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# THE COMPOST

Vol. 44, Number 2 Fall 2022

## STORE HOURS

8:00 am - 8:00 pm  
Every Day

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## Co-op Scoop Alice Rubin

**Who knows where the time goes?** Remember that Sandy Denny song? It is one of my favorites. And it is so true! It has been almost 40 years since I began working at the Food Co-op. Where did that time go? It wasn't a plan, to stay in the same job for almost 40 years, but I have loved my job here and had no reason to leave...until now. And even now I don't really have a plan, or a good reason, but it seems like the right time to retire. So that is what I will be doing in early 2024. That is still down the road a piece, but it will be a big change and I wanted our Board of Directors to be able to do their jobs well to find someone to take over as General Manager. I have great faith that they will.

In the meantime, life goes on as usual at our Food Co-op – which seems to mean that new challenges appear on a regular basis! And we roll with whatever that new challenge is. We have gotten very good at adapting and carrying on.

While worker shortages have been in the news lately, we have not been hit too hard. We value everyone that works at the Co-op and in acknowledgement of that, mixed in with the extraordinary rate of inflation, we were able to increase our living wage, giving everyone a raise that we hope will make working at the Co-op a viable option for all of our staff, and an attractive job for any new hires we might need.

Supply chains are still broken, but we are used to that now! And we have gotten really good at rolling with it. There are very few empty spots on our shelves because our staff has gotten really good at gauging the inventory we need in this new light of not everything being available all of the time.

The National Coop Grocers (NCG), a cooperative that we belong to, has done an excellent job helping our Co-op offer our member-owners and shoppers some very good pricing on many of the grocery items that we sell. They negotiate with the manufacturers and put together the Basics Program – hundreds of items at an 'everyday low price.' They also put together the Co-op Deals fliers. These sales last 2 weeks and offer some very good pricing. They also supply over 30 in store coupons each month that can really save us all some money.

Another way the Co-op can be more affordable is our Pre Order option. This Member benefit gives you a 15% discount on full cases that you order in advance. Not every single product is eligible for this discount, but most are. Just ask any staff person to get you a quote for whatever you are interested in ordering. It is great for staple items or anything you buy on a regular basis. And ordering a case of something when it is on sale is the best because you get 15% off the sale price!

I hope that you will join us on Saturday October 1st at the Willimantic Downtown Country Fair. It is free and everyone is welcome. There will be music, craft vendors and community organizations, kids activities, the 2nd Annual Eastern CT Children's Book Fair, a clothing swap, and yes, of course, food. We all could use a fun and relaxing day, celebrating our great community! I hope to see you there. 🥕

**General Manager**

Alice Rubin

**Management Team**

Kathy Leddy

*Financial Manager*

Wendy Jakoboski

*Produce Manager*

Patty Smith

*Operations Manager*

Marissa Ocegura

*Front-end Manager*

Corry Elm

*Assistant Front-end Manager*

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Maxwell Calverly

Michelle Aguayo Castro

Susan Chasin

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Kathe Gable

Jaron Gaier

Mark Giangrave

Avery Gratton

Catherine Hahn

Bob Jennette

Saige Johnson

Brandon Johnson Nickson

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**Newsletter**

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Amy Kalisher

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## Why buying local is recession proof

*Sasha Bajjo*

### Greetings Co-ops!

People are talking, and guess what?

Whether they're right or they're wrong, shopping local is a surefire way to get what you need, regardless of the economic forecasts.

Your local farmer has the produce, dairy, meat, clothes' and soap, just about everything you need!!!

I can stop right here, but I won't!

Shopping local keeps resources circulating in your community.

Paying your local farmer/vendor means they can resource their farm/operation.

It is renewable and sustainable.

It may cost a dollar or two more at times, but it stretches so much further!!!

That dollar you save at WalPlace is not going to the farmer/operator, and next year, they may not be around - such is the way of "Big" contracts.

Big business is fickle.

"Snooze ya lose" is their marketing tactic.

Whereas local is, "buy local think global".

So while big wigs hem and haw about WalPlace and Tarjett surplus or lack, you get to experience the stability of the local economy.

Keep it simple.

Browse the coop and you will see local everywhere.

Water, seltzer, fruits and vegetables, meat, cheese, milk, eggs, soap, lotion, shampoo...

Search the web for Connecticut- made clothes and you will find a large list of stores offering shirts, blankets, and more.

You can even look a little farther for VT and NH made products, and you will be set!

Take a deep breath.

Shop Local!

See ya round the Co-op.. 🥕

## Winky's Food Review *Winky Gordon*

**Hello Co-ops! Wow are these chaotic** and confusing times – climate, politics, economics, racial reckoning and I could go on and on. It's good to connect with you through what feels like a little island of familiarity and sanity. Thank you for being here.

In this Food Review, you'll read about: Organic BBQ Roasted Almonds from Tierra Farms, \$14.99/lb; Four Sigmatic Golden Latte Mix with Turkey Tail \$15.99/ box of 10 packets; Make It GF English Muffins \$3.99/package of 4; Craftsman Cliff Roasters 55% Cacao Milk Chocolate Bar \$3.29 2 oz. bar.

Starting from farthest away and then zooming in up close –

Although located in California, the Four Sigmatic company sources its mushrooms across the globe, from China. They work with an organic grower who provides superior products, from a country that has, for centuries, utilized the medicinal properties of mushrooms. What, you may ask, does “Four Sigmatic” mean? The company's web site describes this as a category of 100 foods that are “the most studied, the most nutrient dense foods on the planet.” They are 4 sigmas (standard deviations) away from average foods, meaning they are super foods; it doesn't get better than that. They include green tea, blueberries, and turmeric and -ta dah - mushrooms. Four Sigmatic produces mushroom beverages including coffee and nutritional powders. There's a ton of information on the web site about mushrooms in general, about specific mushrooms, and about their enormous health benefits. Four Sigmatics was founded by Tero, born in Finland, land of many mushrooms and of mushroom coffee.

The Golden Latte Mix was...alright. Being a fan of all things mushroom, I was excited about trying this just-add-water beverage at home. I did not read all the ingredients and so was caught off-guard by the presence of stevia – not my favorite sweetener. Nevertheless, I finished the cup and can say that I enjoyed it. The first taste to hit my tongue was



*continued on page 5*

## Board Doings *Linda Brock*

**Wow, has this been a busy summer** for your Board! It feels like it barely started, yet it's almost over. Our two new directors elected in May took their seats two weeks later. They got a “hands-on crash course” in governance in June and July: discussing and evaluating compliance with the Co-op's policies and getting updates on the state of the store from managers.

The Board then had a half-day orientation with one of our cooperative consultants, focused on how our policies are the foundation for handling real-world problem scenarios. Individual directors attended virtual trainings: the Consumer Cooperative Management Association conference; sessions on Co-op Elections and on Finance, and “round table” discussions among co-op boards throughout the country.

Over the past three months, the Board evaluated the General Manager's compliance with policies:

- B.3 Financial Condition and Activities (Q2);
- B.6 Emergency Management Succession;
- B.7 Customer Service and Value.

The Board evaluated its own performance on:

- D.1 Governing Style; and
- D.2 The Board's Job.

(See the Co-op web page, *About the Co-op > Our Board* for the Policy Governance Manual.)

Board committees are forging ahead. On the Co-op reincorporation front, the proposed new bylaws are getting a final review by the lawyer before being presented to members with information/Q&A sessions this fall and winter. The General Manager search committee has refined the “must have” qualities we seek, and is developing the search schedule and the candidate evaluation strategy.

Comments or questions? Use the “Contact Us” link on the web page or leave your name and contact info at the Store; we'll be in touch!

*Board Meetings are now held in Webb Hall on Eastern Rd on the ECSU campus (rear entrance), first Thursday of the month 7:00-9:00pm (check web site to confirm location & agenda). Members welcome!* 🥕

## Helen's Wellness Review *Helen Scanlon*

For this issue of *The Compost*, I review two new products that reduce plastic waste, have all natural ingredients and biodegradable packaging, and perform double duty to combat rising prices of, well, everything!

First up, we have the power duo of *HiBar Volumizing Solid Shampoo and Conditioner*. No plastic, anywhere! ZERO. I mean it! These little shampoo/conditioner beauties are wonderfully swaddled in paper inside a little box—they look like cones with an angled end—just rub that angled side in your wet hair and lather up! Rinse, then—do the same with the conditioner. Work it into your hair right to the ends—leave in for a minute—then rinse.

You know what else *HiBar* doesn't have? Parabens. Sulfates. Silicone. Cruelty.

Check this out from their website ([hivebrands.com](http://hivebrands.com)):

*Developed by 4 friends with a passion for great smells, healthy hair, and, most importantly, plastic-free products, they've cut out plastic packaging entirely, modelling their haircare products on the bars of soap we've been using for years.*

Sounds awesome, right? Well, it is. I tried this magic on my hair (I have LOTS of it—think seventies rock star haircut), and I was quite pleased with the result. My hair was full, didn't flatten out (flat is not a good look for that seventies rock star haircut), and it smelled really, really nice—not perfume-y, just, well, *clean*.

I have a lot of hair (I mentioned that already) so I used a generous amount, and I didn't make a dent in this product. My guess is that this *HiBar* stuff will last me perhaps a decade or more. I am only half kidding. So, if you are looking to save money on your hair care because of rising prices (I mentioned that already, too) I would encourage you to give *HiBar* solid shampoo and conditioner a try. I loved it!

Next, I reviewed *SunLeaf ClarySage Lavender Shampoo and Body Soap*. Double duty alert because of rising

prices! (Third mention!) My goodness, this soap/shampoo is lovely. Smells incredible—think a summer meadow full of wildflowers (stop! I am serious!) and you are right in the middle of it. I am a fragrance collector—and this soap/shampoo is truly a delight for the ol' olfactory.

Look at this from their website ([sunleaf-naturals.com](http://sunleaf-naturals.com)):

*This 5 oz bar soap lathers into a rich, moisturizing shampoo and body soap — all in one! Hand-crafted exclusively from pure plant-derived ingredients and essential oil scents, our Shampoo & Body Soap is biodegradable and free of synthetics, preservatives and petrochemicals.*

Packaged in recycled paper, choosing this bar helps reduce plastic waste. Look good and feel great about the products you use – with *SunLeaf*!

As your Wellness Reviewer, I would advise that you surround yourself with all-natural, great-smelling products like this one. It lathers up like a champ, and the bar is big. It should last a decade as well.

The Co-op features several scents of *SunLeaf*, and I plan on trying them all. Pick up a bar or two at your next Co-op shopping trip!

Until next time, see you in the Wellness aisle! 🥕



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## Food Review *continued from page 3*

the coconut milk powder, an inviting start. Then I got the spices - cinnamon, cardamom, ginger, black pepper, cloves - traditional, warming chai ingredients. I could not identify distinct tastes for the turkey tail and reishi spores, perhaps not a bad thing. And then there is the stevia at the end. There are several other flavors of both non-caffeinated and caffeinated flavors of Four Sigmatic at the Co-op. After more carefully reading the ingredients, I will happily try others. I will certainly finish the other 9 packets in the cute little box of the Golden Latte. If you are a fan of stevia you will likely enjoy these beverages without reservation.

Eion directed me to the BBQ Almonds, from Tierra Farm, proclaiming that they are “obsessed” with them. Although I’m not gung-ho on spicy foods I gave them a shot and can report positive results. They’re roasted and so have a satisfying crunch, an important element in a snack food. They certainly have zip via the coating of organic spices including paprika, chili, onion and garlic powders, black pepper, and maple syrup to hold it all together. I taste paprika and chili powder most strongly. The level of heat on these almonds is just on the edge of too much for me but remember I’m a self-identified wimp in this department. Those of you who dig the world of barbecue flavors will be happy with these almonds I’m sure.


Tierra Farm, in Valatie New York, (South of Albany, so localish) has been producing organic foods including nuts, fruits, granola, since 1999. Their mission statement begins with “Righteous Food, Natural Integrity” and is reflected in their certifications as peanut and gluten free, kosher, and fair trade. They also report worker friendly and environmentally sensitive practices. We carry many products from them, in the bulk aisle. Their website details where products are sourced and has a blog post about the environmental impacts of Covid 19 – think masks, gloves, wipes, shields etc, all disposable – and the launching of the Pandemic Pollution Project to further investigate this un-discussed aspect of the pandemic.

Now moving in closer, to Canton, Connecticut, home of Make It GF, makers of the English muffins, found in our freezer section. The GF designation was originally for gluten free but this bakery has gone a step further to make their products grain free (with the exception of the flour tortillas). Make It GF is a dedicated gluten and nut free facility. Their proprietary flour mix includes a combination of white bean flour, potato starch, tapioca starch, xanthan gum as well as water, vinegar, yeast, olive oil, sugar, salt, cream of tartar, baking soda. Our Co-op carries the English muffins and pizza dough from Make It GF.

I have never tried to formulate a nut and grain free flour mix and so am appreciative of the patience and effort involved. I happen to be one of those eaters who mostly avoids gluten but is not in trouble if some makes it into my body; for this I am grateful. The various gluten free products I’ve tried often are challenged in some way, taste or texture or how well they hold together. The English muffins here hold together just fine and have smooth texture. The taste is, well, unremarkable. Not amazing, not bad, but perfectly good enough. I first tried them with tomato and feta - not quite right. (Big shout out to local farmers and CSAs for the good food you grow!) Then tried them slathered in butter. How can you go wrong? I just ate one with tahini and apple butter and made note of a slightly tangy aftertaste – perhaps from the vinegar in the mix? These would not pass the English muffin test of a certain friend for whom this food is a staple but I would eat them again. And for those with food restrictions these may be a gift from the gods and goddesses of breads.

And now....drum roll please...the Milk Chocolate Bar by Craftsman Cliff Roasters, super local in Norwich Connecticut. Yes, that Norwich – right down the road! The business is owned by Matthew Dutrumble and dad Cliff and proudly proclaims its products as made in a facility with and by nuts. Love it. CCR roasts their own beans and crafts a variety of bars each with a distinct personality. Their packaging sports a cheerful label with a drawing of Cliff, notes the origin of the beans and details of the “flavor profile” of each bar. This is home-grown and local at its best. The web site has a short video in which Matthew details some little known facts about chocolate including its history in Norwich.

Although I am not generally a fan of milk chocolate, with 55% cacao content this one has enough substance to satisfy my distinct chocolate preferences. Made with cacao butter, cacao, cane sugar and milk powder, its flavor profile is described as “coconut, caramel, marshmallow.” I get the coconut and if I stretched my imagination I’d get the caramel. I just got the marshmallow in the last bite I took. It’s the good part of marshmallow taste, not just sugary sweet but with a little personality. The consistency is creamy with a bit of texture. The cacao in this bar is from Ghana. In less than 24 hours I have eaten the whole 2 oz bar and am looking forward to trying other products from Craftsman Cliff. If you like chocolate, this is a definite must-try. Yahoo!

Okay Co-operators, time to say goodbye. Eat well, see what you can do to help this tired old world and, as always, be kind - to yourself and to others. See you at our store. 

## Existential Cart Contemplations *Maxwell Calverly*



photos by Shopping Carts of Willimantic

**Like many others who occasionally** find themselves absent-mindedly perusing their social media platform of choice, I came across something which gave me pause to ponder.

I read a post where an anonymous author stated, “The shopping cart is the ultimate litmus test for whether or not a person [and/or community] is capable of self-governing.” The author goes on to say that apart from dire emergencies or in cases of physical limitation, returning a shopping cart is wholly recognized as being the correct, appropriate thing to do. However, it’s not illegal to abandon your cart; nobody will fine or otherwise punish you for doing so, and you ultimately gain nothing by returning a cart. The act of returning a shopping cart hinges upon the expectation of individuals doing so, quite unironically, out of the “kindness of their hearts”.

Grandiose over-arching social deviance commentaries and cart-related ethics aside, this post did lead me to think a bit about how this statement related to the Co-op. While abandoned carts taking up residence in parking spots and over curbs appears to be a commonality in other establishments, a cart left in the Co-op lot is an immense rarity; perhaps two or three abnormalities throughout the entire day. Despite no cart corral, almost every person who uses our carts endeavors to bring them back to their lofty home.

While it would be easy to state the Co-op simply has an incredibly disproportionate number of kind-hearted and morally sound shoppers, and give everyone involved a textual pat on the back, I think it says something a bit deeper about our customers and our members. While arguably trivial in the grand scheme of things, it’s a tangible real-world reflection on how the vast number of members and people who shop here perceive the Co-op as something to be cared about. Something that people have decided deserves the little extra effort. Something that people want to help in making run just a tiny bit smoother.

And I think that says a lot. 🌱

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# We Want to Be a REAL CO-OP!



## We Need to REINCORPORATE!

### A REAL CO-OP...

- Operates according to cooperative principles and values – *we do that!*
- Is collectively owned, used and democratically controlled by its members – *that's us!*
- Is legally recognized by its state and the federal government as distinct from a for-profit or a non-profit business – *not yet...*

### Learn more about reincorporation here:

[willimanticfood.coop/images/board/wfc-Reincorporating-as-a-CT-cooperative.pdf](https://willimanticfood.coop/images/board/wfc-Reincorporating-as-a-CT-cooperative.pdf)  
and [willimanticfood.coop/images/videos/Willimantic.AGM.2022.D.mp4](https://willimanticfood.coop/images/videos/Willimantic.AGM.2022.D.mp4)

And watch for member information meeting dates – in person and online in the fall.

## ◉ Let's Be Real ◉

### We are here:

**Willimantic  
Food Co-op, Inc.**  
**A CT Nonstock  
Corporation**  
**Chapter 602 Nonstock  
Corporations**



### We want to be here:

**Willimantic  
Food Co-op**  
**A CT Cooperative**  
**Chapter 595  
Cooperative  
Associations**



# THE WILLIMANTIC DOWNTOWN COUNTRY FAIR

OCTOBER 1, 2022 11AM - 4PM



FREE! • EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

**NZINIGA'S  
DAUGHTERS**  
11:15  
**CLAUDIA SCHMIDT'S  
JAZZ FUNTET**  
12:30  
**CHRIS  
FREEMAN**  
1:45  
**BENTETU**  
3:00



**JILLSON  
SQUARE**  
WILLIMANTIC, CT

**BOOK FAIR!  
CLOTHING SWAP!  
VENDORS &  
COMMUNITY  
ORGANIZATIONS!**



# La FERIA del PUEBLO de CAMPESINA WILLIMANTIC

SABADO 1 de OCTUBRE de 2022  
11 de la mañana hasta las 4 de la tarde



¡GRATIS! ¡TODO el MUNDO BIENVENIDO!

**NZINIGA'S  
DAUGHTERS**  
11:15  
**CLAUDIA SCHMIDT'S  
JAZZ FUNTET**  
12:30  
**CHRIS  
FREEMAN**  
1:45  
**BENTETU**  
3:00



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