

SALUTING JOE HOLTZ, AN ICONIC FIGURE IN THE COOP’S HISTORY

July 15, 2025



PHOTO BY STEFAN RUIZ

July 15, 2025

By Zach Schiffman

How do you honor the 50-year legacy of the Coop's longtime General Coordinator, Joe Holtz? On June 1 at the Prospect Park Picnic House, the Coop community saluted Holtz, an iconic figure in the Coop's history, with three waves of guests, over multiple snack stations, musical performances, interactive exhibits, pre-recorded tributes and painted portraits.



The event was organized by three Coop staff members, with food and drinks almost exclusively sourced from the Coop. Catering support was provided by Winner, which was founded by a former Coop member.

The celebration was structured into three sections, each lasting around 90 minutes. The first 50 minutes allowed attendees to mingle, enjoy snacks and refreshments, explore a multimedia showcase and photo archive, sign Holtz's guestbook and have portraits taken.

Each wave then concluded with a speaker, a video featuring Holtz's pre-recorded speech touching on his history at the Coop and a personal appearance and remarks from Holtz himself, most of which involved anecdotes about scrubbing the Coop floors and stocking the milk fridge. The finale was a group portrait on the lawn orchestrated by a documentary team that captured the event.



PHOTO BY STEFAN RUIZ



PHOTO BY STEFAN RUIZ

A celebration of
JOSEPH HOLTZ
JUNE 1ST, 2025



PHOTO BY STEFAN RUIZ



PHOTO BY STEFAN RUIZ



The first wave featured Gillian Chi, a longtime staff member who served as the event's MC despite initial nervousness. "I've never emceed anything before, maybe spoken into a microphone twice in my life," she confessed.

Chi, like everyone at the event, said, "It's hard to imagine the Coop without him." Musical entertainment during this wave was provided by the James Shipp Band, which is made of entirely of Coop members. Member John Webber presented a portrait of Holtz made with MetroCards by artist Juan Carlos Pinto, along with a painting of the iconic PSFC Neon sign by member Erik Schurink.

The second wave featured Jess Robinson, a member and former staffer, as the speaker. Musical entertainment was provided by Coop member band Krissie & the Kranks. Staff member Yuri Weber performed "Hey Mr. Tangerine Man," an adaptation by

former staffer Allen Zimmerman, adding a playful, nostalgic element.

The final wave featured staff member Jana Cunningham as the speaker. “The On-Alert String Band,” also composed of Coop members, provided entertainment. A highlight of this wave was the presentation of a custom event T-shirt to Holtz—an original design reading “Holtz 73”—which staff and members proudly wore throughout the event.

Throughout the day, attendees shared heartfelt reflections.





PHOTO BY STEFAN RUIZ







Sherry Showell and John Decker, members since 1996, described Holtz's support for the compost squad. Showell noted Holtz's unwavering support helped their group grow significantly.

Reflecting on his retirement, Sherry admitted feeling overwhelmed, asking, "Who do I go to now?" Newer members Meredith and Lucy, who assisted with food and drinks, shared their impressions. Lucy remarked, "It's amazing to see all the history—different generations coming together to celebrate."

Meredith, reflecting on the Coop's enduring values, added, "So many of the themes that spurred them to start it are the same things that we're experiencing today. It's a really kind of reassuring feeling in this time, just to know that we have an institution that has lasted longer than me."

Kathy, Holtz's wife, sat quietly off to the side and described the celebration as "very moving," expressing how great it was to see how much people love him and respect him. She warmly shared her belief that Holtz, being "a gregarious person," was truly enjoying the recognition and interaction, adding, "I think he's really liking it a lot."

Longtime member Scott Klein characterized the moment as "the end of an era," while emphasizing the Coop's enduring strength. He said he enjoyed reconnecting with other members, noting simply that "just seeing people" was his favorite aspect.



PHOTO BY STEFAN RUIZ



Coop Exterior Through the Decades



Park Slope Food Coop 1990's



Coop's Rug Cleaners prior to the Coop's expansion in 2001



Delivery of rooftop equipment in 1990's



2001 January-June Removal of Blinds in 1994 Union to build with other buildings



PHOTO BY STEFAN RUIZ



PHOTO BY STEFAN RUIZ



PHOTO BY STEFAN RUIZ



Abigail Dunn, who received work credit to staff the event, described it as “vintage Coop,” and appreciated the chance to meet both new and longtime members. She complimented organizer Silvia Ennes Cabrera for the event logistics.

Cabrera brought her 15 years of event-planning experience prior to working full-time at the Coop to the celebration.

“My mind always goes to food,” she said. “What is the Coop known for? What do you think about when you think of the Coop? And I think about the cheese, bulk, produce and bagels.”

Each table had creative combinations of cheese, dried fruit and crudité. Ultimately, she had to skip the bagels—“We eighty-sixed the bagels because it was just too

hard.” Not only were the snacks a hit, but they were elegantly displayed. “I had a lot of fun getting together stuff to build a little display in the center of each of the tables.” Her earliest memory of Holtz? “He had a belly and a red beard, if you can believe that.”

Elly Dittmar, one of the membership coordinators who helped organize the event, took on the task of curating the photo archive.

“I basically just combed through our archival folders, which, none of them are named—just a massive file of all these random photos,” she said. “Surprisingly enough, it’s extremely hard to find pictures of Joe. In all of these 50 years of archives, there were very few pictures of Joe.”

She eventually had Holtz look through the selections and add his own blurbs. What stood out most to her about the event was how many members were involved: “All the band members, all of the people working today are members. One of the people who helped us prep the food is a member, and the person who owns [the restaurant] is actually a former Coop member. It just feels really nice to be able to pull this all off entirely with people that are part of the Coop.”

Staff member Jason Weiner, handling multimedia presentations, which were displayed on iPads hung in the back of the Picnic House, found joy assembling tributes from international coops, especially from France. “It was really, really endearing,” he said, emphasizing Holtz’s global impact. “The evolution of this place...couldn’t have happened without the work of Joe and other people. It’s nice to celebrate that.”

When the guest of honor was asked how he felt at the expansive event, Holtz told me, “I’m feeling great.”

Zach Schiffman is a social editor and writer at New York magazine, comedian, and Park Slope local.

HOW EQUAL EXCHANGE CONNECTS FARMER COOPS TO OUR COOP

July 15, 2025



ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SAVAGE

July 15, 2025

By Dan Bergsagel

Coop members can learn about the source of their food from labels or from the produce and bulk information on the Coop website. However, we only occasionally hear about intermediaries—the distributors who buy food from farms and sell it to the Coop. They come to our attention when something new happens, such as the expansion of Field Day products on our shelves, or when something goes wrong, including the June 2025 cyberattack on UNFI, which led to temporary shortages on the Coop’s shelves, as UNFI accounts for 32 percent of the Coop’s purchasing.

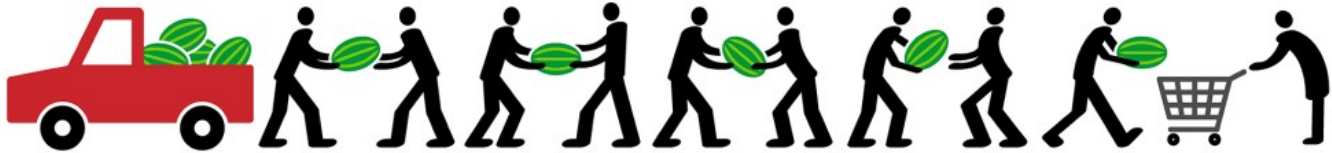


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SAVAGE

Intermediaries are the unsung heroes of the Coop's supply chain. They make it possible for the Coop to sell a wide range of produce. "Distributors are extremely important," said Britt Henriksson, one of two receiving coordinators and buyers for bulk and specialty foods at the Coop. "Working directly with suppliers is not common, as each supplier has an invoice and the paperwork can quickly add up to take a lot of a buyer's time. More distributors also means more deliveries to be coordinated."

Many of these important distributors are fellow travelers—cooperative organizations themselves with clear mission statements, guiding principles and a parallel trajectory which complements the Coop's. Equal Exchange is one of the most important and closely aligned with the Coop.

You may recognize Equal Exchange's logo—two red arrows joined together—on labels on your bananas or bulk coffee. What does not fit on their label is their mission statement:

"...to build long-term trade partnerships that are economically just and environmentally sound, to foster mutually beneficial relationships between farmers and consumers

and to demonstrate, through our success, the contribution of worker co-operatives and Fair Trade to a more equitable, democratic and sustainable world."

Equal Exchange was founded in Massachusetts in 1986, importing coffee from Nicaragua in defiance of a Reagan administration trade embargo. Equal Exchange later expanded to sourcing coffee from farmer groups across Latin America and Africa, and tea from India, Sri Lanka and South Africa. Today, it distributes chocolate, bananas, nuts, dried fruits and olive oils, all sourced from small farmer cooperatives.

The groups and cooperatives all view themselves as democratically organized.

Leah Madsen, sales manager at Equal Exchange, explained: "We have set up governance and capital structures to mitigate some of the most oppressive forces of capitalism. We're trying to feed people, support people who produce food and support ourselves. We prioritize people over profit."

Equal Exchange and the Coop go back a long way. "Back in the 1980s, we were excited about the founding of Equal Exchange. I am certain that we were buying their products in their first year," said Joe Holtz, one of the founding members of the Coop, who just stepped down as general manager.

Since then, Equal Exchange has grown to become one of the Coop's most important distributors. Madsen said the Coop is equally important to Equal Exchange. "PSFC is our largest single-store revenue partner for bulk coffee. Coffee represents more than half of our sales and an even higher percentage of our gross margin," she remarked.

According to Madsen, over the past year the Coop sold 44,879 pounds of Equal Exchange coffee. (This is equivalent to covering the entire ground floor of the Coop with coffee beans two inches deep). The second largest mover of bulk coffee for Equal Exchange was a six-store chain that purchased 41,690 pounds of coffee. After that chain, the next largest single store sold less than half of the Coop's annual volume.

This relationship holds sway beyond the hard numbers. “I love working with Park Slope,” Madsen said. “At an organizational level, the food coops we sell to are very important for Equal Exchange, and the Park Slope Food Coop is an important leader within the national food coop scene. PSFC is the only member labor cooperative still going, and it is a valuable example of anti-capitalism. It is valuable to have an ideological and philosophical partner.”

Equal Exchange and the Coop can have a real impact on small-scale farmers’ livelihoods. The bulk coffee bought by Coop members in the last year is approximately equivalent to the total coffee output of 22 family farms. The 729,520 bananas that Coop members purchased in 2024 paid \$125,660 directly to small-scale banana farmers in Ecuador and Peru.

There are also other, less tangible effects, Madsen explained. “There is so much global upheaval—state violence, militias, civil war, genocide—that we can support farmers operating in these areas to have some economic and social platform through trade and solidarity by bringing them resources. Money flows in, but the organizational impact of allied neighbors as part of civil society is also important.”



ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SAVAGE

“Coops can be more of a positive organizational force than the state in some cases and have been a vehicle for peasant farmers to build political power,” she added. “Farmer cooperatives can use the dollars earned through fair trade premiums. The money we spend with our growers is used to build things like roads and health clinics. We provide access to capital that helps them avoid predatory interest rates.”

In 1994, Equal Exchange became a worker-owned cooperative. Today, each of the 110 to 120 worker-owners has an equal voting share and equal profit share, whether they work in senior management or at entry-level.

While the worker-owners can vote equally, not all decisions are voted on. Madsen explained that “much of the governance and general decision-making is delegated to management or different working groups and committees. Worker-owner votes primarily focus on board elections, bylaw changes, charitable contributions and major changes to operations.”

Equal Exchange initially focused on promoting fair trade in the global south through coffee, and the mission and guiding principles were easily interpreted. In many cases, this trade supports the transition from a commodities trade rooted in colonial histories, and seeks to increase solidarity and transparency when connecting producers and consumers.

Fair trade does not encompass products sourced from the U.S., yet conventional agricultural trade practices here can also be problematic, and small-scale farmers that implement best-practice growing procedures, such as almond farmers in California, need support.

As a result, Equal Exchange management now says that its mission is supporting “fair trade in the global south, and alternative trade in the global north.”

Decisions are not always universally popular. Equal Exchange went through a period of selling single-serve coffee pods (like the ubiquitous K-cup). There was debate among worker-owners about the quality and environmental impact, yet the decision was made by one of the sales teams to proceed. The team had autonomy to make that decision within the guiding principles, on the basis that if people insist on drinking single-serve coffee, then it would be best to drink fair trade higher-quality single-serve coffee.

While the guiding principles of Equal Exchange are often motivated to mitigate the impacts of broader societal challenges, the procurement strategy is much more granular and individualized. Equal Exchange visits its growers, building its network by vetting a farm’s structure and ability to reduce the negative impact of agriculture on the planet.

Equal Exchange sources olive oil from the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee (PARC) in the West Bank and from Sindyanina of Galilee in Northern Israel. The suppliers of these oils were chosen not based on their political geography but for their alignment with democratic fair trade practices.

PARC promotes the sustainable economic development of 41 farmer cooperatives, improves water supply and critical infrastructure and provides social services for women, children and families in the West Bank. Sindyanna of Galilee is “a female-led non-profit that actively promotes the concepts of ‘business for peace’ and fair trade in Israel. The organization sells olive oil from Arab small farmers and then channels all of the profits back into Arab women’s education and other economic activities.” Both olive oils are sold at the Coop.

Closer to home, the Coop has sold pecans from New Communities Inc., a Black-owned small farmer collective in southern Georgia that operates a land trust which developed from the Civil Rights movement. Yet Coop members don’t always buy these high-quality products from mission-aligned organizations.

“We love their story and what they’re about,” recalled Receiving Coordinator Henriksen. “The problem here at the Coop is shelf space, and member dollar spends really dominate that. I loved the product, but the members weren’t buying enough of them.”

This suggests an information gap. “I wish members knew more about what is going on behind the scenes at this lovely grocery store,” Henriksson said. That may be the next challenge: offering the Coop’s buyers a way to share the motivating stories of where the food comes from with members in the aisles.

Dan Bergsagel is a structural engineer from London. He likes to talk about the unexpected things hiding in plain sight.

FOOD CLASS: BREAKFAST TACOS, TEXAS STYLE!

July 15, 2025

The Park Slope Food Coop Cooking Squad Presents

TACOS

Breakfast tacos, Texas style!

Make breakfast
tacos with Food
Studies scholar
and community
organizer,

Rebecca Gorena

@hardfeelingstacos



Rebecca shares
her passion for
food and
community-
building through
classes, dinner
parties, and
breakfast taco
pop ups!

foodcoopcooks.org/rsvp

IG: foodcoopcooks



July 30th
7:30 pm EDT

NOW in person
and online!



July 15, 2025

Join us with Chef **Rebecca Gorena** to make ***Texas-style breakfast tacos*** on **Wednesday, July 30, at 7:30 p.m. EDT** as part of the Coop's monthly cooking series. The class will be in person at the Coop and feature Austin-style Papa con Huevo breakfast tacos!

About the Chef

Rebecca Gorena grew up on the Texas-Mexico border, where breakfast tacos are a beloved part of everyday life. After 14 years in Austin, she moved to Brooklyn to pursue a master's degree in food studies at NYU and to share her passion for food knowledge and community-building through cooking classes, dinner parties and breakfast taco pop-ups around the city. With a background in culinary research and community organizing, Rebecca likes to explore the powerful connections between food, culture and identity. She loves helping others reconnect with their culinary roots while discovering new flavors and stories along the way. You can find her on Instagram: **@hardfeelingstacos**.

RSVP, Participate and Follow

Sign up for classes, download recipes and find shopping lists to cook along from home at **foodcoopcooks.org**. As classes are added, they will show up on the Squad's homepage. Check back regularly for updates! Follow the Cooking Squad on Instagram at **instagram.com/foodcoopcooks** for more content including shopping sessions with guest chefs!

Teach a Class

Though cooperation is at the heart of the Coop's mission, so is food! The Cooking Committee is looking for guest chefs to share their food expertise, traditions and special treats. Members receive FTOP credit for preparing and delivering classes. Tell us

what you want to teach at foodcoopcooks.org/contact.

JULY 15, 2025

July 15, 2025

Letters to the Editor



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIEL WILLOW

DON'T DISENFRANCHISE ME

Greetings:

Now that we know nearly two-thirds of member voters want remote access to the general meetings, and that we are free to have hybrid meetings without a change to the bylaws (legal advice received by senior staff after the referendum was happening), can we please reopen meeting access? Since it's not a boycott or a bylaw change, all we need is a simple majority to approve, if we even need a vote.

For reasons of work/childcare/medical/mobility and room capacity, we can't all participate otherwise.

*Sincerely,
Lisa Guido*

DEMOCRACY, GENERALLY COORDINATED

Greetings:

As recently noted by outgoing General Manager Joe Holtz, Coop members have the right under New York State law to participate in our democratic processes virtually. But our bid to enshrine that right into our bylaws has failed, winning 66.45% of a vote that required 66.67%. That slim margin is a testament to how critical the General Coordinators' fearmongering was in defeating a commonsense proposal rooted in a desire to expand access and maximize participation at the Coop.

The GCs will tout the PSFC's commitment to democracy and member input. They'll invite you to General Meetings where you can "have your voice heard." But after a year and a half of obstruction, obfuscation and the blatant misuse of their bully pulpit, I

Speak from experience when I say they'll only let you participate if they think they'll still be in control at the end of the day.

*Sincerely,
Morgan Võ*

LOOKING FORWARD WITH OPTIMISM

Fellow Members,

This summer I will turn 70 and will have been a member of this Coop for more than two-thirds of my life.

As I move into the next decade, our Coop moves into a new phase of its life, with Joe Szladek in the role of General Manager. Welcome and congratulations, Joe.

As a clear-eyed optimist, I imagine the possibilities and work as hard as I can to achieve it. At this moment, I have great hope for what our Coop can achieve under the leadership of a forward-looking General Manager.

Like all Coop leaders, a GM needs to be even-handed and open, fair in their treatment of every Coop member and constituency. They can help us become a truly democratic organization that uses all available tools, so that 17,000 members have the best possible chance to engage in policy- and decision-making. At a moment when a literal majority of Coop members want the opportunity to attend General Meetings online (while the still undecided Hybrid Referendum leaves that up in the air), they can help us transition to hybrid, fully virtual or asynchronous decision-making.

This means leaving behind an overly nostalgic and often unhelpful “we’ve always done it this way” perspective, choosing instead a more analytical stance. It’s time to

review how well things actually worked before and consider what needs to change to meet the current moment.

During my 30-plus years working in NYC public education, I learned from and with every child I taught, every teacher and principal I coached and every parent who trusted their child with me. As Joe Szladek assumes his important new role, I look forward to his willingness to learn from and with all members and his commitment to our mission: food, social and environmental justice.

In solidarity,
Alyce Barr

THE COOP HAS CHANGED—EXCEPT FOR THE LEADERSHIP

Dear Coop members:

“The city has changed,” said NY-7 Rep Nydia Velázquez on Democratic Primary night. “Zohran knew it. The other candidates didn’t see it. And that is why we are here celebrating this beautiful moment.”

The Coop has changed. Everyone knows it, especially younger people, disabled people, members targeted by racism and Islamophobia, shift workers, supporters of Park Slope Food Coop for Palestine and so on. The Coop leadership doesn’t see it. And that is why it’s not hard to imagine the Coop’s eventual fade.

Kerry Carnahan

MORE DEMOCRACY AT THE COOP: ONWARD!

How disheartening to read that the referendum for hybrid meetings failed to pass. The odds were stacked against it though and I believe that the majority of members do care about greater access to the decision-making process. So...let's forge ahead!

My co-worker Jason Weiner drafted a robust proposal last year. Member Yejia Chen also came up with a solid plan this Spring. The original hybrid meeting proposal, from CJ Glackin & Morgan Võ, has good recommendations too.

I hope that the General Manager, the Agenda Committee, the General Coordinators and the Membership at large will agree to quickly usher these forward. There is always a lot to do, we are all pulled left and right, but this is urgent. With proper planning we can come up with proposals to vote on in the not so distant future. We have to be agile and steadfast about this. We also have to be transparent, accountable and stop the on-going back-stabbing, slandering and other shenanigans.

The above proposals and ideas could be fully discussed at the next GM; small committees of members and/or staff can be organized to generate ideas and research feasibility with regular reporting, clear timelines and deadlines. The Coop can perhaps postpone other projects to focus on this issue. This is not rocket science. It's a business decision related to priorities and allocation of resources.

I encourage all members to push for this in the coming months, and not let it be buried under other priorities or by institutional inertia, nay-sayers and pushback. If we don't stand behind reforming the system to allow greater participation, the Coop will only pay lip service to a core principle: "Democratic Member Control." And skeptical members will have a point: The Coop is just another "glorified buyers club" with performative democratic values.

In solidarity,

Delphine Selles-Alvarez

NEW DEMOCRACY 2.0

Dear Coop members:

We best serve the democratic process when we allow everyone to come to the table. Regardless of technology enhancements, our biggest accessibility limitation will always be time. If we continue to only allow members to participate in discussion and voting on Tuesdays at 7 p.m., we disenfranchise anyone unavailable then. Whether it's the inability to travel, log on or simply focus due to other constraints like family, location or just life, those members can't participate.

We need a system that won't require someone who lost the affordable connectivity program to be pressured by personal cost to participate. We need to give parents and people who work nights time to digest information and not be forced to divide their attention. We need ways that give members with different learning styles and accessibility needs the same info as those at the GM.

I believe it's important to recognize that nowhere in the principles of cooperation does it say that members must agree with each other. Cooperation is finding common ground. The Coop is not meant to be a cookie cutter of anyone's beliefs. That's what makes it beautiful, messy and home to us all. Conflict is inherent in this space. Discourse is a necessity to allow these different opinions a voice. Our current system does not give time or ability to receive, process and respond. It limits participation, it limits engagement, it limits understanding and most importantly it limits factual information and transparent communication.

It keeps us from properly hearing each other. It makes us react and not engage in the best ways. It keeps us from making as much progress as we could.

It's time for **a new Coop democracy**. Please attend the July General Meeting to discuss my agenda item.

Sincerely,

Jason Weiner

Membership Coordinator at the Coop

SPECIAL PRIVILEGES FOR HOLTZ?

Dear Coop members:

In his June 6 email, Joe Holz says that "I'm speaking today only for myself and not on behalf of the staff or General Coordinator team."

If Holtz is speaking only for himself, as one member equal among many thousands of other PFSC members, how is it that he was authorized to send his email to all members on the PFSC email database? Are all members, speaking only for themselves, able to send emails to the entire PFSC email list when they wish?

Sincerely,

Erich Hahn

JOE HOLTZ'S ABUSE OF AUTHORITY

Dear member owners,

Joe Holtz's abuse of authority in using the Coop's mailing list to send a message to each of us about how to vote in the upcoming election is outrageous. I've been an ac-

tive member of our beloved Coop for more than two decades, so I have heard Joe's opinion on many things over all these years. But this is next level, to use our member directory to send a personal message about how to vote.

Joe Holtz's intervention is straight up election interference and an egregious abuse of his power and privilege. Not only is it outrageous that Joe did this himself, I would like to understand which General Coordinators allowed him this access and which General Coordinators knew about this email before it went out and didn't have the judgment to see this as an inflammatory smear campaign against our own members? Please explain.

*Sincerely,
Kathleen Sullivan*

IS THE COOP LOSING ITS PROGRESSIVE SPIRIT?

Folks,

I'd firstly like to congratulate and welcome Joe Szladek to his new role. It's tough taking on a leadership role from a set of founders, as I know from my experience advising many startups and nonprofits around the world.

I joined the Coop because good food is good politics—if not, why buy organic or biodynamic? But the recent developments at the Coop have left me feeling insulted, condescended to, and frankly, unwelcome. The spate of missives from the GCs was bad enough, but Joe Holtz's email decrying board candidates was the height of paternalistic hypocrisy. If the candidates aren't allowed a similar platform to rebut any smears against them, is this really a democracy?

The contrast with Brooklyn, and the rest of the city—in light of the mayoral primary—

couldn't be more stark. The recent elections have proven that the electorate has uplifted candidates such as Mamdani, Hanif, Lander and others who have espoused justice for Palestinians and a variety of progressive causes. This begs the question: Has the Coop become a conservative institution with a set of ossified principles and bound by inertia? What happened to the kind of spirit that led to Chilean products being boycotted (under Pinochet)? Are we going to be so out of step with the community around us?

Maybe I should give up expecting better and go somewhere else.

I was honestly expecting Joe Holtz to email us all urging us to vote for Cuomo. Perhaps he still will?

*Regards,
Jayanth Eranki*

SEEKING ANSWERS ABOUT ALL-MEMBER EMAIL

Dear Editors:

I'm confused—how and why was an overly political and biased email on the Board elections from Joe Holtz sent to all members using the Coop's official 'no-reply' mailing list? I do not consent to my email being used by the Coop in this manner for any political and/or campaign message, and have never received one until now.

Additionally, was Holtz's letter meant to coerce, convince and/or rationalize in some way that Coop members need to agree to carry even one single product, let alone several, from a country openly and defiantly committing genocide in front of the entire globe with full U.S. support of funding, intelligence and weapons? Again, confused and would like an explanation.

Sincerely,
A.L. Steiner

MOURNING FRIEND'S FAMILY, CALLING FOR BOYCOTT

To my fellow members,

I have a good friend who is Palestinian and grew up as a farmer in a village called Khuza'a, southern Gaza. I mentioned him in a letter early last year (a letter that was originally refused for publication by the Gazette).

In the last month, I learned from him that his entire village was completely erased by Israel (there is no other word for it). Over 50 of his relatives were killed. The fate of the rest of the over 15,000 residents is by and large unknown, a tragedy in itself.

Khuza'a's population was not that far off from the size of the Coop's membership.

Among false narratives from the General Coordinators that a mere boycott of Israeli goods would destroy the Coop—narratives then used to prevent discussion and demonize members—I make the same appeal as in my previous letter: Let's keep our focus on the real destruction happening in Palestine.

In cooperation and solidarity,
Abdi-Hakin Dirie

FROM TAIPEI TO PARK SLOPE: IN SUPPORT OF THE COOP'S VAL-

UES

To the Editor:

I've been a proud member of the Park Slope Food Coop for 15 years and have always valued its spirit of cooperation and commitment to providing high-quality, sustainable food to our community.

However, since the attacks in October 2023, I've been troubled by what feels like a shift in the Coop's atmosphere. A vocal minority has pushed rhetoric that feels out of step with the inclusive and cooperative spirit that has long defined this community.

As someone who grew up in Taiwan—a place where democracy and civil liberties were hard-won—I'm deeply unsettled by the selective moral outrage directed at Israel. Though imperfect like any democracy, Israel stands alone in the region in offering meaningful protections for women, minorities and LGBTQ individuals. Yet it is often the sole target of intense condemnation, while regimes like China, Russia and Egypt—whose human rights abuses are well-documented—escape similar scrutiny. Criticizing a government's policies is one thing; singling out an entire nation and its people as uniquely immoral is something else entirely.

Regardless of where one stands on this complex and emotional issue, it is crucial to preserve the Coop's core values: cooperation, inclusivity and a focus on good food and community. I greatly appreciate the dedication of our General Coordinators, whose hard work reassures me that the Coop's spirit can continue to thrive. I want to thank Joe Holtz for his decades of service to the Coop and for his recent letter—a voice of reason and moral clarity from someone who has long embodied the values of the Coop. As Joe steps back from his role, I believe his words serve as a timely reminder of what this community stands for: cooperation, respect and a shared commitment to the Coop's founding principles.

Sincerely,

THE HEARING ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (HAC) IS SEEKING NEW MEMBERS

July 15, 2025



July 15, 2025

HAC's work is organizing the scheduling of hearings for the Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) and Hearing Administration Committee (HAC). The DRC seeks the resolution of disputes among members by investigating and determining if a member has violated Coop rules. If so, HAC determines the consequence for that violation. Hearings are held if a member wishes to appeal this determination.

HAC only meets when a hearing needs to be scheduled, and this is somewhat rare, with a current average of about one (1) hearing per year. HAC conducts its work by

email and phone, and a member of HAC must be present at all hearings. Generally, HAC members will receive about 2-3 shifts for the scheduling of a hearing.

Prospective applicants should be:

- Members in good standing for at least a year before the pandemic
- Willing to work in a collaborative committee environment
- Interested in the ongoing business of the Coop

Please send statements of interest to psfchac@gmail.com. The Committee will interview applicants and then select candidates for election at the General Meeting. We are seeking an applicant pool that reflects the diversity of the Coop's membership.

CROSSWORD: BOWL CUT

July 15, 2025

