

January Owner News



BLOOMINGFOODS



"The way it was....."

By Tony Alongi

First off, a very Happy New Year to everyone reading this! Let's all hope for a safe, happy and prosperous (whatever that means to you) 2017!

I was going to write about resolutions, but I figured, like most resolutions, by the time you read this they might have actually been forgotten. So I struggled a bit with what to write about. Then I had a magical visit last week from an owner-member, who told me that Bloomingfoods problems could all be solved by "going back to the way it was."

Now I have heard this a bunch, both here and at my previous co-op. And with all due respect, it usually comes from people with (very) low ownership numbers. But, I have to be honest....I really don't have a great answer for this other than "there is no such thing as going back to the way it was." Don't get me wrong, I believe we can absolutely learn from our past. But my experience in talking with these folks leads me to the conclusion that learning from the past isn't what they mean. They usually mean a wholesale return to the past – as in the funkiness of the Kirkwood store, buying bulk from garbage bins, volunteering, etc. And with all due respect, that time is gone. Think of it – going back to the way it was requires everyone else to go back as well. As I told the member after a rather lengthy but unconvincing (by me) conversation was that he should contact Kroger and ask them to undo their remodel efforts and I will get on the horn with Jeff Bezos at Amazon and ask them to stop selling groceries via the internet to our area. And yes, the member's look was about the same as yours probably is right now. First one of puzzlement, then the thought that that is ludicrous. And that's exactly what it is.

There is no going back – only forward. The average American shops at 3.5 food stores every week for the food that they bring home to prepare (that does not include restaurant meals). Think back to “the way it was” – I’ll bet that you didn’t go to 3.5 stores for your food. I know that my family didn’t. In the late 60’s early 1970’s growing up in Detroit, we went to exactly 2 – the grocery store and the “fruit market.” Today, when I go home, those fruit markets no longer exist. Instead, they have morphed into the finest specialty grocery stores in the city. I guess there still are a couple of those old fruit markets around, but the last time I went into one it was downright scary – not the shopping experience I am looking for anymore.

And so that is what we need to do with Bloomingfoods and what we are going to start spending time on in 2017 – morphing into a next-generation killer cooperative food emporium. What does that mean? We aren’t entirely certain yet, but everyone here knows that we don’t have a choice. We still have Himalayan sized challenges as an organization. But the way forward is not backward.

All the best for 2017 (and beyond). And, as always, thanks for your continued support of Bloomingfoods.

Want a free ticket to the NY International Children's Film Festival?

Bloomingfoods owner-members are eligible for a free ticket to the [film festival](#) screenings taking place this Sunday, January 8th at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater.* The festival offers short films from around the world for the young as well as the young at heart! There are two programs - one recommended for children ages 3-7, and a second for ages 8-80.



*There is a limit of 50 tickets for Bloomingfoods owner-members, and a max of one free ticket per person. When the ticket max has been reached, the link will stop working. Please click [here](#) to claim your ticket.

*** OWNER
APPRECIATION
DAY**
**2 DAY
SALE!**
JANUARY 14-15

10% OFF
ALL PURCHASES

EXCLUDING BEER AND WINE

EAST

**NEAR
WEST
SIDE**

**IVY
TECH**

January's Local Focus: Brown County Coffee

Bloomingfoods shoppers receive 25% off all Brown County Coffee beans!



Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market:

January's Positive Change Organization

"The Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market exists to extend the farmers' market season and increase the availability of fresh produce and other local products throughout the four seasons of the year. We seek to encourage direct contact between producer and consumer and increase understanding of local food economy issues."



Positive Change raises funds by giving shoppers the opportunity to round their purchase up to the nearest dollar, or donate more if they wish. Each month, Bloomingfoods has a new recipient organization, and 100% of the proceeds go directly to the organization.

Bloomingfoods' shoppers donated to [Middle Way House](#) in December to close out an amazing inaugural year of the program! We'd like to extend our gratitude to the owner-members, shoppers, and staff who have made Positive Change a success. It is so incredibly inspiring to see how small change can make such a big impact!

Game Day Sale: February 1st - 5th



The big game is right around the corner, and to help you enjoy it, we're having a big sale! The sale kicks off Wednesday, Feb 1st, and we'll be scoring touchdowns with samples of great game day eats throughout the stores on Saturday & Sunday! Mark your calendars, and shop us first!

New & Improved: Hot Bar Hours at East

Now that the East deli has received a facelift, and we've improved the flow in that area of the store, we're ready to better serve you! We've extended the hot bar hours, and will be operating on the following schedule:

Monday- Saturday

Breakfast 8-11am

Lunch/Dinner 11am- 8pm

Sunday

Brunch 8am-2pm

Lunch/Dinner 2-6pm

Deli Counter & Salad Bar Hours (same as current schedule):

Monday- Saturday

8am-8pm

Sunday

8am- 6pm

Is Wellness on your "To-Do" List for 2017?

Good health starts with great food, but wellness products are often an essential part of having a healthy body and home. We're excited to introduce Megan, our new Wellness Category Manager! Megan has 8+ years of industry experience, and is a direct link to our wellness product vendors, so if you have questions or need a specific product, she's your go-to gal!



Megan is available to answer questions or schedule appointments via email at: megan@bloomingfoods.coop, or you can find her in our stores during the following times:

Near West Side

Monday 10am-2pm

Friday 8am-12pm

East

Tuesday 10am-4pm

Wednesday 12pm-4pm

Friday 2pm-4pm

Now at Bloomingfoods: Face Plant Skincare



Bloomington native, Bfoods owner-member, and self-professed "label-scrutinizer", Lesley Davis, has created [Face Plant](#), a line of plant-based skincare products with the mantra of "If you wouldn't dream of putting it IN your body, don't put it ON your skin." With options like the *Wonder Balm* to smooth and soften everywhere, and the *Moisture Serum* for an antioxidant boost, Face Plant offers gentle, nutrient-dense products for a variety of skin types and issues.

Where did the olives go?

We've received several inquiries asking for the whereabouts of olives since we removed the olive bar from the East store. We are still carrying several varieties of jarred olives that can be found on the grocery shelves, in the grab n' go case at the East store, and in the cheese case at the Near West Side store. Please let us know if we're missing an olive you like!



Bloomingfoods Financial Forum – Wednesday, January 11th

Do you want to know more about Bloomingfoods finances? Interested in knowing how we are performing? Then this forum is for you. Join Todd Dixon, Bloomingfoods' Finance Manager and Tony Alongi, General Manager on Wednesday, January 11th at 6:30 p.m. at the East Store Patio for Bloomingfoods first quarterly financial forum. We will walk you through Bloomingfoods financial statements, explaining the ins and outs of the grocery business. The January forum will focus on Bloomingfoods first quarter of operations for fiscal year 2017 (July through September, 2016). Please note, this forum was initially planned for the November/December time frame but the board reporting schedule (the board needs to see and review the quarterly financials first) resulted in a delay until January. Future forums will, if at all possible, be kept closer to the quarter end.



Ins, Outs & Recalls: New Information Coming to our Website!

In order to keep you better informed about the products you buy at the co-op, we've added a few new pages to our website. First, we've added a ["Product Ins & Outs"](#) page where we'll soon start sharing products that are new to our stores, as well as products we are no longer carrying and why. Next, we've added a ["Recalls"](#) page to inform you of products that have been recalled by their manufacturer, and details about what to do with said products. Both new pages can be found under the "News & Info" tab along the top of our website, and we hope to have them up and running shortly. Be sure to let us know if these pages are useful to you!

Board News

Our newly expanded board recently held officer elections. Returning board member Caroline Beebe will continue as president. Three newly elected members have stepped into the other officer roles – Maggie Sullivan as vice president, Gracia Valliant as secretary, and Bobbi Boos as treasurer. We have also worked with the IT department to set up e-mail addresses for each board member, which can be found on the [Bloomingfoods website](#). We look forward to hearing from you!

Monthly board meetings tend to focus on the present – how are our financials, how well are we implementing our policies, what immediate issues need to be addressed? In February we will conduct a retreat to tackle some bigger picture thinking about our cooperative. Is our mission statement still serving our needs? As we get back on track financially, how do we refocus on our bigger picture goals of supporting sustainable agriculture and locally produced goods? How can the board help Bloomingfoods thrive, particularly in the face of increased competition?

We will also begin the process of long-term planning. We know in the short term we must continue to improve our financial situation while facing new competition from Whole Foods 365 and Fresh Thyme. We know in the medium term we must deal with the lease ending on the East store. What challenges and opportunities can we envision in 10 or 20 years? What will our community look like in terms of population size, demographics, how people shop for groceries, what products are available? And then the ultimate question – where does Bloomingfoods fit in?

There is no simple answer to these questions and no one can know the future. However, we are excited for the opportunity to create a long-term vision and help guide the future of Bloomingfoods.

Thank you,
Maggie Sullivan, Vice President

Upcoming Board of Directors Meetings:

Regularly scheduled monthly board meetings are held the last Thursday of the month at 6:30pm. Board Meetings are open to co-op owner-members and guests of the board. Familiarity with the Bylaws, Policies, and the Policy Governance Method will enhance your understanding of the board meeting process.

Thursday, January 26th, 2017

Thursday, February 23rd, 2017

Owner-Member Connection Committee Meetings:

Wednesday, January 18th @ 6:30pm @ East Patio Room

Community Connections

Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market: Saturdays, December 3rd – March 25th (except Dec 24th), 9am-12:30pm @ Harmony School

"Want to keep getting your favorite farmers' market goods all winter? The Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market has over 30 vendors with a diversity of produce, meats, eggs, dairy, soaps, flowers, plants, mushrooms, honey, syrup, prepared foods, and holiday items. Come for breakfast, live music, and a great variety of local products."

Solarize Bloomington Campaign: When Bloomington's City Hall and Police Headquarters go solar this year, residents will be able join in at bargain prices. The city has asked solar installers to offer a discount to local residents and businesses as part of the project for the city buildings. The campaign will kick off in January 2017 with public information sessions. Residents interested in attending a session or learning more about the program are asked to fill out an online form at tinyurl.com/solarizebloomington or call 812-349-3837 to get started.

10th Annual Percussive Dance Extravaganza: Thursday, January 19th @ Ivy Tech Waldron Arts Center Auditorium

Bloomingfoods is selling tickets for this "evening of percussive dance and American roots music, featuring special guests Clelia Stefanini and Eric Frey, along with Brad Leftwich, Sam Bartlett, and more!" Stay tuned for ticket order information.

23rd Annual Soup Bowl Fundraiser for the Hoosier Hills Food Bank: Sunday, February 19th, 5pm - 7pm @ Monroe Convention Center

Quick! Buy your tickets at Bloomingfoods before it's too late! Nearly 700 attendees will experience what every sell-out event has featured to date: a smorgasbord of beautiful handmade bowls, tasty soups and bread from over 25 local restaurants and great local entertainment. The Hoosier Hills Food Bank collects and distributes over 4 million pounds of food annually to nearly 100 non-profit agencies in Brown, Lawrence, Orange, Owen, Martin and Monroe counties.



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