



New Deal Cafe Cooperative General Manager's Report February 2013

Overall Summary

This month has been very busy with year-end financial preparation, many ongoing projects, our traditional Valentine's Day Buffet and a lot of cleaning!

Financial Update

I undertook a search for a new CPA and interviewed a company who seems to be a perfect fit for us, The Harding Group. I met with them two weeks ago, supplied the necessary information, and they are now working on our taxes.

Once the taxes are completed, the Financial Summary Report for 2012 will be issued.

Projects and Special Events

Poetry Boxes

The poetry box project is moving right along. Leeann Irwin has held several meetings with interested members of the community and they've named this project "Poetry Moment". Steven Bernheisel is busy designing the boxes and we are shooting for the first weekend in April for the unveiling.

Reel & Meal

Reel & Meal's January film was "Living for 32", a film produced by one of the survivors of the Virginia Tech shooting, and the evening ended with a moving panel discussion which included several law enforcement officers and a local woman who had recently lost her high-school age son to gun violence. NBC showed up to interview her (along with some pro-gun-owning spectators who did not appear to be regulars), and a very nice profile of the entire Reel & Meal event ended up on the 11:00 news. There were many shots of the café: interviews in the front room, shots of the movie playing in the back room, but no mention of us by name!

Entertainment

Our 2013 Inauguration Party went off without a hitch and Karim's special menu was enjoyed by all. I've received lots of feedback from customers who were very happy to be able to watch the Inauguration on the big screen with their neighbors. It took many hours to set up and long hours the entire day, but I believe it's the kind of event that the café is known for and should strive to continue.

I consulted with Teddy Primack, who we bought our piano from 5 years ago, about its most recent problems. He fiddled with it a bit and recommended a fix that Craig Tooley implemented. John Guernsey is very happy with the results, so it appears our piano search has slowed somewhat. We can now be more discriminating and patient in our search for a replacement.

The Nighthawks! played on a Sunday evening to an overflow audience and were amazing! They seemed to really enjoy the café, set a record for tips and a Sunday night, and were asking when they could come back. One of our best bands yet!

Bar operations

Serious cleaning and de-cluttering was undertaken at the bar due to more frequent sightings of bugs there. Most extraneous materials were removed, and the many remaining items were organized into plastic boxes, making things not only more sanitary, but more convenient as well.

Craig Tooley undertook a major 4-hour cleaning around and behind the kegerator and sealed the drain line hole in the wall. He also repaired the evaporator water drain line inside the kegerator.

Amethyst and I fine-tuned the Bar Volunteer Food Credit a bit in response to Karim's concerns, went over procedures to review with the bartenders, and discussed the benefits of periodic refreshers for all.

Restaurant Contract and Facilities

A week or so after the bar cleanup, I went through a more intensive cleanup in the office area and under the stage and disposed of a lot of odds and ends. I donated leftover electronics and electrical items to Club 125 (the new tinkering place across Roosevelt Center) for the kids to take apart.

Chris Logan's friend, who donated 40 luxury restaurant chairs to us years ago, came through with another big donation of 23 brand new chairs. This enabled Karim to move some of the padded black chairs to the front room and get rid of the molded plastic stacking chairs that we were using there. So both rooms benefitted, and the entire café looks better and feels more comfortable!

In preparation for showing the Inauguration on the big screen, Craig Tooley moved the wireless router into a more direct line of sight with the back room. Reception seems to have improved, but I'm still investigating additional options.

FONDCA

FONDCA held its winter quarterly meeting and announced another very successful donation drive. Donations received to date are slightly ahead of last year. Leeann presented an idea for future publicity, and we discussed the Poetry Boxes and the second Artists' Open Studio Tour which will take place in early fall.

FONDCA declined to pay for the outdoor concert insurance this year. They have paid for it since we started purchasing it 2 years ago, so the café will have to pick up that \$218 cost. They did generously offer to put \$500 towards our piano purchase though.

The Art Reception for *Color Movement Latin Art* by Ana Gasper and Clara Majors, and *Near and Far* photos by Kristin Stenson was held on Sunday, February 10, with Ana Gasper providing a special treat of coffee samples from her new company, and both back room artists giving very interesting, short talks about their work.

Barbara Simon and I met with Art Coordinator Julia Wade and primarily discussed communication with artists and publicity for the art shows.

Greenbelt Cooperative Alliance

The Greenbelt Cooperative Alliance had their monthly meeting in the café as usual and chose the winner for the logo contest. There were 7 entries – one from an 8 year-old, as well as one from Turkey, and all of the entries were attractive and imaginative. We unanimously chose the design that seemed the simplest and most reproducible. The winner will be announced at the end of March.

GM Action Items and other matters

Lease Renewal

The lease for our space comes up for renewal in October of this year and I have sent a request for our extension, along with an additional 5-year option, via certified mail. We are now awaiting the paperwork.

Annual Meeting Date

It is recommended that the Annual Meeting be held on April 14. We are juggling many events in April and May. I recommend a later start time (6pm) in order to encourage greater attendance. We may also wish to consider holding it on a weekday evening.

Recommendations on Management Agreement

To be discussed in executive session.

Resolution of Legal Matter

The legal matter which has been limited to executive session has finally come to closure with no further involvement on the part of the café. Though it involved two days in court and numerous phone conversations and research, the café was not directly involved in this matter, and ended up being excused from testifying.

Meetings

Board Meetings = 2

Committee Meetings = 4

FONDCA Meeting = 1

Co-op Alliance Meeting = 1

Art Coordinator Meeting = 1

Bar Manager Meetings = 2

Upcoming Activities

The next special event will be St. Patrick's Day on Sunday, March 17, with the Greentop Ramblers playing Irish tunes and Karim serving corned beef and cabbage as usual!

Terri Rutledge

NDC Cooperative General Manager

February 25, 2013