

Moscow Food Co-op Newsletter

June 1987



LETTER AND RESPONSE

By: Bill London

Yes, last month's piece on Lehnerd's departure has generated some controversy, including the following letter:

Dear Bill/Editor,

The latest issue of the Co-op newsletter has finally prompted us to write a 'letter to the editor.' Specifically the article on Lehnerd's leaving the Co-op. That, and the article on Ginger Clemm in the March issue, we feel are inappropriate to the newsletter. It is gossip. It is backbiting. Personnel matters should be reported in the board minutes or the staff notebook, not in the Co-op's vehicle for public relations. Articles of that kind make the Co-op seem a horrible place to work; if you quit you'll find an article about you in the newsletter, and you'd better not be middle-aged if you're thinking of applying at the Co-op. Everyone can shop, everyone can join, but not everyone can work at the Co-op?

Shouldn't the newsletter be a promotional piece for the Co-op, giving people a positive feeling and reason to shop and work there? Or should it be the club newsletter? If the Co-op is to survive as a business I think the former is a better use of our time and money.

(signed)
Melissa Rockwood
Carolyn Young

My thanks to Melissa and Carolyn for taking the time to write. Their criticism has been echoed by others, a few who have talked to me and more who have complained to Co-op staffers. But in truth, there have been some (probably fewer in number) who have said that my article about Lehnerd was the funniest/best/most interesting thing they had ever read in the newsletter.

Before I explain my reasons for writing the article, let me apologize for one thing. I wrote that, besides Lehnard, the other who applied for what became his job last fall was a "middle-aged woman who would have obvious troubles fitting in." I certainly didn't mean to imply that she wouldn't fit in because she was middle-aged, or a woman. She wouldn't fit in, all of us on the hiring committee felt, due to what we thought were her attitudes and experience. Lehnerd was the obvious choice, and in contrast to most hiring committee meetings, the decision took about two minutes. But that choice of words was bad. Sorry.

The article I wrote about Ginger in the March issue was designed to put a number of rumors and persisting questions to rest. She had, indeed, not paid back her bounced checks for a year, and there were many who were wondering if she ever would settle her debt. I wrote the piece to let everyone know she had.

The article about Lehnerd was designed to be fun, to be interesting, and to answer questions people had about his sudden departure. But, to be honest, I did expect some controversy. Perhaps after doing this newsletter for more than two years now, I was getting a little bored. (Which reminds me, does anyone else want to do it for a while?) And if I was tired of the newsletter's blandness, were others feeling the same? Was the newsletter then unread? My basic feeling is that if people find the same thing in every issue, the newsletter has ceased to fulfill its goal of having an audience.

On the other hand, as Melissa and Carolyn state so well, is it really to the benefit of the Co-op to have what they see as its dirty laundry aired in public? Does that disgust and turn away present and future customers--or does it personalize this personable business and show its willingness to be up front and honest with its members? Should the newsletter be a "good news" advertising vehicle that steers clear of controversy--or a more independent publication?

The Co-op Board of Directors has decided (even before the last issue) to decide this at its June Board Retreat, as part of an investigation into the Co-op's image and advertising direction. I welcome discussion of this question. But I would like to get the opinions of the newsletter readers as well.

So, that's where you come in. If you have an opinion on this, let's hear it. Write it down. Long essays or short are welcomed. Just leave them in the brown envelope on the wall of the coordinators office--the envelope marked "Bill London, Newsletter."

JUNE 1987

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Editor: Bill London
Graphics: Sarah Moore
Advertising: Elliot Bruhl
Typing: Kay Cronin of Hands Down Typing
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HORSETAIL, THE HERB

4.

By: Rosemarie Waller

This is the time of year to harvest horsetail, a wild herb that grows in wet places throughout this region. Horsetail (or as it is also known, shavegrass) grows in straight stalks of pencil thickness topped with a slightly bulbous end. The plant is hard, not soft, and the stalks are jointed. Later in the summer, horsetail becomes unpalatable, so it should be harvested soon--or purchased from the Co-op.

According to the the herbal texts available for reading at the Co-op, The Way of Herbs by Michael Tierra or Natural Healing with Herbs by Humbert Santillo, horsetail is a very powerful diuretic and is used to treat urinary disorders. It is so strong, in fact, that the authors warn that excessive use of horsetail will irritate the kidneys and intestines. They suggest that horsetail works best in small frequent doses. Also, horsetail should always be cooked, since the raw plant has been considered poisonous. Authorities suggest simmering the plant for 20 minutes in a glass pan.

Tierra and Sandillo also write that horsetail is rich in minerals like selenium and silica, useful in healing fractured bones, and in calcium metabolism.

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HUMMUS

By: Rosemarie Waller

With the summer warmth here, sometimes we are anxious for an easily-prepared cold meal. Hummus is perfect for that. It's a Middle Eastern mix of pureed or mashed beans with spices that make a delicious dip or pita bread stuffer:

- 2 cups cooked lentils or garbanzo beans (cold)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup tahini or sesame meal
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 6-8 tablespoons lemon juice
- ground pepper, marjoram, thyme, and sea salt to taste
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (optional)
- fresh parsley for garnish

- mash beans with all ingredients
- garnish with parsley
- serve as a dip with pita bread, lettuce and tomatoes



By: John McCarthy



The Moscow Renaissance Fair was great, as always, and the Food Co-op did well with our desert and drinks booth. Although Saturday appeared to be on the brink of total lunacy at any given moment, by Sunday it was a smooth-running operation. The basic bottom line, money talks - we grossed \$703 for the two days and cleared some where between \$400 and \$500.

Once we got organized with a system for coffee making and we were fully stocked, the operation was enjoyable and we put on a good display of what the Co-op is about, -- good food at good prices, service with a smile, and so forth. We sold out of virtually everything and stripped the store of most juices, sodas and munchies.

Thanks much to all the people who baked and worked at the booth. I wish I had kept track of all of your names so each could be thanked individually and publically, because everyone's participation made it a success. But you know who you are, those dedicated Co-op volunteers who step in to make the Co-op the special place and the special thing that it is. Thank you, again. If no one has patted you on the back, please consider it done.

An interesting sideline; we used up all 800 hot drink paper cups. So half or more of the gross was from coffee and a few hot teas. Both the brownies and the sweet bread sold well. We diversified Sunday with things from the store. I think it worked well to limit the number of items (of course the cookies and other specialties were all great) and we continue to refine the formula.

One suggestion I have is that anyone who likes to hang out at the Fair (and who doesn't?) would have a good time working the booth. I was somewhat dismayed that only one board member worked a booth shift--all staff workers did and did it with a smile. I won't get down on the board for a lack of participation -- some worked other booths, some baked, some helped organize-- but a good time was missed and, more important I think, it was a good time to show off what the Co-op is about and mix it up with a lot of our kind of people. Above all, it was a lot of fun; and shouldn't be missed. The weather was even good; bah, humbug to those who complained about the little chill in the air.

Thanks also to the Hanford Watch crew who did most of the work with the tent and who offered an excellent compliment with the hot food. It was a good combination and one we should pursue in the future.

The future is sooner than you might think. Riding on our recent success and with some of our refinements in equipment and operation, we're going to try to do both the Midsummers Eve Idaho Repertory Theater fair and the Rendezvous in the Park music evenings. The theater evening is where Main Street in front



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Our Renaissance Presence
Page Two

Friendship Square is closed off and a few scenes from each of the summer theater plays are presented. The date is June 19. Rendezvous starts July 11, with Brownie McGee and Utah Phillips, and then continues three nights on the following weekend, July 17, 18, and 19. Weather is not likely to be as much of a factor on any of those nights.

A similar plan of both hot and cold drinks and deserts is also planned. Kenna is going to lead the logistics to organize it and she will appreciate all the help she can get. Depending on junior's state of mind and how the baby-to-be views the summer activities, Kenna may need to have some one step in and take it over. Get in touch with Kenna or any of the staff at the store to see how you can help. Again, all the events should be a lot of fun and it is a good opportunity for the Co-op to make a good public showing.

Thanks again, I'll see you at the summer events and I had a good enough time at the Renaissance Fair that I'll promise right now to help organize it again next year--first weekend in May, East City Park, it's always wonderful.

WHATS NEW AT THE CO-OP

By: Mary Jo Knowles

Again we're going through staff changes. Mark Krueger, our financial coordinator, has taken another job. He has agreed to maintain his duties until we can hire another coordinator, but he can't work any store hours.

Kenna Eaton has also moved on. She and Tim are planning a big move to their new house outside of Deary, and they are expecting a new baby. As a retirement gift the Co-op has a beautiful rose bush for her.

Truman Woodruff who has been a volunteer stocker and board member will be filling in for the summer.

And as usual, we have stocked a few new products on our shelves. For example, take a look at our new coffees. We have changed coffee companies - to White Cloud Mountain from Boise "Roasted in Idaho!" Also, we have new soy milk mozzarella at a cheaper price. And for specialty flour lovers, triticale flour and Desi Chickpea flour are now available in the brown cooler (the old wooden juice cooler).

Blue corn chips, made from organically-grown blue corn, look funny but taste great. Equally exotic is our new artichoke spaghetti, and the whole wheat egg roll wrappers in the freezer. We also now stock New Morning honey almond oatios.

Please try some of these new items and let us know what you think.

We have a great new source for organic products, especially produce. If you want something that we don't carry in the store, please ask. We can always do a special order; this company will break cases and sell.

Westbrae is shifting its soymilk products from a Japanese to an American factory. This will result in a lower price, but some temporary supply problems. We do have quarts of Health Valley brand soymilk on stock.

The Co-op is now carrying goat's milk (raw or pasteurized) from the Cream Top Dairy in Springdale, Washington. If you're going that way owner Richard Mumby says visitors are always welcome - especially at the 5 p.m. milking time.

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MAY BOARD MEETING

By: Truman Woodruff

Meeting called to order 8:00 p.m. May 5, 1987. In attendance were Truman Woodruff, Kally Thurman, John McCarthy, Sue Beetsch, Carolyn Fortney, and Bill London.

The agenda discussed was - (1) old business, (2) the past Renaissance Fair, and (3) the lack of communication between the staff personnel and the board of directors.

John McCarthy reported the Renaissance Fair was a great financial success. All in attendance agreed the fair appeared to be a success overall with everyone having a good time. There was considerable discussion concerning involving the Co-op in upcoming fairs and special occasions this summer and fall. Ideas were: donating food to others; having a Co-op booth; or sharing a booth with another organization.

Also discussed was the awarding of discounts for volunteer bakers, or hiring bakers for the next booth involvement.

Thanks! to the volunteers who contributed to the Renaissance Fair success and to the Hanford Watch for sharing their pavillion space. The combination was very compatible.

We are looking forward to the next Renaissance Fair. Discussion encompassed the need for more involvement to Co-op members/board members/staff in organizational chores, food production, and person-power for the booth. Methods for evoking volunteer participation next year were discussed.

A retreat for the board members was tentatively proposed for the 3rd weekend in June. The intent is to discuss informally the goals and direction of the Co-op in the future. Hopefully, setting goals and direction can improve B.O.D. and staff coordination and support the current positive direction the Co-op is experiencing. Bill London was asked and agreed to function as facilitator for the retreat.

The format of the newsletter was also discussed. Questions included: (1) should the newsletter be used as a marketing tool? (2) should the newsletter contain political articles? (3) should cooking articles and recipes be included on a regular basis? (4) should the newsletter and/or flyers be used to appeal to specific social groups (example: suburbia). Changing the newsletter may involve additional expenses. Bill London expressed the opinion the newsletter was expensive to produce (about 20¢ per copy) and any changes should be done with cost in mind. It was generally agreed contributions of articles to the newsletter should be encouraged.

A short, supplementary meeting of the B.O.D. was proposed for late in May. Proposed agenda is: (1) Co-op image, (2) summer finances; and (3) general finances/wages. B.O.D. members will be notified.

The next general B.O.D. meeting will be the 1st Tuesday of June.

SPECIALS OF THE MONTH

MAY 15 - JUNE 15

NEW FROM MYSTIC
LAKE, WASHINGTON
WHEAT + YEAST-FREE
BROWN RICE BREAD
\$3.35 LOAF

WHEAT-FREE, NO SALT
BANANA MUFFINS
\$2.11 / SIX

NATURE'S WAREHOUSE
WHEAT-FREE
ORANGE COOKIES
REG 1.77 SALE 1.38

KNUDSEN'S RECHARGE
LEMON REG 1.91
SALE 1.56 / QUART

COFFEE OF THE
MONTH
ORGANIC GUATEMALAN
DARK
REG. 7.89 SALE 6.49/16

BACKPACKER'S SPECIAL

JUNE 15 - JULY 31

NATURAL INSTANT MISO
CUP-A-SOUP 2 FLAVORS
REG. 2.41 SALE 1.93

WESTBRAE NATURAL
RAMEN- ALL FLAVORS
REG. 1.04 SALE .83

SMOKE AND HONEY
ALL NATURAL BEEF JERKY
REG .68 SALE .54 EA

DEHYDRATED SOUP BLEND
DRIED VEGETABLES FOR SOUP
REG 12.35 SALE 9.88/16

CAROB TRAIL MIX
REG. 2.10 SALE 1.68/16

PARMESAN CHEESE BLOCKS
REG. 4.13 SALE 3.30/16



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HEARTY LENTILS WITH KOMBU

By: Rosemarie Waller

If you have never eaten seaweed before, a good beginning is to try a small amount (2-3 inch piece) of kombu. Your body needs to develop different enzymes to digest sea vegetables. Once you get used to them, they enhance the flavor and enrich your meals with minerals and vitamins which help balance the oil and protein in beans or lentils.

A good first recipe using kombu is this hearty lentil dish. For easier digestability, soak lentils over night (or 8 hours). This starts the sprouting process which increases nutrients, breaks down phytic acid and promotes faster cooking. Discard the soak water.


2 cups dry lentils, soaked
6 cups water
1-2 bay leaves
1 small onion
1 tablespoon thyme
4 inch piece kombu
1-2 teaspoons sea salt

- place lentils in pot
 - cover with water and bring to boil
 - scoop off foam and discard (prevents flatulence)
 - add bay leaf and onion
 - cover pot and simmer 1 hour or pressure-cook 20 minutes
 - uncover, add thyme, kombu and sea salt
 - simmer 15 more minutes
- before serving take out kombu and cook with another dish
garnish with parsley, serve with millet or bread

Kombu takes 2-3 hours cooking time until it is soft. After being added once to your beans, store it in a covered jar in the refrigerator. You can cook it with your next bean, grain or vegetable dish. Pre-cooked kombu usually dissolves in your meal and you can't find it any more.

An easy way to cook with kombu is to use the shredded kind. Add shredded kombu, sea salt and herbs when the lentils are almost cooked. Simmer 20 minutes. Kombu will be dissolved.

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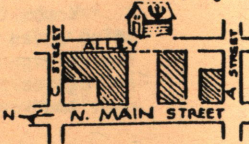
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