



BLOOMINGFOODS
CO-OP MARKET

BLOOMINGNEWS

FALL 2020

PAST, PRESENT, & FUTURE





BLOOMINGFOODS
CO-OP MARKET

BloomingNews is a quarterly publication providing up-to-date information on Bloomingfoods, the cooperative movement, healthful food, nutrition, and local community. Sign up to receive a copy in your inbox at www.bloomingfoods.coop!

LEADERSHIP TEAM

GENERAL MANAGER TEAM

Dee Bohler
Phil Phillipy

EAST
STORE MANAGER
Nancy Flynn-Hert

NEAR WEST
STORE MANAGER
Phil Phillipy

CONTRIBUTORS

Nicholas Blewett
Rhonda Taylor
Bobbi Boos
Chris Little
Wade Van Orman
Dedaimia Whitney

From your GM Team



I was washing dishes at the Encore Café when the Co-op purchased that business in 2001. Brad Salmon was acting as location manager at that time, and introduced me to the Co-op and the Cooperative Principles. I fondly remember the first time I walked into Bloomingfoods East. Everything about it was contrary to my previous experience of a grocery store—it even smelled different! The shelves were filled with products and brands that I had never seen before. The produce department was mind blowing. I had previously only considered the term 'Organic' in relation to an item's carbon content, and everywhere I looked I saw something new and interesting. I was particularly surprised to see local products for sale. As naïve as it now seems, it had never occurred to me that farmers could sell food directly to a grocery store, and I found the concept exciting and empowering. I grew up on a small dairy farm that was unable to successfully navigate a combination of rising corn costs and low milk prices, and saw many other farmers in our community suffer the same fate. The idea of a farm-to-market connection really struck a chord with me. Since that time, developing relationships with local farmer's and producers, and witnessing the impact that a Co-op can have on their lives and livelihoods, has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my Co-op experience. In fact, I have come to believe that most of what we do at the Co-op is about relationships. It is amazing to see the positive effect that a Co-op can have in a local economy, and the direct impact on individual wellbeing. The ripple effect of what we do is immeasurable.

Over the last 19 years I have progressed through several roles at Bloomingfoods. I have learned more about our structure, our guiding Ends, and the great responsibility we have to our owners, our staff, and our community. Principles 4 (Autonomy and Independence) and 7 (Concern for Community) continue to resonate strongly with me, but as November approaches, Principle 2 (Democratic Member Control) certainly comes to mind— one share equals one vote. Please don't miss the opportunity to be heard, in our Co-op's election or our government's.

As you know, the Cooperative model invites member participation and involvement, and I would like to personally thank you for your support of our Co-op. While the future is ever uncertain, it is nonetheless full of possibilities, and collectively we can continue to play a valuable role in our community.

Phil



GM Phil Phillipy unloads product from a shipment at the East Store, 2006
(Phil was able to successfully kick his smoking habit in 2007)

From Your *Board of Directors*

Hello Bloomingfoods community,

I was 17 when I first strayed into Bloomingfoods during my first year at IU. Bloomingfoods was 11 years old. Shortly after, I became a working member and the next spring a deli employee. The Kirkwood store barely had aisles among the produce, deli area, bread stacked to the ceiling, and an array of health and beauty products I had never seen before. Still my favorite was the amazing amount of bulk goods upstairs taking as much room as the packaged groceries. The single store bustled endlessly with customers, eventually making the East store a necessity in 1991. Many of these customers, I learned by name, and still know today. I held a variety of positions in that little store. As the produce manager I pushed my cart down the block on Saturdays to the Farmers Market (which was then in the library parking lot), purchasing local goodness for the shelves. I worked at the East side for a bit, but Kirkwood remained my favorite. It was life changing to learn about cooking, good food, and the value of supportive co-workers. When the membership structure changed, I gladly picked out number 357.

Years later, as I started to really understand the cooperative model, I realized, I was experiencing cooperative principles 1, 5 and 7: Open and voluntary membership, Concern for community, and Education, training, and information. Over time, I've come to appreciate the other cooperative principles. Cooperation among cooperatives became especially clear with the Local Growers Guild. Bloomingfoods helped in their formation and many projects with financial support and development. Both were co-ops with a common mission to support local farms. Autonomy and independence have become increasingly important as large corporations continue to swallow up small businesses, and take away our voice, our jobs, our health, and our earth's future. How do we remain a strong independent business committed to community and education?

Member participation, principle 3, is essential. Clearly, economic participation keeps the business running. But what makes Bloomingfoods a thriving co-op is active Owner-member engagement. Many viewpoints create the best outcomes.

Participation can include, staying educated about co-op issues and voicing your opinion, sharing your talents with educational events, attending the annual meeting, serving on the board, serving on committees. In fact, the Owner-member Connection Committee would really appreciate more volunteers to do just this – create more dialog, events and interaction among Owner-members.

Last but not least is Principle 2 - Democratic member control. Co-ops all follow the one-membership one-vote model, regardless of how much you financially participate. This year we vote for three board positions (from five well qualified candidates) and next year's Positive Change recipients.

I encourage every member to vote with intent. The three candidates we elect will have a strong impact on the co-op as they continue to determine Bloomingfoods' vision and implement the mission. Think about what they offer by reading their statements (in this newsletter, at the stores, and online at [_Insert website](#)). Do you have specific interests? Consider asking direct questions at one of the virtual Meet the Candidates events, during the weeks of September 14th and 21st. (Specific dates will be announced soon.) Also consider the Positive Change applicants. Does their mission align with yours? Your vote truly affects the

future of Bloomingfoods and our community.

Voting will take place online and in the stores from September 18th – October 8th. Also, our 44th Annual Meeting will take place virtually on October 8th at 7pm. Learn about the past year at Bloomingfoods, some future goals, ways to participate, and the Cooperative Community Foundation grant.

I, along with the board, look forward to a long future of cooperating with all of you.

Bobbi Boos
**Bloomingfoos Board Member
& Treasurer**



Meet Your 2020 Board Candidates

We're thrilled to have a fantastic slate of candidates for our 2020 Board of Directors election! We have 5 candidates running for 3 open Board seats.

Owner-members can vote in-store or online at www.votebloomingfoods.com. Want to learn more about the candidates? Full candidate statements and contact emails for each can be found at bloomingfoods.coop/board-candidates.



As a former employee, Catie is knowledgeable about the co-op and the grocery industry. She'd love the opportunity to serve the co-op in new and exciting ways!



Isabelle is passionate about our local food system—involved as a recent IU grad (BSPA in Environmental Management and Economics), the Treasurer of the Bloomington Food Policy Council, and a research assistant on an IU project investigating the accessibility of SNAP benefits. She believes that food is a right for all, and is working to understand, imagine, and build that reality in Bloomington through creativity, collaboration, and inclusion of all stakeholders.

Having served on several boards and committees for many organizations, Sharon has helped make big changes while working cooperatively.



Jeff has been a Bloomington resident and Bloomingfoods shopper for 30 years. He would like your support for the upcoming election for the BCS Board of Directors.



Pam initially joined the board in 2017 and is the current President. If re-elected, she's looking forward to working more closely with members and the board on post-COVID long-term planning for the organization.



Meet Wade Van Orman



Wade's career at Bloomingfoods spans 20 years! We hope it continues for 20 more.

How long have you worked for Bloomingfoods?

I worked here from 2000 - 2006, then I moved to Nashville, TN for my music career. In 2013 I came back to Bloomington and returned to my job at Bloomingfoods.

What positions have you held?

When I started in 2000 I was a cashier at East. I spent four years as the produce manager at the store on Kirkwood. In 2013 I worked at Elm Heights. Now I split my time working at both East and West.

Why did you want to work at Bloomingfoods?

I was a member in the 80s & 90s and loved being here.

What has been your favorite part of working here?

I like promoting local vendors and locally made products. Bloomingfoods' commitment to high quality products is 2nd to none!

Do you have a favorite memory from working here?

There is a daily event that happens here that is my favorite. It is when someone walks into our store for the first time and stops to look around and soak in the entire feeling of the co-op. I often hear people say that it takes them back to their childhood to a market they used to go to, or that it reminds them of the small town where they grew up. I love watching their expressions as they look around the store. This is one of the reasons I love working here every day!

What are some of your favorite foods and products from our stores?

I love the bean burrito from our hot bar! Also the jars of Sunja Kim Chi are incredible!

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I am a songwriter and musician. I play piano and guitar. You can find my music at [Bandcamp.com](https://www.bandcamp.com)

Thank you Chris Little!



You will be missed by all as you enjoy your retirement!

How long have you worked for Bloomingfoods?

I had been there 25 year in June. I started working there in 1995.

What positions have you held?

For 7 or 8 years I drove the box truck. I have mostly been a store clerk. I have also driven the van between the stores to pick up and deliver items from one store to another.

Why did you want to work at Bloomingfoods?

I had a history in the grocery business. I worked at Marsh for 17 years. I shopped at Bloomingfoods and had a friend in the produce department. Bloomingfoods reached out to me and offered me a job and I knew I should take it.

What has been your favorite part of working here?

The interaction with the customers. The relationships are always growing here. I like learning the customers' names.

Do you have a favorite memory from working here?

I really like the truckload sales we used to have in the parking lot at East. We would set up a temporary grocery store out there and it was a very festive event.

What are some of your favorite foods and products from our stores?

I love the Localfolks Foods Ketchup and Beeler's Bacon. We also have the best produce in town!

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I had to make the decision to retire due to COVID-19. I have a lot of property in the country and now I have a new puppy named Mavis, named after one of the Staples Sisters. She is a Brittany Spaniel. My wife is still working as an accountant, so I have Mavis to keep me company during the day.

Do you have anything else to say about your time at Bloomingfoods?

It was a great 25 years! It was the best job I ever had with the best people I have ever worked with. I worked with high school kids that I watched grow and raise their families. It was a wonderful experience.

Remembering

Caroline Beebe

written by Dedaimia Whitney



Caroline Beebe, one of Bloomingfoods' original owner-members and president of the Board of Directors during a crucial period in the coop's life, passed away August 1 after a short illness. She would have celebrated her 71st birthday just a few days after she died.

In 1976, Caroline's husband Michael Yoakam was among those who literally built the first Bloomingfoods. His crew renovated the interior of the Kirkwood on-the-alley building, where Bfoods opened its first store, and which remained the co-op's only outlet for many years. Thereafter, Caroline and her family supported the coop in the ways we all do—shopping, meeting, voting, celebrating, and when necessary, lending money.

After the cooperative food movement had convinced the nation that eating healthful food is paramount, and the mega grocery chains had entered the natural foods market, Bloomingfoods fell upon hard times financially. The coop was in mortal danger and faced closing for good.

Caroline re-entered the picture by attending a meeting of the board and demanding to know what was going on. After a few months of working behind the scenes in the Outreach Committee, she was elected to the board herself. Not long after that, she became its president.

Caroline served the coop as president of the board from 2015-2018, arguably the years during which the coop faced its most existential crisis. Under her guidance, the coop tightened its belt, hired a general manager who was able to give us a clear look at the financial picture, rewrote its bylaws, and hired the current GMs from among the ranks of Bloomingfoods own staff—a truly cooperative move. As a consequence of what Caroline and others did during these terrible years, the coop is now healthy and strong again.

Caroline's unquestioning dedication to the cooperative principles and her willingness to step into the fray at the worst of times is testimony not only to her authenticity and clarity of mind but is also to the kind of coop membership we can all aspire to.

Dedaimia has supported our co-op for many years. She became an owner-member in 1977 when she and her first husband Bill Krejci moved to Bloomington, and can be frequently seen shopping in the Near-West store. Dedaimia has served several times on the Board of Directors, first in the late 80s and again from 2013-2016.



2020

Bloomingfoods Annual Meeting

Online via Zoom
Thursday, October 8
7:00 pm

Owner-Members:
Join us to hear about the year
in review as well as what lies
ahead for your co-op!

**VOTE on
Board of Directors
and Positive Change
candidates!**

In-store and online

9/18 - 10/8

www.votebloomingfoods.com

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR ANNUAL REPORT

FY2020

While we recognize the abundance of work that still remains to fully embody our Ends Statement, we do want to highlight the meaningful progress that has been made towards each of our Ends this past year.

LOCAL

- \$1,618,038 in local sales FY2020
- 15.62% YoY increase in local sales

ORGANIC

- \$4,591,442 in organic sales
- 36.51% of our overall sales

FAIR TRADE

Unique fair trade sales up at both our East and West stores

OUR STAFF

44% of our current staff have worked at Bfoods for 2+ years

OWNER-MEMBERSHIP

- 13,000 Owner-Members
- 98.13% increase in YoY net owner-membership

COMMUNITY

- \$117,651 raised in FY2020 by our Positive Change program
- 73.35% increase in Bfoods For All dollars spent in FY2020

MORE INFO

Stay tuned for our full Annual Report where you can read in more detail about the impact Bloomingfoods has had on our community.



RUBBLE

Works by Tiffany Hokanson

October 1 - December 31

Join us for Bloomington Gallery Walk's First Fridays in October, November, and December in our Near West Store's deli seating area! While the area is closed for dining and we are not currently hosting community events, there is still plenty of space to walk through and enjoy Tiffany's work.

At Gallery B
inside Bloomingfoods Near West
316 W 6th Street
Open & on view
Mon-Sun 7:30am - 10pm

gallery WALK





2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PAM WEAVER
President
ANGELA BABB
Vice President
BOBBI BOOS
Treasurer
JACOB SCHUMACHER
Secretary
CORBIN BAIRD
TOSH LEWIS-YOUNG
GUTHRIE TAYLOR
MICHELE ROBISON
NANCY MATHEWS

NEW CONTACT INFO?

Please email your name, member number, and updated contact information to info@bloomingfoods.coop.

EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER

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BLOOMINGFOODS LOCATIONS

EAST

3220 E 3rd Street
Bloomington, IN 47401
812-336-5400

NEAR WEST

316 W 6th Street
Bloomington, IN 47404
812-333-7312

IVY TECH (currently closed)

200 Daniels Way Rm D109
Bloomington, IN 47404
812-822-0143

www.bloomingfoods.coop