



New Deal Cafe Cooperative General Manager's Report November 2013

Overall Summary

This month was filled with business/research tasks, continuation of management agreement renewal discussions and a couple of fun events!

Financial Update

Good news for October – our sales have rebounded from last quarter's to showing an increase of ~20% in sales over last year! There were 2 new Festivals in Roosevelt Center last month which contributed, a couple of other special events, and overall some busier nights at the café.

Projects and Special Events

Greenbelt News Review Conversation

The Greenbelt News Review event went very well – the back room was packed with folks listening to some history (the News Review won their Supreme Court Libel case!) and then brainstorming on ways to draw advertisers, connect with subscribers, and serve the community. There were lots of suggestions regarding their online presence. The News Review was very happy, and has suggested that this might be a recurring event.

The following week, the News Review held another idea session with advertisers only, which I attended, and that meeting produced more specific feedback and suggestions.

Entertainment

We had a last minute fundraiser for the Philippines, with a scramble to get some advertising in, which was a great success – we raised about \$1000! Chrissy Wilkin, a Greenbelt artist who has exhibited at the café and makes our Crazy Quilt posters, was the organizer and impetus for this, as her family's home town was hit hard by the devastating typhoon.

We had a new group, coming in as a substitution for a cancellation, which packed the back room to standing-room only and gave us our best non-Festival night in years! The Bad Weather Boyz and Dandy had some Greenbelt ties, and besides bringing in so many sales, they sounded fantastic!

Bar Operations

Draft beer prices were increased by .60 on November 5. This makes the cost of a draft beer an even \$5. I've heard only one complaint about the increase, so most customers seem to be okay with it. The beer prices haven't increased for over 5 years that I can remember, and were about the lowest draft craft beer prices to be found in this area. The co-op is trying to stay fiscally responsible, particularly because the new management agreement will probably come with some changes to our financial picture.

Happy Hour was changed to run from 6-7:30 pm, to soften the effect of the increased beer prices.

FONDCA

The art installation and reception were both held this month, with Barbara Stevens and her multi-media paintings in the back room and Dan Kennedy and his large paintings of GHI homes in the front room. Dan also has some amazing wildlife sculptures in the display case. The reception was well-attended, and though people often tend to gather in the back room, Dan spent almost the entire evening discussing his art with admirers sitting around a table in the front room.

I met with the organizers of Beech Tree Puppets, who will be putting on a Puppet Show in January which FONDCA is sponsoring, to go over layout and specifics for this special event. It promises to be a beautiful and spell-binding performance, appropriate for all ages 5-105.

Greenbelt Cooperative Alliance

The Greenbelt Cooperative Alliance had their last meeting to wrap up the year, and reviewed the year's many activities. The Co-opoly Game which the café hosted was a great success, and is planned to be played again throughout next year. It was reported that a new resident, Tim Cohen-Mitchell is hoping to start a "twens" co-op in Greenbelt next year with the idea of selling bicycle-powered smoothies. Sylvia Lewis is stepping down as coordinator, after several years of service, so a new coordinator will be chosen in January.

Restaurant Contract and Facilities

Met with Karim regarding operational details.

The landlord replaced more of the damaged ceiling tiles, and there hasn't been a hard rain lately to see how the leaks in the roof are holding.

I've contacted Verizon about upgrading the internet service, and they will be coming out next week to do so.

GM Action Items and other matters

Charge Card Machine For Bar

I've decided to give PayPal's swipe service a try, as our internet will hopefully be reliable after

next week. Initial concerns about security have been allayed, as the service has very effective encryption. It is also highly rated for small businesses. I've set up the PayPay account already. As there are no fees or long-term commitments, I want to try it out and see how well it meets our needs. I'm anticipating that it will be easier and more efficient than an "old-fashioned" credit card machine, and the cost is similar. I plan to give it a try next weekend.

Beer Price Increase

Prices were increased on November 5 by .60 for draft beer only. I will try to estimate the impact in next month's report.

Insurance

I spent time this month researching other options for the café's Director's & Officers insurance, and found a company that will save us \$800/yr. Our premium was set to increase \$400 this year.

The liability insurance for the café also comes up for renewal next month, and has come in \$420 higher this year than last. I've discussed this with our insurance agent, and he cannot beat that price with any other company. Karim is searching for a better rate through his contacts.

Recommendations on Management Agreement

Contract discussions continue. The current contract has been extended for one month, until Nov. 30, 2013. The agreement has been sent to our lawyer for review.

Meetings

Board Meetings = 1

Other Meetings = 3

Upcoming Activities

The next special event will be New Year's Eve – Hard Swimmin' Fish will be playing this year!

Terri Rutledge

NDC Cooperative General Manager

November 22, 2013