MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Hello my friends,

I hope you all are keeping cozy in this weather. I love the way the world seems to decelerate in winter, so radically different than the manic summer busyness. Settling in to watch the snow fall, I can really slow down for quiet year-end reflection.

Right now everything seems to be subtly shifting, changing for the better. Every challenge we faced this year has brought us where we are now. The rebranding committee is starting to catch some real momentum. Possible storefront locations continue to be sought out. Membership is growing as well as collaboration with other community businesses and organizations to reach all Sitkans. And here we have arrived, together, on the brink of an exciting year ahead.

For in-depth information about what our Co-op is working on, consider attending a board or committee meeting. We invite you to express yourself freely, decisions are always made democratically in solidarity with the members. Your feedback is welcome. Thank you all for your conscientious participation in our Co-op this year. A special thank you to our volunteer coalition, who meet every other week to donate their time and energy to a common purpose: getting wholesome food to the people! You really are the driving force of our Co-op’s success. Remember, delivery days are family-friendly. That means if you have a little one at home, you are welcome to bring them along to a volunteer shift.

I wish you all good fortune in the year to come!

Warmly,
Evanne Kegley - Secretary
MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Greetings Fellow Co-op-ers;

December already? Wow! Where does the time go? The days and weeks (and deadlines) seem to be flying by for me. Now, while some of you may be are settling down for a quiet year-end reflection, it's actually quite the opposite behind the scenes at the Co-op. Believe it or not, summers are our slowest times and winters the busiest.

This is in part because the end of the year Holiday season means members place some of the largest orders of the year. In fact, November's order was the largest order ever made by quite a bit. What's "quite a bit" you ask? How about the order being 30% larger than our yearly average! You may have noticed that we even needed an extra room to distribute all the goodies. And... though still early... December's order holds promise of it being another large one as well.

Of course, since we are indeed a "business" that has done over two million dollars in sales since we started (and are now doing well over $430,000 in sales per year) ... the end of the year also means there are lots of reports that need to be taken care of. There are quarterly reports, interim grant reports, and annual reviews and reports to be generated and/or submitted... several grants need to be updated and/or reapplied for... licenses need to be renewed... and the new 2020 UNFI database has to be prepped for uploading into Foodclub.

Yes... it's a busy time behind the scenes but please... don't get me wrong... it's actually a wonderful, exciting, and amazing time as well!

It's wonderful to see so many new members becoming part of our co-op every month and helping out on our delivery days... it's exciting to see that the graphs and charts that are generated in those reports consistently show an upward growth curve... and it's just amazing what's being accomplished by the Board of Directors, by the Rebranding Committee, by our two assistant managers (Alexa and Dawn), and also by our newly hired "Community Outreach and Education Coordinator" (Kate).

So... as you settle in to watch the snow fall and slow down from the summer season... know that behind the scenes there's lots going... there's much to be excited about... and there's much to celebrate and be thankful for.

Here's Hoping You Have The Happiest, Heartiest, & Healthiest Holidays!

Keith Nyitray

VOLUNTEER WITH THE SITKA FOOD CO-OP!

Sign-up to volunteer for at least 3-4 hours on delivery days and receive a 10% discount on your order! Check out www.sitkafoodcoop.org/membership/volunteer for upcoming opportunities, we are Thankful for YOU, our amazing volunteers!!
Our Co-op Does Care!

As we head into our third year of conducting our "Co-op Cares" program, we think it's fair say it has been a resounding success!

For those who may not have heard or know of this program, this is a member-driven donation program where everyone who "Shops the Co-op" has the opportunity to "round-up" their purchase total to the nearest dollar - and then have that difference donated to a local charitable organization. Every six months 100% of those donations then go to one of two local organizations chosen by the Co-op's membership.

In 2108 the Sitkans Against Family Violence (SAFV) shelter received $430, and the Blessings-in-a-Backpack program received $540.

This year, members selected Brave Heart Volunteers and the SAFV shelter to be the recipients. Brave Heart Volunteers received a check for $550 and - even though there's still two deliveries to go - members have already contributed over $590 towards the SAFV shelter.

THE QUESTION IS... WHO WILL BE THE 2020 RECIPIENTS?

Now is the time to think about which of your favorite local organizations will be the recipients in 2020. Members will be receiving a quick nomination form by email (or you can send us an email) and a final vote will be done at the end of this month.

NOTE: Only those whose memberships are up-to-date will be eligible to vote for next year's recipients.
If you’re looking for bulk herbs and spices, teas, supplements and personal care items take a look at the Frontier Co-op. Frontier Co-op is a cooperatively owned wholesaler of natural and organic products based in Norway, Iowa. The cooperative sells under the **Frontier Co-op**, **Simply Organic** and **Aura Cacia** brands and their products include culinary herbs, spices and baking flavors; bulk herbs and spices; and natural and organic aromatherapy products.

What started out as a two-person operation in a small cabin in eastern Iowa in 1976 has blossomed into a major supplier of herbs, spices and other items to the growing natural products market. Still based in Iowa, their influence is felt all over the world through their Fair-Trade practices and stewardship in many communities.

One example found on their website is that they get their vanilla beans from a group of growers in Madagascar. Through their “Well Earth” program, Frontier Co-op helped dig 49 wells in 38 of the vanilla-farming communities in Madagascar. That is truly giving back to the people who support you! There are many other examples of this type of their caring and stewardship on their website.

Also on their website are tons of deliciously healthy recipes along with lots of information about all the spices, herbs, and teas they sell, and... that you can purchase through UNFI.

If you're interested in learning about all the different herbs/spices available - and how to use them - then their website is a great place to start! They'll even show you how to make your own blends of spices and seasonings for a variety of ethnic meals.

Learn more about this great cooperative at: [www.frontierrcoop.com](http://www.frontierrcoop.com)

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## Dilled Sweet Potato Soup

*Dill seed provides a snap of flavor in each bite of this robust soup.*

### Ingredients:
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon dill seed
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon parsley flakes
- 2 vegetable bouillon cubes
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 5 cups peeled, cubed sweet potatoes
- 4 cups water
- 1 cup milk

### Directions:
1. Heat oil in a soup pot. Add the onions and garlic, and sauté until golden.

2. Add potatoes, water, bouillon, salt, dill seed, pepper, and parsley. Cover and bring to a boil, then reduce heat to simmer. Cook until potatoes are just tender, about 20 minutes.

3. Ladle 2 cups of the hot soup into a blender or food processor. Add the milk and purée. Pour back into the pot. Stir well over low heat for one minute.