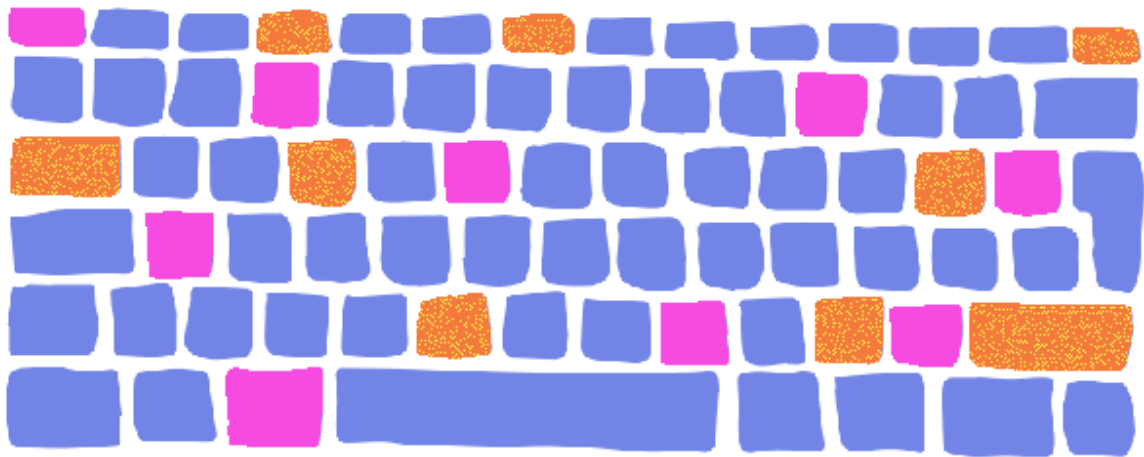


LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

August 20, 2023

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



CLIMATE ACTION

Dear Editor,

Climate change is hitting us hard; as Kate McKinnon says, “We know ‘dis.” I’ve been craving an easy and effective way to act, knowing there are smarter people out there who have a better grasp on what to do.

I luckily stumbled upon this great non-profit, Climate Changemakers, geared precisely toward my engaged and overcommitted self. Through their connections in DC, they curate topical campaigns with bite-sized easy actions that we tackle each week (rarely requiring phone banking!!). Think: getting our council members to rally around LL97, the NYC emissions-reduction law, or reaching out to public-school transportation directors in low-income school districts across the country and encouraging them to apply for free electric school buses.

In a fit of inspiration and motivation, I started a weekly hour of action at Threes Brewing in Gowanus at 8 p.m. on Wednesdays. Coincidentally, a solid contingent of the regulars (Christine, Alec, and Kevin, just to name a few) are also PSFC members—it’s great to know that we belong to a community of people who care about the planet.

If you’re interested or want to reach out and collaborate, I’d love to continue pushing politicians to prioritize climate. Sign up here: <https://lu.ma/iinvvcls>

—*Danny DeBare*

RESPONSE TO PHELONISE WILLIE

Dear Phelonise Willie,

I attended that meeting. I was inclined to vote YES. Two or three well-informed attendees raised questions about oversight and process for the oversight. The estimated budget of \$20 million will be controlled by unelected members. The questions raised did not get good answers. In my opinion, many people probably changed their minds

after that. The vote failed due to a lack of clearly defined process and not an opposition to the idea of a second Coop. This part is not included in the report.

—Amol Kaikini

PLOW TO PLATE FILM SERIES

August 20, 2023



LE CIRQUE: A TABLE IN HEAVEN

By Adam Rabiner

“It’s a family affair,” sing Sly and the Family Stone. That sums up this documentary about Sirio Maccioni, the founder and genial host of Le Cirque, the famed Manhattan restaurant known for its celebrity clientele. Sirio is front and central, and deservedly so—as he is simultaneously funny, charming, and loving. But supporting roles are played by his three adult sons: the oldest, Mario; middle Marco; and youngest Mauro; as well as his long-time wife, Egidiana. They would add the following words to describe Sirio: “Stubborn, old-fashioned, critical, and infuriating.”

Sirio has an interesting backstory. Working in the belly of a cruise ship in 1956, he was too busy waiting tables to witness the Statue of Liberty, as the *SS Atlantic* sailed

into New York harbor. But he fell in love with Manhattan—"jumped ship"—then worked as a waiter at Delmonico's. By the early 1960s, he had become the maitre d'hotel of the Colony restaurant. He opened Le Cirque in 1974 to immediate success.

Sirio makes a point of showing that he "hates" the restaurant business. According to his autobiography, his father, who died when he was twelve, "swore that I was never, ever to go into restaurants, or hotels, unless it was with a beautiful woman, and I was staying there as a guest." Yet he disregarded this advice, and enrolled at the hotel school in his hometown of Montecatini, Italy, and trained as a waiter. He once said, "I saw opening a restaurant as serious business—a profession that is respectable, if you are stupid enough to do it." He claims he's worn down from the years of responsibility and worry. But the audience can see that despite his protests to the contrary, Egidiana is right when she states, "He likes to do it, he complains if he's not doing it." Though they both would have liked their three sons to have been "professionals," with weekends off, all three chose to follow in their father's footsteps, despite Mauro's protest that he is little more than a "glorified waiter."

SIRIO, THE TRADITIONALIST, PREFERS AN ELEGANT RESTAURANT OF WELL--
DRESSED PEOPLE OFFERING CLASSICAL MENU ITEMS.

The differing styles, educations, and business practices between father and sons make up much of the drama of *Le Cirque*, which revolves around the planned opening of a new iteration of the restaurant in 2006, in the Bloomberg Building. His children, armed with college and business degrees from NYU, Columbia, and Cornell, focus on profitability and fret over Sirio's tendency to "give things away all the time," to his favored clientele—which have included such luminaries as the Reagans, Trump, Kissinger, Giuliani, Joan Collins, and Martha Stewart. Wielding a spreadsheet (which they cannot get Sirio to look at, let alone take seriously), they want him to reduce his comps to less than 2%.

They also argue about an array of other matters, as they compete to define the vision and business strategy of this new version of the fabled Le Cirque. What type of food should it be serving, how should it be presented, should there be a single establishment—or two dining options, one formal and one a more casual bar, should there be a dress code, etc.? Sirio, the traditionalist, prefers an elegant restaurant of well-dressed people, offering classical menu items that people will recognize, such as prosciutto with asparagus and melon. There is a generation gap between Sirio and the younger, more innovative members of his family, who find many of his ideas passé.

As they hash out the details, tempers often flare, insults are flung, feelings are hurt, and sometimes his children are brought almost to tears. Egidiana balances everyone out, pouring water on the fire when necessary, and mediating between father and sons, by reinforcing the message that the world has changed since 1974. The stakes are high for the family, who are the sole investors, unlike many new restaurants that are backed by large corporations.

Though charismatic Sirio is clearly the star of this film, it is the family dynamics which bring energy and pathos. The family struggles to bring this collective enterprise to a mutually satisfactory conclusion. But even as they fight fiercely (and Sirio can be quite mean), it's obvious that they have intensely strong bonds tying their love-hate relationships together. And whether they like it or not, with restaurants in far-flung locations like Las Vegas, New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Abu Dhabi, and Dallas, the younger generation is carrying on the family business with panache.

Le Cirque, September 12, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m.

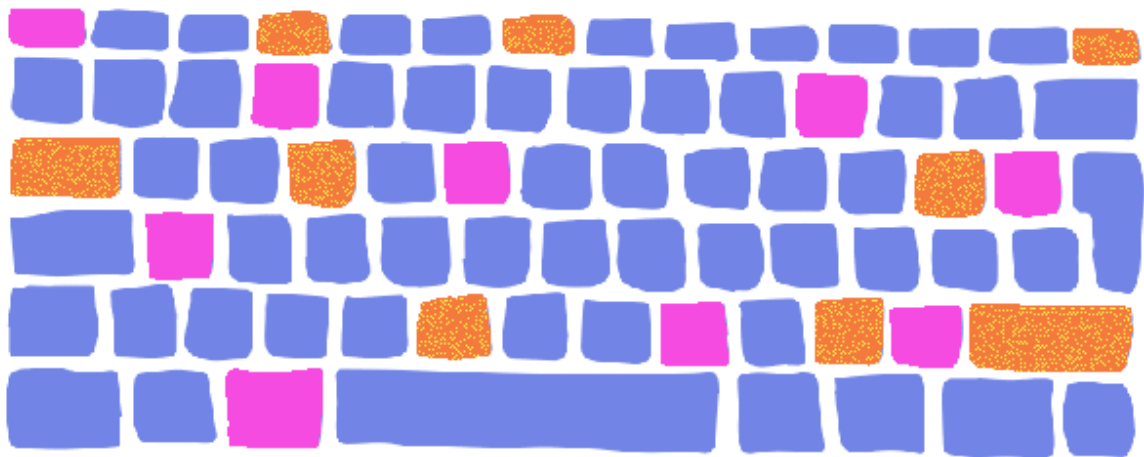
Screening link for Zoom info: <http://www.plowtoplatefilms.com/events/>

To be added to our mailing list for future screening announcements, please email a request to plowtoplate@mail.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

August 20, 2023

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BRING BACK THE CLASSIFIEDS

To the Editor:

At the risk of redundancy, I am writing yet again to suggest—and request—that the *Linewaiters' Gazette* resume its “Classified” section. I don’t know why it was eliminated, I believe early during TrumpVirus, but surely it should be reinstated.

Among its many advantages and conveniences, it serves as an important means of communication among Coop members. And, for an organization that touts the benefits of recycling and improving the environment, it is indispensable for minimizing the unnecessary purchase of yet more goods.

I have both bought and sold items via the *Gazette* and always been happy with my recycled bargains.

I am again requesting that the *Gazette* reinstate this valuable service to the members.

Marc Palmer

MASKING WHILE SHOPPING

To the Editor:

I am still masking, as when I get even a cold it lasts for months. I have been cold-free for most of the past three years, and will continue with the inconvenience of masking vs. the worse inconvenience of a long respiratory illness. That being said, studies show that by masking I’m protecting others, not myself. Everyone in the room needs to be masking to reduce the risk of spreading a cold, the flu, or Covid. So how can I

shop safely at the PSFC if no one else around me is masking? I would appreciate it if there were at least one or two days per week when everyone in the room is masked. - Can't we set this up in non-peak hours for the safety of those of us who are immuno-compromised?

Spike Kahn

RETAILING 101: COOL STUFF AT END OF THE AISLE

August 20, 2023



By Travis Hartman

THE ENDCAP IS WHERE YOUR SHOPPING SHOULD START

As shoppers wind their way through the Coop, ticking items off a shopping list, eyes wander up and down the aisle among a wide array of items, looking for what they need. When they exit certain aisles, they may encounter a treasure trove of new items, potential gifts and delightful things from around the world, curated and displayed on the shelf at the end, known as the endcap.



Endcaps like this one can boost sales significantly for the items it features.

ENDCAP BASICS

In normal stores, endcaps are highly prized real estate, and stores often charge a premium to display items on them. Actual numbers are hard to pin down, but anecdotal evidence from 2018 points to somewhere between \$6 billion and \$8 billion charged for placement each year in the United States. This is because endcaps punch far above their weight in sales. According to a study done in 2009, in a typical store, only about 2% of total items are displayed on endcaps, but the items placed there result in around 30% of total sales. Supermarket research from the last 50 years has established that endcaps can increase an item's sales from between 23% to as high as over an 1,000% increase.

Almost every aisle in the Coop has shelving that faces out at the end, but the Coop has designated three endcaps that feature new and interesting items for shoppers, where items are rotated and updated frequently. Unlike most stores, the Coop does not charge distributors to place items on endcaps. The three endcaps are referred to as the “new products” endcap (across from the eggs), the chocolate endcap (at the front of aisle 6/7) and the specialty, or fancy, food endcap (across from the chicken case).



PHOTO BY JOHN MIDGLEY

Fancy food buyer Yuri Weber poses in front of the fancy sauces and sausages.

YURI'S TAKE

Yuri Weber, the buyer for the fancy foods endcap, explained the difference between the selections: "For the front endcap, it's new products (and sometimes mis-picks from distributors) and things that just don't quite fit anyplace else—water filter systems, for example."

YURI WEBER SAYS THAT THE FANCY FOOD ENDCAP SHOULD CONTAIN ITEMS THAT WOULDN'T NORMALLY SHOW UP WRITTEN ON YOUR SHOPPING LIST BUT, ONCE YOU'VE SEEN THEM, ARE HARD TO RESIST.

Treats? "The chocolate endcap is fancy chocolate and seasonal sweets," Weber said. "The fancy food endcap usually has a smattering of local products, high-end olive oils, vinegars and hot sauces that rotate in and out. It also acts as an extension of the cheese department, in that we buy cheese accompaniments that would be sold at the cheese counter of more traditional stores."



Colorful chocolate bars entice customers on the endcap near the checkout.

GIFTS AND SHOPPING SEASONS

Weber has been stocking the fancy foods endcap since 2008, when he inherited it along with the cheese department. His philosophy for the fancy food endcap is that it should contain items that wouldn't normally show up written on your shopping list but, once you've seen them, are hard to resist. Items that you might purchase as gifts or simply on impulse. He has a rough schedule for varying items corresponding with the time of year, like BBQ sauce in the summer and fancy olive oil and vinegar and gift boxes during the holidays.

"I'm always on the lookout for new items either locally produced or specialty from Europe that members would be interested in. These are either discovered by (Coop cheese specialist) Britt [Henriksson] or myself, recommended by members or distributors," Weber said.

ENDCAPS HOLD A TREASURE TROVE OF NEW ITEMS, POTENTIAL GIFTS AND DELIGHTFUL ITEMS FROM AROUND THE WORLD.

WHAT'S YOUR FANCY?

Items on the fancy food endcap don't normally make their way into the general circulation of the store, but there have been some exceptions when it just made sense and the items have become mainstream enough to start getting scribbled onto shopping lists. The chili crisp condiment is one that became so popular that it transitioned to a regular item this year, migrating to aisle 6B with the other ethnic condiments. "I think it was an item that captured the zeitgeist for some reason," said Weber. "That and it's really tasty."



Fancy hot sauces are lined up on an endcap near the express checkout.

PHOTO BY JOHN MIDGLEY

Sometimes Weber finds that the fancy foods shelf is just too small to hold all the fancy foods. At one point he pulled in a wide variety of Rancho Gordo beans that have now found a home in aisle 6: Black Garbanzo, Christmas Lima, Cranberry, Domingo Rojo, Mayocoba, Royal Corona, Pozole and Wild Rice. "I tried to pick beans that were either different from what we sold in the bulk aisle or what members had suggested in our Instagram feed," said Weber.

Weber says the biggest challenges stocking the fancy foods endcap are that all the prices need to be applied with a price gun, and that the area can get congested when the express line snakes around. But this may be a boon to the shopper waiting in line, who can peruse some of the finest items from around the world while waiting to check out.

Editor's Note: Since this article was written, there is a new endcap that features discounted food. Located at the back end of aisles four and five, across from the yogurt, the selections here change frequently.

Travis Hartman has been a Coop member for over 10 years and likes trying to find the why behind the who, what, when and where.

HEIRLOOM APPLE VARIETIES FROM THE SCOTT FARM ORCHARD IN DUMMERSTON, VERMONT

August 20, 2023



Roxbury Russet



Reine des Reinettes



Blue Pearmain



Cox's Orange Pippin



Calville Blanc d'Hiver



Orleans Reinette



Ananas Reinette

ILLUSTRATION BY VALERIA TRUCCHIA

Illustrations by Valeria Trucchia



Roxbury Russet

Roxbury Russet

This is the oldest American apple variety. Some folks say the flavor is similar to guava and the texture like a coconut. It has a very high sugar content, though you may not notice it due to the other complex flavors. Cider made from this apple is like nectar, it is so thick and sweet. A medium-sized apple with russeted skin, it is also known as a leather-coat apple. The Roxbury Russet is generally available from

mid-October to late November.



Cox's Orange Pippin

ILLUSTRATION BY VALERIA TRUCCHIA

Cox's Orange Pippin

The most popular of English apples, it has been awarded the highest honors by the Royal Horticultural Society. It was originally grown from seed (hence the name Pippin) in 1825 by Richard Cox, an amateur horticulturist. According to Roald Dahl, the popular children's author,

one can tell a Cox is ripe for eating if the seeds rattle when you shake it. Its tart citrus flavor is exquisitely tempered by notes of sweet pear. It is excellent for eating and cooking, and makes a fabulous apple jelly. Cox is parent to Holstein and Karmijn de Sonnaville. A small round apple with orange skin, sometimes with some russeting. Harvest begins in mid-September.



Reine des Reinettes

Reine des Reinettes

A French apple from the 1700s which has a high sugar content that's balanced with acidity. It's a juicy apple, good for eating out of hand. It is also good for cooking and in Normandy it is considered the best apple for making hard cider. One of our favorite apples and a top favorite at the tastings here on the farm; there is good reason it's called the King of the Pippins. A large, beautiful apple, red blush with russetting. Look for this longtime favorite mid-to-late-September.



Calville Blanc d'Hiver

ILLUSTRATION BY VALERIA TRUCCHIA

Calville Blanc d'Hiver

A French apple dating to 1598 with a champagne-like flavor and a wonderful texture when cooked. Of all the French apples, this one is considered the best to cook with because of its flavor and texture and ability to hold its shape. It makes an excellent Tarte Tatin. Calville has a yellow skin with a red blush. Its shape is deeply lobed, often resembling a crown. Harvest in early October.



Orleans Reinette

Orleans Reinette

According to Zeke Goodband, our former orchard manager, this is “one of the most handsome apples on the planet.” Grown in France for hundreds of years, it has a flattened shape with a russeted, rosy cheek. It has a combination of citrus and nutty flavors, and makes for a good cooking apple as well as for eating out of hand. Yellow, fine textured flesh. The famous English food writer, Edward Bunyard,

enjoyed his Orleans Reinettes with port wine. Later harvest variety, usually mid-October.



Blue Pearmain

ILLUSTRATION BY VALERIA TRUCCHIA

Blue Pearmain

A New England apple dating back to the early 1700's. Henry David Thoreau wrote in his journal about his preference for Blue Pearmain. The crisp, rich flavor makes it a good apple for fresh eating and

baking, though its thick skin might prove unfavorable for some in eating out of hand. Large with purple-blue skin with light russeting. Sometimes marked with handsome green stripes and often with a dusty, waxy bloom. Harvest in late September.



Ananas Reinette

Ananas Reinette

Or Royal Pineapple, this small yellow skinned apple was grown in

France and Belgium in the 1850s and is named for its flavor after it mellows from the tree. Some sources note it from the 1500s, though it soared in popularity in Germany in the mid-nineteenth century, and remains popular all along central-northern Europe today. Its zesty citrus flavor compliments its crisp fine-grain texture. Used mostly for eating out of hand, it is also a fine cooking apple and makes a robust juice or cider. It is a small to medium apple and aptly suited for the home garden. Harvest begins in mid-September through October.