sometimes not-so-cooperative world.

At the same time, the Co-op depends on its Volunteer Members—all 300+ of them—for its store operations. That's



**Volunteer Deli Workers, under direction of the Deli Staff, make and prepare food for the East-side salad bar**

300 with regular weekly shifts plus 10-15 doing landscaping, 10 helping in the Westside free store, 11 board members, and 10 doing special projects such as helping with the newsletter, bookkeeping and administrative tasks. Their presence at the Co-op makes competitive pricing possible,

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## Our Stories: A Volunteer Member Speaks



**Desdra Dawning**

*photo by Lloyd Moore*

**I have been a proud Volunteer Member of OFC for two years now. It was, in fact, one of the major catalysts for my move to the Pacific Northwest.**

Having experienced a small co-op in Santa Fe, NM in the 80's, and after studying the Cooperative Principles and working for several years in Flagstaff, AZ

to evolve Common Ground Food Buying Club into a full-blown cooperative store-front market—to no avail—I felt like I had finally come home to roost. I know how easy it is to get complacent and take for granted that which gains familiarity. So, speaking as a newcomer, and one who has lived in the no-man's land of corporate America (Phoenix, AZ) for some time, I wish to remind the members of Olympia Food Co-op that what we have here is, while not unique, certainly not something that is available to the majority of food shoppers across America. For me, it is a precious part of my daily life—through my ability to shop at

my own community market, in an environment that feeds my hungry soul, through the gift of healthy, socially-conscious food, and through the opportunity I have been given to serve this community as a Volunteer Member. As Heather Fink, Volunteer Coordinator puts it, speaking for her fellow Staff Collective members, "One of the reasons we love the Olympia Food Co-op and feel passionate about our work here and have such strong buy-in from the community, is our process of consensus. We do not have a top-down decision structure. We're involved. We all own it." We are blessed, here in Olympia. Most blessed.



## Co-op News

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of the year (except New Year's  
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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 [newsletter@olympiafood.coop](mailto:newsletter@olympiafood.coop) or 360-789-7313 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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*Cover photo by Jennifer Shafer*

# Staff Profile: Cristos Papaiaacovou

By **Desdra Dawning**, Co-op Member

Cristos joined as a new member of the Olympia Food Co-op staff in March of 2013, with great enthusiasm and a bit of relief. Enthusiasm because this new job had been on his focused radar through most of his college years and more recently through a year and an half with three determined Co-op applications—and relief because he was done with school, wanted meaningful work and needed a job. By way of welcoming Cristos to the Co-op staff, I would like to introduce him to the Co-op Membership.

Cristos Papaiaacovou has, as his name implies, Greek heritage. His father came to the United States in the late 60's from Cyprus, eventually settling in New York's Staten Island, where Cristos was born. By the time Cristos was 4, his family had moved to the Jersey Shore, where he lived until graduation from high school in 2003. With an eye toward a college education, Cristos looked to a small liberal arts school in Vermont. However, financial troubles in his home excluded him from their financial aid program. As fate would have it, (ah, that fickle fate that so often sends us off in unexpected and magical directions!) a friend's friend just happened to return to Jersey from an in-

terdisciplinary, public liberal arts college in the Pacific Northwest—a college that had not only rolling admission, but also rolling financial aid acceptance—and yes, The Evergreen State College and Olympia, Washington, became Cristos' new home.

Starting out initially to study history and political economy, Cristos soon found his interest and focus shift. His desire to become a history teacher disappeared, and after two years of study, he decided that he was learning as much on his own as he was in class—and he dropped out of school. But as often happens with students trying to find their way in the academic world, Cristos, in 2009, returned to the Evergreen campus, headed in a much different direction.

The art of trapeze had caught his attention, and because of the progressive approach to education that The Evergreen State College is noted for, Cristos was able to write—and have accepted—a contract that would give him funds to attend trapeze classes in Seattle, which he did



**Cristos Papaiaacovou**

*photo by Desdra Dawning*

for 6 months, until he developed elbow problems and had to discontinue the practice.

Not all learning, not all education, comes in the form of classes, books, and lectures, as most of us have discovered in our own lives. What nurtured Cristos' awareness and growing understanding of conscious, sustainable living sprang from his on-campus work with a new organization that he and a few friends founded in 2003, when he first arrived at Evergreen. They had become increasingly concerned with the fact that the college contracted out all of its food services to large corporate powers, leaving the students

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# Member feedback requested: Bylaws Changes!

**The Board is proposing the following changes to the Co-op's bylaws in this year's election – but first, we want your feedback!**

What do you think of these changes? Is the writing clear? Are there other bylaws that the Board should consider proposing? Send your thoughts to [ofcboard@olympiafood.coop](mailto:ofcboard@olympiafood.coop) by August 14.


**Process:** We will accept member feedback until August 14. The Board will consider member suggestions at their August 15 Board meeting. Final versions will be submitted to the Co-op newsletter in early September, and printed in the October-November election issue.

According to the bylaws, "These bylaws may be amended through a board or member-initiated ballot that remains open at least 30 days. Copies of the proposed bylaws changes shall be available at all locations of the Cooperative at least 30 days prior to the beginning of any vote to amend these bylaws."


**Voting will take place, as usual, from October 15 through November 15.**

**What about changing the Co-op's legal status?** After the Co-op Conversation, the Board created a strategic supporting goal that stated: "The Co-op will determine which legal structure accurately reflects who we are and our future needs and, if necessary, make a change." As many of you know, the Co-op was founded before Washington had a cooperative law and, like most other Washington co-ops, was incorporated under the Non-Profit law.

Mark your calendar for this year's Annual Meeting (tentatively scheduled for Sunday, October 27), because that's when the sub-committee charged with the task of researching this question will present their first round of research! Depending on Board and member interest, changes to the Co-op's legal structure would be proposed during the 2015 member elections.



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## Proposed Bylaws Changes:

### ● Audits

*Current Language (Article 5, Section 2: "Audit Committee"):* **"The Board shall name an audit committee or select an experienced accountant to conduct an audit every three (3) years."**

*Proposed Change:* **"The Board shall select an experienced accountant to conduct an audit at least every three (3) years."**

Why we are proposing this change: We have added the words "at least" in order to make it clear that although an audit is required every three years, the Co-op can decide to hold them more frequently. We have removed the use of an "audit committee" because they are more difficult to organize and not as helpful as a full audit by a trained accountant.

### ● Board Of Directors: Length Of Terms

*Current language (Article 3, Section 2, "Number and Term"):* **"Directors elected by the membership shall serve two year terms. No Director elected by the membership shall serve more than four consecutive years."**

*Proposed change:* **"Directors elected by the membership shall serve three year terms. No Director elected by the membership shall serve more than two consecutive terms."**

Why we are proposing this change: Each year, half of our Board turns over: seasoned Board members step down, and new ones take their place. This means that we have a very short "institutional memory" within our Board, and that by the time a new

Board member has really learned the ropes, it's already time for them to step down. By changing Board terms to three year terms, Board members will be able to develop more oversight skills and a deeper understanding of the Co-op. Furthermore, we will create a stronger institutional memory by only having three positions turn over each year. Lastly, since our Board operates by consensus (rather than majority rule, as at other co-ops), new Board members will still have just as powerful a role when arriving in three's as they do now.

Our research found that almost all co-ops (including Skagit Valley Co-op, Bellingham Community Co-op, PCC, Bozeman Community Co-op in Montana, People's Food Co-op in Portland, The Wedge Food Co-op in Minnesota, and many others) have three-year Board terms for just these reasons. Although we were concerned that it might be more difficult to recruit new Board members for three-year terms, none of the co-ops we spoke to felt this was a significant problem for them.

Current Board members' terms will not be affected by this change. New Board terms would begin in 2015 and would cycle in over the course of three more years, as follows:

2015: Five Board terms expire. Members elect five new Board members. The top three vote-getters will be elected to three-year terms. The bottom two vote-getters will be elected to two-year terms.

2016: Four Board terms expire. Members elect three new Board members. One Board position is left unfilled for one year.

2017: The two Board terms that began in 2015 expire, and one position is still open from 2016. Members elect three new Board members. From this point forward, we will have three Board members turning over each year.

### ● Board Of Directors: Filling Vacancies

*Current language (Article 3, Section 5,*

*"Vacancies"):* **"In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Directors, the remaining Board members may appoint a new Director. The appointed Director shall serve until the next Board election. Any Board appointed Director is eligible to run for an elected term at the next election."**

*Proposed change:* **"In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Directors, the remaining Board members may appoint a new Director. The appointed Director shall serve for the remainder of the term that was vacated. Any Board appointed Director is eligible to run for an elected term at the next election."**

Why we are proposing this change: One goal of having staggered terms is for an equal number of Board positions to turn over each year (i.e. three turn over this year, three the next, three the year after, etc.) The current policy of appointing to fill a vacancy only until the next election means that if a Board Member left during their first year, we would have to run an extra position in the next election, thus creating (if we have three year terms, as proposed above) four terms open one year, three the next, and two during the final year of the cycle. Any time a position was filled, this would skew our overall position turnover. By allowing the current Board to appoint fill-in Board members for the remainder of the vacated term, we will ensure that the Board remains fully staffed and that we continue to have an even yearly turnover.

This is the Board's current process for filling vacancies (consented to June 20, 2013): "In the event of a Director vacancy, the Board shall solicit for applications to fill the vacancy by appointment. The announcement that the board is seeking applications to fill the vacancy will be posted in the newsletter, in the stores, on the website, and social media accounts. The posting shall state the term length and the application deadline. Un-elected candidates from the previous Board election will be contacted to gauge their interest in re-instating their application.

The Board will appoint a qualified candidate from the pool of applications received by the deadline."

### ● Staff Responsibilities: Meeting Minutes

*Current language (Article 4, Section D, "Staff Responsibilities"):* **"maintain accurate and up-to-date corporate records, articles, Bylaws, Board meeting minutes, membership meeting minutes, staff meeting minutes, and required reports; and make these documents accessible to members."**

*Proposed change:* **"maintain accurate and up-to-date corporate records, articles, Bylaws, Board meeting minutes, membership meeting minutes, all-staff collective meeting minutes, and required reports; and make these documents accessible to members."**

Why we are proposing this change: At the time that these bylaws were created, the words "staff meeting minutes" referred almost exclusively to our all-staff collective meetings. Since then, we have changed our staffing structure to a more team-based approach, and many functions that previously were filled by one person are now the purview of a small team. Because of this change in our staffing structure, the language in this section could, for instance, mean that a member could request the confidential notes of our personnel team (which is illegal), or that private information about our vendors might become public.

We want to clarify that this section of the bylaws refers to the large, full-collective meetings that staff regularly attend. (Full-staff collective meetings are where the staff collective discusses and addresses important issues that are relevant to the collective or organization as a whole.

We will continue to provide members with Board meeting minutes, Board committee meeting minutes, and all other documents referenced in this section, in addition to our all-staff collective meeting minutes.



# Where does the Co-op stand on GMOs?

**From the Board of Directors:**

Cezanne Murphy-Levesque, Dani Madrone, Erin Genia, Isabella Rogol, Jayne Rossman, John Regan, Joseph Webster, Joshua Simpson, Niki Bilodeau, Ron Lavigne, Teresa Young

**Human history is replete with cautionary tales about our interactions with natural systems. From decimating salmon runs to introducing Cane Toads to Australia to dealing with nuclear waste, we often make short-term decisions that have long-term, negative, unintended consequences. In our increasingly ecologically unbalanced world we believe that environmental conservatism is warranted in the introduction of GMO crops. Here's why:**

***GMO crops can have unintended detrimental effects on other crops and ecological systems.***

While some GMO crops may be beneficial and safe, others have been proven to have unintended effects including: cross-pollination with other varieties; the creation of "super weeds" and "super bugs" which have developed resistance to herbicides and pesticides after being repeatedly exposed to them due to the use of herbicide- and pesticide-resistant GMO crops; and the inability to eradicate some GMO crops once they are introduced (best exemplified by the recent discovery of an experimental GMO wheat strain on an Oregon farm many years after the product was pulled from testing.)

***We do not yet know whether GMO crops' benefits outweigh their risks.***

Although some GMO crops likely have beneficial applications, others have been exaggerated. Scientific evidence on the benefits of various GMO crops is contradictory. For instance, although multiple studies carried out by GMO producers have shown that their crops have a higher yield than conventionally

bred varieties, newer studies undercut these claims. A recent study in the International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability found that crop yields for corn in America (which produces almost entirely GMO corn) and Europe (which produces almost entirely non-GMO corn) were nearly

identical for the previous 25 years (1985-2010)—or in other words, we haven't experienced a big bump in yields from going GMO. If the benefits of GMO crops do not outweigh the risks, there is no reason to use them—especially given the issues of corporate control of food that are inherent in their production.

***Part of the reason we do not know the risks and benefits of GMO crops is that the science is industry-funded—and contradictory.***

Contrary to GMO producers' assertions, GMO products have not been "proven to be safe." In fact, the very idea that "GMOs" are a homogenous category that can be "proven safe" once and for all is unrealistic. GMOs comprise a diverse array of products, some of which probably are safe for people and the environment, others of which are not. For this reason, rigorous scientific testing of new GMO products is required. This testing must include both human health and environmental effects, and must include long-term studies.

Unfortunately, our regulatory system is inadequately equipped to carry out such studies, much less to determine whether individual GMO products are safe and beneficial. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which is responsible for "protecting the public health by regulating human and animal drugs, biologics (e.g. vaccines and cellular and gene therapies), medical devices, food and animal feed, cosmetics, and products that emit radiation" is underfunded, subject to political and corporate pressure (under which they have ignored or over-ruled the recommendations of their own scientists), and relies upon studies funded by corporations to determine the safety and efficacy of the very products the corporations wish to sell. (This is just as true, and just as problematic, in studies done by cosmetic companies on their new products as it is for GMO-producing companies.)

Thus, although many large organizations have weighed in to say that "no known risks" (to personal health) exist, debate continues in peer-reviewed journals about the overall risks and benefits of many GMO crops. As Nature magazine (a well-respected, peer-reviewed journal) stated in their May 2013 special section on GMO crops: "Researchers, farmers, activists, and GM seed companies all stridently promote their views, but the scientific

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## Yes on I-522!

The Co-op endorses Initiative 522, the "People's Right to Know Act" which would require "foods produced using genetic engineering" to be labeled in Washington state. Find out more at [yeson522.com](http://yeson522.com)



**Though at this point the U.S. produces almost exclusively GMO corn, there has been no significant bump in crop yield since going GMO.**

COOP NEWS





# Member Voices: GMO Article Response

By **Marco Rosaire Conrad-Rossi & Max DeJarnatt**, Co-op Members

As dedicated Co-op members and environmentalists, we feel the need to address the inaccuracies printed in the February/March 2013 issue of The Co-op News featuring GMOs. We thank the Co-op's Board for allowing us this space, as it is important that we help each other understand the vital issues surrounding biotechnology.

Simply put, the feature replicated many popular misconceptions about genetic engineering, serving to promote fear rather than provide accurate information. Defining the technology as 'unstable' and 'unnatural' both mischaracterizes the mechanics of genetic manipulation and employs a 'natural fallacy' which ignores other common 'unnatural' processes we currently deem safe and even organic (e.g. radiating seeds for mutating DNA, or 'mutagenesis'). Indeed, mutagenesis is far more 'unnatural' than gene transfer, which is precise and measurable.

Characterizing the technology as "experimental" also trivializes the decades of diligent research scientists have invested in its development, and ignores the demonstrable benefits already gained in other areas, most notably

medicine. Genetically engineered insulin, available to the public since the mid-1980s, has been of substantial benefit to those who suffer from Type I diabetes. Previous versions of insulin—derived from pigs and cows—more commonly produced allergic reactions in its users and was much scarcer. Without GE technology, this vital medicine would be more costly and of an inferior quality.

The Co-op News article claimed that "recent studies indicate a connection between food allergies and GMOs" and warned about possible health problems with eating GMOs. These are weighty claims that contradict a wide and diverse scientific consensus on the safety of GMOs. The literature on the potential health risks of eating GMOs has been analyzed by the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association, the National Academy of Sciences, the European Science Advisor to the European Union, the Science Advisory Committee for the Indian Government and independent non-profits like the Center for Science in the Public Interest. They have all come to the same conclusion: the current GM foods available to the public pose no known health risks. It

takes a large amount of cynicism to believe that all these groups are willing to put our health at risk in order to ensure increased profits for Big Agribusiness.

The Co-op News article later states that subsistence farming communities are being threatened with the introduction of GE technology. This view is not supported by the evidence. The United Nations Food Agriculture Organization (FAO) has stated that the "appropriate use of biotechnology offers considerable potential to improve food security" and advocates for spreading "its benefits to small-scale farmers, the poor and the hungry." In addition, the insinuation that subsistence farming is something worth 'protecting' from science-based agricultural innovation is misguided. We believe that this is a very bucolic and 'first world' view of subsistence farming that keeps people confined to back-breaking labor and on the brink of starvation.

The Co-op News did cite one source, the Institute for Responsible Technology (IRT), an organization founded by anti-GMO author Jeffrey Smith. By no stretch of the imagination could the IRT be considered an impartial organization. Anyone inclined to believe that the wider recognized, higher impact

organizations listed above are influenced by business interests would have to admit the same of the IRT. The organization actively seeks "non-GMO corporate partnerships" and advertisers for so-called natural food and alternative medicine companies on its website.

In a former life, Smith ran as a candidate for the Natural Law Party (NLP). Far from a progressive political party, the NLP advocated for eventually ending all public funding for abortions, was a proponent of school vouchers, and was also extremely enthusiastic about Clinton's devastating welfare reforms. The reason that this is important is because Jeffrey Smith often frames the struggle against biotechnology as a struggle of the 'little guy' against corporate America. The problem is that as a candidate for the NLP Smith exhibited no such concern for the poor. If anything, Smith has been criticized for approaching the issue of biotechnology more as a salesman than as a consumer advocate.

Smith is often featured on daytime talk shows as a 'leading expert on GMOs', but he has no scientific credentials and his anti-GMO books have been soundly debunked by actual scientists. Most recently, Smith reneged on his commitment to appear alongside Gilles-Eric Seralini, the French scientist infamous for the flawed study linking GMOs to

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**GMOs and OFC** *continued from previous page*

data are often inconclusive or contradictory."

## ***Food sovereignty requires that people control their own seeds, farms, and food systems.***

Perhaps most importantly, we believe the people have the right to control their own food systems; GMOs do the opposite. These proprietary crops contribute to the increasing concentration of

seed production and economic power in a few multinational corporations, while simultaneously putting undue burden on organic farmers to seek out GMO-free seeds and guard against cross-pollination.

We particularly take issue with pro-GMO voices who insist that GMOs are needed to

"feed the developing world", and that those who wish to limit the introduction of GMOs are "elitist". Many citizens in other countries are having their own debate about the pros and cons of GMO crops. In fact, in 2002 the governments of Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe refused to accept food aid from the U.S. because it included GMO corn. Most importantly, the problem we face with food shortages in our world is due more to our refusal to share food equitably across national boundaries than to a lack of food overall. To claim that corporate-controlled GMO crops are needed to solve such shortages is to ignore and exacerbate the systems and inequalities that create these problems in the first place.

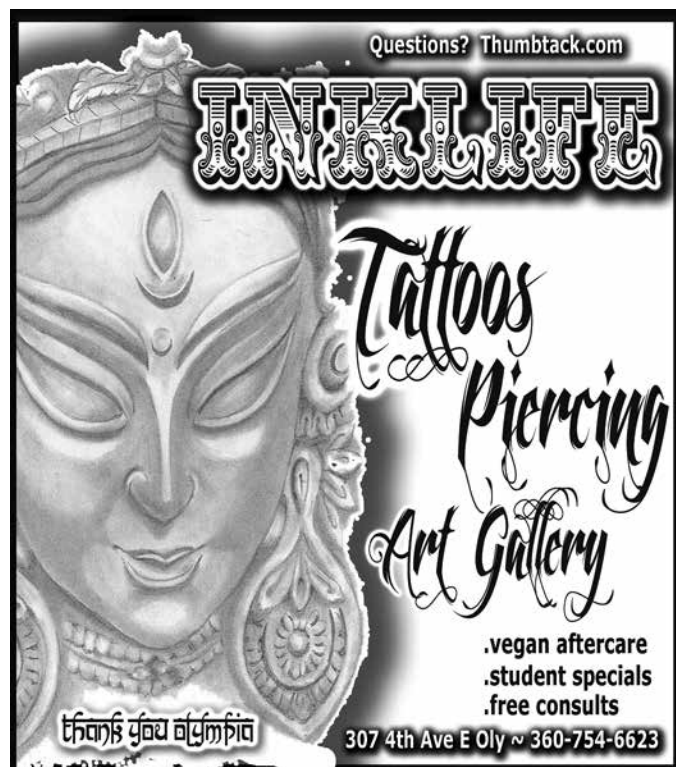
## ***The Co-op endorses I-522 – Washington's genetically modified food labeling act.***

The Co-op endorses I-522, Washington's "Right to Know" GMO labeling act. Labeling GMO foods is important because:

- People have a right to know what is in their food
- Food sovereignty cannot be achieved if information is not freely available
- Without knowing which foods contain GMOs, we can't conduct large-scale epidemiological studies to determine whether they are effecting human health

**For these reasons, and all of those stated previously in this article, the Olympia Food Co-op strongly supports I-522 and urges our members to contribute, volunteer, and vote YES in November's election. For more on the I-522 campaign, go to [yeson522.com](http://yeson522.com).**

*\*To review our sources for this article, please see the version on our blog, which includes citations.*





# Press release from the NCGA: National Cooperative Grocers Association Adopts Non-GMO New Item Policy



Official logo for the Non-GMO project

NCGA is a founding member of the National Organic Coalition and a partner in the Just Label It campaign which calls for mandatory labeling of GMOs. We support your shoppers' rights to make informed purchase decisions and remain committed to providing them with the educational resources they need to make the best decisions for themselves. Members of the NCGA are excited to announce that we are adopting a new policy for NCGA's New Item program.

The new policy reads:  
*Effective January 2014, NCGA will require that any new items introduced through our New Item program that are produced with "high-risk" crops or monitored crops (or contain ingredients derived from them), excluding animal products, be Non-GMO verified by the Non-GMO Project.*

This policy applies to new items introduced through the NCGA New Item program only. New items are critical to the success of most any food manufacturer and any retailer. By enacting this policy for our New Item program we can impact the items being introduced for sale in the natural products marketplace prior to those items being launched in our industry, and we can take action on these items now. This policy will send a clear message to our industry partners about the importance of GMO labeling and provide consumers seeking to avoid genetically engineered foods with a

reliable, third-party verification that manufacturers have taken every reasonable measure to ensure that these products don't contain GMOs.

### What are high-risk or monitored crops?

The Non-GMO Project's standards segment agricultural products into two groups: (1) those that are high-risk of being GMO because they are currently in commercial production, and (2) those that have a monitored risk because suspected or known incidents of contamination have occurred and/or the crops have genetically modified relatives in commercial production with which cross-pollination (and consequently contamination) is possible.

The following are considered to be "high risk" crops:

- Alfalfa (*first GE planting 2011*)
- Canola (*approx. 90% of U.S. crop is GE*)
- Corn (*approx. 88% of U.S. crop in 2011 is GE*)
- Cotton (*approx. 90% of U.S. crop in 2011 is GE*)
- Hawaiian papaya (*most of Hawaiian crop; approximately 988 acres is GE*)
- Soy (*approx. 94% of U.S. crop in 2011 is GE*)
- Sugar Beets (*approx. 95% of U.S. crop in 2010 is GE*)
- Zucchini and Yellow Summer Squash (*approx. 25,000 acres*)

According to the Non-GMO Project's verification standard, ingredients derived from these items must be tested every time prior to use in Non-GMO Project Verified products. As new GE crops are introduced, they are added to this list.

Monitored crops are those for which suspected or known incidents of contamination have occurred, and those crops which have genetically modified relatives in commercial production with which crosspollination is possible. The Non-GMO Project regularly tests products containing these items to assess risk and if contamination is observed crops may be

moved from "monitored" to high risk.

At present the following are considered "monitored" crops by the Non-GMO Project:

- Beta vulgaris (*e.g., chard, table beets*)
- Brassica napa (*e.g., rutabaga, Siberian kale*)
- Brassica rapa (*e.g., bok choy, mizuna, Chinese cabbage, turnip, rapini, tatsoi*)
- Cucurbit (*acorn squash, delicata squash, patty pan*)
- Flax
- Rice
- Wheat



Even the humble summer squash is a high-risk crop

### If a new item is certified organic, does it still need to be Non-GMO Project verified?

No. GMOs are an excluded method (not allowable) under the National Organic Program. Organic farmers and growers work very hard to ensure that their crops and products are free of both pesticide residue and pollen drift (which could be from GMO crops) from neighboring farms and their management plans are reviewed in the certification process. Under the National Organic Program, when products are labeled "100% organic," "organic," or just "made with organic ingredients," then even the non-organic ingredients cannot be produced from GMOs. For example, products labeled as "made with organic ingredients" only require that 70% of the ingredients are organic, but 100% must be non-GMO.

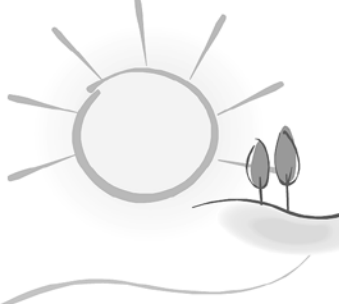
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Jennifer Shafer, LMP #MA00010686  
Lynn Perry, LMP #MA60212995  
Ingrid Abbott, LMP #MA60290880  
Holly Hartung, LMP #MA60314679

# Join the Board of Directors!

Applications due: September 1 by 9pm — Elections: October 15 - November 15



The Olympia Food Co-op Board of Directors is the elected body that represents the membership. The Board establishes policies, oversees the operating and capital budgets, approves plans and recommendations, and sets general guidelines for staff and working members. The Board holds ultimate legal responsibility for the operations and actions of the Co-op.

Board members receive volunteer working member credit for their time spent in Board and committee meetings. The monthly hour commitment ranges between 10 to 20 hours.

The Board meets once a month. Each Board member is required to join 2-3 committees which also meet 1-2 times per month (though this will vary from committee to committee). These committees establish plans and policies that are then passed on to the Board or membership for approval. The standing committees include Finance, Personnel, Outreach, Hiring, Co-op Development, the Local Committee (farms, foods and products), and Member Relations. Temporary committees may be formed to deal with specific short-term projects (Expansion, International Year of the Co-op, etc.).

**To be eligible to run for the Board you must be a member of the Co-op with a current address on file, and you must be willing to make a 2-year commitment.** Board members are elected for two-year terms and may serve for a maximum of two consecutive terms. This year the Board has four positions to fill. The newly elected Board members will receive an in-depth training on consensus decision-making; anti-oppression; the Co-op's finances, policies and general procedures; and a history of the organization.

**The election will be held from October 15 to November 15.** New Board members will be asked to attend the November and December Board meetings to begin their training and meet the current Board members, and they will officially begin their term in January.

**If you are interested in running for the Board, you must fill out the application and submit it and a current digital photo of yourself to [boardapplication@olympiafood.coop](mailto:boardapplication@olympiafood.coop) by 9pm on September 1st.**

**This information will be printed in the October/November Co-op News and ballot.**

*Take this opportunity to be an active participant in your Co-op's future and the future of our community!*

*For more information contact Fern at [boardapplication@olympiafood.coop](mailto:boardapplication@olympiafood.coop)*

## Board of Directors Application

*Please answer the following questions and email them, along with a current digital photograph of yourself, to [boardapplication@olympiafood.coop](mailto:boardapplication@olympiafood.coop). \* There is a strict, combined 500 word limit to your responses.*

**NAME:**

**EMAIL ADDRESS:**

**PHONE NUMBERS:**

**1. Why do you want to be on the Co-op Board of Directors?**

**2. What general abilities would you bring to the Board? What specific abilities and experiences would you offer to help provide direction in dealing with the Co-op's challenges?**

**3. What do you see as current strengths of the Co-op that you would like to see maintained? What would you like to see changed?**

**4. What vision do you have for the Co-op for the next five years?**

**5. Other comments**

*\*Applications will only be accepted by email at [boardapplication@olympiafood.coop](mailto:boardapplication@olympiafood.coop), unless a reasonable accommodation is needed and requested.*





Cucina Ciacetta marinara is made locally from classic Italian ingredients.

photo by Jennifer Crain

# Sauce on Sundays

## Homemade Marinara from Cucina Ciacetta

By **Jennifer Crain**, Co-op Member

Over an Ethiopian meal in Seattle last year, Christine Ciacetta was brainstorming her next career step with friends when one of them said, off the cuff, “You should cook for people!”

The idea had, of course, occurred to her. Ciacetta has been cooking ever since her ambitious inaugural dish – a blackberry pie made when she was seven, just after she became a fluent reader, from berries she picked during a stay at her family’s lake house in upstate New York.

A first-grader doesn’t make a solo attempt at pie crust by accident. Like an olive curing in a vat, Ciacetta was brined in the culture of cooking from an early age, immersed in what we now call “slow food.”

When she was growing up, Ciacetta (pronounced chehn-CHEH-tuh) ate lots of homemade food, courtesy of the Italian side of her family. By the time they arrived at her aunt’s house for a Sunday meal, someone would already be scooping up handfuls of homemade pasta from the pasta-drying sheet and dropping them into a huge pot of boiling water. (A special bed sheet, designated for the purpose, would be draped over a bed where the pasta would rest for a couple of hours. She says to dry enough pasta for 25 people, you need that much space.)

At her own family’s house, Sundays often meant her father’s marinara. Walking into the house through the garage, Ciacetta was enveloped by the rich,

penetrating scent of garlic, onion, and tomato mingling in a pot on the stove inside.

The olfactory memory ended up defining the business she started shortly after the Seattle conversation.

Cucina Ciacetta specializes in fresh marinara sauce, offered as a fresh, Olympia-made alternative to jarred or canned sauces (think of the difference between salsas in the cooler and shelf-stable versions). Ciacetta makes each batch by hand, cooking down the same ingredients her father’s mother used: tomatoes, garlic, onions, olive oil, salt, parsley and spices.

When her grandmother was growing up in the Abruzzo region of Italy, these were the ingredients on hand. She learned to cook them together in a way that brings out the natural sweetness in the onion, mellows the

garlic, highlights the tart tomato.

Ciacetta says her family marinara is a quintessential Italian food, with the flavor of each ingredient remaining distinct.

*continued on facing page*

Oregano  
spices the air  
and my fingers  
as I harvest my first cutting.  
Sunlight is captured  
in leaves  
that will brighten  
rain-soaked winter spirits and  
tongues that hunger  
for tastes of summer.  
~ Linda Lee Tatro ~



Cucina Ciacnetta continued from facing page

The resulting sauce is what would now be described as “rustic.” And it is – uncomplicated and fresh.

Ciacnetta loves to point out that Italian cuisine is the predecessor of modern French cuisine, though she does so with more a gentle ribbing than a true bias. Many venerated French dishes are rooted in Italian cooking tradition, she says, and act as its inverse, obscuring the flavors of individual ingredients, making the two “perfect foils for one another.”

Ciacnetta, in fact, is enthusiastic about almost any cuisine. A self-described “international junkie,” she ran the international programs at The Evergreen State College for seven years after studying abroad three times during her own college tenure (twice in London, once in Paris). While abroad, she practiced her “hobby of eating” in town and on side trips all around Europe as well as in Egypt and Thailand, trying as many different dishes as possible. During the same period, she also took a long trip to Chieti, Italy to spend time with her extended family in the mountainous region that had such a profound impact on her childhood food experiences.

Her openness to tasting new things combined with exposure to whole foods cooking has led to a deep and enthusiastic belief in the link between food and culture, a value she aims to share with her customers. She also aims to help people embrace a fresh, locally prepared product and use it as a springboard for cooking other meals.

To that end, Ciacnetta taught her first cooking class through the Co-op in the spring and will follow it with a second class on Italian soups (keep an eye out for the fall schedule). If you’d like to catch her elsewhere in the community, she’s kitchen assisting at the August 24, Colvin Ranch/Slow Food Farm-to-Table dinner and demonstrating “Quick & Fresh Italian Sauces” at a Slow Food Farmer’s Market Demo on September 8 (information on both events at [slowfoodolympia.org](http://slowfoodolympia.org)). She also teaches Italian cooking classes at Bayview School of Cooking ([bayviewschoolofcooking.com](http://bayviewschoolofcooking.com)).

As an instructor, Ciacnetta aims to give her students courage, information, “and hopefully some joy. I’m crazy about people learning how to nourish other people and feed themselves in other ways. I understand the impulse to just stick with what you know, but fearlessness in the kitchen is just such a joy.”

Co-op shoppers can pick up Cucina Ciacnetta’s marinara in the cooler at the Westside store

To find out more, visit [cucinaciacnetta.com](http://cucinaciacnetta.com).



Christine Ciacnetta cooks up a batch of her marinara. Her locally made sauce is available in the cooler at the Westside store.

photo by Jennifer Crain

# Volunteer Profile: Christopher Dobbins

By Desdra Dawning, Co-op Member

Christopher brings to the OFC a very rich background story, woven together from his ancestral heritage, his childhood, and his amazing experiences with the US Army. Born in 1964 in Columbus, Ohio, Chris moved with his family shortly afterward to Conway, Pennsylvania. This town, 90% populated by Eastern European immigrants of Italian, Serbian, and Greek descents, lay in a steel-mill-lined valley just a little north of industrial Pittsburg. It was here that he attended elementary school, where, as he puts it, “if you saw a school photo with a black child, it was either me or one of my four siblings.”



Christopher Dobbins photo by Desdra Dawning

It is here, with his family, where his rich ancestral/cultural heritage comes in. His father grew up in a very rural part of North Carolina/Appalachia country, surrounded by tobacco fields and moonshine operations—coming himself from an Irish mother who migrated to America during the potato famine, and a West African/Mediterranean father. Chris points out that even with the “multi-cultural dynamic,” of their relationship, his grandparents experienced little racism during this time in the South, because they lived in such rural conditions that all focus was put on sustenance—there was no time amongst their neighbors for racist attitudes. And then there was Chris’ mother, who grew up as a share-cropper’s daughter with slavery heritage in Georgia, cutting cane, picking cotton and peanuts, and also living in a very rural/agrarian environment.

Chris’ parents were “part of the migration of the African-American slave-legacy population that moved northwards right before and during WWII,” Chris says. His father went to work for Penn-Central Railroad, doing maintenance and refueling diesel locomotives, as Chris and his siblings developed a world-view flavored by Eastern and Southern European immigrants in the steel-belt of America.

Then, in 1975, came a “total system shock,” when his family moved from Conway back to Columbus, Ohio, just as Chris was entering his middle school years. The cultural dynamics reversed, as he came to live in an 80% African-American housing project in “The Bottoms,” a very roughneck, heavily industrial, inner-city section of Columbus. His middle school was populated by a mix of Afro-American and White Appalachian cultural influences. I asked him about his experience with racism there, and he shared with me that he saw much more racial tension than he had experienced

continued on page 13

# Community Sustaining Fund of Thurston County Celebrates 25th Year

Would you like to see something change for the better or know someone that does?

We are always on the lookout for good ideas to fund. For the past 25 years, the Community Sustaining Fund (CSF) has plotted a path to award ‘micro grants’ to people and organizations in the Thurston County area. CSF was formed in 1987 in response to the lack of funds available for developing and maintaining local social change activities and began awarding grants in 1989. Given this anniversary milestone we thought it timely to give Co-op members and friends an update on our recent efforts.

But first let’s review who we are and what we do...

**The CSF provides grant support for progressive, community-oriented projects in Thurston County aimed at creating and sustaining a democratic, just, nonviolent, and ecologically sound society. CSF supports groups and individuals that are actively working to educate and involve this community in challenging and correcting the social, environmental and economic inequities around us. CSF is a completely volunteer-run organization. Our leadership group is committed to the principles of consensus-based decision making, cultural diversity and sustainability.**

The CSF is supported by businesses and individuals through direct donations or by voluntary markups at the new cash register by shoppers at both Olympia Food Co-op stores. Typically, Co-op “round-ups” constitute about 75% of our annual revenue but that percentage has dropped in the last few years – more on that later. Grants are awarded on a semi-annual basis in the Spring and Fall, generally around Olympia Arts Walk weekend, and typically range between \$100-1000. We tend to support and assist innovative ideas through one-time infusions of funds rather than with operational funds. We have funded well over

continued on page 12



Celebrate Our Gifts ~ Cultivate Community ~ Dwell in Possibility

# Love Our Local Fest 2013



The intersection of Bethel and SF Streets sets the stage for group activities during the festival

photo by

By Daniel Landin, Co-op and Trillium Power Productions Member

Trillium Power Productions is thrilled to invite you to the third annual **LOVE OUR LOCAL FEST!**

Olympia, as the three blocks emanating from this intersection will be pedestrian only (no cars!) for the whole day. Sharing a day of music, inspirational speakers, delicious food, creativity, friends and fun, we will showcase many aspects of our

This free event will take place at the intersection of San Francisco Ave and Bethel St NE, on Sunday August 25 from 1 – 9 pm. And it is going to be fun!

The whole community is invited to celebrate life together in the streets, in the heart of the North East Neighborhood of

local community and economy. An artisan market, a children’s area, healing artists, the painting of an intersection, and local non-profits fill in our celebration’s unique village microcosm.

Our three-fold mission, Celebrate Our Gifts ~ Cultivate Community ~ Dwell in Possibility, guides the facilitation of this one-day festival. As organizer Marie Poland says, “Love Our Local Fest is a great representation of collaboration in action. I consider simple celebrations like this one integral to our evolution as humans.” Marie is a remarkable speaker and facilitator and will be inviting visionary community activists, business owners, healers, and other community members to speak at Love Our Local Fest throughout the day. There will also be a soapbox on site so that truly everyone has a platform to speak at LOLF.

## Celebrate Our Gifts

The Olympia area is rich with inspired and talented people, working hard all year long to make our home a better place. Love Our Local Fest celebrates an artisan market place featuring the wares of our most talented and creative crafters and local growers. Organized by upcycling clothier Shari Trnka, this is decidedly a market for things created and grown here.

This market is a straightforward way to support our local economy, where a dollar spent is a dollar that stays right here in the community. This year we are encouraging artisans to do on-site demos of their crafting. This will educate folks about the labor of the crafters they are supporting, and make things more fun and interesting!

## Cultivate Community

Music draws people together across the world, and right here in Olympia! There will be two stages of live music, featuring artists entirely from the South Sound... and this means dancing in the street! We are very excited to have the jam rock reggae of High Ceiling, acoustic roots rock legend Mudcat, classical Indian music from Rag Dharma, and the original bluegrass of The Pine Hearts, to name a select few.

There will also be salsa dancing with instruction, a 1960’s dance party, physical theater, and much, much more. Keep an eye on [loveourlocalfest.org](http://loveourlocalfest.org) for an updated schedule as August 25th nears. We are absolutely amazed at the talented artists we will have on stage for Love Our Local Fest this year.

There will also be great food, fun activities for kids throughout the day, revelry, and the intersection will be repainted with the trillium flower designed and painted at LOLF 2012.

## Dwell In Possibility

Love Our Local Fest strives to invite the great offerings of our area to shine. If your modality is something that can be represented at a one-day festival in August, please contact us. There are more ways to participate than we know, so let us know! Email [loveourlocalfest@gmail.com](mailto:loveourlocalfest@gmail.com)

We dwell in the possibility that there is more than meets the eye, there exists joy beyond what can be planned, and that by dwelling with community in a space that is quite typically an arterial for autos, we may bring beauty into the world we wouldn’t have imagined. We might meet new people, discover new aspects of our town, and...?

One thing rising from the possibility this year is a Healing Arts Pod. There will be an area set up at LOLF this year for healing practitioners to share their gifts with the community. At the time of this writing, an amazing group of local healers has come together to facilitate the Healing Arts area, and we are dwelling in the possibility of how awesome and nurturing this will be.



Local vendors catch the the eyes and interests of festival participants.

photo by Joel Kluger

**Volunteering/Sponsorship~**  
This is a volunteer supported and locally sponsored event. We are encouraging people to be in contact with us to find ways to participate. People-power and money are required to make this happen. Please visit [www.loveourlocalfest.org](http://www.loveourlocalfest.org) to get involved.

**We can’t wait to share this day of celebration with you!**



# Board Report

## Report back from the NCGA Leadership Conference

By **Dani Madrone**, Board Member

The past seven months since I began my term on the Board, I have enjoyed learning about the inner workings of the Olympia Food Co-op. I have been serving on the Member Relations committee and the Bylaws Review committee, researching how other co-ops have evolved over the years, and sitting outside the store having lemonade with members.

On the Member Relations Committee, we have been developing protocol for responding to inappropriate behavior at the Co-op. These behaviors include verbal and physical aggression, shoplifting, discriminatory comments, loitering after store hours, soliciting money, and use of illegal substances. With the values of inclusiveness and access, we are working on a policy to ensure the safety of the customers, volunteers and staff. We are also developing a list of member rights and responsibilities and planning the follow-up to the Co-op Conversation.

Our bylaws are under review because a few of them are outdated. As the Co-op has grown and matured, we found that some of the original bylaws no longer serve our needs as an organization.

One of these items is the length of Board terms. Because we serve two-year terms, we lose half of our Board with every election. This leads to a short institutional memory, and slows down the Co-op. I researched the board terms of many other co-ops in the area, and all but one of them did three-year terms to stagger the Board.

More details can be found in this newsletter about the proposed changes, which will be part of the next election season. We welcome feedback and suggestions. Which reminds me, the election season will be up before we know it! Please be sure to update your information with the Co-op if you have moved or have had a change in membership status so that you can be eligible to vote. If you are interested in serving on the Board, applications for running in the election will be available soon. Stay tuned!

I have especially enjoyed hearing from members about the vision for the Olympia Food Co-op, either in conversation or at our meetings. If you have something you would like to share, please visit us at our monthly meeting at the downtown office at 6:30pm every third Thursday.

### GMO Article Response

continued from page 5

tumors in rats, in a widely publicized debate against notable genetic and agricultural researchers. No clear reason was given by Smith (Seralini also backed out) as to why he suddenly backed out. Where actual scientists are seeking open-air discussion, Smith insists on hiding behind insinuation and unverifiable claims.

What was most egregious about the newsletter's recent feature is the complete omission of the proven benefits GM crops have had and the potential benefits that they possess. Consider GE "Golden Rice", rice fortified with beta carotene.

At a time when hundreds of thousands of children in rice-growing regions are going blind from vitamin A deficiency, this strikes us as a strange omission. Also, consider the increase in farmer income in India where, contrary to popularly held beliefs, farmers are benefitting from better yields and less pesticide applications from genetically engineered Bt cotton. Indeed, the world has seen remarkable reductions in pesticides where GMOs are utilized. As proponents of responsible ecological management, this is a glaring omission.

Our view is that the FAO is correct. The benefits of GM

crops are real, and biotechnology has tremendous potential to be a force for good in the world. However, biotechnology is locked in a regulatory and economic matrix that keeps these benefits out of the hands of the people who need them most. Demonizing the technology and misrepresenting the science on GMOs only serves to delay expanding these technologies to those in need, and hinders the organization of a political movement that could reform unjust policies regarding food regulations, biological patents, and commercial agriculture. It is our view that these are the issues the Co-op should dedicate itself to.

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## Upcoming Volunteer Program Orientations

*Be a weekly Volunteer in the store!*

Come tour the store and learn about volunteer opportunities (including cashiering, stocking, and more) at the Co-op. If you are interested in volunteering, please attend this 2-hour orientation.

### Eastside:

Sunday, August 4.....11am-1pm  
Tuesday, August 6.....5:30-7:30pm  
Sunday, September 1.....11am-1pm  
Tuesday, September 3.....5:30-7:30pm

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







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# Think TULIP for Your Back To School Needs!

By Juliann Matson, Tulip Marketing Rep

Fall is just around the corner and with it brings a new school year, then the winter holidays and then... The New Year! Do you have kids with back-to-school needs, including supplies and clothes? Perhaps 2014 will hold the key to unlocking a dream that you have about your future and a loan from Tulip will be the pathway!

Is it time for your child to have a new computer for school? Or perhaps a tablet is required. Gone are the days of the simple Pee Chee and pencils and Toughskins. Sending the kids back to school can be a large strain when you are living check to check. Let Tulip help take some of the load off your shoulders. We offer several loan and savings options to help you with your seasonal needs, as well as vacation loans, small business micro loans, car loans, tuition assistance and more.

### Why Borrow?

Do you often dream of being able to buy your kids all of the school clothes for which they long or even the school supplies of their choice? How about providing that special gift? Perhaps a family vacation in the winter? Would a new/new-to-you car help you get back and forth easier? People move from poverty to sustainability not only by managing their income but also by accumulating assets. Savings, investments, and ownership are the factors that can lead people to financial self-sufficiency. The process of paying over time is the most common way that people of limited means can build asses and enjoy the financial security that comes with financial responsibility.

### How Tulip is Different!

Our aim is to make loans accessible to our members at a cost that is lower than they would pay elsewhere. Often, borrowers have no alternative but to turn to check cashing services, pawnshops, and payday lenders for the funds to cover the cost of life. While these services can be effective in the short run to cover an expense that must be paid, they can be expensive with many charging high fees for their services. Paying high prices for routine financial services lowers the amount of take-home income for

those who use them. Tulip's goal is to make loans accessible to our members at a cost that is lower than they would otherwise pay.

Another way Tulip is different is that we provide the option to put money away in a savings account while you pay off your Tulip loan. When you need to borrow money for back-to-school, auto repair or holiday gifts, consider increasing your payment and put that amount into a club or event savings account so that next year or next time the event occurs, you have the money in savings and you won't need to borrow, moving you even closer to financial self-sufficiency!

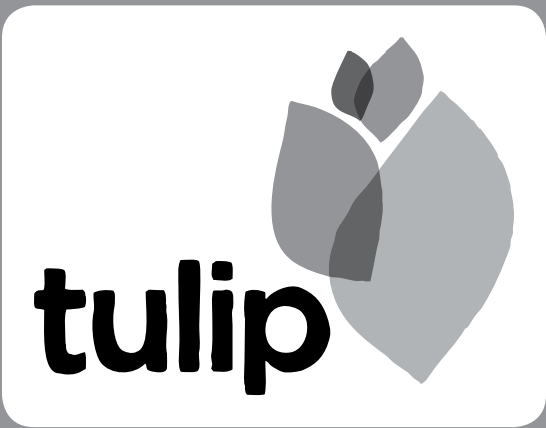
### What Tulip Offers!

We offer personal loans of up to \$2,000 and automobile loans of up to \$25,000. In addition to loans, we provide savings accounts designed to help you with life's activities as well as guide you towards achieving your financial goals. We also give advice about the lending process and provide credit counseling, which includes finding ways to help our members improve their credit and work with them to get the best loan to fit their needs.

### Contact Us Today!

Not a member yet? It's easy to join Tulip! Your membership at the Olympia Food Co-op is all you need. Our member branch is located in the East-side Co-op. Our days/hours of operation are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 11:00am – 6:00pm and Tuesday and Thursday 11:00am – 2:00pm. Call us 360-770-2292, email [info@tulipcu.coop](mailto:info@tulipcu.coop) or check out <http://www.tulipcu.coop>.

**Contact us today to find out how we can help you with your Back-To-School and year-long needs!**



### Community Sustaining Fund

continued from page 9

200 projects to date, including many familiar institutions (Stonewall Youth, Dispute Resolution Center, Sustainable South Sound, Hands-On Children's Museum, SPEECH, Works in Progress, Olympia Family Theater) along with numerous other projects and organizations not as well-known but still critically important to building a thriving Thurston County.

While our original model for providing funding for eligible projects has not changed since our beginning, we are striving

to have our little group fully join the 21st century. In the last few years we have converted our stodgy data base to an email software program; launched a website; retooled our logo; and strive for a paperless grants submission process via our website (which we achieved in our last cycle!). We are now embarking on a stronger branding campaign, including getting a stronger in-store presence in both Co-op stores (which has been lacking for some time). We also have some new ideas to strengthen our partnership with the Co-op, and plan to engage Co-op staff and board over

the remainder of this calendar year in that conversation.

In the meantime, please remember to "round-up" at the cash register when you shop at the Co-op. Be part of an innovative and fairly unique community reinvestment process that has lasted more than a generation – now that's sustainability! We want to increase our accountability through more outreach (like this article), tabling, through our website and more.

## Thank you for sharing our 25th year!



Christos continued from page 2

without the ability to determine the quality of the food they were being served, or where their food dollars were going. And so Students Organizing for Food Autonomy (SOFA) was born, with the goal of forcing the school’s administration to stop their practice of contracting out all food services on campus. After some time, and with great resistance from the administration, however, SOFA decided to let go of the battle, switch gears, and accept the administration’s offer to start a student-run cafe on campus. From this, the Flaming Eggplant was formed, becoming an alternative for students on campus who wish to have choices other than the corporate dining hall. It is still in operation today. It was from his work at “The Eggplant” that Cristos discovered and became grounded in the principles of co-operation, consensus decision-making, social justice and health through nutrition. In fact, he admits that “we borrowed very

heavily from the Co-op when it came to designing our policies at the cafe. The Co-op was very supportive of that and happy to hand down their documents so we had something to start with, essentially.”

After working for a year in the cafe, Cristos became eligible for Work Study on campus. As he puts it, “having work study at Evergreen provided me with the opportunity to get training in jobs that are hard to get entry-level positions in. My desire was to use it either toward potential work at the Olympia Library, work as a carpenter, or work at the Olympia Food Co-op.” In order to head in any of these directions, he would need to take a Work Study position on campus at the Evergreen Library, at the Wood Shop, or continue working at the Flaming Eggplant, learning more about good food and cooperative business practices, and gaining marketable skills for working at the Co-op. Examining his own deeper desires and intentions,

and realizing that what he most wanted to do was to “work in a collective, non-hierarchical, food-based system,” he chose to keep working at the cafe, serving there from December of 2008 to December of 2012—“the longest job I ever had,” he says. The happy ending/beginning to this story? In March of 2013, Cristos was hired on as a new Staff Member of the Olympia Food Co-op, on track to joining the Staff Collective! Hooray for a “college education” with all of the twists and turns it can take!

I asked Cristos why the Co-op was important to him. He thought for a minute, then took me back to his east coast beginnings. “I came to Olympia,” he told me, “from a small, crummy suburban town in New Jersey, so the Co-op was an amazing place to me—like you could go to a grocery store and actually find food you want to eat! It was incredibly shocking.” And now, having been a member for some years, watching the Co-op go through its growth

and maturation, he adds, “I have come to view the Co-op as an engine in this town, creating most things I am excited about. The way they go about supporting local farms is important to me. I’ve talked to some farmers who say they do half of their business with the Co-op and without that they don’t know what they would have done.” Another important community service created through the Co-op? It was “the brilliant idea the Co-op had to open its own bank (TULIP). There was a place people could now bank without getting scammed by...those other banks.” And finally in the list of Co-op-oriented activities close to his heart—the way the Co-op chooses to circulate its finances—through loans to other cooperative efforts, their “constant willingness to give groups a small one-time donation to benefit their process,” and through the “redistributing of their profits through grants at the end of the year.” Cristos then adds, “I just see the Co-op as being a very important and

useful tool in what this town has to offer. It is a big part of what makes Olympia an enjoyable place to be.”

Cristos has seen over the years how other co-ops around the country, who started as Olympia Food Co-op did, with a collective staff, have switched to the general manager/hierarchical approach. The fact that OFC has not followed this trend “makes the Co-op all the more amazing to me,” he says. “They continue to stand by their structures and be successful at that. It’s something I wanted to be a part of.”

And now he is. Since March, Cristos has seen his desire become reality as he moves into his role as a new hire of the Olympia Food Co-op Staff, proposed to become a member of the collective. So welcome, Cristos, as a new and valued contributor to the vitality and successful continuation of our Co-op! Your experience in and enthusiasm for cooperative principles will serve us all well.

Christopher Dobbins

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in Pennsylvania, “more of a multi-cultural mix of violence, intimidation and coercion.” Finding it hard to integrate with his fellow students at the school, he adds, “My identity was not in harmony with the rest of the African-American community down there. I couldn’t identify with them. That caused me to be ostracized more often than not. How I linguistically expressed myself, what clothes I wore, my values and ideas—all of my cultural influences were Eastern and Southern European.” In the midst of this “tough transition,” however, Chris discovered that in this predominantly working class neighborhood, a kid who fought against you one day over lunch money or “some trivial cultural bias myth his family held dear,” could switch and “have your back” on another day “if someone came into The Bottoms from some other area of Columbus to start problems.” Musing over this, he adds, “I’m actually amazed we did as well as we did—things didn’t usually get too out of hand. Strange...I never really did get how it all worked.”

By high school, Chris’ family had moved five miles out of the city to a suburban area and once again the cultural dynamics changed for him. “Now,” he says, “black children and other minorities made up only a fraction of the children in school.” The best thing, he recalls, about his high school years, was his participation in a 3-year program offered at his school called Vocational Horticulture. This came at the same time that his father was teaching him how to fish and hunt—and how to raise chickens and rabbits for food—and his mother was foraging the neighborhood for greens. Being a teenager, he thought of her as a little crazy, but

soon came to appreciate how “she knew certain areas of the community where this stuff would grow wild.” And in addition to learning from his mother about plants for sustenance, he also learned how well they could cure some medical problems. Between his school horticultural program (where he joined the Future Farmers of America) and his agrarian parents, Chris received a strong foundation in agriculture that sparked his interest in science and environmental studies, and today colors his values about conscious, sustainable living. “We had,” he recalls of his family and their gardening and self-sufficiency, “an idea of where our food came from—there was a labor of love and sustenance. We learned that milk comes from cows, not the refrigerator.” And today, he passes on his commitment to know “where our food, shelter, and water come from” to his own son.

Before his son showed up in Chris’ life, however, another chapter opened up for him. As often happens for young men as they come to the leaving-home age, but have no sense of direction, an Army recruiter showed up at Chris’ high school his senior year, painting a very tempting picture of how to gain employable skills and be freed from Columbus, Ohio. By 1984, now 19 years of age, assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division, and field-managed by the Army Corps of Engineers, he found himself on his way to South Korea, to be stationed halfway between Seoul and the DMZ. His first time away from family, Chris joined a group of his fellows who liked to hike, venturing out into the countryside to discover cultural life among South Korean villagers. And then there was the food. With no McDonald’s or KFC, and plenty of mingling with the locals, Chris admits, “I came back (to the US) and

totally lost my desire for fast food.” And it was in South Korea that he met and married Barbara, a fellow service member who worked there in Intelligence.

After a brief return to the US, they were sent to Wuerzburg, Germany, where their son Galen was born in 1989. Again, Chris dove into the local culture, attempting to learn language basics and to observe the culture. His wife, Barbara, added to their rich experience with her “keen emphasis on the importance of integrating into the local German community,” and soon they found off-base housing, “visited historic sites, participated in seasonal events, and attempted to adapt to local customs and courtesies.” Both recognized the importance of being seen as a ‘guest citizen’ rather than just another ‘American Joe,’” adding as he thinks about it, “‘The Ugly American’ is truly ugly indeed when he is neglectfully, culturally-ignorant—not that I was perfect.”

Both Chris and his wife could see that they were a part of a build-up of troops, with the expectation of a major conflict, based on the way things

were going between the Warsaw Pact and NATO forces. Instead, what they witnessed, in real-time on their German TV’s was the actual tearing down of The Wall, and border guards shaking hands. When I asked him how he felt watching that, he replied, “It was incredibly numbing—surreal—the mindset up to that point had been that we were going to have a conflict.” He goes on to share that even the US Intelligence didn’t really know what was going on to predict such an “epic event,” and that “the biggest continued on page 14



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August / September 2013

COOP NEWS

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Christopher Dobbins

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lesson I learned was that your perceptions and the reality of what happens (don't always match up)."

Following Chris' four years in Germany, his marriage dissolved, and the remainder of his 26-year career in the military took him to places around the globe that gave him an education in world events he could not have had sitting, as many Americans do, watching the news on his living-room TV. Courtesy of the US Army, Chris spent time in Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo, Columbia and Bolivia, and Iraq, with his final stop in Ft. Lewis, where he retired from active duty in April of 2011.



Chris currently stocks the bulk section at the Eastside store

I asked Chris, a member of OFC since 1997, how he ended up as a volunteer in the bulk section of the Eastside store, serving first as a Courtesy Clerk in June of 2012 and moving to Bulk Stocker in October. In summary of the story he had just told me, he answered, "All that experience has taught me quite a few things about history, about humanity, about culture, truth, honesty—about how important resilience is for a community—and about how critical it is for people to be attached to the earth that they live on—that they have the ability to get their sustenance from it. The Co-op has a mission to support local agriculture and also local education, with significant outreach. That's what drew me to the Co-op. I share that basic mission statement of building resilience, sustenance, and understanding of where our food comes from—and the impact of that. The impact of who you're buying from, and the conditions that they're living under, and growing under. The things that this food does to us. Where it's coming from—does it have synthetic alterations that are going into it. The humanity behind its production. How something so basic as food affects people—when they don't have the ability to get it—how that helps shape their culture. As I moved forward from all this experience in the military, one of the things (I was trying to figure out) was—how to take all this experience and do good." He described how he had envisioned himself, rolling up in an armored vehicle with guns and equipment, and rather than wreaking havoc, asking the people there, "How are your children? How is your community? How are you going to feed yourself today? Tomorrow? How are you going to take care of your future generations? Do you have free will in your decisions to determine what goes on in your community?" Becoming a part of the solution, rather than the problem.

Volunteer Program continued from page 1

allows for the expansion of services, and makes possible the many ways that the Co-op serves the greater Olympia community.

The Volunteer Member Program is structured in such a way that those interested in becoming Volunteer Members can benefit in a variety of ways. They are able to learn about the Co-op and the cooperative process from the inside out, meet new people, gain new job-marketable skills, and receive a discount on their groceries. Built into the volunteer system is also a community service aspect that encourages the participation of many partnership programs: Transition, a program offered through the Olympia School District, provides real-life experience and vocational skill-building by connecting students to the Co-op Volunteer Program. LINC'S, the Tumwater School District's Transition Program, by working closely with the Co-op Volunteer Program, gives its 18-21 year-old developmentally disabled students a way to gain job skills for future employment. Thurston County's Behavioral Health Services (BHS), through their Pathfinder Program, helps its clients gain work skills and confidence in themselves. WorkSource sends people who are looking for work to the Co-op's doors—introducing them to the art of volunteering as a way to become more employable. Through North Thurston Public Schools, developmentally delayed students from River Ridge High School can learn skills that will enable them to get jobs in the community. Students from the International Lingual School at The Evergreen State College practice their English through volunteering at the Co-op. Coffee Creek Community, a communal gardening family in Chehalis, volunteers regularly as a group at the Co-op. Career Services at South Puget Sound Community College takes advantage of the volunteer program, and Olympia's Community Youth Services (CYS) pays its students to volunteer at the Co-op in order to gain skills for future employment. Together, these and other local organizations participate with the Co-op in some serious community-building. The Co-op's Volunteer Coordinators – consisting of Co-op Staff Collective Members Alejandro Rugarcia, Heather Fink, Diana Pisco and Rafael Ruiz – work hard to insure that the volunteer program effectively serves all of these populations.

Basic Requirements of the Volunteer Member Program

All volunteers must be a member of the Co-op. They need to make at least a 3-month commitment to participate as a volunteer. It is important that they are dependable, have a cooperative spirit, are self-motivated, and have good communication skills. And all new volunteers must attend a full training series that takes 3-4 weeks to complete before they can begin their volunteer positions.

Volunteer Member Training Series

Potential volunteers must attend two orientations, meeting for 2 to 2 1/2 hours each, with 2 times to choose from, one evening or one mid-day. A sign-up sheet is available at the Customer Service desk of both Co-op locations.

WEEK 1: First Orientation (1st week of every month) Learn about the mission and history of the Co-op, introduce yourself and tour the store.

WEEK 2: Second Orientation (2nd week of every month) Learn about volunteer position openings, Co-op policies and agreements, and take a safety tour of the store.

WEEKS 3-4: Department Training (3rd week of every month) Personalized training on chosen volunteer position (some positions require more training).

Once the training series is completed, volunteer members can choose among available weekly store assignments, or help with special projects, depending on interests.

We have a long list of weekly store volunteer positions and it is clear that volunteers are a vital and integral part of our healthy and thriving Co-op. Serving to provide a strong foundation for smooth and efficient daily business activities, it is also one of the vehicles through which our food cooperative is able to walk its talk when it comes to its Mission Statement (See the Mission Statement online at [www.olympiafood.coop/mission](http://www.olympiafood.coop/mission) or inside the cover of the Co-op News). By including the membership in the daily operation of both stores, OFC is able to "make good food accessible to more people," and "support efforts to increase the democratic process." Through its community outreach to schools and other socially-conscious organizations, the Co-op "support(s) efforts to foster a socially and economically egalitarian society," and "assist(s) in the development of local community resources."



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# Co-op Community Classes

All Community Kitchen Classes require pre-registration and there is a non-refundable \$5 fee for each class. To register, go to [www.olympiafood.coop](http://www.olympiafood.coop) and click on Classes, or visit one of our stores between the hours of 11-6 to register in person.

**GRuB:** 2016 Elliot Ave NW, Olympia (off Division St, on the Westside)  
**Fertile Ground:** 311 9th Ave SE, Olympia (behind downtown public library)

## Edible Weeds 101 — Tuesday, September 3, 6 - 8pm

Facilitator: Kate Tossey — Location: Eco House at Fertile Ground — Limit: 15

*Come explore the world of edible weeds. This introductory class will help you recognize edible weeds, learn where to locate them, and provide recipe ideas and food safety information. Handouts will be provided, as well as samples to see and taste. Join us for a whole new approach to weeding your yard!*

## Learn to Render Your Own Lard from Pasture Raised Pork — Saturday, September 7, 1 - 3pm

Facilitator: Valarie Burson — Location: GRuB Farmhouse — Limit: 15

## Do-It-Yourself Probiotics:

### *How to Make Fail-Proof Crunchy Raw Sauerkraut to Rebuild Your Gut and Heal Your Body*

Sunday, September 8, 6:30 - 8:30pm

Facilitator: Summer Bock — Location: GRuB Farmhouse — Limit: 30

*In this 2-hour exclusive workshop, I will teach you how to make delicious raw sauerkraut that is filled with probiotics. These beneficial bacteria are known to support your digestion, end constipation, decrease sugar cravings, and boost your vitality. You will learn my secrets and tricks of the trade for how we create the most amazing recipes at my gourmet sauerkraut company, OlyKraut. You will sample sauerkraut, recipes, and instructional handouts. This is a GA/PS and food allergy-friendly event.*

## 100 Ways to Cook Apples this Fall

Saturday, September 21, 3 - 5pm

Facilitator: Stephanie Sears — Location: GRuB Farmhouse — Limit: 15

*Are you looking forward to Fall when you can sip hot apple cider and share your favorite apple pie recipes? Now what are you going to do with the other 50 pounds of apples? Get fresh ideas for apple recipes this year! Learn to make easy applesauce, zesty apple slaw, apple bbq chicken, carrot apple ginger soup, and much. much more.*

## Creating a Thriving Body Ecology — Sunday, September 29, 6:30 - 8:30pm

Facilitator: Summer Bock — Location: GRuB Farmhouse — Limit:30

*Our collective understanding of the germ theory is evolving. You don't just "catch a cold" by having a germ fly up your nose! What has a greater effect in whether or not you get sick is your internal environment, or ecology. Building the right ecology in the human body is essential to not getting sick and increasing vitality. Why do some people get sick and others do not? Learn the dirty details of probiotics and which herbs support digestive regeneration and healing. Discover how rebuilding is the perfect complement to cleansing.*

## Discovering Plants for Personal Healing — Monday, September 30, 6 - 8pm

Facilitator: Peter Brown — Location: Eco House at Fertile Ground — Limit:15

*From the beginning of time, people have had the ability to listen to plants. This introduction to plant work will enable one to start learning from plants that have qualities which can help to heal us with our current challenges. In an experiential setting, we will each find a helper plant. This skill can be used in your everyday life, even when shopping for produce at the Co-op.*

## Making Miso — Sunday, October 6, 6:30 - 8:30pm — Facilitator: Summer Bock — Location: GRuB Farmhouse — Limit:30

*Making Miso is a delicious healing food that is easy to make when you have access to the right starter culture. Join Summer Bock, Health Coach, Herbalist, and Fermentationist, in this action-packed, hands-on, miso making demo and lecture explaining the health benefits and the science of miso. Sample different types of miso, too!*

## Making Soup Healthy and Delicious — Monday, October 7, 6:30 - 8pm

Facilitator: Michelle M. Bilodeau — Location: Mel O'Soup Commercial Kitchen at 303 Capitol Way N. — Limit: 20

*We'll chat about spices, broths, thickeners, and methods while we make a Mel O'Soup favorite. Other subjects covered will be nutrition, storage, and handling of soup, and ingredients.*



**GRuB works to inspire personal and community change in Mason and Thurston Counties of Washington State**

## Sauerkraut 101 — Saturday, October 26, 11am - 15pm — Facilitator: Meghan Hintz — Location: GRuB Farmhouse — Limit: 15

*Raw fermented sauerkraut tastes amazing and is easy to make with inexpensive, widely available ingredients. It is also rich in probiotic bacteria which improve digestion, relieve constipation, increase energy levels and support healthy immune function. This class will include a hands-on demonstration and sauerkraut samples. You'll leave with recipes and instructions so you can confidently create raw fermented sauerkraut in your own kitchen.*

## How to be Healthy on a Vegan Diet — Monday, October 28, 6:30 - 8:30pm

Facilitator: Doug Walsh — Location: Eco House at Fertile Ground — Limit: 30

*It is true that adding more vegan and/or raw foods into your diet can be a fabulous way to support maximizing your health potential. However, just because your meal is "raw" or "vegan" doesn't mean it is good for you. It is actually quite possible to be very unhealthy and seriously deficient in some key nutrients on a vegan diet. In fact, an uneducated vegan is typically not in good health. Come join Doug Walsh, 17 year raw foodist, 25 year vegan, and HealthForce Nutritionals National Educator, as he shares the secrets to being successful long-term on a vegan diet.*



**Fertile Ground provides a beautiful setting for Community Classes**

*photo courtesy Fertile Ground*

## Make Condiments From Scratch:

### *Quick, Easy, and Tastes Good!* — Saturday, October 19, 3 - 5pm

Facilitator: Stephanie Sears — Location: GRuB Farmhouse — Limit: 15

*Is your ketchup really fancy? Is your mayo really REAL? Learn to make your favorite condiments and some new ones, too! It's easy, tasty and your friends will be thoroughly impressed! Come learn how to make avocado mayo, simple ketchup, spicy mustard, and your favorite salad dressings!*

## Quick and Simple Cheeses — Sunday, October 20, 1 - 3pm

Facilitator: Valarie Burson — Location: GRuB Farmhouse — Limit: 15

*Learn how to turn milk into several different cheeses. We will experiment with herbs, spices and more to create a variety of cheeses. You will take home the skills to make cheese in your own kitchen — as well as some tasty cheese!*







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## What is it?

## KID'S CORNER

Last "What is it?" was: **Brazil Nuts**

Congrats to last issue's winners:

**Atalanta, 10; Dallyn, 10; Denali, 9; Elijah, 10; Jace, 10; Juaylo, 10; Liam, 6; Mia, 9; Naiah, 6; Numi, 7; Oliver, 5; Orin, 9; Rowan, 7; Ruby, 8, Ruby, 9**

*If you're 10 or under, guess what is in this photo. Fill out the form and put it in the What Is It? box in the Co-op office, or hand it to a Staff person, by the deadline. Enter once per issue. Guess correctly, and you'll win a \$1.00 gift certificate to spend at the Co-op!*

### What is it?

Deadline: September 1st, 2013

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Guess \_\_\_\_\_

**Please pick up your gift certificate at the store where you dropped off your entry.**

## Join the Celebration!

The Co-op's Ninth Annual

# Harvest Party

& Volunteer Appreciation Day

is Sunday September 8!

All members of the Co-op community are encouraged to join in the fun of celebrating the bounty of our local foods at the Harvest Party Potluck, Sunday, September 9 at Lions Park in Olympia from 1 to 5 pm.

*This party is a casual gathering of everyone who helps make the Co-op and local production possible: local business owners and farmers, Co-op volunteers and staff, and all the members who have loyally shopped at the Co-op for 36 years. It will also be a great opportunity to thank our volunteers for all they do for our organization.*

*We'll be having a big potluck with as much local food and drink as we can come up with – and it's usually quite a lot! Offerings from your home gardens and kitchens are a welcome addition to the feast. Think of all the wonderful green beans, potatoes, lettuce and cabbage (to name just a few things) that are grown right around Olympia and cooked up into lovely dishes for us all to enjoy.*

*This year there will be live music with local talent, as well as entertaining and fun karaoke to dazzle the hungry, local-loving crowd. We will also have some games for all ages and face painting for kids.*

Mark your calendar: The 9th Annual Harvest Party will be at Lions Park (Southeast Olympia at Wilson & 7th) on Sunday September 8 from 1 to 5 pm.



# THE Co-op News

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2013

## Volunteers: The Heart of the Co-op



Readers and the Co-op Respond to GMOs  
Harvest Party  
Time to Run: Board of Directors Election Application