

Northwind Natural Foods Co-op News

After a long absence here is the new issue of our newsletter!

Fall 2005

A Great Big Hand for the Volunteers!

We couldn't make it without YOU!

As you know volunteers do many vital jobs around the Co-op, from bagging bulk items, cleaning, filling spice jars to breaking down boxes and taking them away. And as everyone knows as a working member, if you donate just 6 hours per month to your Co-op, you get a 10% discount on your purchases!

So **Thank You** Jeanean, Donna, Sue, Samantha, Katie, Derek, Barney, Tim, David, Matthew, and everyone else who takes time out of their busy day to help out! If you'd like to help out, stop by or call and we'll get you started!

PS - And thanks to volunteers (and employees) who helped out with the recent inventory, and to Jeanean and her secret accomplices, who carried out a much-needed cleaning bee a couple weeks ago!

General Membership Meeting and Other Very Important Stuff!

A general membership meeting has been scheduled for Saturday, November 12, 2005, 10 a.m. at the Gogebic-Ontonagon Senior Center, corner of Ayer and Lowell streets in Ironwood!

We have a number of important topics to discuss, concerning the FUTURE of YOUR co-op. These include but are not limited to:

1) The likely arrival of Wal-Mart to the area, in the form of a "superstore". We need to decide how to get more customers in the habit of coming to our store before it

arrives. Greater sales volume would also lead to lower costs and lower prices, which would also benefit the store and its customers.

2) The possible re-incorporation of the co-op, from a nonprofit co-op to a for-profit co-op. A change to for-profit status would require amending both the Mission Statement (see p. 3) and the By-Laws. According to consultant P. J. Hoffman (see p. 2), most other co-ops in the region have done this, with the primary benefit of stimulating member interest.

This is a decision that can only be made by the members. The Board will gather some information on this for the GMM meeting on November 12th. I hope you all will be able to make it to the meeting to discuss this important matter and give your views.

Memberships!

Memberships ended September. If you haven't done so already please renew your membership! Memberships are \$15 for the year. That's only 4.1 cents per day!

Store News

Last winter marked the return of a freezer along with a slew of new and exciting products!

We now have frozen organic vegetables like sweet corn, spinach, peas, carrots, broccoli, as well as frozen fruits like blueberries, strawberries, peaches and more. We also have many time-saving frozen entrees including Amy's Pizza, Matthews Burritos, Ling Ling Potstickers, and vegetarian favorites like Squash Ravioli. We have also purchased a small used display freezer that will house all the breads. This frees up room for such things as ground beef, ground turkey and Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream!

We also have new bulk bins! Now you can always buy exactly the quantity of granola, nuts, beans, yogurt peanuts, and other bulk items you want. Bring your own container (make sure you have it weighed first!) or use the plastic bags provided.

On May 5th P. J. Hoffman, Store Development Manager for United Natural Foods, paid a courtesy visit to the store. He returned soon after to do a plan for the store. Eva and Brady tracked down some bulk food bins being sold by the co-op in Rice Lake, Wisconsin, and arranged to get them here. This was a first step in upgrading the store according to the plan. Future upgrades should include a produce cooler, to keep the produce in tip-top shape. Members are encouraged to stop in the store and view the floor plans P. J. drew up for us.

Comings and Goings

Last fall's General Membership Meeting (GMM) saw the departure of several long-serving board members, all of whom have left at the end of their 2-year terms.

Thanks go to former board members Judy Bennett, Pat Bridges, and Larry I. Sands. Their dedication and service to the co-op are greatly appreciated. Thanks also to Nancy Ramsay, whose skills, dedication and hard work helped the co-op survive through hard times.

The Manager

As you probably know, due to a budget crunch the co-op had operated for a couple years without an official manager. As the co-op's financial situation has improved somewhat, the need for a manager became more apparent. As the co-op employees were all hard-working, skilled, and dedicated, the board had initially considered making them all managers. But because Eva Smith was performing many of the tasks of a manager already, and had demonstrated the skills and strong desire needed for the job, the consensus among those involved was to make her manager.

Upcoming Events

Eva has been thinking about compiling a 25th Anniversary Co-op cookbook! Contribute your classic co-op recipes!

Eva has expressed her desire to offer fresh herbs next summer, grown in the co-op's own front windows. IF we can pull this off we will have fresh basil, coriander, thyme, rosemary, and other herbs next summer. Let us know what herbs you would like to see in the window!

Important dates

Saturday, November 12, 10:00 AM.
General Membership Meeting at the Gogebic-Ontonagon Senior Center, corner of Ayer and Lowell streets in Ironwood.

Thursday, November 17th, 6:00 PM.

Indian food night class. Come join us for a night of exotic food offerings! Delicious Indian cuisine will be served and you will leave the class with recipes to try at home. Come and find out how healthy and nutritious ethnic food can be!

November 21-December 24
Annual spice and baking sale at the store.

Thursday, December 15
Natural Gifts class. For those wishing to give wonderful inexpensive homemade gifts with meaning, we have just the class for you! Learn how to make great natural body scrub recipes, lotions, lip balms, spice mixtures and more! You'll leave the class with 5 gifts to please anyone. There is a \$15.00 materials fee for this class. A materials list will be provided for all that sign up.

Thursday, January 12, 6:00 PM.
All about tea. We'll clear up the confusion between black tea, green tea, herbal teas as well as sample different teas and send you home with a better understanding of this great beverage as well as samples to try at your leisure.

Holiday Store Schedule
Nov 24 - Thanksgiving Day - Closed
Dec 24 - Open 9 AM till noon
Dec 25 - Closed
Saturday, Dec 31 - Open 9 AM till 3 PM
January 1 - Closed

A Hand Up, Not a Hand Up

Check out all the companies whose products make a difference right in our co-op. We carry fair trade and other worker- and environment-friendly products. Here's a short list:

Peace Cereals donates a part of their profits to supporting peace efforts around the world;

EnviroKids Cereals donates a part of their profits to protecting endangered species and rainforests;

Shanthimalai Incense contributes a substantial portion of their profits to health care, education, and vocational training for local villages in India;

Bali Spice products are produced in a worker-owned factory in Indonesia. A portion of their profits are donated to One Voice, a foundation supporting conflict resolution efforts;

Dr. Bronner's Soaps donates essentially all their after-tax profits to various social and environmental causes, from freshwater wells in Ghana and orphanages in Haiti and China, to organic farm projects and homeless shelters;

Tom's of Maine gives 200,000 per year to health and dental clinics across the US;

And of course ***Newman's Own*** is well-known for giving all of its after-tax profits to charitable causes.

In purchasing these products in place of their corporate counterparts, You can feel good knowing that you are buying from companies that care about their employees, their customers, and the environment. And along with all this you are getting some of the highest-quality products made!

Wish List

- 1) Flatbed photocopier
- 2) A large coffee grinder
- 3) Two bookshelves
- 4) Cable spools (3-5, preferably wood)
- 5) Display Shelving
- 6) More members ☺

A Note from the Board of Directors

A couple weeks after the 2004 GMM meeting, an informal meeting was held with the current board and a number of long-time coop members. A number of topics were discussed, including more efficient ways to keep track of inventory, an occasional newsletter, and ideas for our 25th anniversary promotion.

Since last fall the new Board has held several meetings. These meetings have all gone well, with 100% attendance, great ideas and complete agreement between all board members.

And yet there is something missing. The ideas and discussions all seem to be sort of one-dimensional, compared to the lively discussions and wealth of ideas characteristic of previous board meetings.

At least three more board members are needed. And as those who have served on the board in the past already know, all you really have to do is attend a brief meeting each month. (Well, there may be a bit more to it than that!)

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Garske

President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer
Northwind Natural Foods Co-op

Northwind Natural Foods Co-op Mission Statement

1. To provide a marketing and purchasing outlet for primarily natural, organic, unprocessed foods and related items at a minimum price, on a nonprofit basis.
2. To educate and promote to the community healthy lifestyles, wellness and a whole foods diet emphasizing natural, organic and unprocessed foods.
3. To educate the community as to the benefits and potentials of our cooperative and cooperatives in general and to cooperate with other cooperatives

Northwind News is published by Northwind Natural Foods Cooperative for its membership. Please notify us if your address has changed.

Northwind Natural Foods Co-op
116 South Suffolk Street
Ironwood, MI 49938