

# Topeka Natural Food Co-op

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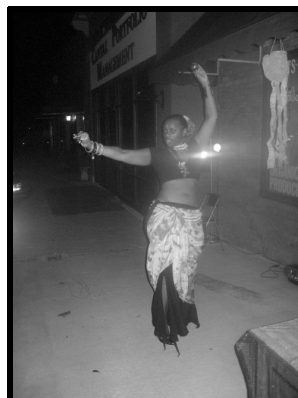
## The Co-op's Fall Celebrations are a Hit

As some of you may know, this October the Co-op celebrated it's 33rd birthday with its annual Parking Lot Party on October 11th. The blues band, Rags 'n' Bones, played during the afternoon as vendors held sampling and informational booths on the sidewalk. A raffle had over thirty prizes for attendees, with the grand prize being a 25 pound all-natural free-range turkey. Some of the vendors included: Dr. Peter Kimble, The Sierra Club, New Grass Bison, Kickin' Bull Ranch, Neat Feet, and others. A special thanks to all who volunteered and participated. We hope next year will be even bigger and better.

At the end of October, the Co-op started a new event for Potwin trick-or-treaters. The Co-op's Spooktacular Halloween featured members with belly-dancing talents, including Barbara Smith and Yeshe Key from the Tara Grace Belly Dance Tribe. Kids enjoyed healthy treats like apples and honey sticks, as they watched the dancers and visited the monster in the Co-op basement. Next year, our manager, Devrin, wants to expand on this new tradition. In November, the Co-op participated in Lights, Camera, Auction— a benefit for KTWU. The Co-op donated three prize bags, each including a Co-op membership and a special theme. The Household bag featured natural household products, the local bag had all Kansas-made products, and the gluten-free bag featured various gluten-free treats from the store. If you are like us and watch Lights, Camera, Auction every November, please look for our featured donations and support the Co-op and public television. Remember, if you have suggestions or want to volunteer for Co-op events—remember to come to a board meeting and let us know. Board meeting times are posted on the community board across from the counter in the store. We hope to see you there!



Top row and left: the Co-op's 33rd birthday party during National Co-op Month  
Bottom right: Co-op member Yeshe Key belly-dances and dazzles Potwin kids on Halloween



**Business Hours:**  
Mon - Fri 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Saturday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Topeka Natural Food Co-op  
503 SW Washburn  
Topeka, Kansas 66606  
Telephone: 235-2309

**Volume 2, Issue 3**

**December 15, 2008**

The Co-op Staff  
and Board  
Members wish  
you all a healthy  
and safe winter  
holiday and a  
promising new  
year!

### Inside this issue:

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## rBGH UPDATE:

To bring you up to date about the hearing Dec. 1 at the Dept. of Ag on labeling of milk and dairy products (the proposed rBGH regulation): Devrin testified against the regulations and presented the petition we had in the store—with over 100 signatures. Several consumers, including Co-op shoppers, were also among the opponents.

Testimony against the new rules was about evenly divided between Kansans and representatives of national organizations such as Sierra Club, Organic Trade Association, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Consumers Union. Devrin's testimony really made the point in a way that no one else was able to that even if Kansas dairy products could meet the proposed new labeling requirements, what comes in from other states will not! And we Kansans would just be left without these products, or they would have to stop making their non-use of rBGH known on the labels, for everybody. They can't and won't re-label just for Kansas, or any other state with rules that don't match the federal guidelines.

One of the people who had come from the West Coast to testify sent us a summary description of the hearing from his point of view. Here is what he had to say in part:

"I thought the star of the show was Devron [sic] Forte, the manager of the Topeka Natural Food Co-op. He had a cooler full of dairy products labeled rBGH-free that he brought up one by one, saying that there was no way all these companies would label just for Kansas and that the rules would be devastating for his dairy section. Then he read a powerful letter from Nancy's Yogurt...describing what a nightmare the production and distribution of her products would be if these rules went through."

Another excerpt from the above summary:

"It was standing room only --more than 50 people. There were 16 people testifying against the rules, 6 for, and one in the middle. A few people also turned in written comments but didn't testify orally."

The hearing officer said that Ag Secretary Adrian Polansky will review all the comments and testimony. There is no deadline for him to act.

He has the option to:

1. Keep the rules as they are (or with inconsequential changes) and enact them.
2. Rescind the rules.
3. Change them in a substantial way. If he chooses to do this, the process would have to start again and there would have to be another hearing.

A Dept. of Ag spokeswoman has suggested it would be very unusual for the rules to be rescinded, having come this far. However, some observers believe the Secretary might wait to see the outcome of a lawsuit in Ohio, challenging a similar rule on grounds of violation of freedom of speech and interfering with inter-state commerce. It was hinted, though not threatened, in testimony that dairy farmers (the majority of whom do **not** use rBGH) might bring suit in Kansas also, if the regulation is approved.

If you have not contacted Governor Sebelius, it may still be worthwhile to write her a note giving your views on the subject.

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| <p>Topeka Natural Food Co-op, est. 1975</p> <p><b>Holiday Coupon</b></p> <p><b>10% Off any One Item</b></p> <p>Valid thru 12/31/08</p> | <p>Topeka Natural Food Co-op, est. 1975</p> <p><b>Holiday Coupon</b></p> <p><b>Free Chico Bag</b></p> <p>With \$50 Co-op Gift Card Purchase</p> <p>Valid Thru 12/31/08</p> |
|--|--|

# LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

December, 2008

Dear Fellow Owner/Members,

Let me first thank each of you for your contribution to your natural food co-op. Our store can only survive with all of us working together—members, staff, and board.

Less than 20 years ago, there were over 900 food co-ops in our country; now there are some 270 or so. If we want to remain as one of the survivors, several things will have to happen.

We need to stop losing money. After a small positive cash flow in 2007, our loss for 2008 will be several thousand dollars. We cannot have that sort of loss in 2009 and stay in business.

That means getting more people into the store. We all need to get the word out that our store is the place to shop for healthful, local, organic and natural food and other products.

To do that, we may need to remind ourselves of the reasons we have this store, why it is worth saving! To mention just a few:

It's a co-op; members are the owners!

For folks who are price-sensitive, our bulk section is a great bargain, and the best in town by far.

Beans, specialty grains, and herbs and spices galore!

Our grass-fed beef, buffalo, milk, bread, local produce in season, and many other items are produced within 75 miles of our store. By buying local foods, you are getting fresh, delicious, healthful food, reducing pollution from transportation, and helping our local area stay viable.

Special diet items are available on the shelf, and special orders are easy—you could say, a "specialty."

So, how can each of us help keep our store?

You can help right now by giving co-op gift cards as holiday presents—at work, at school, to family friends, and more. You can help by bringing friends and relatives to the store. You can help by asking for volunteer opportunities. Consider advertising in our newsletter, or offering a loan or gift to your store.

SHOP TIL YOU DROP AT THE TOPEKA NATURAL FOOD CO-OP! HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Thank You,

Lynn Van Buren, Board President

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**FREE CLASSIFIED ADS ARE AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS... TO PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED AD EMAIL YOUR LISTING TO NATURALNEWSLETTER@HOTMAIL.COM**

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Brad: 785 209-0173  
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**Think Globally. Eat Locally.**

## CONTRIBUTORS

A special thanks to the contributors of the monthly Topeka Natural Food Co-op Newsletter:

Rachael Savage: Editor, Layout and Research

Susan Elmborg: Photography and Research

Devrin Forte: From the Manager Column

Special thanks to Lynn and Marjorie Van Buren for their submissions!

Thank you!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND SUPPORT YOUR CO-OP NEWSLETTER! WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! PLEASE SEND US STORY IDEAS, RECIPES AND TIPS TO SHARE WITH FELLOW MEMBERS!

EMAIL US WITH YOUR INPUT!

**naturalnewsletter@hotmail.com**

WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU!

**\*\*PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSLETTER\*\***