



Co-op Developments

A short monthly update about co-op development in the Pacific Northwest provided to you on or about the 20th of each month. Please share with your network!

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Celebrating Cooperatives in Co-op Month



The **US Department of Agriculture** sent out the following comment this month to promote the value of cooperatives to the US Economy, "Cooperative businesses provide essential economic supports to our rural and urban communities especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Approximately 30,000 U.S. cooperatives operate at 73,000 places of business and provide more than 2 million stable jobs. Cooperatives boast about 350 million memberships and generate more than \$650 billion in annual revenue. Rural electrical co-ops provide power to three-quarters of the Nation's landmass."

NWCDC helped get the word out about co-ops at the state, regional, and national level!

Cooperative Development Specialist **Deborah Craig** and **Cindy Brooks** of the Washington Small Business Development Center are teaming up to provide two webinars on how to start a homecare cooperative. Through education in the cooperative business model and by highlighting the success of the 4 Washington homecare care co-ops, the webinars will provide local caregivers with information to consider in forming their own caregiver cooperative.

Senior Cooperative Development Specialist **John McNamara** was a panelist at the Regards to Rural Conference, Constructing Sustainable and Equitable Rural Economies, engaging in a discussion with **Garrett Dalan** of The Nature Conservancy and **Ernie Rasmussen** Tribal Liaison of the WA Department of Commerce about how rural economies can move to a paradigm based on meeting human needs through economic development without sacrificing the environment or control over their communities.

This month, the annual [Co-op Impact Conference](#) went on-line with 5 days of discussion and training on the value of cooperatives in these incredible times of change. The theme of this years conference was Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

NWCDC participated as attendees and panelists. Executive Director **Diane Gasaway** was a panelist on the Co-op IMPACT panel on "*Policy Strategies to Build a More Inclusive Economy with Cooperatives*" with **Monica Armster Rainge** of the Southern Federation of Cooperatives and **Brett Theodos** of the Urban Institute. Diane noted that inquiries to NWCDC have tripled this year and that co-op's have become a real option as people seek a way to rebuild and argued that we need to make our existing laws easy to understand and use.

In September, NWCDC produced 7 webinars on Marketing. If you missed those webinars, you can catch them on our [Youtube channel](#) or access through [our website](#).

We hope you have an incredible Co-op Month and make sure to let the staff at every co-op that you patronize know how much you care about them!

[Orca Books to Hold First Annual General Meeting](#)

One of the key moments in any co-op's development is the first General Meeting when the first board election happens. For [Orca Books Cooperative](#), that will happen on November 11 and 14 in an on-line meeting of the membership.

Orca began a conversion project in May 2019 as a Solidarity Co-op (which means that membership has different classifications). The steering committee raised over \$70,000 and attracted over 550 consumer and worker members to join the co-op.

The official conversion occurred on April 1, 2020 during the Stay at Home Order and to make things even more complicated, the Co-op moved locations to [315 5th Avenue SE in Olympia, WA](#) (a literal stone's throw from NWCDC's office). The store is open for indoor sales as well as curbside. If you want to join the co-op, you can do so on-line.



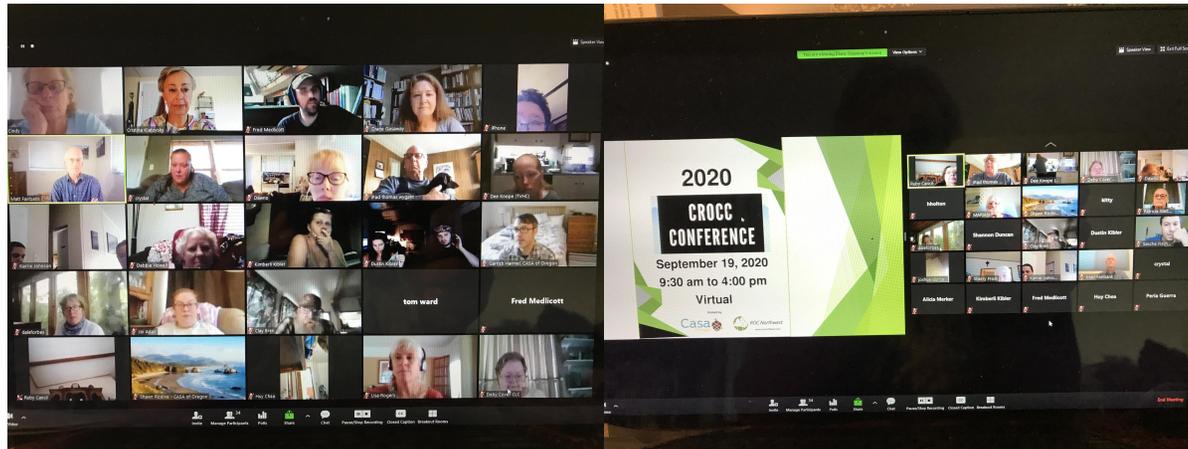
Orca Books Co-op
315 5th Avenue SE
Look for the mural!



CROCC Goes On Line

As with so many events, this year, the annual **Cascade ROC Conference** became a virtual event. Between the pandemic and the fires, traveling and in-person meetings simply were not a safe option, but the [ROC Northwest](#) Team got very creative, providing countless interactive hours of tech training to facilitate participation and successful connections.

NWCDC provided some participants with hotspots and Chrome drives to ensure that directors could participate even if they didn't have a reliable internet connection. At lunch, ROC NW staff coordinated the delivery of pizzas in every participant's location across the State of Washington!



14 Days for Co-ops to Get Out the Vote

Cooperatives are all about democracy. The word shows up in the definition of co-ops, in its values and in its principles. In 2016, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association create the [Co-ops Vote!](#) Campaign and this year, September 22nd has been declared "National Register to Vote" Day. Co-ops across the country are urged to help the members register to vote and cast their ballots on **November 3rd**.



Give Local in November

NWCDC will be participating in [Give Local](#) for the second time. This annual event through the [Community Foundation of South Puget Sound](#) provides a focused opportunity for people to support the mission of SSCF and its partnering organizations (like NWCDC) to directly support work in the the counties of Thurston, Lewis, and Mason. NWCDC hopes to raise \$10,000 to close our giving year out. NWCDC also seeks organizations interested in matching or being sponsors for our campaign. If you or your organization would like more information on how to sponsor or be a matching organization, please contact [John McNamara](#) (johnm@nwcdc.coop)

Age of Co-opportunity

Learn how two U.S. cities with long, rich cooperative histories—Madison, Wisconsin and Oakland, California—created initiatives to dedicate municipal funds to strengthen cooperative development and build economic resiliency. Join Madison Alderperson **Rebecca Kemble** (and Union Cab member), **Charity Schmidt**, University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives, and **Yassi Eskandari**, from the Sustainable Economies Law Center in Oakland, CA for a discussion about how cities can help build cooperative communities.

Could their successes offer a guide for Bellingham and Whatcom County? Join Cascade Cooperatives for this informative discussion to explore the possibilities!

October 22, 2020 6 pm

[Register Here](#)

Support Cooperative Development in the PNW

Consider making a donation to support the work of the Northwest Cooperative Development Center. Any amount is appreciated. NWCDC is a 501(c)(3) organization and any gives are tax deductible up to the limits allowed by law. Please support our mission to support community economic development through the cooperative business mode.

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