

Spring 2025 Issue



2025, eNewsletters

## The Plainfield Co-op Newsletter

### *The Everything for Everybody Store*



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### Seeking Ad Coordinator

The Newsletter is seeking an ad coordinator who will solicit new advertisers as well as track current advertisers and renewals. This job provides a working member discount. Contact the editor: Glenda Bissex, [songboat@vtlink.net](mailto:songboat@vtlink.net) or 454-7895

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White Beans and Greens with Parmesan I was never a fan of white beans until I tried this recipe.



Cheese Blintzes Yum!!!! Eat blintzes for breakfast, lunch, dinner or dessert!

Why Become a Co-op Member? Everyone is welcome to shop here, but members have a special role: they literally own the business!

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## Special Membership Meetings: Sale of 153 Main Street



♥ [2025, Reports and Updates](#)

We have a buyer for the village store and community center at 153 Main Street! Come learn about their plans and ask your questions.

**In-person:** Sunday, May 11, 4:00 pm, Plainfield Town Hall Opera House

**Zoom:** Monday, May 12, 7:00 pm

- <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85925134414>
- Passcode: 558222

Same agenda for both meetings; attend the one that works best for you.



**All real estate transactions must be approved by a vote of the membership. Voting will begin at the May 11 meeting and continue through May 19 at the Route 2 store.**

To vote, you must be a member in good standing: current with your equity payments. A member share costs \$180, with minimum annual payments of \$20 until you reach that total. You can make payment at the registers. This is a big moment for the Plainfield Co-op. Join us to learn more – then vote!

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## About This Newsletter, Spring 2025



by Glenda Bissex, Editor

“The Everything for Everybody Store” is our theme this issue.

On Facebook, somebody raved she could find anything in the new Co-op store. And that’s just about true as shelves full of grocery items, a cooler full of fresh produce, a freezer full of ice creams, and more have been added to the Plainfield Hardware Store. We invite you to walk up and down the aisles, discovering everything you can

buy here now. You might not need to take that trip into town!

In this Newsletter David Ertel shows us around the hardware department, Theis Bergstrom talks about wines, and we get a look at the bulk foods section of the grocery department. Michael and Lisa are opening the greenhouse for the season, and we get a tour of what’s inside. Future issues of this quarterly newsletter will give a close look at the comprehensive grocery department and the well-stocked pet section.

Whatever the department, the new Co-op aims to be a store for everybody in our community. That’s the message from Board member Jan Waterman in her article “Everyone Is Welcome.” It’s clear from the President’s and the General Manager’s reports. For everyone who loves good food (and I think that’s everyone) this newsletter regularly features yummy, not expensive, seasonal recipes. This time it’s cheese blintzes, frittata, and braised white beans.

The Co-op is a store not only for the shoppers in our community but for the farmers and other local producers to sell their products to. Historically, both the Plainfield Hardware and the Plainfield Co-op have made supporting local producers a



priority. That’s true for the greenhouse as well as the grocery. Check out the amazing array of locally baked breads! Now, after the floods and with the cutbacks in federal funding, local farmers need our support more than ever, as you can read in Gail Falk’s article.

Recently I visited the Buffalo Mountain Market in Hardwick. Three years ago the Buffalo Mountain Co-op bought a conventional grocery store in town whose owners wanted to retire. Some customers feared that meant the hippies were taking over. However, the store has become an inspiring example of a hybrid market that serves the whole community. When the Co-op moved into the conventional store, they thought they would finally have ample parking. It turns out their new parking lot can be full to overflowing. Inside, bags of Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups hang happily beside a row of Equal Exchange organic chocolate bars. Reaching out into the community, the store gives working member discounts to volunteers, like fire fighters, who contribute essential services to the whole community.

From City Market to Buffalo Mountain Market to the Plainfield Co-op, the meaning of co-operative is growing to include the whole community.

The Newsletter Committee:

- Glenda Bissex, Editor, [songboat@vtlink.net](mailto:songboat@vtlink.net)
- Gail Falk, Staff Writer
- Elizabeth Mathai, Design & Layout, and Ad Coordinator
- Debra Stoleroff, Recipe Editor

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## Celebrate Spring in the Greenhouse!



by Gail Falk, Staff Writer

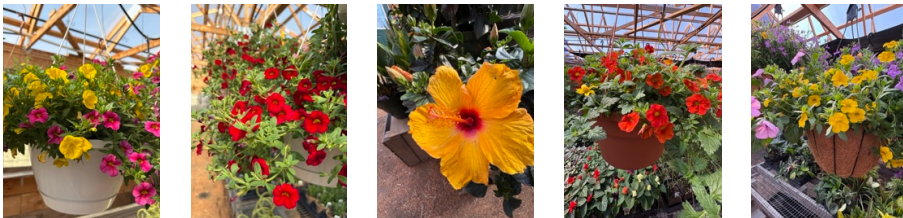
Surround yourself with the colors and smells of spring with a visit to the Greenhouse!

For weeks, Michael Hoffman, Operations Manager, and Lisa Howard, Lead Grocery Buyer, have been preparing for this short, intense season when we plant our gardens and decorate our homes with flower baskets.

They have been ordering flower, herb and vegetable starts from Vermont growers — Blackbird Organics and Friends & Family Farm nearby, and Claussen's and Paquette's in Chittenden County. Asked what plants he is bringing, Kagan Dewey of Blackbird answers, "All your gardening favorites."



Lisa and Michael stand at the greenhouse door



There are seed potatoes and onion sets and bulk pea and corn seeds in bins, and a large selection of flower, herb, and vegetable seed packets. Ian Maas and Roseanne Scotta are returning with a variety of the unusual decorative, medicinal and edible perennials they raise at Great Brook Nursery in Plainfield. They are part-time Greenhouse staff, together with Co-op old-timer Kristin Brosky and floor staff from the main store.

The Greenhouse register can ring up purchases from anywhere in the store, and eligible customers can purchase veggie and herb starts with their EBT card.

There are gardening and landscaping tools and gloves, and locally made cedar raised beds. And, if someone in your family would rather sit and watch, there are Hillcrest Adirondack chairs made on Ducharme Road in Marshfield.

The Co-op is growing, and the plants are ready to grow. As Michael Hoffman says, "It's the first year where the Co-op can put its roots in the ground."



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## The Hardware Department: “A Little of Everything.”



by Gail Falk, Staff Writer

When you're ready to start your spring cleaning and repair projects, the Hardware Department is ready for you. There is a wide range of housecleaning products, tools, plumbing and electrical supplies, building equipment, and paint.

“We try to have a little of everything,” says David Ertel, Hardware Department manager. “We're not trying to be a comprehensive building supply company, but we want to have what you need for a weekend job — a switch plate, tacks, bolts. Instead of having to buy a box of 100, the way you do at a big box store, you can get just as many or as few screws, nails, and nuts as you need.”

Ertel started working at the Hardware Store three and a half years ago after many years in manufacturing jobs in Montpelier. He and his wife Linda have lived around here for 37 years, the past 33 on Hollister Hill. Linda is a longtime medical secretary at the Plainfield Health Center, and now both the couple's children work at the Health Center, too.

Ertel learned the hardware business by working under Rich Christiansen, who built the current building in 2006. Before selling the store last year, Christiansen had phased down sales of grain and fencing for farmers because they were too labor intensive. Perhaps reflecting the area's changing demographics, the store now has an expanded pet department. Ertel says he tries as much as possible to avoid changing what is carried, so that customers in the midst of a project can be confident they'll find what they are looking for when they come in.



The store stays equipped for emergencies: flashlights, batteries, sump pumps, sand bags. Other big sellers are seasonal: “Depending on the time of year,” says Ertel, “I may sell hundreds of mouse traps in a month.”



David Ertel with color chip samples

Although most customers are local, the Hardware Department has developed a regional clientele for stove and chimney pipes and fittings. In fact, Plainfield Co-op and Hardware is one of the biggest dealers in the state for chimney supplies, says Ertel, and chimney pipes and supplies are one of the store's biggest sellers

Color chip samples for Cabot Stains and Clark+Kensington Paints line one wall of the department. The store can mix stain or paint to match any of the chips, or, if you bring in a sample, they can scan the sample and mix paint to match. If you bought paint at the store in the past, they can look up a record of it. Those records, says Ertel, used to be on “slips of paper” but now the paint and stain records are computerized.

Garden supplies — seeds, gloves, tools, fertilizer — are moving to the Greenhouse at the other end of the building. This will give hardware a little more room. “It's a constant battle for space,” says Ertel.

Ertel chats about what's going on at the store on WDEV Radio every Monday morning at 8:40. It's a connection Rich Christiansen started, and now Ertel has taken over the slot. Give a listen.

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## What's a Cooperative Hardware Store?!



2025, Reports and Updates

In August 2024, the Plainfield Co-op grocery store purchased Plainfield Hardware, and the hardware store became a cooperative business, too, owned by the members. Fun fact: both ACE Hardware and True Value Hardware are also cooperatively-owned! According to the national Co-op newsletter, "Hardware is a very competitive business. Being part of a cooperative makes it possible for small-scale, locally-owned business owners to compete." On Route 2, we are one store — hardware, grocery, deli. Everyone is welcome to shop here, but members have a special role: they literally own the business! The benefits:

- **Dividends \$\$** – Receive annual patronage dividends if the Co-op makes a profit
- **Special Orders** – Place special orders for grocery or hardware at a discount
- **No Shifts!** – You don't need to be a working member or work any shifts
- **Prepay** – Prepay your account and spend the money as you shop
- **Senior Discount** – Members age 65 and older get a 3% discount on Tuesdays

**Equity Model, Voting Rights** – Member-owners contribute equally and have equal standing: one share equals one vote. With your voting rights, help determine the future and direction of the Co-op by electing our board of directors, and voting on real estate decisions, bylaw changes, and equity share cost. You can also provide community leadership by running for the board or serving on committees. Or just stay in the loop with the quarterly newsletter.



**Support Local** – Support our local economy and producers by investing in a hardware and grocery store owned by the community, for the community. If you prefer to shop at local businesses — restaurants, bookstores, food co-ops — then Plainfield Co-op is an excellent choice for your hardware needs, while also creating a thriving, resilient local economy.

**\$180 share price** for lifetime membership. Pay in full or make annual payments as low as \$20. **Join today!** Any staff member can sign you up at the register.

## The Wine Department, Etc.



2025

by *Theis Bergstrom, Admin, Data and Personnel Manager*

Since the dawn of time, the struggle to find potable liquids has driven the progress of human society. Why did we first come down out of the trees? Because we were thirsty.

Why did we harness fire? to find something to drink at night.

Why did we invent soup? so we could drink WHILE WE EAT.

What separated us from the Neanderthals? They didn't experience thirst.\*

Along that journey we collectively realized that water can be untrustworthy. We looked around, saw some grapes, and decided it would be better to drink those if possible. Just look at them. They're little tiny waterskins. The problem is the shelf life of unrefrigerated juice isn't terribly long. (This is also why we invented the icebox, see? It's all about thirst!) So our ancestors developed a trick to make the juice last a bit longer. They did this by wielding the mysterious power of yeast. Suddenly the juice could be stored for a really long time without going bad.

As with many human undertakings, we quickly began obsessing with the minutiae of this project: grape selection, soil composition, aging time, materials for aging in; and in the process began making this fermented fruit drink into something so much more than that. Fast forward a couple thousand years and you have the inevitable



*Wine Shelves at the Co-op*



creation of the Plainfield Co-op. I realize it doesn't explicitly say anything about drinkable liquids in our mission statement, but I think we all see the subtext: we continue the noble lineage of slaking thirst that started with those early tree-dwellers.

I like to think that those arboreal antecedents would be impressed with the progress we (at the Co-op) have made to offer an interesting and carefully curated selection of wines. While we might not have the room to cover every terroir and every variety—sorry, no Croatian Ribolla Giallas at the moment—we are constantly expanding our selection. Whether you're pairing with a caprese salad of heirloom tomatoes and handwrapped mozzarella, or with wildebeest bone marrow freshly scavenged from the savannah, there's almost certainly something here for you. (There's some really nice Vermentinos for the first, and I can think of two super fun Cabernet Sauvignons for the later).

In upcoming newsletters I might get more specific with the wine selections. I might try actively convincing you to try some really fun skin-contact wines, or convert you to the absolutely underappreciated world of dry Rieslings. Maybe we'll talk about historic wine regions. I don't know! I might even go on a fun little tangent, and in keeping with the theme of things to drink that are delicious, talk about coffee cultivars and processing. Or maybe even explain why coffee prices are about to go up (the short version is weather, the long version is LONG).

*\*I am not a historian, archaeologist, or anthropologist; some claims in this piece have not been peer reviewed or fact checked.*

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## Theis Bergstrom

Theis used to live in Plainfield and work at the Co-op. Then he didn't for a while. Now he does one of those two things. Mostly his time at work involves futzing with numbers and performing what can generally be called "admin." That all happens upstairs. Sometimes he's downstairs interacting with wine and cheese, which he coincidentally also enjoys doing recreationally. His other hobbies involve drinking coffee and writing autobiographical bios in the third person.



## Bulk Food Section



by Gail Falk, Staff Writer



Customers who shopped at the Co-op in the village will remember Deb Bothfeld as the unfailingly friendly face at the checkout counter, where she worked for three years. As a staff person from the old store working at the new store, she enjoys greeting old customers and bringing her knowledge and experience to the brand new Bulk Food section.

The Bulk section is so new that some customers are unaware of it, located beyond the grocery shelves next to the front window. Deb works with lead buyer Lisa Howard to order and stock bulk foods and coffee, and she helps out on the spices. She also does repacking.

The Bulk section in the new store is similar to the old Co-op bulk section with "good old tried and true" products, such as Farnham maple syrup, canola and olive oils, oats, lentils, flours, but also new choices. For instance, the bulk section now carries King Arthur all purpose flour. Because there are more customers, deliveries come more frequently, and hence the food is fresher. Right now the Co-op is working on building up reserves in case tariffs increase prices or reduce supply.

Deb and Lisa are working with new distributors, such as Hillcrest and KeHE, comparing prices and looking to get the best deals on bulk foods. They are finding the distributors willing to be flexible and offer good deals to a new business. Also, Deb says, it helps to have the store's accounts paid up to date.



Deb Bothfeld

## Everyone is Welcome



by Jan Waterman, Co-op Board Member

So much in our world is changing so quickly. Our Co-op has changed. It looks different than the dear old Co-op we grew with over the last decades. It feels different. The ambiance in the building has changed. The ceiling is higher, the spaces are full of light, the shelves are taller, some of the faces are new. The staff is great—friendly, helpful, knowledgeable, responsive and ready to help everyone. And—wow!—we have so many new products to choose from. The Co-op still carries the foods we've come to depend on, and it also still carries the basic values we cherish.

One of the most basic values I cherish in any co-op is the intention to support and strengthen the community it serves. Electric co-ops, dairy co-ops, agricultural co-ops, hardware co-ops, food co-ops—all are formed in response to a sense of community which can be better served by people coming together and cooperating to strengthen and empower its members. That co-op members make decisions and take actions with the intention that it be a vital, beneficial part of its community—that, for me, is foundational.

At the Plainfield Co-op, that intention involves providing food and other necessities for members *as well as* for the larger community. It means supporting local farmers and producers by prioritizing purchases from them, which in turn strengthens our local economy and helps sustain our local food systems. It means doing business in ways that enhance beneficial connections, and support the health of all living beings, and the soil and water and air. It means stepping up when the floods hit. It means providing whatever we can as needed, as we're able, to help our community thrive as a whole. It means we welcome and serve everyone.

Serving the community also means thriving as a business, in order to provide well for our employees, and support our expanded mission, as the staff and members have always done in countless ways.

Now on Route 2, our new store is able to offer many more choices, supplying a wider range of needs and different tastes. We have organic and conventional consumables. We have beer and kombucha. We have Caramel Cow Tails and high quality grass fed meat. All Souls organic tortillas and Joyce Fowler's donuts! We have more fancy foods, and more foods that are affordable. We have hardware, pet food, garden supplies, a café, a deli, and now gorgeous live plants we can grow in our spring gardens. We have the opportunity to begin growing new relationships with a wider range of our local population. We have new customers to invite into our growing membership, and new faces to include in our expanding Co-op community.

"Everyone is welcome," we say, and we mean it. We have something for everyone!



### Inviting Your Helping Hands – Join the Building Committee

If you have builder's skills, the Co-op could use your help. We have several needs, some immediate and some which will continue into the future. We're looking for interested people who are excited about having a more proactive committee focused on identifying issues and future planning.

You can help our Co-op continue to be an attractive, thriving, and enjoyable place to shop for healthy food, hardware supplies, garden plants and more. Join a really great crew, already up and doing wonderful things. We have meetings once a month.

If you can spare a bit of time to contribute to the ongoing health of the new store, please get in touch with Mike Brosky at [michael\\_a\\_brosky@yahoo.com](mailto:michael_a_brosky@yahoo.com) or Jan Waterman, [jmwinvt@hotmail.com](mailto:jmwinvt@hotmail.com)

Thank you, Building Committee members, current and soon to join!



## Transitions



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### President's Report, Spring 2025

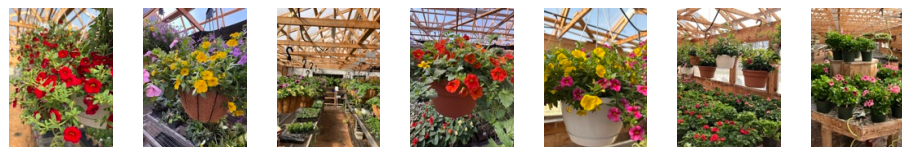
*by Rose Paul, Board President*

A bittersweet moment is upon us. The Co-op board has advertised the village building for sale, and we have an offer. The board will hold an informational meeting in person at the Plainfield Opera House on Sunday May 11 at 4:00, and again by zoom on Monday May 12 at 7:00 ([see link info elsewhere in this newsletter](#)). Come

learn about the proposed buyer's ideas for future use of the building and ask questions of the board. New ownership will spark new life for the building and the village, and allow Co-op staff to focus on store operations without worrying about maintaining a vacant building.

The membership needs to approve any real estate transactions, and a 2/3 majority is needed for a real estate vote to pass. Only members in good standing can vote, so please make sure you are up-to-date in your equity payments. Voting will begin at the Opera House during the meeting on May 11, and continue at the Rt. 2 store through May 19. Ballots are available at the store, and there is a locked voting box where you insert your completed ballot. You will be asked to put your member number on your ballot and this will be verified when the vote is tallied.

Spring is Greenhouse Season at Plainfield Co-op! Check out the fabulous plants and stock up on all your gardening needs—soils, fertilizers, tools, seeds, and even stones to line your patio. A visit to the Co-op greenhouse is both aromatherapy and a visual feast. There's something for everyone's aesthetic and here's a tip: the hanging flower baskets go fast, so don't delay in choosing yours.



The Co-op is hitting its stride filling the grocery shelves with the food selections you want. We aspire to be a grocery for everyone and we offer a range of brands and prices. Don't see something you'd regularly buy? Mention it to staff. Special orders are still an option, just ask. And it's never too early to stock up on canning supplies because strawberry-rhubarb jam season is just around the corner.

Working hard outside to get the garden planted? Give yourself a break and grab a delicious sandwich at the deli. We offer muffins, sweet treats, soups and options for gluten-free and vegetarian—just ask.

I want to give a shout out to our hardworking friendly staff and our very capable General Manager Jeannine DeWald. They've been working to stock up and optimize how products are displayed, and they've stayed cheerfully determined through it all. As a testament to the effectiveness of their hard work, we've been getting a steady stream of new members signing up—welcome to all of you!

Our beloved Plainfield Co-op is entering this exciting new phase of its 53 years on a strong footing with determination and gusto. Thanks for being part of making it happen!

### Board Members

- Rose Paul, President
- Anne Van Couvering, Vice President
- John Cleary, Treasurer
- Claire Dumas
- Jan Waterman
- Andy Robinson

Contact: [board@plainfieldcoop.com](mailto:board@plainfieldcoop.com)

More information at: <https://plainfieldcoop.com/board-of-directors/>

## Wanted: Board Members!

The Co-op is always seeking enthusiastic, curious members to serve on the board. Specifically, we seek people who...

- Are committed to cooperative principles and a stronger local economy.
- Bring relevant expertise: business, financial management, legal, governance, marketing, fundraising and grant-seeking, etc.
- Play well with others.
- Follow through on their volunteer commitments.
- Are willing to prioritize board service.

When the board terms end in August, we anticipate some turnover. Therefore, we would love to add a few new members this spring to ensure a smooth transition. If you'd like to learn more, contact board president Rose Paul ([rosegeo@myfairpoint.net](mailto:rosegeo@myfairpoint.net)) or any board member.

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[General Manager's Report, Spring 2025](#)

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## General Manager's Report, Spring 2025



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*by Jeannine DeWald, General Manager*

Dear Co-op and Community Members,

This past December, I returned to Plainfield Co-op as General manager. It is an honor to serve the Co-op again as staff and membership work together to guide the Co-op in its latest adventure.

I want to start by thanking each of you for all you have contributed to Plainfield Co-op. You are the heart of our community, and your support makes this project possible. It has been wonderful to see both new and familiar faces shopping our store, working on committees, and participating in our mission to bring healthy food and other goods to the larger Plainfield community. Thanks to all of you, that mission now includes hardware, lawn and garden, household items, a greenhouse, and a fabulous deli!

Special thanks are due to our wonderful and innovative staff, who have gone above and beyond to accomplish multiple large, small, and often challenging projects over the past several months. I'm incredibly proud of them. I've never seen anyone hustle like this before. Constant change and one big project after another. It is amazing what has been accomplished so far, and we could not have done it without all of you.

As we move into the Spring season, I want to take a moment to reflect on the past quarter, and share some highlights from Plainfield Co-op's operations, challenges, and plans for the future. The original business plan assumed the Co-op would make the move to Route 2 shortly after the time of purchase, and that increased revenues would immediately follow. However, without a General Manager, store design, or equipment in place, the move was delayed for several months. When I came on in December, shelving and coolers had been purchased, and the Route 2 staff had begun expanding the product line, but the closure of the village location was still ahead of us, as well as the move itself.

We faced the additional challenge of merging two very different point of sale systems, a complicated process that would take several months to complete. As of April 1 it is fully up and running, which means we can now take annual membership payments, recharge member gift cards, and accept new memberships! We've already gained some new members and will be holding a membership drive soon!

Revenues have also risen steadily since the February move to Route 2. January sales for the combined stores were only 64% of budgeted revenues, but by February, they had climbed to 74%, and by March, 79%. Through increased customer traffic and continued expansion of our product line, we expect revenues to continue to climb, reaching 100% of budget by December 2025. Our projections are shown in the table below.

2025 Proforma (Projection) vs. Actual/Estimated Future Revenues:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Proforma</b>	212,230	184,870	202,696	234,699	446,320	294,044	301,244	290,852	277,798	256,487	256,095	244,762
<b>Actual/Est. Future</b>	135,002	136,891	159,523	188,759	400,000	249,938	256,057	261,767	250,018	243,663	243,290	244,762
	64%	74%	79%	80%	90%	85%	85%	90%	90%	95%	95%	100%

Product selection has been essential to our continued growth. We have recently expanded the cheese and wine departments to include several new offerings, and are continuing to add new grocery, bulk, and wellness items. We have initiated relationships with several new vendors this month, and aim to expand our grocery offerings to include a wider selection of organic, natural, and conventional items to suit the tastes, preferences, and budgets of the wider Plainfield community, members and non-members alike. We strive to keep products as affordable as possible while also nurturing our connections with local farmers and producers.

The Co-op has a number of time-sensitive capital projects that require our attention. These include building modifications to meet current fire safety standards, repairs to the rear wall and roof of the grocery-side of the building, and the purchase and installation of cooling systems to maintain appropriate temperatures for shelf-stable food products, as

well as to provide a comfortable environment for staff and shoppers. We are currently looking at heat pump systems with partial rebates available from Efficiency Vermont. Complete estimates for these projects are still being determined.

Due to the scope and scale of these projects, and to allow time for continued growth of the business at Route 2, fundraising for the Co-op is ongoing. There are many ways you can help! If you are not yet a member, you can join! A full membership share is \$180 per person, which can be paid at \$20 per year, or \$180 upfront. Paying your full membership share helps to ensure these projects are fully capitalized. If you are already a member and have been making regular annual payments, you can also opt to pay off your share in full! If you would like to make a gift or member loan toward these projects, please contact the Co-op's Board of Directors at [board@plainfieldcoop.com](mailto:board@plainfieldcoop.com). Donations of \$1,000 or less can be made directly through our Give Butter account. <https://givebutter.com/plainfieldcoophardware>. If you have fundraising ideas, please share them with the Board.

I want to thank everyone again for their continued support, and invite you to share your thoughts, ideas and requests with us. For general information and requests, please contact us at [info@plainfieldcoop.com](mailto:info@plainfieldcoop.com). If you would like to reach out to me personally, please email me at [gm@plainfieldcoop.com](mailto:gm@plainfieldcoop.com). It truly takes a village, and we are grateful for all you do. See you at the store!

**Seeking Ad Coordinator**

The Newsletter is seeking an ad coordinator who will solicit new advertisers as well as track current advertisers and renewals. This job provides a working member discount. Contact the editor: Glenda Bissex, [songboat@vtlink.net](mailto:songboat@vtlink.net) or 454-7895

## Staff List, April 2025



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Jeannine DeWald – General Manager  
Beatrix Dalton – Deli Staff  
Billy Bornstein – Deli Lead  
Brooke Deschamps – Staff  
Chris Thompson – Maintenance  
Daniel (Dan) Siegle – Data assistant  
David Ertel – Hardware Buyer  
Dawn Welch – Grocery Buyer  
Debra (Deb) Bothfeld – Bulk Buyer  
Eben Markova-Gold – Staff  
Hillary MacGregor – Staff  
Jorja Washburn – Staff  
Kendall Flowers – Staff  
Lisa Howard – Lead Grocery Buyer/Greenhouse  
Margie Yoder – Substitute Staff  
Marlow Van Dyke – Admin and Data Assistant  
Michael Hoffman – Hardware and Operations Manager  
Theis Bergstrom – Admin, Data and Personnel Manager



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[Thanks to Former Co-op Staff](#)

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## Thanks to Former Co-op Staff



[2025](#)

by Glenda Bissex

Some village store staff transitioned up to Route 2 where longtime Co-op shoppers feel welcomed by their familiar faces. Other staff did not continue. We miss and want to thank them for extra help they contributed to making the move. But above all to thank them for helping keep the village store going during hard times:

- When Covid hit and the Co-op had to improvise new ways of serving shoppers.
- When Goddard and the Community Center closed, decreasing the number of shoppers.
- When they took on additional responsibilities after other staff members left and weren't replaced.
- When some staff members lost their homes to flooding, and some lost their roads.
- When there were bare spots on the shelves as suppliers waited to be paid before making another delivery.
- When customers were feeling discouraged.
- Hard times when a lot of us were stressed but felt better just going into the Co-op and being cheerfully greeted by our friendly staff.



They kept the Co-op on life supports so it was still alive to make the move—especially Anji Domino who gave her all and somehow kept her spirits up during all the hard times. Gratitude to you all.

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## Treasurer's Report, Spring 2025



2025, Reports and Updates



by John Cleary, Board Treasurer

Over the last few years, reviewing the finances of the Co-op has been a bit stressful for the Board, staff and the Co-op community. There was so much uncertainty about whether we had the financial and management capacity to pull off this big and exciting expansion project. The good (great!) news is that we did it! While we will continue to face challenges, we survived the transition and are now able to focus on growing the business at the new location. The

support from the Vermont Community Foundation, Vermont Economic Development Authority, and the Cooperative Fund of the Northeast was amazing and essential. They believed in us—but only because YOU, the members, believed in our Co-op. The capital campaign that raised over \$500,000 in member loans and donations gave these lenders the assurance that this project had a future.

The fundamentals of the business are stronger today because we now own a larger, well-located business with a talented and committed staff and have tremendous potential to grow and serve even more community members. While we increased our debt load significantly, we now have a road map to a successful future. We also survived our first winter season when sales always slow and are now entering the busy spring season when monthly revenue increases significantly. We can't wait to see you in the greenhouse! We now need to focus on continuing to grow the business to finance the necessary improvements to the building, service our debt and have adequate cash flow for operations.

Annual revenue for 2024 was approximately \$1.2 million which included several months of a difficult transition period to Route 2 during the fall/winter while the village store continued to operate. Sales were down at both locations during this transition and labor

costs were high. The consolidation of all operations at one location has helped to streamline the business and improve the labor budget. We are now seeing significant growth in monthly sales revenue. The budget for 2025 shows estimated gross revenue of approximately \$2.5 million. Both our assets and liabilities have increased significantly. Having adequate cash on hand for inventory and unexpected capital needs continues to be a major focus for the staff and Board. There is still a lot of hard work ahead, but I have confidence in both the Co-op and our community.

Information about Special Membership Meetings on May 11th & 12th, can be found here: <https://plainfieldcoop.com/special-membership-meetings-sale-of-153-main-street>



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Thank to Farmer Co-op Staff

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Financial Update

## Fundraising Update



2025, Reports and Updates

### How You Can Help Complete The Campaign

by Andy Robinson, on behalf of the Board

Last May – nearly a year ago! – we began raising money to purchase Plainfield Hardware and merge the two businesses on Route 2. Since then, we've raised nearly \$2.1 million in loans and gifts from commercial and nonprofit lenders, Co-op members, neighbors, and other co-ops.

To meet our goal and finish the campaign, we seek to raise an additional \$50,000. This money will help us:

- Make needed physical improvements: better heating and cooling, better storage, an effective point-of-sale system, etc.
- Fully stock the store and the greenhouse.
- Expand our hours – which, of course, requires more staffing.
- Implement our marketing plan.

### How you can help

#### 1. Complete your member equity payments or become a new member

Like most co-ops, we operate on an **equity model**. All member-owners contribute equally and have equal standing: one share equals one vote.

The current share price is \$180 per person, which can be paid in full when you join or in annual payments as low as \$20. If you are currently a member and can pay the full balance due, that really helps.

#### 2. Donate

Checks payable to Plainfield Cooperative. (Or, if you want to make a tax-deductible gift, payable to Cooperative Development Institute.) Mail to:

Rose Paul, Board President  
81 East Hill Road  
Plainfield VT 05667

Or you can give online: <https://givebutter.com/plainfieldcoophardware>. (No, the campaign has not ended.)

#### 3. Make a loan

For loan terms and conditions, email me ([andy@andyrobinsononline.com](mailto:andy@andyrobinsononline.com)) or Rose Paul ([rosegeo@myfairpoint.net](mailto:rosegeo@myfairpoint.net)).

We encourage you to keep shopping at the Co-op! Your patronage means everything.

In advance, thanks for your support. Together, we will ensure the future of our Plainfield Co-op.



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## Federal Funds for Farmers Cut



by Gail Falk, Staff Writer

Congressman Jim McGovern (D MA) used his keynote address at the annual meeting of the Neighboring Food Co-ops Association (NFCA) to offer both a warning and a call to action.

“We are witnessing a concerted effort to starve out independent farmers and dismantle local food systems,” said McGovern, who is a senior member of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition and Oversight. “Funds that rightfully belong to the farmers have been frozen without any legal basis or even feigned rationale.”

Since he spoke in early March, the Trump administration has cut close to \$2 million in previously committed funds for Vermont farms and farm food producers. Two programs that were cut supply food grown on Vermont farms to schools, child care centers, food banks and food shelves. The programs provided a stable source of income for farmers and fresh healthy food for children and low income Vermonters. Local Food for Schools and Child Care was slated to provide \$1,222,076 to purchase local produce for lunches in Vermont schools and childcare programs. Another nearly half million dollars supported the Local Food Purchase Assistance Program, which paid for the purchase and distribution of local foods to area food banks and pantries. This money provided income to more than 100 Vermont farms and reached schools in all 14 counties. In March, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture received a letter from USDA saying that the programs “no longer effectuate agency priorities.”

In reporting the end of funding, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture said on its website:

“We want to take this opportunity to briefly celebrate the impact of this federal funding for Vermont producers over the past three years. These federally funded projects resulted in new and expanded partnerships between Vermont farms, schools, food shelves, and community organizations. Over 120 Vermont farms and food producers participated in these programs. The success of these programs is a testament to the collaboration and commitment of the grantees and partner farms. These funds have supported farms and organizations’ capacity to buoy their communities through post-COVID difficulties and multiple natural disasters. These funds have increased resilience across many of Vermont’s diverse communities not just in supply chains, but in connecting communities to each other and to nourishing food.”

“The news that the additional funds have been pulled back by USDA comes as a huge disappointment — for Vermont farms, schools, early childhood programs, and organizations focused on feeding their communities. The absence of these funds does not change the Agency’s commitment to supporting Vermont producers and increasing food access for all Vermonters. The Agency continues to advocate that USDA restore the funding. We have been working with other states on making the case that these programs were great for farmers and great for consumers.”

In addition to these programs, the Trump administration has cut a dozen U.S. Agency of Agriculture jobs in our state, diminishing technical support available to farmers. A number of infrastructure and climate mitigation programs for farmers are on hold.

Describing the situation to Seven Days, farmer Ansel Ploog of Flywheel Farm in Woodbury said Vermont’s local food system is facing a fundamental threat. She compared the system to a mushroom plant: “It’s like the fruiting body that you see on the surface, and underneath is this incredible network of workers and customers; publicly funded science and organizations like NOFA-VT; and other farmers, educators and suppliers. So many of the connections and nourishment that sustain small farms are under fire.”

Congressman McGovern concluded his address with a call for co-ops to take action, urging us to organize, advocate for policies that protect local food systems, and engage our communities in the fight for food justice. “This is like a five-alarm fire,” he said. “And

the only way we're going to stop it is through people power.”

Notes: Plainfield Co-op is a member of the Neighboring Food Co-ops Association.

Flywheel Farm is one of our suppliers.

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**Check: [www.easthilltreefarm.com](http://www.easthilltreefarm.com)**

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## Mary Worely's Frittata



♥ [2025, Recipes](#)

by Mary Worley, collected by Debra Stoleroff

Mary Worley, a weaver from Middlebury, shared this recipe with me over 20 years ago. It is the richest, creamiest and best frittata I have ever made. You need to keep the onion and garlic but other vegetables can be substituted with your favorite combinations.

### Ingredients

- 3/4 cups chopped onion
- 1-2 cloves minced garlic
- 3/4 cups chopped green pepper
- 1 1/2 cups sliced mushrooms
- 1 1/2 cups chopped zucchini
- 3 Tbl. oil
- 6 beaten eggs
- 1/4 cup light cream
- 1 lb. cream cheese (diced)
- 1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 cups cubed bread
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper



### Preparation

1. Sauté onions and garlic, add other veggies until zucchini is tender. Cool slightly
2. Beat eggs with cream. Add cream cheese, cheddar, bread, salt and pepper to veggies.
3. Mix well. Pour into 10" spring form pan. Bake at 350 for 1 hour or so. Cool before eating.



## White Beans and Greens with Parmesan



2025, Recipes

Collected by Debra Stoleroff, adapted from a recipe by Lidley Heuck

*I was never a fan of white beans until I tried this recipe. It is my current go-to dinner when I want to make a fast yummy, nutritious meal. I use canned beans – great northern, cannellini or similar types of white beans (not garbanzo beans).*

Yield: 4 servings

### Ingredients

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, diced small
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh rosemary or thyme
- 5 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon red-pepper flakes, plus more to taste
- 1 large or 2 small bunches kale or Swiss chard (10 to 12 ounces)
- 2 (15-ounce) cans cannellini beans, rinsed
- 2 cups low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella (optional)
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan or Pecorino Romano, plus more for serving
- Toasted country bread, for serving



### Preparation

1. In a 12-inch skillet or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over medium. Add the onion and rosemary, and cook for 4 to 6 minutes, stirring occasionally, until tender. Add the garlic and red-pepper flakes and cook about 1 minute.

2. Begin adding handfuls of the greens, cook until the leaves wilt.
3. Add the white beans, broth and 1/4 teaspoon black pepper, and stir to combine. Bring to a boil, then turn the heat to low and simmer, mashing some of the beans with a wooden spoon, until the liquid has reduced and thickened, 6 to 8 minutes.
4. Turn off the heat and add the lemon juice, then the mozzarella, if using, and Pecorino Romano. Season with salt and pepper.

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[Cheese Blintzes](#)



## Cheese Blintzes



2025, Recipes

Collected by Debra Stoleroff

Yum!!!! Eat blintzes for breakfast, lunch, dinner or dessert! You can also opt to make the crepes and fill them with anything you like, savory or sweet.

### Ingredients

Crepes:

- 1 'container' whole raw eggs
- 1 'container' all-purpose flour
- 1 3/4 'container' whole milk
- 1/4 'container' melted sweet butter
- A dash to a pinch of salt.



Blintz filling: (10 blintz)

- 1 cup farmer's cheese, quark (a thicker cottage cheese) or ricotta
- 3 tbsp sour cream mascarpone, creme fraiche or softened cream cheese
- 1 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1/8 tsp vanilla extract
- Few gratings of fresh lemon zest
- 1 large egg yolk or 1 large egg

### Preparation

1. Decide what size your container will be. For example, if your container is 1 cup then the recipe will read 1 cup eggs, 1 cup flour, 1 3/4 cup whole milk.
2. Beat the eggs. Add the rest of the ingredients, and whisk. Add a bit of salt, and taste. If you don't want to taste the eggs raw, heat a pan, drizzle a bit of the batter into it, then taste it cooked.

3. Heat a nonstick pan, or put a lightly oiled one over medium heat. Add a ladleful of batter, just enough to thinly coat the bottom of the pan. Cook until the edges just begin to brown, probably about 30 seconds. Flip — this is not at all delicate, though it seems as though it should be — and cook about 10 seconds.
4. Cook as many crepes as you want, stacking them on a plate and covering them with a cloth towel until you're ready to eat. Serve with a whole array of things you might like to put on them.\*

To make blintzes:

1. Mix all filling ingredients together until smooth.
2. Place 3 tablespoons or so filling across the center of the top wrapper/crêpe in your stack.
3. Fold the bottom part of the wrapper up and over it; fold the sides in over the bottom and filling, then fold the pancake up to form an egg roll-like shape filled pancake.

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\* Editor's note: Traditionally, apple sauce, blueberry sauce, sour cream. In Vermont, maple syrup.

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## Why Become a Co-op Member?



### 2025, Reports and Updates

Everyone is welcome to shop here, but members have a special role: they literally own the business! Through their modest investments, member-owners help make the Co-op more sustainable and accountable to our community.

- **Dividends \$\$** – Receive annual patronage dividends if the Co-op makes a profit
- **Special Orders** – Place special orders for grocery or hardware at a discount
- **No Shifts!** – You don't need to be a working member or work any shifts
- **Prepay** – Prepay your account and spend the money as you shop
- **Senior Discount** – Members age 65 and older get a 3% discount on Tuesdays

**Equity Model, Voting Rights** – Member-owners contribute equally and have equal standing: one share equals one vote. With your voting rights, help determine the future and direction of the Co-op by electing our board of directors, voting on real estate decisions, bylaw changes, and equity share cost. If you ever wanted to own a business, this is your chance to join one thousand neighbors who are also member-owners.



There are also many (optional) opportunities to provide community leadership: you can run for the board or serve on committees. Either way, stay in the loop with a free subscription to the quarterly newsletter.

**Support Local** – Plainfield Co-op is a grocery, deli, and hardware store owned by the community, for the community. When you join, you're investing in a network of consumers, growers, producers, and other businesses. By spending money close to home, you're helping create a thriving, resilient local economy. Now more than ever, we need that.

**\$180 share price** for lifetime membership. Pay in full or make annual payments as low as \$20. **Join today!** Any staff member can sign you up at the register.