



THE Co-op News

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

DECEMBER 2013 / JANUARY 2014

Staff Profile: Grace and Harry

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

Grace Cox and Harry Levine are coming up on their 30th anniversaries with the Olympia Food Co-op. Both admit that back in 1984, when they first signed on with the Co-op, they had not planned to make it a career. They were, however, both dedicated to the principles the Co-op was founded upon, and inspired by the values being held at that time by many cooperatives around the country, particularly OFC. It is clear that Grace and Harry are quite satisfied with the career paths their lives have taken.

As we talked, I became more aware of the extent to which Grace and Harry's 30 years of service to OFC has helped to guide direction and maintain the values many Co-op members so appreciate today. Back in the 70's, they told me, when many food cooperatives were springing up around the country, it was common for them to be formed around issues not only of food source, but also around social and environmental issues. By the 80's, however, many food co-ops were beginning to shift their focus primarily to issues of financial security and were allowing social justice and even environmental concerns to take a back seat. And as emphasis shifted to better marketing practices, a hierarchical management structure ensued for many co-ops, along with a dropping away of consensus decision-making and a volunteer member system. Not so with our Co-op. Both Grace and Harry are proud to say that they were very much a part of insuring that this change did not happen to OFC.



Grace and Harry – early Co-op movers and shakers

photo by Desdra Dawning

"There was never any intention," Harry told me, "to grow just for the sake of growth, for the sake of money or capitalism or the controlling of the marketplace. That value was shared among the staff collective--and the membership, to a large extent. The decisions we made around our politics, our values, and our product lines all resonated with our commitment to the staff collective and to our volunteer working member system." So, while other food co-ops in the Northwest were growing and changing their internal structures, OFC grew also, yet was allowed to hold to its original vision and values. "We had the same struggle every other co-op in the Northwest had around values,"

Harry added. "Collectives and working member systems were considered inefficient. We resisted that change because Grace and I were there for the politics. We supported our product line but it wasn't our motivation. OFC went through a substantially different process than all of the other Northwest food co-ops at that time. We didn't argue that working member systems weren't inefficient. In some ways they are. That wasn't the issue to us. The issue was--the volunteers are members of our community, they're owners of the Co-op--they get to work in their store and we all appreciate the social experience. It makes us stronger as an organization."

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Election Results are in!

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

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

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

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

The Co-op News is published on a bi-monthly basis and comes out in February, April, June, August, October and December. Please contact the editor, Jennifer Shafer, at 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 Desdra Dawning

Board Report

By **Cezanne Murphy-Levesque**, Board Member

Thank you to the many members who participated in this year's Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting provided an opportunity for members to share discussion and a meal with the Board, staff, and each other.

The meeting started off with the usual updates on all things Co-op: finances, expansion, and special projects. That was followed by an overview of proposed bylaws changes and speeches from ten of the twelve Board candidates. The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to a guided conversation on member equity, ownership, and representation in the Co-op.

The starting point for this conversation was a report-back on the work of "Task Force #4" – a taskforce created by the Board to examine the Co-op's legal structure and the relationship between membership and ownership. This work began with member input during the Co-op Conversations (Spring 2012). During the Co-op Conversation, members and staff expressed confusion and concern about the Co-op's legal structure and what membership and ownership of the Co-op really means. This information became part of the Board's strategic planning exercises (Summer 2012). "Task Force #4" was named after the fourth "Supporting Goal" of the Co-op's 2012 Strategic Priorities which reads, "The Co-op will determine which legal structure accurately reflects who we are and our future needs and, if necessary, make a change."

What follows is a very brief overview of our report and then some of the themes from the ensuing conversation.



Caption?

photos by ?

Who owns the Co-op? ...and what is EQUITY?

A cooperative is an association of members (corporation) owned and controlled by the people who use its services (members). Members generally have an interest in receiving goods at reasonable prices as well as broader goals such as supporting the community or environmental sustainability. This is different from forms of business organizations that are owned by investors, whose objective is making a return on the investment.

Equity is the owner's investment in the business (the dollar amount they pay to join the co-op as a member/owner). Equity,

also known as member shares, is one important way owners of the Co-op provide capital in the cooperative. For the Co-op, equity represents the base capital for the business. Cooperatives can use equity to buy inventory, finance operations, and pay for the facility.

Profit resulting from the operations of the Co-op belongs to the members, and through the Board of Directors, they control how it will be distributed. The possible methods of distributing profit are largely dependent on the legal structure of the business. For many consumer co-ops, profit is returned to members through patronage. The Olympia Food Co-op's incorporation does not allow profits to be distributed to the membership. Instead, members receive a discount on

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the price of groceries at the time of purchase (with members receiving shelf prices; non-members paying 10% more than shelf prices; and low-income, senior, and members with disabilities paying 10% less than shelf prices).

All consumer cooperatives in Washington are incorporated as not-for-profits, but some are incorporated under a different nonprofit act than the Olympia Food Co-op. We incorporated under the Washington Nonprofit Corporation Act (Chapter 24.03 RCW) over 35 years ago. Many younger consumer co-ops are incorporated under the Non-profit Miscellaneous and Mutual Corporation Act (Chapter 24.06 RCW). This is the legal structure that allows for patronage— and may also provide beneficial tax advantages to a corporation. This legal structure also allows for multi-stakeholder cooperatives, in which the organization may be governed by representatives of two or more “stakeholder” groups within the same organization, including consumers, producers, workers, volunteers, or general community supporters. Rather than being or-

ganized around a single class of members the way that most cooperatives are, multi-stakeholder cooperatives enjoy a mixed membership base.

There are several other legal structures for cooperatives in Washington State including: Employee Cooperative Corporations (Chapter 23.78 RCW) for employee-owned cooperatives and Cooperative Associations (Chapter 23.86 RCW) for for-profit agricultural cooperatives.

After the overview of membership, equity and legal structures, the annual meeting conversation centered on several themes:

- Outreach about what membership means and how to get engaged.
- Maintaining our discount program.
- Maintaining our volunteer program.
- Possibility of increased staff representation on the board of directors, either through a bylaws change or multi-stakeholder organization.
- Importance of marketing to a broader audience.



Caption?



Caption?



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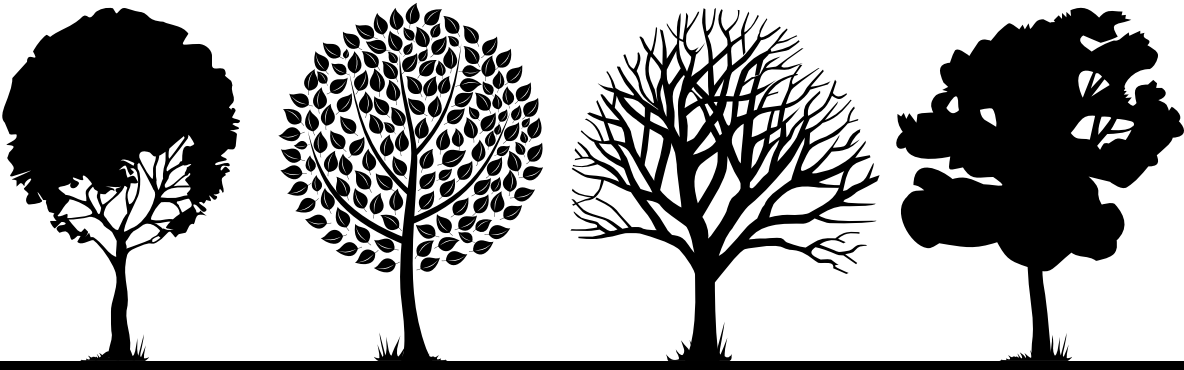
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Our new in-house designed labels have begun to arrive! They will be rolling out on the shelves over the next few weeks... Same great quality and value with a new updated look!

Meet Tulip's CEO, Bruce Cramer



By Juliann Matson, Co-op Member

Bruce Cramer has helped Tulip Cooperative Credit Union grow and blossom.

With our monthly loans increasing exponentially since taking the helm, as well as bring-

ing a deep understanding of regulations and requirements for credit unions, he has been an invaluable CEO and leader. Described as reserved, and "an everyday guy," Bruce has a long history as the CEO of Credit Unions. He began his career with a consumer finance company. Then he spent a short time with a bank, and finally landed with credit unions, starting as CEO of the Teamsters Credit Union, and then 25 years as CEO of O'Bee Credit Union. After the finance company and bank, he found that credit unions offered a better opportunity to meet people's financial needs without the bureaucracy of a larger organization.

"Bruce brings a breadth and wealth of knowledge as well as an energy to try and make sure this low income model works."

– Neil Falkenburg, Board Chair

Bruce began with Tulip over 10 years ago. He started while still CEO of O'Bee, volunteering his time to serve on the Credit Committee, where he utilized his consumer lending experience. As CEO of Tulip, Bruce ultimately has responsibility with everything that happens. He keeps policies up-to-date, helps Johna, our Operations Manager, with loan decisions, attends board meetings, makes marketing decisions, and attends to many other duties and responsibilities that go with being a CEO of a credit union, whose mission is to serve the low income community.

"Bruce has been with Tulip since the beginning. He supported the founders, he sat on the original loan committee, he lent us his CFO when he was CEO at O'Bee, and has spent his retirement with us. His decades-long career as a CEO tracked the growth of mid-cap credit unions from small union-based SEGs into the post Credit Union Act community charters of today."

– Eric Bowman, Board Treasurer

What Bruce likes most about Tulip is our mission. We help members have access to financial services, including low cost loans that are more responsibility priced and services without the fees that other places charge. He believes everyone should have access to reasonably priced credit and financial services. "We are helping people make better decisions with their money." Bruce hopes to see growth in membership, assets, and loans over the next 5 years. As with most financial institutions, a credit union has to scale its services to the size of its membership. The organization needs to increase its size in order to drive down costs – its economy of scale. When asked what Bruce wants people to know most about Tulip, he responded, "We are doing everything we can to ensure we are offering as many services as possible as we grow the organization."



Bruce Cramer photo courtesy TULIP

Loren Kiser, Board member, shared that Bruce has played an important role in the turnaround for Tulip. Previously, a good month was \$14,000 in loans, now we are at \$80,000 - \$100,000 since Bruce has come on board. "Bruce has been a catalyst for this growth."

Bruce is also active in our community as a longtime member of The Chamber of Commerce and Rotary, volunteering his time to fundraising activities for these organizations. In addition, he takes care of his 3-year old granddaughter on a regular basis.

"He has patiently, quietly, and steadily 'done the right thing' by his credit unions, his staff, and his community. We've had a lot of supporters over the years. Very few of them have been as reliable, solid or selfless as Bruce."

– Eric Bowman, Board Treasurer

Thank you, Bruce!

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Wednesday, February 20.....6-8pm
Wednesday, March 20.....6-8pm
Saturday, March 9.....10am-12pm

Eastside:

Tuesday, February 5.....11am-1pm
Sunday, March 3.....6:30-8:30pm
Tuesday, March 5.....7:00-9:00pm

For more information about volunteering at the Co-op, please contact Alejandro at the Eastside store, (360)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.



Volunteer Profile:

Sarah Vanucci

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

For the past 22 years, Sarah Vanucci has called Olympia her home, and OFC her Co-op. When she arrived here in 1991, she was sun-parched and tan from her years in the Arizona high country. Today, she revels in the wet green shade and the abundance of healthy organic food of her Northwest home. Her story begins in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the “big city” where Sarah was born, the youngest of three girls, and where she grew up until she was able to flee to the wild and wooly west. Commenting on how important good food is to her now, she recalled the fact that in the Italian kitchen of her childhood, “we always had a pot of spaghetti sauce cooking on the stove,” yet remembered that fresh veggies were rare. “I grew up eating canned vegetables,” she added with a hint of laughter in her voice, as she went on to describe the garden she now grows with the essentials for her Mediterra-

nean diet of tomatoes, garlic, basil and zucchini.

At 19, Sarah was ready to venture out on her own, discovering Arizona on a road trip she took with two girlfriends. “I never saw a mountain until I was 19,” she told me. “That trip out west just blew my mind.” Upon her return to Milwaukee, she quickly announced her intentions to move to Arizona. Except for her dad, her family doubted her determination, but at her farewell dinner, she told me, “my dad shoved a wad of money into my hand and, putting so much trust in me, said “you’ll know what to do with it.”” That trust went far in filling her sails with a courageous wind that took her on many daring adventures. Looking back on that time in her life she shared with me that “I grew up in a meat-eating, beer-drinking, everybody’s-an-alcoholic-by-the-time-they’re-twenty town. I wanted to change my life...and I did.”

Settling in Flagstaff, Arizona, a little mountain town that sits on the edge of the Colorado Plateau, she married, and gave birth to her daughter Laura. By the time Laura was 4, Sarah, now 25, was a single mom, and began to discover who she really was and who she wanted to be. With two other women, she bought a feminist bookstore and began her fight for women’s rights. Her new friend, Eric, opened her up to the wonderful world of modern dance, and to



Sarah and Paolo

photo by Desdra Dawning

healthy eating, turning her on to organic food and macrobiotics. It was at this time that she joined Common Ground, a food-buying club in Flagstaff, working with her community to purchase good organic bulk foods, unpack and sort them, and make them ready

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Harry and Grace

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Because people in the 80’s were beginning to become aware of the hazards of food produced by mainstream agriculture, with its pesticides and chemical fertilizers, the natural foods industry grew by leaps and bounds. Grace recalled a TV interview with Meryl Streep in which a pesticide for apples was revealed as a health menace. “This pesticide,” Grace recalled, “was showing up in kids’ apple juice and was clearly causing many health problems. As a fluke in timing, we had just purchased our first-ever full pallet of a single product--and it was gallons of organic apple juice! So Meryl breaks this story and the next day we have what everybody’s looking for to protect the health of their children! We didn’t even have to market it.” Then thinking thoughtfully about this subject of marketing and how other co-ops were using health-threats to market their products, Grace added, “This is another thing about the growth in the industry that we never liked--it’s never resonated with us to do fear-based marketing. All we need is more anxiety around what we’re eating--it just makes no sense!”

But even with hesitancy toward mainstream marketing, the Co-op has had what Harry calls “insane growth.” Harkening back to those days, Harry recalled “That year, 1984, our yearly sales were around \$500-600 thousand. Currently we’re budgeting for \$16 million in sales.” Grace laughingly related a story about how, even though the Co-op was growing financially, “For several years, we didn’t want to budget for \$1

million because we thought if we did, and didn’t make it, it would be psychologically too hard on us. So one year we budgeted for \$999,999.99. We didn’t want to freak ourselves out.”

Returning to the changes besetting all co-ops in the Northwest in the 80’s, Grace added, “The same conversation happened here that happened everywhere else. It just went in a different direction. Over the next couple of years, we set about to build the system so it would support the collective. It came to us that people didn’t actually know how to practice consensus decision-making. So we set about to study it and create that process internal for us, where a lot of other groups would have gone out and hired a general manager.” Nodding in agreement, Harry added, “We’ve been successful using a model that people say doesn’t work.”

Now I understand what Pat Kolstad, fellow Co-oper, meant when she said “I think we should send Harry and Grace to DC to teach our legislators a thing or two about working cooperatively and learning how to compromise. It appears that they need a little training in that area and Harry and Grace are experts at it.” Thanks to Grace and Harry, our Co-op continues to hold to consensus as the most egalitarian process available for decision-making, a process many co-ops across the country no longer use.

Grace pointed out that cooperatives can hold a variety of values. Many food co-ops share common economic values, but not all share our strong,

deeply-held political and social values. Concern for community was only recently added to the Co-op Principles, she told me. Comparing OFC to other Northwest food co-ops in terms of these values and the use of boycotts as a tool for social justice, Harry mentioned that OFC has, throughout the years, “made decisions that no other co-op has made. Most of those decisions, including many product boycotts, have been wildly popular. Until we hit the boycott of Israel. They all came out of evaluating our mission statement and asking ourselves--what is it that we support?” Grace commented that other co-ops use boycotts at times, but “we have had a more consistent practice around boycotts and other social justice issues.”

On a lighter note, we slipped back to 1993. The Westside market had reached capacity, and it was time to expand into another storefront. After 2 years of searching with the Expansion Committee, Harry found the site that had everything they needed. Not everyone saw his vision, however. “For Westside-centric members, it was seen as out of town,” Harry said. It had been an RV center with RVs in the parking lot, accessories in the shop and detailing and canopies in the warehouse. Harry and his co-coordinator posed as a happy couple shopping for an RV. Excusing himself to use the restroom, Harry cased out the store. Being able to see beyond the ugly building and RV’s, he envisioned a market where our Eastside store stands today. Most, however, did not share his vision then, including realtor, Suzanne Shafer, a former Co-op

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CAPTION?

photo by Gary Galbreath

Entertain With a Flair!

Unique and Specialty Cheeses at the Co-op



Steamboat Island Goat Farm's Feta, a soft, brined goat cheese with Greek origins, is a local favorite.

photo courtesy the plum palate

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

Some yummy new cheeses are coming to the aisles of the Co-op! Michelle Noel and her cohort in cheese paradise, Ange Duval, Managers in the Cheese Department at the Eastside market, have been seeking out and finding a variety of excellent new cheeses due to arrive in time for our holiday pleasure. On a recent trade show excursion, they discovered--and ordered!--some old standbys and some new-to-the-Co-op varieties for us. These yummy delicacies come from regional sources, in both Washington and Oregon, from creameries that produce fine cheeses valued for their unique methods of production.

Before we begin, let's clarify a few terms often used in this world of distinctive cheeses. In order for a cheese to be classified as "farmstead," as defined by the American Cheese Society, the cheese must be made with milk from the farmer's own herd, or flock, on the farm where the animals are raised. Milk used in the production of farmstead cheeses may not be obtained from any outside source. Farmstead cheeses may be made from all types of milk and may include various flavorings.

The word "artisan" implies that a cheese is produced primarily by hand, in small batches, with particular attention paid to the tradition of the cheese-maker's art, and thus using as little mechanization as possible in the production of the cheese. Artisan, or artisanal cheeses may be made from all types of milk and may include various flavorings. The term "soft-ripened" is used to describe cheeses that are ripened from the outside in, very soft and

even runny at room temperature. The most common soft-ripened cheeses have a white, bloomy rind that is sometimes flecked with red or brown. The rind is edible and is produced by spraying the surface of the cheese with a special mold, called penicillium candidum, before the brief aging period. In the United States soft-ripened cheeses are generally produced from pasteurized milk. Cheeses in the soft-ripened category include brie and camembert styles.

Michelle began by telling me how excited she is to finally have access to the cheeses produced at Ancient Heritage Dairy, a small farm with its own flock of sheep, located in Madras, Oregon. One new cheese from Ancient Heritage that will be gracing the Co-op coolers in December is Adelle, a soft-ripened cheese much like Brie, that sports a "white bloomy edible rind." It is a pasteurized blend of cow and sheep cheese and like most cheeses is best eaten at room temperature. The folks at Ancient Heritage recommend that this "light and fluffy, creamy and smooth, buttery and citrusy cheese" pairs well with "crisp beers, both white and red wines, ciders and sherry," and is a fine holiday treat to "serve with baguettes, fresh fruit, preserves and nuts." They also counsel

that it "can be enjoyed when young and firm, or a couple of weeks older when soft and drippy."



Up In Smoke, a seasonal chèvre by River's Edge Cheese, is wrapped in bourbon-smoked maple leaves.

photo courtesy threeeringfarm.com



Mt. Townsend Creamery's Cirrus is a Pacific Northwest variation on the traditional French camembert.

photo courtesy mixedgreensblog.com



Queso de Oveja, from Black Sheep Creamery, is a Spanish cheese with a sharp flavor and a mellow finish.

photo courtesy oregonlive.com

Another fine holiday cheese is Pearl, an Ancient Heritage cheese already on Co-op shelves. It is a “soft-ripened, bloomy cheese made from pasteurized cow’s milk,” and is said to “hold a tempting secret: a creamy interior that explodes with lush, grassy flavors.” This cheese is best paired, they say, with a “pale lager, like a Pilsner, or a sparkling or floral white wine like a Viofnier or Riesling,”and like Adelle, “served with baguettes, fresh fruit, preserves and nuts.”

River’s Edge Cheese is another outstanding Oregon creamery,” Michelle told me. Both Co-op markets currently have their Up In Smoke, which is advertised as “a smoked fresh chèvre, wrapped in smoked maple leaves which are spritzed with bourbon for extra smoky flavor.” This award-winning farmstead goat cheese is hand-crafted on their farm in central Oregon. Coming in December from River’s Edge is Siltcoos, also an excellent goat cheese perfect for entertaining, described as a soft-ripened “ash-coated round topped with a swirl of fern frond.”

Coming closer to home, Michelle and Ange spoke fondly of the artisan cheeses produced by our local Steamboat Island Goat Farm. Carried regularly at both Eastside and Westside stores, these farmstead cheeses are all made with raw milk and are purchased directly from the farm. Their Goat Feta is the most popular among Co-op shoppers. Other favorites include their Goat Cheddar, Hal-loumi (which has mint on it and is fine for grilling, since it does not melt), IPA Goat Cheddar (raw goat cheddar flavored with mustard seeds and local India Pale Ale), and Cumin Jack.

The Co-op has a long-standing relationship with Black Sheep Creamery, a farm in Adna, Washington. This sheep farm, just outside of Chehalis, produces artisan, raw-milk, hard cheeses from their farmstead. The Co-op has for many years been able to buy directly from them, delivering such delicacies as: Mopsy’s Best, Aged Pecorino (Pecorino means “sheep” in Italian), Queso de Oveja, and Basque to our markets--cheeses just waiting for your holiday dining pleasure.

Looking north of Olympia, we find Mt. Townsend Creamery, which is located in Port Townsend. Coming up on special in December at the Co-op will be Cirrus, a favorite holiday treat for guests, referred to by the creamery as their “North-west camembert-style cheese.” This soft-ripened cheese is always good served with crackers and specialty breads.

The Rogue Creamery, well known for their sustainability practices, is located in southern Oregon. They are particularly noted for their farmstead blue cheeses, made from raw cow’s milk produced by their own milk cows as they graze in 1,250 foot elevation pastures bordering the Rogue River, where they eat a variety of pasture and native grasses, hop clover, wild herbs and flowers, supplemented with grass hay, alfalfa and grain off the ranch.

Their specialty seasonal cheese, Rogue River Blue, made only between the Autumnal Equinox and Winter Solstice, once won the title of Best Blue Cheese in the World! Taking a cue from Basque and Provençal techniques, this unique artisan blue cheese is wrapped in grape leaves that have been soaked in pear brandy. It is a creamy delicacy that tastes of brandy, fruit and burnt cream and is available at the Co-op for a short time, so check it out for yourself. And while you’re at it, look for their Blue Heaven--an amazing powdered condiment made from blue rounds that the folks at the creamery consider slightly less than perfect.

This time of year, as friends and family



Adelle, Ancient Heritage Dairy’s most popular cheese, has a whipped cream-like quality, buttery notes and hints of citrus. *photo courtesy ancientheritagedairy.com*



Rogue River Blue cheese is wrapped in grape leaves that have been macerated in pear brandy. *photo courtesy dibruno.com*

gather together, we are being given the perfect opportunity to share in special culinary treats we might not always get to enjoy. These cheeses stand on their own as specialty, artisan bits of mouth-watering goodness. These sumptuous delights are just waiting to grace your holiday table--or offer themselves up to you any time you care to treat yourself to a little taste of heaven.

ELECTION RESULTS

We are pleased to announce our 2014-2016 Board members – as well as the results of our proposed bylaws changes (spoiler: they all passed by large margins!)...

Our 2014 Board members will be:

Mohammed El-Sokkary (267 votes)

Joshua Simpson (243 votes)

Isabella Rogol (205 votes)

Michael Snow (199 votes)

Congratulations to our new Board members!

for ballot count and further info on new by-laws, see page 11

Finance Report: Third Quarter YTD 2013

By **Grace Cox**, Staff Member

Third quarter of 2013 (July, August & September) brought all kinds of good financial news, though it may not be immediately obvious by the spreadsheet seen here. The attached spreadsheet reflects the financial performance year-to-date – January 1-September 30, 2013. You may recall from earlier reports that our cash had dropped due to unexpectedly high costs in the staff medical plan. The accumulated net loss shown here of \$34,000 is about \$200 less than it was at the end of second quarter. In fact, in a quarter where we budgeted to lose \$19,000, we only lost \$2,000.

You might find yourself thinking, “Why did the Co-op budget for a loss in 3rd quarter?” Two major factors impact both sales and margin in the 3rd quarter - summer and local. Summer brings our lowest sales of the year due to heat, travel, college students who leave for the season, gardens, etc. The local growing season means that we are purchasing more local produce, on which we take a lower margin. We traditionally lose money in the summer, which we make up for the other 9 months of the year.

Other good news includes our continuing sales growth. You can see by the spreadsheet that we are \$111,420 ahead of where we expected to be at the end of 3rd quarter. The growth continues, with both stores above 7% growth (over 2012) for the month of October. On the health care front, expenses for 3rd quarter were only over budget by \$852.

While we’re looking at expenses, please note that we saved over \$52,000 in operating expenses. This savings happened because the staff pulled together to minimize the impact of our health overruns in the first half of the year. Staff postponed projects, reduced hours, and controlled expenses. As a result of this and other measures, we met our cash recovery benchmark (10 days of cash on hand (~\$400,000) plus the cost of a project). We have approved purchasing a new 5 door freezer for the Westside. Once it’s up and running you’ll know it by the texture

of your ice cream!

As of this writing the staff collective is in the throes of budget development. This year has taught us to be a bit more conservative in our health care budgeting. It has also taught us that we can have an impact on the finances when we need to. We are challenged now to make strong but realistic sales and margin goals, accurate and careful labor hours goals, and expense goals that allow us to serve our members, attract new members, and use your money wisely.

Olympia Food Co-op 3rd Quarter YTD Budget Report			
– For The Year Ending September 30, 2013 –			
	2013 Actuals	2013 Budget	\$ over Budget
Revenue:			
Sales	11,948,558.25	11,837,138.24	111,420.01
Discounts	(667,070.72)	(669,945.00)	(2,874.28)
Purchases	(7,980,775.14)	(7,807,809.29)	(172,965.85)
Gross Sales Revenue	3,300,712.39	3,359,383.95	(58,671.56)
Other Revenue	29,224.80	25,295.00	3,929.80
Total Net Revenue:	3,329,937.19	3,384,678.95	(54,741.76)
Expenses:			
Community & Marketing	69,093.95	98,517.25	(29,423.30)
Staffing	2,752,394.35	2,557,237.54	195,156.81
Operations	514,525.74	537,601.45	(23,075.71)
Depreciation	44,170.67	44,170.67	0.00
Interest	9,919.30	10,110.00	(190.70)
Corporate Income Tax	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Expenses:	3,390,104.01	3,247,636.91	142,467.10
Other Income & Expenses:	(26,121.26)	0.00	(26,121.26)
Total Net Income:	(34,045.56)	137,042.04	(171,087.60)

Harry and Grace continued from page 5

Board member, who shared with me recently her admiration for Harry’s tenacity and creativity as he “created tours for members so that they could see his vision,” adding that “we would not be in that place today if not for Harry.”

The collective made the conscious decision to, as Harry put it, “maintain a low-cost structure and do it with as little debt as possible.” Shopping for equipment was done on a shoestring. It was decided that rather than a service counter, the deli should have a salad bar. So Harry and Grace went shopping. At an auction for a closing Safeway market, they found exactly what they were looking for. Harry left Grace to do the bidding while he attended another auction. Upon his return, Grace told him, “We got it!” “How much?” he asked her. “Twenty-five bucks! Grace exclaimed excitedly. “Was that the opening bid?” “Yea,” she said. Harry, in his east coast bargaining fashion, came back with “Why didn’t you start at \$10?” They both laugh now at how, for an initial \$25 plus \$500 for a rebuilt compressor, they got a salad bar that lasted the Co-op for 18 years! “Everything we bought was refurbished except for new shelving and a new bulk system--we even got free exterior

paint from the City of Portland, which we painted on by hand,” Grace told me.

As for the Co-op’s future, Grace would like to see internal operation practices updated a little more swiftly. She still supports the idea of a downtown store as a potential key feature in the revitalization of Olympia’s urban center, and sees the Co-op further supporting other cooperative businesses. And true to her passion for social-justice, Grace would like to see us all become more aware of the plight of those further down the food ladder--all of those who bring us our healthy, produced-with-integrity food. “As a collective,” she admitted, we are adequately compensated while the people down the production chain from us can’t afford to buy the very food they pick.”

Harry’s vision of the Co-op’s future centers around his own passion for its principles and values. “I want the Co-op,” he said, “to continue to progress and change and grow-if-we-grow or not-grow-if-we-don’t, but keep the values in our Mission Statement and our Staff Values Statement.” He feels that, being the biggest cooperative around, OFC’s growth has put us in a position to be able to help other local cooperative endeavors, both consumer or worker,

either through our own expansion, or by encouraging and supporting others.

Their stories could fill a book, but suffice it to say that Grace and Harry have been on an amazing odyssey through their years with the Olympia Food Co-op. “We’ve had a lot of great parties over the years, and written songs,” said Harry. “And had hysterical laughter,” added Grace, “and epic moments at meetings,” recalling one emotionally heated moment that got defused when Corey, our finances wizard, suggested everyone “Do the math! When you do the math, the feelings go away.” That motto has moved them since through several difficult moments.

Humor has obviously served Grace and Harry in their lives, both through their work at one politically-spicy Co-op, and in their spare moments, writing and performing humor-based social justice songs for Citizens Band, where they both play bass; Harry, the guitar, and Grace, the accordion.

Thank you both for your dedication to our Co-op. Your nurturing contribution to its sweet growth and continuing prosperity deserves hearty appreciation from all of us who value our membership at Olympia Food Co-op.

Sarah Vanucci continued from page 5

for pick-up (food break-ups, they were called). Later, she worked with them to attempt the formation of a cooperative storefront, which never managed to take off.

It was also at this time (around 1986) that a life-changing event happened to Sarah. Being so close to the Grand Canyon, and the Colorado River, Flagstaff was a hub for river-running. Invited on a private raft trip by another new friend, she found herself, without any prior experience, rowing her own raft for days down through the intense rapids of the Colorado River. "Ignorance is definitely bliss," she confided to me, adding that if she had known what she was getting into at the time, she might never have taken it on. But take it on she did. And within months Sarah found herself hired as a cook for Canyon Explorations, a rafting company recently purchased by a woman who wanted to turn it into one offering a healthy lifestyle--one with spiritual experiences and a menu that went well beyond the hotdogs, hamburgers and beer usually offered on the river. Sarah became not only the cook, but the menu planner, creating vegetarian meals--shopping, packing and preparing the meals for weeks at a time--as they rafted through the rapids on the river. What she also discovered was her knack for helping fellow rafters move through the life-changing challenges and fears associated with running those rapids at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. "I was the one on the crew," she told me, "who sat down with the people who seemed like they were having a really hard time doing the trip--being out of their comfort zone--and I would help them." Eventually they started telling her, "You should be a counselor! You're so good with people!" "That's when I started getting the idea," she told me, "to go back to school and finish my degree (one she had begun at Northern Arizona University).

On one such adventure, she met someone who would not only shift the course of her life, but would be instrumental in bringing her to the Pacific Northwest and into the doors of Olympia Food Co-op. Coming up to Olympia to visit her new partner, Sarah discovered The Evergreen State College (TESC), and their psychology program, and applied. Returning to Arizona and her life on the river, she received at Phantom Ranch, with surprise and delight, a letter--envelope stamped "Delivered by mule to the bottom of the Grand Canyon"--accepting her (one of four chosen) into the program. (She has that letter still.)

By September of 1991, Sarah was living in Olympia, enrolled at TESC, and a member of Olympia Food Co-op. And by 1992, she was commuting to Antioch in Seattle two days a week to work on her Master's Degree, while filling in the rest of her days living on a 10-acre, all women, organic farm in the Delphi area. It was here that she learned how to garden, drive a tractor, and can fruits and

veggies. "It was paradise on the farm," she mused. "I became an organic farm girl for three years. We would drive to Yakima in the summer and pick up fruit, bring it back and have canning parties. It was so hot, we would take breaks by jumping naked into our pond. And I got very good at slug patrol too. First thing in the morning, and late in the evening, I was committed to going out to save the broccoli and spinach from the slugs."

Moving away from the farm and into town in 1997 in order to be with her partner, Sarah experienced at the time what she now calls "culture shock." She became an urban dweller, immersing herself in the politics of gay rights and developing a counseling practice at Good Samaritan/Multi-Care in Puyallup.

Over the past 7 years, she has served the Co-op as a volunteer member, learning the fine art of cashiering, with regular shifts the first few years, and once her counseling practice took off, offering to be on the sub list for both stores. Unlike other retail work situations in which an employee is expected to find their own replacement if they are unable to make it to work, the Co-op volunteer system asks only that the Staff Collective be informed. Then a Staff member in charge of the front end of the store must start calling from the list of dedicated volunteers who are often willing, at the drop of a hat, to come in and save the day (or at least the floundering shift) for a fellow cashier. They are a vital part of the smooth functioning of both markets, and a very important part of the volunteer process. It is in this way that Sarah continues to serve the Co-op today, sometimes being scheduled in advance, and sometimes coming in at the last minute, mostly at the Eastside store.

I asked her what she appreciated about the Co-op. "Trying to help start a co-op, and not being successful with it in one community, and then to come to the Northwest and find a food scene and food consciousness that was so together here...I felt like I came home to food heaven," Sarah said. "I have a lot of pride," she added, "knowing that Olympia's food co-op has been around for so long. I appreciate living in a community that made it happen. I couldn't ever again live in a place that does not have good clean abundant food. It's one of the priorities in my life."

As for her years of cashiering for the Co-op, Sarah is clear about what she appreciates most. "I run into all my friends," she said, "and get to catch up and share what's happening in town. It's a social event. And when she sees some grocery item she is not familiar with, she loves asking people, "Oh, what are you going to do with that? Really? I never knew you could do that with that!" And then I go home and try it out!" Cashiering, for Sarah is "an informational, educational, and social event." And then she adds an emphatic "wow!" I think that pretty much sums it up for most of us who love this Co-op and value its presence in our lives.

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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 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 Guesthouse: 311 9th Ave SE, Olympia (behind downtown public library)

Improve Nutrition in the New Year — Sunday, January 5, 2:30-5pm
 Facilitator: Erin Majors — Location: GRuB Farmhouse — Limit: 20
Do you want to improve your nutrition in the New Year? Are you looking for ways to add more vegetables and fruits to your diet? Come join Erin and learn to cook five high-fiber, plant-based dishes that you can incorporate into your plans for healthy eating. We will make one breakfast dish, one side dish, two main dishes, and one snack.

Edible Weeds 101 — Saturday, January 18, 2:30-5pm
 Facilitator: Kate Tossey — Location: Fertile Ground Guesthouse — Limit: 15
Join Kate in exploring edible weeds which grow in our region. Learn about identifying, collecting and preparing those pesky plants that get in the way of what we choose to grow. Handouts will be provided, including recipes. Samples will be presented as available.

Cooperatives and the Labor Movement
 Saturday, January 25, 2:30–4:30pm
 Facilitators: Keziah Apuzen & Peter Kardas — Location: Eco House at Fertile Ground — Limit: 30
Cooperatives have a long history in the workers’ struggle for economic democracy. Labor movements have used various approaches to better the lives of workers and to strive for workplace democracy and economic and social justice. Some unions have seen the creation of cooperatives as an essential means for workers to reclaim control and ownership of their livelihood, while others have wanted nothing to do with any form of worker ownership or worker self-management. In this class, we will travel through the history of cooperatives and their relationship to the labor movement in both the U.S. and Philippine contexts.

The Body Ecology Talk — Sunday, January 26, 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.

Creating Delicious Flavor Profiles — Saturday, February 8, 2-4:30pm
 Facilitator: Maeanna Welti — Location: GRuB — Limit: 20
Much of making cooking special lies in seasoning. In this class we will look at how to create unique and well-rounded flavor profiles by learning about herbs, spices, vinegars and other ingredients that add flavor to a dish. We will sample different seasonings, cover basics of how and when to add flavoring ingredients, taste prepared dishes, and come up with our own creation together. My goal is to help cooks leave with increased confidence in their own creativity and a solid foundation in seasoning basics from which they can explore.

Cooking Grains for Maximum Nutrition
 Sunday, February 9, 2:30-4:30pm
 Facilitator: Jeannine Godfrey — Location: GRuB — Limit: 20
Whole grains contain many beneficial vitamins and minerals but unless they are properly prepared your body may not be able to use those nutrients. In this class we will learn to prepare grains in traditional ways by soaking, sprouting, and fermenting to make all those valuable nutrients available to nourish you and your family.

Urban Foraging Class — Saturday, February 22, 1– 5pm
 Facilitator: Melany Vorass Herrera — Location: GRuB — Limit: 20
What separates my classes from all other classes is my focus on yard and garden weeds. Roughly 9 out of 10 of these weeds are delicious, nutritious and fun to cook with. My class can be strictly a plant i.d. class with a discussion on cooking, or it can include a hands-on cooking segment.

Introduction to Greens — Sunday, March 9, 2-4:30pm
 Facilitators: Erin Majors — Location: GRuB Farmhouse — Limit: 20
Adding hearty greens to your diet is one of the simplest (and cheapest) ways to improve your nutrition. Once you get the hang of cooking with greens, it is easy to add them to your everyday meals, and you may even find yourself looking for recipes that feature them. Come join Erin in this fun and accessible introduction to cooking with greens. We will go over basic selection and preparation tips and make four dishes that feature hearty greens including kale, collard greens, and chard.

Basic Sauces — Sunday, March 23, 2-4:30pm
 Facilitator: Valarie Burson — Location: GRuB — Limit: 15
A sauce can be the crowning glory of any dish. There are hundreds of variations of sauce that are used to dress, compliment, enhance and bring out the flavor of the food it is served with. Come and learn to make a few basic sauces and make them your own. They will add a new dynamic to your kitchen repertoire! We will make Roasted Garlic Aioli, Béchamel, Classic Cocktail, Cheddar Mustard and Spicy Jamaican Jerk Dipping Sauce.

Winter Gardening:
Start now to eat more from your place next winter!

Sunday, February 2, 1:30-3pm
Facilitator: Sandia Slaby — Location: Eco House at Fertile Ground — Limit: 20

This class will give participants an opportunity for learning how to eat heartily right out of their own gardens here in Thurston County throughout the winter months. Through presenting example veggies from my garden this winter, presenting possibilities for crops that grow or 'keep' in the ground through the winter here in the PNW, planning & preparatory tips for the crops one wants, and getting a clear picture of the all important schedule of when to plant, you'll go away primarily with knowledge enough to actually have a productive winter garden next winter.

Flower Essence Basics for You & Your Family

Monday, February 24, 6-8pm
Facilitator: Peter Brown — Location: Eco House at Fertile Ground — Limit: 15

Flower Essences are a method for taking care of ourselves that is readily available to all. Essences can help us to be more present and healthy. This basic introduction will talk about the history, making, use and identification of the characteristics of flowers for personal use.

What is Good Nutrition?



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More Election Results...

Proposed Bylaws Changes: PASSED!

The Board of Directors also proposed four changes to our bylaws, all of which passed by very large margins. You can find the full proposals below.

Audits: 279 votes in favor, 25 opposed
Length of Board Terms: 294 votes in favor, 38 opposed
Filling Board Vacancies: 294 votes in favor, 29 opposed
Meeting Minutes: 298 votes in favor, 24 opposed

Thank you to everyone who participated, and especially to our late-night verification and vote-counting crew: volunteers Laura and Jaime, and staff members Fern, Jason, Jayne and Jackie.

● **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 Direc-**

tor 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.



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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?

What is it?
Deadline: January 1st, 2014

Name _____
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Grace and Harry Celebrate 30 YEARS AT THE CO-OP!



Election Results – Cheese for the Season

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Thank you for your support and
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