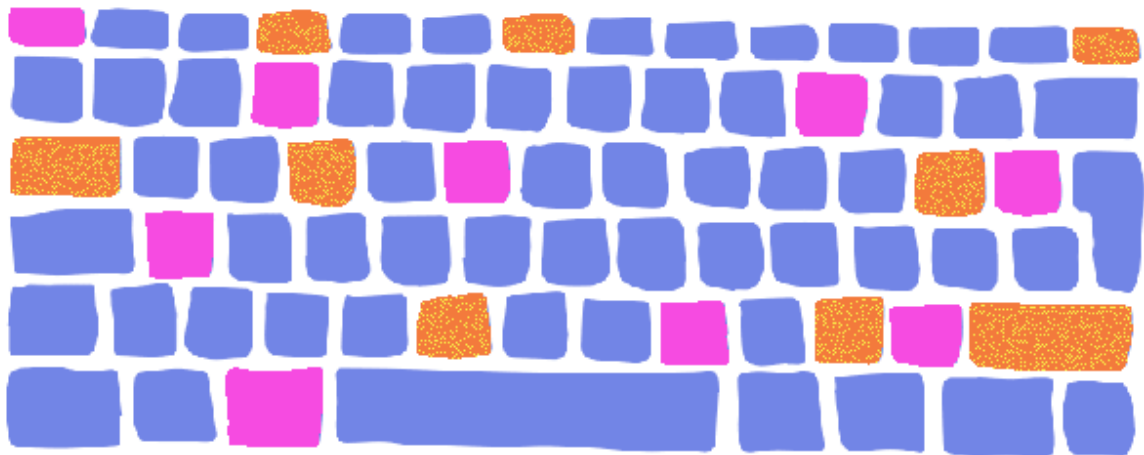


LETTERS 12/27/2022

December 26, 2022

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



THE NEW NEW-MEMBER ORIENTATION: SOMETHING LOST, SOMETHING GAINED

To the Editor:

During my time as a Coop member, I have been called upon a number of times while working a shift to give tours to visitors—back when we used to have visitors. I always enjoyed meeting people who were interested in how the shopping floor is organized and how the place works. It was a pleasure to introduce folks to the culture, community, and bounty of the Coop.

While we wait for the return of more personal orientations, I hope we can consider sending newly oriented members downstairs to the shopping floor for a personalized tour by a member working a shift.

The tours would be welcoming and a great introduction to a place where someone will hold your baby by the ice-cream freezer if you have to use the bathroom. A little break from walking carts or stocking vitamins would be a nice perk for a working member. We could restore a little of what we've lost.

Respectfully,

Lynn Yellen, Coop enthusiast

JOE HOLTZ'S SUSPENSION

To the Editor:

Thank you to all whose letters expressed what is in so many Coop members' hearts over the suspension (and without pay?!!!) of Joe Holtz. I sincerely hope this mistake is rectified and an overdue apology made to the man who has held the Park Slope Food Coop together for decades and helped insure the safety of us all during the COVID years. There was no safer place to be than the Coop. We owe him. If something isn't done soon, let's all like-minded Coopsters get together and make sure our voices are heard in support of this superior leader that we might give him his due.

Peace & love,

Heidi Oleszczuk

JOE HOLTZ'S SUSPENSION LACKED DUE PROCESS OR PROPORTION

Dear Editor,

I want to echo others' disappointment at the treatment of Joe Holtz, a Coop co-founder, which appears to have lacked proportion and reasonableness from my (admittedly limited) vantage point and seems like a smokescreen for larger behind-the-scenes issues. I love how the Coop protects its own through protocols in the age of COVID; but it's one thing to censure someone for breaching fast-changing COVID protocols and another to cut off email (remote work risks no exposure) or dock 1/12th of annual pay. The optics are of a masked vaccinated employee with unclear symptoms who followed good faith protocols and avoided putting others at real risk, and was penalized in part for candor (when my work colleague did something similar, she received more compassionate treatment, with concern for her speedy recovery and no punitive consequences for good faith yet flawed behavior under still-extraordinary circumstances).

This smacks of a marital dispute where one party says something innocuous and the other party loses their cool; in those cases it's about more than the situation at hand—the original transgression is bigger than it seemed from the outside, but a disproportionate or punitive reaction isn't helpful either. To persons who accuse Joe of receiving special treatment: I agree, he seems to have been singled out for disproportionately poor treatment in this case and hopefully he'll have his pay reinstated at minimum. This doesn't seem to be about the "crime" of coming masked and vaccinated to work and finding out about a diagnosis, but about something else; hopefully the persons involved will find some transcendent, kind and empathetic solution going for-

ward.

Wishing grace to all in the situation. It's been an exhausting 2+ years, let's be kind to each other as much as possible.

Jeanne Solomon

UNSAFE?

To the Gazette:

I don't want to comment on the whole Joe Holtz brouhaha, although I do have some strong feelings about it and how it is a reflection of the censorious zeitgeist that seems to have taken hold of many of our institutions. But I really have to say something about defenders of the Personnel Committee saying they felt "unsafe." For some years now I have heard the use of that word, primarily on college campuses, by young people who feel threatened by a right-wing personality being given a speaking platform, or who espouses an opinion that they strongly disagree with, or even someone who defends the free-speech rights of such a person. Maybe I am not keeping up with contemporary changes in language usage, but "upset" or "turned off" or "angry" or "annoyed" are not synonyms for "unsafe." What would make *me* feel unsafe at the Coop? If a big hole suddenly opened in the floor and I could fall through and break my neck. Or if someone came in with a weapon and threatened people with it.

Could consciousness of exposure to someone with Covid make somebody feel unsafe? Maybe for someone with underlying conditions that make it potentially quite dangerous. But if you only learn of the exposure after the incident is over, and especially if several days have passed since then without symptoms, you may have a reason to be upset, but how is "unsafe" an apt term to use? Progressives and Gen-Z'ers are often typecast by conservatives as being whiny, and maybe it is the misuse of

fraught exaggerated language like that that gives cause to hang that label on them.

Michael Esterowitz

WE'RE WRITING A TV SHOW & WE WANT YOUR HELP!

Dear Coop:

The Coop is, objectively speaking, hilarious. The rotating cast of characters, the hapless members trying to learn and execute a job on the spot, the constantly evolving structure, the Drama. Have you ever worked a shift and found yourself thinking, "This could be on TV!"? Well, so have we. We have an idea and absolutely nothing else. A member-run food coop is a fantastic setting for a sitcom.

Tentatively called "COOPERATE," this (web series, probably) follows a fictionalized full-time staff working at a member-run food cooperative. From pre-shopping hours, to coordinating the chaos in the receiving room, staff parties, organics scandals, and all the other chaos this iconic cooperative sees, this single-camera sitcom highlights (and amplifies) the behind-the-scenes shenanigans that we all merely get a glimpse of when we work our shifts.

This is certainly not an entirely original idea, and other people have done things like this before (shout out "Food Coop" and "Murder at the Food Coop"!). But we have jokes and we have fresh takes, and we would love to work with anyone else who wants to give this a try with us!

Right now, we just want to write some episodes, have a laugh, and see where the concept goes. We want to hear from you all and write with whoever is interested in getting involved. We have no funding, concrete concepts, experience writing for TV, or pretty much anything else. We're just two best friends who can't stop thinking about

the Coop as a sitcom.

Reach out to us! Let us know what you think, if you want to be involved or share any funny stories you've collected in your time at the Coop. At the very least it'll be a fun time.

You can reach us at asiyaherrero@gmail.com.

With love,

Asiyah Herrero and Sydnie Rathe