

The Harvest Beet

SPRING 2021

est. 1979

NATURAL
HARVEST

FOOD CO-OP

*Locally owned,
organically grown.*

Board Member Contact Info

• BOARD OFFICERS •

PRESIDENT • Stephen Levchak
(GM Evaluation Committee)
stephen@naturalharvest.coop

VICE PRESIDENT • Pauli Rancourt
(Perpetuation Committee)
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(GM Evaluation Committee)
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TREASURER • Kelsey Gantzer
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• BOARD •

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Victoria Ranua
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Tera Nowicki
(Perpetuation Committee)
tera@naturalharvest.coop

Your quarterly source of information for healthy living!

General Manager's Report: A Year of Two Tales

Anja Parenteau, General Manager & NHFC Owner

Last year was a year of two tales. We started out the year with budgets, plans and projects for the Co-op, all of which were derailed by a pandemic that reached us in March. From that moment on it seemed like all we were able to focus on was how to provide the safest way to shop and work for our community. Writing the Ends report for our Board of Directors focused my attention on all the ways we still made progress even during an incredibly challenging year. Watch for our Annual Report coming out in April which will include the highlights.

For 2021, we are working on a few projects that will improve our product offerings and customer experience.

A reset in our Cheese Cooler will give plant-based meats a more prominent spot. As plant-based meats become more popular, we can move them out of the freezer and have them available to you fresh and ready to cook. We are also working on implementing a Customer Experience survey. This will give random shoppers an invitation on their receipt to fill out a short survey about their most recent shopping experience. We will be able to hear more frequently and urgently about what went great and what could be improved.

As we are all still adjusting to this new normal, we are working on ways to get our

Deli department sales back to where they were a year ago. We are planning more dinner offerings in our hot bar and will feature more "heat & eat" options for those of us still working from home. For March, the Deli is bringing back our popular hot sandwich specials and drink specials.

Another trend that I am following with excitement is zero waste shopping, which has been derailed by the pandemic as the need for more packaged options skyrocketed. Our team is ready to tackle a bulk department reset early this summer, as we explore bringing back more bulk bins and the option to bring your own containers. Zero waste shopping is nothing new to seasoned Co-op customers, hopefully we can introduce more shoppers to this earth-friendly and more sustainable option!

In mid-May we will have our first annual tree-giveaway! If you feel like planting a Red Pine in your back yard, keep watching our postings and come and get one! Our goal is for our community to plant 200 trees this year!

One small project at a time will get us through these challenging times, allow us to continue to make progress and focus our attention on you, our valued customers!

In Cooperation,

— Anja



Watch for our first annual tree giveaway in mid-May. Plant a free Red Pine seedling in your back yard!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF OWNERS OF NATURAL HARVEST FOOD CO-OP, INC.

*Tuesday,
April 20, 2021*

The Annual Meeting of the Owners of Natural Harvest Food Co-op, Inc. (the "Co-op") will be held virtually Tuesday, April 20, 2021, at 6:00 PM via "Zoom". All Owners are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Registration for the event is now open, you must register in advance to receive the meeting web link.

Register by emailing info@naturalharvest.coop. Be sure to include your Full Owner Name and Owner Number in your registration email request. The Registration Deadline is Monday, April 19, 2021.

The Co-op will present its Owners with the following agenda items:

- (1) Review fiscal year;
- (2) Keynote speaker(s);
- (3) Announcement of Micro Grant recipient;
- (4) Announcement of new board members.

We are unable to offer Board Election voting during the virtual meeting. Ballots must reach the Co-op by 7 PM on Monday, April 19, 2021.

If you have any questions about the meeting, please contact us via email info@naturalharvest.coop or by phone (218) 741-4663 and ask for the Marketing Director.

NHFC Board Report: An Unusual Trip Around the Sun

Emma Peterson, Board Member & NHFC Owner

Another winter is ending, and the Natural Harvest Food Co-op Board has had another active trip around the sun! This trip has been very unusual, as starting last March, all activities moved to a virtual format due to the spread of COVID-19. We had planned and looked forward to our usual annual meeting in 2020 but moved it to a ZOOM meeting to avoid a large gathering. We continued the rest of 2020 with meetings via ZOOM and managed a productive orientation for our four new board members and an annual board retreat on a virtual format. We are all looking forward to a day when we can return to our in-person meetings and large gatherings for our annual meetings but have decided to again hold our 2021 annual meeting on an online platform for the safety of all. We invite all Co-op owners to join us for our virtual Annual Meeting on Tuesday, April 20 at 6:00 PM.

In addition to our usual activities of monitoring and updating poli-

cies and ends for Natural Harvest, the board has worked to organize our system of record keeping. This will ensure that future board members can easily find data as they guide the direction of Natural Harvest. Several of our board members have worked again to update our application and rubric for our second annual micro-grant award, which will be awarded to one of the local farmers who supply Natural Harvest as they pursue endeavors that improve their farms.

Our three sub-committees — GM Evaluation, Education, and Perpetuation — have worked hard to make sure we are monitoring and evaluating our general manager, providing the board with continuing education, and recruiting new board members to run for the open seats we will have in 2021.

On behalf of our board, we are proud to serve as a voice for our members and will continue to work to ensure the continued success of Natural Harvest.



Time to Elect Your Board Members!

Yes, it's that time again — time to elect your new Co-op Board Members! This year there are four open seats on the Board of Directors.

Just what do Board members do for the Co-op? A vital, efficient, and effective Board of Directors is necessary to provide guidance and leadership to keep the Co-op healthy, active, productive, and responsive to Owners' needs. The Board employs the principles of policy governance to focus on big-picture issues in order to evaluate and help plan for the future of the Co-op without managing day-to-day operations.

Use the ballot (on page 3) to select your choices for open Board Member positions. Ballots must reach the Co-op by Monday, April 19. One vote per Owner number, please. We will have a ballot box at the front of the store, or you can choose to mail your ballot. New Board members will be announced at the Virtual Annual Meeting.

We asked each candidate about their interest in becoming a Co-op Board member (see answers on pages 3 and 4). Information

on each candidate, along with ballots, will also be available in-store and online at www.naturalharvest.coop.

1 Why would you like to serve on the Board of Directors of Natural Harvest Food Co-op?

2 Describe any volunteer or paid experiences relevant to your service as a Co-op board member. What skills or experience will you bring to the board?

3 What opportunities and challenges do you see in the future of Natural Harvest Food Co-op?

4 Other Comments

BALLOT

Board Election

**RETURN BALLOT BY
4/19/2021**

Use the ballot box at the front of
the store or mail your ballot to:
732 N. 4th St. • Virginia, MN 55792

There are four spots open on the Natural Harvest Board of Directors. Please choose up to four Board Member candidates here, and return your ballot to the store by Wednesday, 4/19/2021.

_____ Carly Antus Wilk

_____ Dominic Renollet

_____ Jennifer Krenz

_____ Lisa Buckman

_____ Raini Knaeble-Weiss

_____ Tera Nowicki (Incumbent)

_____ (Write-in Option)

ONE VOTE ALLOWED PER OWNER NUMBER.YOUR VOTE REMAINS CONFIDENTIAL.

Name & Owner # _____

NHFC BOARD CANDIDATE BIOS

Carly Antus Wilk (Angora, MN)



1 I have primarily shopped at Co-ops since 2003. I love the ambiance of my shopping experiences, the availability of whole foods products and non-food items that resonate with my lifestyle, the expertise of staff to assist me in finding healing remedies, the availability of a hot deli, the enriching offerings of classes, and being part of the Co-op community – a group that gives back to their community. I am ready to be more involved and bring the voices of my rural area to the Board of Directors.

2 My father suffered a massive ischemic stroke at age 59 in June 2012. The stroke left him permanently disabled, unable to work and not able to care for himself or his home. Upon hospital discharge in September 2012, I brought him home to his house, moved in and became his 24-7 care provider. In addition to providing hands-on care; I coordinated all of his therapy and medical appointments, provided transportation to and from all of those appointments, managed his household and property, and did all of the necessary shopping. I did this completely unpaid until all of his assets were spent down and he qualified for waived services through St. Louis County. Through my Dad's stroke journey and my care-giver role, I have also organized a local "Stroke Walk" team for several years to raise money for the Minnesota Stroke Association.

In the last 8-1/2 years, I have learned and become skilled in providing the holistic care that my father needs in order to stay in his home while participating in continued therapeutic services. I have met countless stroke survivors, caregivers, families, and healing professionals over the years. I feel that my experiences can bring the needs of those populations to the attention of the Co-op community.

3 I have been a Co-op member for longer than I can remember in St. Paul/Minneapolis, Duluth, and now Virginia. I would really like to see the "Food Access for All" program that the Duluth Whole Foods Co-op utilizes come to Virginia. I feel this would help make the Co-op community more appealing and accessible for everyone. Then, the challenge would be getting that information out to a broader base of people.

Dominic Renollet (Chisholm, MN)



1 My wife and I have been owners for a few years and we enjoy all the staff and ethics and the atmosphere of Natural Harvest. We have always been a family that has a deep respect and connection to the northern woods. I've been an avid hunter and fisherman since I was a child. We have raised our son to love these gifts that nature provides. Local farm raised is ethical, the integrity of the animal is upheld and purchasing from them feels right. As do fair trade products. Natural Harvest excels in these areas.

2 I am a natural leader and I very much enjoy people and helping guide them to do a good job — the first time. I oversee many people at my job and have done so for many years. I respect workers who are honest and come directly to me for issues or questions. I firmly believe in an open line of communication with my co-workers and people who I am in charge of. I will always do my best to come straight to the person, face to face, and work out ideas and issues. I promise this to anyone I know and work with. Honesty, integrity and an open line of communication are integral in every part of my life.

3 To be part of a "movement" of organic food and sustainability harvested meat and ingredients is near and dear to me. I have always believed what you put in your body is intimate and should be clean of chemicals and harvested in an ethical manner. Give back to nature, respect her and her gifts and she will provide for you in turn. This belief, this movement, takes work and time. We have to fight to keep this movement fresh in the public eye. I do not shy away from challenges. My belief in Natural Harvest is connected deeply to my ethical goals for life.

4 I feel we are very lucky to have this level of quality and selection in our region. I would be very honored to serve on the board of directors of a store that is part of my family in so many ways.

Jennifer Krenz (Gilbert, MN)



1 I would like to participate in maintaining a valuable community resource that contributes to a healthy lifestyle for myself, family and community.

2 My diverse work experience has given me a strong background in grant management, non-profit administration and financial management.

3 One of the biggest challenges will be to stay relevant in an increasingly competitive market. Big box retailers continue to increase offerings of organic food and wellness products, making it difficult to attract future customers that are able to achieve one stop shopping on a tight household budget.

4 I look forward to assisting in developing systems and processes to ensure that our Co-op is here and thriving for our community to enjoy.

**Lisa Buckman
(Gilbert, MN)**

1 It aligns with my cooking, nutrition, entertaining and healthy lifestyle interests and my thoughts on investing in the health of a community. I am interested in generating enthusiasm for owners and patrons to take ownership of their own health and that of their families through proper nutrition and a healthy lifestyle. I believe I have experience and skills that would be of value to the board of Natural Harvest Food Co-op.

2 I have 15 years of non-profit experience. In just the last 3 years I was the ED at Families Helping Families in Cedar Rapids, an organization serving Iowa's children in foster care, and most recently worked as Operations Coordinator at the African American Museum of Iowa. Through March 2021, I serve as the VP of the board at Central Furniture Rescue, an organization providing basic, essential furniture and housewares for people transitioning out of homelessness in Cedar Rapids. I have experience in grant writing, donor development, volunteer coordination, fundraising and event management, and public speaking.

3 Since I am new to the area, I don't know that I can sufficiently identify challenges, or even opportunities. A challenge might be that Co-op products are cost-prohibitive for some. I am hopeful that the Co-op is or could be a cornerstone of the community through education, advocacy and teaching, and that we are or will be a driver for economic growth. I believe this can be achieved through strong partnerships with businesses, farmers, growers, organizations and schools who share similar values and vision. I would look forward to discussing ways to accomplish these things, as well as addressing food insecurity issues.

4 I'm always grateful for opportunities to use my experience and skills in ways that help a community. I am excited to learn about the development and past successes of Natural Harvest Food Co-op and help identify ways to adapt to the effects of the global pandemic and other developments of 2020 while fulfilling our mission.



**Raini Knaeble-Weiss
(Eveleth, MN)**

1 I believe the Natural Harvest Food Co-op to be an essential part of what makes this area a great community. To me the Co-op is more than a grocery store. The mission to provide natural, organic, local foods with a consciousness of animal welfare and environmental impact is important to me. I would like to be part of the board with the intention of creating the experience of community connection for as many people as possible.

2 I am a professional counselor and have worked in our community in education, non-profit, disability and currently clinical practice. I believe my connection and commitment to supporting the needs of others brings a unique perspective. Programs like community education/classes and the round-up program, are a large part of my reason for wanting to join the board. I will be committed to continuing and building on these types of programs.

3 I think the potential challenge is competition from new and existing grocery stores in our area. Local grocery stores are doing a better job carrying organic products. I believe this makes growing membership and a sense of community even more important.

4 I appreciate your time to read my responses and thank you if you choose to give me your vote.



**Tera Nowicki
(Incumbent)
(Virginia, MN)**

1 I served a short term last year and really enjoyed being part of the Board of Directors. I love that we all share similar interests in healthy lifestyle options for our families and supporting local businesses.

2 As a former employee of the Co-op I understand some of the day-to-day work that it takes to keep the Co-op going. I am also a small business owner of a bookkeeping company of 10 years and have been in the financial industry for 20+ years. I believe in sustainability and supporting local businesses and keeping our families healthy by supplying and educating them with healthy, organic options.

3 Covid has certainly been a challenge and will continue to be this coming year. I think it takes work to keep everything going and everyone safe and healthy. When things return to normal we will have the awesome opportunity to open up classes again to continue to serve, gather and teach our community.

4 Being an owner/customer is so rewarding. The smell and layout and everything about the Co-op is so inviting and I am proud to be part of it.



Save the Dates!

**TUESDAY,
APRIL 20**

**NHFC VIRTUAL ANNUAL
MEETING OF OWNERS
6:00 PM**

**HOLIDAY
HOURS**

**EASTER
SUNDAY
CLOSED**

A warm welcome to our newest Natural Harvest Owners!

Ashley Brown (Hibbing, MN)
Elizabeth Rich (Eveleth, MN)
Lisa Bernt (Tower, MN)
Joe & Mickey Caskinette (Cook, MN)
Amanda Rose Nelson (Ely, MN)
Pamela Johnson (Eveleth, MN)
Nancy Dougherty (Biwabik, MN)
Cindy Vangness (Gilbert, MN)
John & Kaitlin Flannigan (Eveleth, MN)
Shelley Gobats (Tower, MN)

Corinn Tiwari (Nashwauk, MN)
James Pessenda (Chisholm, MN)
John Scott (Hibbing, MN)
Steve & Polly Voiles (Ely, MN)
Steven Hunter (Virginia, MN)
Liz Burton (Cook, MN)
Jean LaPorte (Virginia, MN)
Mallory & Jon Maki (Eveleth, MN)
Brenda Jylha (Virginia, MN)
Jacki Fisher (Ely, MN)

Tyler & Randy Lehto (Aurora, MN)
Jeffrey Zakula (Iron, MN)
Jennifer Ryan (Saginaw, MN)
Sara Jordahl (Gilbert, MN)
Connie Achman (Eveleth, MN)
Henry J. Lee (Hibbing, MN)
Bryan Morcom (Tower, MN)
Rallista Lendacky

Minnesota Food Co-ops Collaborate to Support Food Shelves

Raising over \$100,000 for 25 Minnesota food shelves



Natural Harvest is taking part in the Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign along with 13 other food co-ops across the state. The Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign provides food, funds, and educational materials to nearly 300 Minnesota food shelves. Operating since 1982, the campaign is the largest grass-

roots food and fund drive in the state. This past year has been challenging in numerous ways, and the effects of COVID-19 have been sorely felt by our local food shelves and neighbors experiencing food insecurity. On average, our food shelves have seen a 300-400% increase in usage since the beginning of COVID-19.

Channeling one of our cooperative values "Cooperation among Cooperatives" we join together each March to raise awareness of food insecurity and make a difference for our communities experiencing hunger across the state.

Last year, the Cooperating Minnesota Food Co-op team raised a total of \$167,934.74 dollars/pounds for 25 different food shelves. This year we hope to strive to reach a similar goal with new, creative programs to meet the increase in need for our communities.

Co-op Funded Matches: Natural Harvest Food Co-op, Mississippi Market Co-op, Lakewinds Food Co-op, Seward Community Co-op, and Just Food Co-op will all provide co-op funded matches totaling \$27,000.

Equal Exchange Partnership: Equal Exchange will donate \$1 per pound of Love Buzz bulk coffee sales to support our local food shelves at Mississippi Market Co-op, The Wedge Co-op, and Linden Hills Co-op.

Throughout the month at Natural Harvest, we will be encouraging shoppers to round up their purchases at the register through the Change Within Reach Program and have the option for you to purchase \$5/\$10 donations. One hundred percent of March's donations will combat food insecurity by supporting the Quad City Food Shelf in Virginia. This year, Natural Harvest's goal is to collect \$3,000 which will include a \$500 donation from the Co-op.

Give: Help Feed Local Families!

Your Co-op will match the accumulated donations up to \$500!

Food Share March:
The MN Food Share Organization will proportionally match all food shelf donations this month.

Purchase \$5 or \$10 donations for the Quad City Food Shelf



“Change Within Reach” Round-up Report

Once again, your contributions have added up in a big way! We would like to extend a huge “THANK YOU” to everyone who continues to donate to the program. Your nickels and dimes are helping make our Iron Range Community stronger. In 2020 shoppers collectively donated over \$14,400 for local charities.



A LOOK BACK

In November we collected over \$1,400 for **Veterans on the Lake Resort**; in December, over \$1,300 was donated to **Care Partners**; and in January, more than \$1,100 was raised for **Range Regional Animal Rescue**.

LOOKING AHEAD

In support of the MN Food Share Campaign, we will round up for the **Quad City Food Shelf** in March. All donations made to MN food shelves during this month will be proportionally matched by the MN Food Share organization.



April donations will be collected for the **Mesabi East Environmental Education Center**. The funds will be used to purchase items necessary for the continual use of hydroponics, producing microgreens, and growing products using traditional gardening methods.



Your May donations will support **Ely's Historic State Theater**. Donations will be used to support the completion of a second theater to enhance the flexibility to host live events and movies in the same timeframe.



If your non-profit organization would like to apply for the Change Within Reach program, please visit the Co-op's website www.naturalharvest.coop for more information.





Spring Cleaning with Essential Oils

Homemade All-Purpose Cleaner

1/2 C. white vinegar
2 Tbsp. baking soda
10 drops tea tree, lavender, or lemon essential oil
(for their disinfectant properties)

Mix the vinegar, essential oils and a little water before adding baking soda in a clean spray bottle (glass is best). Then fill to top with water. Use about a 12 oz bottle. Gently shake to mix ingredients, and then spray, wipe with a cloth, and allow it to dry.

Homemade Liquid Dish Soap

1/2 C. warm distilled water
2 tsp. kosher salt
1/2 C. white vinegar
1/2 cup Dr. Bronner's Sal Suds
1 tsp. lemon juice
Lemon essential oil (optional)

Combine distilled water with salt, stirring until the salt is dissolved. In a separate bowl, combine the vinegar, Sal Suds, and lemon juice. Stir this mixture into the salt water mixture, and stir until thickened. You may wish to add 10-15 drops of lemon essential oil both for scent and for disinfectant properties.

Pour mixture into a recycled dish soap container for storage.

Homemade Mirror & Glass Cleaner

1/4 C. white vinegar
1/4 C. isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol
1 Tbsp. cornstarch
2 C. water
8-10 drops essential oil of choice, optional

Combine everything in a spray bottle. Shake to mix well. Spray onto glass surface and wipe clean.

Be sure you shake well to fully integrate the cornstarch, which is the ingredient that reduces streaking. You'll want to shake before each use.



Interested in Virtual Classes?

Visit the classes page on our website to be directed to seven sister co-ops that have steady lineups of virtual classes. Most of them are FREE to attend!



Sandwich Menu Update

Sandwich specials are back! They will change frequently throughout the month and be served while supplies last. Watch our website and social media channels for updates.

Upgrade your Cheesy Cheese to and Adult Grilled Cheese by adding your choice of turkey, ham or tuna for \$2.

New Grab & Go Options

The deli crew is now featuring delicious bowls in the grab & go cooler. The bowl varieties will rotate through the months so keep your eyes peeled for new flavors.

DELI HAPPENINGS!

Enjoy Deli Deal Mondays!

Every Monday in March enjoy a free cup of Alakaf Natural Harvest Blend drip coffee with the purchase of any deli item.

- * Limited to one free drip coffee per shopper transaction, per trip
- * Not available through curbside pickup



Beverage Specials are Back!

MARCH SPECIALS

LONDON FOG:

Earl Grey tea with steamed milk & vanilla syrup

SHAMROCK SMOOTHIE:

Almond milk, spinach, mint & vanilla syrups

Deli Deal

Mondays in March

Free Drip Coffee
with any deli purchase

*not valid through curbside pickup
*limit one free coffee per shopper transaction, per trip

NOW OFFERING

Curbside Pickup

Visit our website for details.

Looking to stretch your grocery budget?

coop basics

coop basics

Quality Foods at Low Prices!

~ ON SILVER LAKE ~
OPEN MON - FRI: 8 AM - 7 PM
WEEKENDS: 9 AM - 6 PM
732 N. 4th St. • Virginia, MN 55792
PHONE: 218-741-4663
FAX: 218-741-6153
E-MAIL: info@naturalharvest.coop
WEB: www.naturalharvest.coop
Visit us online! Like us on Facebook, and follow us on Instagram @NaturalHarvestCoop!

*Locally owned,
organically grown.*

NATURAL HARVEST

FOOD CO-OP

est. 1979

The Harvest Beet
SPRING 2021

"The Harvest Beet" is a publication of Natural Harvest Food Co-op. Editor: Briana Sterle

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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