Kickstarter for Central Brooklyn Coop Shows Community Commitment

By Frank Haberle

After six years of planning and development, the Central Brooklyn Food Coop, “hit the go button” this month on a critical phase in its development: the launch of a Kickstarter campaign to raise funds for a down payment on a new space in Bedford-Stuyvesant or Crown Heights. While the physical space has yet to be formally selected, this is a tremendous moment for CBFC: the $25,000 they plan to raise through the campaign will position CBFC to act quickly and secure a space that best serves the needs of Central Brooklyn.

The Kickstarter campaign for CBFC, which launched October 16 and runs through November 22, seeks donations from Brooklyn residents who want to support the opening of a new food coop that is open to all and is owned, led and operated by people of color and low-to-moderate income people of Central Brooklyn. The campaign has set $25,000 as its base goal which has been projected as enough up-front funding for a physical storefront. Once that goal is met, a “first stretch” goal of $100,000 would also support community outreach and programming efforts to bring food education and empowerment to local residents.

As of October 27, the campaign had already surpassed its base goal with $31,876 in total contributions from 501 donors, reflecting the breadth of commitment from community members and supporters who recognize the value of building a member-led food coop to bring food sovereignty to the people of Central Brooklyn.

About the Central Brooklyn Food Coop

With a planned opening of September 2020, CBFC will be the Central Brooklyn community’s first member-owned and operated food cooperative. Similar to the Park Slope Food Coop model, its members will work and shop at the new coop, helping to keep prices affordable and strengthening ties among neighbors. The CBFC will serve as a community center for affordable groceries, food education and advocacy to promote food justice and food sovereignty in the Central Brooklyn neighborhood. The CBFC will be open to all for membership, but it is particularly dedicated to ensuring that households of low-to-moderate income and communities of color are highly represented in its membership, and it will prioritize relationships with local people of color who are growers and food suppliers.

Food insecurity and inaccessibility remains a pressing issue among lower-income people of Central Brooklyn. Bedford-Stuyvesant is ranked sixth nationally in food hardship. Four out of five food stores in the community are bodegas, with limited food options, especially for fresh produce. Forty percent of residents make less than $25,000 per year, and on average, $100,000 would also support the opening of a new food coop.

A “second stretch” goal of $75,000 total raised will fund meeting space and a community kitchen, as well as the basic shelf space needed for the store. A “third stretch goal” of $100,000 would also support community outreach and programming efforts to bring food education and empowerment to local residents.

In the beginning of renovations of $50,000 will also support construction of a physical storefront. Once that goal is met, a “first stretch goal” of $100,000 would also support community outreach and programming efforts to bring food education and empowerment to local residents.

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Next General Meeting on December 3
The Year-End General Meeting will be on Tuesday, December 3, at 7:00 p.m. at John Jay Educational Campus, 227 Seventh Ave., between Fourth and Fifth Sts.

The agenda is in this Gazette, on www.foodcoop.com and available as a flyer in the entryway of the Coop. For more information about the GM and about Coop governance, please see the center of this issue.
Kickstarter

Central Brooklyn residents must travel 1.5 miles to their primary grocery store.

“Central Brooklyn got hit hard by the pattern and practice of redlining which resulted in a disinvestment in this community with very little access to good food,” Bianca Bockman, a PSFC member since 2012 who has been organizing the CBFC effort since 2014, explained. “Centrification then hit the area all over again, bringing in fancy food stores—clearly not for the people who made the neighborhood great for so many years before it. These mostly Black folks are now coming together and saying ‘we’re not going to let politicians and banks and big business decide what our food situation is going to be. We’re going to create our own solution, despite the odds.’ Real estate costs are high, the industry is moving toward automation, and we are not well practiced in building democratic institutions. What’s most inspiring, is that after six years of organizing not only are we still going, but we’re stronger than ever and closer than ever to opening our doors.”

The community organizing efforts to launch the Central Brooklyn Food Coop have been led by the Brooklyn Movement Center (BMC), a Black-led, membership-based organization of primarily low-to-moderate income Central Brooklyn residents. BMC builds power and pursues self-determination in Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights by nurturing local leadership, waging campaigns and winning concrete improvements in people’s lives. Through its food justice working group, BMC is bringing together residents of Bed-Stuy and Crown Heights to plan for solutions that will strengthen health equity in our communities.

The CBFC will support this food justice strategy by making healthy and affordable food available while building a strong solidarity economy in Central Brooklyn.

BMC Executive Director Mark Winston Griffith, a Central Brooklyn native and lifelong organizer who is also a founding board member of CBFC, speaks of the community’s enthusiastic response to news of efforts to launch CBFC. “We’ve received nothing but positive feedback,” Griffith said. “People are calling us, showing up at events, or surveys, or events we’ve hosted. Long-term residents deeply appreciate the way we are centering Black folks in CBFC and are excited by the possibility of getting access to affordable food. And community newcomers who are well versed in the locavore movement, or food justice CBFC as a potential political home. In the end we won’t be able to compete with the Trader Joe’s, Fairways and Wegmans of the world if people think we are just another supermarket. What we’re trying to get folks to appreciate is that joining CBFC, in addition to being a pathway to healthy, sustainably sourced food, represents an act of collective self-care, survival and community building.”

Recent gentrification, and a boon of designer restaurants in Bedford-Stuyvesant tailored to new residents, has only reinforced the sense of food disparity among lower-income Central Brooklyn residents who have lived in the community for years. “CBFC will center on local residents who don’t see themselves reflected in Central Brooklyn’s current food culture,” Griffith added. At the same time, Central Brooklyn is home to farmers, food producers and providers. “We’re going to be part of a local food chain. We’re going to be supporting local farmers, and growers and producers.” We’re going to be connecting them to consumers who are going to be buying sustainably and affordably. Nothing like that exists in this neighborhood right now.”

CBFC Support from PSFC

Staff and Members

Staff and members of the Park Slope Food Coop have supported the planning and development of the Central Brooklyn Food Coop on multiple levels. Staff have offered direct technical assistance in how to set up a member-led, working coop. Dozens of Coop members have worked on FOTP shifts and as volunteers supporting the launch of the CBFC, joining members of the Bedford-Stuyvesant community in building a new working coop that serves and reflects its community.

Taisy Conk, one of the PSFC members who has been working with the CBFC effort since 2015, said, “I’ve been blown away with the talent and dedication of our members, and continue to strongly believe in our mission. It’s been challenging to reconcile that with the necessarily slow pace of the huge lift of opening a store when we are member-led and under-funded. What’s been amazing about the crowdfunding campaign is seeing that our mission is electrifying hundreds of New Yorkers. It validates our collective efforts.”

From the earliest days of our organizing, now, this institution has been more supportive and patient with us,” Griffith says of the PSFC. “One of our first organizing meetings was a result of PSFC sending out a notice to its members in Central Brooklyn zip codes. PSFC has led trainings for us, provided FOTP credits to our organizers, penned letters of support, and provided a dozen kinds of technical assistance. That’s just a fraction of the kind of support we’ve received from PSFC.”

Asked about how PSFC members can get involved moving forward, Griffith adds, “Right now, we’re asking everyone to back our Kickstarter campaign. Also, we know PSFC is bursting at the seams and we can only open one day a week as an outlet for its Central Brooklyn members. We’re looking at the possibility of working with PSFC folks with technical expertise, and maybe even receiving a loan from the PSFC loan fund.”

We’ve worked hard for six years,” Griffith says. “But now we’re ready to sign the lease. We’re ready to open our store.

If you are a Central Brooklyn resident and/or you would like to learn about how you can support or join the Central Brooklyn Food Coop, please visit their website for more information: cbfood.org.

If you can consider making a financial contribution to the CBFC’s Kickstarter campaign, please visit their Kickstarter site: www.kickstarter.com/projects/cbfoodcoop/meet-the-central-brooklyn-food-coop.

Tricena

One day soon after, Landfield, married to PSFC member Caitlin, was gazing at the empty construction site where his family home once stood and with some puzzlement. He vaguely knew, via his dad, that much of Tricena had been created out of landfill and that the neighborhood had an industrial past (their apartment building was a former central Brooklyn syrup factory). He knew it eventually became home to a community of artists, then comfortable lofts for affluent professionals and that today, it’s an enclave of the super-wealthy.

Landfield wanted to know what came before. Was it farmland? Had the Lenape Indians, who were on the island of Manhattan long before white settlers arrived, used Tribeca for year after year, own, now marginalized, way of life?

To get answers, he went to the New York Public Library and a city records office. He poured over rare maps, microfiche news items, reports from The TriBeCa Trust (led by historian and activist Lynn Ellsworth) and inventory and census lists. He also, crucially, found an online project called Welikia (a very good home) in the language of the Lenape Indians. Funded by the Wildlife Conservation Society, the website aims to reconstruct, in graphic form, the shape of Tribeca before its development in 1609—in other words, before white people and their activity transformed the entire region permanently.

Landfield’s research led him to understand that “no one had been living on [the] spot” where 31 Desbrosses Street is now. His family were the first humans who lived on that land. Welikia depicts 31 Desbrosses Street in 1609 as, simply, the Hudson River. It was only in the early 1800s that this part of the river became development property. At that time, the city allowed New York’s merchants to increase their land holdings by literally creating them. Using landfill, they pushed the perimeter of the island further out into the Hudson and built wharves—that they then owned—to capitalize on shipping windfalls after the Erie Canal was built.

The new property at 31 Desbrosses was initially used for storing coal and then exotic wood. The building that Landfield’s family moved into was built in 1899 by whiskey wholesalers. Landfield’s research also highlight ed some striking effects from climate change. Comparing Welikia’s map of downtown Manhattan with one from our era, Sandy’s inundation zone essentially lines up with where the coast was in 1609. This gave Landfield a new way of looking at climate change’s threat to New York.

The city’s post-Sandy resiliency plans envision, among other things, changing building regulations to help structures resist floods and building the perimeter of the city out further into the Hudson. Having studied the shape of Tribeca from nearly 400 years ago, Landfield says, “I don’t know if we can build our way out of danger. I think we have to consider a managed retreat from the coast of Manhattan…. We need to understand how radical this sounds.”

In spring 2015, Landfield published the results of his research as a lyrical, long-form meditation on Medium.com (“Requiem for a Living City: Notes on a Home in Tribeca”). He then founded his own film company, TimePatrol, and studied the shape of Tribeca from nearly 400 years ago, Landfield says, “I don’t know if we can build our way out of danger. I think we have to consider a managed retreat from the coast of Manhattan…. We need to understand how radical this sounds.”

Four years later, Landfield received a tweet: “It’s Alec Baldwin trying to reach Matthew Landfield.” “Thinking Baldwin was interested in potentially hiring TimePatrol for a production
PSFC Produce Buying Q & A: First of a Series

By Sensho Wagg

Quite a while ago, I received an email from a Coop member asking about a story she had heard on NPR. The subject was the possible use of tainted water for irrigating organic growing fields in California (our biggest produce and organic produce growing state in the U.S.).

I started to do research on the subject and began to feel that perhaps we, as Coop members, may have other questions about organic and IPM produce and other questions related to our produce department. Without a doubt we enjoy our glorious array of ever-changing, top-quality fruits and vegetables. Because thousands of pounds of produce are available to us all year long, far-ranging questions about it are bound to come up, and perhaps there’s no easy way to ask them or get them answered.

After discussing this with the Environmental Committee, we realized that we could offer Coop members a conduit to the knowledge of our hard-working produce buyers, and also the research capabilities of our committee. Questions Coop members may have include: What makes organic growing so special? How do our buyers decide where to buy fruits and vegetables?

I asked the produce buying team to comment on a number of questions that arose from the initial question about the irrigation water in California. Since I’ve been working on this article, the project has expanded in scope and length to necessitate a series of articles. We are delighted to enter into this exploration of what we, as the Coop membership, want to know about our produce department. I hope our three articles on the subject generate more questions for us to look into on behalf of everyone who enjoys the produce the Coop offers.

What follows are initial questions I posed and the answers from the produce buying team; unedited/unembellished. At the end of this article there’s an email address, should any PSFC member wish to ask more questions about our produce or the produce department.

Q: As this project was generated by a request for information from a PSFC member about the question of fracking water being used on organic growing fields in central California (as reported on NPR some time ago), can you please comment on this issue?

A: Please note that the issue has not been “fracking water,” but in the case of California, water that was used by Chevron for crude oil refining. The media chose to call the water “fracking water,” ostensibly because this sounds much more alarming. The water in question has been allowed for agricultural use by the state of California. This practice in Kern County, CA, predates fracking in the United States. As far as we, the produce buyers, know, the issue of repurposing water was concerning overwhelmingly conventionally grown crops, and the state of California certified that the water is safe for agriculture. The latter claim one might have valid doubts about, hence our abundance of caution.

Q: How do we know that our organic or conventional produce is not being watered using contaminated water in central California?

A: In the case of produce that does not arrive from our local suppliers, we monitor the origin of received produce and take action when necessary. For example after learning that both “Cuties” and “Halos” citrus might be irrigated with water that was initially used in oil production facilities, we as produce buyers (we currently have five coordinators involved in the Coop’s produce buying) had internal discussions and decided, in the best interest of our membership, to end the sales of these two very popular items. The concerns we had revolved around issues of the reliability of the purified water monitoring, but foremost, that given the fact that many members and many in the general public had misgivings about these products grown in Kern County, we want to err on the side of caution to keep the Food Coop’s membership safe.

The next article will include questions posed to the PSFC Produce Buying Team about the path taken by some crops from field to Coop shelves, and some comments about organic certification.

Please address any question you want us to ask the Produce Buying Team to psf.environmental.committee@gmail.com.
Linewaiters’ Gazette

The Linewaiters’ Gazette is published biweekly by the Park Slope Food Coop, Inc., 782 Union Street, Brooklyn, New York 11215, 718-622-0560. Opinions expressed here may be solely the views of the writer. The Gazette will not knowingly publish articles that are racist, sexist or otherwise discriminatory.

Submission Guidelines

The Gazette will not knowingly publish letters, articles or reports that are hateful, racist, sexist, otherwise discriminatory, inflammatory or needlessly provocative. The Gazette welcomes Coop-related articles and letters from members.

Letters, Articles and Reports Submission Policies

Letters must be the opinion of the letter-writer and can contain no more than 25% non-original writing. All submissions must be signed by the writer. Letters or articles that are form letters, chain letters, template letters or letters prepared by someone other than the submitting member will be rejected. Letters, articles and reports must adhere to the Fairness, Anonymity and Respect policies. They cannot be hateful, needlessly inflammatory, discriminatory, libellous, personal attacks or make unsubstantiated claims or accusations or be contrary to the values of the Coop as expressed in our mission statement. All submissions must be legible, intelligible, civil, well and concisely written with a positive contribution to the understanding of the reader on a topic. If a submission is deemed to be an essay, a Letter to the Editor, possibly to a future issue. Editors will reject letters, articles and reports that do not follow the guidelines or policies. Submission deadlines appear each edition in the Coop Calendar section.

For topics that generate a large number of submissions, the editor reserves the right to be selective and to publish letters, articles or reports that are of the highest quality and that do not follow the guidelines or policies. Submission deadlines appear each edition in the Coop Calendar section. The following is a summary—please see the detailed guidelines for each type of submission on the Coop website: www.foodcoop.com.

Letters: Maximum 500 words. Voluntary Articles: Maximum 750 words. Articles are self-contained, with complete titles and all credits included. Articles should be a minimum of 1,000 words. Reports must follow the published guidelines and policies.

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Three GM attendance credits per year:

Please see below for details.

Advance Sign-up required:

To increase participation in the Coop’s decision-making process. The General Meeting-for-workslot-credit program was created to make decisions and set Coop policy. The General Meeting is typically held on the last Tuesday of each month. This is the final General Meeting for 2019. The General Meeting is held on the last Tuesday of each month. Copies of the Coop’s bylaws are available on foodcoop.com and at every General Meeting.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 3, 7:00 p.m.

This is the final General Meeting for 2019. The General Meeting is typically held on the last Tuesday of each month.

Location
John Jay Educational Campus, 227 Seventh Ave., between Fourth and Fifth Sts.

How to Place an Item on the Agenda
If you have something you’d like discussed at a General Meeting, please complete a submission form for the Agenda Committee. Forms are available in the rack near the Coop Community Corner bulletin board, on foodcoop.com, and at General Meetings. Instructions and helpful information on how to submit an item appear on the submission form. The Agenda Committee meets on the first Tuesday of each month to plan the agenda for the GM held on the last Tuesday of the month. If you have a question, please call Ann Herpel at the Coop.

Meeting Format
Warm Up (7:00 p.m.) Submit Open Forum items Explore meeting literature
Open forum (7:15 p.m.) Open Forum is a time for members to bring brief items to the General Meeting. If an item is more than brief, it can be submitted to the Agenda Committee as an item for a future GM. If an item is more than brief, it can be submitted to the Agenda Committee as an item for a future GM.

Reports (7:30 p.m.) Financial Report • Coordinators Report • Communications Report

Agenda (8:00 p.m.) The agenda is posted on foodcoop.com and may also appear elsewhere in this issue.

Wrap Up (9:30-9:45) Meeting evaluation • Board of Directors vote • Announcements, etc.

Park Slope Food Coop Message Statement
The Park Slope Food Coop is a member-owned and operated food store—an alternative to commercial profit-oriented business. As members, we contribute to our labor to make the Coop possible and ethical employer and neighbor. We keep prices as low as possible within the constraints of our values and principles. Only members may shop, and we share responsibilities and benefits equally. We strive to be a responsible and ethical employer and neighbor. We are a buying agent for our members and not a selling agent for any industry. We are a part of the cooperative movement.

We offer a diversity of products with an emphasis on organic, minimally processed and healthful foods. We seek to avoid products that depend on the exploitation of others. We support non-toxic, sustainable agriculture. We respect the environment. We strive to reduce the impact of our lifestyles on the world we share with other species and future generations. We prefer to buy from local, earth-friendly producers. We recycle. We try to lead by example, educating ourselves and others about health and nutrition, cooperation and the environment.

We are committed to diversity and equal opportunity. We oppose discrimination in any form. We strive to make the Coop welcoming and accessible to all and to respect the opinions, needs and concerns of every member. We seek to maximize participation at every level, from policy making to running the store.

We welcome all who respect these values.

Our Governing Structure
From our inception in 1973 to the present, the open monthly General Meetings have been at the center of the Coop’s decision-making process. Since the Coop incorporated in 1977, we have been legally required to have a Board of Directors. The Coop continued the tradition of General Meetings by requiring the Board to have open meetings and to receive the advice of the members at General Meetings. The Board of Directors, which is required to act legally and responsibly, has approved almost every General Meeting decision at the end of every General Meeting. Board members are elected at the Annual Meeting in June. Copies of the Coop’s bylaws are available on foodcoop.com and at every General Meeting.

Read the Gazette while you’re standing on line OR online at www.foodcoop.com
Food Class: Napa Kimchi 101
Kimchi is a delicious condiment and powerful health-supportive food. In the last decade, science is recognizing the importance of ferments for optimal digestive health. This class is for beginning ferment enthusiasts. You will learn step-by-step instruction on how to make a classic napa cabbage kimchi. Traditional and vegan options will be discussed. Sung Uni Lee is a Korean-American who grew up with the honor of taste-testing large batches of kimchi. A culinary instructor, she has two decades experience in teaching and empowering people with her passionate knowledge of food and culture. She is one of the administrators of the monthly Park Slope Food Class series. Menu includes: Salting Cabbage; Traditional & Vegan Kimchi Filling; Steamed Tofu with Salted Cabbage Wrap. This class is gluten- and dairy-free, with vegan options.

ASL interpreter available upon request, please contact the Membership Office. Materials fee: $5. First come, first seated. To inquire about leading a Food Class, go to bit.ly/CCCChef1.

Swing Band
Come out for a night of big-band swing-dance music, fun for singles, couples or the whole family! Join saxophonist Lisa Parrott and drummer Rob Garcia as they lead a swing band of world-class jazz musicians. There will also be professional swing dance instructors giving a group lesson of some basic steps. It’s going to be a great night of music, dance, snacks and good vibes to benefit to Park Slope Food Coop.

Concert takes place at the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture, 53 Prospect Park West (at 2nd Street), $10, doors open at 7:45. Prospect Concerts is a monthly musical fundraising partnership of the Coop and the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture.

Bookings: Bev Grant, bevgrant1@aol.com.

PSFC Year-End General Meeting
Items will be taken up in the order given. Times in parentheses are suggestions. More information on each item may be available on the entrance table at the meeting. We ask members to please read the materials available between 7 and 7:15 p.m.
Meeting location: John Jay Educational Campus, 227 Seventh Ave., between Fourth and Fifth Sts.
I. Member Arrival and Meeting Warm-Up
II. Open Forum
III. Coordinator and Committee Reports
IV. Meeting Agenda
Item 1: Election of Hearing Officer Committee Member (10 minutes)
Election: The committee will present one candidate for the committee. Hearing Officers work on an FTOP basis when needed and serve three-year terms.

Item 2: Amendments to the Park Slope Food Coop Pension Plan & Trust (10 minutes)
Proposals: To amend the Park Slope Food Coop Pension Plan & Trust as follows:
1. Change the pension plan year for all participants to Jan 1 - Dec 31, for parity with our 401k plan;
2. Entry into the pension plan occurs the first day of the month after eligibility is established.
3. Automatic/forced lump sum and/or rollover distribution when employees leave the company with a present value less than $5K (for parity with 401k plan). Any participant with a balance of less than $5K must take either a lump sum or rollover their balance to a qualified retirement account regardless of when they ended their employment.
4. Change wording to ensure beneficiaries receive lump sum payment and/or rollovers immediately, i.e., remove any wording that restricts distribution until the normal retirement age of the beneficiary.

Proposal: To amend the 401K plan to allow for earlier entry into the plan (10 minutes)

Item 4: Food Delivery Pilot (45 minutes)
Discussion: Should the Coop implement a 3-month pilot program in January delivering food to people with physical disabilities?

V. Board of Directors Meeting
VI. Wrap-Up. Includes member sign-in for workslot credit.
For information on how to place an item on the Agenda, please see the center pages of the Linewaiters’ Gazette. The Agenda Committee minutes and the status of pending agenda items are available in the Coop office.

Safe Food Committee Film Night: A Prayer for Compassion
This month’s event takes place a week earlier than usual, due to limited space in our movie room. A Prayer for Compassion follows Thomas Jackson on a quest across America to ask, “Can people who identify as religious or spiritual come to embrace the call to include all human and nonhuman beings in our circle of respect and caring and love?” Drawing on Christianity—evangelical, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Friends (Quakers), Seventh Day Adventism, Unity, Judaism; Islam; Hinduism; Buddhism; Jainism; Native American tradition; Unitarian Universalism; Zoroastrianism; and the “spiritual but not religious” point of view—the film calls on spiritual people of faith of every stripe to come together to bring about a different world.

See upcoming events, past reviews and a comprehensive list of films shown at www.plowtoplatefilms.com which can now also be reached via a link on the Park Slope Food Coop’s home page at www.foodcoop.com.

Film Night
Film to be announced.
To book a Film Night, contact Gabriel Rhodes, gabrielrhodes@me.com.
How do we preserve Coop values when things get difficult? The best way is to listen to and peacefully engage with staff members who say they want a union, those who are unsure, and those who say they don’t. Nobody should have to fear retaliation when discussing the conditions they experience at work.

Our overarching goal as a Coop must always be to prioritize democratic and egalitarian values. This includes efforts to explore unionization in a respectful workplace free from hostility. That’s why we are asking for the General Coordinators to sign a neutrality agreement. Neutrality can provide clearer guidelines for organizing, reduce misinformation, and support staff to discuss these issues with less risk. We believe it will bring down the temperature of the conversation and enable principled debate and learning.

Neutrality is a bare minimum condition toward respecting democratic values. We ask our fellow members to join the call for General Coordinators to sign a neutrality agreement and to fulfill our Coop’s responsibility to provide a workplace free of harassment and intimidation.

The Editors

CORRECTIONS

In the November 3, 2019 issue of the Gazette, the Editors reported that Coop staff member Sam Clark was the only person who had named a power imbalance between management and workers, and the problem as necessitating a union effort. We have learned that many staff members have named the same issue, which is troubling, as it discredits, misrepresents, and boisterously provokes unionizing a Coop.

We would like to invite everyone to step back and focus on human well-being. We have community members reporting oppression, intimidation, and bullying in their workplace. This workplace is our community, where we all shop and work side by side. How do we, as a community, respond to these serious concerns? We think the best approach is to listen and to take action to find solutions.

General Coordinators and some staff have opposed unionization by claiming that their fellow staff members are exaggerating or lying about the problems that have prompted them to organize. This argument is not only wrong but it dismisses many who have named urgent issues and who propose to address them collectively.

Even more troubling, in August, the National Labor Relations Board determined that General Coordinators violated federal labor law by retaliating against union supporters and actively discouraging union organizing. For anyone who has tried to unionize in this country, this atmosphere of fear and retaliation is familiar. It shuts down the dialogue necessary to address problems and build our community. Polarization and infighting make workers’ livelihoods needlessly precarious, and impedes democracy.

How are we going to do this? We can start by listening to our Coop members, prioritizing democratic and egalitarian values, and negotiating a workplace free of harassment and intimidation.

Our overarching goal as a Coop must always be to prioritize democratic and egalitarian values. This includes efforts to explore unionization in a respectful workplace free from hostility. That’s why we are asking for the General Coordinators to sign a neutrality agreement. Neutrality can provide clearer guidelines for organizing, reduce misinformation, and support staff to discuss these issues with less risk. We believe it will bring down the temperature of the conversation and enable principled debate and learning.

Neutrality is a bare minimum condition toward respecting democratic values. We ask our fellow members to join the call for General Coordinators to sign a neutrality agreement and to fulfill our Coop’s responsibility to provide a workplace free of harassment and intimidation.

The Editors

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Solidarity Means Listening to All Staff

MEMBERS,

As members who care about Coop values—democracy, equity, solidarity—we are proud to support the PSFC staff members who are organizing a union.

We would like to invite everyone to step back and focus on human well-being. We have community members reporting oppression, intimidation, and bullying in their workplace. This workplace is our community, where we all shop and work side by side. How do we, as a community, respond to these serious concerns? We think the best approach is to listen and to take action to find solutions.

General Coordinators and some staff have opposed unionization by claiming that their fellow staff members are exaggerating or lying about the problems that have prompted them to organize. This argument is not only wrong but it dismisses many who have named urgent issues and who propose to address them collectively.

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The Editors

Gazette Editorial Policy

Please take a look at these recently revised guidelines:

If a letter meets one or more of the following criteria, it will not appear in the Linewaiters’ Gazette. The letter or article:

• is on a topic that has been covered extensively in the Linewaiters’ Gazette and is not a matter of current Coop action
• is unsigned or does not contain the author’s contact information
• exceeds the word count (500 words for letters, 750 for member articles)
• uses long, “unclickable” URLs that hinder the reader from following the letter and understanding its sources

If you have a concern about a publication that reflects the interests of the Coop, our community, our limited resources require us to focus on articles and letters that cover issues of current interest.

In cooperation,

The Editors

Gratitude

MEMBERS,

A few weeks back, I came to the Coop with a new shopping cart. As I entered the building, a wheel fell off. I asked a man inside for help as I drive here at a certain time and didn’t want to go home without shopping. He and another man together fixed the wheel. Even though it was missing a part so I was able to go in and shop. I am writing this letter to thank the two of them. I don’t know their names but they went out of their way to help me. I hope they see this letter and know that I am grateful for what they did.

Mary Ann Fassio

L'imprimerie Mia Breads

MEMBERS,

We are a 45-member multi-generational women’s choir based in Brooklyn. Eight of us are Food Coop members.

We recently had a concert at the People’s Voice Church. It was a great evening of hope and perseverance. First Unitarian, 121 Pier Rep East, Brooklyn. $20, seniors $15.

We would love people to come out. It’s a great way to meet new people! first and third Friday of the month.

We will be playing our repertoire of light, uplifting songs. Tickets $20, seniors $15. I hope you will join us.

In cooperation,

Gloria Tepper

The Editors

Dear Gazete Readers,

We are printing this latest letter on the issue of unionization for Coop staff members, however, after several months of back and forth between different interested parties, it will be the last letter on this topic until and unless there are new developments. As an actual vote by staff members on whether or not to unionize.

This decision to cease printing these letters is in accord with Gazette policy not to print repetitive letters that cover similar material.

The Editors

Communities Calendar

Community calendar listings are free. Please submit your event listing in 50 words or less to GazetteSubmissions@psfc.coop. Submission deadlines are the same as for classified ads.

Please refer to the Coop Calendar in the center of this issue.

SAT, NOV 9
8 p.m. Bruce Markow, Concert at the People’s Voice Cafe, 40 East 35th St., Manhattan. For info call 212-787-3903 or see peoplesvoicecafe.org. Suggested contribution: $20 general, $12 PVC subscribers/sustainers, FMSNY members, youth, students.

FRI, NOV 15
7:30 p.m. Brooklyn Contra Dance at Town Square Dance Hall, 170 4th St., Brooklyn. $5 General / $2 Student / Volunteers dance free. brooklyncontra.org

SAT, NOV 23
7 p.m. Join BVS Women’s Choir for “Light in the Darkness,” an evening of hope and perseverance. First Unitarian, 121 Pier Rep East, St. Tickets $20, seniors and students $15. Children free.

We are a 45-member multi-generational women’s choir based in Brooklyn. Eight of us are Food Coop members.

Read the Gazette while you’re standing on line OR online at www.foodcoop.com
Coop Job Opening: Receiving Coordinator

**Description:**
All Receiving Coordinators ensure the smooth functioning of the Coop.
- Facilitate and supervise continual stocking of the store.
- Train working members how to stock and complete projects.
- Communicate with members and leaders and squads about priorities.
- Sustain knowledge about products and inventory.
- Answer members’ questions.
- Respond to physical plant and refrigeration issues.

**Evenings/Weekends** Receiving Coordinators are generalists who work with members to maintain and restock all aisles including produce. They also oversee late deliveries, inspect for dates/quality, and support the Receiving and Food Processing squads.

The ideal candidate will:
- Enjoy working with people and crowds.
- Be an excellent team player with strong communication skills.
- Have ability to teach, explain procedures, give feedback.
- Be able to evaluate Coop needs, prioritize tasks and delegate work.
- Be comfortable with computers (Mac preferred).
- Experience working in a grocery store is a plus.

**How to Apply:**
We strongly encourage candidates to work one Saturday or Sunday afternoon Receiving shift. Please introduce yourself as an applicant to one of the Receiving Coordinators.

Attach resume and cover letter as a single document at the link below:
http://bit.do/Receiving-opp

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until position is filled.

**EMPLOYMENT**

**SPOKE THE HUB DANCING INC.**
seeks PT arts administrator skilled in any of the following: MBO, Mail Chimp, FR, IT, website, copywriting, grants. 20hrs./wk. Mon-Fri 3-6 p.m. Letter, resume and three references to Elise Long, Spoke the Hub Dancing, 748 Union St., Brooklyn, NY, 11215 718-408-3234.

**HOUSING**

**TURN-KEY VACATION RENTAL**
in the Catskills for sale! Our beloved 3BR home with fire place has provided a peaceful getaway while producing some income. 800 sq.-ft. deck with views to Elise Long, Spoke the Hub Dancing, 748 Union St., Brooklyn, NY 11215 718-408-3234.

**Turn-key Vacation Rental**

Our beloved 3BR home with fireplace in the Catskills for sale! It has provided a peaceful getaway while producing some income. 800 sq.-ft. deck with views, walk to pool, playground, restaurants, church and synagogue. 165K negot. Con team via phone Niki 917-921-1314

**TECH HELP**

MAC, WINDOWS, PHONES, TABLETS AND MORE... www.tech11215.com

**Call Dom:** 347-954-9353 • info@tech11215.com

**MARINA SNEIDEBK**
Licensed Real Estate Salesperson
marina@triplemint.com • 973.865.1785

**FITTING TRIBUTE**
Funeral Services LLC
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Amy Cunningham
Funeral Director (718) 338-8080
Amy@FittingTributefunerals.com

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**SERVICES AVAILABLE**


**ATTORNEY CAROL LIPTON** has been practicing law for decades in New York State. She represents accident victims in car accidents, slip and fall cases, and construction. We also handle co-op and condo transactions, estates and wills, guardianships, business litigation, and civil and family court appeals. We provide courteous, attentive service. Convenient midtown location.

718-436-5359 or 212-233-1010 nycatomeys.com.

**HAIRCUTS HAIRCUTS HAIRCUTS**
Color, low lights, hot oil treatments in the convenience of your home or mine. Kids $20+up. Adults $35+up. I also specialize in aesthetic and special needs children and adults. Call Leonora, 718-857-2215.

**MADISON AVENUE HAIRCUTTER** is right around the corner from the Food Coop, so if you would like a really good haircut at a decent price, please call Maggie at 718-783-2154. I charge $60. I work from Wednesdays through Sundays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**MUSIC LESSONS** from Broadway musician: piano, French horn, trumpet. Beginners and advanced students of all ages welcomed.

Rent a charming one-bedroom apartment in Paris from longtime Coop members. On the top floor with an elevator and quintessential views of Paris rooftops in a lovely residential neighborhood. Wi-fi, cable TV, DW, WD, free calls to U.S. Photos and description: homeexchange.com/en/homes/view/425686 email: magisson@gmail.com

**Classified advertising in the Linecutters’ Gazette is available only to Coop members. Publication does not imply endorsement by the Coop.**

Read the Gazette while you’re standing on line OR online at www.foodcoop.com

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**To Submit Classified or Display Ads:**

Ads may be placed on behalf of Coop members only. Classified ads are prepaid at $15 per insertion, display ads at $30. (Classified ads in the “Merchandise–Non-commercial” category are free.) All ads must be written on a submission form. Classified ads may be up to 315 characters and spaces. Display ads must be camera-ready and business card size (2” x 3.5” horizontal). Submission forms are available in a wallpocket near the elevator in the entrance lobby.

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