

The Firestarter

Newsletter of The Tonasket
Natural Foods Co-op

Spring 2023



**All Members are Invited to
the Co-op Annual
Membership Meeting on
Sunday, May 6th**

Come join us at the CCC at
411 Western Ave. for this
very important event.
4:30-6:30

We will vote on bylaw
changes and approve our
new board members.

All interested members are
welcome!

Co-op Board of Directors

Peggy Tofte, *President*

Ron Jones-Edwards,
Secretary

Charlene Baka Rich,
Treasurer

Patti House

Thom Speidel

Your Name Here?

Store Manager:

Sabrina Sofia

Assistant Store Manager:

Melissa Calhoon

**Tonasket Co-op
Member Appreciation
Day**

3rd Tuesday of each
month

Members may
bulk-order from the
UNFI Catalog at 20%
above wholesale.

New and Noteworthy at The Co-Op

Greetings to all our Co-op friends and members! We hope this finds you well and you were able to spend the past months cozy and warm, enjoying your winter activities. I think we're all happy to be seeing some sunny, warm days, with the promise of more to come.

Here at the Co-op, we've been busy and adjusting well to the new management team and staff. Our big news is that we are ever closer to accomplishing a long-awaited project that will enable the store to operate much more efficiently: our Point-of-Sale (POS) system.

We've been working diligently to get the POS up and running. This is a project that we first discussed implementing in 2015, so you can imagine how exciting it is to be this close to completion. As of this writing, we are nearly there. A big part of this undertaking was to get every piece of merchandise counted and entered into the database, a task that included many people and countless volunteer hours, with Pasquale Sofia as the main coordinator.

We had to close the Co-op for two days, from the afternoon of Friday, February 24 to Sunday, the 26th, to do this project effectively. A huge thank-you goes out to our team of volunteers who gave their time and energy to make this happen! The Co-op staff also worked overtime, especially Sunday night to be ready to open the store on Monday morning.

It was heartening to see how the Co-op membership stepped up

to help with inventory and we are hoping to continue to include more volunteers in future endeavors. We have many tasks, both large and small, that volunteers could easily accomplish. The plan is to have a white board with jobs available so members can see if there's something they want to be involved with. And we're also planning on having a Volunteer Coordinator as the contact person so that this plan can run smoothly. Stay tuned for more on that.

In closing, we want to say that our Co-op illustrates a deeply felt quote that needs to be shared: "Many Hands Make for Light Work". That's what we're all about, and we couldn't possibly do it without YOU!

**We want to
acknowledge our
amazing volunteers
for their help with
inventory, we couldn't
have done it without
you!**

**Our deepest
appreciation goes out
to Pasquale, Julie, Su,
Avie, Melanie, Rob,
Karen, Sunny, Carol,
Peggy, Rose, Julia,
Ron, Baka, Priya,
Laura, Raina, Rita,
LD, Lisa B. & Annie K.
And to our dedicated
Co-op staff who
worked extra hours to
finish the job: Melissa,
Sabrina, Lisa, Zae,
Tyler, Ramon &
Veanna.**

One of the critical aspects of a State Nonprofit is that we are governed by a Board of Directors (BOD) and abide by established bylaws and policies to ensure that we are compliant and operating smoothly and legally.

The BOD has determined that we need to address some changes in bylaws, and these must be voted upon by the Co-op membership.

Let your voices be heard and come to the meeting!

**The Co-op must announce these proposed changes
one-month in advance of the Membership Meeting.
Our General Membership Meeting will be on
Sunday, May 7th from 4:30-6:30.**

All interested Co-op Members are invited to attend. We will serve a soup and bread dinner, prepared by our talented deli staff.

There are two bylaws modifications that we need to discuss and vote on. Anyone who is a current member will be eligible to vote on these changes. Please plan on attending this meeting and let your voices be heard.

For specific details on these bylaws, please see the article on page-4 of this issue, where we discuss the current wording and the proposed changes.

Blueberries Have Joined Green Beans in This Year's Dirty Dozen List

Savvy Co-op shoppers most likely know what the phrase “*The Dirty Dozen*” means when talking about produce. This refers to 12 of the most pesticide-laden crops that farmers grow in the U.S., and is tested by our government’s *Pesticide Data Program*, which was initiated in 1991. Each year a new report is released, and while much of the information remains the same, some crops show different numbers, depending on the pesticide residue levels. This year, blueberries are on the list.

According to Organic Consumers Association (OCA), “strawberries and spinach continued to hold the top two spots on the

Dirty Dozen, followed by three greens – kale, collards, and mustard. Listed next were peaches, pears, nectarines, apples, grapes, bell and hot peppers, and cherries. Blueberries and green beans were 11th and 12th on the list.”

This is yet another reason to shop at the Co-op and ensure you and your family are eating the healthiest foods possible.

Along with *The Dirty Dozen*, the data program has established *The Clean Fifteen*, which, just as the name implies, lists the produce that has the least amount of residue. This information enables shoppers to make

informed decisions on healthy food choices. For more information on these lists and the program, visit OCA at <https://www.cnn.com/2023/03/15/health/dirty-dozen-produce-pesticides-2023-wellness/index.html>



The Co-op Café is open 7-Days a week!
We offer hot Reuben Sandwiches daily and a different “Sandwich of the Week” from 11-2
We are now serving a different breakfast item each Saturday from 10-12
Thank-You to all of our members and customers for supporting the Co-op Café and giving us great feedback!
Look for our daily soup schedule and specials on our Facebook Page, updated each week.

MEMBERS!

Look for the storewide SALES throughout the Co-op, displayed with white shelf tags below the items. Current Tonasket Co-op members receive special discounts on these products – some are a one-time deal, some are monthly sales, & some are introductory promotions.

Price tags show member prices and non-member prices.

These specials also apply to visiting members from other Co-ops. Just show us your membership card!

Maple-Glazed Carrots

Do you still have plenty of carrots in your root cellar that need to be used up? Try this simple and delicious recipe. And if you need more organic carrots, you know where to find them!

Ingredients

3 tbsp. salted butter
 1/3 c. maple syrup
 1 tsp. thyme
 2 tsp. coriander
 1-1/2 tsp. salt
 1/4 tsp. black pepper
 2 lb. carrots, halved or quartered lengthwise and cut into 2- to 3-inch sticks
 4 shallots, peeled and cut into wedges through the root (you can substitute leeks, onions, garlic or garlic scapes, according to what you have on hand)
 2 tbsp. white wine vinegar

Directions

Position a rack in the bottom third of the oven; preheat to 425°.

1. Melt the butter in a small saucepan over low heat.
2. Whisk in the maple syrup, thyme, coriander, salt, and pepper.
3. Spread the carrots and shallots on a rimmed baking sheet.
4. Drizzle with the butter mixture and toss well. Roast, tossing halfway through, until the carrots are tender and glazed, 35 to 40 minutes.
5. While the vegetables are still hot, drizzle with the vinegar and toss well. Transfer to a serving dish.

Behind the Scenes at Our Little Store

Dear Shoppers:

We encourage customers to bring their own clean containers for bulk non-food items, such as shampoo, etc.

Under Washington State regulations, we must now charge for shopping bags. Please try to bring your own supply of reusable bags.

We also offer a great selection of lovely and practical reusable shopping bags to purchase.

Thank You!

There's a lot going on in the back rooms of our Co-op, more than most people realize. From the busy deli to the store's beautiful ambience, it takes a team to keep everything running smoothly and efficiently.

Let's introduce our readers to our dedicated deli staff – Ramon Martinez, our "Deli Denison" and Briana McIsaac, sandwich-maker-extraordinaire. Ramon joined the Co-op staff last fall and came to us with so many new and exciting ideas. While he's familiar with much of the inner workings of the store, the Deli is where his passion lies, and we all appreciate his commitment and enthusiasm. Ramon has literally transformed the Co-op deli to its new incarnation, and now we're calling it *The Co-op Café*. A fitting name for such a marvelous place to eat. Along with Ramon and Briana, we are honored to present one of our most dedicated

volunteers, Pasquale Sofia. As already mentioned, Pasquale has been working steadily on implementing our POS system and ironing out all those pesky kinks that come along with such an undertaking. Pasquale often refers to the Co-op as our "little store with a big heart", and that's exactly what we are all about.

Speaking of dedicated volunteers, Marliey Thackeray is someone who's become a tremendous asset to the Co-op. Not only making himself available to help with many of our projects, both old and new, he's also a volunteer for Green Okanogan Recycling Center. Fondly referred to as their *Mr. Fix-it*, he will probably become a familiar face in our community before long. Recently Marliey has been on hand to make certain the Co-op's data network is secure, which is critical for our present operations.

Another hearty *thank-you* goes out to Concetta and

Caleb for their behind-the-scenes help with our window displays, helping to spruce up our little store. Their artistic flair has added a lot to beautify the Co-op.

While on the subject of dedication, our two new managers, Sabrina and Melissa are both on hand daily. Often on the periphery, they're regularly doing tasks that nobody sees. They've transitioned well into their roles at the helm of operations, becoming the glue that holds the Co-op together.

And last, but certainly not least, our appreciation goes out to former Co-op manager, Julie Greenwood, and our hardworking Board of Directors, all of whom do plenty to keep the store operating successfully.

We are especially fortunate to have such hard working and devoted staff and volunteers who strive to make our little store such a vibrant and successful business.

Our website is back up and running! We're at the same address:

<https://tonasketcoop.com>

with a brand-new and improved look

Please check it out and let us know what you think!

Co-Op Garden Spring Update from Board Member, Charlene Baka

As spring approaches, we're beginning to make plans for our lovely garden.

Last fall we had a spring clean-up with a few volunteers. It was fun to work with friends and we thank all who helped. Around the second week of April a date will be announced for the next clean-up. For those who are interested there will be a sign-up sheet inside the store, or you can leave a message at my home phone: (509)485-3605. I will return your calls

after April 1st when I return from vacation.

Going forward I have lots of fun ideas. Through the years the trees have grown creating a canopy garden. The shade is much needed, and caring for trees is an art. James Gillespie is our expert advisor in this area and we thank him for his time.

As a community project, the tables and structures have been built or donated by various Co-op members, and

the overall maintenance is also a volunteer endeavor. As the garden comes back to life we could use more help. If you have a green thumb or just want to help and volunteer with the garden area, please stop in or call the Co-op during open hours.

Wishing everyone a great growing season. Hope to see you under the trees, my favorite place!

All the best,
Charlene Baka



*Supporting local farmers
and the
Community since 1977*

ADDRESS:

21 W. 4th Street

PO Box 591

Tonasket WA 98855

PHONE: (509) 486-4188

E-MAIL:

info@tonasketcoop.com

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.tonasketcoop.com

Spring & Summer Hours

9am-7pm Mon-Friday

9am-6pm Saturdays

11am-4pm Sundays

Newsletter editor:

River Jones

*The Co-op Board of Directors
meet on the 3rd Monday
each month at the CCC.
Meeting starts at 4 pm.
Members are welcome.*

Follow the link on our website to submit an article to the Firestarter – the newsletter editor and store management will review all submitted articles to determine suitability for publication.

We would like to thank everyone who has continued to support the Co-op for over 45 years!

As a member-owned nonprofit business, this is your store! We encourage you to use the suggestion box. It is a great way to communicate with us about what you like about the Co-op & make kind recommendations. We take your suggestions to heart & do our best to provide what our members are looking for.

Co-Op General Membership Meeting & Bylaws Changes

On Sunday, May 7th the Co-op will hold our Annual General Membership Meeting, from 4:30-6-30. The meeting will take place at the Community Cultural Center, located at 411 Western Ave, just around the corner from the store.

The meeting agenda will include two proposed bylaw changes that will help enable the Co-op to better serve our members.

As you know, your Co-op membership requires annual dues, which cap off at \$50, making you a "lifetime member". The bylaw that dictates this was established in 1997. This is the bylaw as it reads now:

Article one: Membership

Section 1: After September 1, 1997: Any person may become a new member of the Association who:

A. Agrees to a payment of a \$10 non-refundable initiation

fee and a lifetime non-interest loan of \$40 per adult member (over 18 years) which is refundable on a 90-day notice. This \$40 loan is payable at once, or upon 4 yearly installments. Refunds apply only to lifetime members.

This is the change we would like to make:

Any person may become a member of the Association who: Agrees to pay an initial fee of \$10 per adult member (over 18 years) and \$10 a year after that for a total of \$50 to become a lifetime member.

The way this bylaw is set up, our membership dues show on the Balance Sheet as a long-term liability of \$72,157. If ever we wanted to apply for a loan from a bank or individual, it makes it look like we have a large debt. That is why we want to change this going forward.

In the 45-year history of the Co-op we have had less than five people request to have their dues returned.

The second proposed bylaw change is below:

Article three: Board of trustees

Section 1: The association shall have at least a seven (7) but no more than nine (9) member Board of Trustees, elected by the membership.

We would like to change the minimum number of board seats from 7 to 5, because we have not consistently been able to fill all the seats.

Coming to the Annual Membership Meeting will also enable our members to meet our dedicated Board of Directors, many of our faithful volunteers, and share a lovely dinner of homemade soup and bread, prepared by our Deli staff for all to enjoy. Please plan to attend this very important event!

Staff Picks

Products Our Co-Op Really Likes and We Think You Might Too

Peggy enjoys our Sesame Blues Corn Chips from Garden of Eatin'. Not only are they delicious, they're on sale this month! Regularly priced at \$5.15 & now on member-special at \$4.20

Tyler's pick is Jennie's Double Chocolate Bits! "So good & pretty healthy with only 4-grams of sugar each. They're vegan & gluten-free too!"

Pasquale is loving all the amazing dishes created in our Co-Op Café "My favorite so far is the Vegan Blueberry Apple Hand Pie!" They're so delicious!

Amazing Grass Greens-Blend w/ Energy "Great steady energy & nutrition made easy!" Look for in our supplements area. ~ Sabrina

Organic India Tulsi Sweet Rose Tea It's calming and delicious! ~ Ramon

Free2be Mint Cups are so minty, delicious, and simply wonderful! They're gluten-free, vegan, and free of the 12 most common allergens. The perfect fix for a mint craving!" ~ Veanna