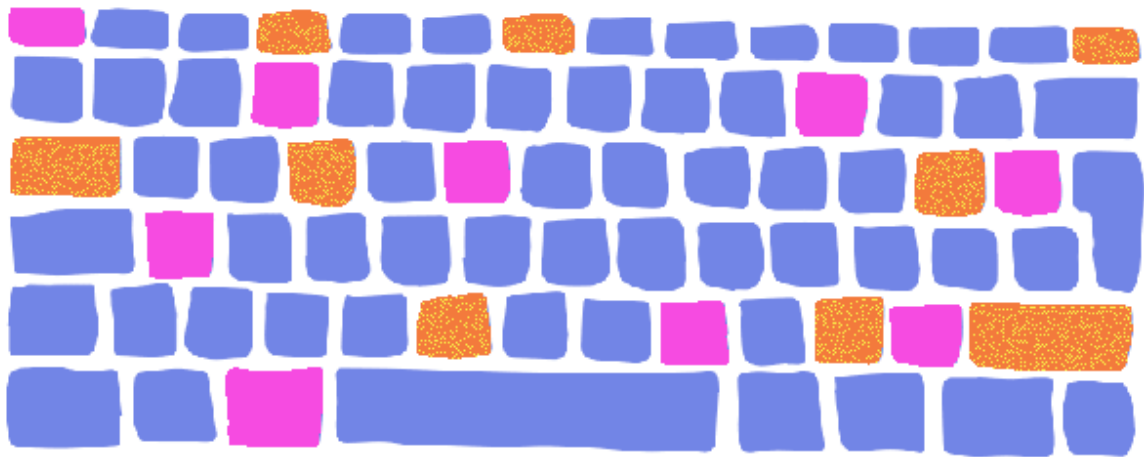


LETTERS 1/17/2023

January 17, 2023

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



GRATEFUL FOR MASKING POLICY

To the Editor:

I joined the Coop in 2017 in my 70's, and thus am an older working member. I am writing to express my gratitude and support for the general coordinators' decision to continue the mask requirement for all shoppers and workers. As the risk of serious Covid infections and death has waned for younger members, it seems that some have forgotten that those of us who live with a continued heightened risk (whether due to age, illness or a combination of factors) need to continue to protect ourselves. As the Coop has gotten busier, it has become increasingly difficult to maintain a comfortable distance from others; it seems to me that many members are not even making a modest effort to avoid close contact. I have limited myself to working 6 a.m. stocking shifts (no customers in the store for most of the shift!) and the occasional "walker" slot when one turns up, and have tried to confine my shopping to times when the store is not too busy, but I am concerned that without a mandatory masking policy even these practices will feel inadequate. With deaths at well over 300 a day nationally, mostly among older people, those of us at a heightened risk appreciate having places where we can participate in daily life without undue worry and risk.

Thank you for the current policy and I sincerely hope it continues.

Ellen Winner

HEARTFELT THANKS TO PSFC STAFF

To the Editor:

I want to thank all of the PSFC staff for their exceptionally hard work since the pandemic began. My background is in Operations + Dispute Resolution and, while I've always been in awe of how the Coop functions under its unique business model, I am deeply grateful for everyone who kept it together through Covid so that members could continue to have such a special shopping experience. I particularly want to thank everyone involved in purchasing for toughing-out what I can only imagine to

have been a supply nightmare for nearly the last three years. I've recently noticed that some of my missing staples have returned to the shelves, so I'm particularly appreciative of their efforts.

The pandemic brought on chaos for everyone, and while I've read and heard about a lot of negative issues at the Coop, I want to make sure the gratitude held for staff cuts through that noise so they know they are immensely appreciated. Thank you all!

Katheryn Keller

ARE VACCINES SAFE AND EFFECTIVE?

To the editor,

The Coop had really no choice but to institute a vaccine mandate for workers, as demanded by the city, which is unfortunate because we lost people who had no intention of submitting to them. But we're now seeing information coming out about these particular vaccines that are highly disturbing, including the unprecedented plethora of deaths and disabilities that have been appearing in the CDC's Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (known as VAERS) temporally associated with the vaccines, plus the realization that they don't prevent infection or transmission but are only claimed to reduce hospitalization and death from Covid-19. In light of this growing realization, people should think twice about the steady stream of boosters coming out. The "safe and effective" talking points and the rock-solid belief in "the science" and in modern medicine, are looking more and more like little more than propaganda. What people actually believe in is what they are told "the science" is.

In fact, the longstanding belief in the practice of vaccination itself as the agent that wiped out the terrible infectious diseases of the past is simply *not the case*. Rather, what brought about the diminution of these diseases was the common public-health

measures that most of us take for granted, and which were extended to most citizens over the course of the first half of the 20th century: specifically, indoor hot and cold water, treated water, indoor flush toilets, refrigeration, steam heating, garbage collection, and others. Some of these were luxuries not even available to the kings of old. Think of the possibility for infectious diseases without these measures, whether with vaccinations available or not. And alternatively, how would people have fared without vaccines available, but *with* these public health measures? And, in fact, more and more people are shunning vaccines.

David Barouh

LEAVE THE HEADPHONES AT HOME

To the Editor,

I was just starting a stocking shift recently, and I found myself holding a box of farm-raised organic pork tenderloin, priced and ready to sell—quite appealing—but with no space on the refrigerated shelf for display. Being a new member and somewhat cautious by nature, I decided to ask the member next to me, who was also dutifully stocking, if he had any advice on how to proceed. “Hey, do you know where this tenderloin is supposed to go?” A little louder: “Excuse me, sorry. A question? Regarding this pork tenderloin?” Nothing! Finally, he turned around, looked at me with some skepticism, took out his earbuds and said, “What?”

What followed “what” was a fairly straightforward conversation about stocking pork tenderloin that I won’t share here, but when our problem had been resolved my fellow Coop member returned his earbuds to his ears and didn’t speak again. Now, in addition to being cautious I am also prone to shyness, especially in new situations, and yet despite myself I do think there is value in being, at minimum, open to the possibility of conversation. Headphones declare: “Do not speak to me.” Which is totally fine in

any number of situations one encounters living in the most populous city in the United States, but is a shift at the Coop one of those times? Discussing pork tenderloin or produce or U-boat technique can lead to conversations about work, hobbies, family—anything. Or not. But whether you'd rather talk or listen, isn't it a good thing to get to know your fellow members a little bit more? Sharing our time and our labor, together in this place, is what makes it more than just a grocery store. Right?

Clark Mizono