# The Co-operator

EAST END FOOD COOP

The monthly newsletter of the East End Food Co-op • Pittsburgh, PA

# Sustainable DIY Gifts

by Kate Safin, Interim Marketing & Member Services Manager

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, household waste increases by more than 25% from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day. Food waste, shopping bags, packaging, wrapping paper, bows and ribbons add an additional 1 million tons of waste a week to our landfills! A sustainably packaged gift can be beautiful in its simplicity and offers an opportunity to get creative and DIY. If you feel compelled to cloak your gift in wrapping paper, consider using sustainably sourced and recycled wrap, newspaper, or butcher paper. Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse (PCCR) has hundreds of gift cards and paper wrapping options, and every purchase helps support their non-profit business.

Here is a collection of a few ideas, inspired by products at the Co-op.

- A glass mason jar filled with herb infused sea salts, sparkly raw sugar speckled with ground vanilla beans, or colorful bulk herbs and spices needs nothing more to increase its dazzle.
- A collection of loose-leaf teas with an infuser and insulated mug is ideal for a friend, neighbor, or colleague. A jar filled with organic, fair trade coffee beans from Bulk works well for the java-loving people in your life, and there is incredible variety from our cooperative partners Equal Exchange and local roasters like Steel Cup and La Prima Espresso (who make a donation to the Rachel Carson Homestead for every pound of the Rachel Carson blend sold).
- Bulk popcorn paired with spices and chocolate for drizzling, a cozy hand-made (or locally crafted) blanket, and a movie

- or book is a nice idea for the homebody (or someone in desperate need of a curl up on the couch).
- You can reuse an old tin and fill it with mixed nuts, candies, and dried fruit from the Bulk department. All it takes is a few tins (we bet you can find these at PCCR) and a little assembly and you can have stacks of gifts for co-workers, neighbors, or large extended families for very little
- Edible gifts are another great choice, especially for those who don't want "things" or "trinkets." A selection of fresh, organic fruit paired with locally-crafted artisanal cheeses, high-quality chocolate, and local honey really has a wow factor. Add a bottle of wine, bring it to your next gathering, and offer to make a cheese plate that everyone can enjoy. Is there anything better than sharing delicious food among good company?
- Our Health & Beauty Department also has many sustainable DIY gift options. Check out the Aura Cacia DIY Center at the end of aisle 5 for all the tools, ingredients, and even recipe cards you need to assemble everything from foot scrubs to lip balms. Our new line of organic Veriditas essential oils also has recipe cards and usage tips. A few jars of high quality essential oils packaged in a muslin bag is one of my personal go-to gifts all year round. You can also pair essential oils with anything from a yoga mat to a diffuser, even a bottle of Dr. Bronner's Castile soap, depending on the scents you've selected and the person receiving the gift.

 Books, calendars, and journals are great for the thoughtful planners in your life and make wonderful gifts for people of all ages. No need to wrap them up in paper. Many are beautiful on their own with intricate covers, photos, and illustrations.

When selecting a gift, organic, fair trade, non-GMO, and local are all more sustainable options. Fortunately, your Co-op has many items that fit into this category!

One great example is Alaffia Cooperative, which has many affordable body care items that can be paired to make a wonderful gift basket. Alaffia was founded to "alleviate poverty and empower communities in West Africa through the fair trade of shea butter and other indigenous resources," and the sales of their products support maternal care, education funds, and restoration efforts, just to name a few. Shopping local keeps your money in the regional economy and drastically decreases the environmental impact of shipping items

long distances. Many of the items we carry are handcrafted by the very people who own the company and are delivered to us in person, like the soaps from Apothecary Muse, which are locally produced and delivered to the Co-op by bike. Try the luxurious lip balms and body butters from Abeille Beauté and you are supporting both an entrepreneur and the honeybee population in Southwestern PA.

Beyond the hundreds of local gift options available at the Co-op, you may consider supporting the local theater and art scenes by purchasing tickets to a show or investing in season passes to your favorite theater. Look for the popular I Made It! Market pop up events across the city for a slew of handcrafted gift options, all made right here in Pittsburgh. And don't forget about the many local business that are part of our Community Partners Program! There are many, from unique shops to salons.

This holiday season, get creative, think locally, act sustainably, and have a fun and joyous holiday!



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# BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The next board meeting is Monday, December 19th at 7 PM.

# MEMBERS ONLY:

Be sure to use your 10% quarterly discount by December 31st! The next quarter goes from January 1st – March 31st.

# Hours for All Staff Meeting & Party:

Your Co-op will close at 6 PM on Tuesday, December 6th for an All Staff Meeting & Party. Thank you for your cooperation!

# Holiday Hours:

Your Co-op will close early at 7 PM on December 24th and will be closed all day on December 25th.

East End Food Co-op • 7516 Meade St. Pittsburgh, PA 15208 • www.eastendfood.coop • 412.242.3598 • Open to Everyone, Every Day 8 AM - 9 PM



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# Annual Report

# **GM** Report

by Justin Pizzella

Fiscal Year 2015-16 marked another good year for our Co-op. Although we still face many challenges, we have made great strides that I am excited to summarize in this report.

#### **Our Successes**

Some highlights of our successes throughout the fiscal year include:

- Our membership grew by 676 members and we now have over 12,162 members.
- We grossed \$11.3 million in sales in the fiscal year.
- Approximately 25% of our sales were from local products.
- We negotiated a first union contract that was unanimously ratified.
- Our finances are sound. If we did not incur the extraordinary expenses related to the union contract, we would have returned a positive net income.
- We placed third in Sustainable
  Pittsburgh's Green Workplace Challenge,
  and we were one of 12 National
  Cooperative Grocer member Co-ops
  recognized for sustainability initiatives.
- We continue to be a significant giver in the community through our community event participation, direct donations totaling nearly \$40,000, composted materials totaling 61,731 pounds, and direct food donations of nearly 300,000 pounds.

#### **The Union Contract Negotiations**

I highlight the union negotiations and the subsequent contract as a significant positive for our Co-op.

This was a very fast first contract negotiation. Our first meeting was in early December, and despite a month-long hiatus over the holidays, the union unanimously ratified the contract on March 18. Since we ratified our union contract, I continue to field questions about our approach to negotiating this contract. I would like to emphasize that we took a neutral approach to the union, neither supporting nor opposing it. In fact we recognized that the union may help improve staff communications.

As nobody in the Co-op's management team had experience negotiating a contract, we hired a law firm to represent us. We contacted several union law firms. These firms highly recommended John Cerilli of Littler because of his long history negotiating fairly and amicably with unions, his 6 years' experience with the National Labor Relations Board, and his service on non-profit boards, particularly the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank.

Overall, the negotiations were collegial, above board, and done with an air of mutual respect. This amicable tone has continued since we have signed the contract. For future contracts, we look to improve our negotiations by employing an "interest-based" negotiation strategy that is a collaborative approach to find "win-win" solutions to meet the needs of all parties in the negotiations.

# Challenges

In last year's GM Report, I wrote about the challenges our Co-op was facing: the need for continual improvement in our operations, increasing participation in our Co-op, and

the changing competitive landscape of the natural/organic sector. These challenges have not changed. We have to continue focusing on all three challenges to accomplish the things that differentiate us as a co-op.

Operations: A continuing theme for the last several years, the fruits of this work are paying off. We have been able to reduce expenses (aside from our wages and benefits), and most of this reduction is the result of the operational improvements we have made. As we go forward, we will continue to maintain tight expense controls and improve systems. Our big focus operationally over the last year has been to reduce pricing. We now offer nearly 500 items on our Co+op Basics program in addition to consistently having about 15% of our items on sale at any given time.

Competition: The demand for clean, organic, and non-GMO food continues to grow, and we experience pressure from just about every sector of the food economy.

Participation and Engagement: Probably our biggest current challenge as our Co-op evolves. We need to get better at engaging our members to understand their needs. We also need this input so that we can help focus the organization.

#### **Progressing forward**

In a recent interview with the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, food activist Marion Nestle stated that her primary message to those of us involved in food activism is to "pick a goal." My strategy for the Co-op over the last several years has been similar-focus and become really good at something. That something has been becoming an excellent grocer of healthy, clean food sourced as locally as possible. This focus area was born from member surveys, talking with many of you in the store, and the fact that our primary activity that generates the most good is the operation of our store. If we become a great grocer, our ends take care of themselves. Statistics have shown that for every \$100 spent at a local business, \$68 stays in the community. Being a great grocer allows us to invest more in our staff, community, and in the services and infrastructure we provide to our members. Under this strategy, the store has had tremendous impact over the last five years: sales of local product have climbed from 12% of sales to over 25%, our sales have grown from \$7.5 million to \$11.3 million, our membership has grown from 9,248 members to 12,162, and our staff has nearly doubled as we currently employ approximately 90 people. We contribute significantly more in both food and direct monetary contributions. Considering the majority of the \$11.3 million dollars in sales stays in our local economy, we have tremendous impact on our community.

That said, we must do a better job of engaging our members to insure that this focus is the will of the members. This is the focus of the next year. As we move through the year, look for us to be engaging members in many different ways. The Co-op is only as good as what we put into it.

# **Board Report**

by Mike Collura

Cooperation is defined as working together towards the same end, and joining forces to accomplish a task that one can't achieve alone. This is at the core to what differentiates us from others. We look to our shared principles and values to guide us as we work to meet the most needs of the largest number of our member-owners. This is the foundation on which we built the framework of how we choose to interact with member-owners, employees, vendors and our community at large.

Our co-op is open to anyone willing to use our store to meet their needs and to accept the responsibilities of membership. We welcome memberowners, staff, and shoppers without discrimination of socio-economic status, racial or ethnic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or religion. We celebrate diversity in our staff and membership and acknowledge that this diversity can make meeting a collective group's needs challenging. Having an explicit directive of inclusivity is one of the most powerful statements that we can make in our community. It acknowledges what each of us have in common: our humanity and our shared connection to our environment.

We have stayed committed to being a democratic organization controlled by our member-owners. We provide opportunities for member-owners to share their input on our mission and learn about how and why we choose to do the things we do. We conduct member surveys to gauge member's needs, hold open board meetings, and have special meetings like our financial deep-dive sessions for interested member-owners. We have even stationed board members inside the store on certain occasions to interact with member-owners that wouldn't normally come to a meeting or event.

Democratic member-owner control is a tool used to achieve fairness through equality, but it isn't a tool that can be effectively used alone. It is no coincidence that the values of democracy, equality, and equity are layered together to help make up cooperative identity. Our board has been committed to ensuring that we make decisions based on the intersection of these values. While we depend on our highly active and engaged memberowners to help our co-op thrive and succeed, we also work hard not to devalue those member-owners that make use of the co-op in other ways. The democratic process allows us to treat everyone equally, but it is up to the board to ensure that member-owners that don't participate in meetings still have an advocate.

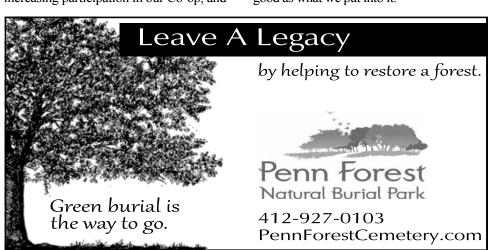
The board has made changes to its appointment process when there are board vacancies, providing a framework to put out open calls to the membership for appointment candidates. We believe that this allows the most number and different types of people the opportunity to choose board service.

We've worked to enhance physical and social health in our community in some new ways. The Co+op Explorers program for kids is encouraging healthy eating habits. The Co+op Basics program, made possible through our partnership with National Co+op Grocers (NCG), is offering everyday low prices for a variety of popular grocery and household staples-the building blocks for hearty meals and daily living. Our member-owners have directly supported many local nonprofits through our popular Register Round Up program. The Co-op also continues its efforts with composting and recycling and has worked to reduce food waste by partnering with 412 Food Rescue to redistribute excess food to people in our community that need it.

We support and contribute to an ethical and resilient food infrastructure by supporting local farmers and suppliers, and working to grow that support each year. We evaluate fairness and equity in the supply chain of the products we sell by collaborating with cooperatives such as Equal Exchange. We continue to be a leader in educating the community about issues like the risks of GMOs and the importance of labeling them.

The Co-op has also started the process of using Open Book Management, an approach to running the Co-op that empowers every employee with the tools, education, and data they need to act and take responsibility like owners. This process enables employees to identify ways in which their role in the Co-op fits in to our performance as a whole and challenges them to take steps to help us all succeed together.

On September 14, 2015 the staff overwhelmingly voted to join the United Electrical Workers union. Management worked very diligently to remain neutral during the process, focusing on ensuring that the election was amicable and that the staff had as much information as possible to make their decision. The Coop remained committed to supporting staff throughout the process of contract negotiation and both parties were able to complete negotiations and produce a fair contract for everyone in just four months. This quick timeframe, along with the friendly and productive tone of the negotiations, are a testament to everyone's commitment to cooperation.





# **Finance Report**

by Shawn McCullough, EEFC Finance Manager

Another year has come and gone at the Co-op. Financially speaking, we continue to face the challenge of increasing expenses with flat sales. For a number of years, the Co-op enjoyed double-digit sales growth. This came to an end during fiscal year 2014-15, where the sales growth over the previous year had been approximately 5 percent. Sales growth further diminished for Fiscal Year 2015-16, with growth at approximately 2.4 percent, and even this figure is inflated because Fiscal Year 2015-16 had 53 weeks (which happens every six or seven years). Excluding the additional week, our sales growth was approximately 0.6 percent. As of the writing of this report (through 18 weeks of fiscal year end 2017), our sales growth is approximately 0.8 percent.

Broadly speaking, we are not alone in this financial quandary. Co-ops in general continue to face challenges specific to sales growth, with the most recent data showing sales increases of between 1 and 1.5 percent. We do not have hard data on historical trending data of co-op sales, but would venture to say this anemic sales growth is the lowest it has been for quite some time.

Expenses are the other side of the equation. Our overall expenses increased at a faster rate than our sales. The expense categories of most concern were purchases, personnel, and legal.

• Related to purchases, our gross margin decreased from approximately 39.2

percent in 2015 to 37.7 percent for 2016. The majority of this decrease in margin percentage results from our effort to be more price competitive and to increase the margin dollars as opposed to the margin percentage, essentially selling more products at a cheaper price as opposed to selling fewer items at a more expensive price.

- Our personnel expenses (salaries, wages, and benefits) increased nominally (0.4 percent) from prior year. Through attrition, mainly in Admin, personnel costs were controlled.
- Legal expenses were considerably higher during 2016 as opposed to 2015. The Co-op spent approximately \$160,000 more than what would be considered "normal" for yearly legal expenses. This increase was almost exclusively due to the negotiations around the contract for the collective bargaining unit.

For the year, we are anticipating a significant loss due mainly to exceptional legal costs. This loss is before any taxrelated adjustments, as well as any other final audit adjustments, which were not yet available at the time of publication. Complete, audited financials will be available in the FY2015-16 Annual Report, set to be published in January. The Annual Report will be available at the Co-op, on our website, and will be emailed to all members.

# **Member Services Report**

by Kate Safin

The Marketing & Member Services
Department experienced significant
staffing changes during the past fiscal
year. As former Assistant Marketing &
Member Service Manager, I stepped
into an Interim Management position.
Patrick McHale took on the position
of Promotions & Merchandising
Coordinator and helped the department
establish a regular in-store demo
program. The changes in the department
gave us an opportunity to evaluate
our objectives and the goals we could
reasonably accomplish with the attrition
we experienced in a few months' time.

Membership

Our membership continued to see steady growth, and in fiscal year 2015-16 our membership surpassed 12,000 and by the end of the fiscal year we were 12,162 members strong! We welcomed 55 new members during our Annual Member Drive, which took place during International Cooperative Week July 4-12, 2015. Over the year, we welcomed 676 new households and had member equity of over \$1.2 million.

Special Events & Outreach
Our third annual Know Your GMOs
event took place on Saturday, October
24th at the East End Cooperative
Ministry in East Liberty. This year,
presentations and a panel discussion
focused on the concerns of growers and
farmers in our region.

Winterfest, our annual, seasonal celebration and fundraiser for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank took place on Saturday, January 23, 2016, at the Hosanna House in Wilkinsburg. In spite of very inclement weather, over 200 people joined us for this family-friendly event and raised \$1,892.90, a monetary

sum that equates to providing 9,460 meals to hungry children throughout the region.

Throughout the year, the Co-op remains dedicated to the Cooperative Principle of Education & Information. In FY 2015-16, we collaborated with 13 community organizations to offer 36 free classes, workshops, and tastings. We also introduced and hosted five gatherings of Cookbook Club, a potluck where cooks of all skill levels had a chance to rub elbows, trade recipes, and share some of their favorite dishes. Through our robust outreach efforts, we engaged with nearly 17,000 people in the community.

We also provided many additional savings opportunities for members and shoppers. On Earth Day, we had a 25% off Bulk Food Sale and in May we offer 50% off seedlings for our 2nd Annual celebration of Plant Something Day.

Co+op Explorers

Co+op Exploreres, a free fruit program for children ages 12 and under, launched on March 1, 2016. Hundreds of children signed up to be card-carrying members of the program, which exists to encourage healthy eating habits and engage young shoppers in a positive co-op experience. Last fiscal year we gave away 960 pieces of free fruit through the Co+op Explorers program!

#### **Donations**

We continue to support the work of many local schools, non-profits and charitable organizations through our General Donations program and Register Round Up program. Our general donations contributed \$11,406.21 to local organizations and the Round Up program raised \$28,279.40.

# 2016 Annual Meeting Recap

By Erica Peiffer, Board Clerk

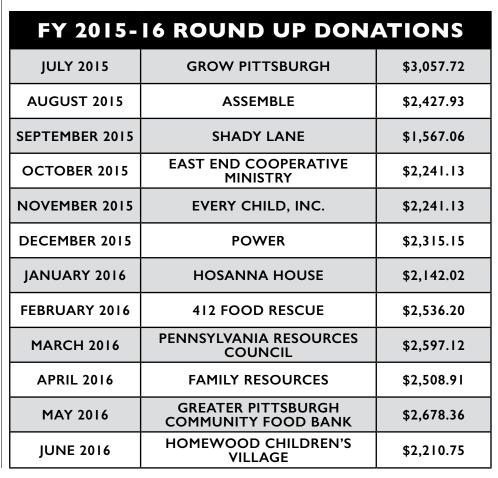
On Sunday, November 13, our Co-op hosted its 2016 Annual Meeting. This year's event was hosted in the bright and colorful Great Room at East End Cooperative Ministry, a long-time partner community organization located in East Liberty. A total of 76 people gathered together that afternoon, representing 58 membership investment shares in our Co-op.

The Annual Meeting is traditionally an opportunity for fellowship and discussion amongst member-owners, and it is the obligation of our board and general manager to report to the membership at this meeting on the accomplishments and challenges of managing our cooperatively-owned business. On this occasion, General Manger Justin Pizzella reported to the membership on operational outcomes of the prior fiscal year. Justin also discussed unaudited financial outcomes from the prior fiscal year, and went on to discuss our current financial status. Board President Mike Collura presented highlights from the past year of board work, and Board Perpetuation & Elections Committee Chair Caroline Mitchell reported on progress toward resolving questions of integrity that have postponed results of the 2016 board elections.

Each speaker took time to listen and respond to questions and comments from the membership.

Next, a hired facilitator and Co-op member Lizzie Anderson transitioned to leading a discussion on expansion, as was promoted on the meeting agenda, although many member-owners in attendance preferred to continue the discussion about board elections. Results from this hour-and-a-half long discussion were a list of questions and concerns voiced by member-owners, some of which were responded to by the board during the discussion, and others which will be taken into consideration for futher communications.

Thanks to Annual Meeting Committee members Alice Leibowitz and Sarah Aerni, as well as Interim Marketing & Member Services Manager Kate Safin for your collaboration in organizing this event. Thanks to our Co-op Café Staff for providing delicious sandwiches, salads and hors d'oeuvres. And a very sincere thank you to the member-owners who not only have invested in a membership share, but also dedicated their time, energy, passion, and came in the cooperative spirit, to make our Co-op's 2016 Annual Meeting a lively affair!







# OMMUNITY

CO-OP SHOPPERS **CONTRIBUTED** 

00 \$1,778.08 **THROUGH** 

THE REGISTER ROUND UP FOR



**412 FOOD RESCUE RECEIVED** 



POUNDS OF **FOOD FROM** THE CO-OP

**OUTREACH** REPRESENTATIVES **REACHED** 



**PEOPLE AT EVENTS** 

LOCAL **PRODUCTS MADE UP** 



**OF TOTAL STORE SALES** 

OF OUR PURCHASES,



WERE FROM LOCAL **SUPPLIERS** 

# EMBER IMPA

**MEMBERSHIP GREW BY** 



**NEW HOUSEHOLDS** 

**MEMBER EQUITY INCREASED** 



FOR A TOTAL OF \$1.2M

**OF OUR** MEMBERSHIPS,



**SHARES ARE FULLY PAID** 

DATA COLLECTED DURING OCTOBER 2016

**OUR CO-OP HAS** 



**ACTIVE MEMBERS** 

**MEMBER PURCHASES MADE UP** 



**OF TOTAL STORE SALES** 

**December's Round Up Recipient: Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh** 





Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's mission is to engage the community in literacy and learning. It was established in 1895 by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie as a public trust to be funded by the community Through critical services such as early learning programs for children, job search assistance, and computer and Internet access, the Library fosters lifelong learning and is a renowned leader among the nation's libraries.

With more than 2 million visitors and 3.5 million items borrowed each year, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh is the region's most visited asset and one of the largest public libraries in Pennsylvania. People use the library for free internet and

computer access. There were 726,558 computer log-ins last year and wi-fi use was up 19%! The Library serves as a community anchor, provides services to people of all ages, and contributes to a thriving city.

The Library's vision is that through Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, the people of our region will develop the literacies and connections that support individual achievement and strengthen the power of community. To learn more about Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, visit their website or give them a call at 412-622-3114. If you want to support them in their mission, be sure to tell your Co-op cashier that you want to Round Up your total this month!

Spare change can result in positive change! www.carnegielibrary.org

# **Board Update**

The East End Food Co-op board met in Executive Session on Saturday, Nov. 19, 2016 to discuss serious issues related to violations of the board's Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics by two board members, Tom Pandeleon and Alice Leibowitz. These issues included public disparagement of the General Manager in open board sessions, bullying and intimidating behavior towards the General Manager and other board members, and prohibited direct dealing with union members.

Relevant sections of the Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics which led to this decision are posted on the website.

All directors signed the Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics and agreed to follow them. The full text of the documents can be found on the Co-op's website on the board page. Warnings had previously been given to these board members about their behaviors but their actions continued. Each of the two board members received written notice of the alleged violations five weeks in advance. Each were given a chance to be heard, were given the opportunity to vote, and both attended the meeting.

Alice Leibowitz spoke and produced documents to defend herself. The board listened to her defenses. She and Tom Pandaleon then walked out of the meeting just prior to taking the vote. The board voted to remove Alice Leibowitz as a director (5-0-2). Both could have participated in the vote had they not left.

Tom Pandaleon walked out of the meeting without taking advantage of the opportunity to be heard that the board

provided to him. He did not present any verbal or documentary defense to any of the charges against him. One director read an email Tom previously sent to the board where he disputed one of the charges. The board discussed the evidence supporting his removal. The board voted to remove Tom Pandaleon as a director (5-0-1). He could have participated in the vote had he

The board does not take this action lightly. Notice and documentation supporting the charges were distributed to all board members in advance. The actions taken at this meeting were the product of discussions and warnings to the board members, which had progressed over the last several months.

**Election Update** 

Members have also been asking about the election investigation. The board also discussed this matter at the November 19th board meeting. Selecting a vendor to perform the election integrity investigation was discussed at the board meeting on November 21st. We hope to have the vendor begin their work soon. Pending results of the election integrity investigation, we will resume the election and count the ballots. We hope that this will be able to occur by the December board meeting.

We also hear the member-owners' concern for how the three additional board vacancies are filled. The current board will entertain a motion to seat the top six vote getters from the 2016 election. There are three expiring terms to be filled by the election and three additional vacancies.

Questions should be directed to boarddir@eastendfood.coop.

# Pittsburgh apiary helps support beekeeping in Kenya

by Christina Newman, Apoidea Apiary

To Americans, the thought of African bees typically incites fear of "killer bee" attacks. Yet, for Kenyan beekeeper Fred Mugo, the Sub-Saharan subspecies, Apis mellifera scutelatta, is the honeybee of his homeland. The moment I met him three years ago, I noticed his deep sense of awe when we talked about honeybees—so much awe and wonder that even the aggression of this killer bee did not hinder his enthusiasm. When Fred came to Pittsburgh in 2013 to visit his sister, Rosa, he connected with our local beekeeping community. As we beekeepers like to commiserate over our many challenges, I enjoyed getting to know Fred and comparing Kenyan beehive management to Western Pennsylvania practices.

Fred lives in Kerugoya, Kenya, a town about two hours north of Nairobi, near majestic Mount Kenya. Over the years, he has studied at the University of Nairobi College of Agriculture & Veterinary Sciences and has taught beekeeping in Ghana as an extension service agent with the United Nations. Inspired by the strong environmental activism of Kenyan Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai, one of Fred's focuses is on the ecological importance of the flowering trees that provide food for bees.

Kirinyaga Conservation Honey is Fred's operation in Kerugoya, where he teaches beekeeping and indigenous tree conservation as a way to regain lost flora and fauna. His mission is to help small farmers with limited resources make the most of their honeybees for farm pollination and honey sales. Because contemporary beekeeping woodenware can be very expensive in Kenya, Fred demonstrates how to innovate with limited building materials by making the more traditional Kenyan top bar hives, or hives made of hollowed logs. One of his most impressive entrepreneurial feats is

the use of bike power as the primary mode of transportation for tending his hives and for moving them from one location to another. It's pretty gutsy to strap a colony of 30,000+ live honey bees onto a rear bike rack and take them for a ride. Honey bees are less than thrilled about excess vibration, and Fred has said that the bees do sometimes get out in the middle of the bike trip...but he just keeps pedaling. I can only imagine this accomplishment is a matter of mind over venom.

This holiday season, Apoidea Apiary is donating a portion of their profits to Kirinyaga Conservation Honey to support their educational efforts. If anyone would like to donate beekeeping books or magazines as well, we will gladly include them in our shipment to Kenya. In the future, we hope to help Fred create simple "how-to" guides for new beekeepers.

To connect Pittsburghers with Kenyan cuisine, we've crafted a special Kenyan Chai honey infusion made with organic Kenyan black tea, cardamom, cinnamon, nutmeg, black pepper and dark fall honey harvested from our Allegheny River zone bee yards. Strong spices in many Kenyan dishes are a cultural influence from trade with India over the centuries. We highly recommend drizzling this honey on homemade "mandazi" (Kenyan donuts) for a special holiday season brunch. Rosa Mugo, Fred's sister, has been very kind in providing her family recipe. Chakula chema! (translation: Good appetite!)

Christina Newman is the principle beekeeper of Apoidea Apiary and a cofounder of Burgh Bees. She currently manages an apiary of 40-70 hives in Pittsburgh, PA. For more information about donating to the Kirinyaga Conservation Honey, please email cjn@apoidea-apiary.com. You can learn more about Apoidea Apiary by visiting www.apoidea-apiary.com.

# **Staff Picks**

Who would know the best products to buy at the East End Food Co-op better than our Staff? We asked some of them to name a few of their favorites and tell us why they love them!



## **Latimore Valley Apple Juice**

This is the freshest tasting juice I have ever tried! It's silky and refreshing, not overly sweet. Apple juice in general makes my belly hurt if I drink too much at once, but I've never felt bad after indulging in Latimore Valley - it's addicting! - Erica P.

**Greek Gourmet Buffalo Hummus** A healthy buffalo dip that is tangy and not too spicy. Great with tortilla chips! Or try it in a wrap with spring greens, shredded carrots, and grilled chicken for an easy meal.

- Kate S.





### **Back Roads Granola Chocolate Pecan Granola**

I love adding this granola to Seven Star Farms Maple Yogurt. The Chocolate chunks make it a delicious treat or breakfast

- Maura H.

### Honest Tea Lori's Lemon Tea

It has a great flavor without a ton of sugar or caffeine!

- Patrick M.



# **Mandazi (Kenyan Donuts)**

Servings 4-6

# **Ingredients**

3 cups flour

2 1/2 tsp baking powder

1 tsp salt

1 cup sugar 1/2 cup butter

+/- 1/4 cup water

# **Directions**

- 1. Mix flour, baking powder, and salt together. When blended, mix in sugar.
- 2. Add butter and cut through dry mix until the texture is fine and there are no big lumps.
- Add warmed water (80-90 degrees but not hot).
- Mix together to form dough. The dough should be soft and pliable, but not sticky. Add more flour or water to make it workable, as necessary.
- Let the dough rest. An hour or two is best, but wait time can be shortened.

Photo Credits: Christina Newman

- Cut the dough ball in half. Roll out one half at a time on a lightly floured board until it is about ¼ inch think.
- Cut round dough pieces with a biscuit cutter, mason jar ring, or shape of
- Fry in hot oil at 375 degrees F until both sides are golden brown. Remove from oil and drain on paper towels or newspaper.
- 10. Drizzle with Apoidea Kenyan Chai infused honey.

Mandazi are best served warm.

# **New in the Aisles**

**ORGANIC VALLEY** – Egg Nog

TRICKLING SPRINGS – Egg Nog

**SILK** – Dairy Free Soy Nog

**RICE DREAM** – Rice Nog

**SO DELICIOUS** – Coconut Holiday Nog

**ALMOND DREAM** – Pumpkin Spice Non-Dairy Beverage

MIDEL – Candy Cane Creams, Gingerbread Men, Gluten Free Gingerbread Men

MARICH CHOCOLATES – Peppermint Bark Shortbread (Bulk)

MARICH CHOCOLATES – Triple Chocolate Toffee (Bulk)

# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

# **Zero Waste Shopping**

By Mary Peterson, Pennsylvania Resources Council

Do you spend a lot of time thinking about the food you eat and its nutritional benefits? There certainly is a lot to think about when making dietary choices in our complex food system. Many people now think carefully about where their food comes from and how it's processed. Sometimes, however, with our more immediate concerns, we don't consider the way our food is packaged. Approximately 30% of the waste we send to landfills is packaging waste, and while it's time for producers to wise up and take responsibility, we as consumers have great power to change this situation.

Many people, fed up with waste, are shifting toward "zero waste" lifestyles. Living zero waste means rejecting open-loop products that go straight to the landfill and diverting as much waste as possible from the garbage can toward reuse, recycling or compost. Most of our daily household waste is generated in the kitchen, so it makes sense to first analyze grocery purchases to see whether you can simply switch one item for an identical option that comes with little to no packaging.

Almost every grocery store has zero waste options, even if its bulk food section is merely nuts and candy. And some stores, like the Co-op, offer produce with no packaging. Zero waste shoppers reuse bags, jars, and other containers to package food while shopping. Or they simply take their few naked potatoes, apples, or bunch of bananas from the shelf, to the basket, register, shopping bag, and home without waste of any kind. Making the switch to shopping this way can be intimidating at first, but as you develop new habits, shopping becomes effortless. You will not only have less garbage to deal with, but you'll feel good about your choices and your smaller carbon footprint!

Mary is a LEED Green Associate and SCA Sustainability Fellow. She assists with program development of Zero Waste Pennsylvania, which provides technical assistance to events and facilities that want to reduce their waste. Join Mary on Saturday, December 3rd for a Zero Waste Shopping workshop at the Co-op. See page 8 for event details.



# **Shady Side Academy Pre-K Adventurers Visit EEFC**

On Friday, November 11th, a group of 42 Pre-K students, 6 teachers, and several parents from Shady Side Academy Pre-K visited the East End Food Co-op. The visit was part of the Pre-K Adventurers program FUNdamentals of Foods unit where the 4-and 5-year-old students learned about nutrition and healthy eating. The students all gathered in the POWER/EEFC Conference Room for a lesson about where our food comes from, how to "Eat a Rainbow" of fruits and vegetables each day, and a healthy rainbow-inspired snack of apples, cucumbers, grapes, carrots, and bananas. Teachers then led small groups of students through the Co-op so they could explore the facility where the foods they just ate came from. We really enjoyed making this connection with the Pre-K Adventurers, and based on the note they sent us, the feeling was mutual:

Dear Mr. Gabriel and Co-op Workers, Thank you for letting us come to your store and teaching us all about healthy foods that we can eat. You taught us that the food in your store comes from local farms and gardens.

We loved our rainbow healthy snack that you prepared for us. The snack was delicious because of all of the nutrients in it! We loved touring your store an seeing the cow hanging from the ceiling. We liked seeing the Brussel Sprouts on the ice to keep them cold to be healthy.

We can't wait to come back another time soon!

Thanks again. Love, Shady Side Academy Pre-K Adventurers



# **Seasonal Cocktails and Other Beverages**

by Co+op, stronger together

Step in from a wintery blizzard and wrap your hands around a warm mug of cocoa. Put away the mower and refresh with cold, freshly squeezed lemonade. Welcome visitors with your signature tea blend, or toast the latest accomplishment with a glass of bubbly. Somehow, there's a beverage for every scenario!

# Cocktail anyone?

Starting with a basic Arnie Palmer (half iced tea, half lemonade), you can create an endless number of other drinks, like this Berry Mint Cocktail by the pitcher, perfect for summer:Combine two cups of hot peppermint tea with two cups of frozen mixed berries (or add fresh berries to chilled tea). Add two cups of lemonade. Refrigerate until chilled, then garnish with a mint or lemon slices. For an alcoholic version, add light rum.

# Punch

Think fruit and carbonated beverages: Sparkling apple juice with orange slices and star anise, or natural ginger ale with pineapple juice and frozen strawberries. For extra fun, add a scoop of sherbet to each serving.

# **Smoothies**

Blend any combination of fresh or frozen fruit (frozen will make it icy), yogurt, milk, or soy milk for an instant smoothie. Add sweeteners and spices to taste.

# Warming beverages

When the cold wind blows, think hot beverages, like hot cocoa (spice it up with cinnamon and cayenne), chai tea, toddies, and mulled cider. To make a child-at-heart version of a bedtime toddy, simply warm milk or soy milk, sweeten with honey or maple syrup, and sprinkle with nutmeg. For a feistier version, include a little rum or brandy.

# Toasting the holidays

When the winter holidays arrive, try your hand at making your own eggnog (with or without alcohol), and consider mulling some cider in your crockpot to make the whole house smell festive (mix it with cranberry juice, and go heavy on the spices).

Reprinted by permission from StrongerTogether.coop. Find articles about your food and where it comes from, recipes and a whole lot more at www.strongertogether.coop. Learn even more about proper cocktail mixing on December 7th from 5-8 PM at Wigle Whiskey Distillery. Robert O. Simonson, prolific cocktails and spirits writer, will visit the distillery for a reading

and signing of his new book, "A Proper Drink." Join us for a reception featuring cocktail demos from local bartenders Cecil Usher of Butcher & the Rye and Catherine Cannon of Smallman Galley.



# THE CO-OP

The East End Food Co-op is Pittsburgh's only member-owned natural and organic food market, serving the community since 1980. We offer the finest in certified organic produce and herbs, bulk foods, vitamins and supplements, cruelty-free health and beauty aids, organic and natural packaged and perishable goods and hard-to-find items for special dietary needs.

Our award-winning Vegetarian Café and Juice Bar offers a daily array of fresh, wholesome, hot entrées, soups, salads, and vegan dishes.

The Co-op is open to the public and membership is not required to make purchases, but members do receive better prices, have access to the Federal Credit Union, and can vote and serve on the board of directors.

7516 Meade St. Pittsburgh, PA 15208 www.eastendfood.coop

# **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Mike Collura, President Sarah Aerni, Secretary Dirk Kalp, Treasurer Caroline Mitchell Amit Shah

# MANAGEMENT TEAM

General Manager: Justin Pizzella Human Resources: Jen Girty Finance: Shawn McCullough

IT: Erin Myers
Grocery: Maura Holliday
Café: Amber Pertz
Front End: eric cressley
Produce: Evan Diamond

# THE CO-OPERATOR

Editor: Kate Safin

Copy Editor: Karen Bernard Contributors: Mike Eaton, Erica Peiffer Design & Layout: Molly Palmer Masood Printed By: Indiana Printing & Publishing

The Co-operator is a monthly publication mailed to East End Food Co-op members. Additional copies are available in the store's foyer, and at outreach events. The Co-operator is also available online at www.eastendfood.coop.

Opinions expressed are the writers' own and do not necessarily reflect Co-op policy. The East End Food Co-op does not endorse the views or products of the advertisers in this newsletter.

# Contact Us:

If you are interested in more information about advertising or would like to submit an article, please contact Member Services:

Email: memberservices@eastendfood.coop Phone: 412.242.3598 ext. 142

Show how much you "LIKE" us and **follow** EEFC online!



# EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH



Congratulations to **Ebony Thomas**, who was chosen as the Co-op staff pick for Employee of the Month. She is the POS Coordinator and has worked here for 5 years.

• What's your favorite product, food, or item here?

ALO beverages. Specifically, the Awaken with wheatgrass, though all of them are delicious.

• What do you like to do when you're not at the Co-op?

A. Martial Arts and Hula-Hooping, and training for both.

O. What wouldn't you ever change about the Co-op?

**A.** The appreciation and acceptance of people from all walks of life.

If you could change one thing about the Co-op, what would it he?

**A.** We should put a little bit more trust in our members.

# **NEW FACES**

Cody Williams, Front End

Cody is attracted to the co-op business model because everyone gets to have a voice, and everyone at all levels is held accountable for the business to run smoothly and effectively. Cody would like to be involved in the community in a direct and helpful way.

# YEARS OF SERVICE RECOGNITION

Thanks to the following employees for their contributions:

Richard Calhoun, Café Jess Bartley, Front End 4 Years I Year



Looking to stretch your grocery budget?

Just look for this logo. Co+op Basics offers everyday low prices on many popular grocery and household items.



# CAFÉ SPECIALS • DECEMBER 2016

Sun	Mon	TUE	WED	Тни	Fri	SAT	Store
				I Italian Kitchen	2 Winter Feast	3 AM: Brunch PM: Comfort Kitchen	HOURS: OPEN DAILY: 8 AM – 9 PM
4 AM: Brunch PM: Quesadilas	5 Asian Kitchen	6 Pizza	7 Hearty Harvest	8 Italian Kitchen	9 Winter Feast	10 AM: Brunch PM: Comfort Kitchen	Café Hours:
II AM: Brunch PM: Quesadilas	12 Asian Kitchen	13 Pizza	14 Hearty Harvest	15 Italian Kitchen	16 Winter Feast	17 AM: Brunch PM: Comfort Kitchen	JUICE & COFFEE BAR: 8 AM — 7 PM
18 AM: Brunch PM: Quesadilas	19 Asian Kitchen	20 Pizza	21 Hearty Harvest	22 Italian Kitchen	23 WINTER FEAST	24 AM: Brunch PM: Comfort Kitchen	SOUP & SALAD BAR: 8 AM — 7 PM HOT FOOD BAR:
25 CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS	26 Asian Kitchen	27 Pizza	28 Hearty Harvest	29 Italian Kitchen	30 Winter Feast	3 I AM: Brunch PM: Comfort Kitchen	II AM – 7 PM  WEEKEND BRUNCH:  9 AM – I PM

# **DECEMBER**<sup>§</sup>

# COMMUNITY EVENT SERIES

# ZERO WASTE SHOPPING

Saturday, December 3, 2016 at 2:00 PM Mary Peterson, Pennsylvania Resources Council POWER/EEFC Conference Room

Join us for an event that will teach you the many benefits of zero waste shopping. Learn how to buy in bulk, build a zero waste shopping kit, and reap the financial and environmental rewards of zero waste. Put the lesson into action with a guided shopping tour throughout the Co-op. Please bring reusable containers and bags.

This event is FREE, just call 412.242.3598 to reserve your spot!

# A PROPER DRINK

Wednesday, December 7th, from 5 - 8 PM Wigle Whiskey & The East End Food Co-op Wigle Whiskey Distillery

Robert O. Simonson, prolific cocktails and spirits writer, will vist the distillery for a reading and signing of his new book, *A Proper Drink*. Join us for a reception featuring cocktail demos from local bartenders. Plus a cheese sampling from the Co-op!

For more info visit: www.wiglewhiskey.com/calendar

# WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, December 28th, All Day East End Food Co-op EEFC Supplements and HBA Departments

All shoppers will receive 10% off wellness and body care items. Our expert staff and vendors will be on hand to help you select products that promote health and wellbeing, inside and out. Discounts are non-stackable, excludes items already on sale; vendor coupons welcome.

#### Dear readers,

In 2017, the format and frequency of *The Co-operator* will change. This publication will shift to a full-color 12-16 page magazine produced on a bi-monthly schedule. There are many reasons for this change.

- The printing and mailing of *The Co-operator* are the greatest expenses undertaken by the Marketing & Member Service department. Reducing our mailing frequency is good for the bottom line of this business and is more eco-conscious. We are set to exceed 10,000 mailings a month in 2017; reducing that by half significantly reduces costs and paper usage.
- In a survey conducted several months ago, respondents overwhelming informed us that they prefer a digital version of *The Co-operator*. A full-color magazine style newsletter is better suited for digital presentation. Additionally, there are only two local printers capable of printing the current tabloid style newspaper we produce. Changing the format allows us to bid for better pricing and select a local, sustainable printer.
- We have implemented a robust e-newsletter cycle that allows us to provide more timely communications directly to our members and shoppers. We are no longer bound to the monthly newsletter to inform members about important things taking place at the Co-op. Our e-newsletters will fill in any gaps in information sharing with the new bi-monthly format.
- In the coming months, we will also unveil a brand new website that includes a blog feature, which provides an additional channel of communication that is immediate and interactive.

My vision as editor of *The Co-operator* is to provide a publication that truly tells the story of the Co-op, and my hope is to collect input and stories from you, our Co-op members. Articles, recipes, and community updates, as told by you, will be critical elements of our newly envisioned newsletter. I personally am excited at the opportunities this new format and schedule provide. One element of the newsletter format that we are still determining is how to distribute the monthly sales flyers that are currently stuffed in the newsletter. We would like to remind you that these flyers are available in the store, on our website, and are emailed at the beginning of each sales cycle.

Thank you for your continued readership of *The Co-operator*. If you have questions, concerns, or would like information on how you can contribute to the newsletter, please email me at ksafin@eastendfood.coop.

In Cooperation,

Kate Safin, Interim Marketing & Member Services Manager