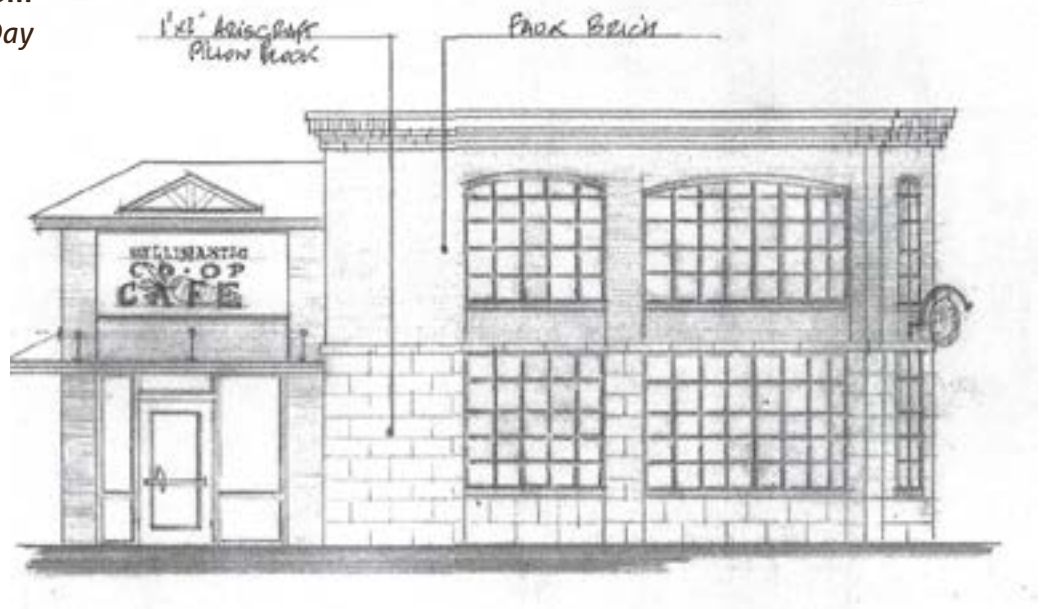


STORE HOURS

8:00 am - 8:00 pm
Every Day



Church Street Update *Alice Rubin*

A plan is in the works to build our kitchen/deli case/café and offices on our Church Street property - as well as a preliminary timeline. The first step will be to do environmental abatement inside the building. When we purchased the property we did a full assessment of it – land and structures. We did the remediation of the ground contamination. Then as we demolished the sheds surrounding the property we abated the asbestos within those structures.

We knew that there was potential for both lead paint and asbestos within the building given the time of its construction and subsequent remodeling.

Now that we are going to get the building ready for restoration, the first step is to find and abate both asbestos and lead paint (and anything else!). Our goal is to salvage as much of the structure as possible – hopefully at least the foundation and frame. What will most likely need to be torn down – ceilings and floors and sheetrock - needs to be tested for asbestos and if there is any, it needs to be removed and disposed of properly. Then we will have a clean slate for the rebuilding. That step will start as soon as possible, maybe even before the end of the year!

While that is happening we will start to look in detail at the finances of the entire project. Given the cash that we have accumulated in anticipation of some form of expansion, we are in pretty good shape, but we will still need to take on

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Member Benefits Update *Patty Smith*

Thank you to all the members who have attended our member info sessions on the topic of Co-op member benefits over the past several months. We've had some great conversations around how we might update our current member benefits to make the Co-op more affordable, accessible, and welcoming to more people in our community.

Access to high quality, fresh, nutritious food has always been a stated part of the Co-op's mission, and we really want to mean it when we say "Everyone Welcome". With food insecurity and socio-economic inequities growing, even in our own community of downtown Willimantic, we believe our Co-op can and should do even more to live our values of solidarity, equity, equality, and mutual aid.

During the info sessions, we've heard a lot of support (and little, if any, concern) from attending members for our proposal to end the 10% non-member surcharge, add new ongoing and periodic members-only cost savings, and introduce a "Food for All" needs-based discount program for qualifying shoppers. While we aren't quite ready to make any final decisions on changes to member benefits, we at least feel like we are on the right track!

Based on last year's member survey and the feedback we heard in this year's member info sessions, we feel confident that members will support changes to member benefits that both reward member investment and make Co-op membership and shopping available to more people in downtown Willimantic and surrounding areas.

If you have not yet had a chance to engage with us around this topic, we welcome your feedback and questions. You can get in touch using the contact form on our website (willimanticfood.coop/contact-us) or by asking to speak with Alice or Patty at the store. Check out an abbreviated version of the presentation given at the member info sessions on our website. Finally, keep an eye out for the next member survey over the next few months, in which we will be gathering more member input on this important topic. 🌱

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Downtown Country Fair 2023 *Alice Rubin*

Wow! It was a miracle, but we pulled it off! It was a fantastic day, filled with sunshine, music, craftspeople, kid's activities, food and information from community members.

Big thanks to the Downtown Country Fair Committee for your hard work and determination to have the fair despite the chaos of an impromptu rain date.

As we begin to envision next year's fair, we will try to find a way to plan for rain! 🌱

Creative Minds!

We want YOU!

Do you love your Food co-op? Show the world! Create the next Willimantic Food Co-op Bumper sticker. Here is how it works. A standard bumper sticker is 3" x 11 1/2", but your design can be any size!

- Submit your design by Monday January 29th.
- All entries will be on display in the Café for the month of February – that is when voting will take place.

The winner gets a \$150 gift card from the Coop and the joy of seeing their art on the road!

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Co-op Membership for All *Patty Smith*

Celebrate Alice Rubin's 40 years as General Manager of the Co-op by helping make Co-op membership available to all.

Donate to the...



Alice has been the General Manager of the Willimantic Food Co-op for four decades. Now that she is about to retire, the Co-op would like to honor her Co-op legacy and her dedication to the people of Willimantic.

We invite Co-op members and other stakeholders to donate to a "solidarity" fund that will be used to offset the cost of Co-op membership for shoppers who would like to be members but are challenged by the full cost of a member share (\$120).

Please consider making a donation (in any amount) in recognition of Alice and in support of the cooperative values of Mutual Aid, Equity, Democracy, Solidarity, and Concern for Community.

Mail in your donation along with the form on the back of this page or scan the code to donate on our GoFundMe page. 🌱





Donation Form

The Go Ask Alice Solidarity Fund will be used to support the Co-op's efforts to increase access to Co-op shopping and membership for those in our community who demonstrate need.

Please consider enclosing a donation (cash or check) with this form in recognition of Alice and in support of the cooperative values of Mutual Aid, Equity, Democracy, Solidarity, and Concern for Community.

For credit card donations, follow this link to our GoFundMe page.



Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

I donate \$ _____ to the **Go Ask Alice Solidarity Fund** in honor of Alice Rubin and her service to the Willimantic Food Co-op and Willimantic community.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Admin use

Member #: 403611 _____

Check #:

Other:

Rec'd Date:

Holiday Tables

The Co-op will have
space available

**Every Saturday and Sunday
November 25 – December 17th**
for local artisans to sell their
homemade goods.

Set up starts at 10:30 am.
Selling ends at 7 pm.

Please email Alice at
alice.rubin@willimanticfood.coop
if you would like to reserve a space
or have any questions.

Our Holiday Gift to You!

5% off for all Member-Owners

Every Member-Owner who has
paid their \$120 equity in full or
is up to date on their payments

will receive 5% off

all of their purchases made between
**Saturday, November 25th
(Small Business Saturday)
and December 31st**

Many thanks and much appreciation
to all of our Member-Owners!



WILLIMANTIC WINTER FARMER'S MARKET

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH
9AM - 12PM
EVERY 2ND AND 4TH SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
FROM NOVEMBER TO APRIL

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....In Which Our Reviewer Writes a Love Letter to Alpaca Socks....

Dear readers,

It is my distinct honor to write this review, dare I say a love letter, a tribute, a poem of longing—a cheesy romance novel—about a new item available at our wonderful Willimantic Food Co-op.... Alpaca Arte socks.

I never experienced alpaca before this magical moment.

Warm as a fireside and as soft as a kitten. As comforting as a cup of tea after an autumn hike in the woods. A beautiful woven pattern. Covers the majority of the calf with a whisper of unobtrusive elastic that stays put. Thin enough for loafers. Perfect for the lazy read-a-good-book-by-the-woodstove Sunday.

Let me tell you my sock odyssey to give you a better understanding why I am so excited about Alpaca Arte:

I am a cold-weather person—give me frost on the pumpkin and flurries circling in the breeze. Give me perfect hot chocolate with whipped cream dripping down the sides of the mug. Give me long velvety scarves, big sweaters, tall boots. Yes, you can even give me leg warmers. I am one of those people you see running in a snowstorm. Give me the chill!

Alas, my feet are always cold. Until now.

Before I discovered alpaca, I would wrap my icy toes in wool and fleece and whatever came along as the new super-duper warm sock of the moment. My sock drawer is chock full of these socks, all of them a disappointment. ALL of them.

Imagine if you will...You are in the middle of an open field and it is lightly snowing. You stand there, still as an owl, and your mind is filled with thoughts of warm socks, and how sad it is that you have never really known a pair of cold-weather socks that actually did what they were supposed to do. Are you destined to



return home to another dismal pair? Will your feet ever be toasty?

Then, an alpaca arrives. First, the creature is a tiny dot on the horizon, then as he strides into view, he gets close enough to whisper in your ear:

“Would you like me to wrap your toes in something delicious?”

Of course, you say yes.

As the socks gently cradle your tired feet, the first thing you feel is something akin to rabbit fur. Soft, delightful, and barely perceptible to the touch—like an otherworldly angel wing (you’ve petted a rabbit, right? Then you know I am spot-on with this

description). The socks have a silky texture, so light—so airy—and you fear that the wind will pick them up and sweep them away. Perish the thought.

“But,” you remark breathlessly to the alpaca, “how can something this soft, this thin—warm my frigid feet?”

“You have been disappointed by wool,” the alpaca says. “You have been betrayed by fleece. These things are bulky. Scratchy. They promised you warmth but gave you nothing but despair. I have arrived to show you the only way.”

Alpaca will become your new favorite cold-weather sock in 3...2....1....

I know what you’re thinking. You need to throw some of these beauties in your shopping cart the next time you are at the Co-op. You smart cookie, you!

Plus, an alpaca looks like this (photo by yours truly):

Yes, they look like adorable bunny-camels! Why wouldn’t you want their socks? Get on this!

Honorable mentions—new items also available at the Willimantic Food Co-op Wellness department:

continued on page 9

Wellness Review *continued from page 8*


Unscented Company shampoo and conditioner, also in bulk! I am picky about shampoo and conditioner, and this product brings on the clean and the shine. Unscented and completely gentle. Vegan, fragrance-free, biodegradable, and zero phosphates.

Ursa Major Golden Hour Recovery Cream face moisturizer. Very, very nice. Perfect for winter-dry skin. Gentle for everyday use—also use at night and let it work its magic as you sleep. Non-irritating and quite wonderful! Features calendula and sea buckthorn.

Treefort Naturals beeswax candles. I tried the Evergreen scent. Oh my, absolutely lovely. Fills your space with the earthy scent of a pine forest. (Hello, perfect for a holiday scent!) You LOVE their soaps, now stock up on their candles! Treefort Naturals is locally owned and operated in Colchester, CT.

Lots of GREAT new stuff in the Wellness aisle, it is time to stock up. Those lovely little flurries will be flying soon. (YAY!)

In health and happiness,
Helen 🌱



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Church Street *continued from page 1*

some debt. Our plan for financing will include member loans and donations. When we moved to our Valley Street location, many members loaned the Co-op over \$220,000 at interest rates ranging from 0% - 3.5%. Members and other local businesses donated over \$50,000! This financial support of our Co-op’s members – almost 1/3rd of the entire cost of the project - made a huge difference, helping to minimize the expense of the money we did have to borrow. Our new store was so successful that we were able to pay off all of our loans ahead of schedule. We hope to have a repeat performance with this project!

Patty and I met with Chuck Bomely (Plan B Design and Project Management out of Tolland) and Matthew Vertefeuille, CZEO, Planner, Director of Development for the Town of Windham. Matt appreciated Chuck’s design and was excited about our project. (See page 1 for a sketch of what our new building will look like in the end.)

If all goes perfectly, the building will be done and we will be cooking in our new kitchen in a year or so.

It is getting exciting! 🌱



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art design inspiration

WANT TO HELP YOUR CO-OP GROW?



Join the Board of Directors!

Participation on a Board committee or a seat on the Board of Directors are two ways Willi Food Co-op member-owners can contribute and participate in the Co-op's vision and direction. Do you have skills or experience that could help the Co-op serve its members and fulfill its mission? Here are some more questions to ask yourself if you'd like to get involved:

Are you...

- *An enthusiastic member-owner-shopper at the Food Co-op?*
- *Interested in learning about and supporting the Cooperative Principles and Values?*
- *Interested in big-picture planning and helping to develop vision for the Co-op's future?*
- *Willing to actively participate in discussions?*
- *Good at working in a team environment that comes to decisions by consensus?*
- *Willing to set aside personal vision or agenda and honor the diversity of other perspectives?*
- *Looking to take on a leadership role and serve the Co-Op through your participation and active engagement?*



If you are interested in contributing to the Co-op's future, please reach out to us at Board@willimanticfood.coop *Thank you!*



WILLIMANTIC
FOOD CO-OP
a community market