



BLUFF COUNTRY CUIZINE

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



Spring
2025

Calendar

March

all month

**Round Up
at the
Register**



Visit our website for more info.

all month



Herbal Tea Sale

See the store for details.

Saturday, Mar. 15

Nori Maki Class

10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Class fee: \$20

Details on page 11.

Monday, Mar. 17



**Co-op Board
Meeting**

6 - 8 PM

Community Room

Wednesday, Mar. 19

**Local Ham
Pre-Order Open**

Estimated arrival is April 16
Prices on our website.

Saturday, Mar. 22

Bulk Basics Class

10 AM - 11:30 AM

Free

Details on page 11.

Saturday, Mar. 29

Vendor Visit

Sample fresh local ham
and meet the farmer!



Learn more on page 6.

April

Every Saturday

Local Vendor Visits

Celebrating Earth Day all month by
showcasing our local producers.
Stop by for samples! More info coming soon.

Tuesday, Apr. 8

**Local Ham
Pre-order Deadline**

Estimated arrival is April 16
Find details on page 3.

Sunday, Apr. 20

**Easter Day
CO-OP OPEN**
8 AM - 8 PM

Monday, Apr. 21



**Co-op Board
Meeting**

6 - 8 PM

Community Room

Friday, Apr. 25

Arbor Day

Watch for free native tree
seedlings to arrive in late April.

Saturday, Apr. 26

**Sustainable Business
& Fast Fashion
Presentation**

Details coming soon.

May

all month

Round Up at the Register



Visit our website for more info.

May 4 - 11

Mother's Day Plant Sale

Locally grown native, flower and
veggie starter plants from
Whitewater Gardens & Fair View Farms.

Monday, May 19

**Co-op Board
Meeting**

6 - 8 PM

Community Room

Monday, May 26

**Memorial Day
CO-OP OPEN**

8 AM - 8 PM

Check our website
for more details & events
happening at the co-op:
<https://www.bluff.coop/events/>



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

board@bluff.coop

PRESIDENT

Lisa Lorisich
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	brenna@bluff.coop
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Violet Yoon	violet@bluff.coop
Chris Phan	christopherphan@bluff.coop
Jennifer Monsos	jennifermonsos@bluff.coop

BOARD ALTERNATE

Stacey Huber	stacey@bluff.coop
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STORE CONTACTS

GENERAL MANAGER

Heather Kitching
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KITCHEN

Mark Liedel
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PRODUCE & MEAT

John Bride
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GROCERY & MERCHANDISING

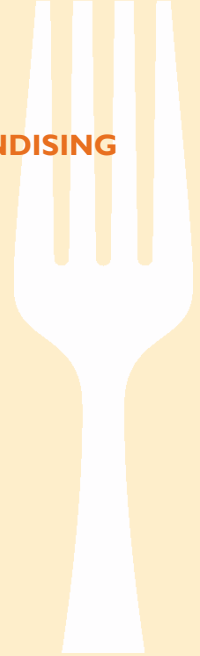
Andrea Strain
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WELLBODY

Amy Shea
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FRONT END

Jessica Delgado
femanager@bluff.coop



Fresh, local ham for your family table!

Spring Ham Pre-Order

Find more details at:
<https://www.bluff.coop/ham-pre-order/>

owners
save an
extra **10%**
on **coop deals**



Visit our website to view the current flyer.



coop deals



GM Report

BY HEATHER KITCHING, GENERAL MANAGER

Bring on Spring!

It's been a productive winter for your BCC team with much of our work focused on laying down the roots for some new plans and ambitions to start to bloom come spring. This process reminds me of one of my favorite quotes, which is from Rumi:

"don't think the garden loses its ecstasy in winter. It's quiet, but the roots are down there riotous."

Many of those new 'roots' are the new faces on our leadership team. They bring with them a wealth of experience and passion for community, sustainability, and delicious food. Please join us in welcoming:

Ingrid Ogren – Ingrid is our newest addition to the Marketing team and will be focusing on community outreach and sustainability practices. Some of you will probably recognize Ingrid as she's worked for the co-op before as a lead cashier, produce assistant and deli assistant.

Ingrid got right to work helping to lay out some plans for our Earth Day celebration this year, and I'm personally really excited about what's in store. To some degree, Earth Day will become Earth Month, with events happening on Saturdays throughout April and culminating on May 3rd. Ingrid will further introduce herself later in this newsletter, so be sure to check out her message!

Mark Liedel – We're thrilled to welcome Mark as our new Kitchen Manager. With his culinary expertise, dedication to the customer experience and love for fresh, local ingredients, Mark is already making his 'mark' in the kitchen and on its sales with the help of his fantastic team.

Jessica Delgado – Jessica joins us as our Front End Manager, bringing a warm smile and steady leadership to the co-op's front lines. She's here to ensure your shopping experience is as smooth and enjoyable as possible, and we couldn't be more excited to have her on board.

We're so grateful to have these talented individuals join our team. Be sure to say hello the next time you see them around the co-op!

Some of our previously laid 'roots' have already been bearing their fruit in the form of strong and steady sales growth throughout fiscal year 2025. The team has managed to set several new daily sales records this year – outstanding! Of course, it's our store's ability to operate efficiently and effectively that powers all the other good work we do in our community, and sales growth is a powerful indicator of just that. I'd also like to acknowledge that this growth—12.6% year-to-date—has been achieved despite far less-than-ideal staffing conditions, which is truly an accomplishment. Please join me in thanking the team for their dedication and resilience.

At the time of writing this we are, knock on wood, about to be fully staffed for the first time in well over a year and while 'riotous' may be a *little* strong, I am sincerely exhilarated by the potential I perceive in the current team. And I'm eager to help that potential manifest in a multitude of ways that serve and delight you. I look forward to celebrating new wins with all of you!

Happy spring, and thanks for being here!

Yours in Cooperation,

Heather Kitching
BCC General Manager
gm@bluff.coop





Board Report

BY VANESSA PERRY, BOARD VICE PRESIDENT

Spring Greetings from your Co-op Board of Directors!

My name is Vanessa Perry, and I will be serving as the 2025 Board Vice President.

Although I am writing this on a snowy February day, it is such a treat to think forward to the spring days that we will all be in when you are reading this newsletter. If I squint, I can imagine garden prep and fresh breezes through the windows.

In the spirit of spring transitions, I want to sincerely thank past Board members Jennifer Sanborn and Aaron Perleberg, whose terms ended in 2024, for their years of service and expertise on the Board. I would also like to offer a hearty welcome to new Board members Jennifer Monsos and Chris Phan. You can get to know all your Board members on the Board of Directors page on the Co-op website.

I am also excited to share that this year the Board will be undertaking a strategic planning initiative. This effort is intended to guide Board work through a common vision, help keep the Board accountable for making progress, and smooth transitions as Board membership changes over the years. We are in an excellent place as a cohesive team and are pleased to be able to dedicate time to developing a strategic approach for our role in the Co-op and community.

We will be reaching out to members and staff to gather thoughts and feedback as we move through this planning process. Please keep a lookout for ways to participate in the next few months! More to come! I look forward to connecting with members on this initiative and many others this year.

In the meantime, please reach out via email or join a Board meeting on the 3rd Monday of each month in the Co-op meeting room. And always feel free to say "hi" if we see each other around the Co-op!

Happy Spring!

Vanessa Perry
Board Vice President
vanessa@bluff.coop

Co-op Involvement

Owner Outreach • Food Access • Community Fund

Owners can join a Board Committee and take part in co-op decision-making!

Learn more about the Board Committees at <https://www.bluff.coop/meetings-governance/>



Co-op Board of Directors

MEETINGS

held monthly on every

3rd Monday

The monthly board meetings are held at 6 pm in the BCC Community Room and open to Co-op Owners.

If you would like to attend, please contact our Board President, Lisa Lorsch in advance and review our meeting guidelines at:

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

Family Dedicated to Sustainable Farming

For several years during the Christmas and Easter holidays the co-op has provided customers with the convenience of pre-ordering fresh hams from Hidden Stream Farm.

In March we are delighted to have them visit the store, share samples and chat with customers. Read on to learn more about this family farm and the sustainable pork they raise.

Owned by Lisa and Eric Klein, Hidden Stream Farm is located near Elgin, MN between the Mississippi River and Rochester. Their beef, pork and chicken are raised using a pasture-based and deep bedding system. This allows them to farm in an environmentally friendly way.

Hidden Stream Farm was started in the 1950's when Lisa's dad Everett started growing his own feed and milking 36 cows, with his wife Rosemary by his side.

In the 1990's, Everett became involved with the Land Stewardship Project. He switched to raising beef cattle and growing row crops. Given his success, he started rotational grazing, bringing hogs and chickens to the pasture, too. This was the beginning of Hidden Stream Farm and its journey with regenerative farming, working to improve the health of the animals, the soil, the planet, and the people.

Lisa met Eric while studying agriculture at the University of Wisconsin. In 1997, they married and took over the family farm, officially making their farming dream a reality. There were challenges at every step.

The Klein's started selling direct-to-consumer in 1999 at a little farmer's market in Plainview. In those early days they were selling meat out of coolers in the back of a pickup when their first child Andy was just 1 week old! Over time, they grew to take on wholesale with restaurants, schools, and grocery stores. As the growth of local food increased, they became a local food hub, growing their own food as well as sourcing foods locally from other area farmers for resale.

Today, the Klein's grow as much of their own feed for their animals as possible, right on the farm. Their pigs are raised without antibiotics or hormones and live in spacious, deep straw bedded hoop houses. This allows the pigs to follow their natural tendencies for rooting in the dirt or burying themselves in the straw to stay warm in the cold winter months.

All 6 of Lisa and Eric's kids are active on the farm. They can proudly say they are a 4th generation family farm, devoted for 3 generations to regenerative farming. Their goal is to maintain and grow their farm not only to sustain their family, but all the families they provide food to in the community. The Klein's aims to build on what they've already learned to do well—produce a wide array of delicious, nourishing, environmentally positive foods.

Eric from Hidden Stream Farm will be in the store to visit with customers on Saturday, March 29. This will be a great opportunity to taste their ham and ask questions in person, before committing to a pre-order. So, mark your calendar! More details about this local vendor visit will be shared soon, in our bi-monthly emails, posted on our social media, website and at the store.

To learn more about the ham pre-order, visit our website: <https://www.bluff.coop/ham-pre-order/>





Meet our Well-Body Manager

Amy Shea has been the manager of our wellness, body care and general merchandise departments since 2021. Learn more about her below.



What do you love most about food co-ops?

Amy: Outside of amazing food? I love the community that happens here. I've worked in a lot of retail spaces and there's nothing like the culture of a co-op, whether it's the relationships we build within the community that we serve or the culture that develops amongst the staff. Co-ops seem to attract people who care very much about making a positive impact on their communities, the environment and the many ways in which we as grocery stores can work together to improve the quality of the food industry one little grocery store at a time.

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

Amy: My background is in herbalism. I graduated from the Green Wisdom School of Natural & Botanical Medicine in 2015 and have been working in various ways within that world since. I also spent about 2 years working as the Wellness Assistant at People's Food Co-op in La Crosse between 2006 and 2008, so the Well-Body Manager felt like the best next step for me within the co-op.

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

Amy: I really enjoy the relationships I've developed with some of my customers and bumping into customers from my time at the co-op in La Crosse. I really enjoy the opportunities I've had to learn new things. I find myself always learning new things about herbs, but also learning in unexpected ways like figuring out how to create spreadsheets that calculate costs for orders I put together. I also get really excited about bringing in new general merch items. Those big ol' fair trade boxes filled with brightly colored baskets and whatnot are so much fun to stock out. I know I did a good job picking things out if my co-workers are excited too.

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

Amy: I am looking forward to writing for the newsletter again. I enjoy having that outlet very much and I feel like it could be beneficial for folks to have those bite-sized, easy

to understand bits of information about what we have in the aisle and how those products might be useful. If nothing else, those write-ups might spark conversations.

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

Amy: You can find the beauty in snow, or you can hate it. Either way you have the same amount of snow, but you might experience less beauty.

What is currently your favorite food indulgence at BCC?

Amy: I think I eat soup from our kitchen for lunch almost every day. Madeline makes chili that is pretty much soul-nourishing.

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

Amy: Turnip, because turnips look great in purple.

What is your favorite local product?

Amy: I have to pick just one? There are so many... I do love the local fresh basil from Rolling Hills. It makes the most wonderful pesto.

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

Amy: I have never made the same meatloaf twice. I also enjoy singing but I have a voice for silent movies, so I don't sing around other people usually.

What's been your favorite new discovery in Winona or around the Driftless Region?

Amy: Just a Horse Rescue & Sanctuary in Melrose, Wisconsin. Spending time with the horses there has been really lovely.

Seasoned to Perfection

If you are craving big, bold flavors and want to change up your mealtime routine, look no further than a blackening seasoning blend.

This zesty and flavorful spice is handy to have on hand for seasoning all of your favorite entrées—like chicken, seafood and burgers—plus hearty sides like potatoes.

Blackening seasoning, (a.k.a. "blackened seasoning") is a mixture of chili powders, spices and herbs, very similar to Cajun and Creole seasonings. Designed for the blackening cooking technique, where proteins (like steak, chicken, or fish) are dipped in butter, coated with the spice blend, and cooked over high heat, usually in a cast-iron skillet. This method caramelizes the spices, creating a charred crust with a deep, smokey flavor that is characteristic of blackened foods.

It's easy to make your own blackening seasoning blend from scratch, because no fancy ingredients are required. You are more than likely to have everything you need already in your

pantry. Homemade also allows you to adjust the ratios and control the level of heat to suit your taste, making it far better than any store-bought blend, and it will be fresher too!

Stacey and Brenna, Board members from our Food Access Committee, have shared the following recipes to inspire you on your culinary adventures with this savory seasoning. Get started with the recipe below and discover just how versatile a blackening seasoning blend can be in the kitchen.



Stacey Huber



Brenna Curry



Blackened Seasoning Blend

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp smoked paprika or use regular paprika
- 1 tbsp cayenne powder
(use less for a less spicy blend)
- 1 tbsp onion powder
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 tsp sea salt
- ½ tsp dried basil
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ½ tsp dried thyme

Instructions:

1. Mix all of the ingredients together in a small bowl.
2. Make sure it is blended evenly.
3. Store in airtight containers and use as needed.



Dirty Rice & Beans

Vegan

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup yellow onion, diced
- 1 cup carrots, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, diced
- 1 tbsp blackening seasoning
- 1 ½ cups vegetable broth
- 14.5 oz diced tomatoes, do not drain
- 1 cup long grain white rice (uncooked)
- 12 oz can beans (any variety) drained

Instructions:

1. In a large skillet with a lid heat the oil over medium heat. Sauté the onions, carrots and green pepper for about 5 minutes, stirring often.
2. Sprinkle in the blackening seasoning. Stir to coat the vegetables.
3. Stir in the (uncooked) rice and drained beans.
4. Pour the vegetable broth and tomatoes into the pot and scrape up any browned bits from the bottom of the pot.
5. Turn the heat to medium high and bring the liquid to a hard simmer for a minute.
6. Turn the heat to low and pop the lid on the pot. Cook for 18-20 minutes.
7. Remove the pot from the burner and let sit, with the lid on, for 5 minutes.



Air Fryer - Blackened Salmon & Cilantro Rice

Ingredients:

- 6 oz salmon fillet
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 tsp blackened seasoning
(2 tsp if covering both top and bottom of salmon)
- 1 cup dry rice
- 1 lime
- 1 bunch of cilantro

Instructions:

1. Pat salmon dry with paper towels. Remove any bones if needed. Remove skin (optional).
2. Place salmon on a plate and drizzle with olive oil. Rub into the surface of the salmon.
3. Sprinkle blackened seasoning over the top of the salmon.
4. Either brush air fryer basket with oil or use air fryer parchment paper.
5. Place salmon in air fryer basket. Air fry at 375 degrees F for 4-8 minutes.
6. Cook rice according to package instructions.
7. Juice one lime - add to cooked rice
8. Add 1/4 cup chopped cilantro. Stir until combined.

See recipe video reels on our Facebook and Instagram pages, and get printable versions of the recipes at: <https://www.bluff.coop/recipes/>





Browse our selection of heirloom garden seeds from Seed Savers Exchange (Decorah, IA). If we don't have what you are looking for at the store, use the catalogue to place a request and we'll try to order it for you. Great way to save on shipping!

Cooperative Principles

- 1.) Voluntary & Open Membership
- 2.) Democratic Member Control
- 3.) Member Economic Participation
- 4.) Autonomy & Independence
- 5.) Education, Training & Information
- 6.) Cooperation Among Cooperatives
- 7.) Concern for Community



REGISTER
ROUND UP

Bluff Country Co-op

Community



Fund

Donations

collected from

- Round up at the Register
- Customer Donations

Our donations are pooled with the donations of more than 40 other co-ops and used to make loans to other co-ops.



The interest on our principle is returned to us annually. We donate this to a local non-profit of our choosing.

2025
Community
Fund Recipient
will be
**Winona
Farmers
Market**



Bluff Country Sustainability

BY INGRID OGREN, SUSTAINABILITY & COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR

As we head towards the spring equinox, I am reminded of new beginnings. Mother Earth is priming for change. Spring. A re-framing of life. And I am no exception. I am beginning a new chapter within my life with you here at Bluff Country Co-op. My name is Ingrid Ogren, and I would like to introduce myself as the Sustainability and Community Outreach Coordinator.

I have long been a part of Bluff Country Co-op's vibrant and generous community. My family moved to Winona when I was 2 years old. With a love of whole foods, my family soon located the local co-op, then known as 'Famine Foods' stationed at the west end of the Latsch Building. I grew up helping scoop things out of the bulk bins, getting weighed on the cashier scale by Don Nelson at check-out, and smelling the nostalgic peppermint Dr. Bronner's mop soap used nightly to clean the ancient wood floors. I LOVED trips to the Coop. It was like visiting family. Everyone knew your name; you could plop up front, talk with whoever was cashiering, and always find some food treasure you could (sometimes) talk your folks into treating you to.

When I was of working age, I naturally turned to the co-op, applied, and was hired as a cashier to help transition Bluff Country Co-op from the Kupietz/Latsch building into the east half of 121 W. 2nd St. It was an exciting time. We had outgrown our first beautiful shell and were ready to move into the next, like a growing hermit crab.

I worked at Bluff Country Co-op over the next 7 years. No matter what my life threw at me, the co-op community was always there. Whether I was returning for summer breaks, moving away from, or moving

back to Winona... Bluff Country Co-op's doors were always open to me, and our community perennially welcomed me back with warmth, laughter, and good food. BCC became a second family once again during my early 20's.

Now, as the Sustainability and Community Outreach Coordinator, I am excited to continue giving back and helping grow the Bluff Country Co-op family. You are a big, beautiful, beating heart here in Winona. Thank you for welcoming me home yet again, BCC.

Ingrid Ogren
Sustainability & Community Outreach
outreach@bluff.coop

Nori Maki Cooking Class

Saturday, March 15 • 10:30 am – 12:30 pm
Co-op Community Room • Cost: \$20

Learn how to make Nori Maki – a tasty, healthy snack of rice wrapped in seaweed and Japanese traditional Miso soup. Vegan, Vegetarian, & Gluten-free friendly. Akebono is from Japan and volunteers to teach classes with Bluff Country Co-op.

The cost covers ingredients.

Bulk Foods For Frugal Cooks

Saturday, March 22 • 10:00 am – 11:30 pm
Co-op Community Room • Cost: Free

Eating organic and healthy food does not need to be expensive; you can eat well and feed a family on a budget that won't break the bank. Discover the benefits of our bulk foods department during this class with Debi, as we explore purchasing, storing and cooking bulk foods.

Early registration is appreciated.
To sign up for a class, contact us at the store:
(507) 452-1815, or email Ingrid:
outreach@bluff.coop

Earth Day Celebration: May 3

Watch for more details!

Rain Garden Clean Up: Early June

Info will be shared on our social media and in our bi-monthly eCuiZine. Interested volunteers can contact Ingrid: outreach@bluff.coop



Board Members Brian and Pingping sharing samples and smiles with customers.



Bluff Country Co-op

121 W. 2ND ST • WINONA, MN • (ph) 507.452.1815

www.bluff.coop
info@bluff.coop

GOOD FOOD DAILY
8 am - 8 pm