



# The Swarthmore Co-op NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2010

Serving the Community Since 1937



January brings us into a new year, a new decade, actually—2010. It's hard to believe how quickly 2009 came and went. 2010 also brings with it new products, ideas, and initiatives at our Co-op. Our GM and Department Team Leaders have been busy working out goals and strategies for the year that will take the Co-op to a higher level of service and quality. What will 2010 bring? This month's newsletter will hopefully give you an idea of the exciting things to come. In any event, Happy New Year and we'll see you at the Co-op!

## Looking Back, Looking Forward

Our Co-op team leaders were asked to share their thoughts on 2009 and 2010. Highlights and what they are looking forward to for the coming year.



**Rick Abt—Produce Team Leader:** My highlight for the Christmas season of 2009 was the feeling of energy in the air as people hurried here and there. I enjoyed the friendliness and cheer of customers and they shopped.

My goals for 2010 are to keep our produce department as fresh as it can be, to provide more pre-packed, fresh cut fruits and vegetables and salads on a daily basis, and

finally, to visit more of the farmers that we work with at the Co-op in order to build better, stronger relationships with each one.

If there is one product that I would encourage all my customers to try in 2010, it would be our line of Judy Foods Dips and Spreads. *Cont. on page 2*

## What's YOUR Go-To-Meal?

See Page 5

## URBAN NUTRITION INITIATIVE

Urban Nutrition Initiative (UNI) is a West Philadelphia-based non-profit that engages elementary and high-school students in an active, real-world problem-solving curriculum and strives to improve community nutrition and wellness. UNI programs fall into three categories: increasing food and nutrition knowledge; increasing the supply of healthful foods; and encouraging healthy lifestyles.

UNI transcends traditional models of nutrition education by engaging learners in hands-on efforts to improve their local food system while working to solve the systemic problems manifested in nutrition-related disease. *Cont. on page 3*

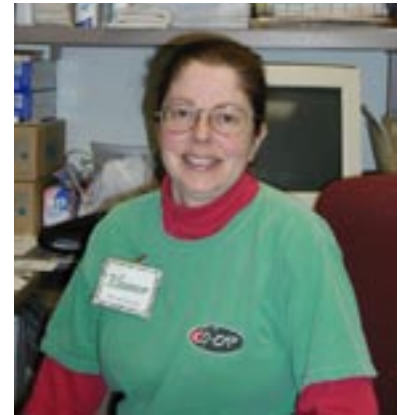
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## Looking Forward, Looking Back cont'd

This new line can be found in our produce case which also holds our varieties of hummuses and fresh salads. My personal favorite is the Southwestern spread, which is fantastic on Boca burgers.

**Eleanor Ford—Customer Service Team Leader** I have too many highlights for the 2009 holiday season to list just one! First, I love the Strath Haven High School Silvertones holiday concerts at the Co-op! They appeared twice this year, and both excellent performances were well attended, and not just for the free hot chocolate. Silvertones, when you sing at the Co-op, please take a minute to glance around at the faces of the people gathered. I hope you can see what a glorious gift



you give. Thank you to the director, Mr. Shankweiler and all the singers.

My second is about the whole fourth quarter Customer Service Team. I'd like to commend all the cashiers because I think, and I hope the Co-op customers think so too, that they did a great job keeping the lines moving at Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Eve. Everybody stayed focused on being fast and accurate while being pleasant and helpful. Many cashiers put in extra time to make sure we were well staffed on the busiest days. Thank you to the Cashiers for all your hard work!

My third highlight is also in the Customer Service area and is something that happens now and again. Routinely the cashiers thank the customers, but often, and very often at the holiday times, the customers will thank us for doing a good job, for being at the Co-op, and for being in their lives. Along those lines exactly, I want to reiterate my thanks to the Co-op Board of Directors who thoughtfully expressed their appreciation for all the employees by hosting a party for us in early December.

There are other co-ops in the world with their own loyal customers, but the Swarthmore Co-op regulars are Amazing! My last highlight is personal. I'd like to thank the following: my little friend Jeremy of the Blond Curls who gave me homemade cookies (thanks to his mom, too), to Jim for gifts of original poetry, 509 who completely spoiled me with a present full of carefully selected goodies, and extra special thanks to Barbara B. for bringing a holiday tea party for two - complete with table decorations and delicious Co-op chicken salad tea sandwiches - to my lunch break! *Cont'd pg 6*



**Barbara Weismann—Co-op Chef** *Holiday Highlights:* Thanksgiving was a great success in our department at the Co-op. Transactions and order pickups when very smoothly. The team worked together like a well oiled machine! Our Holiday Tasting table was a hit and we found a great new way of organizing our event operations to keep our customers well fed and happy.

*Goals for 2010:* In prepared foods, we are planning on expanding our entrée selection, displaying beautiful platters of grilled and roasted chicken, flank steak, London Broil, meatball varieties, and a lot more seafood and fish options. In the deli, we will be introducing weekly specials for our cold cuts and cheeses. Watch for those! I'm also excited to introduce a new line of sandwiches that will be avail-

-able during the lunch hour—grilled gourmet burgers, mini sliders, and of course, the ever so famous hot panini sandwiches.

A couple other initiatives our department is implementing include more direct communication with our customers. So, go ahead and tell us what is on your mind and what you've been craving next time you are at the Co-op to pick up dinner. We are also going to be adding employee favorites to our signage. Maybe you haven't tried our eggplant parmesan yet and all you need to know is that it's Co-op team member, Shamereah's, favorite dish! You will also see a lot more pre-packed salads in our grab-n-go case so that you can run in and grab lunch or dinner on the go.

## NEW PRODUCTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

We have some wonderful new product lines for 2010 in each department. Here are just a few to tempt your taste buds.

**SchoolHouse Kitchen**—This young company, launched in 2005 is all about providing gourmet foods with have a higher purpose than just tasting fantastic, owner and founder, Patsy Smith started her venture with the mission to raise funds for educational organizations and to make her gourmet products available to more people.

The Co-op is introducing Patsy's mustards, sauces and chutneys that will add new life to your food in the new year!

Visit School House Kitchen's website for more info:

[www.schoolhousekitchen.com](http://www.schoolhousekitchen.com)



**Laura's Biscotti**—Chef Barbara recently found a baker who is making some of the best mnbvvybiscotti around (I can attest....it's the best stuff I've ever tried!) Laura's biscotti and granola are small batch recipes, with all natural ingredients, including traditional flavors like anise, chocolate, almonds and pistachios, and not-so-traditional flavors with lavender, pumpkin, fig and pecans.

You will find an assortment of Laura's seasonal biscotti flavors across from the deli counter. We dare you to try every flavor and tell us your favorite! Visit Laura's website for more information: [www.laurasbiscotti.com](http://www.laurasbiscotti.com)

**New Cheeses**—We have a great selection of blue cheeses that are great for the cold winter months and just might be NEW to you! Our cheese case includes several types of blue cheese that vary in flavor, origin, and age. If you are a newbie to blue cheese, but have resolved to expand your cheese horizons, you may want to try our Cashel Blue cheese from Ireland. This is a cow's milk cheese, firm in texture, moist and traditional in blue cheese flavor.

*Cont'd on page 4*

### **Mezgaldi--Moroccan Spice Baked Onions**

4 medium-sized onions  
1/4 tsp ground cinnamon  
1/4 tsp ground ginger  
1/8 tsp turmeric (or 1/4 tsp curry powder)  
1/4 tsp coarse black pepper  
3 tbsp oil  
2 tbsp water  
1 tbsp sugar

Combine 3 tbs oil with 1/8 tsp turmeric (or 1/4 tsp curry powder), 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon, 1/4 tsp ground ginger and 1/4 tsp coarsely grinded black pepper. Brush the spiced oil on top of both sides of the onion. If there is any

*Recipe from Eleanor Ford*

marinade left, add it as well and pour 2 tbsp water down the sides of the baking dish. Tightly wrap it with aluminum foil and place in the center of a preheated oven. Bake at 400F(200C) for 40 to 45 minutes, until nice and soft. Take it out of the oven and drizzle some of the cooking juices lurking at the bottom over the onions. Sprinkle 1 tbsp regular, granulated sugar on top of the onions. Crank up the oven heat and place the baking tray back in there for 10 to 15 minutes, until the top layer of the onion and the sugar have caramelized and are beautifully golden brown. 4-6 servings

### *Urban Nutrition Initiative cont'd*

UNI is based on the idea that teen participants must contribute in designing, operating and evaluating interventions. UNI combines hands-on nutrition education, community-problem solving, and research to foster long-term school and neighborhood partnerships. • *Meghan McCracken, Co-op Team Member*



## January Savings at the Co-op

**One Village Coffee**—Try One Village's Smart Blend, \$9.99 lb

**Organic Russet Potatoes**--  
\$2.99 5 lb. bag (reg. \$4.99)

**Organic Braeburn Apples**--  
\$1.29 lb (reg. \$1.99 lb)

**Shurfine Pretzel Thins**--2 for  
\$3.35

**Shurfine Vitamin Water**--  
\$1.09 each

**Green Mountain Gringo  
Salsa**---Save \$1.00 with  
purchase of GMG Tortilla  
Strips

**Jute Shopping Bags**—2 for  
5.00!

*New Products in the New Year cont'd*

You can use this cheese as your benchmark for comparing other blue cheeses. If you are already a blue cheese connoisseur, break out of your rut with our Valdeon Blue. **Valdeón** is a rich and creamy, intensely-flavored cow and goat's milk



blue cheese. The Valdeón wheels are wrapped in Sycamore leaves which contribute to their distinctive appearance and complex flavor. Valdeón was named best blue cheese in a 2003 national competition in Spain. This cheese pairs well with wines made from the Gamay grape, such as Beaujolais, as well as Muscats. This cheese is delicious with smoked and cured meats, and simply divine melted on top of a hanger steak. • *Amelia Furman, Co-op Team Member*

## **THE GM'S CORNER**

As we enter into year 2010, I can report to you the state of our Coop is good. Sales and gross profit dollars are up, thanks to your support throughout the year. Sixty-five new members joined the Coop in the last quarter of '09. This the result of good work from our Board Membership Committee, especially Sharon Mester and Joe Fallon.

In 2009 your Coop held a series of successful events, encouraging us to continue our outreach to members and the community at large in 2010. Our Slow Food dinner in July brought Coop members and Slow Food members together to share a wonderful meal and conversation while dining al fresco on our patio, under the direction of our very talented Chef Barbara Weisman.

Helen Nadel, who recently joined our Board of Directors, jumped right in conducting hands-on veggie cooking seminars for members and organizing a farm trip also for members. Great stuff and fun as well. In October, working together the Coop, Swarthmore Town Center, Mid-Atlantic BBQ Association, and local farmers and producers came together for our first ever Food Festival. This event was a great success, even with pouring rain throughout the day. We plan to make this a yearly event.

Recently, the Coop had the honor and great pleasure of hosting the Silvertones. They are amazing, bringing the spirit of the holidays into the Coop. One of the Silvertones, Connor Ambrose, works here at the Coop. On his own, Connor organized a small group to come into the Coop to sing. We have some really great people working here at the Coop, as Eleanor Ford points out in her article. *Cont'd on page 5*

## **Children of the Mire**

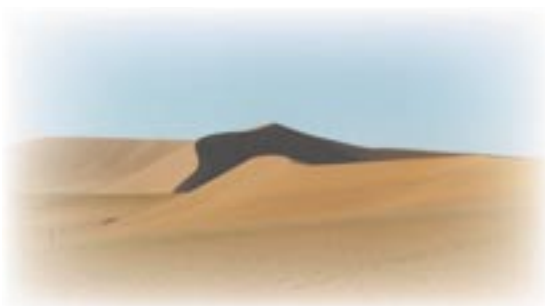
Come my children, wild and free,  
Break through the dune's engulfing sea  
For desert gates impede the ancient  
breath.

And, with the dunes, a stagnant river  
Dried of all its flowing vigor  
Yields an arid wasteland cleft.

Come my children plainly,  
Come awakened and come sanely  
To the inspired gardens of infinity's plains.  
For the roses breathe that rhythm,  
And the same harmonic vision

Of the dreams forever beating in oasis  
golden rain.  
Come my children, through the dune mires,  
To silhouetted meadows  
Where milky dew forever floods our surging  
veins.

• *Poem by Co-op Team Member, Phillip Perrone*



## WHAT'S YOUR "GO-TO" MEAL?

You race home from a) a meeting at work, b) taking your child to karate/ballet/music class, c) your first workout in weeks, or d) a doctor's appointment. On the way, you ask yourself, "What's for dinner?"

If you are the one who also has to answer that question, you are not alone. We've all stood in front of the refrigerator, wondering what's next. Good intentions abound, whether you cook for yourself or for a family: to eat together; to cook a meal everyone will eat; to provide a delicious, healthful meal every time.

Sometimes those intentions bump up against reality: too little time, or too little motivation.

I'm convinced, though, that each of us who prepares dinner regularly has a "Go-to Meal" – the dish you cook when time is tight and there's not much in the house. The one you've made often enough so that you don't really need to think about it

Sometimes a "Go-to Meal" is one we cook from scratch. Other times, we combine an already-prepared item, like meat marinated at the Co-op, with vegetables we cook ourselves.

Either way, we all need to increase our repertoire of fast, good meals. Sharing those ideas is one way to do just that.

Here's my "Go-to Meal": *Pasta with Ricotta and Vegetables*. In the time it takes water to boil, you can make the sauce. What's your "Go-to Meal?" Email me at [helennadel@gmail.com](mailto:helennadel@gmail.com).

*Pasta with Ricotta and Vegetables* is infinitely variable. I've made it with onions and frozen peas when I have nothing else in the house. You can use many vegetables: spinach, kale, corn off the cob, zucchini, sugar snap peas, asparagus, and broccoli are some favorites! Visit our website recipe library to check out Helen's Go-To-Meal, Pasta with Ricotta and Veggies. • *Helen Nadel, Co-op Board of Directors Member*



### *GM's Corner cont'd*

This year, I am very interested in developing stronger linkage with all of our members. Our staff and myself need and desire a strong sense of connection with all of our members. Your comments and suggestions, both verbal and written (email is good) are important to us. We are looking forward to having a great year at the Coop.

I wish you a Happy & Healthy New Year!

Gerry

• *Gerry Greway, General Manager of the Swarthmore Co-op*



## **Contributing to the Co-op Newsletter**

Do you love to write?  
How about take pictures?  
Maybe you just LOVE the Co-op!

We are asking our Co-op members and shoppers to submit their writings and pictures for upcoming newsletters.

If you would like to do that or need more information, please call the store or email us.

## **A WORD FROM THE BOARD**

Thank you to everyone who helped with our recent membership campaign, whether it be by writing letters and inviting people to join the Co-op or by just talking up the Co-op to your neighbors and friends. The Co-op added 65 new member-owners since mid-October, about the same number that typically joins the Co-op over a two year period! The active membership base is now 994 member-owners.

Of the new members, 63% reside in Swarthmore, 17% live in Wallingford and the remaining new members hail from Folsom, Glen Mills, Media, Moylan, Rose Valley, Rutledge, Springfield and Woodlyn.

While the Co-op's membership campaign may have ended, we are always reaching out for new members. If you would like to be part of our outreach efforts, please contact me at [membership@swacoop.com](mailto:membership@swacoop.com).

• *Sharon Mester--Chair, Membership Committee*

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### *Looking Forward, Looking Back cont'd*

Looking ahead to 2010, means I have to look back a year for a minute and talk you about our biggest customer service improvement. In the last few months of 2008 and the first few months of 2009, Amelia, practically single-handedly, created the first editions of the Co-op Employee Manual and the Cashier Operations Manual. I believe "The Binder" has already helped us improve the level of customer service we provide for you throughout the store. All new employees now have immediate access to the basic policies and procedures that have been developed for general Co-op operations; and in addition, a new cashier has all the basic register training in a compact, readable format. We plan to focus even more on cashier training concepts in 2010. Also in 2010 we're all going to learn more about the COOPERATIVE part of our name and begin to help the Co-op further develop as a community resource.

I'd be rich if I had a dollar for every time I've said, "There may be one more button for you to push", "Yes, the button is taped on, please push it!" or my favorite line (could get a smile if the timing were better), "At this time of night, they add another button!" But instead, I'm just happy to let you know that in mid-2010 there will be a long-awaited upgrade to Customer Service equipment. At this point I don't know anything about how it will work, but I'm positive it will all be for the best! A year from now we'll share a laugh when someone says, Remember all those buttons?

Best wishes to you for a happy year in 2010!  
Eleanor

• *Eleanor Ford, Customer Service Team Leader and Assistant Store Team Leader*

## **Ginger Cookies**

*Yield: 30 cookies*

### **Ingredients:**

2-1/4 C all-purpose flour  
1 tsp baking soda  
1/4 tsp coarse salt  
1-1/2 tsp ground ginger  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1/4 tsp ground cloves  
1 TBSP cocoa powder  
12 TBSP unsalted butter  
(1-1/2 sticks at room temp.)  
1/3 C packed dark brown sugar  
1/3 C granulated sugar (plus extra  
1/2 C for rolling)  
1 large egg yolk  
1/2 C molasses  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
1/3 C chopped candied ginger  
1 C dark chocolate chunks (chop  
a gourmet dark chocolate bar for  
best results)

### **Directions:**

- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Whisk together flour, baking soda, salt, spices and cocoa in a large bowl. Set aside.
- With a mixer, cream together butter and 1/3 cup dark brown sugar and 1/3 cup granulated sugar until light and fluffy.
- Beat in egg yolk. Add molasses and vanilla. Add flour mixture. Mix until no flour pockets remain. Stir in chocolate and candied ginger. Chill dough until firm.
- Place 1/2 cup granulated sugar in a bowl. Roll tablespoonfuls of cookie dough in balls, and then roll in sugar.
- Place 2 inches apart on parchment lined cookie sheets. Bake 10 to 12 minutes, rotating pan after 5 minutes, until cookies are beginning to crack and edges are just set.
- Let cookies cool briefly on baking sheet, transfer to a rack to cool completely.

• *Submitted by Melissa Cirba, Co-op Team Member*