

September 18, 2014

Co-op Communicator

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Professional Development Opportunities for All Staff: FREE classes of your choice at the Culinary Learning Center

Pick up an employee class voucher from your location manager, and sign up for a class today!

Upcoming events

September 22: Orientation for new staff; 8:30 a.m.-noon, Buck Road Conference Rm. B

September 24: Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Black Center, call Genie Braasch for more information or if you wish to attend.

Caselot sale: Oct. 9, 10, & 11

From Tony White (*Terry Appleby is in Seattle this week for the Fall NCGA Conference.*)

Vermont Mac & Cheese Challenge

I had a great day at the Mac and Cheese Festival this past Sunday at Harpoon Brewery. Thanks so much to Joi Purrell, Joanne Bouchard, and Bonnie Armstrong who all did an amazing job finding a way to heat up and serve an estimated 3,000 samples of Co-op Mac and Cheese. We heard dozens of great comments from those in attendance who were so happy to have some “real mac and cheese like Mom used to make.” A lot of Co-op customers with kids searched us out, knowing their kids love our mac and cheese! It was a fun day!

Operations

It is hard to imagine that we are about to enter the fourth quarter of the year!

Consolidated sales of all stores continue to be below our budget, but have shown some signs of improvement in the last couple of weeks. We have a great staff, and I believe we are poised for a strong fourth quarter performance.

Accrued Vacation Time

Please do your best to work with your manager on using up your accrued vacation time. Remember, you can carry over only 80 hours into the new year (and 120 hours of personal time). Stay on this now, and use your hours this fall. Once we hit Thanksgiving, it will be difficult (perhaps impossible) to schedule any vacations.

From the Board President

What’s involved in being on the Board of Directors?

A board term is a three-year commitment. Meetings are only once a month, but they can be lengthy. Usually they run from 5:30 to 9 p.m., including a half-hour dinner.

The Board has a full-day retreat annually. Board members need to attend the Annual Meeting in April and usually make appearances at major events like the Producers Fair. Board members can serve on standing board committees—the Nominating Committee and the Hanover Cooperative Community Fund (HCCF)—and on occasional short-term task force committees that do one-time jobs. This year those include a task force re-evaluating our employment policy and one working on possible revisions to our Ends statements. This is in addition to regular board work, which includes preparing for board meetings by reading the board packet, plus monitoring and occasionally re-writing policy.

If it sounds like a lot of work, it is, but it is spread out among what will ultimately be a 12-member board. Being a board member is challenging but rewarding work that makes a difference. Is Board service a possibility for you?

—Margaret Drye, Board President

Hanover Renovation

Estimates for the refrigeration system and installation of the cases and equipment came in significantly higher than the original estimated cost. Therefore, we have met again with our refrigeration design team and will be looking at lower-cost options. Evaluating the choices and determining the cost benefit/return on investment (ROI) is just part of the normal construction process. We will end up with a great store that will have significant energy and environmental improvements, but it sure takes a lot of time to get there.

We had hoped to break ground next week, but we were informed this week that the inspector for the Town of Hanover is on vacation and the signing of the permit will have to wait until he returns on September 29th.

Appreciation: I want to thank the staff of the Hanover store for the amazing work they have accomplished concerning the re-setting of the shelves in preparation for the re-model. So much great work has gone into the elimination of SKUs and the reconfiguration of sets. I know the work has just begun, but you have certainly shown you are up to the task.

—Tony White

Fun With Food



What is it?

Answer next week!

Answer to last week's Fun with Food photo:
Diced tomato

"Introduction to Sustainability" Study Group

A small group of Co-op staff is participating in an eight-week "Introduction to Sustainability" course. Through assigned readings and online lectures, they're learning about a variety of global issues, then meeting every Thursday to discuss how the Co-op can be part of the solution. Along with Sustainability Coordinator Amanda Charland, participants are Bonnie Armstrong (Community Market), Audra Bonds (White River Junction), Barb Broderick (Buck Road), Matt Szczesiul (Lebanon), and Jamie King (Buck Road).

Interested in joining a future sustainability study group? Contact Amanda at x6359.

Culture Change Update: Leadership Task Group

Five teams of Co-op employees from across the organization meet on a regular basis to work on the five "pillars" of culture change Terry Appleby wishes us to achieve in order to support effective operations and open book management: Appreciation, Communication, Leadership, Service, and Training.

The Leadership group has defined its goal as "Every manager will identify leadership skills in which s/he could improve and receive trainings." Using the Managers Code of Conduct as their standard, managers at all levels will be asked to identify the areas in which they would benefit most from skill-building. The group is also identifying key competencies needed at each level of management to help Paul Lambe determine the types of trainings that would be most useful. Possibilities might include motivating staff, coaching and mentoring, handling difficult situations, and problem solving.

Members of the Leadership group are listed in the September 11 issue of the *Co-op Communicator*.

By the Numbers

Last fall, the Co-op's Floral Departments sold 3,647 of those decorative, cute and colorful little gourds that are striped, bumpy, or look like miniature pumpkins. All were grown by local farmers.

By the Numbers Quiz

In 2013, our Floral Departments also sold a goodly number of pumpkins! How many do you think we sold?

- a) 1,150
- b) 1,512
- c) 1,923

Emergency Info Line Wallet Card

Do you know what Co-op number to call when storms or other emergency conditions could potentially affect operations? Could you find information on our website meant to keep you up to date on what's going on? Ask your facility manager today about the wallet card that tells you everything you need to know!

Answer to last week's By the Numbers quiz: What day last year saw the most shoppers in our stores? Tuesday, November 25