

FIBER CRAFTING & MENDING CIRCLE

April 14, 2026



COURTESY OF THE PARK SLOPE FOOD COOP FUN COMMITTEE

Calling all Coop members who are serious or aspiring fiber crafters and menders (knitting, darning, crochet and embroidery!).

Join the Park Slope Food Coop Fun Committee and the Park Slope Food Coop Environmental Committee on Saturday, April 18, from 4:00–6:00 p.m. in the Coop's se-

cond-floor meeting room to work on our projects together, learn from each other and be inspired by our crafty neighbors.

We will have donated fiber available from our partner Brooklyn Creative Reuse for participants! You are also welcome to bring extra yarn you would like to swap with others! Please note that while we have some extra tools available, we cannot guarantee you tools to work with, so please bring your tools!

We have 25–30 slots for this event. Please RSVP [here](#) for this event to let us know you are coming!

B.Y.O. BOOK CLUB: UNPLUG, READ AND CONNECT

April 14, 2026



The
B.Y.O. Book
Club

Unplug, Read and Connect

Thursday, April 30th, 2026, from 7–9 p.m.

**390 Social
390 5th Ave, Brooklyn**

RSVP: bit.ly/psbyobookclub



Sponsored by:
The Park Slope Food Coop Fun Committee
and Park Slope Parents

Join us for a cozy community reading event where we turn off our screens to reconnect with the joy of reading and being in community. We'll begin with 30 minutes of quiet reading, followed by conversation and reflection with fellow readers, and then another 30 minutes of reading plus connection time at the end. Bring whatever you'd like to read, settle in and order drinks and bites to support 390 Social, and make some new reader friends.

Thursday, April 30, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at 390 Social, 390 5th Ave, Park Slope, Brooklyn.

Only 25 spots available!

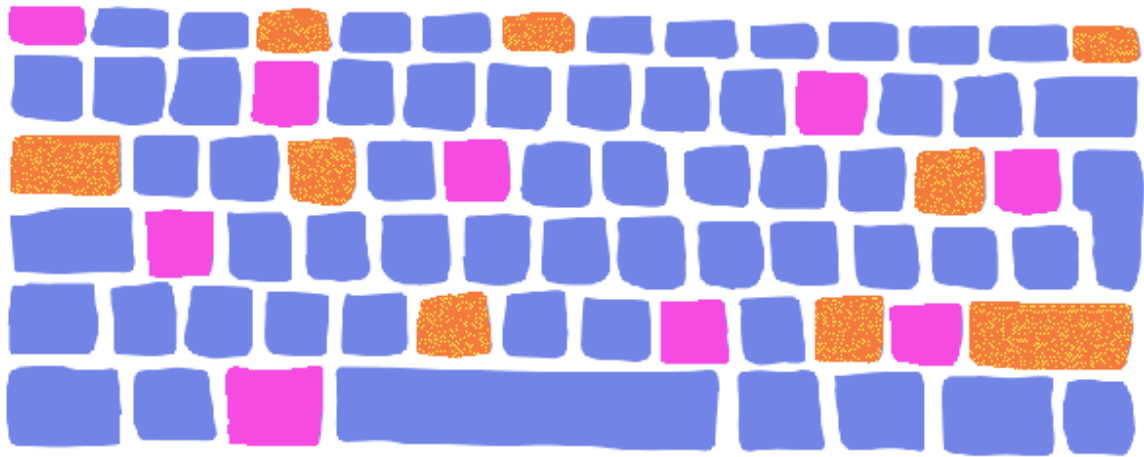
Co-sponsored by Park Slope Parents and the Park Slope Food Coop Fun Committee.

RSVP [here!](#)

APRIL 14, 2026

April 14, 2026

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



THE COMMUNITY BENEFITS OF A BILL ON FOOD DATE LABELLING

Dear Coop community,

Are you tired of second guessing the “expiration” date on your hummus after a few weeks? Do you resort to the water test with every purchased carton of eggs because

the stamped “sell by” date doesn’t make sense?

Then you want to advocate for a piece of proposed state legislation that would standardize food date labeling for products sold in New York State, including our beloved Coop. The aptly named Food Date Labelling Act would standardize the language that food producers are allowed to use; language that more accurately speaks to the quality of the food. This would include “best by” (for the most perishable items like raw meat) and “best if used by” (for less perishable items), and would axe vague terminology like “sell by” or “use by.”

The Consumer Goods Forum found that this updated language reduces food waste, saving consumers money and landfill space. Keeping that food out of the trash would keep millions of tons of methane—a greenhouse gas that traps 30 times as much heat as carbon dioxide—out of the atmosphere. Additionally, variation in food date labelling adds significant procedural burden on food banks like our great friends at CHiPS; this bill would ease that burden and allow these vital food distribution sites to focus instead on getting food into the hands of the people who need it most.

The bill is currently in the NYS Assembly and Senate Agriculture Committees and could use some advocacy from the public! Reach out to your state representatives and make sure they are co-sponsors of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Alec Regitsky, Emily Meagher and Danny DeBare

CALLING ALL SQUIRRELS

Dear Coop community,

Do you have a war chest of shift credits? Do you like to do a little something “extra” for the Coop? I am planning a member-submitted *Gazette* article on this strange behavior and I want to hear from YOU!

How many credits have you banked? Why do you engage in this practice? Do you harbor deep fears of being suspended? Are you FIRE (Food Independence, Retire Early)?

Please contact me at scottrmiddleton@gmail.com if you would like to share your story in a judgment-free space.

In Cooperation,

Scott Middleton

THE DRC’S SHAMEFUL FAILURE

Dear Coop members,

Several months ago, a fellow Coop member decried me as a “genocide supporter” due to my lack of support for boycotting Israeli goods.

The interaction left me shaken and upset. This woman had never met me and knew nothing of my relationship to Israel. Yet she felt comfortable labeling me as someone who endorses the purposeful extermination of an entire group of people.

I lodged a complaint with the Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) because I felt this woman needed to be held accountable for her irresponsible name-calling and that measures should be put in place to protect others from similar attacks.

After months of waiting, the DRC finally arranged a “mediation” between me and the other member, under the guise of a dialogue supporting mutual understanding in the

spirit of our “cooperative” Coop.

That is not what happened. The mediation began civilly enough. My assailant apologized and claimed she had no recollection of the event and that I didn’t look familiar to her (which begs the question: how many other complete strangers has this woman accused of supporting mass murder?).

Yet once she found out that I have family in Israel, she rescinded her apology, completely shut down and asked to leave the conversation as she doesn’t “converse with Zionists.”

Bear in mind, at no point did I express any political opinions nor call myself a Zionist. This is something she concluded on her own.

The worst part is that even after expressing dissatisfaction regarding this mediation, the DRC stamped my complaint as closed. As far as I know, this woman has suffered no consequences and has free rein to poison others with her baseless accusations. The silence from the DRC in the name of “neutrality” is shameful.

Sincerely,

Sarede Rachel Switzer

THE DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMMITTEE RESPONDS TO THE ABOVE LETTER

Dear Coop members,

Our committee is bound by confidentiality, which we take very seriously. We can share that we thoroughly investigated this complaint, and felt that offering mediation

was an appropriate conclusion to our investigation. Note that we never force mediation on the parties—instead, we offer it as an option under certain circumstances, and the parties to this case accepted this course of action.

We typically do not receive information from the mediator. It is a discrete and highly confidential pathway, separate from the DRC process. When mediation fails to result in an agreement, we typically do not reopen the complaint, depending on the circumstances. In this instance, we were informed that the mediation went to completion, and we twice informed the complainant that the case was closed. It is not our practice to disclose the outcome or any actions we may have taken as the result of a DRC investigation.

We are also unable to investigate complaints concerning what takes place during a mediation, or personal communications related to it, as confidentiality is essential to the mediation process. We are working to clarify DRC guidelines regarding mediation in response to feedback we have received after the last few mediations.

Please also note that the details of our investigations are memorialized in DRC case files and may serve as precedent leading to sanction in any additional active or future cases involving these Coop members.

Sincerely,

The Dispute Resolution Committee

THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF MASKS

Dear Coop members:

The Plastic Reduction Committee put out a survey presented at the February General Meeting to gauge Coop members' interest regarding topics on which the committee

should focus. I urge as many people as possible to make “Researching mask-related options and approaches that optimize safety while reducing plastic waste” their top priority!

If you do not shop or work on a Wednesday or Thursday at the Coop you will be surprised to know that we go through A LOT of masks. To be able to ensure the mandatory masking is in place, it was decided operationally to provide masks to members who did not bring their own.

As a staff member who works both mandatory mask days, I see with my own eyes the amount of mask-related waste we produce on a weekly basis. A colleague who places mask orders told me the Coop ordered 222,000 masks in 2025 which comes out to more than TWO THOUSAND (2000) masks *per mask day* (Wednesday and Thursday). The 2024 estimate is similar.

While we aim to prioritize safety for those in our community who are immunocompromised, doing so has come with an unintended environmental cost.

Our Mission Statement reads: *We respect the environment. We strive to reduce the impact of our lifestyles on the world we share with other species and future generations.*

I keep this in mind as I plead for us to seek a better solution to helping fellow immunocompromised members without harming the environment.

Sincerely,
Mae Frankeberger

MASK POLICY

Dear Coop members:

How is it possible that in 2026 we are all still going along with a mandatory mask policy? Coming from someone who was extremely pro-mask for longer than most, it's out of touch and unscientific that we're still forcing everyone to wear masks, not to mention the unbelievable amount of waste mask-wearing generates.

Masks have their time and place, and everyone has the right to choose to wear one, but it is downright silly that we're still pretending this serves a purpose. We must be the only place left in the world outside of operating rooms maintaining this policy.

In cooperation,

Kim Landman

WHAT IS "ZIONISM?"

Dear Coop members:

Recent letters in the *Linewaiters Gazette* use the term "Zionist," as if it is interchangeable with "Jewish," implying that criticism of Israel is tantamount to antisemitism, supposedly causing Jewish members to fear for their safety within the Coop. The claim—blatantly manipulative—is frankly ridiculous, as the Coop is probably the last place that Jews need worry about their "safety."

Zionism is a secular historical movement to establish a specifically "Jewish State" in Palestine. It is not synonymous with "Jewish." Most professed Zionists are not Jewish at all, but pro-Israel American Christians.

Many—perhaps most—Jews are themselves not sympathetic to Israel’s violence, especially its current massacres and destruction, visible for all to see, but cynically referred to in one letter as a “defensive war,” as if violence all started on 10/07/2023. But Israel has an ongoing—and especially brutal—six-decade occupation of the West Bank, and also of Gaza, which has become an all-out blockade.

Military occupations are acts of violence. Occupying powers have no inherent “right of self-defense,” whereas occupied populations have every right to resist occupation, however necessary. During the 1948 War, an estimated 750,000 Arab inhabitants of Mandatory Palestine were violently expelled en masse by Zionist paramilitaries, all to insure a Jewish majority. Albert Einstein’s vision of Zionism was of a “homeland” for Jews, as was specified in the 1917 Balfour Declaration—*not* for a “Jewish State,” one ideally free of its current 25% Arab population, made up mainly of Muslims and Christians.

Such letters as mentioned above are blatant calls for Coop speech suppression. But now there are hybrid GMs, and a vote on the BDS boycott is possible, hopefully a fair representation of the entire membership, this despite all attempts to stop it, and keep the megalomaniacal State of Israel first among all other considerations.

Sincerely,

David Barouh

WHY I’M VOTING AGAINST A PRO-WAR CANDIDATE

Dear Coop members:

Like many at the Coop, I vote for board members who focus on the main mission of the organization; providing low-cost food to our community.

The War in Iran will be a disaster for food prices nationwide as the Strait of Hormuz is not just a key chokepoint for oil and natural gas but fertilizer as well. I encourage you all to read this article in *Foreign Policy* magazine on how the crisis will spiral.

Unfortunately, one of the candidates for the board, Barbara Mazor, stridently supports the war, as evidenced by her posts on X (formerly Twitter), so much so that she's questioning her support of the Democratic Party because they won't get behind it and calling one of its foremost opponents a bimbo.

I would expect everyone whose stated goal is keeping food prices low to oppose this war. If an Iran War supporter can win a spot on the Park Slope Food Coop's Board of Directors, what message does that send to the people trying to ratchet up the domestic pressure to end this folly and reopen the Strait?

I'm undecided on the rest of the candidates but I cannot support Ms. Mazor.

Best,

Aaron Kleinman

RESPONSE TO KLEINMAN LETTER

Thank you, Gazette staff, for providing the opportunity to respond to Aaron Kleinman's letter citing two tweets from me as evidence I "stridently" support the war against the Iranian regime.

First, I have much agreement with Aaron. I share his concern that Coop board members should "focus on the main mission of the organization; providing low-cost food to our community." This is why I submitted my candidacy, to assure that there would be at least one candidate who does not prioritize boycotting Israel over the Coop's core

mission. I hope Aaron will be consistent and cast “NO” votes for Taylor Pate and Tim Hospodar.

I also share his concern about the effects of war on food prices, as well as all other aspects of the economy. War is a terrible thing and should never be undertaken lightly. I can assure Aaron that the administration did not consult me on its decision to embark on this war.

As for the two tweets, one was from before the war and was a reaction to an unrelated statement from Representative Ocasio Cortes.

The other tweet was a reaction to the nearly unanimous vote of Senate democrats in favor of S.J.Res.104, “direct[ing] the President to remove U.S. Armed Forces from hostilities within or against Iran.” It seems to me this vote was more about politics than about strategic considerations. I would be pleased to learn why Iran’s nuclear ambitions, arsenal of ballistic missiles, and repeated calls for “Death to America” should not be taken seriously.

Barbara Mazor

INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE ALLIANCE STRENGTHENING BY THE DAY

Hello Coop:

You can join the fight against Jew-hate both here at the Coop and throughout the world. Millions of others are waking up to the dangers and the coded hatred supplied by the violence-supporting global BDS movement who have championed the murder and kidnapping of Thai migrant workers, Arab/Muslim men and women, and Jewish Israelis on and since October 7, 2023 by so-called liberation forces. The International

Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) is central to many of these examples, and I welcome considering its adoption in New York at all levels, including the Coop. Get involved!

- The Missouri House of Representatives passed HB 2061, using IHRA to prohibit anti-Semitic discrimination in the state's public K-12 schools and institutions of higher education.
- Italy is pushing forward the IHRA definition of antisemitism and banning anti-Semitic rallies.
- The Wisconsin State Assembly has adopted IHRA through passing AB 446 into state statute, more effectively evaluating discriminatory intent and enforcing enhanced criminal penalties. The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety will soon hear a companion Senate bill, SB 455.
- The Concord, Massachusetts Select Board unanimously voted to adopt the IHRA as part of a proclamation to fight hate.
- Mayor Brandon Johnson and the City Council of Chicago have codified the IHRA definition of antisemitism.
- The Maine State/Local Government Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY to table a BDS-backed divestment bill.

More to come!

Sincerely,

Jesse Rosenfeld

HOW WILL THE WAR ON IRAN AFFECT THE COOP? HOW CAN WE PREPARE?

Dear Coop,

Since February 28, I've been appalled by the unfolding of the unprovoked U.S.-Israel war on Iran. I'm heartbroken at the destruction and death our country is raining down on Iranians, and the needless devastation experienced by so many others in the region. As the days go by, I'm also increasingly alarmed by the implications for the entire world.

On top of everything else, this war is a disaster for the global economy. Disruption of shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has resulted in diesel prices heading skyward, likely ensuring a price rise for goods delivered by truck, groceries included. Even if the war ends tomorrow, we could be headed for a severe global recession. Our Coop could soon be facing conditions that will make the disruptions of the pandemic pale in comparison.

I ask Coop members to speak out against this horrific war as a matter of basic justice. And on a practical level, let's come together to anticipate challenges to come. We need to plan now for how we'll handle price inflation, supply chain breakdown and delivery problems. We also need to prepare for a leadership role in responding to local food needs, as not only rising prices but a crash in world supplies of fertilizers could ramp up levels of hunger here at home.

Let's think about the many resources we already have in place to respond to these possible scenarios. For example, the International Trade Education Squad can help us predict cascading effects from the limitation in petroleum exports. What else can we foresee, and how can we be educating, organizing and preparing now?

In cooperation and against imperial war,

Kathy McCullagh

TO COUNTER A ROGUE STATE:

Dear fellow members,

I support a Coop boycott of Israeli goods because Israel has become a rogue state whose depredations should be resisted. While indignation has rightly been focused on Israel's wanton destruction of Gaza, I think we also need to consider other aspects of its lawlessness. Over recent months and years, Israeli settlers have violently seized ever more Palestinian land in the West Bank, creating "outposts" in lieu of formal annexation, as journalist (and sometime PSFC member) Jasper Nathaniel describes here: (1) Instagram.

It is the sum of Israeli actions to kill, displace, or expel Palestinians that the boycott proposal properly responds to. But I believe we cannot ignore the wider context of Israel's aggression and lawlessness in the region. In 2025 alone, Israel bombed six neighboring countries. It routinely bombs and invades Syria and Lebanon; the Israeli Defense Minister recently announced plans to occupy southern Lebanon indefinitely. In September 2025 Israel mounted an attack in Doha, the capital of Qatar, flagrantly violating Qatari sovereignty and sending shock waves throughout the Gulf Cooperation Council. Now, Israel and the U.S. in tandem have unleashed an unprovoked, incredibly dangerous war against Iran. This is already starting to have frightening effects on the global economy and the international system, with more mayhem to follow.

Israel's expansionist ambitions in combination with Donald Trump's imperial delusions make for a toxic brew. We must join the worldwide movement to boycott Israeli goods, thereby rejecting cruel and criminal actions with respect to Palestinians. In so doing, we can also signal our abhorrence of Israel's aggressive posture toward its neighbors and the global threat presented by the fusion of U.S. neocon policies with

the Greater Israel project, an initiative favored by the current Israeli prime minister.

In cooperation,

Winston McIntosh

BDS CAMPAIGN

Dear community,

In late February, news outlets reported that Israel has begun employing U.S.-made weapons that vaporize bodies, leaving only tissue and spattered blood behind. As reported by Aljazeera, they release a gas, designed to maintain 3,500 degrees, by adding aluminum, magnesium and titanium to prolong the burn time.

Racist violence by settlers continues in the West Bank, with the aim of replacing Palestinians in their homes. The pattern became so pronounced this year that even the *New York Times* refers to it as a “land grab.”

The Coop should come into line with other Coops and communities of conscience around the U.S. and adopt the non-violent BDS campaign because it is our tax dollars that fuels this.

Sincerely,

Ann Schneider

REGARDING CARRYING PRODUCTS FROM ISRAEL

Dear Coop,

I have been a member of the coop since 2017 and I feel like it is a safe haven in a city of chaos and vitriol. Even when there have been unsettling interactions with members, what keeps me feeling safe is knowing that there is a strong moral compass within the structure of the Coop itself.

We can all agree to disagree about what is happening in Gaza, but I believe there is an active genocide occurring and the Palestinian people have been oppressed by the West since 1948. Even by the recent admission of Israel, thousands upon thousands of Palestinians have been martyred by the IOF since 10/2023. I am baffled why owning these confirmed facts is feared when we can also say this about the U.S. and its commitment to violence around the world. This is just what it is.

I am aghast that my taxes go to funding the horror in Palestine and I would feel the same way if this was 1939 and my taxes supported Germany. I would also boycott all German products. It would matter little to me about what that meant to the “good people” of Germany and I feel the same way about Israel right now.

If the Coop is not willing to boycott products from Israel, then it should at least make the origins of these products obvious to all. That you need a magnifying glass to see our bell peppers are from Israel feels corrupt and deceptive. Please don't trick us into buying something we could do without.

Since realizing an open boycott of Israeli products is likely not going to happen, I request a concession of being clear about where items are from should be a priority. It feels like a bare minimum at this point.

Thank you.

STAY IN THE LOOP WITH THE PARK SLOPE FOOD COOP

Fellow Coop members,

How does one keep track of all the happenings at the Coop? There are so many different news sources to track! Here are a few to list off: the Coop announcements page; the Coop social media on Instagram and Bluesky; the Coop daily produce page; the Coop shift calendar; the different Coop initiatives like the concert series, the fun committee, or the cooking classes; the *Linewaiters' Gazette*; the General Meetings.

What new produce should I be on the lookout for today? What Coop events are upcoming? What's the latest news across all of the Coop?

Well, I am back with another project as an answer for these problems. I created food-coop.news, a place to help members stay in the loop with the Coop.

Here are the main features:

1. Browse a single feed to track latest news and upcoming events at the Coop.
2. Search the Coop's produce selection alongside historical pricing information.
3. Filter the Coop's produce selection for price drops, price increases, new arrivals, recently out of stock items and even selected favorites.
4. Read what's up for discussion at the next General Meeting, as well as see past agenda items and summaries of previous meetings.
5. Sync your favorite upcoming shifts (e.g. Bread Stocking, Cart Return) to your Google, Outlook or Apple Calendar.
6. Add your member card to your Apple or Google Wallet.

Hope these digital conveniences help members discover something new at the Coop! You can check it out at foodcoop.news. If you have any feedback, please reach out at rex.r.ledesma@gmail.com.

In cooperation,

Rex Ledesma

THE TROUBLE WITH TOURLAMI

Dear Coop members,

I am a passionate vegan baker. The other day at the Food Coop, none of my favorite vegan butters were there. So I bought Tournalami Premium.

I want all of my coop friends to know that it did NOT perform well at all in my beloved vegan chocolate cake recipe, as Miyoko's and Violife have in the past. I'm not a newbie, so I hope you'll appreciate what I have to say here: In the buttercream frosting, the Tournalami butter separated badly. It ran like a coward. Please do not buy this "butter."

Sincerely,

Gersh Kuntzman

A DISTURBING INTERACTION AT THE PSFC

To the Editor,

I have been a PSFC member since 1973. I generally use my car when shopping, and after shopping I wait for a walker to walk with me to my car. Until recently, I have always had very positive experiences with Coop walkers. I push my own cart and know that that is not the walker's responsibility. Once we get to my car, whoever is walking me almost automatically holds the cart while I unload groceries into my car. This assures that the cart doesn't roll into the street.

On January 21, after shopping I greeted a walker outside the Coop and they walked me to my car. Once we arrived, the walker began looking at their phone. I asked if they could hold my cart while I unloaded and they replied "we're not supposed to help". I was taken aback. I responded that walkers always hold my cart and asked why they wouldn't do the same. They replied that it was political. Confused, I asked them why it was political, to which they replied, "Well, you're wearing watermelon earrings and that button" (referring to my button which says GAZA). I asked what that had to do with holding my cart, and they replied that everything has gotten political. They begrudgingly held onto my cart. Needless to say, I was left feeling quite upset.

Given the current climate we are all living in, where people are being harassed, arrested and even killed for their viewpoints and non-violent actions, experiencing this hostility from a Coop member was an unsettling experience. This is a time to show each other basic humanity, regardless of our political views. Thankfully, this was an aberration from my usual Coop shop, where I experience kindness, helpfulness and community.

Sincerely,

Deborah Kaplan

BDS OPPOSITION

Dear Coop members:

I've been a Coop member since 2007; I joined for the high quality/lower cost of products AND for the vibrant grassroots community the Coop has engendered. Indeed, I used to love shopping and working my early morning produce shifts. (Given my longevity, I was able to retire during the pandemic.)

Cut to the chase. I am adamantly opposed to the BDS movement. In short, my opposition to BDS is driven mostly because of its leadership, mainly their National Committee, which includes several groups designated by much of the world as terrorist organizations, such as the (1) Council of National and Islamic Forces in Palestine (CNIP) and (2) Palestine National and Islamic Forces (PNIF); both groups have ties to several terrorist organizations (including the infamous Hamas military organization).

Indeed, the omnipresence of BDS folks at the Coop—it's difficult to ignore them because they often stand in front of the Coop spouting their misinformation—has made my shopping experiences rather unpleasant. I'm often uncomfortable when I shop at the Coop, wondering: Is the person standing next to me a BDS supporter?

Certainly, what Israel is doing now (and in the past) in Gaza alone has been reprehensible, however, the decision to boycott the country can only promote more anger, hatred and extreme prejudice in our already divisive world. The question becomes: What other countries should we decide to boycott because of violations of peoples' fundamental rights and freedoms?

Please, I implore you: do not allow the large majority of BDS supporters at the Coop to spread such hatred and mandate the operations of our Coop community.

In Solidarity,

Anita Aboulafia

IN RESPONSE TO VIVEK BHAGWA'S LETTER IN THE 2/10 ISSUE OF THE *GAZETTE*

To Vivek,

Thank you for raising these questions and we welcome the opportunity to clarify.

Will there be additional sessions, and will members who weren't selected this time get priority or another clear path to participate?

Yes. The next facilitated session is scheduled for Tuesday, May 19, 6 pm-8 pm. We anticipate offering additional sessions if there is continued interest and capacity. Members who expressed interest but were not selected for the initial session will be notified and given an opportunity to participate before opening additional spaces more broadly. The intent is to create ongoing opportunities while keeping group size small enough to support meaningful dialogue.

What were the selection criteria? Was it first-come/first-served, a lottery or based on other considerations? Was race, ethnicity, religion or identity considered?

Because space was limited to 12 participants, selection was not strictly first-come/first-served. The facilitators aimed to assemble a group that reflected a range of perspectives and experiences within the Coop community while maintaining confidentiality and psychological safety. Race, ethnicity, religion or identity were not used as determining criteria. The primary consideration was creating a balanced group conducive to constructive conversation.

Who approved this as eligible for shift credit, and under what policy or category? What safeguards ensured it was administered fairly and consistently?

The GCs approved shift credit for participation, consistent with prior decisions to grant credit to squad leaders attending workshops led by the Equity, Alliance, and Community Committee. There is no specific written policy governing this category of shift credit; however, the Coop believes it is important to support opportunities that build community and foster better understanding among members, particularly around sensitive topics.

Where was this discussed publicly within Coop governance?

The Dispute Resolution Committee suggested offering facilitated conversations to the GCs as a way of addressing ongoing tensions within the Coop community around topics related to Israel, Palestine, and boycotts. The GCs reviewed and approved moving forward with the sessions. While the initiative was discussed within governance channels, it was not voted on at the General Meeting.

In Cooperation,

The General Coordinators

IN RESPONSE TO KRISTEN MASHIKIAN'S LETTER IN THE 2/10 ISSUE OF THE GAZETTE

Dear Kristen,

Thank you for your thoughtful letter and commitment to sustainability at the Coop.

We want to let you know that the Coop staff has been actively exploring alternatives to the plastic bags used for pre-packaged bulk items for some time.

So far, we have not found a suitable substitute that meets all our needs. Some compostable or non-plastic bags we've evaluated are not sturdy enough for heavier bulk items or bread, while others are prohibitively expensive for regular use. We've also encountered issues with opaque bags, which make it more difficult for both shoppers and checkout workers to identify products quickly and accurately. In addition, certain alternatives don't hold up well and can compromise the quality or freshness of the products they contain.

Despite these challenges, we remain committed to finding better solutions. The member-led Plastics Reduction Committee was formed in 2025 and welcomes input and new ideas. If you have any suggestions or would like to get involved, please consider reaching out to them at ReducePlasticPSFC@gmail.com.

Thank you again for your engagement and for helping to keep sustainability at the heart of our mission.

In cooperation,

The General Coordinators

TWO LETTERS MISSING IN ACTION

Fellow Members,

I read the February 10, 2026 *Gazette* on the day it was emailed to members. Now, three days later, it is missing two letters: no explanation, no revision, just gone.

Did anyone ask the authors of these letters to make minor changes, before the decision to simply remove them? (Authors are not named here, out of concern that my letter would also be censored.) What was so scandalous about these letters?

This post-publication editing of the *Gazette* makes me realize several things:

- Submission guidelines are at best ephemeral, and those empowered to apply them do so capriciously.
- Upper management (the GCs) are intervening directly to censor the *Gazette*. I know this because I have seen a copy of the General Manager's letter sent to one of the censored writers informing her that her letter would be removed because "we" are reviewing editorial policies.
- Mentioning the author of a prior letter is not slander.
- Referencing authors/submitters of proposals is part of the Coop's factual record.
- When I wrote an article that a General Coordinator disagreed with, that person had the privilege of seeing it in advance and replying to it in the same issue, yet other members don't have this option.
- The Coordinators' Corner has served as a one-sided bullhorn, with members being forced to wait 3 weeks to see their responses published, while their writing is often subjected to draconian nitpicking.

It is past time for members to see, review and vote on the full editorial guidelines of the *Linewaiters' Gazette* and to take a hard look at all communication policies.

The letters that were stricken from the *Gazette* two days after publication of the most recent issue must be restored to the website immediately, with an explanation and apology for their removal.

Working openly and cooperatively makes the Coop stronger.

Sincerely,

Alyce Barr

Editor's Note:

On February 14 two letters were removed from the February 10 issue of the *Gazette* because of inconsistencies surrounding our submissions policy. Since that time the policy has been reviewed and updated and the two letters have been reinstated below.

TEAR DOWN THIS WALL!

Dear Coop,

Later this year, the GM will likely consider whether to repeal the undemocratic supermajority requirement for boycotts. This rule, devised by those seeking to prevent the PSFC from joining the BDS movement, mandates a 75% “yes” vote to approve any boycott. Adopted in 2016, it supersedes the practice that governed our decisions on at least nine boycotts we’d observed since our founding in 1973: approval by simple majority vote. That’s the same way we make all other membership decisions except for changes to our bylaws (which require a two-thirds majority in favor). Members considering repeal deserve to know the history behind this departure from longstanding Coop precedent.

Advocacy for a BDS boycott at the Coop began in 2009, during an especially virulent Israeli campaign targeting Gaza. Longtime General Manager Joe Holtz voiced his strong opposition. In 2010, he wrote a *Gazette* column recommending that “all boycotts be passed by a two-thirds majority from now on.” The suggestion gained traction a few years later, following the defeat of a proposal to hold a referendum (Coop-wide vote) on BDS and the introduction of a measure to boycott SodaStream. In 2013, Jesse Rosenfeld proposed requiring an 80% supermajority for boycotts. At the January

2016 GM, an updated version setting the formula at 75% was approved. According to the Gazette's GM coverage, the meeting featured confused instructions from the Chair Committee and expressions of bewilderment from members, such that the result "did not have a feeling of finality."

In 2017, a GM voted on whether to join a boycott of Tom Cat Bakery, whose management had fired 21 workers in cooperation with ICE. The measure fell victim to the supermajority rule, failing despite solid support (a 59% "yes" vote). The supermajority rule is a wall to keep out justice. High time to dismantle it.

Sincerely,

Jan Clausen

ANTISEMITISM IS REAL, SO IS STATE-SPONSORED VIOLENCE

Dear Coop members:

In the two most recent issues of the *Linewaiters' Gazette*, members continued to conflate criticism of Israel with antisemitism. Zack Zaban's letter of January 20 quotes the Mayor's Office to Combat Antisemitism Report which states "that "anti-Israel rhetoric, however well-intentioned, demonstrably contributes to violence against Jews." This suggests to me that we should not even speak out against injustice if it is committed by Israel. But the Torah demands that "we not stand by the blood of our neighbor," (Leviticus 19:16)

As of late January, the "blood of our neighbor" continues to flow.

On Tuesday, January 20, *The Guardian* reported that "Israeli crews started bulldozing the headquarters of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees in occupied East

Jerusalem and fired teargas at a UN vocational school in Qalandia, in the West Bank.”

On Wednesday, January 21, an Israeli airstrike killed three journalists, according to the New York Post. Eight other people, including two 13-year old boys, were also killed by Israeli forces, per the BBC.

More than 470 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire since the “ceasefire” took effect on October 10, 2025.

Answering the call to boycott Israeli products is a non-violent means of pressuring the State of Israel to end the systematic oppression of Palestinians. Coop members are free to disagree about what terms to use in characterizing Israel’s actions, as well as how or whether we as a Coop ought to respond.

But as members of the Coop, we believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Antisemitism is a real problem and these are dangerous times. We need real solutions, not self-serving arguments. Political differences within the Coop are not a threat to our safety. We must resolve questions of Coop policy through democratic processes, not suppression. I look forward to the vote on a boycott of Israeli products at a future GM.

In cooperation,

Rebecca Schoenberg-Jones

RESPONSE TO JAN CLAUSEN’S LETTER IN THE 02/10/26 ISSUE

Dear Coop members:

I attended the meeting to raise the percentage of votes needed to institute a boycott and it was very clear that we were voting to increase the percentage to approve any boycott from 51% to 75-80%. The case was made that all previous boycotts passed with near unanimity and if we were to disrupt the lives of the people involved in the production/distribution of a target product(s) a simple majority isn't enough to warrant that action.

Tom Cat Bakery is a case in point. I talked to the union, which I noted at the GM. The union didn't support a boycott. That would hurt the production and distribution workers. The union did not agree that the company did anything wrong. The Coop should not take sides in a dispute within a union and certain of its members.

Management didn't cooperate with ICE, there wasn't any raid. The government flagged the documentation of certain workers during an audit. The company continued to pay them and provide benefits for, I believe, a month perhaps longer. If the workers could provide documentation that they were eligible to work in the U.S. their jobs were secure. Some were able to provide documents, the ones who couldn't were let go. People lost jobs but weren't deported.

Tom Cat would be fined and penalized if they continued to work. Those were Federal rules not Tom Cat rules. The proposal's target should have been the Federal government not Tom Cat. If a similar audit arrived at the Coop we could do no different given the same circumstances.

Boycotts have effects on many people's livelihoods and therefore merit a greater agreement to institute one. The current voting percentages correctly reflect the weight of this decision.

In Cooperation,

Stewart Pravda

MEMBER-SUBMITTED ARTICLE: ANALYSIS OF RISKS FOR YOUR COOP—THE ISRAEL BOYCOTT

April 14, 2026



April 14, 2026

By Joe Holtz

The boycott vote could happen shortly. Please sign-up to attend the GM online.

International Cooperative Principle #1:

“Voluntary and Open Membership: Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.”

Analysis: Our Coop was able to hold together during boycotts of South Africa, Chile etc. because all had about 100% support. But the boycott of Israel has thousands of members/owners on each side. The middle ground is: each member/owner makes their own shopping decisions. Banning Israeli products will be perceived as discrimination per International Coop Principle #1. Many members will give up their Coop membership because a policy for the entire organization that they object to will speak for them if they remain member/owners. Many future would-be members will never join. Many members enjoy our Coop's diversity—interacting with members from a wide variety of races, ethnicities, religions and sexual orientations. Political tolerance and diversity is difficult. Embracing all types of diversity is what coops worldwide have found to be what is needed for Cooperative success. Our Coop is an amazing place but we shouldn't be overconfident about our ability to maintain the number of members we need to stay financially viable.

Excerpt from our Mission Statement:

"We are committed to diversity and equality. 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."

Analysis: This excerpt from our Mission Statement is our Coop's version of International Principle #1.

Respecting the wisdom of the International Principles of Cooperation and our Mission Statement will hopefully give members pause, regardless of their views on Israel/-Palestine, before supporting a Coop boycott that is sure to divide us. If you must vote for a boycott, please respect the super-majority and vote to keep that. It is the Cooperative thing to do. The 75% supermajority aligns more with our historical support for boycotts.

The damage that will come our way from outside if we boycott Israel is significant. The Heritage Foundation's "Project Esther" is a roadmap for the Trump administra-

tion's plan to attack groups/organizations that are anti-Israel and/or pro-Palestine. (follow this link then click on "Read Full Report"). We will be perceived as a group that should be attacked. The Project Esther report call-to-action includes attacking groups via "Critical vulnerabilities exploited".

Analysis: We're in the world's media capital. The administration in Washington has great attention to retribution (Columbia, Harvard etc.) and follows the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025 in many instances. We should expect to be attacked by the administration's bureaucracy if we boycott Israel. Our Coop isn't just regulated by NY State or NYC. National agencies regulate us. We should be terrified of possible consequences and worried about our ability to exist. We should not take our little Coop's existence for granted. We will be a target.

Joe Holtz is the former General Manager, and Co-founder, of the Park Slope Food Coop.

IN MEMORY: TIM THOMAS

April 14, 2026



PHOTO COURTESY OF PARKER LUTZ

April 14, 2026

By Thomas Rayfiel

Tim Thomas, musician, former Development Director for Bang on a Can, devoted husband and father and longtime Coop member, died unexpectedly on January 24. He was 59 years old. Tim joined the Coop in 2004. For many years, he was co-Squad Leader on Wednesday mornings along with Grace Freedman, who recalls:

“Tim was the kind of guy where multiple people during the shift would yell out, ‘Tim!’ and get a bear hug or an enthusiastic high-five as a greeting. When it was slow, they would gather around the front desk to hear Tim’s funny stories about music, family, the neighborhood or NYC in the ’90s. Of course, he always had ‘aux’ and we would all enjoy the greatest tunes during the shift, wide-ranging fare from ska to jazz to old-time country. I miss him and remember and appreciate all the positive energy he brought to the Coop and to the world.”

Music was Tim’s life. He was a member of many musical groups, as well as a mainstay at Bang on a Can, which promotes innovative concerts, commissions original compositions and sponsors an annual summer festival. After 18 years as Development Director at Bang on a Can, for the past three years Tim served as the Executive Director of So Percussion, a leading percussion quartet and non profit music organization. With Tim, music was never an ivory-tower pursuit. Eddie Gormley, one of his bandmates, emphasizes:

“Tim was always interested in community involvement...primarily leading to some music project. The longest collaboration he had was with Rose Thomson, which evolved into Babe the Blue Ox, that included Hanna Fox, and then me. But Tim had so much musical energy that he created many other projects along the way involving his many other musical friends. He often created the events to showcase them, including the local Greenwood Baptist Church Soul Patrol, which performed at services. That community involvement energy extended to his blog ‘the Q at Parkside,’ participating with lo-

cal community boards, marching in art parades, participating in protest marches and being there for a lot of people who needed him.”

Mark Stewart, another frequent collaborator, says of Tim:

“He made every room warmer. He was masterful in the most generous way imaginable. You knew that you would accomplish whatever the challenge was, such was his smiling, confident creative leadership. Mirth was his constant companion and he shared it freely. Big, strong, gentle and a fantastic musician to boot.”

Tim is survived by his wife, Parker Lutz; his daughters, Wrenn and Poppy; his mother, Jean; his sister, Sarah; his bandmates, Hanna Fox, Eddie Gormley, and Rose Thomson; and, as his wife puts it, “the countless dear friends who kept him going all these years.” She continues, “He adored his daughters more than anything and he never once said no to his adoring wife when asked to stop by the Coop on the way home to pick up a few things.”

Thomas Rayfiel is the author of eight novels. He has also written “living obituaries” for VICE TV.