

NORTHWIND NATURAL FOODS COOPERATIVE

Ironwood, Michigan

Newsletter

January, 1993

We will all work together for the common good in a cooperative manner.

Much good will come of it.

Nominations Open for BOD

We have a vacancy on the Board of Directors. Ed Danoski has removed himself from the Board for personal reasons.

While our By-Laws tell us how to elect a new BOD they do not deal with the issue of filling a vacant seat on the Board. Previous Boards have filled vacancies by merely appointing an interested member to the Board.

The current Board has decided that the most democratic way to fill this vacancy is by a vote from the General Membership. We are hereby soliciting nominations to the Board. You may nominate yourself or another Northwind member. All nominations must be received in writing at the store no later than March 15, 1993. All papers of nomination must be accompanied by a brief statement by the nominee covering the qualifications, skills and experience that they would bring to the Board, any specific viewpoints or envisioned goals they hold on co-op matters, plus any additional information they feel would be useful to *co-op members in voting* for a new director on the Board.

It is anticipated that the slate of candidates and their respective statements would be mailed to the membership by April 1st and the annual General Membership Meeting be held in late April or early May.

The needs of Northwind are changing and we face many challenges in the months ahead, not the least of which is expansion and development of our product line and sales. The Board needs skilled people from the community who are committed to cooperative principles and to making a difference at Northwind. Directors

represent the interests of the general membership and have a responsibility to see that the co-op remains healthy and successful. To do this one must be able to envision realistic long range plans and must be committed to seeing that specific tasks get done on time.

As the governing body of the cooperative, the Board has many duties such as selecting, evaluating and overseeing management, encouraging member participation and education; setting overall policies which affect employment and marketing; approving financial plans and monitoring store performance; setting goals and long range plans for the organization, and making the major decisions related to such. It is NOT the Board's role to be involved in the actual running of the store--that is the responsibility of management. In general, the Board oversees the operations of the business by the management, including the implementation of policies set by the Board.

The Board is also the legal representative of the cooperative and its membership, and as such is legally responsible for it's own actions and for the actions of management. It is therefore the Board's responsibility to see that all policies and activities of Northwind are legal and carried out properly.

Being a member of the Board of Directors is a responsibility not to be taken lightly, but it is also a highly rewarding role. If the cooperative is an important part of your life, if you really care about what happens at and to Northwind, if you want to have a direct role in the future of Northwind, then considering becoming a Director on the Board. --LS

Manager's Comments

1993 'is, hopefully, a year of beginnings for your co-op. A new, actively involved board, a new manager, new members (membership is up more than 50% since November)--to whom we extend a warm welcome, new products, a new look for the store, and a new and positive outlook for the future.

Your patronage of the store is not only appreciated; it's vital for steady growth, and your active participation in the co-op's affairs is more important than ever before.

With time at a premium, it's difficult for many members to volunteer working hours at the co-op, but there are things you can do to help your co-op grow and prosper--the most important, of course, being shopping at the store. If you've not been in for a while, you'll probably be pleasantly surprised at the direction the store is taking. We have dozens of new products, and health and purity are still primary considerations, but we're expanding the product line while trying to walk the line between harsh economic realities (products carefully produced with good health in mind tend to cost more) and the need to provide affordable goods.

Since Northwinds Natural Foods Co-op is now Ironwoods's only downtown food store, we are making an outreach to the general community, not only to provide basic foodstuffs, but to educate and inform as well.

To this end, we're planning a weekly "Sampling Day," during which the community can come in, see the store, and taste nutritious foods they may never have been aware of. We need volunteers to provide (and prepare) tasty and healthful recipes using ingredients found in the co-op. We'll provide the ingredients at no charge if you'll volunteer your time to prepare the dish (and earn working hour credits in the bargain). We'll also need, and make available during the sampling, your recipe so that interested customers can duplicate the dish at home.

Just give me a call at the store (932-3547) or come in and we'll talk. Your comments, ideas, and suggestions are always welcome.

A quick word on working for extra discounts might be in order, particularly for new members. As you know, your membership entitles you to a 5% discount on all purchases excepting frozen foods, dairy items, bakery, and juices. For every 4 hours (2 hours for seniors) you work each month for the co-op, you earn an extra 5% on purchases made the following month. If you can work 8 hours (4 hours for seniors), you'll earn still another 5%, for a total discount of 15%.

Please, if you've not already done so, come into the store and see what we've done, and what we're doing to make your co-op a more important part of your, your family's, and the community's life.

December 29, 1992

Northwind Natural Foods
134 W Aurora Street
Ironwood Michigan, 49938

Dear Friends in Ironwood,

The Volume Discount Grant Committee at Mifflin Coop is happy to report that we have awarded Northwind Natural Foods \$1,000.00 to go toward the funding of an outreach and marketing position.

We were impressed with all that has happened at your store in the last year- it sounds like a year of peaks and valleys- with the peaks being an incredible core of dedicated volunteers and shoppers. Rescuing a coop from the hands of death can not be an easy chore. We were struck with the challenges that the geography and economic situation there put on an already challenging business. Sometimes we feel that the business of running a store is enough to drive us all crazy, here in Madison, with a population of thousands right outside our front door.

We were sorry to not be able to give you more- you have so many good ideas, but we received 15 requests this year, and were forced to cut most requests a lot. We hope that you can do enough with these funds for the staff position, without additional for projects. We have some materials here that may be of help to you- educational fliers (most on nutrition topics), newsletters (with more political focus). I will send a selection along when I send you your check. Let us know if there is anything else, beyond the financial, that you think we could help out on.

We would appreciate it if you could sign the two enclosed agreement forms and return one to us. We'll get a check in the mail to you as soon as we receive the agreement form.

Good luck with all you have going,
Have a good 1993,

Sincerely,



Jody Padgham
Grant Committee
Mifflin St Coop
32 N Bassett St
Madison WI 53703
608-251-5899

HELP WANTED

All interested members are strongly encouraged to participate in the current re-writing of the co-op's By-Laws. Our By-Laws govern all major aspects of Northwind Cooperative and as such should be of interest to all of us as members.

We need to have a wide spectrum of representation from the membership to ensure that the proposed changes best reflect the interests of all members. We need people to join the Bylaws Committee who want to work for positive, productive change at Northwind. We need people who are able to make a commitment to see this project to completion.

This committee is for members only. It hopes to accomplish its work by early April. You don't need to join the committee; just come to the next committee meeting or send your written thoughts to the By-Laws Committee at the store. For info call Larry Sands, 561-2880.

Northwind Natural Foods Co-op
134 W Aurora St.
Ironwood, MI 49938

Northwind Awarded \$1000 Grant

In Early December members of the BOD spent many hours writing a grant proposal. Their efforts have paid off as Northwind NF Cooperative was recently awarded a grant for \$1000 to be used in establishing a dynamic education and outreach program. (A copy of the award is included in this Newsletter.)

The grant is provided through the generosity of Mifflin Street Community Coop of Madison, Wisconsin. Mifflin Coop is Madison's oldest food co-op and they provide a percentage of their North Farm volume discount to smaller, poorer co-ops such as Northwind.

The Board hasn't had the opportunity to meet since the grant was announced but it is anticipated that a part time, temporary paid position will be established as Outreach Coordinator. If you have interests along these lines contact any member of the Board ASAP and come to the next BOD meeting.

A copy of our Grant Proposal is posted on the store bulletin board. Please take a few minutes and review it. --LS