



fresh grit

Grit City's food co-op newsletter.

A Quarterly Newsletter Issue No° 1 – Fall 2010

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Our Project Manager... Ken Miller

Ken Miller became project manager in April to launch the member loan program and the search for a general manager. While those two projects have been on hold pending the annual meeting, Ken has helped the board in a number of areas including recruiting volunteers and market research. He's been in Tacoma since 1970, when he arrived as a VISTA volunteer. Ken was a member of Tacoma's food co-op in Court C in those days.

What's with the 'grit'?

With a long history of blue-collar labor politics — from the railroad workers of the 19th century, to the longshoremen of the 20th century, to the Labor Ready workers of today — Tacoma has long been known for its rough, gritty image. Hence, the nickname, Grit City. Combine that with the TFC social justice mission and grit just fit.

Volunteer All-Stars

A great big shout out!

The past few months have been a busy time for the volunteers and board members who staffed our booth at local farmer markets and spoke with hundreds of Tacomans about our efforts to bring a food co-op to Grit City.

A huge thank you to all four farmers markets - Proctor, Broadway, South Tacoma and 6th Ave - for generously donating space.

And most importantly, a shout-out to some of our most dedicated volunteers who generously donated entire days and evenings to staffing our market booths:

Courtney Anderson-Love,
Ann Meersman,
Marie Kons-Christy,
Cassie Woolhiser, and
Ryan Lundberg.

If you're interested in volunteering, email us at tacomafoodcoop@gmail.com.

— Jaime Smith, Volunteer Coordinator

A WORD FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

The change of fall is upon us. Fall is one of the most obvious changes of season in the Pacific Northwest. The temperature, sights, and ambiance shift as we prepare for harvest. Since our last annual meeting and Board elections in October of 2009, the Board of Directors has been hard at work. And at this year's annual meeting (Monday, October 25th from 6-8 pm, The Evergreen State College Tacoma Campus), we have plenty of reflections, plans, and details of exciting change in the development of our business.



In this past year, we have been busy forming a 5-year financial plan, marketing and communication strategies, consulting with lawyers and cooperative experts, and hiring a project manager. Our project manager has developed timelines and documents to hire a general manager and launch a member loan campaign to fund the initial salary of our general manager and products for the shelves. Meanwhile, we have been out recruiting new member-owners and can now celebrate nearly 300.

Having been a part of this journey since its inception in 2006, membership has always been the part that's stood out to me the most. People get involved with food cooperatives for many reasons: high-quality food, local business and products, special dietary needs, or the predetermined standards and criteria the products go through before arriving on the shelves. However, community ownership, individual people literally buying into the need and success of the business is what captures me. And what better a constant need to service than food. Membership in the Tacoma Food Co-op is more than a financial commitment. It doesn't simply get you access to high-quality food. Membership is your vote to feeding the mouths of every individual in Tacoma equally. Regardless of race, gender, or economic status, the member-owners of the Tacoma Food Co-op are committed to educating, serving, and caring for the health and well-being of our community. The members are choosing to cultivate a community hub that infuses a grocery shopping experience with recipes of seasonal treats, stories of the farm from across the valley, and care for the need of each individual's whole-health needs. It is for these reasons I have devoted the last four years to the leadership of its development and growth.

So it is with great joy that I celebrate with you this monumental stage in our horizon but with sadness, I announce this annual meeting will be my last as your President and Board member. After four years, I am passing the baton. But, I say with confidence that the Board is packed with incredible talent with the past year's surge of leadership, people stepping up to the plate, and more of you still waiting to follow through on the little tug of desire to join. It has been a pleasure to serve you in leadership, and I am excited to see the TFC infuse Tacoma with an understanding of co-operation, community ownership, and local, organic food. But continue to step up co-operators. We cannot successfully sail this ship with just a captain and her inner-circle. There is a great need for a massive crew. Continue to gather your friends, family, and neighborhoods to join in the ownership of our business and co-operate. Go Co-op!

With Sincere Gratitude,

Amber England

Upcoming Events

Monday, October 25: Annual Member Meeting and Board Elections
6:00pm-8:00pm, The Evergreen State College Tacoma Campus (1210 6th Ave)

Retail location planning and opportunities will be reviewed and members will vote to decide how we'll be proceeding towards a future direction.

Board member elections will be held. If you are interested in pursuing a position with the board, please contact Amber England for more information at amber@tacomafoodcoop.com.

There is a potluck that begins at 5:30pm. Please bring a dish to share. Everyone is welcome, only members can vote.

Wednesday, November 10: Food on Film - King Corn
6:00pm-7:00pm, Rausch Auditorium – University of Puget Sound

Tacoma Food Co-Op and University of Puget Sound Sustainability Advisory Committee present a feature documentary about two friends, one acre of corn, and the subsidized crop that drives our fast-food nation. Free, 6 p.m. in Rausch Auditorium in McIntyre Hall on the UPS campus.

Seasonal Recipe: Pumpkin Bars

Recipe: Cassandra Gorell

Ingredients:

- 4 eggs
- 1/2 c applesauce
- 1/2 c olive oil
- 1 c brown sugar
- 1/2 c honey (warmed to liquid)
- 2 c pumpkin
- 2 c whole wheat flour
- 2 t baking soda
- 1 t salt
- 2 t cinnamon
- 1 t nutmeg
- 1 t cloves
- 1/2 t ginger

Mix dry ingredients together with a fork in a bowl and set aside. In a large bowl whisk eggs then add the rest of the wet ingredients until well incorporated. Fold dry ingredients into the wet ingredients until mixed.

Put in a greased 9x13 pan and cook at 350° for 25-30 minutes. Done when knife comes out of the middle clean.

Frosting:

- 4 oz cream cheese
- 1/2 stick butter
- 3 c powder sugar
- 2 t milk
- 1 t vanilla

Mix cream cheese and butter together until whipped, add milk and vanilla and mix well. Slowly add powder sugar until light and fluffy. Spread on bars when completely dry and sprinkle with nutmeg.



Photo: NeatlySliced.com 



The Numbers

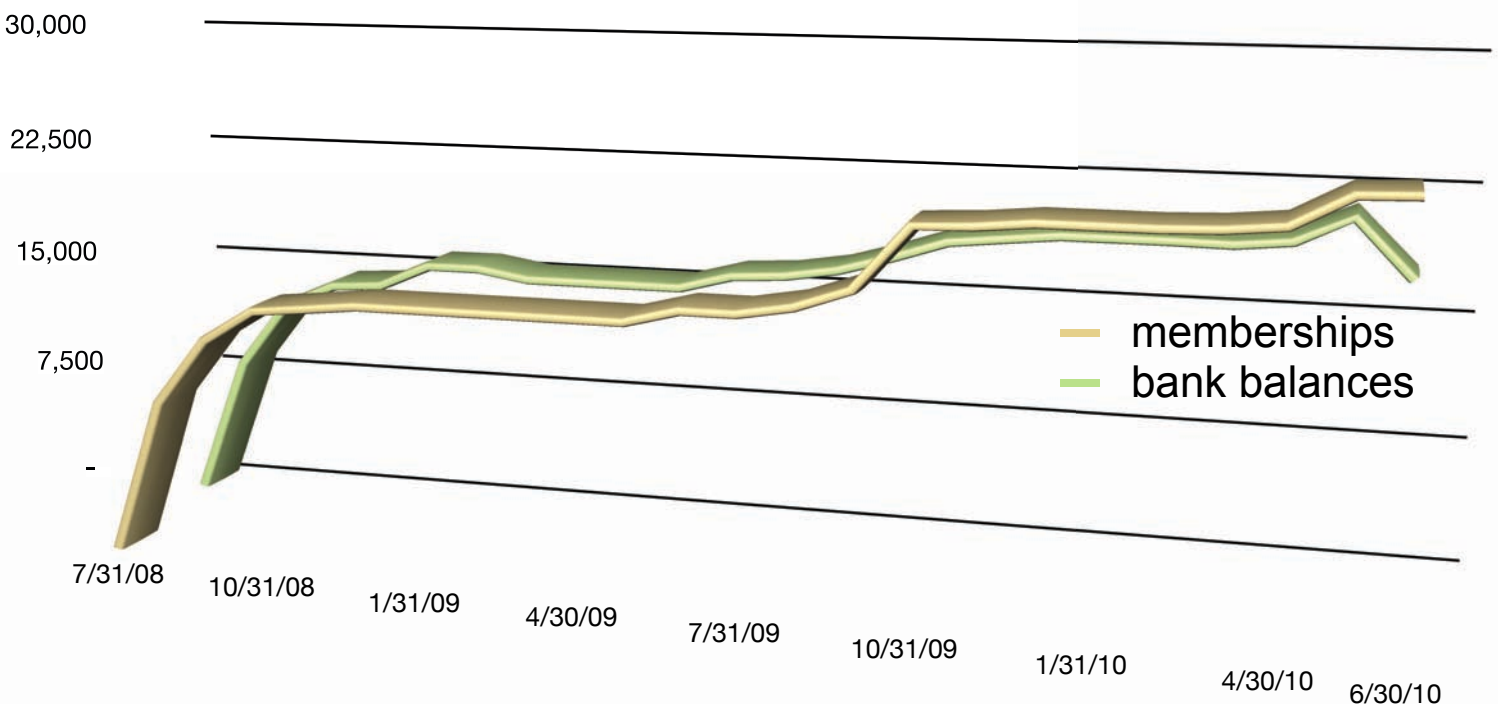
Molly Archer, Treasurer

As of June 30, 2009, we had 139 members and a little over \$16,000 in the bank. We grew to 260 members at June 30, 2010. During that year, we also invested some of our money and a lot of our time pursuing our options for opening a store.

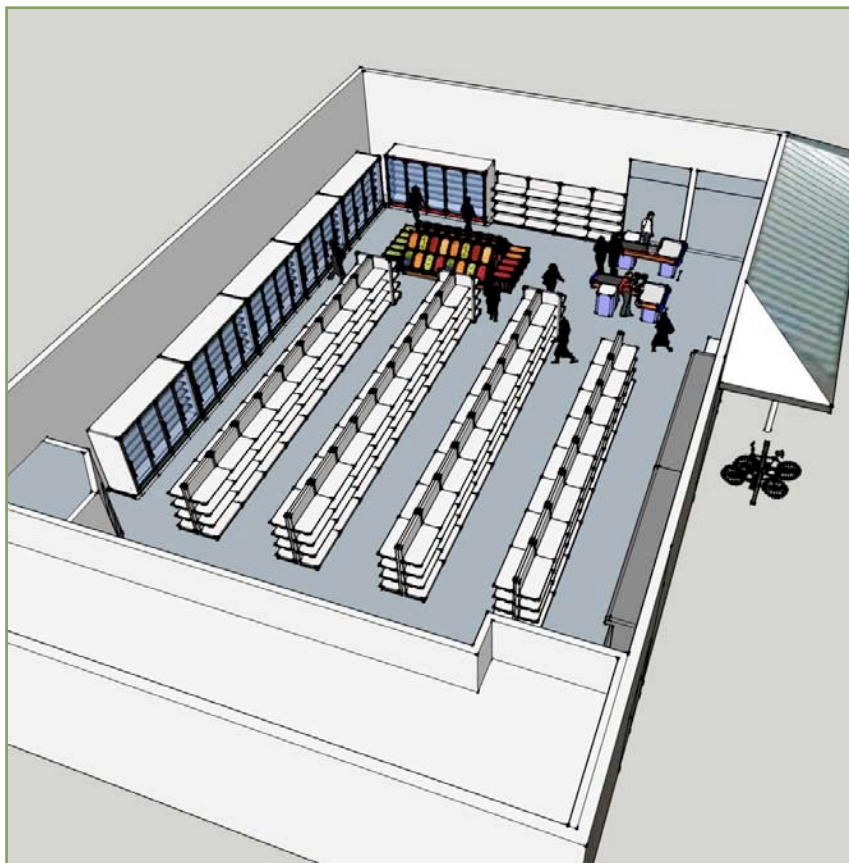
The Co-op now stands at 284 members, with new memberships coming in weekly through the mail and Farmer's Markets. We hope this is a sign that word is getting out about the Tacoma Food Co-op!

We have over \$20,000 in the bank, but will need much more before we can get the store opened. A five year cash flow plan shows that we must raise between \$300,000 and \$500,000 (depending on the terms for the store) in order to hire a general manager, furnish and stock the shelves and have a healthy cash reserve. The Board has been reviewing options for raising the funds in order to present this at our annual meeting.

	6/30/09	6/30/10
REVENUE		
Events, sales & vendors	\$6,728.00	\$1,288.00
Community support & other	7,609.00	84.00
Total Revenue	\$14,337.00	\$1,372.00
EXPENSES		
Events & merchandise	6,715.00	3,015.00
Legal & consulting fees	1,380.00	3,000.00
Other expenses	2,077.00	1,367.00
Total Expenses	\$10,172.00	\$7,382.00
Net Income (Loss)	4,165.00	-6,010.00
Memberships	\$13,900.00	\$7,760.00
TFC Capital Increase	\$18,065.00	\$1,750.00
Cumulative Capital	\$18,065.00	\$19,815.00



October 25: New Board Elections, Membership Vote on Retail Space Proposal



The Board of Directors of the Tacoma Food Cooperative is the leadership team in the absence of managers and staff. They serve the members in the areas of organizational development, member recruitment and strategic planning.

The Tacoma Food Co-op will be electing new Board Members at our upcoming member meeting on October 25th. We are looking for leaders committed to the development of the co-op. If you have approximately 20 hours per month available to devote to the business, financial, membership, marketing and/or educational development of the TFC, please contact Amber Englund at amber@tacomafoodcoop.com.

THE TACOMA FOOD CO-OP BOARD

Amber Englund - President
Cassandra Gorell - Vice President
David Hanson - Secretary
Molly Archer - Treasurer
Corrinne Henderson,
Jaime Smith, Ken Miller,
Maureen Stebner, Robert More
and Theresa Schoen



*Your vote is
critical!*



At our last annual meeting, the membership voted to explore the opportunity for the Tacoma Food Co-op to operate a shared space and partial store, specifically at the site of the Neighborhood Market on 6th Avenue and Junett Street.

With professional consultation and financial assessment, we have determined that a shared space and partial store is not in our best interest due to inadequate space and operational funds to support the needs of our members and the salary of a general manager.

On Monday, October 25th, the Board will be proposing to membership that we leap

forward and launch a full retail space food co-op with financial support from our members. A member vote will be held following this proposal, determining whether or not to pursue this direction.

A second proposal and vote will also be held, depending on the outcome of the first vote. We have received an offer to lease the full space now housing the Neighborhood Market on 6th Avenue and Junett Street for \$4,000/month. John Loesch, the owner of the building, is also offering to sell us the store fixtures, equipment and goodwill for \$250,000.00 at a favorable interest rate.

He would defer payment on that loan for two years to help us establish our business. With the results of our feasibility study in the winter of 2008, the recent surveys, and the membership living in this area, the board feels this is a decision that will provide an opportune establishment of the Tacoma Food Co-op.

See the renderings above for an idea of how the space will be used to house the co-op.

