



# BLUFF COUNTRY CUIZINE

FOOD NEWS, EVENTS & SALES FOR BLUFF COUNTRY CO-OP OWNERS



*Autumn* 2025



# Calendar

## September

Monday, Sep. 1

**Labor Day**

**CO-OP OPEN**

8 AM - 8 PM

Monday, Sep. 15



**Co-op Board Meeting**

6 - 8 PM  
Community Room

Saturday, Sep. 13

**Japanese Noodles Cooking Class**

10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Class fee: \$15

Details on our website events calendar.

Saturday, Sep. 20

**Fall Clothing Swap**

10 AM - 2 PM

Everyone Welcome

More details on page 11.



Friday, Sep. 26

**Alaskan Wild-Caught Salmon Pre-order Ends**

Details posted at the store, on social media and website.

## October

October

**Round Up at the Register**

More info on page 7.



Saturday, Oct. 11

**Garden Harvest Plant Swap**

10 AM - 2 PM

Everyone Welcome

Details on pg. 11 and on website calendar.

Sunday, Oct. 19

**Rain Garden Clean Up**

9:15 AM - 11:15 AM

Volunteers Welcome

More info on page 11.

Rain date: Sunday, Oct. 26

Monday, Oct. 20



**Co-op Board Meeting**

6 - 8 PM

Community Room

Tuesday, Oct. 28

**Annual Owner Meeting**

5 - 7 PM

Two Fathoms Brewing Co.

Details on page 3.

Visit our website for updates.

Check our website for more events at the co-op:



<https://www.bluff.coop/events/>

## November

Nov. 2 - Nov 8

Sunday - Saturday

**Owner Appreciation Week**

More info on page 5.

Saturday, Nov. 15

**Kitchen & Household Small Appliance Swap**

10 AM - 2 PM

More details on page 11.

Monday, Nov. 17



**Co-op Board Meeting**

6 - 8 PM

Community Room

Thursday, Nov. 27

**Thanksgiving Day**

**CO-OP CLOSED**

**Estimated arrival for Turkeys:**

Frozen: week of Oct. 27    Fresh: week of Nov. 17

**All Month  
Strengthen Indigenous Foodways**

**5¢**

donated to:  
**NATIFS**



for every Field Day product sold during November.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

board@bluff.coop

### PRESIDENT

Lisa Lorisch  
lisa@bluff.coop

### VICE PRESIDENT

Vanessa Perry  
vanessa@bluff.coop

### TREASURER

Pingping Zhang  
pingping@bluff.coop

### SECRETARY

Ann Prochowicz  
annprochowicz@bluff.coop

### BOARD MEMBERS

Brenna Curry  
Stacey Huber  
Violet Yoon  
Chris Phan  
Jennifer Monsos

brenna@bluff.coop  
stacey@bluff.coop  
violet@bluff.coop  
christopherphan@bluff.coop  
jennifermontos@bluff.coop

### BOARD ALTERNATE

Stacey Huber

stacey@bluff.coop

## STORE CONTACTS

### GENERAL MANAGER

Heather Kitching  
gm@bluff.coop

### KITCHEN

Mark Liedel  
deli@bluff.coop

### PRODUCE & MEAT

John Bride  
john@bluff.coop

### GROCERY & MERCHANDISING

Andrea Strain  
andrea@bluff.coop

### WELLBODY

Amy Shea  
amy@bluff.coop

### FRONT END

Heather - Interim Front End Manager  
femanager@bluff.coop



Co-op Trivia  
Gift Card Raffle  
Giveaways



Fancy Taco Bar  
Live Music by Makebait  
Game Corner

Bluff Country Co-op  
2025 **ANNUAL**  
**OWNER MEETING**

Tuesday, October 28  
5 - 7 PM

Two Fathoms Brewing Co.  
65 E. Front St, Winona, MN



# GM Report

BY HEATHER KITCHING, GENERAL MANAGER

Fall has come to remind me to embrace the richness and opportunities that change brings. Partly this is because each year, as I revel in summer's first true hints, I almost immediately resent its inevitable end. Yet, by the time summer concludes, I'm quite honestly weary of the heat, humidity, and bugs, and the prospect of cool, clear nights and warm layers sounds pretty appealing! For me it's become a lighthearted reminder that I can't always (often) anticipate the good things still out of sight around the corner.

Indeed there are many good things around the corner at Bluff Country Co-op! This September, October, and November, your co-op is offering a full harvest of events, programs, and opportunities to connect with your co-op community. Whether you're swapping garden extras, exploring new culinary traditions, attending the Annual Owner Meeting, or lending a hand to steward our local spaces, there's something this season for everyone.

Our event calendar is as abundant as the season itself:

- Dive into the flavors of fall with a Japanese Noodles Cooking Class, perfect for warming up your kitchen skills.
- Clear your closets and refresh your wardrobe at the Fall Clothing Swap, or trade out your well-loved but underutilized blender at the Kitchen Small Appliance Swap.
- Gardeners, don't miss the Garden Harvest & Plant Swap, a great way to share your bounty and pick up something new.
- Join us for the Rain Garden Clean-Up, where we care for the native garden we steward—a small but vital contribution to our local ecosystem.
- And if you plan ahead, you can pre-order Alaskan wild-caught salmon, perfect for stocking your freezer with sustainable protein for the colder months.

October brings two particularly special opportunities to connect:

Our Annual Owner Meeting will be held at a local brewery just a block from the store—an informal and fun way to celebrate another year of co-op progress. Our Board of Directors has put a lot of thought into making this a fun and informative event.

We're also proud to participate in a fundraiser for North American Traditional Indigenous Food Systems (NATIFS). It's a meaningful way to honor food sovereignty and support Indigenous-led solutions in the food system.

Behind the scenes, our Board of Directors continues to meet monthly, and this issue features a special article from several board members reflecting on how Board service has deepened their connection to the co-op's mission. It's a must-read if you're considering getting more involved.

You'll also want to check out the "Meet the Manager" article highlighting our relatively new Kitchen Manager—someone who's already bringing fresh energy and creativity to our deli and prepared foods department. And don't miss our Recipe Corner, where we're spotlighting versatile and delicious ideas using ground meats—perfect for cozy fall meals.

After the often hectic pace of summer, fall seems like the perfect time to root into your community. The co-op model works best when everyone contributes—by shopping, showing up, sharing ideas, and supporting one another. Your engagement makes a difference. Indeed, it is the difference. I would love to see you at one of our co-op's many events this fall!

Wishing you a bountiful fall season,

Heather Kitching  
General Manager, Bluff Country Co-op  
[gm@bluff.coop](mailto:gm@bluff.coop)



# Board Report

BY VANESSA PERRY, BOARD VICE PRESIDENT

I am not shy about sharing that autumn is far and away my favorite season.

First: The food! As Co-op owners, I know you will join me in appreciating the abundant variety of the fall harvest. Minnesota local food really shines in the fall with late season berries, apples, root veggies, and the hardy squashes.

Second: The weather! It is back to cozy sweaters and pants, but not yet to big hats and heavy boots. Every warm, sunny day feels like it needs to be savored just in case we don't see another until April.

Finally: The gatherings! I am not a particularly extroverted person, but I love the traditions of bringing people together that occur in the autumn. Kids are back in school. Many people will gather with family or friends to celebrate Thanksgiving in November.

An autumn Co-op tradition of gathering that I hope you will participate in is the Annual Owner Meeting! This year the meeting will be held the evening

of October 28th from 5-7 pm — mark your calendars! The annual meeting is your chance to mingle with other owners and Board members, hear updates from the last year at the Co-op, ask questions, and voice your thoughts. If you are interested in becoming a Board member this is a chance to share your "why" with other owners.

Two Fathoms Brewing has generously offered their space for the meeting. This is a family friendly venue (even with a small kids play area inside) and there will be alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages available for purchase. The Co-op will be providing a fancy taco bar, and there will be live music from the Winona-based band Makebait. We are looking forward to a delightful evening and hope you will join!

Whatever your favorite season, I hope you find some time to pause and enjoy this autumn. Say "hi" if you see me around the store and please come visit at the Annual Owner Meeting in October!

Vanessa Perry  
Board Vice President  
vanessa@bluff.coop

*Mark your Calendar!*

## Owner Appreciation Week

**Sunday**      **Saturday**  
**Nov. 2**      **Nov. 8**

*Daily Giveaways, Local Vendors, Samples,  
and more!*

## Co-op Board of Directors

### MEETINGS

held monthly on every

## 3rd Monday

6 pm in the BCC Community Room

Open to Co-op Owners

To attend, contact our Board President,

Lisa Lorsch, [lisa@bluff.coop](mailto:lisa@bluff.coop)

Review our meeting guidelines at:

<https://www.bluff.coop/wp-content/uploads/2020-Visitor-Policy.pdf>



# Guide Your Co-op's Future

We are proud to be an anchor of downtown Winona as the Co-op turns 53 in October. Bluff Country Co-op is seeking passionate owners for board service — where your leadership will support local food systems, strengthen vital community connections, enhance our shared ownership and ensure this co-operatively-owned grocery store continues to thrive for generations to come.

## What does the Board do?

Our Co-op is a democratically governed and community owned business. The Board of Directors work closely with the General Manager, acting on the behalf of all owners, to ensure the success of the Co-op. Board members also work together on the greater scope of the Co-op's vision and future, while the staff focuses on store operations.

The Board monitors performance and provide financial oversight, plus set standards and policies to fulfill our mission and meet our Ends. The Board also help to bolster community engagement, promote our Co-op values and perpetuate our democratic organization.

## What our Board members like most about their role?

*"It has truly been a great way to learn more about Winona. The board is made up of people from diverse backgrounds and with varying levels of experience in the*

*community, which has allowed me to see many different perspectives on living here. Since joining, I've grown to love Winona even more. I've also had the chance to engage with the community-oriented initiatives the Co-op leads, which has deepened my appreciation for both the town and its local products."*

— Violet Yoon, Board Member

*"I ran for board membership because I wanted to contribute to a committee organization I felt passionate about. My favorite part about being on the board is connecting with my fellow board members."*

— Vanessa Perry, Board Vice President

*"Being part of such a passionate group of people who care about good food, community, and making things better—it's energizing! Plus, I love getting a behind-the-scenes peek at how the co-op runs and helping shape where it's headed."*

— Stacey Huber, Board Member

## Why should you run for the Board?

*"For several years I'd been interested in running for the Co-op board, but it was just an idea that simmered on the back burner. Getting involved in an organization that places environmental, ecological, sustainable, and humanitarian needs over pure profit at any price appeals to me. I also wanted to meet more people who shared my goals and interests."*

— Ann Prochowicz, Board Secretary

Continued on page 12



# Bluff Country Co-op Community Fund 2025 Recipient Winona Farmers Market



*Our Bluff Country Co-op Community Fund  
has reached its 8th year!*

*The Co-op donated to its seventh  
community organization since 2019:*

Winona Farmers Market – 2025  
Winona Volunteer Services – 2024  
Winona Sheltering Network – 2023  
Winona Outdoor Collaborative – 2022  
Engage Winona – 2021  
Advocacy Center of Winona – 2020  
Manitou Center – 2019

For the Community Fund's 2026 donation, the advisory committee and board of directors have chosen Home and Community Options (HCO). In a year of news coverage about funding cuts for people with disabilities, it seems a good time to dedicate our community fund to them.

For 50 years, HCO has been providing support and opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities.



Since 1975, HCO has focused on more than just care – it supports independence, inclusion, and the chance to thrive. Whether it's helping someone settle into their new apartment or learn a new skill, HCO tailors support to meet each person's needs at every stage of life.

From 24/7 residential homes to in-home services, HCO works alongside individuals and families to ensure safety, dignity, and independence. The organization offers personalized care, supporting conditions like autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and brain injury.

HCO's impact goes beyond just the individuals it serves. By offering respite care and family support, HCO strengthens the entire community, helping everyone grow and thrive together.

Celebrating five decades, HCO remains committed to creating a Winona where everyone has the opportunity to live their best life. And with the continued support of the community, HCO is here to stay, empowering individuals to achieve their dreams.

For more information about Home and Community Options, please visit its website at <https://www.hco.org/>. Its office is located at 66 East Third Street, Winona.

Each year to help raise money for the Bluff Country Co-op Community Fund, the Co-op holds a Round-Up-at-the-Register campaign in October and April.

This October, to celebrate Co-op Month, we will be holding our eighth annual Round-Up-at-the-Register campaign to raise donations for our Bluff Country Co-op Community Fund. Here's how Round-Up-at-the-Register works: Every time you make a purchase at the co-op in October, your cashier will ask if you'd like to round up in support of our Community Fund. You can choose to round up to the nearest dollar or you can pick any dollar amount to contribute. All of your round-up donations are tax-deductible.

*Continued on page 12*





# Beyond the Burger



Switch it up this fall!  
Go beyond the burger and  
try out cozy meals using  
ground meat, whether it's  
beef, turkey, bison or veggie  
crumbles.



### Broccoli Cheddar Turkey Meatballs

Servings: 10. Total Time: 55 minutes; 25 minutes active

½ bunch broccoli  
2 pounds ground turkey  
1 cup instant oatmeal  
2 large eggs  
1 teaspoon salt  
½ teaspoon ground black pepper  
4 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, shredded  
Ranch salad dressing

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F. Line two sheet pans with parchment, reserve.
2. Using a knife or food processor, finely chop broccoli to the size of rice until you have 2 cups.
3. In a large bowl, combine the turkey, oatmeal, eggs, salt and pepper. Mix. Add the broccoli and cheddar and mix well.
4. Use a 2-tablespoon-sized scoop to portion and shape into 1-inch balls. Place on the sheet pans, taking care that the meatballs don't touch each other.
5. Bake for 20 minutes, or until an instant-read thermometer inserted in a meatball registers 165 F.

*Make it meatless! You can substitute plant-based crumbles for the ground meat in any of these recipes. With a texture similar to ground meat and loads of protein, veggie crumbles are an excellent option to eat lower on the food chain.*

### Bison Chili

Servings: 8 . Total Time: 45 minutes.

1 pound ground bison (substitute grass-fed beef or vegetarian crumbles)  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 yellow onion, diced (about 2 cups)  
1 green bell pepper, seeded and diced  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
1 teaspoon ground cumin  
1 teaspoon ground coriander  
2 teaspoons chili powder  
1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes  
1 7-ounce can diced green chilies  
1 15-ounce can red or kidney beans  
2 cups beef broth  
½ cup fresh or frozen corn kernels  
Salt and pepper to taste

1. In a large stock pot, heat the oil over medium-high heat and saute the onions, peppers, and garlic for 5-6 minutes. Add the oregano, cumin, coriander, and chili powder and cook for 1 minute more.
2. Add the bison and break it up into small pieces. Cook the meat, stirring frequently, for about 5 minutes until it is no longer pink. Add the tomatoes, green chilies, beans, broth and corn. Stir well and simmer for about 15-20 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Reprinted by permission from grocery.coop. Find recipes, plus information about your food and where it comes from at grocery.coop.

# Meet Our Kitchen Manager

Our Co-op Kitchen recently experienced a transition in staff. Mark hopped on board during this time to lead our kitchen team and we're glad he did! Learn more about Mark below.

## What do you love most about food co-ops?

**Mark:** "I've always valued the independent spirit, it is such a great American value, from the way food is bought and consumed to Indie Rock! I love that there are alternatives to giant chain stores. There is an intimacy between staff and customers, and between the customer and the food and goods that they buy, that gets lost in the endless aisles of a large chain store."

## What drew you to your current role at the co-op?

**Mark:** "I have been working in the food service industry in every capacity for 30 years. Two years back I had foot surgery and wasn't sure if I would even be able to walk correctly again let alone work a job where I was always on my feet. I had also become disillusioned with the industry. I was tired of deep fryers and greasy flat top grills. I also was fed-up with the amount of waste that is part of the business. After my foot healed, I thought I was going to get a job outside the industry. Ultimately, kitchens are where I love to be, making and serving food. Here at Bluff Country Co-op, there are no deep fryers or flat top grills. Limiting waste and the way it is done is a priority."

## What has been your favorite part of the job so far?

**Mark:** "Not being slathered in grease after a long day is up, but I would have to say that all the opportunities that this job offers is my favorite aspect. The sky is the limit for my creativity to shine. After my foot surgery, I started investing myself in how I took care of my health, including the way I ate. I love how I am able to use a variety of organic, locally sourced meat, grain, seasonings, and vegetables to further my creative culinary endeavors."

## Are there any particular projects or challenges you're looking forward to tackling in your new role?

**Mark:** "I don't think we have the room for me to get into all of the projects we are taking up in our deli. I think the first project that we are currently working on is to make sure we are serving high quality food items to a variety of tastes and diets. This includes vegetarians, vegans, and gluten-free customers. Don't worry carnivores, we will never leave you out!"

## Can you share a favorite quote or piece of advice that has inspired you?

**Mark:** "Do Better" — "This is a phrase we used to use in some of the restaurants I worked in. Usually, it was used in a derogatory manner when someone made a mistake. I don't look at it as negative anymore. I wake up in the morning and say it to myself as a reminder that we can always strive to make every aspect of our life better every day."

## What is currently your favorite food indulgence at BCC?

**Mark:** "This summer it has to be our watermelon gazpacho."

## If you were a vegetable, what vegetable would you be? Why?

**Mark:** "If I was a vegetable, I would be a beet. I had always disparaged the beet. I had no particular reason to. I think I tried a generic canned beet once and didn't like it. I had a Borcht soup on a whim and fell in love with the beet. It reminds me to always keep an open mind."

## What is something people might be surprised to learn about you?

**Mark:** "In my free time I am a poet and visual artist and was a stand-up comic for 11 years."







# Bluff Country Sustainability

BY INGRID OGREN, SUSTAINABILITY & COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR

My Dear Cooperators,

Fall is coming! I adore this season of fog and cool mornings, hoarfrost and the harvest moon, as well as the dawning of our foliage's most vivid hues. It is the time of year when I begin to take stock of unfinished projects and start making plans to button up loose ends (especially in the garden).

Along those lines, Bluff Country Co-op (BCC) will be hosting a volunteer-based rain garden clean-up on Sunday, October 19, 2025, from 9:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. Please join us in tending to this valuable ecosystem. The rain garden not only acts as a living filter to keep refuse and runoff from reaching our water systems, but it also plays host to a variety of native plants, pollinators, birds, and other wildlife. During the last clean-up of the season, we will tuck the rain garden "into bed" by using this time for trash removal, clearing sand from drainage points, lightly trimming the river birch, and checking for and/or mitigating invasive species.

Are you looking for other ways to engage with BCC? Please join us this coming quarter as Bluff Country Co-op hosts a variety of community events, including fall and winter clothing swaps, a garden swap (tools, seeds, excess produce, etc.), a kitchen and small appliance swap, a book and puzzle swap, and a variety of cooking classes.

All swap events are open and free to everyone. For those who are able, we encourage you to bring clean, lightly used, and damage-free items in good to excellent condition that are ready to find new homes. Bringing items to exchange is not required for individuals to be able to "shop" at these events, so do not worry if you are unable to bring anything to share. Check out our website for more details.

In other exciting news, BCC is in the planning stages of revamping our community corner. We aim to transform this quiet corner into a vibrant and dynamic community engagement space. Where we previously had our cookbook donation shelves, we will be creating a game library and community communication nook. As part of these efforts, Bluff

Country Co-op is putting out an all-call for donations of any complete games or puzzles, coloring and puzzle books, markers, crayons, colored pencils, and other similar items that you may have, in good condition, and no longer want. We will continue to post details for this project (on our website) as they develop.

Apples will soon be in season, cider-pressing begins, the first frosts will sweeten brassicas, sweaters get aired out, and pumpkins and winter squash will be round and ready for harvest. Let's begin to slow down, turn toward each other, and The Cozy. I will see you there.

In Gratitude and Wonder,

Ingrid Ogren

(she/her)

Sustainability & Community Outreach Coordinator  
outreach@bluff.coop



## Board Service continued...

*"I joined the board because I believe in the co-op's mission, because I wanted to get more involved in the community, and because I wanted to learn more about the world of business. I believe that cooperatives such as Bluff Country Co-op provide a much-needed alternative to large corporations that mainly serve to concentrate wealth in the hands of a few."*

— Christopher Phan, Board Member

*"I love the opportunity to give back to something that is very important to me and my family. I've always had a strong interest in retail, grocery, and volunteerism. Running for the Board felt like a natural way to bring together all three of these interests in a meaningful and impactful way."*

— Lisa Loris, Board President

*"I became a board member because I believe in the mission of the Co-op. I worked at the Co-op years ago, and appreciate the attention to sourcing as much local food as possible, and providing the community with healthier food options. I also enjoy the community of the Co-op."*

— Jennifer Monsos, Board Member

*"Honestly? I thought it would be a great way to support something I care about and meet some awesome people along the way. Spoiler alert: it is!"*

— Stacey Huber, Board Member

Be a voice for change and help make a difference by leading the co-op you own. Join the Bluff Country Co-op Board of Directors. With your help, we will continue to be a treasured beacon of sustainability in this beautiful rivertown community.

Candidate declarations are due Tuesday, September 30, 2025. The election will take place during the Annual Owner Meeting in October. Candidates must be owners in good standing and be able to commit to a 3-year term of service. Visit our website to learn more about serving on the Board and reach out to our Board members if you have questions.



Click or scan  
to join the Board!

## Community Fund continued...

For example, if your co-op purchase comes to \$32.39, and you opt to round up to the nearest dollar, your total would be \$33.00 and your tax-deductible donation to the fund will be \$0.61.

If your co-op purchase comes to \$32.39 and you opt to round up to a \$50.00 donation, your total will be \$82.39, and your tax-deductible donation will be \$50.00.

Your co-op register receipt will separate your donation to the fund from your grocery purchases and you can keep it for your tax records.



Donate by check, made payable to: TPCF/BCCCCF

If you'd like to learn more about our Community Fund, please visit our webpage at [www.bluff.coop](http://www.bluff.coop) or the Twin Pines Cooperative Foundation website: [www.community.coop/ccf](http://www.community.coop/ccf).



Thank you for helping us strengthen our local community through our Community Fund. We sincerely appreciate your support!



**Bluff Country Co-op**

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[www.bluff.coop](http://www.bluff.coop)  
[info@bluff.coop](mailto:info@bluff.coop)

**GOOD FOOD DAILY**  
8 am - 8 pm