



# Northwind News: Stronger with our Members

## Summer 2016

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Letter from the President

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Staff Changes

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Letter from the Manager

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Treasurer's Report

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Calling New Board Members

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Monthly Work Bees Continue

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Recipe: Watermelon-tomato Salad

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Spotlight on Dario Dominguez

## Mission Statement

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

## Staff

**General Manager:** [Jason Olkonen](#)

**Clerk:** Levon Ladwig

**Clerk:** Jenni Jackson

## Welcome to Northwind News!

Below you'll find the latest on the Co-op: announcements, introductions of new staff, financial and progress reports, a recipe, member spotlight, and call for new board members. Please read on, and we hope to see you in the store!

## New Store Hours!

The Co-op has changed its store hours after valuable feedback from its members. We are now open until 7 pm on Thursdays and Fridays. Our current hours are Mon - Wed 9 - 6, Thurs - Fri 9 - 7, Sat 9 - 6.

## General Membership Meeting: Saturday, September 24

Mark your calendars: our annual general membership meeting will take place on **Saturday, September 24th from 5:00 - 7:30 pm** at the Depot Park pavilion in downtown Ironwood. Bring a dish to pass; the potluck will run from 5:00 - 5:30 and the meeting will start at 5:30. As many members as possible should be in attendance! We will be presenting on the status of the Co-op, electing new board members, voting on changes to the bylaws, and of course, eating good food and talking with fellow community members. Look for an upcoming announcement about topics to be discussed and voted on at the meeting. The success of our Co-op depends on member participation, so we hope to see you there!

## Celebrating Festival Ironwood

Thank you all who came to the Co-op during Festival Ironwood. We hope you enjoyed the samples! If you have any suggestions on something you would like to see in the store, you can let us know. Remember, we can special order many items that we don't stock: just ask a clerk for assistance. Thank you for your support!

## Board of Directors

**Board President:** Jackie Powers

**Vice President:** Karl Jensen

**Secretary:** Hannah Panci

**Treasurer:** Stan Carr

Lanae Carr

Laura Scotford-Fedora

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116 S Suffolk Street  
Ironwood MI 49938  
906-932-3547  
[info@northwindcoop.org](mailto:info@northwindcoop.org)

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Monday - Wednesday 9-6  
Thursday - Friday 9-7  
Saturday 9-6



## Working Members Needed

Looking for a place to share your talents with others and strengthen our Co-op community? Become a working member! Working members get a discount at the Co-op: for 3 or 6 hours of work per month, you will earn a 5% and 10% discount (respectively) on all purchases the following month. Contact the Outreach Committee at [outreach@northwindcoop.org](mailto:outreach@northwindcoop.org) to become a working member.

Possible projects include:

- **Graphic Design:** flyers, brochures, website
- **Manual Labor:** minor building repairs, unloading delivery trucks, garbage and recycling removal, cleaning, painting
- **Classes or Demonstrations:** cooking, health and wellness, etc.
- **Community Outreach:** represent the Co-op at community events by working a booth at your local Farmers Markets. Markets include Iron County Farmer's Market (Hurley): Wednesday 3 - 6 pm & Saturday 10 am - 2 pm and Ironwood Depot Market (Ironwood): Friday 3:30 - 6:30 pm

Please also read our article below on monthly work bees: it describes other ways you can get involved!

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Would you like to see your business advertised in this newsletter? Here are our rates:

- 1/8 page (business card size) for \$15
- 1/4 page for \$30
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Email [outreach@northwindcoop.org](mailto:outreach@northwindcoop.org) and your advertisement can appear in our next newsletter.



## Rising Sun Infusions

Mark Sherry

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## Letter from the President



As we enjoy the abundance of summer's bounty, the Co-op is preparing for our New Years! Our fiscal year begins Oct. 1st, so we are reviewing the past year and planning for the next. This newsletter brings you some reflections on our accomplishments since last October, as well as a glimpse into the challenges we continue to face.

We have enjoyed a year of changes: two managerial changes, new clerks, new board members, new cash flow methods, new paint and a new store sign soon to be unveiled. We have succeeded at many of our goals and are very happy with our progress. However, we began the year following a long period of increasing loans and failure to pay our bills, and we continue to need to reverse this trend.

We are encouraging all members to consider making the Co-op your first stop in your shopping schedule. Please read the [Treasurer's Report](#) to realize how close we are to meeting our revenue goals. Simply spending \$10 or \$20 more each week at the Co-op will get us there.

We are also asking more members to consider joining our team of working members. By sharing the work (and "earning" a discount on purchases) we all gain an investment in our cooperative. The payoff is apparent.

Next month begins our annual membership renewal period. All current members are invited to attend our general membership meeting (GMM) Sept. 24th. You are also encouraged to consider running for a spot on the board of directors. Elections are held at the GMM. For more information on these topics, read on!

Jackie Powers  
Board President

## Welcome Jason! Farewell Brad

We're excited to introduce Jason Olkonen as our new store manager. Some of our long-time members may remember Jason from way back in the late '90s when he worked here as a store clerk. Since then Jason earned a BS degree from NMU in network computing, with a minor in biology. Ten years immersed in the technical world of computer networking was enough, and Jason sought a change that enabled him to see the light of day and breathe fresh air, and maybe talk to some people every once in awhile. As store manager he is utilizing his computer networking skills by installing our new CoPOS (i.e., cash register) equipment. He's also put his knowledge of biology to work generating ways to better preserve our produce. Please introduce yourself and welcome Jason; we're lucky to have him!

Meanwhile, after four months as store manager, Brad Carr has resigned his position in order to resume a writing career. We thoroughly enjoyed Brad and benefited from his expertise in the natural food arena. We wish Brad well and look forward to reading his books some day!



## Recipe: Tomato-Watermelon Salad

Based on a recipe from Wisconsin Public Radio: Dr. Zorba Pastor  
Makes about 4 servings.

- 4 cups watermelon
- 3-4 large tomatoes
- ½ t. sea salt
- 2.5 T. olive oil
- ¾ T. red wine vinegar
- 3 T. chopped mint/basil (fresh, and consider other herbs)
- 3 c. arugula
- 2.5 oz. feta cheese
- ¼ c. sliced almonds

Directions: Cut watermelon and tomatoes into 1-inch chunks. Combine watermelon and tomatoes in bowl and sprinkle salt over. Let stand 15 minutes. Add herbs, red wine vinegar and 2 T. olive oil to tomatoes and melons. Mix. Toss arugula with ½ T. olive oil. Add to tomato-watermelon mixture. Sprinkle almonds and feta over salad and serve.

## Letter from the General Manager



Hello!

It has been an exciting few months at the Co-op! As some of you are aware, in the past month I became the general manager of our store and have been enjoying it immensely. Some of you I know from when I worked here as a clerk in the late '90s before pursuing my bachelor's degree in computer science, while others I have just met. I am trying to bring my love of the Co-op and computers together to get everything running smoothly again.

First off we will be installing our new point of sale (register) system in the next few weeks. While it may look the same at first glance it has some features that will allow us to better keep track of what is selling, what needs to be ordered, what needs to be repriced with the monthly sales, and will allow many forms of payment such as Google Wallet, Apple Pay, credit cards, EBT, cash and check. This should allow us to better manage the inventory, get items on the shelf that everyone wants much faster, and run more efficiently.

Second I would like to recruit more working members to help with the various committees and store operations we have. As an example, just helping one Thursday afternoon (1:30 to 7:30) a month unloading our weekly large order, stocking shelves and repacking bulk items will net you 10% off most items the next month. In my view this is one of the foundations of a cooperative, members helping on projects that help many while also deriving a personal benefit.

I hope to see more of you enjoy our store as I strive to get you the good food, supplements, and other products you like. Please feel free to send me your suggestions via email to [gm@northwindcoop.org](mailto:gm@northwindcoop.org), phone 906-932-3547, or just stop by the shop.

Jason Olkonen  
General Manager

## Monthly Work Bees Continue

In the spring newsletter we told of the efforts to make the Co-op shine. The trend has continued into summer with monthly bees resulting in freshly painted walls in the kitchen, office and bathroom, as well as better organization and cleaner surfaces.

Future Cleaning Bees: We have more cleaning bees scheduled for August and September. If you are available to help, stop on by and meet some fellow members while helping to make our Co-op shine.

### **Monday August 15th, 9 a.m.**

Cleaning and organizing the basement and hauling metal to the recycler. Bring work gloves. If you have a truck or trailer for hauling, we can use that too.

### **Sunday September 11th, 9 a.m.**

Organizing and painting the restock area behind the walk-in cooler.

Ongoing Cleaning Help: In addition to the monthly cleaning/work bees, there are other opportunities to help out at the store. So if you can't make it to the scheduled cleaning bees, you can still help whenever you are available. Here are a few examples of ways you can help:

- flatten cardboard boxes for recycling on Thursday afternoon or Friday morning
- design window displays
- clean shelving
- sweep floors

Sign Hanging Help: We are also looking for someone with metalworking skills to help inspect and repair the supports on the roof and front of the building for the new store sign.

All of these tasks qualify you for working member discounts. If you have these skills or have questions about the cleaning bees, send an email to [facilities@northwindcoop.org](mailto:facilities@northwindcoop.org).

Laura Scotford-Fedora  
Facility Committee Chair

# Treasurer's Report

Fiscal Year 2016 has been a bit of a roller coaster for the Co-op from a fiscal perspective. We started the year with high payables at \$28,500, and that now stands at \$17,000, mostly in current bills. The board laid out a budget and a plan to end the year with no open overdue bills, while building a cash balance in our checking account. The approach was working well until spring, when weather events kept customers away. Our sales declined and our expected revenues have not recovered. Our YTD sales through July 20th are \$206,000, but we expected sales of \$229,000. That may not seem significant, but the timing has complicated our efforts to maintain the business in good standing. The first six months through March were satisfactory and we continued to pay overdue bills, make store improvements, and build cash. The decline in the last few months has forced us to drain cash reserves and live week-to-week. In the Income and Expense Trends chart, you can see that expenses have exceeded income since April. In the Cash Flow chart, you can see that, at our current average weekly revenue of \$4,778, our checkbook will soon go below zero, because the revenues are not high enough to cover expenses.

Earlier in the year, we calculated that we need approximately \$5100/week in sales to cover fixed and variable expenses. That requires 204 customers (about 1/2 of our members) to spend \$25 every week, which seems like a very reasonable expectation. In June, 197 members averaged (16.41/week): but the top 50 members averaged \$44/week, and next 147 members averaged \$7/week. At this volume, the Co-op cannot be sustained.

The staff and the working members have done a superb job of improving the look of the facility, of improving the efficiency, and of stocking the store. The conclusion of this discussion is that we, as a group of Co-op supporters, need to increase our purchases if we expect to enjoy the benefits of a local food cooperative.

Stan Carr  
Treasurer



Week ending	Income	Payments	Cash reserve	Cash Balance
26 7/23/16	\$ 4,910	\$ 5,415		\$524
27 7/30/16	\$ 4,778	\$ 5,055		\$247
28 8/6/16	\$ 4,778	\$ 4,501		\$524
29 <b>8/13/16</b>	\$ 4,778	\$ <b>7,236</b>		<b>(\$1,934) &lt;= high expense week</b>
30 8/20/16	\$ 4,778	\$ 3,806		(\$962)
31 8/27/16	\$ 4,778	\$ 4,533		(\$718)
32 9/3/16	\$ 4,778	\$ 3,487		\$573
33 <b>9/10/16</b>	\$ 4,778	\$ <b>5,572</b>		<b>(\$221) &lt;= high expense week</b>
34 9/17/16	\$ 4,778	\$ 3,990		\$567
35 9/24/16	\$ 4,778	\$ 4,533		\$812
36 10/1/16	\$ 4,778	\$ 4,049		\$1,540

## Calling New Board Members!

### New Terms Begin Oct 1<sup>st</sup>

We know it's summer but it's time to start thinking about fall, namely Oct 1st when our new fiscal year begins and our next board is inducted. Last year saw five new board members joining two incumbents. Together we have formed a respectful, hard-working, critical-thinking team and accomplished much:

1. Control of the finances: We have a system in place for managing cash flow that has resulted in over \$10,000 of back bills being paid.
2. A major amount of cleaning and purging: Most of the store has a fresh coat of paint and every area is pretty well organized.
3. Outreach to you, our members and customers: This newsletter, recruitment of some great working members, and a presence at the local farmer's markets are some of the results.

Come fall we will be losing two board members: Lanae Carr and Karl Jensen, who have served two and five years, respectively. Kristen Anderson recently stepped down after realizing she is better suited to serving as a working member than as a board member (we need both!). So that leaves four of us heading into our second year: Stan Carr, Laura Scotford-Fedora, Hannah Panci, and me. We have room for up to five more! Won't you consider stepping up?

What does it take to be a good board member? First, time to serve. It takes a minimum of 12 hours per month to attend the monthly meetings and contribute to store operations between meetings. Examples range from serving as board secretary to serving as treasurer to serving by organizing cleaning bees to manning a booth at a farmers market. Each director gives more or less based on interest, skill, work, family and other life circumstances. Lastly, you need to be able to use e-mail and to access documents on Google Drive (training is provided). Board members receive 10% off their purchases at the Co-op, a nominal compensation for their time and skill. The main rewards come from being part of this important community asset. The work is fun and gratifying!

If you have any interest in board service, please let me know. I would be happy to meet with you and talk further about your interests and our needs. There is a new board application that we will share with our members, so you can be informed voters at the general membership meeting September 24th. Terms are two years, commencing Oct. 1st.

Jackie Powers  
Board President

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## Spotlight on Dario Dominguez

For our summer newsletter we would like to shine our member spotlight on a new member to our community, Dario Dominguez. Dario hails from Bronx, New York and lived in Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN for 8 years before settling down in Ironwood. After making a home here, Dario has opened a local downtown business, The Other Side Glass.

Dario is a huge supporter of our local Co-op; he's in practically every day! Many of you have likely witnessed the wonderful smile he carries all the time. Watch out, it's contagious!

Not only is he shopping for himself now, but for his family. Dario is a proud father of a beautiful daughter and wants to nourish her with healthy, local foods just as he and his partner nourish themselves.

Another passion Dario has is music. When he is not working at his store or shopping at Northwind Co-op, he is visiting all the live music he can get to. He is a vendor at the local musical events we have in the area. Not only does he support the local events, but he travels to places such as Madison and Minneapolis, bringing his glass art and jewelry on the road with him. Dario appreciates Northwind Natural Foods Co-op as much as we appreciate him. Thank you, Dario, for being a member for 3 years now and for all your support. Not only to the Co-op, but to the community as well.