

IN MEMORY OF KATHRYN DRUMMER

April 1, 2025



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*By Thomas Rayfiel*

Kathryn Drummer, for many years a Saturday morning Shopping Squad Leader, died on January 12, 2025. She was 73. Longtime residents of Park Slope may remember Kathryn's store Waltzing Matilda, on First Street off Seventh Avenue. From 1995 until 2004, the store featured an eclectic mix of salvaged and restored furniture, not to mention antique jewelry and, briefly, "retro candy," including wax lips and giant jaw-breakers. Over a varied career that included teaching, catering and renovating local buildings, her abiding passion was to haunt estate sales and flea markets, finding offbeat and funky décor which she displayed in a space reflecting her own very personal aesthetic. Her college friend and roommate Jan Cunningham Hodson, recalls:

"Kathy was the first person to interest me in antiques, in upcycling furniture, and she taught me the joy of finding treasures along the street. She knew about all-things-vintage at that young age and often came home from class with a treasure she had picked up from someone's junk at the curb."

CARING FOR OTHERS, BOTH HUMANS AND ANIMALS, PLAYED A HUGE PART IN KATHRYN'S LIFE.

Kathryn joined the Coop in 1990 and was, in the words of her daughter, Anna Sarfaty, "a true believer," not only arriving before 6am to prepare the Coop but coming earlier in the week to pick up the keys so she could open the doors. Anna remembers, in those less liability-conscious times, happily wandering in the Coop, bagel in hand, from the basement to the main floor to the upstairs offices, a child on the loose, while her mother ensured the smooth running of the early-morning rush. Kathryn loved to cook, later in life sending her daughter care packages of Coop food. She was willing to shop at any time, wait on any length of line, chatting with fellow members, enjoy-

ing herself.

Caring for others, both humans and animals, played a huge part in Kathryn's life. She volunteered to take part in hospice vigils, a program that provides support and comfort for patients in their final stages of life. She would bring homemade soup or talk or just sit with people. She would also take in stray cats and elderly, often sick, dogs, feeding and nursing them. "It's no wonder," Anna says, "that I became a veterinarian."

Kathryn lived on Sixth Avenue for 45 years and was an integral part of the neighborhood. Her friend Gerry McCleave wrote: "I must mention her joy when we would meet accidentally and her big welcoming smile and positive approach even when things got difficult. I was lucky to know her and enjoy her conversation."

Kathryn is survived by her daughter, Anna Sarfaty, grandson, Rafi, her brother, Alan, nephew and niece Dylan and Dasha, and her sister, Dorothy.

*Coop member Thomas Rayfiel is the author of eight novels. He has also written "living obituaries" for VICE TV.*