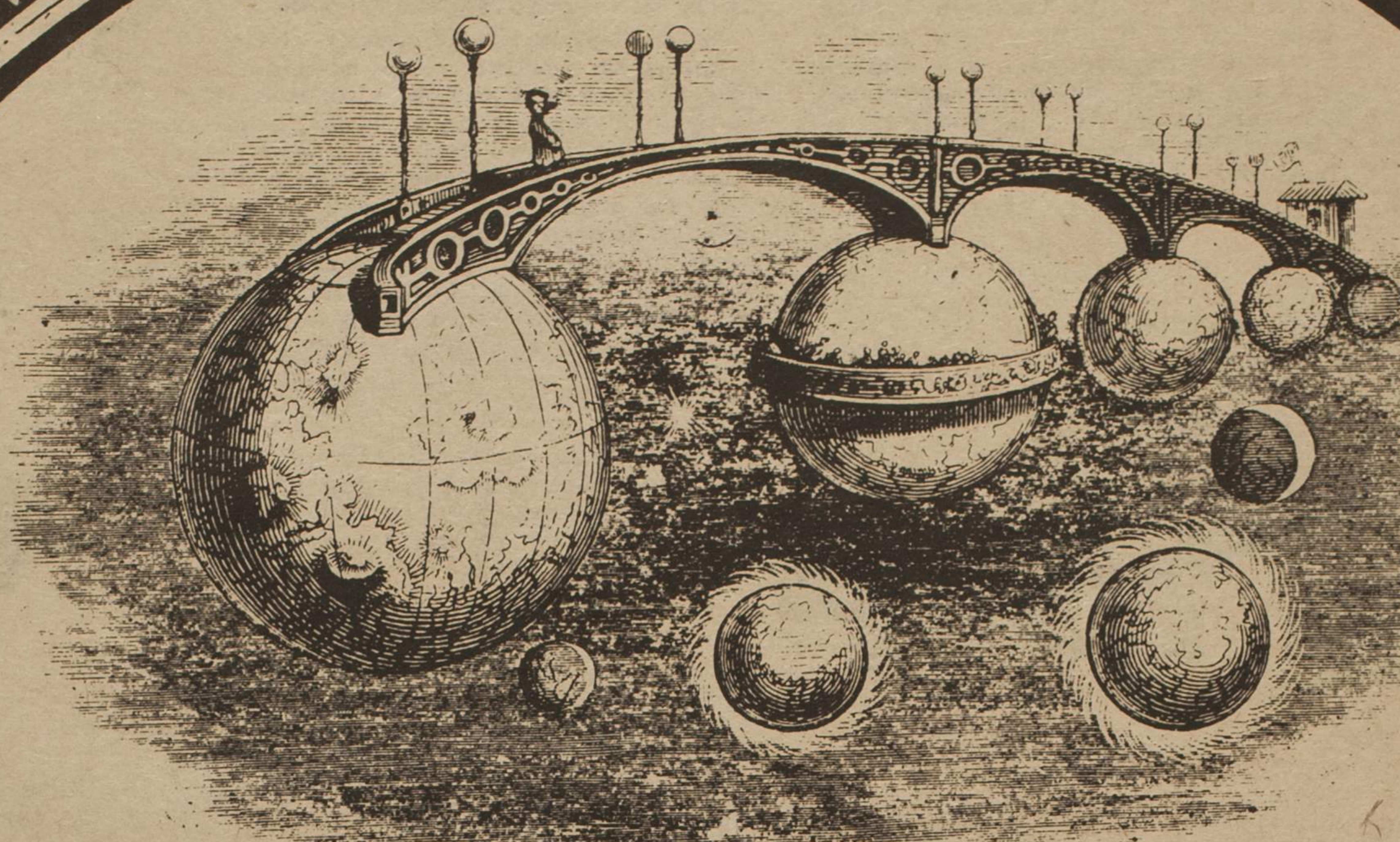


COOP NEWS



BERKELEY CO-OP FACES CRISIS

By Mark Blackburn

(Berkeley, CA)

This university town, long known as a home for radicals and their ideas, puts its money where its mouth is when it comes to buying food for the table: it shops Co-op.

A third of Berkeley's food needs are met by the Berkeley Co-op, the largest consumer's co-operative in the United States and owner of what is said to be the most profitable supermarket west of the Mississippi.

But after 40 years of successful existence -- and devotion to a set of principles formulated by a group of weavers in Rochdale, England, in 1884, the effective founders of the modern cooperative movement -- Co-op now faces a battle against insolvency that pits conservative defenders of the bottom line against political activists who fear ideals are about to be sacrificed.

The final outcome may have significance for American consumer cooperatives as a whole because, according to a spokesman in Washington for their trade association, the Cooperative League of the USA, "Berkeley is looked on as a model of the things a

Co-op & MacDonald's
 EDITOR: The only thing missing from Levitt's Levitts (Co-op News, July 6 special on junk foods, page 5, "Eatin' Needs") is a coupon or two redeemable at your local MacDonald's.
 Under the new management, Co-op loves me as Lucksafe does -- for my dollars.
 VICTORIA P. STRATTON
 Oakland

reprinted from Berkeley's Co-op News

co-op could do when it keeps an active and stimulated membership."

With 90,000 of the estimated 1.2 million members of U.S. consumer cooperatives, Berkeley provides a range of services to its members not normally expected of a commercial supermarket. They include a credit union, access to inexpensive legal advice and air charters, free advice from a home economist and child care centers -- called "kiddie korralis" -- for shoppers.

But what has made Berkeley truly distinctive in what otherwise could be just a grocery business is an involvement in political

causes. During the '60's it supported the Black Panther Party by supplying food for its breakfast for children program and wholeheartedly backed United Farmworkers leader Cesar Chavez by joining his boycott on Gallo wines and non-union lettuce and table grapes.

When environmentalism became the



The co-op meeting of March 23 features a slideshow and talk by Wes Jackson of the Land Institute near Salina, Kansas.

The Land Institute defines itself as a non-profit educational/research organization devoted to a search for alternatives in agriculture, energy, shelter, and waste. Wes Jackson is a founder of The Land, and will describe the progress of the young group. Their projects include several solar heating systems built into houses they've designed. Many times the houses are built with native materials, stone, sod, and timber from the surrounding countryside. Wind power is also used as an energy source at the school's site.

Currently, Wes describes himself as, "deeply into agriculture." One of his recent articles carries the title "Soil Loss and the Search for a Permanent Agriculture." Wes will speak at 7pm at the Salvation Army Center, 10th & New Hampshire. The public is invited.

cause of the day, Berkeley dropped aerosol cans containing fluorocarbons, which were said to be environmentally harmful. It discouraged both smoking in

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LIBRARY PROGRESS

by Douglas D. Palmer

As work teams feel the ropes of their new jobs and become more efficient every member prospers. The more support any facet of the Co-op receives the more effective it can operate. Such is the case of the Library Work Team. Thanks to member and non-member support our financial resources went from virtually zero to fifty dollars.

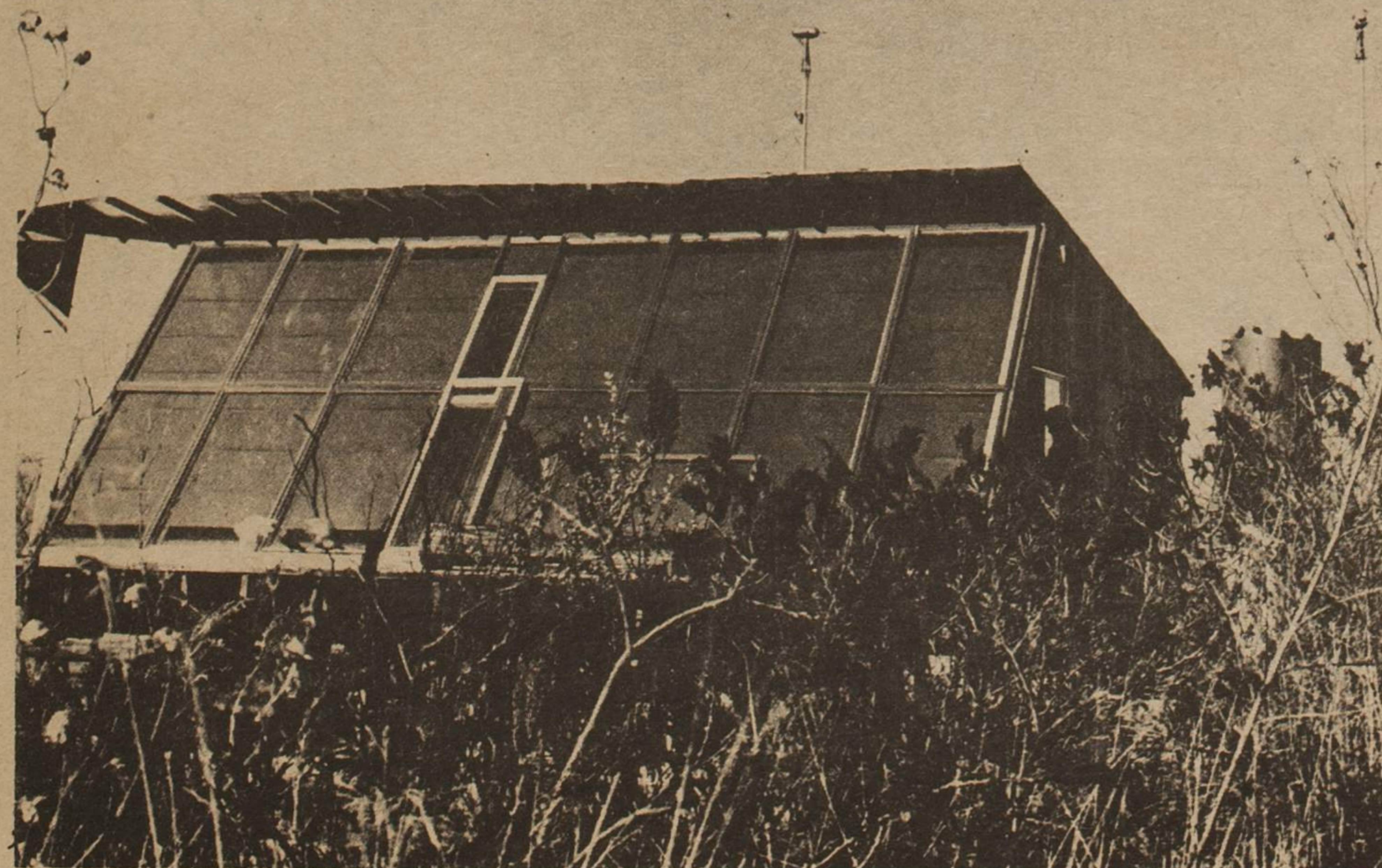
We have many areas in which this money could be filtered. Before doing this we would like to find a source for some items that would enable us to channel the money towards other areas.

Many members have a desire to see publications such as "Mother Earth News," "Organic Gardening," and "Prevention" at the library. It is our hope that someone would donate copies of these periodicals to the library on a regular basis. Such a donation would benefit everyone. Old copies in useable condition would be immediately added to the magazine section.

Other items that we would put to use are 4 x 6 cards, recipe files, just about any catalogues (seed, book, tool, etc.), and wall lamps or floor lamps for aid in reading in the northeast corner of the basement which, as a matter of fact, happens to be the location of the library.

At this time we will not be able to offer books to check out. Everything in the library is for in-store use. Some of the services we will have are reference books and magazines, a children's book section, Co-op Archives, pamphlets on a potpourri of interesting subjects and a recipe file. The recipe section will host blank cards for those who wish to share a favorite recipe with all of us and will have recipes for those interested in trying new ideas using foods available at the Co-op.

Everything considered, the Co-op library is in its infancy. But this is the time when the most can be learned and put to use. We are learning, with your support, to stand up on sturdy legs and walk for the good of all.



A view of one recent building at The Land Institute, designed with solar and wind energy systems; low-cost too!

Talk about better ideas