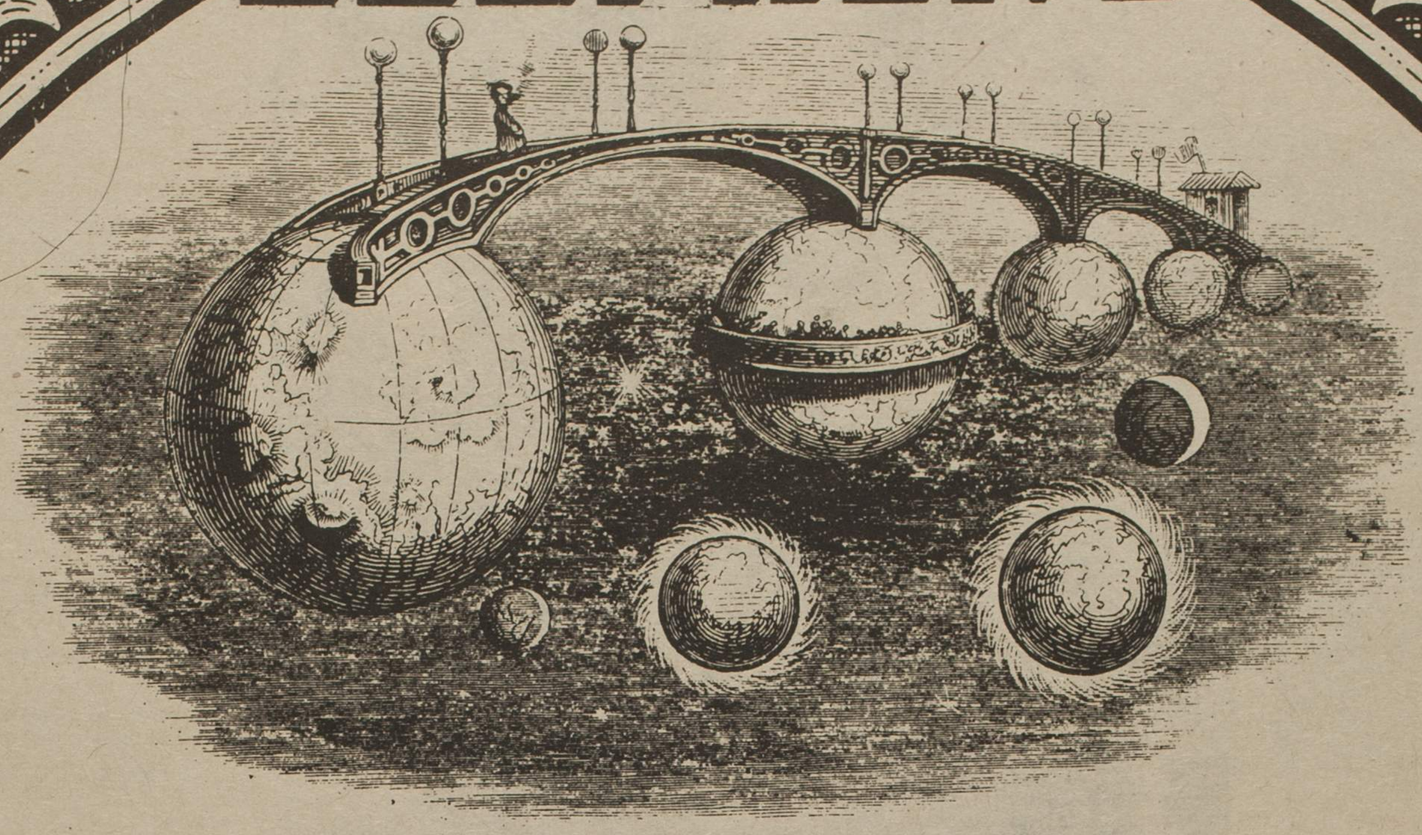
COOPNEWS



OVERHAUL OR OFF-THE-WALL?

Many important Co-op meetings have been taking place in recent months. Decisions have been and are being made that will determine the direction of the Co-op for years to come. Efforts were made to contact all Co-op members prior to most of these meetings. But if you were missed or were unable to attend, you may be interested in a brief review. For another slant (I can't claim to be objective) or more details, talk to other Co-op members who have participated. "The times, they are a-changing..."

March 11 - This general membership meeting was preceded by a mouth-watering potluck and an entertaining, education film entitled "In Search of An Organic America." Bob Grubbs, a member of the newly "re-formed" Steering Committee, chaired the meeting and introduced the other nine Committee members. Chuck Magerl distributed and explained the financial statements for the year 1976. Sales were over $200,000. The profits resulting from this growth were plowed back into inventory expanding the amount as well as the variety of our stock. The first tentative plans for summerization of our present location were discussed. Lack of cool and cold storage space was of primary concern. Coupled with the uncertainty of the future of the 600 block of Massachusetts, these problems led to a discussion of of buying a building and moving. Locations available were discussed. It was decided that an open house should be organized so that all Co-op members could see the alternatives for themselves.

photo paul johnson

March 20 - Using a telephone campaign, all members of the Co-op were encouraged to visit 1) Turner's Grocery at 7th and Maine, 2) Someplace Else - an ex-bar in North Lawrence, 3) Off-the-Wall Hall at 737 New Hampshire, and 4) our present location in order to discuss and decide the future location of the Co-op. After the "Open House," members met in the dance studio above the Co-op and, after some initial discussion, broke into small groups to encourage greater participation by all present. When the small groups reassembled, two had decided the Co-op should purchase and move to Off-the-Wall Hall. One group favored staying to give the Co-op more time to find a more suitable location and to consider other alternatives (closing membership, splitting into two co-ops, etc.). One group was split between moving to Off-the-Wall Hall and staying. A committee was formed to study financial and other aspects of these two alternatives. This committee was to present its findings at a general membership meeting the following Sunday at which the final decision would be made.

March 25 - This "official" quarterly general membership meeting had been planned by the Steering Committee far in advance of the moving/staying issue. A brief discussion of the topic during the business part of the meeting began to illumine the short-

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WILD EDIBLES by Uncle Dan'l

It's that time of year to start goin' out lookin' for wild edibles, folks! If you don't know much or anything about wild foods, it's best to learn to identify plants directly from someone who knows how. Country people who "lived through" the depression are good teachers. It seems that these delicious plants are even more highly regarded when that's all you got to eat. It's good to know wild edibles and medicines for emergency and survival situations but let's not forget a lot of the wild stuff is very tasty!! Taste is the real reason it's good to know what to eat when you're in the wilderness or in the country. With the way modern times are going you might need to know some survival stuff sooner than you think. If you can't find a teacher, here are a few good books on the subject.

THE WILD FOOD TRAILGUIDE by Alan Hall - Holt, Rinehart, and Winston (1973) - $3.45
This paperback is concise and a good size to take with. It has fairly good drawings and descriptions of the plants, lots of which can be found in this area.

FIELD GUIDE TO EDIBLE WILD PLANTS by Bradford Angier - Stackpole Books (1974) - $4.95
The major attraction of this book is its great color illustrations of edibles. In book tutors, good pictures are one of the main things to look for. A number of books display this as their weakness. However, the main weakness of this book is the scanty mention of ways to prepare the plants.

EARTH MEDICINE EARTH FOODS by Michael A. Weiner - Collier Books N.Y. (1972) - $3.95
This is a very useful book with good illustrations. The information in it was accumulated from various Native American Tribes. It would be simplistic but true to say they didn't need any supermarkets, drugstores, or discos. The earth was all they needed.

STALKING THE WILD ASPARAGUS and STALKING THE HEALTHFUL HERBS by Euell Gibbons - David McKay Co. Inc. N.Y. (1962) - $3.95
These are great books written in Gibbons' rambling, conversational style. They contain loads of good information gleaned from years of research into Native American's early use of plants and much personal use of the things he's talking about. That's a drawback with other authors. They're merely reporting second-hand information. Gibbons was all for wild food. Can I help it if he also liked Grape Nuts cereal? Did you know that eventually those ads were banned by a bunch of people who complained to the FCC. They thought that because he said such things as "you can eat a pine tree" their kids were going to start eating poison plants or some such nonsense. Any parent who lets his kid watch T.V. at all places him or her in a more imminent peril. Violence? Mom and Dad, let them eat violets! Gibbons was a pacifist as well as a P.R. man for nature in all its glory. He emphasized the mutualism and cooperation of nature and downplayed the survival of the fittest idea of the Darwinists. Not too long ago he went back to the earth. So long, Euell.

That's about it for now. The fact remains that there is no definitive book on wild edibles in this area. You'll have to gather that information over a period of time and quite a bit of reading. Just look for the book or teacher that suits you best. Happy Foraging!!!