

First Alternative NATURAL FOODS CO-OP

Fresh, local, organic groceries for everyone

North Store: 2855 NW Grant Ave • South Store: 1007 SE 3rd St

The 
SCOOP

April 2023



From the Board of Directors

Frank Hall

Here's some First Alternative Co-op news from the perspective of its Board of Directors. This is the first Scoop I've written. I just joined the Board last summer because I love

living in Corvallis. I wanted to do something to support this cooperative grocery that has provided my family with healthy, natural, and environmentally friendly foods for decades. Because I know just how hard that is.

I learned *how hard* back in college at UT when Austin had cooperatives of cooperatives of cooperatives in all combinations, like some helping-hand Rubik's cube.

I was asked to help save a struggling co-op vegetarian restaurant, of all things. So, me and three guys I've just met are chopping veggies like crazy around a big cutting board table. Doors open to serve lunch in twenty minutes. Turns out these guys have no food skills, either. Each of them has just arrived from places like Laredo or Tulsa hoping to earn themselves a lunch. Well, Tulsa guy slices open his finger. There's blood all over the cutting board. We all freeze...

Set that scene aside because I meant to tell you about

Mandy, the food manager for the 75-person housing Cooperative I lived in at the time. She and her recruits served us meals from food she got wholesale from Dallas through a buying co-op of housing co-ops. Meats were easy in Texas, but getting veggies, especially the protein kind, or gluten free anything, was a problem that kindled discontent among the Rubik's cube combinations of food preferences that Mandy had to plan a menu for. So one day in her typical wry humor, she announces to us that "this would be so much easier if you would understand that a chicken is really just a vegetable with feathers."

It can become absurd to try to live a healthy life with food that's easy on the planet and your body if the food supply constructs around you are opposed to that. This is why I want to help First Alternative, because it fosters healthy food constructs around us, including organic, local, and those meeting a range of dietary needs, far better than chain grocers designed to profit distant investors. Now for news.

VOTE! Let's honor those who have stepped up to run

Continued on next page...

April Board of Directors Committee Meetings

Owner Relations Committee:

The conduit for communication between Owners and the Board.

Monday, April 10, 5:30 pm

Board Recruitment & Elections Committee:

Working to recruit qualified Board candidates.

Tuesday, April 11, 6 pm

Finance Committee: Reviews, analyzes, and makes recommendations on financial matters.

Wednesday, April 12, 4:30 pm

Board of Directors:

Elected Owners putting cooperative principles into action.

Tuesday, April 25, 6 pm

Owners interested in virtual attendance can contact BREC@firstalt.coop for details.

**ANYONE
CAN SHOP**

**Two locations
Open daily
7 am - 9 pm**



From the Board of Directors

Frank Hall

Continued from previous page...

for the Co-op Board in the election this May. I hope you will read about them in the Scoop and, if you are an Owner, support the ones you feel will best represent your voice with your vote in our deliberations. Basically what the Co-op Board does is help keep the “wheels on the bus” by providing oversight and policy governance for our very competent operations management, and helping them navigate hard blows like having to “build back better” the South Store annex which burned a couple of years ago.

Remodel? Now that the South Store annex and Commissary is near completion, we are exploring if and how we might expand product floor space in a remodel of the South Store itself, which would also allow more product selection. Currently we have Produce, Grocery, Dairy, Frozen, Deli, Meat, Cheese, Bulk, and Wellness departments at our stores. Be thinking about which department(s) at the South Store you might like to see expanded, with more selection, because we’ll be asking you that in an online survey soon.

New North Store Neighbors: The building where Susan’s Garden and Coffee Shop used to be is now the offices of a local company that publishes Self-Reliance Magazine, and Backwoods Home Magazine, both of which cover topics related to living closer to nature with less reliance on urban amenities. We welcome them, wish them well, and are pleased to have them as neighbors.

Bulk and Variety: Now that the local Fred Meyer has slashed its bulk section down to basically candy and nuts, our extraordinary selection of basic as well as hard-to-find bulk items is even more important for you! Check it out! My recent favorite find is dried mulberries. Who knew that was a thing? Turns out they’re awesome to eat straight up or in cereal, trail mix, fruit salad, yogurt, ice cream, etc.

And how about those unusual finds in our produce section? My recent favorite was finding a strange grayish green fruit, about the size and length of three fingers glommed together. It was labeled “Paw Paws”. I’d vaguely heard of them (“way down yonder in the paw paw patch”) but had no idea how they looked or tasted. Always curious, I got some. I soon had two revelations: 1) They’re amazingly delicious—and their skin is edible! 2) If you want to put one in your jacket pocket to have at lunch, when you reach in at lunchtime, your pocket will be filled with mush... Also, their skin is very soft.

Turns out an Oregon farmer has started growing organic paw paws! Who knew? I’m so glad our First Alternative buyers found them. I’m glad we are giving that farmer, and many other local farmers and producers, a market to sell their product at fair prices. The more we collectively do this, and foster healthy food constructs around our community, the better off we, and they, and our planet, will be. And the less likely it will be that we hear an echo of that frustrated statement from long ago, saying even if in jest, that “this would be so much easier if you would understand that a chicken is really just a vegetable with feathers.”

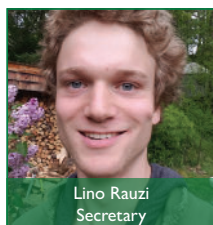
Your 2023 Co-op Board of Directors



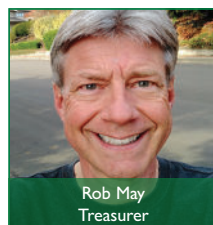
Jasmin Woodside
President



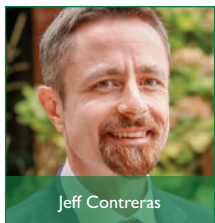
Dana Monroe
Vice President



Lino Rauzi
Secretary



Rob May
Treasurer



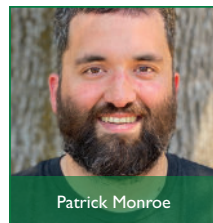
Jeff Contreras



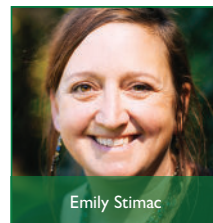
Camille Freitag



Frank Hall



Patrick Monroe



Emily Stimac

Board Meetings are held the last Tuesday of each month at 6pm. **Learn more at: firstalt.coop/governance.**

BEANS 4 BAGS

**Cut Waste and Support Local
Community Organizations
While You Shop at the Co-op!**

First Alternative's Beans for Bags program supports sixteen different community organizations by splitting an annual donation of \$4,000 between them, in a proportion determined by you—our shoppers!

How does it work? Both Co-op stores have Bean Towers near the entrances/exits. These towers showcase each quarter's four non-profit organizations. Beneath the name of each organization (and some info about them) is a jar for collecting Bean tokens.

Every time a customer uses a reusable bag, they can take a Bean token from the holders at each register and drop it into the jar of their choice. At the end of each quarter, the tokens are counted to determine what percentage of the quarterly \$1,000 donation each organization receives.

April, May & June Recipients:

**Court Appointed Special Advocates
(CASA) Voices for Children**

**Center Against Rape and
Domestic Violence (CARDV)**

Jackson Street Youth Services

South Corvallis Food Bank



**Bring your reusable
bag to cut waste and
support local charities!**



1 BRING YOUR BAG 2 TAKE YOUR BEAN 3 PICK YOUR CAUSE 4 HAVE AN IMPACT

Over \$91,000 in donations and over 2 million bags saved from disposal since 2003.



PROTECT OUR PARKS

Friends of Corvallis Parks & Recreation

Friends of Corvallis Parks & Recreation is a non-profit organization that works to protect and enhance the city's parks and recreational areas. They provide maintenance, programming, and advocacy for the parks system.

↓



CARE FOR LOVED ONES

Grant Center for Adult Day Services

Grant Center for Adult Day Services provides a safe and supportive environment for adults with cognitive impairments. They offer day programs, respite care, and support groups to help individuals maintain their independence and quality of life.

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ACTIVE TRANSPORT

Corvallis Bicyclist Collective

Corvallis Bicyclist Collective is a non-profit organization that promotes safe and sustainable transportation for all. They provide advocacy, education, and resources to encourage the use of bicycles in the community.

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PRESERVE NATURE

Grounds for Local Food

Grounds for Local Food is a non-profit organization that promotes local food systems and sustainable agriculture. They provide resources, education, and support to local farmers and food producers.

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Follow First Alternative

*For up-to-the-minute news,
giveaways, recipes, special offers,
and tons of cooperative fun.*

@firstaltcoop     

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Scan this QR Code with
your smart phone to join
our email list. *Subscribers
receive twice-monthly emails
plus occasional special offers,
coupons & announcements.*



The Co-op welcomed

27

**new Owners in
February 2023**

Community Happenings

Northside Open Studios Tour

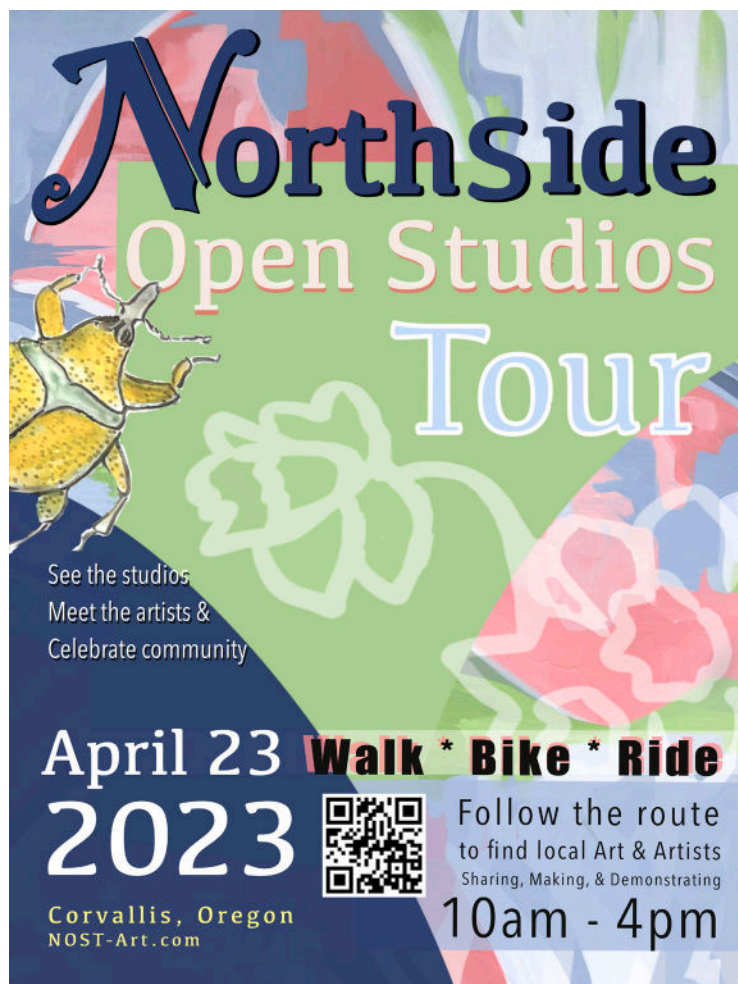
April, 23, 10am-4pm at various North Corvallis locations (see NOST-art.com for details.)

Northside Open Studios Tour (NOST) is a free, open studios tour featuring more than twenty local artists in six locations, all celebrating the spring and community connection through art.

Organized entirely by artists, the Open Studios Tour is modeled after the South Town Art Walk, which has showcased local art in South Corvallis since 2011.

Similarly, the 1st Annual NOST event is a grassroots effort encouraging visitors to explore home studios by foot, bike or carpool. North Corvallis artists will be sharing and selling their locally created works and inviting conversations about their creative practice and spaces.

We are excited to welcome Spring by sharing art with this amazing Corvallis community. Learn more about the artists and locations at NOST-art.com.

A colorful poster for the NorthSide Open Studios Tour. The title 'NorthSide Open Studios Tour' is prominently displayed in a mix of blue, red, and green fonts. Below the title, there's a green silhouette of a person walking. To the left, a yellow and green beetle is illustrated. The background is a collage of various colors and patterns. At the bottom, it says 'April 23 2023' in large white letters, followed by 'Walk * Bike * Ride' in red. A QR code is present, and text to its right says 'Follow the route to find local Art & Artists Sharing, Making, & Demonstrating 10am - 4pm'. The bottom left corner mentions 'Corvallis, Oregon' and 'NOST-Art.com'.

Master Gardener Plant Sale & Clinic

Saturday May 6, 9am-3pm, Southwest corner of Benton County Fairgrounds, 110 SW 53rd St, Corvallis.

The annual Benton County Master Gardener Association Plant Sale & Clinic is coming up, as always on the first Saturday in May. Held under cover at the fairground's Solar Barn and Floral Courtyard, the sale features over 10,000 ornamental sun and shade perennials, groundcovers, shrubs, vines, trees, and native plants, as well as vegetable and herb plants grown from seed.

Benton County Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer your gardening questions and help you find plants suited to your own growing needs.

Proceeds from the sale support educational programs in our schools and community. Payments by cash, check, or credit/debit card accepted. You'll find more info at bentonmg.org/plant-sale.

Annual Plant Sale and Clinic



**1st Saturday
in May
9 am - 3 pm**

For more information visit
www.bentonmg.org

**Perennials, Natives,
Veggies,
Trees, Shrubs
and lots more!**