



## New Deal Cafe Cooperative General Manager's Report August 2012

### Overall Summary

The main focus during this month was advertising and preliminary preparation for the Greenbelt Blues Festival, to be held on September 15. We completed a significant safety improvement to the café, attended a Merchant's Work Session with City Council and participated in a fun Celebration of Co-ops in Roosevelt Center.

### Financial Update

The cooperative continues to operate in the black, although overall gross income is down by approximately 11% compared to this time last year.

### Projects and Special Events

#### Blues Festival

Publicity and planning for the Blues Festival in September began, with new ads and posters being designed and distributed. FONDCA was unable to pay for advertising or food again this year, so Karim again agreed to split the cost with the café, as long as the New Deal Cafe was credited as a sponsor along with FONDCA.

#### Celebrating Co-ops

In honor of 2012 being named the International Year of Cooperatives and also of Greenbelt's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the Greenbelt Cooperatives Alliance held a Celebration of Co-ops on Sunday, August 12. Festivities included a co-op bingo game with prizes from our local co-ops, tables with lots of information and give-aways from local co-ops and the National Cooperative Business Association, and a very fun and funny sing-along of folk songs updated with new "cooperative" lyrics! We gave away new New Deal Café magnets to the delight of all of our regulars.

## **Entertainment**

Our exemption from the Prince Georges County Entertainment Permit was approved, with the same conditions as last year.

Konrad Herling and I held a preliminary meeting to discuss his hope to hold a first night event this New Year's Eve in Roosevelt Center and covered lots of logistics (permits, advertising, timing...) and planning ideas. Konrad plans to continue to pursue this idea, and the café is a willing partner, though our specific NYE entertainment is already finalized – young Blues guitarist Andy Poxon!

The broken speaker was fixed and the mixer is in the shop under warranty – thanks to loans from sound gurus Frank and John V for no break in the music!

Jazz legend Buck Hill returned to the café after an absence of 7 months, and performed to a standing-room-only crowd. 17-year-old Bluesman Andy Poxon also returned to the café, straight off of signing a recording contract with EllerSoul Records, and the first CD under this contract will be produced by Duke Robillard! The café is lucky to have such talented performers happy to play for us.

A customer generously offered to donate a piano to the café, but it did not suit our needs at this time.

## **Bar Operations**

The Bar Volunteer Food Credit has proven to be quite popular – it is used almost every night that volunteers are working, and it seems to be going smoothly.

The county liquor inspector came to visit the café one evening at 7pm, causing a bit of concern, as they usually only visit during the day. He had questions regarding the Entertainment Permit and I clarified our status.

## **Restaurant Contract and Facilities**

The much-discussed push-bars were installed in the back room of the café, and much needed repairs were done to all sets of the café's outside doors at the same time. The push bars work beautifully, and the doors actually seem more sturdy and secure since their installation. This was a tremendous improvement to the café functionally and security-wise.

I met with Karim periodically regarding the operation of the café doors, advertising and logistics for the Blues Festival and various operational details. Karim will be traveling to Lebanon again this year in September for three weeks, for his daughter's wedding.

### FONDCA

The Artists Reception was held on Sunday, August 5. Ingrid Cowan-Hass and Eva Kritt were the artists being featured this month, and there were several sales at the reception. Brochures publicizing the Nov/Dec 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Group Photo Show were prepared and unveiled at the reception as well.

### RCMA/City Council Meeting

I attended a City Council Work Session with the Roosevelt Center Merchant's Association on August 27. Michael Hartman (president of the NDC Board) and Barbara Simon (president of FONDCA Board) were also in attendance. I shared our current financial status (most debts paid off, but the city kitchen payment still remains) and also expressed our pleasure with the working relationship between the café and the city. We had an extended conversation about the unsightliness of the trash area by the loading dock, and this time they seem to be ready to take action. I anticipate meeting with the City Manager soon on this project. There was again discussion of the vacancies in Roosevelt Center and the renovation of the movie theatre, along with the mayor's desire to see the Roosevelt Center Merchants' Association revitalized. In closing, the council was happy to receive some of our new NDC magnets!

### Meetings

Board Meetings = 1

Committee Meetings = 6+

RCMA/City Council Meeting = 1

NYE First Night Meeting = 1

### Upcoming Activities

The next special event will be the Blues Festival on September 15.

*Terri Rutledge*

NDC Co-op General Manager