

# BOARD STORIES



## WHY I SERVE . . .

*By Hannah Breckbill, Oneota Co-op Board of Directors*

The reason I serve on the board of directors of the Oneota Community Food Co-op is simple: *people power!*

I am so inspired by the way cooperatives work by pooling resources from a community in order to benefit that community. We can do so much more together than we can on our own, and the cooperative model takes advantage of that.

In our case, imagine if you tried to get the kinds of products that you buy regularly at the Co-op, without the infrastructure of the Co-op. It would probably be expensive and time-consuming and you'd be easily discouraged trying to find, say, bulk salt, or even Fair Trade chocolate, and get it delivered to Decorah. But



Photo courtesy of Charlie Langton

because of people who pooled their resources and worked together

for years on the mission of access to good food, we now have the vibrant and thriving cooperative that we all know and love.



As a board member, I get to keep all of that in mind as I make decisions about the direction of the Co-op. I get to ask myself, "what do members want from this institution that they are part of?" I get to ask that directly of member/owners too! There are so many tangible and intangible ways we can improve our Co-op, and that our Co-op can improve our community, and I like to be part of thinking those things through and acting on them.

If you get excited about thinking strategically and long-term, in conversation with a small but powerful group, with benefit to your community in mind, please consider running for the board of the Co-op!

## IS IT YOUR TIME TO SERVE?

The Co-op welcomes all interested member/owners to confirm candidacy in our next board election cycle.

There will be two open seats on the 2024 election ballot.

[Applications](#) are due Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024. Learn more by [clicking here](#):

## COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE NUMBER TWO

**Democratic Owner Control.** Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their owners, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the ownership. Owners have equal voting rights - one owner, one vote.