

The



PEOPLE'S FOOD CO-OP
NATURAL FOODS MARKET & DELI

Connection

Update Newsletter

ANN ARBOR'S COMMUNITY-OWNED NATURAL-FOODS GROCERY SINCE 1971

Letter from the General Manager



We are continuing to face difficult times as a business. Sales and customer count continue to decline and we are losing money. We need you to patronize your locally owned cooperative. Our sales are down about 10% from the prior year, we have trimmed expenses and labor to meet this decline but our cash reserves

cannot sustain this pattern and I, and PFC staff, have been working diligently to reverse the trends of decline. We have been focusing on customer service and the customer experience. Removing clutter from aisles for better ease of movement, carefully examining our product mix to make sure everything we carry are items our members and customers want to buy, working on staff training and development, and working to make PFC more environmentally sustainable. We continue to focus on bringing you the best from our local vendors and the excellent products they provide. It is always our priority to provide for our community the goods and services they desire. That is really what being a cooperative is all about: serving our community.

Please tell us more about what you looking for when you shop PFC. Are there items that you regularly purchase elsewhere that PFC could stock? While based on our size we might not be able to match item for item and dollar for dollar, in all cases we are responsive to you our members and community first. How can we better serve our community? What is it that you want from your grocery cooperative?

Last year, as a new General Manager, I presented the Board of Directors an annual financial budget and a one-year business plan. But, what we need to turn PFC's path around is much more than that one-year plan. I have begun the process of creating a three-year strategic business plan (including a budget) that I will present to the Board at the end of this year. This strategic vision will be solely focused on bring PFC back to a place at the center of the community, one where we are profitable and it is a sustainable business. I envision a healthy robust cooperative that serves the entire Ann Arbor community, is a hub for local food and community involvement, and where we are great stewards of our environment, increasing our impact as outlined in our Ends, are a model workplace that encourages and supports employees,

Calling All Members!



SAVE \$10

Save \$10 on your shopping trip when you make your additional \$100 equity investment today!

This investment supports your Co-op's success & ensures uninterrupted member benefits.

Payment Plan Options Available - Ask an Associate for details. \$10 Coupon Offer Ends November 10th, 2019. The Board voted to increase full membership investment to \$160 effective January 1, 2019.

and so much more. Please join me in creating the first steps of that journey by renewing your commitment to PFC.

The outcome of my vision, however, will only be as strong as your increased support. We need your involvement! Whether it means making an extra shopping trip to the co-op every week, or telling a friend about what makes the co-op unique and valuable to the Ann Arbor community, or increasing your member investment to the \$160 level, or becoming a new member. Concrete example: If every one of our 5,500 active member shoppers increased their shopping by \$10 a week that would mean an additional \$2.8 million dollars in sales in one year. What can you do to support this business? We need the support of the membership, shoppers and community or we cannot survive and begin to thrive. Please join me in my deep commitment to revitalize this amazing Ann Arbor institution!

In Cooperation, Angie Voiles General Manager

Board Matters Fall 2019



JAIME MAGIERA
PRESIDENT
TERM EXPIRES 2021

FELLOW PFC MEMBERS,

As Summer winds down and we head into Fall, I'm thankful to bring you the latest news from your Board of Directors.

Since my last column, the board has gained a member. Long-time local physician

Dennis Chernin took a seat with us in June. His health expertise and his strong ties to the community are a tremendous benefit to the co-op. If you haven't had the pleasure of speaking with Dennis before, please feel free to reach out to him. His contact information is on the Board section of the PFC website.

In July, the board embarked on a major project to reformulate the co-op's vision and set the foundation for the General Manager's multi-year financial plan. As the grocery landscape changes, it's important for the co-op to envision how we can best serve the members and the community, then interweave that vision with the opportunities and limitations of the store's operations. To that end, the board has been engaging in extensive outreach to local business owners and other leaders in the community, discussing how the co-op can best position itself in the future. Likewise, the board's Linkage Committee will be hosting focus groups with members in the coming months. Once we've parsed all the information, we'll formulate a concise vision which will be brought to the General Manager. From there, we'll be able to define regular benchmarks and alternate paths to ensure that we're realizing the vision, or taking appropriate steps when certain aspects become untenable. This project is taking a considerable amount of time and resources. The board has now added an additional meeting each month for planning and information sharing. I appreciate that our volunteer board members have stepped up, bringing their energy and wisdom to this very important process.

Another important project I'd like to update you on is our Zero Waste initiative. In the past year since the co-op started the project, we've taken significant strides in empowering members to reduce waste within the store and at home. There are a variety of metrics being used to assess the success of the

project. One of those is the number of cloth bag purchases in the store. I'm happy to report that the latest numbers show that members are buying increasingly more cloth bags for their goods. If you haven't already, please take a look at the cloth bag options next time you're in the store. The General Manager has stocked everything from small bags, which are good for fruits and vegetables, to the larger insulated bags which are good for refrigerated items. In early September, the Board's Linkage Committee hosted a Zero Waste educational event in the cafe. You can read more about it in the Linkage Committee report within these pages. I'll have more to share with you on our Zero Waste efforts in the next Board Matters.

Lastly, I wanted to update you on our membership fee realignment program. As you know, the board voted last year to increase the co-op's membership fee by \$100. We're still working stridently to reach all the members about this change. At our August meeting, the board resolved to extend the program until January 1st, 2020, thereby providing a full year for members to respond. Memberships which have not been paid in full or are not subject to a payment agreement by January 1, 2020, will be deactivated. This deactivation means the shopper loses all rights of membership, including the following:

- Access to members-only discounts on specific products.
- Access to the members-only monthly discount.
- The ability to vote in the Board of Directors election.

Memberships which have been deactivated can be reactivated at any time by paying the remaining amount of, or by entering into a payment agreement for, the full fee. We thank all of the members who have taken the opportunity to update their membership. If you haven't done so yet, please do. The co-op now has an online form that members can use to pay the additional amount in just a few clicks.

peoplesfood.coop/about/membership-payment/

That's all the board news for now. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to reach out.

**SEE YOU IN THE CO-OP,
JAIME**

your BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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ABOUT: The Board of Directors are elected by PFC members to represent them in setting policy and ensure the financial well-being of the Co-op.

Member-owners are encouraged to participate in the Co-op's decision-making process and to attend monthly board meetings. Time is set aside for public comments at the start of each meeting. Have a topic you would like the board to consider? The deadline for member requested agenda items is two weeks before the scheduled meeting. Contact president@peoplesfood.coop for more information. Our board generally meets on the third Wednesday of the month (subject as always to occasional one-time shifts to accommodate events).

If you have any comments to share with us, contact any of the directors.

From the Linkage Committee

DEAR MEMBERS,

The PFC Linkage Committee continues to work on efforts to bring concerns from members to the PFC Board of Directors, facilitate and improve communication from the board to our members and promote actions for members to engage with.

In September your PFC Linkage Committee hosted an evening on zero waste and waste management presented by Jennifer Petoskey, Solid Waste Outreach, City of Ann Arbor, and Anya Dale, Sustainability, Program Manager, University of Michigan. The evening's presentation focused on the circular economy and efforts to reduce waste at PFC and in members' lives. Several members have expressed interest in waste reduction at home, and the board is also keenly interested in that issue in the store. Other members have been interested in zero waste, eliminating plastics, and improving packaging issues. The evening was a great success and those that attended received many helpful suggestions and a warm community of support for their efforts to reduce waste. Meanwhile, the co-op continues to add to its already significant assortments of ways to shop zero waste.



Coming in October and November, the Linkage Committee will be helping to facilitate small focus groups with the intent to explore ideas and develop a three year vision for the co-op. Your PFC Board of Directors is seeking input from members and their dreams for our future.

Also, our committee has begun to discuss ways in which we can help in our co-op's approaching 50th Anniversary in 2021. While we have almost a year and half to go until our anniversary, our committee wants to help make this an outstanding celebration. Achieving 50 years in business thanks to our members is cause for great celebration and very few Ann Arbor businesses can boast such an accomplishment.

5 Easy Tips for Zero Waste

How much waste do you and your family usually throw away every day, month, in a year? Can you imagine where will all those waste go eventually? Here are five Tips for Zero Waste: Refuse what you don't need, Reduce what you do need, Reuse things by using reusables, Recycle the things that you cannot refuse, reduce, or reuse, and Rot the rest to make compost.

1. Refuse

Refuse means that don't take what you don't need and bravely refuse things that are given to you without your intention. One example is junk mail, it is kind of a waste of resources since it will eventually just go straight into your trash bin. Another example is those freebies you can get from conferences, parties, or meetings. Every time you take one, you create a demand to take more and more. Ask yourself, what will you do with another free pen?

2. Reduce

Reduce means get what you need, efficiently. You can do this step by first learning to clean up your house and choose unused stuff you find. You can

donate those things for people who need it or you can sell it in your own garage sale. This will lighten your load and bring happiness to other people who are more likely to give those things more use.

3. Reuse (and Repair)

Reuse and also Repair, is another step to Zero Waste living. The first thing is swap the disposable for reusable items, like tissues for handkerchiefs and cloth napkins, plastic bags for shopping totes, etc. If you have changed your disposables for reusable items, then you can repair those things when they get broken. In example when your shopping tote is ripped, you can just sew it to get it back its full function.

4. Recycle

Recycling is your last resort, choose wisely what you are going to buy and think about the former three steps first. Choose materials other than



plastics if you cannot recycle it yourself because plastic often ends up in the landfill (or ocean).

5. Rot

Rot things and make them compost. Find a compost system that works for your home and learn what it will digest. This way, you will make use of what's grown from earth and give it back to earth. Those are the steps to guide you to Zero Waste living. For your information, if you want to do this, you are not alone. There are many sites in the internet that will provide you the information about the guides, supports, even nearest communities.



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SUSTAINABLE
One Bag At A Time!

BAGS SOLD YEAR TO DATE **2018** **2019**

Co+op Shopping Bags **134** **990**

Small PFC Cloth Bags **0** **268**

Large PFC Cloth Bags **0** **115**

Insulated Co+op Bags **14** **102**

Sustainable shopping made simple at the co-op!

SILVIO'S
Handmade Italian food

Silvio's Organic Ristorante e Pizzeria is happy to offer

10% OFF*

For all members of the People's Food Co-op!

*Offer valid for Dine-in and Take-out orders only

(734) 214-6666

PFC  **Board Meeting**

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

St Andrews Church
on Division Street

Everybody is Welcome!

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PFC SPONSORED CLASSES
EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

2019 PFC CLASS SERIES

Stay tuned for more classes.

We will be starting back up soon!

For more information, registration or cancellations check our Website & Facebook.

CURBSIDE CARRY-OUT!



HOW IT WORKS:

- SHOP**
Shop for your favorite items in our produce section & more.
- CHECK OUT**
At check out, ask for one of our curbside carry-out associates. We'll load up your groceries while you get your car.
- PICK-UP**
When you're in our designated curbside pick-up area simply press the call button, one of our friendly associates will be right out with your groceries.

FREE PARKING

There is **FREE PARKING** across the street after 6:00pm during the week & all day on the weekends.
Water / Street parking is free after 6 p.m.

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