



ROOTSTOCK

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE **Belfast CO+op**

ISSUE 23 NOV-DEC 2017

www.belfast.coop



from the

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

One owner, one share, one vote... One number?

For longer than most of us have been owner-members of the Belfast Co-op, households with multiple adult members have been asked to purchase one voting share per adult, but these additional household owner shares have been tracked under a single owner number. This is highly problematic, and has been a topic of discussion among the Board and staff for many years, for two primary reasons:

- 1) Coop Principle 2 - Democratic Member Control: One member, one vote. It is very difficult to manage Co-op elections, especially as our number of owners grows, when we have to manually determine how many votes each owner account is allowed, and verify all ballots against this data.
- 2) Owner equity and fee maintenance at the registers. There is a lot of manual tracking currently being done to keep owner customer records in Catapult, our point-of-sale system, current with owner accounts in our bookkeeping system. This puts a significant burden on our Ownership, Accounting, and Front End staff, as well as causing confusion and frustration for our owners at the register.

The solution the Board and management have been discussing and would like to propose to you, the owners of the Co-op, is separating all owner shares into individual accounts, with unique owner ID numbers. These unique accounts would still be affiliated in a single household for patronage dividend calculations, and for equity and fee payments, but each would be identified with one individual person. Individual accounts would resolve both of the problems listed above.

The election process would be much simpler to keep track of if there were one owner, one share, one vote. Additionally, the Maine statute on Consumer Cooperatives extends eligibility for membership to "[a]ny natural person", in the singular, so there may be a legal requirement for us to separate accounts. (Other cooperative associations, groups organized on a cooperative basis, and nonprofits are also eligible for membership.)

Separating multiple-share accounts into linked, but separate, individual-share accounts will allow us to make use of some of Catapult's advanced membership capabilities. One example of this is applying payments directly to owner accounts at the register so that account standings will be updated and owner benefits will be available immediately when payment is made, and owners will have more immediate access to their account statuses.

The Board and management of the Co-op recognize that owners have an emotional connection to their member numbers, especially the ones that have been with the Co-op the longest. Separating the owner shares means at least one household member is going to have a new number, if not both. Changing the numbering scheme to six-digits, another accounting change that has been discussed, may provide a solution. In this system, a two-share household using owner ID #66 would become owner ID #'s 100660 and 100661. When possible, we may be able to display the numbers as "1-0066-0" and "1-0066-1", to help highlight the historical ID number.

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123 HIGH STREET BELFAST, ME 207.338.2532 7:30AM-8:00PM



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Joining dates, initial equity payments, and historical changes to equity investments can be complicated for multiple owner accounts. Many of these will need to be parsed out manually to format them in a way that can be imported into Catapult. This is not impossible, but it will be somewhat laborious initially; the Board and management expect this one-time labor investment to be more than made up over time. We know there are at least a few other considerations to discuss: each household will need to identify one of the current owners as the primary account, and deferrable discounts - such as Senior Discount and Owner Appreciation Week - are connected to individual accounts, not households.

We fully expect that more benefits and challenges may be identified in the course of this conversation over the next few months. If you have thoughts on the proposal, pro or con, we want to hear from you. The members of the Board and management are eager to listen, whether you happen to see them in the store, attend one of the Owner Socials in the Cafe, or come to the monthly Board meeting - now being held in the Unitarian Universalist Church Meeting Room (just around the corner on Miller Street, and handicap accessible). If you are more comfortable putting your thoughts in writing, please fill out a customer comment card and drop it in the comment box, write us an email, or even scratch out an old fashioned snail-mail letter.

Thank you for your engagement and cooperation!

-Zafra Whitcomb
BOARD SECRETARY

Are you following your
Belfast CO+OP
on Instagram? Find
us at @belfastcoop
for great photos in
the store and in the
community.



The Belfast Co-op exists so that our member-owners and our community will have:

A thriving, just, and sustainable local food economy

A source of healthy, affordable food

An efficiently managed, democratically governed cooperative retail store

A greater understanding of health, food systems, and economic & environmental sustainability

An invested, engaged, and empowered staff that thrive in a safe, respectful, inclusive, and equitable workplace.



GENERAL MANAGER

Doug Johnson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alessandra Martinelli, President

Andrew Watkins, Vice President

Zafra Whitcomb, Secretary

Lindsey Schortz, Treasurer

Betsy Garrold

David Balicki

Shannon Grimes

Violet Jastram

BOARD COMMITTEES

Finance Committee

boardfinance@belfast.coop

Owner Engagement Committee

boardowners@belfast.coop

Board Development Committee

boarddevelopment@belfast.coop

Bylaws Committee

Ad hoc



for the next meetings of the
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NOVEMBER 16 • DECEMBER 28

6 PM SOCIAL TIME,

6:30 PM MEETING

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH



FROZEN PUMPKIN MOUSSE PIE

By: strongertogether.coop

Total Time: 2 hours 20 minutes (including freezing time), Serves: 10

It's fun to shake up Thanksgiving traditions with something new. This easy pie just might become a new holiday favorite.

INGREDIENTS

CRUST

30 small gingersnap cookies, (about 7 1/2 ounces)
2 tablespoons raisins
1 tablespoon canola oil

FILLING

1 cup canned pumpkin puree
1/3 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
2 pints (4 cups) frozen low-fat vanilla ice cream, softened



PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9-inch deep-dish pie pan with cooking spray.

To prepare crust: Combine gingersnaps and raisins in a food processor and pulse until finely chopped. Add oil and pulse until blended. Press evenly into the bottom and up the sides of the prepared pan.

Bake the crust until set, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

To prepare filling: Combine pumpkin, sugar, cinnamon, ginger and nutmeg in a large bowl and mix well. Add ice cream and stir until blended. Spoon the mixture into the cooled pie crust. Freeze until firm, at least 2 hours. Let the pie soften slightly in the refrigerator for 20 to 30 minutes before serving.

Enjoy!



Each month, the Belfast Co-op provides the opportunity for the community to donate to a local organization, nominated and voted on by our Owners at our annual meeting.

NOVEMBER

Waldo Community Action Partners is a charitable, educational, private non-profit organization designed to utilize and mobilize public and private resources to assist low-income Waldo County residents in the alleviation of poverty and address its underlying causes.

In order to reduce poverty in its community, a Community Action Agency works to better focus available local, state, private, and federal resources to assist low-income individuals and families to acquire useful skills and knowledge, gain access to new opportunities, and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

The mission of WCAP is "Building strong families and communities by empowering people to achieve economic independence and self-reliance".

DECEMBER

Hospice Volunteers of Waldo County has been training volunteers to offer free, confidential, non-medical support and assistance to anyone with a life limiting disease or illness and their families since 1981. They partner with the medical hospice program of MaineHealth Care At Home as part of the collaborative team to bring support to the people of Waldo County.

Hospice's trained volunteers provide bereavement support to anyone in our community who is grieving the loss of a loved one. We are an independent non profit organization funded by generous members of our Waldo County Community.

In the month of September
our community raised

\$3,861.66

for **Literacy Volunteers of Waldo County** through the Common Cents program!





GM CORNER

by Doug Johnson
Belfast Co-op General Manager

Have you ever wondered... where all that money that you spend at your Co-op goes?

This is an exercise that I have done with our workers to help them visualize the financial picture of the Co-op at the end of our fiscal year. I believe that understanding how slim our profit margin is helps our workers see the bigger picture of the work that we do and allows for some perspective when we need to make decisions about how the our funds are allocated.



Imagine all of our sales revenues throughout the year constitute one dollar:

Of that one hundred pennies, the single largest expense is Cost of Sales. Cost of Sales this past year was 63% of sales revenue and includes what we pay for the product as well as any supplies that we need in order to sell the product (coffee bags, bulk containers, etc.) and any rebates that we get through our membership in the National Co-op Grocers. Our second largest expense is Payroll, making up 20%, followed by Benefits & Personnel Expenses, which makes up another 7%. We paid out over \$1.6M to our workers in 2016-2017 and offer a diverse benefits package including health and dental insurance, an IRA matching plan, and a sizeable discount on goods purchased from the Co-op. Together Cost of Sales, Payroll, and Benefits make up 90% of revenues, leaving ten cents on a dollar for us to do all of the other work that we need to do and to pay all the bills.

Administration contributes another 2.6%. Administration includes postage and office supplies, accounting fees, professional services, worker education and professional development, as well as a number of other smaller expenses. The single greatest expense from the Administration account is Bank and Credit Card Fees, making up 52% (\$113K) of the total. Next is Occupancy making up 2.3% of sales revenues. Occupancy includes all of the maintenance necessary to keep the store in operation as well as electricity, heating fuel, water, and rubbish removal. I saw a pretty significant increase in our occupancy costs this past year as we addressed some deferred maintenance issues and tried to improve the quality of our workplace. Membership expenses contributes another 2.2% of sales. Owner discounts, including Owner Appreciation Week and pre-order discounts, which totaled \$71,618 and senior owner discounts which totaled \$105,615 comprise this account. Next is Sales Discounts which comprised 1% of sales and includes select discounts on items such as six packs of beverages as well as when we discount bread or baked goods. Department Supplies and Equipment make up 0.7% of sales. This includes any department specific equipment expenses, freight, and the purchase of bottle deposits. Information Technology was 0.5% of sales this year, up 50% from last year. The largest portion of this increase was attributed to software improvements and telephone and internet services. Marketing and Governance both made up 0.3% respectively. Marketing includes all of advertising, sponsorships, events, and charitable giving. Governance includes all of the expenses throughout the year associated with the Board of Directors, including the Annual Meeting and our quarterly Owner Socials,...



90% of sales revenue is allocated toward Cost of Sales (product, supplies needed for product) and Payroll (20% of revenue going toward local wages) and 1.6m in diverse benefits packages.

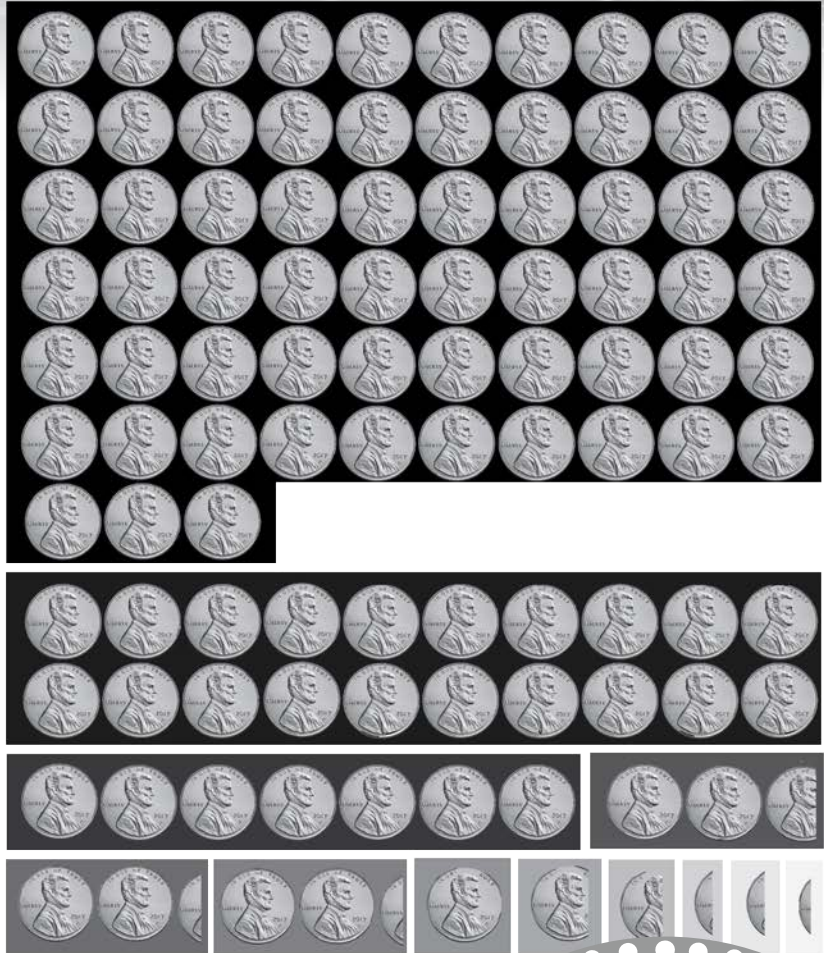




CONTINUED...

THE PENNY EXERCISE

COST OF GOODS 63%
PAYROLL 20%
BENEFITS AND PERSONNEL 7%
ADMINISTRATION 2.6%
OCCUPANCY 2.3%
MEMBERSHIP 2.2%
SALES DISCOUNTS 1%
DEPARTMENT SUPPLIES 0.7%
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY 0.5%
MARKETING 0.3%
GOVERNANCE 0.3%
INSURANCE, TAXES, OTHER INCOME, AND EVERYTHING ELSE 0.1%



...Directors and Officers insurance, and any education and development activities in which the Board participates. The final 0.1% is made up of all the other incidentals including depreciation, other revenues, interest, and taxes.

All told, that comprises roughly 100% of our revenues leaving little in terms of profit for 2017. When looking at our finances through this context it is easy to make some predictions about where we will need to make changes to our operations if we are to be more profitable in the future and to identify those expenses that are not sustainable long-term. With that said, I know that we were able to make some dramatic improvements in many areas of the enterprise this last year that will position us for future success.

I thank you for your patronage and your support in 2017 and am confident that together we will make 2018 a stellar year for your Belfast Co-op.



love local ... PROFILES ...

LOVE LOCAL is a monthly sale and tasting event featuring one of our local vendors and 10% off all local products all day at your **Belfast Co+op**.

NOVEMBER



Try a taste of the Thanksgiving catering menu offered by **Your Belfast Co-op Deli** - featuring local seasonal favorites like butternut squash, cranberry relish, and roasted fall vegetables. Let the Belfast Co-op do the work this Thanksgiving and enjoy the holiday even more. *Sample at the co-op on Friday, Nov. 17th, 11:30-2pm.* Preview our catering menu at belfast.coop and don't miss the ordering deadline of Nov. 17th!

DECEMBER



Bixby & Co. is committed to creating nutritious and natural chocolate products. Their chocolates stress "real foods" that are artisanal as well as natural, and have a flavor that reflects a simpler past but also ventures with zest into the future.

The ingredients are all natural or organic, free of genetically modified organisms (GMO's) and additives. Committed to a better community and world, Bixby & Co. sources ingredients from green and fair-trade sources. *Enjoy samples and met the vendor on Friday, Dec. 29th, from 11:30-2pm.*

YOUR VOICE counts

"Please try serving iced coffee later into the fall and earlier in the spring. If it does not work after giving it a try, I will stop commenting. Thanks."

I don't disagree. Our iced coffee is fantastic. Problem is people stop buying it around this time of year, even with the crazy warm fall we've been having. In order to keep the iced coffee at the low price we offer we have to ensure that we are not throwing it out when it has languished around the co-op and has gone stale. Each year we've offered iced coffee we've extended the season as best we can, we've just reached the limit. Thanks,

-Poly
Deli Manager

"The new HABA (Health and Beauty Aids, aka 'Wellness') setup is awful. Very difficult to find things."

We hear you and we have recently invested and installed signage to make your search easier. Please feel free to ask for assistance from our staff as well.

-Carisa
Marketing

"PLEASE PLEASE an individual scoop in each bulk spice jar that stays in each spice jar. There was a brief period when you did this. It made people happy."

Unfortunately, we had issues with contamination of the product when the utensils were stored in the jars. We moved to the taller thinner jars so the product can be dispensed directly without the need of a scoop or spoon.

-Jeremy
Operations

"Would be great for members to know how much we rounded up' each year."

Agreed! We think this would be awesome, too. It is something that we would love to implement and are looking for ways we can make that happen.

-Carisa
Marketing

thank you for your cooperation!

Squash happens.



Given the right combination of soil, sun, season and seeds, a knobby Kabocha, glossy Butternut, or hulking Blue Hubbard will result. But squash soup, squash pie, squash seeds spiced and toasted— that is what my mother calls a happening. That single-letter modifier marks the gap between taking and making meaning from raw material. With a little time and heat, perhaps some oil or sugar or spice, vegetable becomes vessel of celebration. The simple act of gathering at a shared table brings home to us the true meaning of nourishment. As such, it's a time-honored ritual across the globe.

Thankfully we live a place teeming with feast-making potential- everything you could wish to fill a holiday table can be gathered from our backyards or the fields of hard-working farmers. Hardy vegetables are sweetly matched by apples, pears and cranberries; nuts and cheeses balance the board. For the omnivores among

us, fish, fowl and four-footed creatures anchor a harvest spread. Yet for every brimming basket and full plate there's an equal measure of empty cupboards. We have so many neighbors struggling to simply pay the fuel bill that keeps their ovens running, let alone find something to fill them. It's hard to feel celebratory in the face of such stark contrast, but the remedies for these hurts can be as close as their origins. It's the sort of work that can be done in daily doses— rounding up a few cents at the register, giving a few dollars to the food pantry when you have a bit to spare. Small steps may feel foolhardy when great strides are needed, but they far surpass standing still.

Giving has become a vehicle for consumer unconscious, but it can readily be reclaimed in service to a greater good. We must take care to not do this blindly, to stuff a hole carved by guilt with mere stuff. The siren call of stuff is deafening this time of year, and its echoes ring with lasting harm. We live, after all, in a world of deep footprints. Wrapping paper chokes up landfills, Christmas trees are tossed to many a curb. Stuff is dismissed as simple, formless matter, cast off into an ever-growing heap that weighs heavy on our planet and, it could be argued, cheapens the meaning of our traditions. But we can't deny that it feels simply good to give and receive in the spirit of gratitude and generosity. We want to make magic in our celebrations, so how do we evoke that glow without falling into the ready traps of excess and acquisition? How do we make our material lives about more than mere stuff?

Here, I'd say, is how we make a start: For every squash you bring home, donate to a food pantry that will fill an empty oven, or take old coats to a collection center. For every gift you give or get, add a parcel to the Co-op giving tree, which reaches kids in our community, or choose one of the three baskets in our Give Where You Live campaign to gift a neighbor in need. If the gifts you're given this year come swathed in shining paper, receive them with the grace of gratitude and then turn that paper into something else. A placemat for your dinner guests, perhaps, when you have them over for squash soup. With every choice, make this holiday season a happening— an act born of generous intent— rather than something that simply happens. 'Tis a gift to be simple, as the old song goes, and it should also be simple to give. Make small acts into celebration, and nourish your loved ones and neighbors in this place we make a home.

-Hannah Kreitzer

... holiday giving @ your Belfast Co+op ...

This holiday season we are once again partnering with the **Belfast Soup Kitchen** to provide food for our neighbors in need. For every dollar you contribute to the *Give Where You Live* campaign your CO-OP will match your donation and together we will bring much needed necessities to the **Belfast Soup Kitchen** pantry.

Maine Ranks 7th in the nation and 1st in New England for food insecurity. Join your co-op in the *Give Where You Live* campaign to help feed our neighbors in the Belfast community.

THE giving tree

How to participate: 1. Take a gift tag from the tree. 2. Record your name, phone number, and tag number at customer service. 3. Purchase or make a gift from the wish list on the gift tag. 4. Bring your gift into the co-op and we will deliver it in time for the holidays!



Look for *Give Where You Live* this November and *The Giving Tree* in December at #yourbelfastcoop.

NOVEMBER

Common Cents: Waldo Community Action Partners

Featured Artist: Jasmin Pike

- Wed. 11/1 Co-op Deals and Owner Plus SALES cycles begin! Watch for flyers in store and online.
- Thurs. 11/2 The co-op welcomes State Representative Erin Herbig for a tour of the store as part of her "Waldo County Works" initiative.
- Wed. 11/8 Your co-op will be a guest speaker at the Slow Money conference at the University of Maine Hutchinson Center.
- Fri. 11/10 The Milkhouse Egg Nog Tasting 11:30am-2pm
- Sun. 11/12 Co-op closing at 6:30pm for a staff meeting. Regular hours resume Monday!
- Wed. 11/15 New sales cycle begins! Watch for flyers in store and online.
- Thurs. 11/16 Co-op Board of Directors Meeting: Social time at 6pm, 6:30 meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Church. Owners welcome!
- Fri. 11/17 Love Local Day! 10% off all local products. Our deli will be sampling items from our Thanksgiving catering menu 11:30am-2pm. This is the last day to place an order!
- Thurs. 11/23 Co-op is CLOSED for Thanksgiving. Regular hours resume Friday.
- Wed. 11/29 Co-op Event TBD

DECEMBER

Common Cents: Hospice Volunteers of Waldo County

Featured Artist: Lewis Cisle

- Dec. 1-7 Owner Appreciation Week: Vendor tastings all week long from 11:30am-2pm.
 - 12/1 - Beacon Blessings
 - 12/2 - Maine Crisp
 - 12/3 - Maine Pie Co.
 - 12/4 - Nordic Naturals
 - 12/5 - The Milkhouse
 - 12/6 - Resurgam Hot Sauce
 - 12/7 - Martha Bars
- Sun. 12/10 Co-op closing at 6:30pm for staff holiday party. Regular hours resume Monday!
- Wed. 12/27 Co-op Event TBD
- Thurs. 12/28 Co-op Board of Directors Meeting: Social time at 6pm, 6:30 meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Church. Owners welcome!
- Sun. 12/24 Co-op closing at 5pm.
- Mon. 12/25 Co-op closed for the holiday. Regular hours resume Tuesday.
- Sun. 12/31 Enjoy live entertainment in the cafe during New Year's By The Bay. Learn more at nybb.org.
- Mon. 1/1 Co-op closed for New Year's Day. Regular hours resume Tuesday.

For more event information, please visit our online calendar at:
www.belfast.coop

Sign up for co-op newsletters and be the first to know about sales, events and Belfast CO+OP news. Ask at the register!

JUST
PICKED



HELLO, MY NAME IS Ryan AND I WORK IN
center store HERE AT THE CO-OP.

I JUST PICKED The Ginger People Sweet Ginger
Chili Sauce BECAUSE it's great for ginger lovers -
just the right amount of sweet heat.
Fantastic on your proteins. I love it on chicken.

Find it #TODAYATYOURCOOP in Aisle 3.

