

LINEHATERS' GAZETTE

Established
1973



Volume HA, Number 1

April 1, 2010

Coop to Purchase Key Food Property on Fifth Avenue

By Al Dente

After months of closed-door negotiations and a contentious General Meeting on February 23, the General Coordinators and Board of Directors of the Park Slope Food Coop announced today that the purchase of the Key Food store and property on Fifth Avenue and Prospect Avenue has been finalized.

"We are thrilled with the new possibilities this represents for the store," announced a smiling Joe Holtz, General Manager of the Coop. "With the recent surge in membership, the more spacious store will allow us to expand our line of products, offer longer hours and allow our members to actually park their cars in that big lot next to the store."

"It's definitely a new day for the Coop," echoed General Coordinator Jessica Robinson. "We've hired a green architect to work with us on a redesign of the space, and we're working on a community outreach program to encourage all the former Key Food shoppers to become Coop members."

The new store is spacious—over 20,000 square feet of floor space, plus a full basement of about the same size. The parking lot holds 120 cars and there are plans to also use it for bike racks, stroller parking and possibly a dog run.

Bidding War

The Coop first heard of the possibility that the property



Artist's rendering of the new store with signage in place.

was going on the market last year. It's a large parcel of land on trendy Fifth Avenue, making it irresistible to real estate developers. In fact, Bruce Ratner, the controversial developer of Atlantic Yards, expressed a serious interest, saying, "I think that it's important to keep constructing more luxury condominium towers in this part of Brooklyn." Other developers were interested as well, but Ratner was the most serious contender. He was in negotiations with the mayor's

office about tax breaks for the property when the Coop stepped in and made an offer. Ratner made a counter-offer and a bidding war ensued.

However, Ratner eventually withdrew from negotiations when the mayor's office refused him eminent domain status for the property, leaving the Coop with the winning bid.

So what was the final purchase price? "You don't want to know!" said Holtz, rolling his eyes.

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Pit bull mix Cola shares the Childcare couch with Evan and his baby sister Vanessa.

Who Let The Dogs In? PSFC Opens Childcare to Dogs

By Amy Pearl

They say every dog has his day. And at the Park Slope Food Coop, he'll have his daycare, too.

After paying more than \$1,500 in noise violations in 2009, the Coop ended the practice of leaving dogs unattended outside the store by opening up childcare to four-legged members. The new policy offers daycare spots to up to 12 dogs at a time, Friday through Sunday, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. If the service proves popular, it will be expanded to the rest of the week.

Ann Herpel is the coordinator in charge of doggy daycare. "We can't afford to keep paying fines for barking dogs,

but we don't want to discourage our human members from spending time with their canine companions," Herpel said. "This is a win/win situation. Dogs and kids go together like pit bulls and pork chops. Everyone is happy."

In fact, not everyone is happy. Reaction to the announcement among members was mixed.

Charlene Powers is a squad leader on the Goat Milk Committee. "That's fine for dog owners," Powers said, "But I have a budgie and 2 guinea pigs. What am I supposed to do with them while I shop?"

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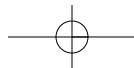
Coop Event Highlights

- Thu, Apr 8 • Cooking Class: Vegan Hash Brownies**
7:00 p.m.
- Mon, Apr 19 • Movie Night: Avatar in 3D, with special guest speaker James Cameron** 8:00 p.m.
- Fri, Apr 31 • The Good Coffeehouse: Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band** 8:00 p.m.

Look for additional information about these and other events in this issue.

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Key Food CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Big Plans

There is much work to be done at the new store. An environmental consultant has been brought in to assess the damage that years of conventionally produced food has had on the space. An architectural firm is designing a new layout for the store and basement storage areas. To accommodate the Coop's enormous membership, at least one more floor is being planned for the building, with a state-of-the-art meeting space, large commercial kitchen and yoga/ meditation rooms. Offices, childcare (with a "time-out" room and its own juice bar), plus a lounge and fitness center for the staff are also in the works. There is even talk of a roof-top garden, where the Coop could grow some of its own produce.

"One of the great things about the new store is that it's only a one-story structure. So the sky's the limit!" said Robinson. "We can also sell the air rights if we need to raise cash for future growth."

Members React

The response of most members interviewed for this story was positive. Angelina Pizzaria, a two-year veteran of the Coop, said, "You mean I can drive my SUV right up to the store and park, just like in the suburbs? Awesome!"

"I'm really looking forward to the Coop expanding the kind of food we carry," said Carl Samuels. "Like I would love to buy, you know, Oreos and stock up on cans of Campbell's soup, right? But we don't have the shelf space now."

Paulette Wallet, a busy mother of three small children, who were all pulling boxes of cereal off the shelves, expressed her delight at the news, "Oh I hope they think about putting in a room for breast feeding. You have no idea how hostile people can be, even here! It's just the most natural thing in the world and we need to make sure nursing moms are comfortable."

One of the Krasdale drivers, who would only give his name as Spike, offered his assessment of the new prop-



The new store should ease overcrowding, like this recent scene in the produce aisle.

erty: "That's f---ing great. You have no f---ing idea what a f---ing pain in the f---ing ass this delivery is. Three times a week, crawling up f---ing Union Street and blocking traffic while 60 different people unload the f---ing truck."

Caleb Webster, a long-time Receiving Coordinator, told a harrowing story, "I was in the freezer one morning, and became trapped behind two tons of ice cream. I was in there for hours—my cell phone wasn't getting a signal and no one

heard me. I thought I was going to die. So yeah, I am happy we are going to a bigger space." Mr. Webster was eventually freed from his chilly prison, but not until the store was about to close and his fingertips were turning blue.

With membership at 36,000 (see story on page 3), the Coop has been contemplating drastic measures to deal with the crowds of shoppers, tight storage space in the basement and the flaring tempers it has produced. The new property and plans for expansion will help alleviate many of these problems.

Not everyone was thrilled at the news. Red Schwinn, a

member of the Valet Bicycle Committee, was outraged, "One hundred and twenty parking spaces?" she shrieked. "That's one hundred and twenty more cars polluting the air and creating traffic. We want to see that parking lot turned into a community garden with the largest bicycle parking lot in the world." A spokesperson for the Environmental Committee, Freddy Green, outlined plans for what the Coop should do before moving into

the space. "We are cautiously optimistic about this move but a complete top-to-bottom environmental impact statement needs to be done. We'd like to look into building the new second floor with straw bales and plastic soda bottles. And with so much space, we think we might be able to recycle the fryer oil from all the restaurants on Fifth Avenue to generate our own electricity."

"I don't like it," said octogenarian Amethyst Blue, a member of the Coop since its inception. "My member number is 08 and I've seen a lot of changes, some good, some bad. Getting shopping carts was a great thing. We didn't have to push cardboard boxes around the floor. But this? We're turning into Costco."

Neighborhood Reaction

Perhaps the biggest outcry against the expansion has been from members of the community, who are upset at the loss of a large, conventional grocery store.

"What's up with that?" said Margaret Mayo, a long-time Key Food shopper. "I don't want to have to work for my food. I just want to pay money and go home."

Borough President Marty Markowitz offered to preside over talks between the neighborhood and the Coop. "Brooklyn is the greatest city in the world," he said. "We want everyone to be happy. We want everyone to be able to shop for groceries."

A Community Liaison Committee has been formed, with Coop members going door-to-door trying to encourage Key Food shoppers to join. The Coop may

also consider different membership structures such as special days for non-member, a lottery where the winnings are a family membership for a certain period of time and a guest-worker program.

How Long?

The General Coordinators anticipate the renovations and move will take about eight years to complete. New construction and renovating committees are being formed to tackle specific tasks like choosing non-toxic paint colors, buying toys for the childcare room and deciding which new products the store will carry. Another committee will work on what to do with the future of the Union Street buildings. Selling them will help raise cash for the move, but with a stagnant real estate market, it might not be the best time. Membership Coordinator Cynthia Pennycooke wants the Coop to hang on to at least one of the buildings "We can open a Coop Museum," she offered. "We've saved every Gazette, sales receipt and vendor invoice since we opened. I even have the cardboard box that I used to carry home my first groceries. I think a museum would be of great interest to the community and the world at large."

"The Coop is the most unique place on earth," said Joe Holtz thoughtfully. "We hope this move will give us the room we need to grow so that the Coop will still be here for our grandchildren. When membership reaches 70,000 and when you and I are long gone from these aisles, the members will thank us for having the foresight to make this move." ■

Dogs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Sometimes I put the guinea pigs under my shirt, but a budgie under my shirt? That's not right!" Jason Magellin-Smitty was looking forward to using the new service. "I wouldn't tie my daughter to a pole on the street. At least not in winter. Unless the lines seemed super short. Or I was only buying, like, one muslin bag worth of nutritional yeast. So why would I do that to my dog?"

Some members were angry that the service began before construction on the new space was complete. For now, docile dogs and children are sharing the original childcare room

while the more active kids and pups are together in the unfinished addition. "My son Billy is small, but he's full of energy," said Jock Smullyan of Dyker Heights, "so they moved him in with the big dogs. Well, now this one standard poodle keeps taking Billy's bagel!"

Herpel stresses that the arrangement is temporary and adds that besides one incident the week the service began, things have gone relatively smoothly. According to witnesses, a man posing as a childcare worker tossed a stray cat into the room yelling, "Cats are dogs, too!" Thankfully, nobody was hurt. "He was unassigned," Herpel said of the perpetrator. "Always moving from committee to committee. He'd been in and out of the one-

for-one program. You know the type."

Most of the childcare workers welcome the new responsibility. "I love kids, that's why I signed up for childcare," said Queens resident and long-time member Mike Vermicelli. "But I really love dogs! They can't talk and are less likely to bite." All current childcare workers are being retrained using a curriculum designed by "Brooklyn Dog Whisperer" Tyril Frith.

The Coop is seeking 30 new workers for the shift, and the training sign-up sheet is in the Membership Office.

Canine Companion Supervised Play FAQ

• Members may not drop off more than two dogs or children at a time; or one dog

and one child or one regular dog and up to three Chihuahuas, or two children and a hot dog.

• Humanely raised, grass-fed, locally sourced beef marrow bones are for dogs only—no exceptions.

• In case of wet-dog smell, incense will be provided.
• Dogs or children not picked up by 7:15 p.m. will be held at the firehouse next door for up to 3 days. After that, please check with Animal Care and Control. ■

Doggy Day Care Has Come to the Coop!

Friday through Sunday, 7 to 7, Coop members can now leave their dogs in a supervised play environment while they shop!

Trained workers will take your dog at the side entrance.

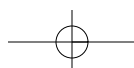
Doggy Day Care is leash-, dairy- and nut-free.

Dogs must be housebroken.

If you are dropping off both a child and a dog, please specify which is which.

Note: no drop-off after 6:30 p.m.

Doggy Day Care at the Coop is brought to you by the PSFC Fur Kid Committee.



Membership Rolls Surge to 36,000, Beating Out Liechtenstein

By Amy Pearl

At the end of a long shift signing up new members, office workers told Abby Plinsky to look for her name on the shop-without-a-card list and handed her a cloth bag, officially bringing the number of Coop members to 36,000. The ballooning rolls have put a strain on Coop resources as the organization struggles to find workslots and keep crowds down. General Coordinator Joe Holtz attributes the surge in membership to the sinking economy and a growing trend toward local, sustainable food. "People are hurting," Holtz said. "They take solace in food."

Creating New Workslots

In an attempt to match every member with a workslot, new squads are being formed and others are increasing in size. Squad leaders are being asked to look for ways to create jobs. 'Smiling' Sam Tollerson, leader of the C Week maintenance squad, recently found room for 7 new members using a simple tool: the toothbrush. "If we use toothbrushes instead of sponges



Joe Holtz, General Manager of the Park Slope Food Coop (left), and Hans-Adam II, Crown Prince of Liechtenstein.

and mops and stuff, things just take longer," Tollerson said. "It used to take two people one hour to clean all the bathrooms and mop on the second floor. Now it takes four people two hours!" Other examples of increased efficiency include one-handed stocking and receiving, no-knives food processing and blindfolded cashiers.

New squads are also helping to accommodate the fresh faces. One brand-new workslot that still has a few openings is called For-Gan,



which squad leader Yseult Andersen says is a combination of "foraging" and "freegan." The squad meets one Monday a month at midnight. "We start at the park and pick greens and dig tubers," Andersen explains. "Then we walk down 7th Avenue liberating edibles from the refuse." The For-Gans are looking for 6 new members who have strong stomachs, good night vision and like the outdoors. Please sign up in the Membership Office.

But finding a job is only

half the problem. The giant growth in membership has also made for crowded aisles and long lines. "One time the end of the express line got mixed up with the end of the regular line and we started going around in circles," Wilhelmina Eason complained. "When I passed the cat food for the second time, I thought, 'Something's not right!' " Many ideas to ease crowding were proposed at the last General Meeting but only two were voted through by members: even/odd weekends and doing away with shopping carts.

Changes in Shopping

Starting in June, shopping during peek weekend hours will be decided based on member number. Members with numbers ending in an odd digit can shop on Saturdays, even digits on Sundays. Entrance workers will be trained in the new system over the next two weeks. "No,

no, no," opined Beverly Lue, a member who drives in from Yonkers. "I am not letting other people decide whether or not my number is odd or is it even," Lue said. "That is up to God to decide."

The other strategy for reducing crowding is eliminating shopping carts and will also be phased in over the summer. "If you can't carry it, you can't buy it," said Membership Coordinator Karen Mancuso. "You have seitan in one hand, dried goats milk in the other and you decide you want a watermelon. It's like 'Sophie's Choice!' " No carts also means more room in the aisles, Mancuso points out.

Watch Out, Liechtenstein

Breaking the 36,000 mark means the Coop is still smaller than every U.S. state and territory. However, the Coop now has 19 more members than Liechtenstein has citizens. Hans-Adam II, the crown prince of Liechtenstein, could not be reached for comment. ■

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DEADLY SPIDERS IN YOUR BANANAS?

GREETINGS GOOD PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF BROOKLYN:

It has come to our attention that a shipment of organic bananas that left the port of



Guayaquil on March 25 may be infested with Brazilian Wandering Spiders (also known as the Banana Spider). We send this letter to the good people of your supermarket as a warning. Should you encounter one of these deadly spiders while reaching into a carton of bananas, don't panic! These venomous spiders can instantly smell your fear and they will attack. We repeat: They will attack. The best thing to do is act casual. Then evacuate the building and immediately call the Department of Wildlife Conservation.

Should you have the unfortunate opportunity to be bit-

ten by a Brazilian Wandering spider (*Phoneutria* spp.), we sincerely apologize. The *Phoneutria* not only has a potent neurotoxin but is said to have one of the most excruciatingly painful spider bites of all spiders. There is only one known antidote for a bite of this kind: Chew two fresh cacao leaves and mix with the fur of a howler monkey. Apply this tincture to the affected area within seven minutes of being bitten.

Best wishes,
Departamento de
Agricultura de Ecuador

WE DON'T WORK ENOUGH!

DEAR COOPERATORS,

I am sure you will all agree with me when I say that we should all be working more around here. In fact, during my last Receiving shift, I took an informal poll and found that 100% of members agreed that "working once every four weeks is for wimps." I propose we change the current system to working once a week, and a penalty of seven

makeups if you miss a shift.

I have added this proposal as an agenda item at the May 13 General Meeting. I hope you will all come and help us vote in this important change.

Sincerely,
Amanda Stiles

THE OMNIVORE'S APOLOGY

Heard the latest from Michael Pollan?

What he thought was true Now's been proven totally bogus—

Food's no good for you! Scientists have come up with Proof positive Adult bodies are sacrosanct Or they will not live. Green or brown or yellowish, Every food's a killer Even with organic credentials, Nothing but poisonous filler. Forget about expansion rumor Planted by the naïve Ignorant of bodily needs Just like Adam and Eve. As a result of Michael Pollan's Eye-opening blows, The Park Slope Food Coop Has no choice but to close. Plentiful sunshine and a mirror

Are what yesterday's foodie Needs to turn to as he becomes A dedicated nudie.

Leon Freilich

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ARUGULA

DEAR FRIENDS:

You wouldn't use tongs to pick up a kitten, would you? Then why is it okay to use tongs to pick up arugula, mesclun or any other loose lettuce offered by the pound in the produce aisle? These cold, hard instruments of torture are bruising the leaves, causing long-term damage to the membranes and possibly contributing to global warming. I propose we do away with tongs and instead use white cotton gloves to gingerly pick our lettuce out of bags. Produce tongs have already been banned in San Francisco and a vote is pending in Costa Rica.

If you are interested in joining this campaign, please attend a meeting of the newly

formed P.E.T.A. Committee. It will be held in the upstairs meeting room on May 6 at 7:00 p.m.

In solidarity,
Matt Iceberg

THE MOTHER OF ALL BOYCOTTS

DEAR COOP:

Every few years we talk about boycotting particular products or countries or companies. Does anyone know if this really even works?

Everything is tainted with corporate greed, the underpaid labor of oppressed people, the blood of animals, the tears of children, the degradation of our environment.

I propose a Boycott Everything Day. Don't buy anything. Don't go anywhere. Don't use your phone or computer. Stay home. Draw the shades. Sit in the dark.

Only by not doing anything, will the powers that be see that we mean business.

Power to the People,
Dulce deLeche

WORKSLOT NEEDS

Disc Jockey

Evening shifts and after hours

In order to create a more harmonious and pleasant shopping experience, there is a new shift opening up for experienced DJs. Give us a shout out if you can spin, scratch, rap, MC, and otherwise play good music to the shopping masses. All styles and musical genres are welcome. To be considered, please drop off a digital sample of your work in the Membership Office.

Wine Buyer

Flexible Schedule

With the possibility that New York State will allow grocery stores to sell wine, the Coop is

seeking an experienced wine enthusiast for the Coop's expansion into the world of wine. Ideally, you will know grape varieties, vintages, major wine merchants and markets. This shift entails travel to all the premier wine-growing regions of the world (France, California, Long Island, etc.). Connections in the wine industry helpful but not necessary—you receive Master Sommelier training and learn as you go. Only members over the age of 21 will be considered. Email a cover letter and resume to sourgrapes@psfc.coop.

Dog Daycare Squad Leaders

Now that the Coop is offering doggy daycare, we need experienced dog lovers to drop in during each shift to make sure things are running

smoothly. Your responsibilities will include making sure there is fresh water in the bowl, lint brushing the couch, mopping up any accidents, checking that each dog has been signed in properly and that no pooch exceeds the maximum time allowed in daycare. Call the Membership Office for more information.

Translator

The Membership Office is looking for one member to translate all Coop literature, every issue of the Gazette, and the website and product blog into six languages. This shift meets on a daily basis. If this sounds like your dream workslot, call on Tuesday and ask for Sinead.

**Saturday
Apr. 31
8:00 p.m.**

very
The Good Coffeehouse
COOP CONCERT SERIES

A monthly musical fundraising partnership of the Park Slope Food Coop and the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture



Bruce Springsteen and the E-Street Band

Bruce Springsteen and the E-Street Band are as old as the Coop! In 1973 they released their first album, *Greetings from Asbury Park, N.J.*, a precursor to the hit reality TV show *The Jersey Shore*, and the Boss's fate as a rock and roll legend was sealed. Bruce lost some traction with 1987's *Tunnel of Love*, but won the heart of liberals all over America when he came out in strong support of Barack Obama for President. He currently resides in Rumson, New Jersey. This performance marks his debut at the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture.

53 Prospect Park West [at 2nd Street] • \$10 • 8:00 p.m. [doors open at 7:45]

Performers are Park Slope Food Coop members and receive Coop workslot credit.

Booking: Bev Grant, 718-788-3741

Coop Deliveries by Bicycle?

Every week, as many as 10 tractor trailers pull up in front of the Coop, engines roaring and carbon-monoxide spewing all over Union Street. They are full of groceries, produce, frozen food, dairy, meat and other products for the store. By arranging to have our deliveries made in this way, we are complicit in climate change and all the problems associated with the internal combustion engine.



There is a better way.



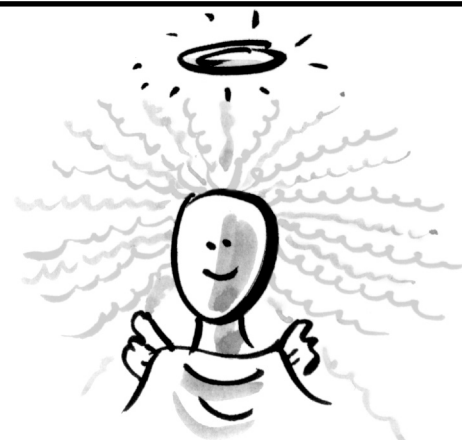
The Coop could have all its deliveries made by bicycle. It's safer, quieter, cleaner, employs more people, doesn't clog the street or fill the air with toxic fumes. Imagine the sound of pedals turning and the healthy breathing of the riders instead of the roar of truck engines.

The Safe Food, Shop & Cycle and Environmental Committees

are joining together to make this scenario a reality. If you are interested in hearing more, please join us on:

Sunday, April 11th at 8:00 a.m.

Bring your bike! We'll meet at Grand Army Plaza for a quick sprint around the park, then back to the Coop for a meeting.



WELCOME!

A warm welcome to these new Coop members who have joined us in the last week. We're glad you've decided to be a part of our community.

Paula Abdul	Foxy Brown	Chelsea Clinton	Mariska Hargitay	David Letterman	Sasha Obama	Sade	Meryl Streep
Woody Allen	Steve Buscemi	Bill Cosby	Murray Hill	Dave Longstreth	Rosie Perez	Carlos Santana	Barbra Streisand
Jonathan Ames	John Casablancas	Ellen DeGeneres	Jesse Jackson	Nelson Mandela	Colin Powell	Seal	Donatella Versace
Maya Angelou	Tina Chang	Garance Doré	Joan Jett	Marty Markowitz	Vladimir Putin	Sarah Silverman	Kanye West
Paul Auster	Tracy Chapman	Tina Fey	Billy Joel	Matisyahu	Christine Quinn	Lisa Simpson	Colson Whitehead
Tyra Banks	Don Cheadle	Lady Gaga	Zoe Kazan	Mo'Nique	Charles Rangel	Patti Smith	Michele Williams
Mike Bloomberg	Iron Chef Morimoto	Rudy Giuliani	Spike Lee	Karen O.	Bruce Ratner	Spongebob	Brian Wilson
Daniel Boulud	Margaret Cho	Whoopi Goldberg	John Leguizamo	Conan O'Brien	Alex Rodriguez	Squarepants	Tiger Woods