



Greetings from the Co-op!

We hope you are well and getting excited for a special Thanksgiving celebration.

Thank you to everyone who attended our Annual Membership Meeting on November 10. At our peak, we had 163 computers logged on including many with more than one member attending. Highlights included:

- We celebrated our 50th anniversary as a cooperative featuring a new [celebratory video](#) prepared by our friends [ORCA Media](#) and a [congratulatory letter](#) from Senator Patrick Leahy.
- Our Community Award went to Liv Dunton and Doni Cain of [Fox Market](#) in East Montpelier. Liv and Doni (both former Co-op employees) have done a spectacular job creating a welcoming and nourishing community space.
- We announced this year's Cooperative Community Fund grants totaling a record \$15,200 going to 15 deserving local recipients working on important and innovative projects.
- We recognized a couple dozen Co-op employees who reached milestone anniversaries this year and appreciated Jan Tobias who is this year's recipient of our award for Excellence in Customer Service Award.

As Council President and General Manager, we gave brief presentations of our annual impact report. It's hard to believe our community now includes 10,655 members, 187 employees and 387 local vendors. Some additional points of note:

- Gross sales last year topped \$27 million with 38% coming from local products and 35% coming from organic products.
- Members reported a very high level of satisfaction with their Co-op this past year.
- We purchased \$8.5 million in goods and services from local vendors.
- Our co-op gave back \$80,174 in donations and sponsorships last year.
- We also purchased two solar arrays which helped us significantly reduce our net carbon emissions.
- We did end the year with no taxable income so there will not be a patronage refund. A key reason for this was our decision to retire the renewable energy credits associated with the arrays and reduce overall carbon emissions.
- Overall, our co-op is on solid financial footing with total equity of \$7.6 million and relatively low level of debt.

And here are some highlights from the work the Co-op Council has been focused on this year:

- The council devoted approximately 20% of our meeting time to furthering Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Education. We look forward to putting what we've learned together to work in a variety of ways and to considering ways to update our policies using an equity and inclusion lens.

- Big thanks to the Bylaw Committee for developing and following through on proposals to update the Co-op's bylaws and thanks to everyone who participated in the Special Member Meeting in May, we have a much-improved set of bylaws, which are available on the [Co-op's new website](#).
- The council has put a lot of effort into recruiting members to run for council or serve on committees (two committees each welcomed a new committee member this month). If you are interested in either running for council next year or joining a council committee (new committee members are accepted throughout the year) please let us know by [emailing us](#). Your participation helps keep our co-op strong.
- Finally, our Carbon Neutrality Committee has been looking at possible solutions to reduce our carbon emissions as a Co-op. Their work contributed to the purchase of the solar arrays which will offset most of the electricity we use with a renewable source and save us money over the long term.

Based on the feedback we received, it was an informative and inspiring meeting. You can view a recording of it on our [YouTube channel](#). You can also view a separate presentation of our [annual impact report](#).

Be sure to [vote in this year's council elections](#) where we have four excellent candidates for three open seats. Polls are open through November 27.

Many appreciations to outgoing council members Andrew Sullivan and Nick Sivret who added valuable perspective as both Co-op members and employees.

Other than that, it's all about Thanksgiving here at the Co-op. The deadline for pre-ordering a turkey has passed but we will have some extras available. Our Prepared Foods department will be featuring Thanksgiving foods all week on the hot bar and our grab-and-go is filled with delicious pies and side dishes.

We hope you and your loved ones have a wonderful holiday. Thank you for supporting our co-op.

[Eva Schectman](#) [Kari Bradley](#)
Council President General Manager