

# ROOTSTOCK

the official newsletter of the BELFAST CO-OP

[www.belfast.coop](http://www.belfast.coop)

## owner connection



by Emily Berry • Belfast Co-op Worker-Owner

In August, the Board of Director's membership committee hosted a Member-Owner Forum with the theme: Co-operative Principle 7 – Concern for Community. P7 states that co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members. With this in mind we set out to see if the Co-op is working toward the sustainable development of our community.

We began our discussion with the question, **“What is the value of the Co-op in our community?”** Our owners had a variety of answers:

- As an economic engine for local farmers and producers
- As an attraction, drawing people to Belfast
- As a social center
- As an employer
- As an educational resource
- As an alternative economic business model
- As a source of good (healthy) food
- As a source of local food and products
- As a method of keeping revenue in our community
- As a democratically governed organization

### What development would Co-op owners like to see in our community?

- Food education
- Affordable housing
- Alternative economy
- Public commons for meetings, activities, education, and fun
- Affordable daycare

### Is our Global Ends Statement (see p.4) structured to foster the community development our owners would like to see?

Our Ends Statement highlights what the owners see as the value of the Co-op in the community. However, because we are a retail food store it doesn't touch on areas outside of food, health, and sustainability. Affordable housing and affordable

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# WANTS YOU!

The Belfast Co-op is in the process of recruiting new Board Members, especially those willing and qualified to help guide the co-op toward a productive and sustainable future.

The Board of Directors serves a critical role in overseeing and guiding our success. Serving on the Board is the most responsible position that a Member-Owner can assume.

Election of board candidates will commence at the Belfast Co-op Annual Meeting next March. Interested Member-Owners should contact us at [boardelections@belfast.coop](mailto:boardelections@belfast.coop)

*Thank you for your cooperation!*

## GENERAL MANAGER

Doug Johnson

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ron Braybrook, president  
Alessandra Martinelli, vice president  
Zafra Whitcomb  
Andrew Watkins  
Lindsey Schortz  
Bindy Pendleton  
Betsy Garrold  
Patti LeClair  
Justin Howard, staff rep.

## BOARD COMMITTEES

Finance Committee  
[boardfinance@belfast.coop](mailto:boardfinance@belfast.coop)

Membership Committee  
[boardmembership@belfast.coop](mailto:boardmembership@belfast.coop)

Board Development Committee  
[boarddevelopment@belfast.coop](mailto:boarddevelopment@belfast.coop)

Elections and Nominations Committee  
[boardelections@belfast.coop](mailto:boardelections@belfast.coop)

Annual Meeting Committee  
Ad hoc

Public Interaction Committee  
Ad hoc

Bylaws Committee  
Ad hoc



*for the next*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS *meetings*

# September 29 & October 27

6:30PM AT WATERFALL ARTS, 256 HIGH ST, BELFAST, ME



# GM CORNER

by Doug Johnson  
Belfast Co-op General Manager

## Why owner equity matters

Like all businesses, co-ops need capital to keep their doors open and to provide services for their shareholders. What differentiates co-ops from other organizations is the source of that capital. Owner equity is your contribution to the financial health of your co-op in the form of an owner share. Over the years our Co-op has had a complicated relationship with its owners and their equity. It was not until the late 1990s that equity was formally introduced into our cooperative model, and even then it was a nebulous concept that has struggled for twenty years to be fully embraced. The many revisions to the membership structure over our long history, some resulting in the alienation of early members, is a byproduct of a fundamental misunderstanding of why co-op owner equity is important. Owner equity is not a membership fee. Owner equity is an investment. Owner equity allows your Co-op to finance its operations without looking to creditors for financing. Owner equity allows your Co-op to grow to meet the needs of our community, as well as to improve operations in preparation for the arrival of new competition. Owner equity is the lifeblood of the cooperative economy.

In an age when member wholesale outlets like Sam's Club, Aldi, Costco, and BJ's have diluted the public perception of what it means to be a member of an organization that you procure goods from, the fundamental and radical difference of the cooperative model cannot be overstated. The Belfast Co-op is OWNED by its community. Your equity share is more than an assurance of great deals on products that you want, it is your stake in the vitality of this business. Without the ongoing support of our owners, both in equity contribution and in patronage, we serve no purpose and cease to mean anything. That is why it is so important that member-owners who care for the ongoing sustainability and renewal of their Co-op participate where they can to keep our cooperative strong. Participation takes on many forms, from purchasing items at your Co-op rather than at other retailers, to serving on our Board of directors, to investing in a future capital campaign. We as an organization are only as strong as our connection to our owners, and that connection is built upon a mutually beneficial relationship that betters our workers, our community, and our economy.

As I look back on 40 years of Belfast Co-op history, I see an organization that has been through a lot, often fighting tooth and nail to survive. This community has never failed to support its Co-op. I am in awe of all of the community members that have poured so much time and resources into ensuring our continued success over the years. Looking to the next 40 years it will take as much if not more of a commitment from the community for us to thrive. As the world changes around us, we must be courageous in our idealism and enthusiastic about the opportunities that change presents. You as owners all play a very important role in the future of your Co-op and it is important to the future success of the Co-op that we all understand the benefits of strong equity dollars in meeting the needs of the business and in completing our capital goals. I see great things ahead for us, and with your continued commitment to embrace ownership in this historic organization we will take on tomorrow's challenges together.

*We've distributed*  
**\$2,765**  
*Maine Harvest Bucks*  
*since June 1st!*  
**STORE-UP SEPTEMBER!**

Earn 2x the Harvest Bucks on all eligible purchases, Sept 1st-30th!



SNAP/EBT card  
participants who sign up  
for our program and purchase  
local foods will earn bonus local fruits and veggies!  
Learn more at:

[maineharvestbucks.org/retail](http://maineharvestbucks.org/retail)





# Who was Howard Bowers?

Howard Bowers dedicated his life to the consumer cooperative movement. In his five-decade career, he worked for cooperatives throughout the Midwest, mentored hundreds of food co-op workers, and was in large part responsible for reviving the Consumer Cooperative Management Association, which he helped build into the organization for all consumer-owned food co-ops. He also served on the boards of the Cooperative Development Foundation and the National Cooperative Business Association.

We celebrate Howard Bowers Day October 29 in honor of him, and to support groups starting new food co-ops as they continue to spread the cooperative model.

**Learn more at [www.cdf.coop/bowersfund](http://www.cdf.coop/bowersfund)**

## *OWNER CONNECTION - CONTINUED FROM P1*

needs in our community and addressing them raises an interesting line of questions; Would there be a benefit for our cooperative owners to engage in other forms of business besides a retail food store? Would engaging in other forms of business take away or enhance the resources available for our retail food store? Right now we don't have an answer.

Our next Member-Owner Forum will be held October 5 at 6pm in the Abbott Room of the Belfast Free Library where we will be celebrating National Cooperative Month and talking about Cooperative Principle 6 – Cooperation Among Cooperatives. All member-owners are encouraged to attend and bring a friend: all are welcome.

If you have any questions about our previous or upcoming Forums please contact Emily, Marketing and Membership Assistant at the Belfast Co-op, at 338.2532 or [emily@belfast.coop](mailto:emily@belfast.coop).



## **GLOBAL ENDS STATEMENT**

**The Belfast Co-op exists so that our member-owners  
and our community will have:**

A thriving, just, and sustainable local food economy

A source of healthy, affordable food

An efficiently managed, democratically governed cooperative retail store

A greater understanding of health, food systems, and economic & environmental sustainability

An invested, engaged, and empowered staff that thrive in a safe, respectful, inclusive, and equitable workplace.





a conversation with  
**early member-owner**

## ***Ronald Goldstein***

*by Betsy Garrold*

ThePopulistFarmer.wordpress.com

In our on-going 40th Anniversary series we are speaking with Ronald "Goldy" Goldstein. Long time worker at the Co-op and even longer time shopper. Goldy is a beloved fixture at the store and has fulfilled many different roles since he first started working here in 1994. Currently he is buyer for grocery perishables, lead forklift trainer and driver, and also does parking and security. He is a former events planner, and has served as the interim general manager several times and as part of the management team three times. Here are his answers to the five questions:

How, when, and why did you become involved with the Co-op?

In 1966 I helped start Yellow Sun Co-op in Amherst, MA. I moved up to Maine in 1975 and started homesteading gradually working my way up the coast from Kittery Point (where I used to buy some staples like beans and rice from Tom Chapelle, founder of Toms of Maine). Back then we would strap on our backpacks and go back to Amherst to stock up on basic supplies. Later while working in Waterville as a chef I would shop at Hungry Chucks in Waterville. There I met Kip Penney and CR Lawn and got more involved in the Cooperative movement in Maine. When my first wife and I moved to St. Albans we started commuting to the Unity Co-op to get our staples. Then I discovered the Belfast Co-op and started shopping here. I even won a cord of wood in a raffle early on in the history of the Upper Main Street store front. That was in 1978 or 79. We liked the Belfast community and saw the Co-op as a real catalyst for change.

Eventually my wife said "let's just move to Belfast." We both found jobs here in the early 1980's. After being asked to cut my hair and beard for a job at EBS I came to Gary and asked him for a job. I've been here ever since. I think I've done every job in the store.

Do you have a favorite Co-op story you'd like to share?

Well, I could tell you the one about the Hollywood celebrity who came into the store and filled every cart we had with her groceries, but I won't. One I really like is about one of the last big Community Appreciation Days we had out in front of the store. The street was filled with probably 3000 people and I didn't hear a negative comment all day. Everyone loved the music, the food and the vendors. The health connections vendors especially. The sense of community was palpable. It was a great day and one of my favorite co-op memories.

How has your involvement with the Co-op enriched your life (needs met, connections made, etc.)?

Well, of course, the early years when it was the only place to find the food you needed to live a healthy vegetarian lifestyle. I think also the fact that both my children have worked here. In my opinion, of course, they were some of the best employees we ever had. People still ask about them. And that is one of the best things about the co-op is the sense of community and continuity with the next generation.

What are the biggest changes you have seen in the Co-op since it's early days?

The evolution of the management styles has been interesting to watch over the years. I was a big advocate for the management team approach and served on a couple of the teams myself. Joining NCGA has changed things. It is the new generation of leaders taking over that will continue to facilitate change.

What direction would you like to see the Co-op take in the future?

I'd like to see a new co-op built right here on the parking lot. The hotel that was here originally was four stories high. If we could do something like that and have affordable housing in the upper stories that would be great. A better kitchen and a place to do catering would be good additions to any new building we build. I would like to see us continue to support our local producers well. And eventually have our own cooperative farm. Continue and maybe improve our labeling of local products. Have good continuity with our community outreach. Otherwise, if it ain't broke, don't fix it.



*by Hannah Kreitzer*  
Belfast Co-op Worker-owner

The clouds were heavy but spirits high on August 13th. Ominous skies could not dampen the celebratory spirit that spread across Steamboat Landing as we celebrated our 40th year in beautiful Belfast, Maine. How often can you say that over 200 of your friends showed up at your birthday party? As our General Manager Doug said: “This was as much a celebration of where we are going as where we have been. I am so grateful to everyone in Belfast and beyond who brought us to this moment in the co-op’s evolution. Who we are now and who we will be tomorrow is built on the shoulders of the community that has supported this organization for 40 years.”

In years past our seasonal festivities have taken the form of Customer Appreciation Day. While we loved the all-hands-on-deck feel of those parking lot parties, this year we wanted to try something new. As Doug said, “When you turn 40 what do you want to do? Eat some good food, listen to good music, maybe dance a little, hang out with the kids?” There were plenty of chances for all those things that Saturday, starting with a bounty of excellent food. We didn’t go the traditional birthday cake route— why pick one treat when you can have a whole spread of local fare? Food trucks Urban Sugar and Chef on the Run dished out mini doughnuts, sweet potato fries, grass-fed beef

burgers and chicken banh mi. A last-minute vendor dropout gave cooperative ingenuity a chance to shine, as our very own Jeremy and Jason (of the Store Operations and Maintenance departments, respectively) whipped up a slew of delicious burritos. For a sweet finale to the feast, Doug, his son Bodhi, and Marketing Manager Carisa Carney dished out our special batch of Principle 8 ice cream, chock-full of blueberries, maple, and chocolate.

Next on the revelry roster: music and dance. Floor Manager Mike’s suave emcee stylings ushered in an all-star lineup of local talent, starting with The Hollow Horse (our dazzling Produce Manager Sofia). Folksy trio Sugarbush carried on the Waldo County women theme, and “Maine’s holler folk” stars Ghost of Paul Revere took the house (er, tent) down in style. The bash proved truly newsworthy— find links to media coverage on our Facebook page. You can also check out lots of pictures on our website!

Whether you danced and dined through the festivities or simply showed your support by coming through the store, thank you for your part in making us feel part of the fabric of this community. Summer’s jubilant sun-soaked hours are winding down, but that bittersweet waning heralds harvests to come. The season of gathering is ahead, and we’re excited to share the bounty with all of our friends and family. Our quarterly Owner Appreciation week (formerly known as super saver sale week) kicks off in September, so plan your feast-prep shopping accordingly! From the 1st to the 8th each equity-paying member can save 10% off an entire transaction of their choosing— one small way we give thanks for your love and loyalty. Waldo County farms will soon be bursting at the seams with beautiful produce, herbs, meat and dairy, and we’ll have lots of vendor demos, samples, and a few surprises in store. We’re all in this together, so come on down any day of the week and help us make this 40th year of radicalizing the local economy one of our best yet.

*Check out photos from the event on our website!*

# JUST PICKED



HI! MY NAME IS **Amy-Sue** & I WORK IN THE  
**Front End** HERE AT THE CO-OP.

I JUST PICKED **Salted Corn  
Snacks with Flax** BECAUSE  
They are salty and  
delicious like regular corn  
chips, but with a healthy  
twist!

**1.33M**  
*in local sales*  
**year to date**



**September – MOFGA**  
**October – Howard Bowers Fund**

## YOUR VOICE *counts*

**Your customer comments and Belfast Co-op  
Management responses**

***"Please bring back the Maison Orphee Canola Oil."***

This product was very slow to move on the shelf. We  
would be happy to place a pre-order for you, however,  
6 come in a case.

-Judith  
Center Store Manager

***"I love our coop. The staff is gracious, polite, and  
efficient. Heather, Jenn, Kristian, Alex, and the  
deli guy are all so wonderful!"***

Thank you so much, we love them too!

-Jeremy  
Store Operations Manager

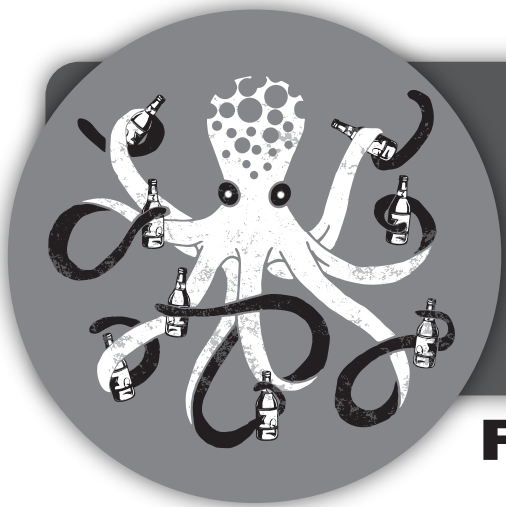
***"How about a Zevia that isn't cream soda ? How  
about orange?"***

We will look at carrying more flavors, thank you!

-Judith  
Center Store Manager

*thank you for your cooperation!*





# CELEBRATE OCTOBEER

A NON-GMO MONTH BEER TASTING & ART OPENING

**FRIDAY OCTOBER 28 4-6pm**

you must be 21 or older to attend OctoBEER



September 7 - **"Food Preservation 101"** talk at the Belfast Free Library, Wednesday, 6-7:30PM

Join Mickey McDevitt, master canner, for Food Preservation 101. Mickey will be introducing us to the types, tools, and tricks of preservation. Want to savor your summer bounty through the winter, let Mickey teach you how.

October 5 - **Member-Owner Forum**, Wednesday, 6pm to 8pm, Belfast Free Library, 106 High St

Our next Member-Owner Forum will be held October 5 at 6pm in the Abbott Room of the Belfast Free Library where we will be celebrating National Cooperative Month and talking about Cooperative Principle 6 – Cooperation Among Cooperatives. All member-owners are encouraged to attend and bring a friend: all are welcome.

October 26 - **"Cheese Making 101"** demo at the Belfast Free Library, Wednesday, 6-7:30PM

Do you dream of making cheese? Let the Co-op's own Heather Hay-Brackett make that dream a reality with her beginners guide to cheese making. Heather will walk us through the methods for making cheese, and present demos on making ricotta and chevre.



## CO-OP CALENDAR

### SEPTEMBER

**Common Cents: Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association**

**Artist of the month: Lewis Cisle**

**Tuesdays all month: Senior Discount Day All senior patrons receive 10% off of their purchases**

September 1 - Board Meeting Thurs. 6pm social time, 6:30pm meeting, Waterfall Arts, 256 High St.

September 1-7 - Member-Owner Appreciation Week (Super Sale)

September 7 - **"Food Preservation 101"** talk at the Belfast Free Library, Wednesday, 6-7:30PM

September 29 - Board Meeting Thurs. 6pm social time, 6:30pm meeting, Waterfall Arts, 256 High St.

September 30 - Love Local 10% off all Maine-made products all day. Featured vendor: Maine Crisp Co.

### OCTOBER

**Common Cents: Howard Bowers Fund**

**Artist of the month: Hannah Kreitzer & Audrey Broetzman**

**Tuesdays all month: Senior Discount Day All senior patrons receive 10% off of their purchases**

October 5 - **Member-Owner Forum**, Wednesday, 6pm to 8pm, Belfast Free Library, 106 High St

October 26 - **"Cheese Making 101"** demo at the Belfast Free Library, Wednesday, 6-7:30PM

October 27 - Board Meeting Thurs. 6pm social time, 6:30pm meeting, Waterfall Arts, 256 High St.

October 28 - Love Local 10% off all Maine-made products all day. Featured vendor: TBD

For more event information, please visit our online calendar at: **[www.belfast.coop](http://www.belfast.coop)**