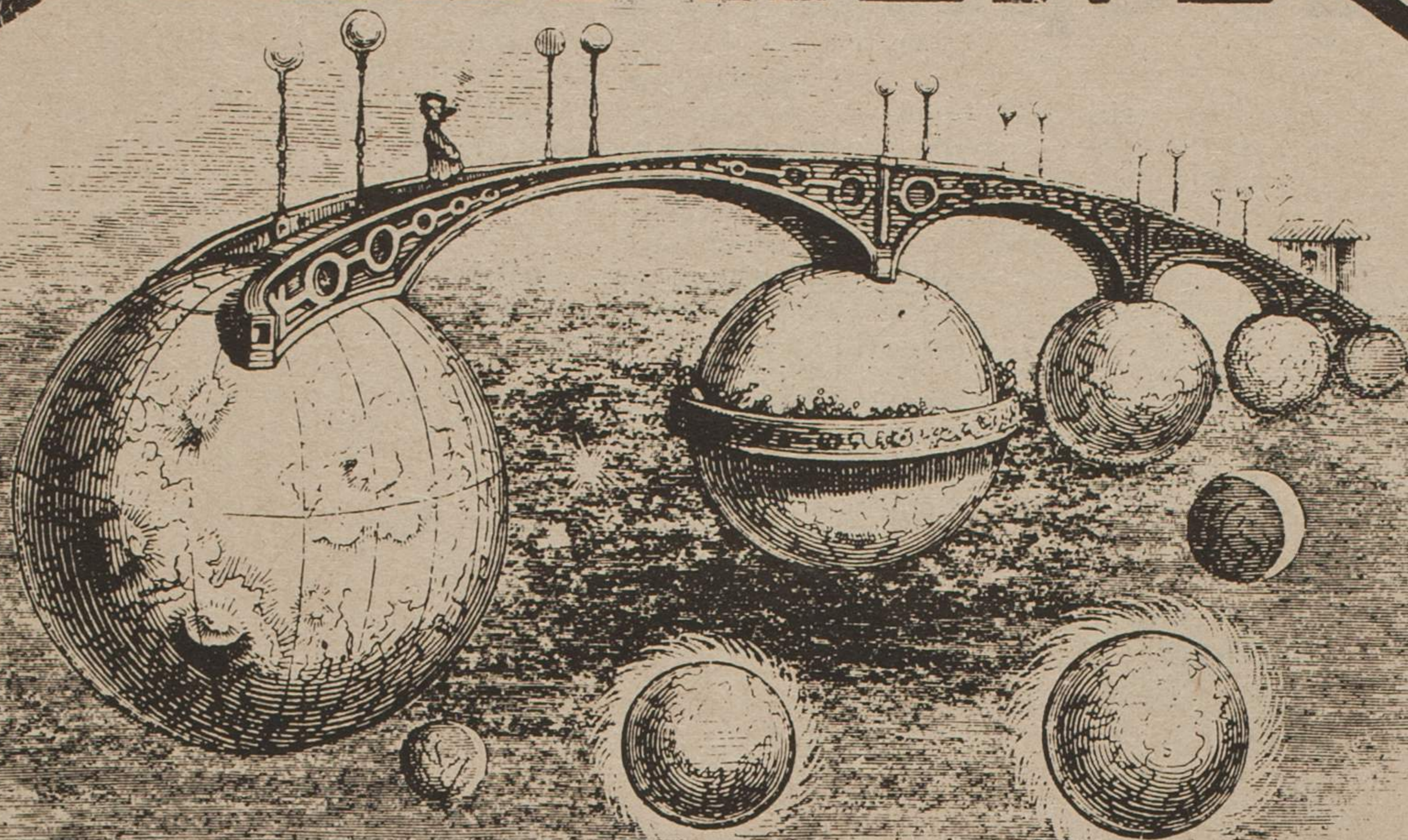


COOP NEWS



From Turners To Co-op

Calling on the image of a comfortable neighborhood grocery, the Community Mercantile Co-op has opened a new location at 7th and Maine. Co-op members pooled their money and labor to purchase and renovate the former Turner's grocery store in August. The move culminates an eight month study of the options facing the co-op, a period marked by dissension and concerned emotion. But the challenge of a new phase of co-op activity was met with a show of devoted work that opened the bright, new store on August 29th.

The co-op assumed the site of Lawrence's last neighborhood grocery, Turner's. It was the sole survivor of the supermarket siege of the 50's and 60's that destroyed the appeal of the corner store in favor of the glamour of bright, sterile linoleum floors and cool fluorescent lights. Turner's has weathered changes in grocery trends and now, in its 44th year, scrubbed, painted, and cleaned out, is the co-op grocery in Lawrence.

The ground work for the move included analysis of financial

position, detailing the design of the retail space, co-ordinating work crews for the restoration, and satisfying money lenders and building inspectors.

With the boost of a \$10 per member surcharge, and some consultations with supportive credit union workers, the money to secure the move was guaranteed. On August 16th, co-op members gathered at Turner's and began 13 days of virtually non-stop trash-hauling, rebuilding, scrapping, painting, moving shelves, and muscling coolers.

The result of the co-operative work is a clean, friendly, and easy-shopping store. "A 500% improvement!" as one shopper remarked on first impressions.

But the work continues with efforts focusing on fine-tuning refrigeration equipment, building the adjoining bakery, and developing the parking lot area.

All the activity indicates a wholesome, new life for the longest-lasting grocery in Lawrence.

R-E-O-R-I-E-N-T-A-T-I-O-N

By Joyce Steiner

The coop is currently undergoing alot of changes. Besides the physical move to a new building, there are also a number of policy changes. So that everyone can get acquainted with the new building and policies, there are going to be Reorientation Sessions that must be attended by at least one member of each household. However, we strongly urge each member to

attend. There will be a number of changes for each of us to learn and understand.

Reorientation meetings will begin October 1st and run the full month. To insure meeting times to match everyone's schedule, sessions will be held every week-night (Mon.-Fri.) and every Sunday afternoon. The agendas have

been shaped at weekly gatherings of a members' committee and will serve to guide the meetings in a discussion/evaluation of our co-op.

The layout and the function of store services will be discussed, as will ideas for new items. And the new work/decision structure of work teams, adopted at

summer meetings will be introduced

There will also be discussion of the philosophy of the Coop. If there are any questions or suggestions, the reorientation meetings will be a good place to talk about them.

Cafe sails with new style

Lawrence's Sister Kettle Cafe celebrated its first anniversary recently. The occasion was greeted with heavy sighs of relief and congratulations for a round of hard work. The workers' efforts had pulled the cafe from the brink of collapse in late July and initiated a new style of operation.

Boosting itself as a vegetarian, collective cafe, the Kettle opened last September with scores of volunteers eager to take part. But as the shine began to wear and the wages proved unsatisfactory, workers began to leave. At

one point over fifty part-time workers were trying to operate the cafe, and the mass confusion resulted in poor service and a slow slide of the business.

By July the situation was bleak. Workers were vacationing with no concern for replacements. Others were quitting by the handful. And the remaining workers were reacting with bitter anger.

With loan payments overdue and wages hitting rock-bottom, the Kettle underwent a major shake-down. The staff collective was cut to thirteen people, hours were re-negotiated, and the menu

simplified. The thirteen workers, all veterans of the cafe's struggles, re-examined their specific duties and instituted a program of equalizing the "office-work" load.

The result of the changes are obvious this fall with a consistent crew of workers. They are much more in-tune with the operation of the business, and present a feeling of confident, reliable service.

Sister Kettle has always served the highest-quality food in Lawrence. Now they're striving for service to match.

Ozark co-op hits skids

Misery and confusion has paralyzed the oldest co-op grocery in the mid-west. The Fayetteville, Arkansas Ozark Food Co-op is described by co-op warehouse workers as "one or two steps from bankruptcy."

After seven years of serving the Fayetteville area and numerous Ozark "hill folks", the store sits quiet, shelves nearly empty, abandoned by the staff, and thousands of dollars of debts discouraging those members interested

in salvaging the store.

For the past year and a half the co-op has been torn by internal strife, facing charges of sexism and classism. The battles among the staff left little time or concern for secure management and threatened the co-op's future. Antagonism within the co-op grew and the ideals of unity were lost in the battles.

In August, many Ozark members advocated a boycott of the store to protest the staff's "extremist" policies and practices and alleged

mismanagement. As business faltered, a rapid re-evaluation of the store's status was made. The first reconciliation of the store's store's checking account in 2 years revealed thousands of dollars less than expected. And checks to suppliers began to bounce.

Now the people of Ozark Co-op are struggling to pull through the disorder. There's uncertainty whether the old store will be revitalized or perhaps a fresh attempt built on the lessons of the past. But they will go on.

A C.U. REPORT

By Pat Sullivan

The Credit Union just recieved its second state audit. The books and the paper work passed and the auditors criticism was in the collection of delinquent loans. A credit union is by nature a more personal financial institution than a bank and I feel our credit union carries that one step further. Many of the loans that were determined delinquent, we actually are confident will be repaid. However, it seemed like a good idea to go over some things that could help both the CU and members with delinquent loans.

First off, the most important thing to do if you're going to be late with a loan payment, is to call and let someone know. Although, we generally do not call someone who is only a week or so late, this is a helpful thing to do as it lets us know that you're thinking about your loan. It is also better to make a partial payment rather than no payment at all. That way it reduces the amount of interest that you have to pay. Another thing that can be done is to change the terms. Generally, we encourage people to sign themselves to the least possible payment, so not to over obligate themselves. However, its best to make the largest payment possible as your interest is always figured on the unpaid balance.

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