



Forum Report

How can we work together as a community to make decisions about growth and expansion at Green Fields Market?

by Lynn Benander, board member

The Board and General Manager are in the process of gathering information from members, staff, producers, and other stakeholders so that we can have a clear picture of the growth and expansion plans that could work for us as a cooperative. Once we have that clear picture, the General Manager will use it as guidance to draft a proposal and the Board will be able to vote on whether to accept the proposal developed by our General Manager. Under our current decision making policies, the Board will make final decisions related to expansion or relocation. The Board will be asked to be responsible for these decisions because real estate decisions often need to be made quickly and without a great deal of public participation. Our cooperative's

governance process gives this decision making responsibility to the Board, and does not require a full member meeting to be called.

Relocation and expansion decisions can either bring a cooperative together or create conflict and mistrust. The Board and GM, in an effort to bring people together, are gathering information and learning about what members, staff, producers,



One of our new bag designs by local artists Opertura. We will be doing a series of local artist designs, if you are an artist interested in working with the co-op, contact Sarah Kanabay: sarah.kanabay@franklincommunity.coop.

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Community Connections

You can earn working member credit by volunteering at certain community organizations! We've expanded our work options for co-op members. Featured here are two—one we have partnered with for years and one new. Want to know more?

See www.franklincommunity.coop/co-op-community/good-stuff-we-do/.

Franklin County Community Meals Program

by Sharin Alpert, member

The Franklin County Community Meals Program (www.fccmp.org) has been organizing free meals for Franklin County residents since 1984 and currently sponsors five meals each week: Mondays at Our Lady of Peace Church in Turners Falls and Bethany Lutheran Church in Orange;

Tuesdays and Wednesdays at the Second Congregational Church in Greenfield; and Thursdays at Bethany Lutheran Church in Orange. Volunteers usually arrive around 4:30 p.m., doors open at 5 for coffee, the meal is served at 5:30, and clean-up is done and all guests and volunteers leave by 6:30. Volunteers wrap up leftovers for guests to take home. (For a list of free meals in Franklin County, see <http://www.recorder.com/Archives/2016/01/CommunityMealSchedule-GR-011516>.)

Andrea Leibson, FCCMP's Executive Director, says that the Greenfield meals usually serve 50 to 100 guests, with proportionally smaller numbers at the other sites. "We don't ask our guests where they're from or their incomes. They can just come. It's open to anyone," she said. "At the end of the month, when people's pocketbooks are a little emptier, the number of guests is typically larger."

CONNECTION continued on p. 3

Join us for Our Co-op Community Forums: Thursday, January 26, 6 p.m.

**Franklin Community Co-operative
Board of Directors**

Andy Grant '19
Gary Seldon '19 (Clerk)
Lynn Benander '18 (Vice President)
Norm Hirschfeld '17
David Paysnick '17
Stephan Gordon '17
Judy Draper '19
George Touloumtzis '19 (President)
Emma Morgan '17
Jeanne Douillard '17 (Treasurer)
Peter Garbus '18

The co-op board meets monthly, (generally 2nd Wed.) at 6:30 p.m. The agenda and minutes from previous meetings are posted in both stores and on our website. Meetings are open to all co-op members. Board mailboxes are at our Greenfield store where message can be left or via email: bod@franklincommunity.coop

**Co-op Managers
413.773.9567**

General Manager
John Williams x1009

Marketing & Member Services
Suzette Snow-Cobb x1017
Events & Outreach

Sarah Kanabay x1003
Human Resources

Gretchen Tucker x1004
Information Services
David Russell x1001

Prepared Foods
Chris Opalenick x1008
Bakery

Micheal Shersnow x1007
Produce

Victor Signore x1015

Perishables (Meat, Cheese, Dairy, Frozen)
Kim Nyiri x1020

Green Fields Market Store Manager
Pat Donohoe x1014

Front-End/Cashiers (GFM)
Jeremy Starpoli x1013

McCusker's Store Manager
Alec Goodwin x2001
McCusker's Market
413.625.9411

New Beet Editors:
Suzette Snow-Cobb, staff
Eveline MacDougall, member
www.franklincommunity.coop

Illustrations: Masthead Art Work:
Jessica Larkin, member Karen Gaudette

Co-op Information

Our Co-op and Community

Complementary Care Clinic

Monday, January 16, 2017 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

In honor of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, three local healing professionals are offering a seated bodywork clinic, open to everyone. Sign up that day and receive a free 15-minute Acupressure, CranioSacral Therapy, or Energy Healing session. At the co-op's meeting room (170 Main Street, Greenfield). Folks receiving bodywork are encouraged to make a donation to any of the local service organizations featured at the co-op's check-out registers. For more information, contact Janet Masucci (413.863.8694), Margaret Olin (413.625.8688), or Karen Traub (413.367.9826).



Art at the Co-op

Sonny Crawford will be showing pencil drawings and water colors during January at Green Fields Market. Sonny received a Bacaloriat Ecole des Arts Decoratifs in Stasbourg, France and an M.Ed. from Antioch Univeriversity. Sonny created the visual arts department at Pioneer Valley Performing Arts high school and taught at PVPA from 1996 to 2003. He is now an arborist, illustrator, musician, and activist in the Pioneer Valley. Join us for a reception for the the artist on Sunday, January 22nd from 5 to 7 p.m.

We love having art on our store walls! The displays rotate every couple of months and have included photography, paintings, quilting, ceramic, collage and children's work. Contact art space coordinator Eileen Rauch for displaying at McCusker's, rauch10@verizon.net (413) 625-9877 or Steve Earp, (413) 625-0105/sepottery@comcast.net if you would like to display work at Green Fields Market.

Winter Workshop Series

Organized by the Valley Community Land Trust and held in the upstairs meeting room at Green Fields Market, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Donations accepted, but not required to attend.

Homesteading, Inch by Inch, Sat., Jan. 21st

Discussing self-reliance, building quality of life, and land trusts. Speakers: Scott Nielsen, Neilia Sargent, Stan CMCCumber, jenny Wright, Vanessa Keith of Quaker City Land Trust and Meb Boden and Tom Vaiciulis of Meb's Kitchenwares.

Getting to Know Your Local Mushrooms: Where, Why, and How They Grow Sat., Feb. 11th

Identifying and foraging for local mushrooms, shiitake inoculation. Speaker: Paul Lagreze, owner of New England Wild Edibles.

Backyard Botanicals: Harvesting in Your Own Backyard and Tincture Making Sat., March 4th

Discovering beneficial native plants, herbal remedies, and simple tinctures. Speaker: Emma Donnelly, Blue Dragon Apothecary.

The New Beet is the newsletter published 6-7 times each year by Franklin Community Co-operative.

Articles about health or nutrition are for informational purposes only. We recommend that you consult a health care professional for medical advice. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the writers and not necessarily the views or policies of FCC.

The deadline for classified ads, letters, recipes or article submissions is the 15th of the month prior to publication. All submissions must include author's name and phone number, and conform to the following guidelines:

Recipes: We welcome original recipes from members.

Classifieds: Members' classifieds are free (40 word limit) Drop off at the member/customer desk (typed

or very clearly written) or e-mail; we print as space allows. suzette@franklincommunity.coop

Letters to the Editor: We welcome letters; they must be signed and include a phone number for author verification. We will withhold name if requested. We reserve the right to edit for grammatical errors, clarity, and length. 300 words maximum.

Via email: suzette@franklincommunity.coop
Submissions on paper: Typed and double-spaced. The editor may reject letters and articles that are illegible, too long, or inappropriate. We also welcome original poetry, photographs and drawings.

Our Ends (What we are working toward):

Global: The co-op will be an innovator and collaborator in the process of creating a regenerative and sustainable local community, economy,

and food system.

- Our community will be educated about our food, food systems, health and ecology.
- The co-op will supply healthy, reasonably-priced foods--and other goods and services--that benefit the lives of the members, community, and all those who worked to bring these goods to us.
- The co-op will provide a central place for the members and community to congregate and strengthen the social fabric of our community.
- The co-op will foster a positive working environment for all staff while providing a living wage, and excellent treatment of all workers.
- Customers will have a positive experience with each visit.
- The co-op will be an outstanding example of the Co-operative Principles and Values.



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About 40 different groups volunteer to provide and serve the meals. Organizing all of that is a huge effort! Three coordinators, one for each meal site, oversee logistics.

Our co-op member/volunteers provide the Greenfield meal on the fourth Wednesday each month. Andrea commented, "That's an incredible commitment – only one other group does a meal every month." She added, "(The co-op's) meals are great. There's always a wide variety of food, and lots of food. We know no one leaves hungry."

Co-op members Mary Siano and Shel Ball were co-coordinators of the 4th Wednesday meal about 15

years ago. Mary says, "I enjoyed doing it. It was so long ago, we had paper lists! I called part of the list to see what they could contribute, and Shel called the other part." She added, "Eating with the guests is fun and a good experience. You really feel connected with the community and with the need. So often you want to do good in the world and you can't really tell what you're accomplishing, but here you can tell. Some of the volunteers have been doing this as long as I can remember, from back when we first started."

Shel is still one of our monthly meal co-capitains. She says, "When you do this, you're doing something really cool. You make great friends with great people, and you get your working member credit."

Each month, Shel contacts volunteers to see if they can bring 20 servings of something – a main course, rice, soup, salad, cookies – for the next meal. "It's an orchestrated potluck," she said.

"Mary McClintock described it as an ordinary miracle. It always comes together. It's not about any one person's contribution. Each time, some volunteers can't make it, but together we hold up this thing."

"In the early days," Shel said, "we always had chili and rice and salad. Finally someone said, 'Not everyone likes chili! It's too spicy for a lot of us!' Well, we needed that information! Now, according to the site supervisor, participants say we have a fabulous spread, and abundance."

Both Mary and Shel mentioned the song they

So often you want to do good in the world and can't really tell what you're accomplishing, but here you can tell.

sing at the beginning of each meal. Shel described it as a short non-religious grace expressing gratitude. The volunteers sing it once, then a second time with everyone invited to join in.

If you would like to help at the Co-op's monthly meal, Call Shel Ball, 413-774-2628.

If you or your group would like to volunteer for Franklin County Community Meals Program in another way, contact Andrea at fccmp.ma@gmail.com.

The FCCMP appreciates financial support, too. While the actual meals are donated, other expenses total about \$100,000 a year, including rent, utilities, supplies like paper products, membership fees for the Food Bank of Western MA, and pay for five part-time staff. You can donate online at www.razoo.com/us/story/Franklin-County-Community-Meals-Program.

The Literacy Project

The Literacy Project is pleased to partner with Franklin Community Co-op to offer community-based volunteer opportunities for working member credit. We have provided free adult literacy and high school equivalency classes in Franklin and Hampshire Counties since 1984, and we've always looked to the local community to provide essential volunteer support. Approximately 400 adults study with us each year, building vital skills in order to complete high school education and prepare for college and careers. To learn more about our program:

www.literacyproject.org.

Currently, we have two opportunities for working-member hours:

Classroom Assistant in Orange: Join us once a week at our North Quabbin classroom for one-on-one tutoring and small group instruction in reading, writing, math and test prep. Classes meet Monday-Wednesday, September-June. We are looking for a minimum 6-month commitment of 1-3 hours per week.

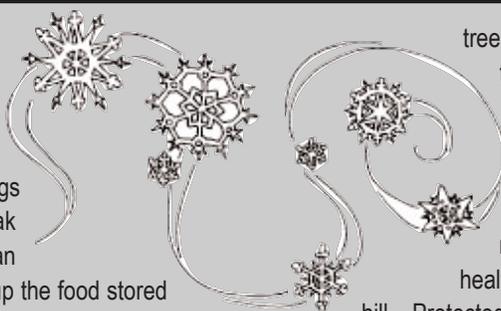
Classroom Clean-Up in Greenfield: Help us keep our classroom neat and tidy! We are looking for a few volunteers to come in once a week for an hour, to sweep, disinfect tables and chairs, clean the white board, and generally keep the classroom in good working order. This is great to do with a friend or as a family. This position can be schedule for any afternoon, Monday-Thursday.

For more information about The Literacy Project or these volunteer opportunities, please contact Margaret Anderson, Volunteer Coordinator, at (413) 774-3934, ext. 15 or margaret@literacyproject.org.

Nature Notes

- In the **winter woods**, please keep dogs on a leash. Their feet pads allow them to run on top of snow, but deer—with thin legs and hoofs, and heavier weight—will break through the snow. When deer are chased, it can result in exhaustion, broken legs, and using up the food stored in their body; if attacked, they will probably die. Winter puts extra physical stress on all of us, but especially on our wild cousins.

- Which way does the **cold wind** blow? Look up at a ridge and at the tops of hillsides; the conifers exposed to weather will give a clue. Rime ice—which can look like the delicate frosty crystal patterns on our windows—as well as branch breakage, causes branches to be shorter and stunted on the side of the tree facing prevailing winds. Some older



trees have weathered many storms in their lifetimes. Adaptation is how the flora (plants and trees) survive. Is this a visual example of how adversity builds character? You may see a lone, short and twisted, thick tree on a mountain top that appears to be young, but may very well be 50-100 years older than a tall healthy one of the same species lower down the hill. Protected by other trees from the wind and ice, it has grown healthy in soil that is richer and deeper, literally holding the mountain together with their roots.

- Snow** consists of large and often complex crystals that originate in clouds and fall to the earth. The average speed a snowflake falls is 3.4 miles per hour.

-Kathleen O'Rourke, Naturalist/herbalist

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shoppers, and other stakeholders want from our cooperative. Now that we've gathered information from hundreds of people, we'll soon report on what we've learned, elicit feedback, and develop a proposal for criteria for the board to use to make decisions when opportunities arise. We'll share that proposal, listen to what people have to say about it, tweak it, and send it to the Members and Staff for an advisory vote. The GM will use that advice to create proposals for relocation and/or expansion, and the board will use that advice as it decides whether to accept a proposal.

Decisions related to growth and expansion will be made at board meetings in open session unless there's a very pressing reason to make the decision in Executive Session. Members may be able to attend the Board meeting and participate in the decision, but it can't be guaranteed. I hope you'll provide as much guidance as you can on growth and expansion plans so we can move forward through these changes together.

What do you think?

Input can be sent at any time to: John Williams, General Manager (*john-williams@franklincommunity.coop*), Suzette Snow-Cobb, Marketing & Membership Manager (*suzette@franklincommunity.coop*) George Touloumtzis, Board President (*gtouloumtzis@yahoo.com*), Lynn Benander, (*lbenander@gmail.com*) or to the board as a whole (*bod@franklincommunity.coop*)

Why relocate or expand?

We've been talking about relocating or expanding Green Fields Market for a number of years for two reasons:

1) **Future Viability:** Most big box grocery stores carry natural foods and have buying power we're not going to be able to match, we're generally not going to be able to compete on price. There are, however, many things we do to build a vibrant local food system and contribute to our local economy. Members and shoppers appreciate the fact that we:

- pay higher wages and benefits than other grocery stores

Expansion Option	2016	2015
Expansion in current location	37%	37%
Open an affiliated business (such as bakery, urban farm, commissary, etc.)	20%	19%
Expansion by relocating store to a different location	14%	17%
Opening an additional store or stores	10%	11%
Acquisitions/conversions of non-co-op stores	8%	9%
Other	6%	4%
Co-op should not expand	4%	3%

- include smaller producers and farmers at a higher transaction cost than other grocery stores
- have more programs for people with limited resources
- maintain community meeting spaces

To survive in a competitive grocery environment, we need to have more space to increase the range of products and services we offer, expand our production capacity for prepared foods, and grow our bulk department (the area where we can compete on price). This growth

- producers
- break down barriers of food inequality (by investing future profits in food access programs)

If we can do these things, the GM and Board believe we can remain a viable downtown grocery store, providing valuable products and services that we are well positioned to provide.

2) **Staff Safety:** The Prepared Foods Department has outgrown its space and it's still

Expansion Outcome	RANK			Totals	
	1 Most Important	2 Most Important	3 Most Important	N	%
A greater variety of products in the store	96	42	37	409	20%
Selling more local and/or organic foods	50	47	33	277	13%
New or expanded services in the store	36	53	30	244	12%
Reducing overcrowding	30	36	40	202	10%
Expanding number of living-wage jobs	29	40	35	202	10%
Increasing the co-op's purchasing power	25	28	26	157	8%
Other	21	5	7	80	4%
Giving more people a chance to join/use co-op	17	19	16	105	5%
Promoting community economic development	16	23	36	130	6%
Serving new markets/communities	8	10	14	58	3%
Using sustainable building practices and design	7	19	27	86	4%
Creating gathering spaces	7	11	20	63	3%
Making the co-op more visible in the community	4	9	12	42	2%
Locating in neighborhood w/complementary retail business	4	3	5	23	1%

will enable us to:

- offer fair prices to our producers and consumers
- offer a greater selection of goods and services provide a living wage and great benefits to all staff
- provide a safe working environment for staff
- help build a regional food and agricultural hub in Franklin County
- support our local economy and local

growing. It needs more room to continue to be a safe place for staff to work.

Because of these store viability and staff safety concerns, in April '16 the Board authorized our General Manager to explore options for relocating or expanding Green Fields Market within a block of Main Street in Greenfield and to gather input from Members and other key stakeholders about it.

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President's Report

Winter greetings!

A significant number of owners (including nine from your Board of Directors) participated in the first of a series of forums, on November 30, organized by General Manager John Williams and the ad hoc Planning Council advising him on the Multi-Year Planning process. This first forum focused on expansion of Green Fields Market. It was great to see such a vigorous turn-out, and to hear the exchange of information and viewpoints.

The results of the 2016 member/shopper survey had just come in -- the evening before! -- and were presented.

Highlights from the section on expansion: 60% strongly favored expansion as compared with 1% who were strongly opposed (and 3% weakly opposed); there was top priority given to "preserving the downtown location;" and the most preferred option -- matching the 2015 survey results -- was for "expansion in the current location."

Participants brainstormed in small groups, reporting to the meeting. We focused on hopes and concerns about expansion, then offered proposed guidelines for John and the Board to keep in mind. The guidelines that got the most support focused on maintaining our cooperative practices (prioritizing staff treatment, supporting local producers), recognizing that co-op growth can expand the value we bring to the community, enlarging ownership while keeping our "grass-roots character," while making sure the expansion would be financially feasible.

Additional forums are coming up (all from 6-8pm): Tues., Jan. 10, considering and potentially updating our Ends policies; Thurs., Jan. 26, regarding the proposed Merchandise Policy and food justice; and on Thurs., Feb. 16, the draft Multi-Year Plan will be offered for feedback and potential owner endorsement. A busy time for member input and participation!

We filled the space at 170 Main St., so staff are seeking a larger location for upcoming events. Signing up ahead helps us plan. (Staff are also always interested in getting more member e-mails so as to better link our ownership community; please consider providing your e-mail address so you'll have increased access to

info, updates, and reminders.)

This process will culminate in presenting the Multi-Year Plan -- which is required both per our policies and prudent business practice -- at the Annual Meeting to be held on Sunday, March 5th, once again at Greenfield Community College (specific hours to be announced). Mark your calendars!

Also at the Annual Meeting, five Board seats will be open for election (using an online voting system for the first time!). We compiled a needs list of qualities of new Board members, including: accounting/business/legal expertise, more diversity (such as race and age), FCC employees

deadline for turning them in is Feb. 2. And if this newsletter arrives in your mailbox soon enough, consider attending the Board meeting on Wed., Jan. 11 at 6:30pm (170 Main St.) for a first-hand experience.

Last but certainly not least: Prompted and inspired by the advocacy efforts of member-owners specifically requesting that FCC display Black Lives Matter signs and more broadly raising the issue of racial justice, the Board endorsed a Statement of Solidarity:

"As directed by the Franklin Community Co-op Ends Policy to 'strengthen the social fabric of our community' and according to the cooperative values of equality,

equity and solidarity, the board affirms the following statement:

Franklin Community Co-op --

Franklin Community Co-op — through introspection by and education with its member-owners, board, and staff — strives to become a fully inclusive, anti-racist, multicultural organization. To this end, we align ourselves with the work of existing anti-racist, multicultural organizations and seek their guidance to move toward meaningful change for the whole community."

(who per our bylaws can fill up to two Board seats), group/communication skills, digitally savvy. Sound like you or someone you know? Interested in serving yourself? Is there another member-owner you want to encourage to run? Has a current Board member -- in keeping with our responsibility to recruit new Board members -- suggested you seek this role?

Please take a little time to think about it. A contested election that gives ownership choice about who represents us is one sign of a healthy cooperative. Board nomination packets are available in both stores and on the website; the

through introspection by and education with its member-owners, board, and staff — strives to become a fully inclusive, anti-racist, multicultural organization. To this end, we align ourselves with the work of existing anti-racist, multicultural organizations and seek their guidance to move toward meaningful change for the whole community."

In service,
George Touloumtzis
FCC Board President

Considering Running for a Seat on Your Co-op Board of Directors?

To help you decide, you can:

- * Attend a board meeting (2nd Wed/month)
Upcoming: January 11th
- * Talk to a current board member
- * Go to our co-op's website and review the b.o.d. nomination packet and past newsletter articles from the board
www.franklincommunity.coop

Elections happen at our Annual Meeting, March 5, 2017

Deadline for nomination application: February 2, 2017

Co-op Classified

Looking for help with pain from Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, Plantar Fasciitis, other repetitive motion injuries? Massage from Gretchen Wetherby LMT with an office in Shelburne Falls upstairs from the co-op and in Millers Falls, Route 63. (413) 824-7063
www.gretchenwetherby.massagetherapy.com.

Want solar, a cozier home, less wasted energy? Want to help the climate? Sally Pick of SJP Environmental Consulting, LLC helps homeowners explore weatherizing, efficient & renewable energy options including solar, & find energy contractors, new incentives, low-cost financing.
<http://SJPconsulting.biz>.

Pet-Sitting: Happy Cats Happy Dogs - Cat, dog and small animal care in your home. Professional, affordable, kind. Serving Grfld and surrounding area. Insured and bonded. Adriene Tilton Phone/Text: (413) 824-8269, happycats.greenfield@yahoo.com; www.facebook.com/HappyCatsGreenfield.

Childcare available Mature, loving nanny available. Excellent references, many years experience, all ages. involvement with horses possible, if interested. Diane: dsuller@comcast.net

Positive dog training creates better behavior! At Your Service Dog Training offers effective, fun clicker training at pet dog manners and service dog classes in Orange, or private training in your home. Certified Professional Dog Trainer. Sharon@atyour servicedogtraining.com / 978-544-8674 / atyour servicedogtraining.com.

Piano Lessons: Nourish your soul! Patient, experienced teacher. Accepting teens and adults for lessons at my beautiful home studio in Greenfield. Taubman Technique specialist: heal or prevent piano-playing injuries/limitations. www.juliabady pianist.com. Julia Bady: 413.774.0102.

Medicine Mammals needs volunteers to help raise orphaned/injured wildlife and prepare them for release. No experience required - just helping hands and a big heart. See FB page for more information or contact Priscilla Caouette 413.773.1978/lostinne1@gmail.com.

Piti Theatre Multi-Arts Classes accepting registrations from ages 7 - 12 for Piti's Shelburne Falls Youth Troupe, to perform at 8th annual SYRUP Festival with two-time Grammy winner Bill Harley on 3/18. Other classes include Soapstone Carving and Art'n'Nature. ptco.org/classes, info@ptco.org

Free Introduction to Heart-Conscious Communication **Thurs., Jan. 26, 6 p.m.** with Karen Fogliatti, Ph.D., experienced mediator, educator and counselor. Optional 8-week workshop will follow on Thursdays, Feb. 2 - Mar. 30, 6-8:30 p.m. (413) 773-8303 or karenmf@mindspring.com. HeartConsciousCommunication.com. Karen also offers, as a follow-up to the basic course in Nonviolent Communication, the NVC Practice Group. Opportunities to work on personal or scripted situations to deepen understanding and integration of the skills into daily life. Meets every other week on Mondays, Jan. 23rd - April 3rd, NVC Practice Group (6 sessions), 6-8 p.m.

College Counseling Services - Need help with the college process for your son or daughter? Neale Gay: 413.522.7712 / nealegay@gmail.com. Reasonable rates and expertise you need.

more classified p. 8

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What are we hearing from members and other stakeholders now?

In the recently completed member/shopper survey, we see support for expansion, staying downtown, and offering a wider product selection. Of the 481 survey responses, 60% strongly favor growing the co-op over the next 3-5 years. Only 4% opposed growing the co-op. 37% most preferred expansion in our current location. Outcomes respondents were looking for from an expansion include: 17% for selling more local and/or organic foods, 16% for expanding number of living-wage jobs, 12% for increasing the co-op's purchasing power, 11% for reducing overcrowding, and 11% for giving more people a chance to join and use the co-op. 31% want to preserve the downtown location.

In the Forum on Relocation and Expansion, we heard general support for expanding to offer wider product selections, reduce prices by increasing our sales volume, and serve more people in our community as long as the plan works financially, retains our community flavor, improves staff working conditions, and maintains our values.

What's Next?

We have a number of other Community Forums scheduled over the coming weeks to gather information for the multi-year plan we're developing. We're looking for input on our mission here in our community, our commitment to food justice and inclusion, and on our merchandise policy (what products and services do we want to sell here at our store?). Please join us for these conversations or send in your thoughts!

As a big advocate for Member, Staff, Producer/Farmer, and other Stakeholder participation in our cooperative, I'm grateful for all the time and energy our General Manager, John Williams, Staff - Suzette Snow-Cobb, and Sarah Kanaby, are investing in hosting this participatory planning process. I'm grateful for all the Board and Planning Council are doing to support this process. I'd encourage you all to give your input and be part of the conversation. We'll have a chance to see the results of this participatory planning process at our Annual Meeting in March. I truly hope we'll all see a reflection of ourselves and our community in it. I hope we'll use this planning process to discern how our cooperative can be the change we want to see in our world.



Have you seen the great new bulk set at McCusker's?

We are kicking off the new year with some more new improvements.

McCusker's will be closed the 1st two weeks of January but re-open by January 15th.

Help us celebrate on Saturday, January 28th with a Grand Re-Opening!

See in-store signs for details. Announcements will also go out on our E-News and Facebook page.

Not on our e-mail list? Sign up! www.franklincommunity.coop

Members Write



Growing the Co-op

I recently attended a co-op community meeting about growing the store in Greenfield. The management informed us that our workers lack adequate space and we are unable to carry all the products that the customers want. I was Board President the last time we moved in Greenfield when we held meetings about going from a small space on Chapman St. to our present location on Main St. I was also at the meetings when the store was still in Turners Falls, and we needed to move to Greenfield in order to survive economically. I wish we had videoed those meetings way back when and played it at this meeting because the same issues, the same concerns, even the same phrases, were used. Back then, just like now, there was fear that if we got bigger we would lose our sense of community, or that we would be going corporate, or that making a profit would corrupt us. We wanted to support the local economy, sell organic food, pay our workers well, and have the right ambiance.

After our last move, we greatly increased our sales and profit, our membership went way up, the variety of food offered increased as did the number of workers employed and the wages they received, and no one pined for the good old days when we paid just over minimum wage (or in the case of the Turners store, less than minimum wage!), carried fewer products, and were one crisis away from having to close the store. Our co-op got bigger, stronger, and remained welcoming.

We are a cooperative. We couldn't go corporate if we tried. We are not made that way. We own this business.

When we make a profit, the surplus goes back to the owners. We see to it that we pay the workers as well as we can and we put money back into the business. When profit is used for the benefit of all, it is clearly a good thing. By definition, because we are a cooperative, we will retain our values even if we get bigger.

We can't serve all the various needs of all the people of Franklin County or even of our members. Viewed rationally, that's not possible. We know our identity. We stand for cooperative values, regardless of size. We have to make our local economy and co-op as strong as possible. Given what is going on in the world, I think we know this to be true. When we have a disagreement about how to proceed and what products to carry, we should have a good airing of the topic, take a vote if necessary, accept the outcome, and move on. It is great that our co-op has turned profitable again and is situated for growth after a long, rough period. This is the time to look into ways to expand our business. This is no time to be timid.

-Terry Plotkin

Member Participation Circle Begins 17th Year

The Member Participation Circle is beginning our 17th year of working to increase member participation in our co-op. We're excited about the Board and General Manager's commitment to a year-long process of outreach to members as part of planning the co-op's expansion and development. We believe this openness about planning for change provides opportunities for learning to cooperate more effectively in shaping the co-op to meet needs for members, staff and the community. We learn through doing and, as Frances Moore Lappé pointed out, democracy is a set of skills that we can't have unless we practice them.

Our member group is always open to new members and this would be a good time to check us out. We'll begin the year with a revised mission and spend our January meeting talking about projects to increase opportunities for co-op members to bring the co-op into the community. Suzette Snow-Cobb, the co-op's Marketing and Membership Manager, will help us with this.

You're invited to join us. We enjoy our work and each other, and work hard to keep our dialogue open and our heads clear. Our meetings are on the first Wednesday of each month at 5:30 in the Green Fields Market meeting room.

Our revised Mission and Goals statement is below:

Member Participation Circle—Mission and Goals revised 12/16

Mission:

Increase member/owner participation in the life of the co-op so the co-op can enhance the well-being of members and the community.

Goals:

1. Increase member/owner participation in co-op democracy by:
 - Increase knowledge of our co-op democracy by expanding effective dialogue skills and how democratic decisions are made in our co-op
 - Develop new opportunities to dialogue about:
 - what's important to us as members
 - how we want the co-op to support our community we live in.
 - Support new projects that will further our co-op's mission and be run by member committees
 - Increase our co-op's ability to identify important issues
2. Add to learning about food-related issues, including:
 - food production and distribution
 - support for local food production and distribution
 - sustainability
3. Enjoy our work.



Co-op Classified Ads

Donate Books: Great Falls Books Through Bars sends free books to prisoners. Donation boxes for gently used books at The Brass Buckle, (204 Main St, Grmfld) & The Brick House (24 3rd St, TF, M – F, 2:30 – 6 p.m.). Paperback dictionaries appreciated. greatfallsbooksthroughbars.org, gfbbooksthroughbars@riseup.net.

Awakening to Health and Happiness through Wisdom Healing (zhineng) Qigong, Sat., Jan. 14, 1:30 -3 p.m., Green Fields Market. Zayne Marston offers an introduction to this powerful system of energy practices. As part of his teacher training, Zayne will be offering more Wisdom Healing Qigong classes in the New Year. www.transformationaltimes.com/qigong (413) 624-9605.

Jeff's Home Improvements Outstanding workmanship & care for your home & property. Carpentry, home repairs, painting, masonry & tile, home organization, organic garden & landscaping services. I use mostly eco-friendly & non-toxic materials. 25 yrs experience. Excellent references. Free estimates. (413) 773-9597.

The Coward's Guide to Conflict Free introductory session Mon., March 6, 10 to noon, in Greenfield. For anyone who takes to the hills--or wants to--at the first sign of conflict. Facilitated by Susan Hackney, MSW. hackneys@juno.com.

Greenfield Zen Mondays 7:15 – 8:45 PM Sitting & walking meditation. Cushions & chairs available. \$5 donation requested – not required. Initial instruction for beginners at 7 PM All welcome. Contact: Paul Sonier (413)665-0278 or prajna801@icloud.com

Handcrafted Wind Chimes Recycled silverware, ham-

mered & strung together with fishing line hanging from cord ribbon, creating a unique musical sound. Display inside or a nice addition to any garden. Cynthiasfinephotos@yahoo.com (413) 522-2406.

Experienced Roofer. Knowledgeable, trustworthy local roofer with 45 years experience. Slate expert. Repairs, ice dam removal, flashing, gutter cleaning, gutter & downspout installation. No job too small. Ask about activist discounts. (413)367-9352 lionoak@gmail.com

Holistic Women's Health & Wellness Practice opens January in Greenfield. Addressing women's health concerns, holistic weight loss, and fertility through herbal medicine, nutrition and bodywork. Becca Sarich, CNM, RN, Women's Holistic Health Care Provider www.beccasarich.com

SYRUP: One Sweet Performing Arts Festival at Memorial Hall, S.F. on 3/18 featuring national touring singer-songwriter/author Bill Harley, Piti Theatre's world premiere "Sammy and the Grand Buffet," S.F. Youth Troupe and more! Volunteers welcome. Tix: ptco.org/syrup, 625-6569.

Healthy Eating for Successful Living in Older Adults offers nutrition strategies that can help maintain or improve heart and bone health as well as prevent or slow the progression of chronic conditions; starts Jan. 19. Marcus Chiaretto: (413) 773-5555x2304, mchiaretto@lifepathma.org.

Kathy Dean, Licensed Acupuncturist and Practitioner of Chinese Herbal Medicine in Shelburne Falls, Mass. Chinese medicine is a gentle and natural approach to

treating a wide variety of acute and chronic health conditions. Individualized treatment for pain relief, stress reduction, reproductive health care, immune system support or complementary treatment for cancer and other serious illnesses. 413-625-2550

Beautiful and tranquil office space for body workers or therapists available in Shelburne Falls for 1-2 days per week. Office suite is located in the Salmon Falls Artisans building. Two private treatment rooms, a waiting room and a separate office area. Contact Kathy Dean, Licensed Acupuncturist at 413-625-2550.

Her Wild Roots offers nature-based programs for women who wish to cultivate a deeper connection with the natural world. See our 2017 program calendar and course descriptions at www.herwildroots.com. Contact Jeannie Bergstrom or Kathy Dean at herwildroots@herwildroots.com to register.

Rising Resilience! - A Free Rainbow Elders Breakfast Friday, Jan 27, 2017, 9:30 a.m. at Shelburne Senior Center, 7 Main Street, Shelburne Falls. Snow date Feb 3. For LGBTIQA elders & friends. RSVP appreciated by Jan 23: www.lifepathma.org/rainbowelders or (413) 773-5555 x 2215.

We seek walking companion, French/English conversationalist, and/or piano duet partner for delightful & spry elder recently transplanted to W. MA. Céline loves to walk (fast!), discuss a wide range of topics, and laugh a lot. If you're interested in making a new friend for one or more of these activities, please contact C's daughter, Eveline MacDougall. (413) 498-2974 eveline@amandlachorus.org.

more classifieds page 6

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity and the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Cooperative Principles are guidelines by which cooperatives put their values into practice.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Member Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

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