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The Willy Street Co-op *Reader* is the monthly communications link among the Co-op Board, staff, and Owners. It provides information about the Co-op’s services and business as well as about cooking, nutrition, health, sustainable agriculture, and more. Views and opinions expressed in the *Reader* do not necessarily represent those of the Co-op’s Directors, staff, or Ownership. Willy Street Co-op has not evaluated the claims made by advertisers. Acceptance of advertising does not indicate endorsement of the product or service offered. Articles are presented for informational purposes only. Before taking action, you should always consult a professional for advice. Articles may be reprinted with permission from the editor.

Submissions: Ad space reservations due by the 10th of the month before publication; artwork due the 15th of the month before publication.

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ISABEL FREINKEL



IKE ROSS



DEBRA SHAPIRO



DAN STREIT





..... GIGI GODWIN



..... TATIANA DENNIS



.. ANTHONY HERNANDEZ



..... ASHWINI RAO

The Board meets 8–10 times a year, meetings are held at the Central Office, 6:30–8:30pm. Owners are invited to attend during the open session of the BoD meeting. See www.willystreet.coop/events and select the Board category for details.

Oct. 6, Annual Meeting

October 28

December 9

January 27, 2027

EMAIL: BOARD@WILLYSTREET.COOP

ALL-BOARD@WILLYSTREET.COOP

(includes the GM, Executive Assistant, and Board Administrator)

THE WILLY STREET GROCERY CO-OP



MISSION STATEMENT

Cultivate and empower community, customers, employees, and suppliers through cooperative principles and practices.



EIGHT COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES



DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

MEMBER ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

CONCERN for the COMMUNITY

EDUCATION TRAINING AND INFORMATION

2

Willy Street Co-op Reader • October 2026



GLUTEN-FREE NUTS

Recently found I have celiac disease and was looking for gluten free certified nuts - all of yours came from facilities that process soy etc. Nutritionist said not to get items from the bins due to possible contamination with gluten. Thanks.

Thank you for commenting about this! I will see what we can find for gluten-free certified packaged nuts. We have been considering bringing in some of Tierra Farm's packaged nuts. I believe their facility is gluten- and peanut-free. -Dean Kallas, Grocery Category Manager

GLUTEN-FREE BAKERY

Hi! I'm one of your gluten free customers and I appreciate all your offerings. It makes it so much easier for me to navigate shopping for my groceries. Having said that, I would LOVE to have a small selection of bakery style items to choose from. I know you have a handful in the freezer, but I wanted to request that you look into sourcing from Sweet Ali's, a quasi-local bakery out of the Chicagoland area. I had one of their cinnamon rolls while traveling and it was so delicious!

Thank you for your comment and request! We will look into Sweet Ali's and see what we can do about getting some of their products. It might be a bit difficult because their products appear to be fresh with a limited shelf life. -Dean Kallas, Grocery Category Manager

CHEESY POTATO BROCCOLI SOUP

Product: Cheesy Potato Broccoli Soup. Listed in the ingredients is cheddar cheese which contains among other things "color added". What color? What additive? As one with allergies to dyes and colors such as ANNATO (yellow cheese color) this is important information. I know there are others with similar allergies. Could you please list this on the label?

I'm really sorry about that not being on there properly, the coloring is indeed annatto, which is the typical coloring used in yellow cheddars. I did search our system and make sure this wasn't happening anywhere else in the Deli items and this was the one anomaly. Again, I'm very sorry this was missed, thank you so much for reaching out and letting us know! -Nicholas Oconnor, Director of Prepared Foods

TRES LATIN FOODS

I came into my convenient West store the other day and to buy the Tres Latin Foods Spinach and Cheese Papusas. They are a regular for me as they are a quick and convenient no brainer for a meal with a salad of spring mix and Ranch dressing - Yum. The Ranch dressing provides the perfect acidity like the more authentic cabbage/vinegar salad they are eaten along side. I prepare the papusas by spraying them with a little olive oil from my Mister Misto and heating them in a skillet on medium and flip every couple of minutes. I'm not sure this is the directions on the box from comments on their web site, but there used to be a grocery store on the East side that made them fresh and put them on a griddle. So, I took that as the way

to prepare them. They come out a bit browned with gooey, melty cheese inside. You can get that pizza commercial cheese pull with these papusas (maybe not quite as long of a one since they are smaller). The green chili and cheese ones are also delicious and cheesy as well. However, they were no longer on the freezer shelf when I stopped in for them the other day. I was informed that you are no longer carrying them. No, no, no. Please bring at least these cheesy ones back. The bean and corn ones were nice with some salsa heated up in the pan for the last minute or so. I could live without the bean and corn ones though. Not so much with the spinach and cheese ones! When I don't know what to have for dinner, I think of having the spinach and cheese papusas and all is (was) good. They are healthy, vegetarian and delicious. Please bring them back. Still dreaming of spinach and cheese papusas (liked the green chili and cheese ones as well) with a spring mix salad with Lite-house "Ranch" dressing (my favorite Ranch).

Thank you for your question. Our distributor stopped carrying them, and they are not available through our other vendors. That is why we stopped carrying them. I am sorry to disappoint you. -Dean Kallas, Grocery Category Manager

CYCLOSPORIASIS

Hi there, We get most of our groceries from the coop and wondering if you've had recalls or heard of recalls regarding cyclosporiasis. Any products or brands to avoid at other stores? Thanks!

We've been keeping our eyes on the FDA and CDC websites, and have also been in communication with our distributors regarding the cyclosporiasis outbreak. Unfortunately, other than the general information we're seeing in media reports, we do not have additional information regarding specific products and brands. We are seeing reports that the outbreak may be linked to lettuces and pre-packaged salads. Currently, the Produce departments are offering local organic lettuce from Crossroads Community Farm in Cross Plains, and packaged salad options from Vitruvian Farms in McFarland, and these products are distributed locally and not available in areas of the country that are reporting high cases. Thanks for reaching out, and wash your hands often! -Andy Johnston, Produce Category Manager

SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY

I just want to say a huge and heartfelt THANK YOU! And express my unwavering support. I am so glad to be a co-op owner and to hear all the many ways that the Co-Op is stepping up to support the community and stand in solidarity with those of us who are horrified at the murder of Corey Ruiz. It's really important the people are able to express shock, anger, grief, and all the rest. And to gather together in demanding meaningful change. Thank you for supporting all of that!! I am so proud to be a small part of this organization! If I can do anything to maintain this support, please let me know.

Thank you for your kind words. We will share them with our staff. Your support means a lot to us right now, and we truly appreciate it. -Anya Firszt, General Manager

TLT WRAPS

Suggestion to rename the avocado bacon and tempeh wraps so that the titles are more different - noticed a few times that they get mixed up.

Thanks for the suggestion. We have the TEMPEH and BACON in all caps so this doesn't happen! We will remind our teams to be extra careful! -Nicholas Oconnor, Director of Prepared Foods

1977

In the 1977 photo of Willy Street Coop, there is a couple descending the stairs. The woman has bright colored striped knee socks and there is a shirtless man behind her. I am 70 years old and this is me and my husband on our wedding day. We lived on the third floor above the Willy Street Coop, 1014 Williamson Street. What a nice memory.

Wow, so glad you noticed that and that you shared that story with us. Thank you and have a nice week! -Brendon Smith, Marketing & Communications Director

Editor's Note: Here's the 1977 photo and a link to check out the article it was in! www.willystreet.coop/reader/october-2024/a-brief-history-of-willy-street-co-op/



CHIP

Does the coop publicly disclose what organizations the coop donates to with chip contributions? I'd like to know specifically where my money is going?

Thanks for reaching out and inquiring! Yes, we do disclose the 80+ individual organizations which make up the Community Shares CHIP Program both on our website (www.willystreet.coop/community/charitable-giving/), which links to Community Shares of Wisconsin, naming all organizations by category (www.communityshares.com/our-causes/). Additionally, at all three stores at our Customer Service desks, you can find a hard copy with Community Shares information that lists the same website for anyone to check out. If any shopper has a technology barrier, our Customer Service staff would be happy to provide anyone with this printable list to take home (www.communityshares.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/list-of-member-nonprofits-CSW-Apr-2026-final-b.pdf). -Kristina Kuhaupt, Customer Experience Manager

IDLING SIGNS

I'd love to see the "no idling" signs in the parking lot get removed. It just seems overly-dictorial ~ kind of "progressivism at it's worst". Concerned about managing the choices of others. Ironically, this note is sort of the same thing in action! Anyhow, just seems like the people inclined to follow the edict would likely do so anyway and the rest of the people would just find it off-putting, uninviting and annoying,. And when it's 0 degrees outside and you've got a kid in the car while your spouse is shopping, well you should idle your engine. Just let people make their own choices, you know. A car idling for 15 minutes won't make a critical difference, but those signs will alienate newcomers.

Thanks for taking time to share your perspective on the "no idling signs" in the parking lot! I will take a look at the signs in the lot with our facilities team and take that feedback into consideration! -Kristin Esselstrom, Willy East Store Director

Have a comment or request you would like to share?

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!



www.willystreet.coop/contact-us

OWNER APPRECIATION!

WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

15% Off
Wednesday, October 7th

Sale for Willy Street Co-op Owners only.

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By: Anya Firszt,
General Manager

Hello, dear Owners!

October gives Owners plenty of reasons to celebrate: National Co-op Month, Owner Appreciation, Fair Trade Month, and, of course, Halloween!

NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

Co-op Month has been celebrated nationwide since 1964, when U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman proclaimed October Co-op Month. Across the country, cooperatives use this time to highlight and celebrate the cooperative business model. All kinds of co-ops sell all kinds of goods and services, from groceries and cab rides to hardware, so you can probably find one to meet your needs.

OWNER APPRECIATION

This month, we're celebrating you, our Owners. For 52 years, you've helped keep the cooperative dream alive by shopping at the Co-op and being part of our community. To thank you, we're offering 15% off on Wellness Wednesday (instead of the usual 10%) on October 7, October 5–11, you can enjoy 15% off all bulk items (except water and coffee), deep discounts on Owner favorites during October 12–18, plus a fun gift card giveaway!

No Owner celebration would be complete without cake. Join us for cake, served by the Board of Directors and me, at each store on Saturday, October 17 (Willy East), and Sunday, October 18 (Willy West and North), beginning at 12:00pm until it's gone.

FAIR TRADE MONTH

Equal Exchange—celebrating 40 years of cooperation!

The Co-op began working with Equal Exchange in the early 1990s, when they started offering fairly traded specialty coffee. Since then, we've seen their product line grow, and their

support for family farmers and cooperatives has gotten even stronger. As they introduced new products, we added them to our shelves. Today, Equal Exchange offers not only organic coffee, but also organic chocolate, cocoa, teas, nuts, oils, dried fruits, avocados, and bananas!

We'd like to wish our friends and colleagues at Equal Exchange a happy anniversary! You can read more about the impact Equal Exchange has had on farmers in a farmer interview featured in this issue of the *Reader*.

Keep an eye out for Equal Exchange organic avocados on sale this month.

WHY IS FAIR TRADE SO IMPORTANT?

Fair Trade aims to fix inequities in the global supply chain. It puts more money in the hands of small farmers and producer cooperatives and gives them decision-making power over intermediaries or big corporations. When you pick Fair Trade vendors like Equal Exchange, you help make the food system better for everyone.

2026 ANNUAL BOARD ELECTIONS

This month, we're holding our Annual Board elections. Eight Owners are running for four open seats. Three seats are three-year terms, and one is a one-year term.

You'll find ballot information in this issue of the *Reader*. If we have your current email address, we'll also email you election details. You can vote in-store, online through the email link, by phone, or by mail. Please submit electronic ballots by 11:59pm on Monday, October 19, 2026.

We'll announce the election results at the Special Owner meeting on Tuesday, October 22. The last chance to submit paper ballots is at 6:00pm, and we'll share the results at 6:30pm. After the meeting, you can find updates on the Co-op's website or in the November *Reader*.

PLEASE NOTE THESE IMPORTANT DATES:

- The Annual Meeting will be held online on October 6, starting at 6:00pm. Register at willystreet.coop/annual-meeting.
- Board elections will take place from October 1 to October 21.
- The Special Ownership Meeting (to announce the Board election results) will be held online on October 22, starting at 6:30pm.

Cheers,
Anya



By: Tatiana Dennis, Board Member

Another beautiful month at Willy Street Co-op!

Last month, we wrapped up another Board candidate application cycle, and candidate applications are officially closed. As Board Development Committee Chair, it has been exciting to see the process come together and to connect with owners interested in serving our Co-op in this way. Thank you to everyone who took the time to learn more, ask questions, attend a meeting, or submit an application.

Now, we get to turn our attention to one of my favorite opportunities to gather as a cooperative. Our Annual Meeting is coming up at 6:00 p.m.

on Tuesday, October 6. I hope you'll join us virtually! You can register at willystreet.coop/annual-meeting. The Annual Meeting is a chance to come together as Owners, hear more about the state of our Co-op, connect with your Board, and participate in the cooperative process that makes Willy Street Co-op what it is. Plus, the first 50 Owners to register and attend will get a \$10 gift card, and all attendees have a chance to win a \$25, \$50, \$75, or \$100 gift card!

This is also a good time to talk about what it means to have a Board of Directors. Your Board is here to keep an eye on the big picture. We think about the Co-op's long-term vision, provide oversight, monitor organizational health and accountability, and make sure the Co-op continues moving in a direction that reflects its mission and values.

As Board members, we get the privilege of stepping back, looking ahead, asking good questions, and representing the interests of the ownership as a whole.

We love being your Board of Directors, and we're looking forward to seeing many of you on October 6. Here's to another month of cooperation, community, and continuing to build something pretty special together.

Virtual Annual Meeting

**Tuesday, October 6th
6:00pm-7:00pm**

Register at:

willystreet.coop/event/2026-annual-meeting-virtual/
Or scan the QR code



WORD on the BEET

**willy street co-op
PRODUCE NEWS**

Hear about what's new, what's done for the season, and what tastes best in our Produce department—sign up for our weekly Word on the Beet email!

Sign up at willystreet.coop/emails

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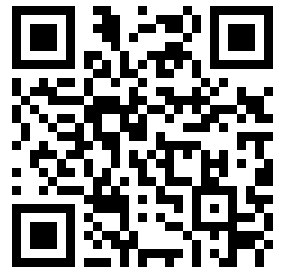
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www.willystreet.coop/events



FUSION FLAVOR TACOS WITH A BIOMEDICAL PERSPECTIVE

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Sunday, October 4, 12:00pm–2:00pm
Ages: 14+; adult supervision not required
Instructor: Anupama Bhattacharya
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 20

In this class, we will cook delicious gluten-free, plant-based tacos influenced by Southeast Asian and Latin flavors. We will make cassava root tortillas by hand and a rich protein filling. While putting together this mouth-watering dish, we will examine the biomedical compounds in the key ingredients and their interaction with the human body. Together, we will learn the flavor of healing! Demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: tree nuts, sesame, Vegan.

FOCUS ON FAIR: COCONUT MILK

Location: Willy West Community Room
Wednesday, October 14, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

October is Fair Trade Month, and Chef Mike is zooming in on some of his favorite Fair Trade items. In this class, we'll put some coconut products from Native Forest to good use. We'll begin with a coconut curry soup, rich and spicy with tofu and mushrooms, then we'll make some peanut sauce to serve with crispy chicken over cilantro lime rice, and finally we'll satisfy our sweet tooth with a rich and silky smooth coconut crème caramel. Demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: soy, peanuts, sesame, eggs.

COOKING WITH CHEF PAUL: COOKING FOR TWO—ONE POT MEALS

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Thursday, October 22, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Paul Tseng
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

There is an answer for any cooking situation and need! Cooking for yourself or loved ones? Don't have time to clean up after so many pots, pans, and dishes? Here is the class for your needs! The key is not cooking less—join Chef Paul

to find out the ways that are surprisingly easy to solve our daily cooking concerns. On the menu: Seafood en Papillote with Pesto; Lamb Shank with Gnocchi; and Rice Salad. Demonstration. Recipes contain: seafood, wheat.

CULTURAL INFLUENCES OF GUMBO: GERMAN

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Tuesday, October 20, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 13+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Steffry Langham
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

We will explore the history, culture, and foods that made Louisiana a true melting pot. We will explore by ingredients and/or culture, sampling foods that contributed to the main dish of the state, Gumbo. Join Steffry to discuss the traditions and history that make Louisiana what it is today. On the menu: Seafood Boil Potato Salad, Andouille and Smashed Potatoes, and Sausage Po' Boys. Everyone will make a seasoning packet to take home as well! Laissez les bon temps rouler. Demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: milk and wheat.

GONE FISHIN': RED LAKE WALLEYE

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Thursday, October 29, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

The Co-op's Meat and Seafood Category Manager, Nick, is excited to bring a new product to the fish case: Walleye Pike from the Red Lake Nation Fishery. Wild-caught from pristine Minnesota waters, the Red Lake Band of Ojibwe employs methods informed by the knowledge and traditions passed down through many generations to maintain a sustainable fishery. Join Chef Mike to prepare one of his favorite fish in three different ways: poached and served with greens and a citrus vinaigrette, pickled with onions and served with mustard and rye, and, of course, breaded and crispy, Wisconsin fish fry style, with potato pancakes and tartar sauce.

COOKING WITH CHEF PAUL: TAIWANESE GUA BAO AND PORK CONFIT

Location: Willy West Community Room
Thursday, October 29, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Thursday, December 17, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Paul Tseng
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

Oftentimes, we find great cuisines have

something similar in their cooking techniques or flavor profiles. Taiwan has pork belly, slowly braised in flavorful local ingredients. Simply fill up a steamed bun and turn it into an open-faced sandwich. In France, confit is considered a technique to preserve food in its own fat. Join Chef Paul to explore these two culinary powerhouses. Demonstration. Recipes contain: peanuts, wheat.

SIDES FOR HOLIDAY ENTERTAINING

Location: Willy West Community Room
Wednesday, November 11, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

Is it Thanksgiving Dinner without the classics? Why not? Let's mix it up with some non-traditional side dishes! Cheese pumpkin gratin sits in for mashed potatoes, and roasted autumn veggies with sage brown butter will fill in for those mushy baby carrots. For dessert? Pumpkin pie is really great, so buy one from the Co-op, then go home and make apple cinnamon bread pudding with brandy sauce for a change of pace. Join Chef Mike in the Co-op kitchen and try something new this year. Demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: dairy, eggs, wheat.

CULTURAL INFLUENCES OF GUMBO: AFRICAN

Location: Willy West Community Room
Thursday, November 12, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 13+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Steffry Langham
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

We will explore the history, culture, and foods that made Louisiana a true melting pot. We will explore by ingredients and/or culture, sampling foods that contributed to the main dish of the state, Gumbo. Join Steffry to discuss the traditions and history that make Louisiana what it is today. On the menu: Jambalaya, Okra and Tomato Stew, Calas, and Hush Puppies. Everyone will make a Voodoo Seasoning packet to take home as well! Laissez les bon temps rouler. Demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: milk, tree nuts, and wheat.

ONE BIG BIRD

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Monday, November 23, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10
When you only cook something once

a year, it's hard to master! Co-op Class Instructor Chef Mike. has some tips for dealing with that one big bird that some may look forward to preparing, but nevertheless find it kind of daunting! We'll demonstrate spatchcocking poultry, make some stuffing and talk about how to use it safely in your bird, try some sous vide tricks for perfect turkey, and we'd better make some gravy, too. Demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: dairy, wheat.



FOCUS ON FAIR: CHOCOLATE

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Tuesday, October 13, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

October is Fair Trade Month, and Chef Mike is zooming in on some of his favorite Fair Trade items. In this class, we will celebrate slavery-free chocolate by making rich and velvety chocolate mousse, a decadent flourless chocolate cake, and we'll finish with homemade hot fudge over vanilla ice cream, all featuring Fair Trade chocolate. Recipes contain: milk, eggs.

WHOLE GRAINS: BAKING WITH FRESH MILLED FLOUR

Location: Willy West Community Room
Saturday, October 17, 10:00am–12:00pm
Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Wednesday, October 21, 6:00pm–8:00pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Wendy Porterfield
Fee: \$40 for Owners; \$50 for non-owners
Capacity: 12

Do you want more whole grains in your kitchen, and have you thought about milling your own grains into flour? Explore the world of nutrient-rich baking with freshly milled flour! Taste test some freshly milled goodies, experience a grain mill demonstration, and learn the basics of types of wheat berries and how to use them in everyday recipes like pancakes, muffins, cookies, and bread. Demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: milk, eggs, wheat.

BAKING SOURDOUGH BREAD

Location: Willy West Community Room
Wednesday, October 28, 6:00pm–8:00pm

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Saturday, November 7, 10:00am–12:00pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Wendy Porterfield
Fee: \$45 for Owners; \$55 for non-owners
Capacity: 12

Learn the art of sourdough—and enjoy fresh bread, too! In this hands-on class, discover the health benefits of sourdough, how to care for a starter, and how to mix, knead, shape, and bake bread. You'll take home a dough ball to bake, an organic sourdough starter, and a recommended supply list. Please bring a small mixing bowl with lid or cover to mix and transport your dough. Hands-on. Recipes contain: wheat.



SPROUTS: CANDY STORE AT HOME

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Thursday, October 8, 4:00pm–5:00pm
Location: Willy West Community Room
Tuesday, October 20, 4:00pm–5:00pm
Ages: 5–12 years old; adult supervision not required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$15 for first child of Owner (\$12.50 for each additional child); \$25 for each child of non-owner
Capacity: 10
Sure, you can buy peanut butter cups and chocolate coconut bars, but we can make them at home without the artificial colors and flavors, too! In this Sprouts class we will keep busy making our own homemade peanut butter cups and chocolate and coconut candy bars, all from wholesome Co-op ingredients, of course. Hands-on. Recipes contain: peanuts, milk.

SPROUTS: COOKIE CLUB

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Thursday, November 12, 4:00pm–5:00pm
Ages: 5–12 years old; adult supervision not required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$15 for first child of Owner (\$12.50 for each additional child); \$25 for each child of non-owner
Capacity: 10
Join Mike T. and the Sprouts to make some tried and true classic cookies! Iced and decorated sugar cookies, and chewy chocolate chip cookies will fill your favorite cookie jar, but they're so good they won't be around for very long! Hands-on. Recipes contain: milk, eggs, wheat

SPROUTS: A MAGICAL TEA PARTY

Location: Willy West Community Room
Tuesday, November 17, 4:00pm–5:00pm
Ages: 5–12 years old; adult supervision not required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$15 for first child of Owner (\$12.50 for each additional child); \$25 for each child of non-owner
Capacity: 10
Join the Sprouts for an adventure through the looking glass, where it's tea time any time! We'll make a high time of high tea and make a variety of finger sandwiches, scones, madeleines, and brew up a cuppa (decaf, of course!). Recipes contain: milk, wheat, eggs. Hands-on.



MYCOTOXINS ON THE MENU

Location: Zoom
Wednesday, October 7, 12:00pm–1:00pm
Instructor: Katy Wallace, ND
Fee: Free; registration required
Capacity: 50
For most people, mold is just a nuisance. However, scientists estimate that for about a quarter of the population, molds and their chemical mycotoxins have the potential to trigger a variety of symptoms in various body systems and cause inflammation. Join Katy Wallace, ND of Human Nature, LLC, to learn ways to identify if you are sensitive and how to keep mycotoxins off the menu. Katy has 20 years of clinical practice helping people with mold illness and sensitivity.



FROM THE GARDEN: HERBS FOR TOPICAL APPLICATIONS

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson Street
Saturday, October 3, 12:00pm–2:00pm
Ages: 8+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Linda Conroy
Fee: \$60 for Owners; \$70 for non-owners
Capacity: 20
Join herbalist Linda Conroy for this fun and inspiring class to learn about topical applications of herbs. We will cover skin healing, pain relief, moisturizing, and much more! In the hands-on portion, we will tmake infused oils, lotions, and salves that everyone will take home. Lecture and hands-on.

FROM THE GARDEN: HERBAL AND GOAT MILK SOAPMAKING

Location: Willy West Community Room
Saturday, October 10, 2:00pm–4:30pm
Ages: 16+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Linda Conroy
Fee: \$65 for Owners; \$75 for non-owners
Capacity: 20
Join us for a hands-on learning experience where we'll create moisturizing, farm-fresh bars of goat milk herbal soap. We will explore the healing and moisturizing properties of herbs and learn how to incorporate them into soap. Participants will leave with bars of soap we make in class and the skills to craft their own natural soaps at home. Recipes will be provided. Hands-on.

HERBAL MEDICINE-MAKING FOR WINTER HEALTH

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson Street
Tuesday, October 27, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Linda Conroy
Fee: \$60 for Owners; \$70 for non-owners

Capacity: 20
Join herbalist Linda Conroy for this fun hands-on herbal medicine-making class. During this class, we will make several remedies that you can add to your home apothecary. We will make and/or sample oxymels, throat sprays, tinctures, lozenges, infusions, tea, and salves. Everyone will leave with recipes, remedies that we make in class, and instructions.



MAKING ELDERBERRY SYRUP & HONEY FERMENTED GARLIC

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Tuesday, November 10, 6:00pm–7:30pm
Location: Willy West Community Room
Monday, November 16, 6:00pm–7:30pm
Ages: 10+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Wendy Porterfield
Fee: \$40 for Owners; \$50 for non-owners
Capacity: 12
Prepare for winter by making two traditional seasonal remedies: elderberry syrup and honey fermented garlic. Learn how to prepare, store, and use these delicious additions to your kitchen, and explore how they can help you weather cold and flu season well. Each participant will take home jars of both recipes, along with the skills to make them yourself. Demonstration and hands-on.

HOMEMADE GIFTS FOR HOLIDAY GIVING

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson Street
Tuesday, December 1, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10
Make a resolution this season to give more gifts that come not just from the heart but from the hearth as well. Join Chef Mike in the Co-op kitchen to prepare gifts that are just the thing for that hard-to-buy-for person on

your list. Candied nuts, cocktail bit-
ters, homemade mustards, and salted
caramels are delicious, easy to make in
large quantities, and are sure to please.
Demonstration with limited hands-on
opportunities. Recipes contain: tree
nuts, peanuts, dairy.



45-MINUTE INDIVIDUAL NUTRITION CONSULTATIONS

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Wednesday, October 14, 1:30pm–4:45pm
Friday, November 20, 1:30pm–4:45pm
Wednesday, December 2, 1:30pm–4:45pm
Location: Willy West Community Room
Friday, October 23, 1:30pm–4:45pm
Friday, November 13, 1:30pm–4:45pm
Friday, December 11, 1:30pm–4:45pm
Fee: \$58 for Owners; \$93 for non-owners
An individual nutrition consultation is your opportunity to learn how the correct food choices for your body can enhance your well-being. A one-on-one session with Katy Wallace of Human Nature includes a 45-minute consulta-
tion regarding your health goals, as well as lifestyle and food choice suggestions geared toward addressing health goals and developing sustainable change. Appointments are confirmed upon payment. Payment is due at the time of scheduling; otherwise, the appointment will be released to other interested parties. Payment is non-refundable and non-transferable unless notice of cancellation or rescheduling is provided seven (7) or more days prior. To register for the next available opening, email info@humannaturellc.com or call 608-301-9961.

Classes provided by Willy Street Co-op are not designed to and do not provide medical advice, professional diagnosis, opinion, treatment, or services. Classes are for informational and educational purposes only and are not meant to replace medical consultation with your physician.



An anonymous donor will cover the cost of a limited number of 45-MINUTE INDIVIDUAL NUTRITION CONSULTATIONS for those with a financial need who are 18 years and under. Please reach out to Katy for more details at info@humannaturellc.com or call 608-301-9961.



VOTE

For the Willy Street Co-op

BOARD CANDIDATES

Voting open October 1–21

Paper ballots are due by Wednesday, October 21st at 6:00pm. Online and phone voting ends Monday, October 19th at 11:59pm. The results of the election will be announced at a Special Membership Meeting that will take place at the Central Business Office (1457 E. Washington Ave., Madison) at 6:30pm on October 21st. Drop your ballot off at the kiosk near the Customer Service desk at any of our stores, vote online via the unique ballot link emailed to you (if we have your current email address), vote by phone with the unique personal identification number (PIN) mailed or emailed to you, or mail your absentee ballot to: 2026 Owner Vote, Willy Street Co-op, 1457 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI 53703. Candidate statements appear on pages 8–10 of this issue. Please vote for up to FOUR candidates. Only Owners' votes are valid. One vote per Owner account. If both Owners on a Household Account vote, only the Primary Owner's vote will be counted. Candidates are listed in alphabetical order. (If you would like your ballot to remain anonymous, use the following procedure: 1. Place completed ballot in envelope and seal. 2. Write your name and Owner number and sign across the seal. 3. Mail or deposit in the ballot box.)

WHY FOUR CANDIDATES?

One of the current Board members not up for reelection this year recently announced that they are resigning from the Board. (In a typical year there are three seats open.) The Board member who resigned had two years left in their term, so three elected Board members will have a three-year term, and one will have a two-year term. The top vote-getter will be able to decide if they want the two-year term or the full term; if they choose the full term, the decision goes to the next top vote-getter.

WHAT DOES THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS DO?

The Board sets governance policies for the General Manager (GM), who manages Co-op staff and day-to-day operations in accordance with those policies. The Board also helps guide the Co-op's long-term direction, monitors organizational performance, and ensures the Co-op remains accountable to its mission, values, and Owners.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Please vote for up to **FOUR** candidates. Ballots with more than four votes will not be counted.

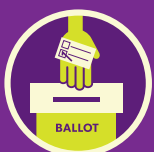
- ☐ Ashwini Rao
- ☐ Benjamin Becker
- ☐ Bethany Matson
- ☐ Glen Reichelderfer
- ☐ Mary Bechtol
- ☐ Meagan Vargas
- ☐ Mike Engel
- ☐ Om Devi Malla

Owner Name: _____

Owner Signature: _____

Owner Number: _____

Date: _____



BOARD CANDIDATES



Ashwini Rao

SUMMARY STATEMENT

My professional experience in economic and community development gives me a cross-sector perspective on long-term needs. As a Board member, I want to help the Co-op remain financially strong, responsive to Owners, and connected to the community.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR THE WILLY STREET CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

I am running for another term because I care deeply about the Co-op and want to contribute to its future. Since joining the Board in 2020, I have developed an understanding of the opportunities and challenges of governing a cooperative and balancing the needs of Owners, employees, and the organization.

Through Board committees and work focused on community investment and Owner engagement, I have gained a broader appreciation for the Co-op's role in the community. I want to help strengthen that role while ensuring the Co-op's long-term financial health and sustainability. I also want to preserve the values that make it unique—as an employer, local purchaser, community investor, and place where people come together around shared values.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ACTIVE IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

I've lived in Madison since 2001 and value being part of the community here. Through my involvement with the Willy Street Co-op, including serving on the Board and participating in several committees and community-focused activities, I have had the opportunity to engage with Owners and community organizations and gain a deeper understanding of the people and institutions that make Madison strong. I have also volunteered at local festivals and with other community organizations. I value the connections I've made in Madison and the opportunity to contribute to the community in meaningful ways.

HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO FURTHER THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE CO-OP?

My experience in economic and community development gives me a perspective that can be useful as the Co-op navigates real tensions: keeping the business financially strong and products accessible while supporting local producers, maintaining environmental commitments, and investing in the community.

I have spent my career working across sectors and bringing people with different priorities together to find practical solutions. As a Board member, I would bring that perspective to questions of affordability, sustainability, local sourcing, and the Co-op's role in the community. I don't think these goals are mutually exclusive, but they require thoughtful choices and a willingness to look at the bigger picture.



Benjamin Becker

SUMMARY STATEMENT

I am a long-time cooperator and former Willy Street employee with over 15 years of experience in strengthening the local and regional food system. I'm excited to bring my background and expertise to the service of our cooperative and its members.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR THE WILLY STREET CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

Having spent a decade as a Willy Street Co-op employee working closely with the Board of Directors, the General Manager, and senior staff as Executive Assistant and Project Manager, I have a depth of experience

to draw from in serving our co-op. I believe it is essential to serving our co-op and our mission that our directors can navigate the complexities of governance and the fiduciary responsibilities of this position. I will prioritize continued dedication to equity and diversity; fiscal, social, and environmental sustainability; making sure the co-op is a great place to work while keeping staff safe; ensuring that the co-op is a place where all owners feel they can shop; and, most importantly, engaging with our members and community.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ACTIVE IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

I've continued to support our cooperative by volunteering on Willy Street's Board Development Committee because having a great co-op requires great board members with access to knowledge, training, and resources. I am dedicated to the well-being of our community and have enjoyed volunteering with CSA Fairshare, on the Friends of Lake Wingra Board, and as a team leader with the UW-Arboretum. In my professional career, I have continued to promote sustainability and resilience as a professional in conservation, agriculture, and food

systems. Amongst other successes, I led the establishment of WI's State Food Security Grant in 2025, creating relief for those impacted by the loss of SNAP while strengthening our state's food supply chain.

HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO FURTHER THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE CO-OP?

As a former staff member who worked closely with our Board, I bring a unique perspective and experience that I can leverage to serve our cooperative's mission. I am well-versed in our governance model and how it works. My professional and co-op background will

allow me to hit the ground running in driving forward the vision and taking on the fiduciary responsibilities that come with stewarding our co-op. As a Green MBA, I have the financial and business acumen to support operations and keep our co-op thriving and accessible. As the co-op's project manager, I led the charge on sustainability initiatives, promoted DEI practices, and built relationships with staff and customers. I will continue to champion these priorities as a board member.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ACTIVE IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Director of Port Saint Vincent de Paul 16+ years. (1985-2001)
23+ years on the Luke House Board. (1984- 2007)
3+ years on the Wil-Mar Board.
Chaired the hiring committee for Gary Kallas- years ago.
For 26+ years- a member of La Samaritaine (a housing Coop) using consensus process for decisions.
3+ years on the WS Coop CRF committee.
Associate Minister at Christ Presbyterian Church 2002- 2017. (Lots of community outreach and committee work there.)

AND VISION OF THE CO-OP?

Because I was part of the weekly meeting of La Samaritaine Coop, I am skilled at group process.

I know how to listen carefully, how to clarify, how to remind people to stay on track. Sometimes personal feelings can erupt which can derail a meeting due to a values conflict. I have experience in respectfully working through that part of a group process.

I am open to hearing new perspectives and learning more about an industry that is at the forefront of societal change.

I know how to function on a Board level. I have enjoyed being a member of the WS Coop CRF committee and desire to take my participation in WS Coop to the next level.



Bethany Matson

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Community, connection, and belonging matter deeply to me. I believe in investing in our neighbors, supporting local communities, and creating spaces where everyone has a voice and an opportunity to thrive.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR THE WILLY STREET CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

As a human rights advocate, I believe access to safe, nutritious food is an inalienable human right, and I am deeply invested in ensuring that everyone has meaningful access to it. I am interested in helping the Co-op remain financially and operationally strong while continuing to ask important questions about accessibility, affordability, employee and Owner experience, community partnership, and support for local producers. I would be excited to contribute my experience in governance, strategic planning, organizational change, and community engagement while also

listening to and learning from fellow Board members, employees, Owners, and community partners.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ACTIVE IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Community and public service have been consistent threads throughout my professional and volunteer life. My entire professional career has been in public service and non-profits, working with children and families, people experiencing behavioral health needs, and community members navigating public systems.

Beyond my professional roles, I have volunteered at numerous organizations and events, including YWCA, Rape Crisis Center, and as a community co-chair for UW-Madison's annual Racial Justice conference. I see service not simply as representing a community, but as listening to it, being accountable to it, and helping create opportunities for people to shape decisions that affect them.

HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO FURTHER THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE CO-OP?

I would bring a collaborative and curious approach to Board service. I am comfortable asking difficult questions, working through conflict, considering data alongside lived experience, and balancing immediate needs with long-term organizational health. I believe I can bring a perspective that can help the Board support a Co-op that remains sustainable, responsive, supportive, and deeply connected to the community.

HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO FURTHER THE MISSION

VOTE

For the Willy Street Co-op

BOARD CANDIDATES

Voting open October 1st-21st

This year you can vote by mail, in the store, by email, or by phone.



Mary Bechtol

SUMMARY STATEMENT

I'm a stay-at-home parent and will represent the perspective of families on a budget. Purchasing natural foods and attending community programming at the Co-op shouldn't feel like a splurge, it should feel like you're investing in a healthier future.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR THE WILLY STREET CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS?
Being a member of the Co-op has turned errands into experiences for me

and my family. When our kids were babies, sometimes getting to the store and back was the big event of the day. From the free piece of fresh fruit to the coloring sheets and the kid-sized carts, these small details reinforce a sense of welcome belonging to families. I've been a stay-at-home parent for the past five years and care deeply about giving back to the community of which we are a part. I am running for Board of Directors because I care about ensuring the long-term health of the Co-op. Owners know that it is more than a grocery store: it is a cornerstone of Madison that represents the vision for a cooperative and just society.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ACTIVE IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

I constantly seek ways to connect with people across my community. When I don't know something, I invest time and energy into learning about it and prioritize sharing those findings with others. For example, the desire to know more about policing in Middleton led



Glen Reichelderfer

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Been a WS Coop member since 1983. 25+ years on the Luke House Board. 3+ years on the Wil-Mar Board. For 26+ years- a member of La Samaritaine (a housing Coop) using consensus decision making. Adept at process. 3+ years on the WS Coop CRF committee.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR THE WILLY STREET CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

We have lived on Williamson Street for the past 43+ years. My family has personally seen WS Coop grow in front of our eyes. From a single store front to the Eagle's Club (FYI-I bowled there back in the day) renovation to 3 stores now, we have seen it become not just another "natural" food store but become a force for bringing healthy food to more and more people. Willy Street East is one of my happy places. It is a joy to see how WS Coop values what I value- respect, inclusivity and diversity. I would be honored to help guide WS Coop into a future that embraces more fully those values (respect, inclusivity and diversity) while bringing healthy food to other areas in the greater Madison area.

me to complete the Citizens’ Academy through our local Police Department. This same curiosity coupled with the willingness to learn led me to apply for city committees. I am in my second year serving on Middleton’s Public Works and Conservancy Lands Committees. I am energized by advocating on behalf of people and causes. I was raised in a military family where public service was our ethos; I proudly serve as Secretary to our local Auxiliary to William “Sonny” Simon VFW Post 8216.

HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO FURTHER THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE CO-OP?
My experiences as an active pedestrian and parent of young kids led me to rec-

ognize a very real problem for patrons of Willy West (and other businesses in Middleton’s Parkwood Plaza) – the lack of a safe pedestrian access point from Park Street to the Co-op’s shared business frontage. Over the past year, I was in contact with the Co-op GM about creating a curb cut so that vulnerable users have a safe way to get from the sidewalk to the business frontage. I am proud to say that due to shared efforts, action is currently being taken on this small yet crucial infrastructure project. As a driven neighbor with the willingness to see projects through, I will employ data gathering and communication skills to further the Co-op’s mission and vision.

gave me a deep personal stake in their success, and I want to return to the board to see these locations thrive. That foundational work taught me that collective vision requires active listening to members and community. I am personally motivated to bring this consensus driven leadership to our board as we collaboratively resolve structural budget deficits and optimize operations across our cooperative over the next three fiscal years, ensuring we remain financially stable, equitable, and whole.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ACTIVE IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?
My community work is about listening to neighbors and supporting our local food system. Serving as a board member and President of my neighborhood association, I focused on bringing people together to solve local safety issues, and build a stronger, more connected community. For example, I collaborated with a local artist to create four unique park benches crafted completely from salvaged materials, including wood from trees in a neighboring park.
Beyond neighborhood work, I have spent over twenty years building

relationships with Wisconsin farmers to help them protect their soil, water, and land, while volunteering locally to restore native pollinator and other wildlife habitat.

HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO FURTHER THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE CO-OP?
My fiscal management of federal agreements and grant budgets will support the board's work in monitoring operating budgets and reversing deficits. Seven years of board service means an immediate understanding of how to respect the boundaries between oversight and operations, ensuring our work remains focused on our mission and vision. My background as a neighborhood association president gives me the knowledge of gathering community input, balancing neighborhood interests, and channeling local voices into decisions.
Finally, a career built on finding common ground will help the board navigate complex owner priorities such as retail affordability with fair compensation for local suppliers.



Meagan Vargas

SUMMARY STATEMENT
I bring previous co-op board experience and 20+ years in leadership, public service, policy, and operations. I hope to put that experience to work for Owners while helping Willy Street Co-op strengthen our community and local economy.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR THE WILLY STREET CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS?
I have seen firsthand how a strong cooperative can strengthen both its Owners and the community it serves. As a former Bloomingfoods Co-op Board member, including service on its Finance and Annual Meeting Committees, I gained valuable experience in cooperative governance and developed an even greater appreciation for the co-operative model. I am running because I want to bring that experience, together with more than 20 years in leadership, public service, policy, and operations, to Willy Street Co-op. I would be honored to help protect what makes the Co-op special while thoughtfully planning for its future and ensuring it remains a strong, sustainable community institution.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ACTIVE IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?
Service has been a consistent thread throughout my life. In addition to serving on the Bloomingfoods Co-op Board and its Finance and Annual Meeting Committees, I have volunteered with the USO for more than a decade and have been involved with the VFW Auxiliary, American Legion Auxiliary, Elks, and sorority alumnae organizations. Professionally, my work in university communities has placed me in roles requiring collaboration with students, employees, local officials, public safety agencies, contractors, and vendors. I also make a point of visiting cooperatives when I travel, learning how other communities support local businesses and put cooperative values into practice.

HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO FURTHER THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE CO-OP?
I would bring a combination of cooperative governance and more than 20 years of leadership, policy, operations, and project management experience. My career has included serving the White House and federal and state government, managing large university residential operations, drafting policy, navigating regulatory requirements, overseeing budgets and complex projects, and bringing diverse stakeholders together to solve problems. Those experiences taught me to listen, ask difficult questions, evaluate information carefully, and remain accountable for decisions. Combined with my previous co-op board experience, I can contribute immediately as Willy Street advances a sustainable, accessible and equitable food system.



Om Devi Malla

SUMMARY STATEMENT
27 years of working experience in the cooperative sector from primary level to national level in Nepal . Worked as chairperson in the National cooperative Federation of Nepal (NCF) and also as a ICA Board of Director at global level.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR THE WILLY STREET CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS?
I am interested in running for the Willy Street Co-op Board of directors because I care deeply about the success and long term sustainability of our co-op. I believe that serving on the board would give me an opportunity to represent the interests of members, support in decision making and help ensure that the co-op continues to operate in a transparent, financially responsible and member focused manner. I am committed to work collaboratively with other Board members and management to strengthen the co-op and create value for all members. As a Board member, I value the services and benefits the co-op provides and would like to contribute to its growth and effective governance.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ACTIVE IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?
I have moved to the USA from Nepal in September 2025 and living in Madison since July 20, 2026 with my family. Yes, i had been active in local community through volunteering. participating in community events and supporting local initiatives whenever possible in Nepal. I believe that being involved in the community helps me better understand needs and concerns of our local community. Through my 27 years of experiences, I have developed a greater appreciation for collaboration, communication and community service. I would bring these values to the co-op Board of Directors and work to ensure to use my passion for the benefit of my local community in Madison as well.

HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO FURTHER THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE CO-OP?
I worked in cooperative sector for 27 years starting from primary cooperatives to district level union and national apex organization of Nepal (NCF). I have experience of working as chairperson of NCF where i had successfully implemented laws and bylaws of cooperative to achieve mission, vision and objective of cooperative movement of Nepal. Addition to this I had also worked in principal and identity committee of ICA as a Board of Directors successfully. I make you sure these skill and experience which i had acquired, would be beneficial for achievement of mission and the vision of the Willy co-op.

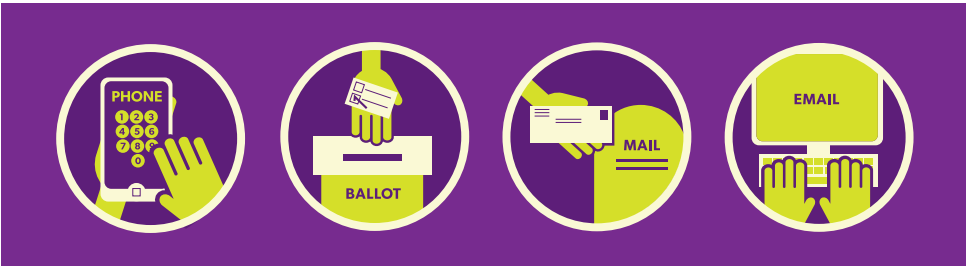


Mike Engel

SUMMARY STATEMENT
Former Co-op Board Member & Vice

President who collaborated on our West, North, and off-site kitchen expansions, I will reinvest my cooperative knowledge. I bring strong skills in Policy Governance, agriculture, and budgets.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR THE WILLY STREET CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS?
I am running to ensure our Co-op remains a resilient, community owned alternative during an important financial cycle. Serving on the Opportunities Committee that developed our West, North, and production kitchen sites



Your Ownership Has Perks Beyond the Stores!



It's Owner Appreciation Month, and we're celebrating all the ways your Willy Street Co-op Ownership connects you to our community.

Community Perks are exclusive discounts, free samples, and extra services offered to Co-op Owners by nearly 50 local businesses across greater Madison. We launched Community Perks during our 50th anniversary to celebrate our roots—and our commitment to the local businesses and neighbors who make our community special. Below are just a few of the many Community Perks available!

1. **JNJ Gifts and More:** 10% off Willy Street Co-op Owners with code WSC10.

2. **Northside Lounge:** \$1 off Northside Lounge craft cocktail menu items.

3. **Clasen's European Bakery:** Spend \$20 and get a free loaf of bread.

4. **Boomerangs Resale Store:** 10% off your purchase.

5. **Alice Good Specialty Coffee:** Receive a 10% discount for in-store purchases.
6. **The Deliciouser:** Complementary “chef’s daily bite” with any dine-in purchase.

7. **Grape Water Wine Bar:** 10% off tab when checking out.

8. **Madison BCycle:** 20% off Monthly Pass, use code WSC2026. Code valid through 12/15/2026.

9. **Massage East:** Get \$10 off any 60 minute or longer massage for a new client.

10. **Sultan Restaurant:** One free naan per person when you dine with them.

Your Ownership goes beyond our stores. Discover local businesses, save a little, and support the community you call home.

See all Community Perks at willystreet.coop/community-perks.



COMING SOON!
Reserve Your
Thanksgiving
Turkey Online!
11/1/26-11/19/26

Learn more at willystreet.coop/turkey





OWNER AD

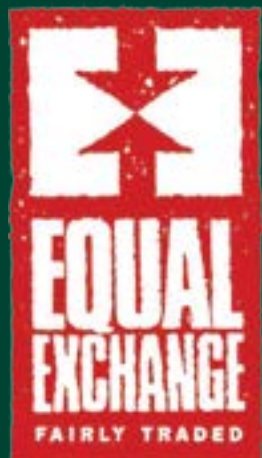
WE'RE
TURNING
52
BECAUSE
OF YOU!

UP TO
40%
OFF!

**Owner
Deals
Sales
10/12-10/18**

**Owner
deals**

For Owners only!



Equal Exchange
**Organic
Avocados**  
Owners Save 50¢–\$1.87
2 for \$3
or \$1.69/ea



Equal Exchange
**Organic
Chocolate Bars**  
2.8–3.5 oz
\$2.99
Owners Save \$2.30



Equal Exchange
**Organic
Origins Coffee**  
12 oz
\$12.99
Owners Save \$5.00



Equal Exchange
**Organic
Dried Mango**  
Bulk
\$8.99/lb
Owners Save \$4.00/lb

Plus these Co-op Favorites!



Bell & Evans
**Natural Boneless
Skinless Chicken
Breast Tray Pack**
\$5.99/lb
Owners Save \$3.00/lb



Sartori
**BellaVitano
Wedges** 
\$3.99
5.3 oz
Owners Save \$2.00



Mont Gravet
Wine
\$7.99
25.36 fl oz
Owners Save \$3.00



**Enter to win a Co-op gift
card—we're giving away
10 at \$52 and 3 at \$520!**

Sales on this page are valid 10/12–10/18, 2026 for Willy Street Co-op Owners only; non-owners pay shelf price. All sales and coupons subject to availability. Sales quantities limited.

APPRECIATION!

Join Us for Cake!

Board members will be giving away free slices of cake in honor of our birthday!
Vegan option available. Cake served starting at 12:00pm–2pm or until we run out.



Willy East Saturday, 10/17
Willy West Sunday, 10/18
Willy North Sunday, 10/18



Show your Co-op love with a Willy Street Co-op shirt, tote bag, or hat—all of them 30% off Oct. 12-18, while supplies last!



Find Eggie!

Find Eggie hiding somewhere in this issue of the *Reader*!

Spot Eggie? (Besides the one above, of course!) Email us at eggie@willystreet.coop by 10/18 for a chance to win one of three prize packs, each containing \$240 worth of Deli or Bakery coupons! In your email, tell us which page you found Eggie, what Eggie is doing, and which store you'd like to pick up your prize if you win.

Each prize includes 12 \$20 coupons—one for each month of the year—good toward Deli or Bakery foods. Coupons are valid for the specified month only.

Must be 18 or older to enter. No purchase necessary. Three winners will be selected at random on October 19, with one winner per store. All entrants will be notified whether or not they win.



Complete the short entry form at willystreet.coop/Owner-Appreciation for your chance. Enter in-store, too!
Starting Oct. 5. No purchase necessary.





Buy One, Get One
FREE

Caulipower
Pizzas or Pizza Crusts
11-11.85 oz.



Buy One, Get One
FREE

Beyond
Breakfast Sausages
9.7 oz.



Buy One, Get One
FREE

HOP WTR
Sparkling Waters
6 pk-12 fl. oz.



Buy One, Get One
FREE

Hippeas
Chickpea Snacks
4-5 oz.



Buy One, Get One
FREE

Siete
Refried Beans
15.5-16 oz.



Buy One, Get One
FREE

Artisana
Organic Raw Tahini
14 oz.



Buy One, Get One
FREE

Frontera
Cooking Sauces
8 oz.



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FREE

Lotus Foods
Rice Ramen
2.8 oz.



Buy One, Get One
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Lily's
Chocolate Bars
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Hydration Multiplier
Drink Mixes
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Orgain
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Protein Powders
32.4 oz.



Buy One, Get One
FREE

Chickapea
Organic Chickpea Pastas
8 oz.



Buy One, Get One
FREE

Desert Essence
Jojoba Oil
4 fl. oz.



Buy One, Get One
FREE

Beekeeper's Naturals
Lozenges
Select Varieties
14 ct.



i = Inclusive Trade **L** = Local **USDA ORGANIC** = Organic

Sales on this page valid 10/21–11/3, 2026. All sales and coupons subject to availability. Sales quantities limited.



IMMUNITY BOOSTERS

By: Tim Ruddy, Willy East
Wellness Manager

**These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. We suggest checking with a healthcare practitioner before making changes to your diet or taking supplements.*



Gaia Herbs Black Elderberry Syrup Extra Strength

This whole-fruit extract crafted by Certified B Corp Gaia Herbs delivers concentrated anthocyanins. These plant pigments provide antioxidant protection, support cellular immune signaling, and help to maintain the integrity of mucosal tissue barriers in the upper respiratory tract.

Learn more at: www.gaiaherbs.com



Willy Street Co-op Elderberry & Zinc Lozenges

These lozenges deliver zinc gluconate directly to throat tissues, acting locally to stabilize mucosal membranes and systemically as an essential trace mineral for healthy T-cell function. The zinc is paired with a food-based blend of organic elderberry, fermented

turmeric, bee pollen, grape seed extract, and ginger for complementary immune support.



Herbal Revolution Fire Cider

Crafted by a woman-owned, certified organic farm in Maine, this traditional herbal tonic infuses raw apple cider vinegar and honey with pungent roots, citrus, and aromatic herbs: garlic, onion, horseradish, ginger, turmeric, thyme, rosemary, and hyssop. These botanical compounds work synergistically to support upper respiratory vitality and

stimulate circulation, while bitter and warming roots promote healthy digestion and intestinal immune defense.

Host Defense MyCommunity Extract

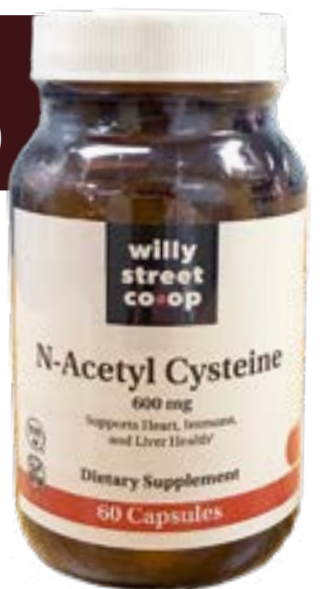
Produced by Certified B Corp Fungi Perfecti, this blend delivers fungal beta-glucans from 17 organic mushroom species. Compounds from turkey tail, maitake, and reishi engage cellular receptors on immune cells, supporting white blood cell activity, cell-mediated immunity, and overall cellular defense.

Learn more at: www.hostdefense.com



Willy Street Co-op N-Acetylcysteine (NAC)

NAC serves as a building block for glutathione, the body's primary internal antioxidant. By maintaining glutathione levels, NAC supports healthy liver function and helps neutralize oxidative stress while maintaining healthy respiratory mucus consistency and normal lung tissue function.



Four Elements Organic Immune Blend Tincture

Grown and handcrafted in the Baraboo Bluffs by woman-owned Four Elements Herbals, this liquid extract pairs astragalus root, whole echinacea, and elderberry. These botanicals work together to support healthy white blood cell response and promote resilient immune function.



Source Naturals Wellness Formula

This comprehensive complex pairs vitamins A, C, D3, and zinc with classic botanicals like echinacea, elderberry, isatis, and eleuthero. Together, these nutrients provide robust antioxidant defense, support mucosal barrier integrity, and promote overall immune health.

Learn more at: www.sourcenaturals.com





9 CO-OP MADE PRODUCTS

By: Melissa Reiss, Purchasing Assistant

Emerging from the legacy of mutual aid and the shifts of the Industrial Revolution, cooperatives remain a resilient, community-centered model that fosters economic independence and addresses systemic inequalities through shared ownership.

More than 30,000 cooperative businesses operate in the U.S. today. Food co-ops continue to offer local control over food access, keeping local money in the community, and empowering workers with decent wages.

Discover these cooperatively made products carried at the Willy Street Co-op, ranging from regional staples to globally renowned favorites!

Just Coffee Organic Fair Trade Coffee

Madison's own Just Coffee Cooperative operates as a worker-owned cooperative roaster. They have remained committed to ethical trade, prioritizing environmental sustainability, worker dignity, and complete transparency since the co-op's inception in 2001. This ensures that earnings are shared equitably across the supply chain, supporting sustainable, community-focused coffee production. Grab a bag of their best selling Revolution Roast, or our very own Willy Street Co-op blend!

Learn more at www.justcoffee.coop.

Organic Valley Organic Grassmilk

In the 1980s, before organic certification as we know it existed, a group of Wisconsin farmers started a movement by committing to growing and raising real, wholesome food as nature intended.

Now, Organic Valley is a cooperative of about 1,500 small family farms, producing certified organic dairy, eggs, and more nationwide. By combining nature's resources, generations of farming wisdom, and strict USDA Organic standards (which they helped shape), their products are still made without antibiotics, synthetic hormones, toxic pesticides, or GMOs. Grassmilk® comes from cows fed a natural diet of organic grass and dried forage.

Learn more at www.organicvalley.coop.

Aura Cacia Essential Oils and Body Care

Under Frontier Co-op's umbrella, Aura Cacia provides a comprehensive range of aromatherapy essentials, pure essential oils, and natural skin care solutions. Their 100% pure lavender essential oil, *Lavandula angustifolia*, remains a favorite, celebrated for its calming scent. The lavender harvest occurs each year near the summer solstice, during a brief two-week flowering window. To ensure the highest quality, these blossoms are promptly gathered and steam-distilled at their peak.

Learn more at www.auracacia.com.

Frontier Co-op Organic Herbs, Spices & Extracts

Operating as a member-owned wholesale organization from its base in Norway, Iowa, Frontier Co-op provides a vast selection of organic herbs, spices, and natural wellness essentials. Since its humble beginnings in 1976—when two founders hand-bagged bulk herbs in an Eastern Iowa river cabin—the cooperative has grown into a global leader. Since establishing its permanent headquarters in 1982, the co-op remains dedicated to its mission, now owned by a network of over 50,000 retail partners and cooperatives and distributes its products worldwide.

Learn more at www.frontiercoop.com.

Kerrygold Butter & Dubliner Cheese

Headquartered in Dublin, Ornuá—derived from the Irish "Ór Nua," meaning "new gold"—is Ireland's leading dairy exporter. Owned collectively by the country's dairy farmers and processors, this international cooperative distributes products to more than 110 countries. At the heart of the co-op's success is Kerrygold Butter, renowned for its rich golden color and delicious taste derived from the milk of grass-fed cows. In addition to its iconic butter, Ornuá produces exceptional specialty cheeses, including Dubliner.

Learn more at www.ornua.com.



La Rioja Organic Fair Trade Wine

Nestled within the scenic Famatina Valley of Argentina's La Rioja province, La Rioja operates as a robust collective of 500 family growers. As the nation's largest wine cooperative, they produce a variety of acclaimed Fair Trade and organic wines enjoyed by enthusiasts across the globe.

Their Cabernet Sauvignon offers a concentration of succulent fruit notes complemented by subtle spicy undertones and smooth, firm tannins. It serves as a perfect accompaniment to pasta dishes, grilled steak, pork chops, meat stews, or a cheese board.

Bursting with aromatic tropical fruit flavors, their delicate yet vibrant Chardonnay is a versatile aperitif for any season or occasion. It pairs wonderfully with roast chicken, creamy pasta dishes, and Asian cuisine.

Learn more at www.lariojanawines.com.

Maple Valley Cooperative Maple Syrup

The Maple Valley Cooperative includes more than 30 multi-generational family farms across Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Vermont. Farmer members practice sustainable stewardship by preserving woodland habitats, preventing soil erosion, and minimally tapping trees so they remain healthy for up to 200 years. The sustainability doesn't end there. Maple Valley's Cashton, Wisconsin facility offsets energy use through a community wind project, packages products in glass and BPA-free recyclable plastic, and sources locally.

Maple syrup is available in a variety of sizes—including bulk! Have you tried maple candy? Crafted exclusively from pure, certified organic maple syrup, this fun product offers a unique and sweet natural indulgence.

Learn more at www.maplevalleysyrup.coop.

Equal Exchange Organic Fair Trade Tea

By sourcing directly from small-scale agricultural organizations, Equal Exchange honors the belief that these producers represent the essential spirit of Fair Trade. (Learn more about Fair Trade from one of the farmers in this month's feature article.) Products are harvested from diverse regions across the globe. With nineteen current varieties, you'll be sure to find your perfect cup of tea!

Indulge in the bold, malty taste of their English Breakfast tea, made from a carefully selected blend of black tea leaves harvested in Sri Lanka and India. Enjoy it the traditional English way by adding a dash of milk and your favorite sweetener. Or refresh your senses with Peppermint tea—a cool, vibrant blend featuring a revitalizing aroma and crisp minty flavor.

Learn more at www.equalexchange.coop.

Alvarado Street Bakery Sprouted Wheat Bagels

Tracing its roots back to the San Francisco Bay Area, this cooperative emerged from the activist-driven "Food for People, Not for Profit" movement. Originally established as the Red Clover Worker's Brigade, a dedicated collective sought to provide nutritious, whole-grain staples to their immediate neighbors. Now, nearly five decades later, and operating as a worker-owned organization with more than fifty members, the cooperative remains steadfast in its commitment to the original organic and sprouted-grain techniques that defined its inception. Grab a pack of their sprouted wheat bagels and start your day off with a hearty dose of whole, organic, sprouted grains.

Learn more at www.alvaradostreetbakery.com.



By: Maya Ticku, Merchandising Assistant

ENDANGERED SPECIES CHOCOLATE EXTREME DARK 88%

Calling all chocolate lovers and conservationists! This bar isn't just 88% cacao—it's a small, but meaningful act towards conservation. Endangered Species Chocolate is committed to removing 1 million pounds of plastic from the world's marine environments, with each bar purchased helping remove the equivalent of two plastic bottles from our oceans. Each bar brings awareness to a different marine creature—Extreme Dark focuses on the orca, which faces the dangers of plastic pollution in their waters. The Extreme Dark 88% bar is made with high-quality ingredients, including Fair Trade cacao. Chocolate this dark is bold, intense, and deeply rich—perfect for baking, or eating it as is for those who crave richness.

Learn more at chocolatebar.com.



POST MERIDIEM TINY COCKTAILS

Drinking a cocktail is easy—but making one at home that's as good as the ones from a bar is a difficult feat. Post Meridiem takes care of the hard part, with ready-to-drink cocktails in perfectly portioned 100mL cans. Crafted in small batches with hand-selected ingredients, each variety is made with intention. Choose from four cocktail staples: the Classic Margarita (which sticks to just three ingredients: 100% real lime juice, silver tequila, and orange curaçao), plus an Old Fashioned, Espresso Martini, and Cosmopolitan. Check out these bar-quality cocktails that are ready whenever and wherever PM rolls around. Available at Willy North and West.

Learn more at postmeridiemspirits.com.



NATURAL RENEWALS SOURSOP SEA MOSS GEL

If you haven't tried sea moss yet, consider this your sign! Natural Renewals Sea Moss is ethically harvested from the pristine waters of the St. Lucia Islands. Organic and packed with vitamins, nutrients, and minerals, this gel has all the qualities that may strengthen the immune system, improve digestion, reduce inflammation, and boost energy levels. While many sea moss gels carry a fishlike taste that turns people away, Natural Renewals takes a different approach, cleansing their gel with lemons and limes during preparation for a bright, citrusy flavor that's actually enjoyable to eat. Available in the Wellness departments.

We suggest checking with a healthcare practitioner before making changes to your diet or taking supplements.

Learn more at naturalrenewals.com.

ONE MIGHTY MILL BREAD AND BAGELS

Meet the breadmakers who are bringing back the art of stonemilling. In 2018, One Mighty Mill did indeed start as one bakery and stone mill—now they've grown to bread-making out of eleven mills across the US, still ensuring that they only use sourced organic wheat from the local farmers of that area. Stonemilling involves crushing the grain whole, which allows for a more nutrient-dense loaf of bread. With both stonemilled bread and bagels, One Mighty Mill captures the goodness of whole wheat at any meal.

Learn more at www.onemightymill.com.



SMASH FOODS JAMMY PROTEIN BITES

Fun fact: In order for jam to officially be considered “jam,” it must be 55 percent sugar! That number didn't sit right with Steve and Anna, creators of Smash Foods, who set off to create their own version of jam that contained only real fruit and no added sugar. With a perfected fruit mash, Smash Foods took their creation one step further—with their Jammy Protein Bites, we can now enjoy fruit smash goodness on-the-go. With five bites in one pack, you'll find nothing but the perfect fusion of salty seed butters and sweet fruit smash, loaded up with protein to power up your snacking. Choose between three different takes on the classic PB&J: Peanut Butter & Concord Grape, Sunflower Butter & Strawberry, and Cashew Butter Blueberry, plus decadent Chocolate Peanut Butter Raspberry. Each pack is gluten-free and lunchbox ready! Available at all three locations.

Learn more at smashfoods.com.



FISHWIFE MUSSELS

Bringing back tinned fish with style! The first thing you probably think of when thinking of tinned fish is a whole lot of brownish grey. Enter Fishwife—who have completely revamped tinned fish with their vibrant artistic packaging, bold flavors, and dedication to sustainably sourced seafood. We're adding a new Fishwife creation to our lineup: sweet, tender, protein-packed mussels. Each tin is hand-packed with mussels responsibly sourced from the cold waters of southern Chile. Choose from two different flavor experiences—basil pesto (at Willy East), for a bright burst of herbs, or sweet pepper and garlic (at Willy East and North), if you prefer more of a flavor punch. These preserved mussels work great with your favorite carb—on a bed of pasta or a nicely toasted baguette.

Learn more at eatfishwife.com.

KOURELLAS YOGURT & KEFIR

Kourellas is your gateway to authentic Greek dairy! Founded in Greece's dairy country, Kourellas Greek yogurt and kefir keeps it simple: milk from cows and goats that graze freely in the mountains of Greece, plus live and active cultures. Whether your go-to is a bowl of Greek yogurt or glass of kefir, Kourellas proves that Greek dairy done right doesn't need a long ingredient list, simply high-quality, organic milk, and real cultures. Available at Willy North and West

Learn more at kourellas.com.



Stonewall Kitchen Maple Bacon Balsamic Dressing

Love to warm it up for a wilted spinach salad. Fantastic marinade for beef, chicken, and pork. Willy West and Willy North only.

-Stephen, Logistics

Mount Hagen Organic Fairtrade Instant Coffee Decaf

Best thing ever. I never need a pot of decaf, but love to have a late night cup, so this is perfect for that!

-Noah, Logistics

Scenic Ridge Farms Bagged Spinach

This local and organic spinach is great. It's always fresh, has great flavor, and has a nice texture with a little crunch. I like to use it for all sorts of things—sandwiches, salads, soups, you name it. My mom is a vegan who lives in a remote area of the UP, so she has limited choices for fresh and organic produce. This is always one of several produce products I bring for her when I take a trip up north to visit.

-Justin, Produce

Cascadian Farms Hash Browns

The perfect candidate for any breakfast. When paired with eggs, bacon, cheese, peppers, and onions, Cascadian Farm Hash Browns complete a fantastic breakfast skillet!

-Lee, Grocery

Country Life Vitamin C Chewable Juicy Orange

This is my go to for fighting off illness. The amount of vitamin C is 500mg which is well tolerated by my stomach. It's super important as a meat-minimalist to get iron. Vitamin C helps convert iron into a more readily absorbable form. Double YAY!

-Lauren, Facilities

Sablefish AKA Black Cod

Sablefish is sustainable, affordable, and delicious. The skin crisps nicely when you render it slowly, flip it once, just a few more minutes and it's perfectly cooked. It stands up well to bold sauces, but is great on its own or in a fish taco, too.

-Mike, Customer Experience

Troubadour Bakery English Muffins

Your search is over. These are the best English Muffins I've found. Separate gently with a fork and toast until the crumb is crispy. Top with butter and honey and thank me later. Extraordinary.

-Austin, Deli

Jovial Einkorn Flour

I love eating this organic heritage grain flour! It is easier to digest than regular flour, and it has a slightly nutty and sweet flavor. It is very finely ground and creates a light and fluffy texture when you bake with it.

-Vanessa, Front End

Olden Organics Butternut Squash Cubes

Olden butternut squash cubes are not only local and delicious, they make prepping with mobility impairments a walk in the park! Just tear the packaging, dump, season, and roast them at 420 degrees. I love adding them to my coconut curry!

-Thrash, Front End

Organic Jasmine Incense

The scent of this incense is clean, soothing, and fragrant. I prefer the size of these incense sticks, enough to fill a couple rooms without becoming overwhelming. The ceramic holder that comes with each box is also very convenient.

-Zoe, Front End





10



11



12



13



14

Sunridge Farms Raspberry Yogurt Covered Pretzels in Bulk

I used to eat these all of the time as a kid, and they are finally back in the Bulk aisle after a long time! These pretzels are awesome—they're sweet, salty, crunchy, and perfect for any summer plans you might have.

-Ellen, Logistics

10

Singing Dog Vanilla Bean Paste

This paste adds plenty of vanilla goodness to any good that you are baking. The concentrated power of vanilla is strong—you only need just a bit for whatever you need!

-Jake, Grocery

11

Maya Kaimal Tikka Masala Indian Simmer Sauce

The best tikka masala sauce is homemade, but Maya Kaimal's Tikka Masala occupies the middle of the venn diagram for easy and delicious. Excellent for a vegetable packed paneer masala!

-Katy, Front End

12

Willy Street Co-op Sesame Tofu

L

I like the texture and flavor of this tofu. It's great for a salad, grain bowl, or for topping a bowl of hot rice with some pickled vegetables.

-Jake, Communications

13

Carr Valley Cheese Apple Smoked Cheddar

L

This cheese is so creamy and the apple-smoked flavor is PERFECTION!! Cheddar cheese is my favorite and the smoky apple flavor gives it a nice boost of flavor. It's perfect on a charcuterie board and is always a hit with all my friends with the first taste!

-Steffry, Finance

14

Willy Street Co-op Veggie Cream Cheese

L

This house made cream cheese is packed full with vegetables! It makes such a great accompaniment to my sandwiches or alone on a bagel. Super flavorful and hearty!

-Rachael, Deli

15

Rubicon Chocolate Cream Cupcake

I have an insatiable sweet tooth, and chocolate treats are my go-to. It takes all my restraint to keep myself from buying these every time I go into our stores. If you're looking for an indulgent, delectable treat, this is your answer!

-Jake, Communications

16

Driftless Provisions Cacciatore

i

L

On an autumn hike I can throw this local and delicious package into my backpack with apples and oat sticks from the bulk aisle. Watching the sunset over the lake is complete with the buttery tender chew of my favorite cured meat.

-Beth, Custodial

17

Willy Street Co-op Green Cotton Tote Bag

L

Very sturdy, easy to wash, and it has a flat bottom—perfect for grocery shopping. And I love the color as well!

-Brendon, Communications

18



15



16



17



18



GIVE TODAY TO BUILD TOMORROW

Your Donation During Workplace Giving Advances Social and Environmental Justice

Workplace giving campaigns are underway and we would be grateful for your support this fall.

Community Shares of Wisconsin offers you the choice of supporting 80 local nonprofits working on essential issues like civil liberties, sustainability, LGBTQ+ rights, voting rights, healthy food and farms, criminal justice reform, affordable housing, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Your gift today is an investment in a tomorrow where communities are safe, healthy, and thriving.

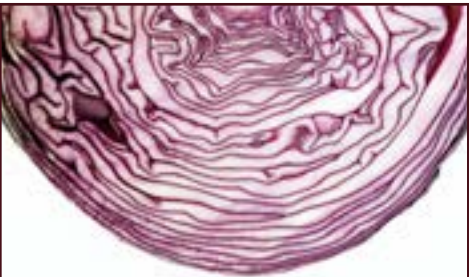
Photo provided by Wisconsin Women's Network

Learn more and donate at
communityshares.com/workplace-giving



**ENJOY WHAT'S NEXT.
WE'LL HANDLE THE REST.**

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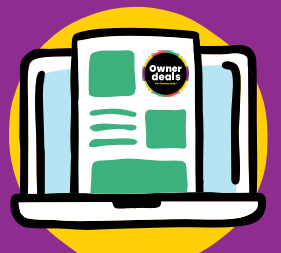
JUST ENOUGH!

Feel free to purchase just one stalk of celery or broccoli, one bunch of grapes, or one banana.

Produce Staff can cut a cabbage or cauliflower in half for you.

Some restrictions apply.
Feel free to inquire if you have a question!

willy street co-op



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we'll come to you.*

Shopping with Kids?

Take a piece of pre-washed fruit from the designated basket in Produce for the kids to munch on while you shop.

Compliments of the
Willy Street Co-op
Produce Department

FREE!



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Sat., October 3 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

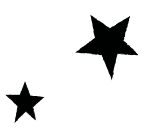
Aldo Leopold Elementary School
2602 Post Rd., Madison

NEW LOCATION!

Register here:



- Free soccer clinics
- Fun activities
- Community Resources





1 Fortune Favors The Everything **2** Olden Organics Guacamole **3** Que Pasa Organic Blue Corn Tortilla Chips **4** Mrs. Renfro's Nacho Cheese Dip **5** Tony's Chocolonely Milk Chocolate Caramel Sea Salt Bar **6** San Pellegrino Aranciata Rossa **7** Big Dipper Wax Works Pure Beeswax Pillar Candle **8** G.H. Cretors Just the Cheese Popcorn **9** Greenbush Bakery Pumpkin Spice Cake Donuts **10** Mayana Chocolate Space Bar **11** Big Dipper Wax Works Beeswax Pumpkin Candle **12** Bulk Milk Chocolate Malt Balls **13** Equal Exchange Organic Milk Chocolate Hot Cocoa **14** Bequet Sea Salt Caramels **15** Madison Chocolate Company Ghost Pepper Caramels **16** Kolsvart Salty Licorice Fish **17** Rotten Candy Gummy Worms **18** Willy Street Co-op Pumpkin Cookies **19** Equal Exchange Organic Dried Mango **20** Abe's Chocolate Brownies



By: Megan Minnick

October is a busy month. It's both Fair Trade Month and Co-op Month—two of the central themes in Willy Street Co-op's vision of a sustainable, accessible, and equitable food system. Both movements are near and dear to us, but there's only so much time in the day and so many pages in the *Reader*... It can be a real challenge to decide which to focus on.

But what if they weren't in competition? What if, rather than choosing between the Fair Trade and cooperative movements, we instead celebrate them both and the synergy between them? What does that synergy look like?

It was with these questions in mind that I sat down to interview Gerardo Goicochea.

Gerardo is a Fair Trade coffee farmer from the village of Santa Rosa in Jaén Province in the mountains of northeast Peru. He's also a founding

member of the Sol y Café Farmer's Cooperative, a key supplier of our longstanding coffee partner, Equal Exchange. Sol y Café's coffee is a regular component in two of our top-selling coffee blends: Organic Love Buzz and Organic Breakfast Blend.

I spoke with Gerardo over a video chat and through an interpreter. While I've tried to keep his original thoughts and voice as intact as possible, what follows has been edited for clarity.

Megan: How did you come to be a coffee farmer? Did you grow up on a farm?

Gerardo: I know coffee because of my father. He first came to Santa Rosa in the 1960s, when he was in the army. He saw that the soil was good for growing coffee, and came back here to have his family. I'm the third child.

My father didn't know how to read or write. He signed papers just using his name. He told me and my siblings

that he did not have the resources to educate us, but he could teach us to work. Back then, there wasn't any other option than working.

After I finished primary school, I decided to plant my own coffee crop. I started when I was 13.

Megan: And you continued until now?

Gerardo: More or less, though 2003 marked a turning point.

Over the years, my family had accrued a debt of 3,000 sols [around \$900 USD], which we owed to a man who lent money to families like ours. In 2003 the time came to pay. The common method of payment was in coffee, and the man had written in his notebook that we owed him 30 quintales of beans [3,600lbs]. But that was much more than 3,000 sols worth. He was taking advantage.

It wasn't fair. I had my own family by then, and the money from the crop paid for our food for the year. But we had no choice. We had to pay. It was very difficult, and I spent all my time growing coffee. For me, it was the breaking point. That was before the cooperative.

Megan: How did the cooperative come into being?

Gerardo: It started back in 1997, when Cáritas [a Catholic organization dedicated to empowering vulnerable populations] arrived and started a program funded by USAID to help farmers learn new growing techniques in coffee, rice, and cocoa.

I was identified for my leadership and selected to be part of the committee created by the project. I became involved in workshops on coffee

growing. I was excited by what I was learning, and my family agreed to give our land over to me to implement the new techniques.

In 2005, after surviving that difficult year when we settled our debts, I decided to travel to Jaén [the capital city of Jaén Province and an important coffeetrading hub] to sell my crop, rather than selling to the local traders. No one from Santa Rosa had ever done this, but I'd heard that in the city, buyers were paying three times what we were getting in the village.

The trip took two days. I brought my wife and baby son (who's now a university student!) with me, because it was a risk, and we didn't want to get separated. But it was worth it. In that year, we won because we were able to sell at a much higher price. I also met buyers and experts in the coffee trade who would eventually become important to the business of the cooperative.

In Jaén, I saw firsthand how my coffee was mixed with other producers and sold as a commodity. That made me sad, because my coffee was much higher quality than the others.

I realized then that we needed a better way.

After that, the Cáritas project ended. We had been very successful, and we continued with that success. While many farmers in the area were getting 14-15 quintales [1,680-1,800lbs] of coffee per hectare, we had farms in the program that got up to 23 quintales [2,760lbs].

What to do with all that coffee became a problem. We needed buyers who valued the high quality of our bean, and we needed an efficient way to get it to market. The cooperative came out of this need.

At first, we debated if we should become a cooperative or an association, and in 2008 we decided on a cooperative—Sol y Café. I was called to become part of the board, and ultimately elected president.

At the beginning, I worked as a technician for the co-op, helping other farmers with their growing techniques. This position paid a salary, and in this way I was able to make money so my siblings could study and pursue livelihoods of their own.

Megan: How many members does the co-op have?

Gerardo: We started with 950. We now have 1,091.

Megan: What difference has the co-op made to your family—and the other members' families—compared to the way it was before 2008?

Gerardo: The difference is in both the social and business aspects of the cooperative. We are family, and we work as a team. If we have an objective or goal we all pull in that direction.

It's created a safe place for our farmers. We're not alone anymore, and we don't need to look for opportunities elsewhere, which can represent a danger—as our experience with the debt collector showed.

We trust in each other, that no one will take advantage of us, and we feel safe.



It's not something to be taken for granted. I've found that I need to remind members of these values and benefits all the time in the cooperative meetings. Especially now, when coffee prices are very high, it can be tempting for members to look outside the co-op for short-term gain. But we need to think in the longer term, and in that, we're much better together in the cooperative.

Megan: Sol y Café became Fairtrade Certified in 2010. How has that affected your livelihood?

Gerardo: The Fair Trade premiums have contributed greatly to the management and development of the cooperative. Honestly, without them we wouldn't be talking right now. I consider myself a result of Fair Trade.

Megan: What sorts of things have been made possible by the Fair Trade premiums?

Gerardo: We decide together how to use the premium money. Some of it goes into the co-op's financial reserves, and some toward technical support so we can continue growing high-quality coffee in the face of climate change and other challenges.

We realized that if we want to have good results and production, we need healthy members, so we used premium money to fund a health center and preventative health program. No one wants to lose a family member, and now we have a means to identify illnesses and save lives.

We've also funded a school—the only co-op school in the country. In fact, just earlier today, I went there to view the children's science experiments.

Megan: What is your farm like now? How many people do you currently support?

Gerardo: There are four of us here—my wife, daughter, and my mom. My son is at university in Jaén. My sister is a professional who works for the government, and one of my brothers works with orchids.

We have fourteen hectares which we work together as a family. Some is in coffee, some is in conservation, which is very important to me. I gave my last salary from my paid work with the cooperative to my mom, and she bought cows.

I also own five hectares myself, three of which are in coffee.

My father died 8 years ago, and I'm very proud to have the family together like this.

Megan: Is there something you wish that the people who drink your coffee in the United States knew about you or the coffee you grow? If you could speak to them, what would you say?

Gerardo: I would ask them to drink the coffee with responsibility, solidarity, sustainability, and trust. I'd like them to not only remember me, the coffee farmer, but to think of the next generation.

I would also tell them that if they want to visit, they're always welcome to come and see my farm!

So there you have it. Gerardo's story is unique of course, but it's a beau-

tiful illustration of what can happen when the cooperative movement and the Fair Trade movement combine. The cooperative provides the structure—the foundation and connection between farmers—which is then nourished by the Fair Trade premiums.

The results are nothing short of transformational as farmers like Gerardo are empowered to disrupt the cycle of generational poverty and create a new future for their families and communities.

Kids are able to go to school. Life-saving healthcare becomes accessible.

Farmers are able to think in the long term—about creating a sustainable agricultural system that future generations can inherit—rather than just short-term survival.

I was particularly struck by Gerardo's statement that members feel "safe" within the co-op, and how they were no longer alone.

In the face of so much uncertainty, with climate change and a wildly fluctuating global coffee market, this safety and solidarity means everything—for Gerardo, for his family, his community, and for all of us who connect with him through the coffee he grows.

The next time you brew your cooperatively grown Fair Trade coffee or tea, or break into a delicious Fair Trade chocolate bar, be sure to think of Gerardo, and do it with responsibility, solidarity, sustainability and trust.

Many thanks to Equal Exchange for facilitating this conversation. While the exact makeup of Equal Exchange's coffee blends changes with each harvest and season, Sol y Café's coffee may be found in their Organic Peru Medium Roast, Organic Breakfast Blend (both the original and Dark Roasts), Organic Love Buzz, Organic Espresso, and the Organic Peru Light Roast that is part of the new Co-op Origins Series 12oz product line.

Photos courtesy of Equal Exchange. Photos from top left going clockwise: Gerardo Alarcón, General Manager of Sol y Café, and coffee farmer Gerardo Goicochea work side by side in the field; Students engage in a full curriculum, including music, at the only co-op school in Peru. Sol y Café invests in music and dance as a way for children to experience cooperation from an early age, learning to work together through the arts; Gerardo with his wife Margarita and daughter Sol.; One of Sol y Café's remote farmer neighborhoods; Gerardo's freshly-harvested coffee ready for sorting; Coffee cherries, freshly-harvested, ready to sort for quality.





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Sustain Dane Summit

- **When:** Friday, Nov 6
- **Where:** Monona Terrace
- **What:** Sustainability Event of the Year

Session Highlight

On the Menu: Chefs & Sustainability

Learn how local chefs at your favorite restaurants are helping shape a more sustainable food system.



Evan Dannells
Cadre Restaurant & Lola's Hi/Lo Lounge



Elena Terry
Wild Bearies & Tall Grass



Christy McKenzie
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