Worker Co-operation and Collaboration in Baltimore & DC

Yesterday and Today

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History of Cooperatives in the Baltimore-Washington DC Region

By John Curl

THE EARLY YEARS

In 1794, shoemakers in Baltimore formed the United Journeymen Cordwainers union and demanded that the standard piece-work rate be raised to six shillings. When they were unable to negotiate a settlement, the shoemakers went out on strike, taking with them over half the shoe workers in the city. In the midst of it, they organized the first cooperative factory in the United States. Located on the main commercial street, it was a large workshop open to all journeymen boycotting the masters' shoe shops. Before the era of mass production made hand production obsolete in the 1840s, shoes, like almost all products, were produced by artisanal methods. The Cordwainers union appointed two shop foremen to oversee the work in the cooperative. When several masters acquiesced and began paying the higher rates, the union approved workers returning to the concurring shops. How long the cooperative continued is not recorded.

In the same city, artisans in various types of production came together in 1809 and opened a cooperative warehouse called the Baltimore Society. Through it, they distributed their artisanal products without middlemen, selling both wholesale and retail. They also used the warehouse for joint buying of raw materials, often on credit. The Baltimore Society's sales for 1809 were $17,000, a sizable sum at the time; $32,000 for the next thirteen months, and $51,000 for 1811. Word of its success quickly spread, and the Baltimore Society became the prototype of similar cooperative warehouses that opened in other Eastern cities in the following years, including Pittsburgh and several locations in Massachusetts.

In the early 1830s, unions first began coming together into citywide federations or "trades' unions," the first organizations of American wage earners to cut across trade lines and look to the interests of wage earners as a class. Baltimore was one of the first of these federations, along with Philadelphia and New York. In 1834 the city federations came together into America's first national labor organization, the National Trades' Union (NTU). In 1836 Alexander Jackson of Baltimore was elected president, and they set up a committee to enquire "into the sources of the great system of speculation (through which) they who produce nothing receive nearly all the products of the labour of those that produce, while they who produce all receive but a mite of their own labour." The committee concluded that the heart of the problem lay in "a fluctuating currency," in which speculation is encouraged by "the division of... employers and journeymen," and proposed that a system of cooperation could restore to each worker "the disposal of his own products." They set up a committee on cooperation, which recommended that all unions investigate setting up cooperatives, because "until a system of Cooperation is adopted by which the producers of wealth may also be its possessors... the great burden of the evils of which we so justly complain, will never be removed."

LATER 19TH CENTURY

Between the end of the Civil War in 1865 and the later 1880s, Baltimore was a center for worker cooperatives. The Ladies' Co-operative Tailoring Association opened in 1865, followed by the Coachmakers' Co-operative Association

(1866), the Furniture Manufacturing Co. (1867), the First Baltimore Bricklayers' Association (1868), the Cigar Makers' Union Joint-Stock Cigar Factory (1869), and the Baltimore Co-operative Iron Founders (1870).

Baltimore's first co-op grocery store opened in 1865, soon after the end of the Civil War, just three years after union shoemaker, Thomas Phillips, introduced the British Rochdale consumer cooperative system to America. Phillips wrote a series of columns about cooperatives for a weekly national labor newspaper. Finding an enthusiastic response in many locations, over 30 co-op stores connected with unions were begun in12 states, mostly in industrial towns. More than simply stores and community centers, they were also venues for union organizing. But with a sharp fall of prices in the post-war period, many of them failed.

In the fall of 1866, representatives from local unions, city federations, Eight-Hour Leagues and national unions met in a Labor Congress in Baltimore, and formed the first American union federation on a coast-to-coast scale, the National Labor Union (NLU), led by William Sylvis, head of the Iron Molders' Union, one of the largest national unions. The NLU was a loose federation, like its predecessor the National Trades' Union; it probably had 300,000 members at its peak. The NLU fought for the eight-hour day, for land for settlers, for black and white labor solidarity, for the rights of women, for an end to contract and convict labor systems, and threw all of its weight behind the cooperative movement. To facilitate the movement, the founding congress endorsed cooperative workshops and stores, and called for the passage of cooperative incorporation acts in all the states. At the urging of union president Sylvis, the entire national Iron Molders union turned to worker co-operatives "for relief from the wages system," and opened cooperative foundries in many cities, some by the central organization and some by local unions. The Baltimore Co-operative Iron Founders opened in 1870. But the next year many of the NLU unions took great losses in the strike wave of 1871 and 1872, and the NLU collapsed. The great depression of 1873 left the trade unions mostly destroyed and wiped out the Baltimore Iron Founders and many other cooperatives started at the time.


William H. Sylvis

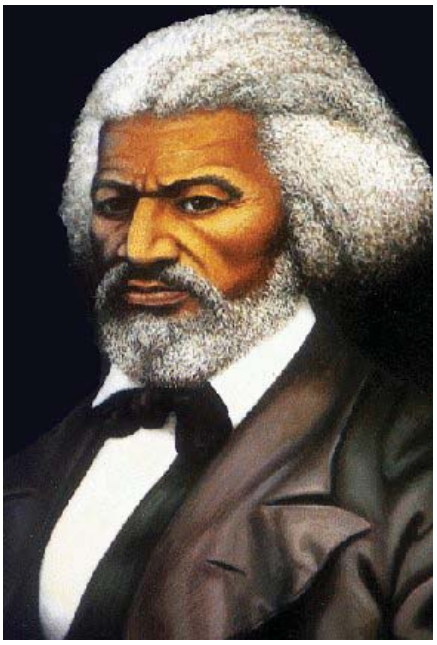
Isaac Myers, a freeborn black, had risen through his abilities as a journeyman caulker to become supervisor of hull caulking for some of the largest clipper ships in Baltimore. As a leader of the Colored Caulkers Trade Union Society, a labor union and beneficial society, he successfully bargained for better wages and working conditions in 1865. But the end of the Civil War in 1865 occasioned the arrival of a large number of white workers, and the shipyard owners began to replace black caulkers and longshoremen with them. Myers responded by organizing a group of black community leaders to open their own cooperative shipyard. Finding no white shipyard owner willing to negotiate directly with them, they enlisted the help of a white friend as intermediary, and the Chesapeake Marine Railway and Dry Dock Company opened in 1866. Within six months, the cooperative was employing three hundred black workers. In the following few years, the Baltimore black community became a center for cooperatives, including stores, coal yards, and various small industries. The Chesapeake Marine cooperative ran successfully for two decades despite increasing competition from more automated companies, until finally losing its lease on the shipyard in 1884.

Isaac Myers worked with William Sylvis and Frederick Douglass to break the color line of the National Labor Union. Myers was the keynote speaker on that topic at the 1869 NLU convention. Encountering opposition, Myers and Douglass organized the affiliated National Colored Labor Union (NCLU), the first national organization of its kind. Myers was elected its first president, and Douglass succeeded him in 1872. The NCLU's program, like the NLU's, backed worker cooperatives. Besides the usual advantages, cooperatives could help remedy racist exclusion from the skilled trades. Cooperation was widespread in black communities across the country, rural and urban. The NCLU led union organizing efforts in the South, and successfully helped organize the longshoremen's union for a wage increase in Baltimore.

In Washington, DC, at least two worker cooperatives operated in the years following the Civil War. In 1867 the workers took over F. Reeside and Co. and transformed it into a cooperative, and two years later in the same city the cooperative Tobacco and Cigar Manufactory opened.

In 1870-1871, Baltimore shoemakers of the Knights of St. Crispin union opened two cooperative factories, the Monumental Co-operation Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Co. (1870) and the First International Co-operative Shoe Factory (1871). The International factory had about a hundred members, and its core leaders belonged to the International Workingmen's Association, an activist organization of the time. The constitution of the shoemakers union called for "cooperation as a proper and efficient remedy for many of the evils of the present iniquitous system of wages." While they tried to raise wages through control of the labor supply and through strikes, it was really through cooperation that they aimed to solve their basic problems. "We believe the end and aim of all Labor organizations should be self-employment," the Crispins proclaimed. With the leadership of Thomas Phillips they proposed that each lodge organize a factory and either a store or buying club. The Crispins organized between 30 and 40 co-op stores in Eastern cities in 1869 alone, and Crispin cooperative supply purchasing clubs were widespread. The Baltimore companies were among their earliest factories. By 1873 Crispin cooperative shoe factories were running in six Eastern cities. But the Crispins declined as quickly as they had risen, and after 1878, following a rash of losing strikes, they were in disarray and fading almost everywhere.

In 1882 the co-operative Journal Publishing Co. printed the first issue of the Baltimore Journal. That newspaper, with various editions in both English and German, published in some periods daily and in some periods weekly, until 1913.



Today, the Frederick Douglass-Isaac Myers Maritime Park stands as a monument and national heritage site that highlights African American maritime history and the existence of the cooperative business venture, the Chesapeake Marine Railway and Dry Dock Co. For info: http://www.douglassmyers.org/

KNIGHTS OF LABOR

In the 1880s Baltimore was a center for Knights of Labor (KOL) cooperatives. They organized a cooperative bakery in 1884, but it folded soon after; picking up the pieces, they started another more successful bakery in 1886 with 250 member-stockholders. The Annapolis Co-operative Glass Works opened in 1884. In Baltimore the following year, Knight glass-blowers staged a general strike in the industry, and afterward formed the KOL Cooperative Glass Works, employing 100 workers, as well as the Co-operative Druggists' Ware Glass Manufacturing Association. In 1886 the Can Makers' Mutual Protective Association opened a factory in the same city. After the 1886 May Day strike for the eight-hour day, eighty-five black-listed joiners formed the Furniture Workers Cooperative Manufacturing Association of Baltimore. In 1887 the KOL organized the Co-operative Shirt Manufacturing Co. of Baltimore, as well as a publishing house, a cooperage shop, and the following year the Solidarity Cigar Co. In Cumberland (western Maryland) in 1887 the Knights started The Workman, a cooperative newspaper, and the following year opened the KOL Co-operative Soap Co.

Almost all of the Knight cooperatives faded by the 1890s, in the wake of the nationwide clampdown on labor activism following the 1886 May Day National 8-Hour Strike.

NEW DEAL CO-OP COMMUNITIES

After the fall of the Knights of Labor, the cooperative movement in the area did not rise again until the Great Depression of the 1930s. With the economy collapsed, the only institution left standing with the resources to institute rapid social change was the federal government, and Roosevelt filled the New Deal with progressive activists. The Resettlement Administration planned twenty-five "greenbelt" cooperative communities and projected a hundred of them. The mission given the developers was to create a national low-income land-use plan co-ordinating

urban areas with a surrounding rural economy. These "garden cities" were conceived as cooperative collectively-owned villages for low-income families on the fringes of cities, encircled by wide belts of common land left permanently undeveloped except as farms, close to workplaces for both industrial and agricultural workers, with common utilities and gardens, and eventual populations of up to 10,000.

The most successful was Greenbelt, Maryland, about seven miles from Washington, DC. Many historians consider it to be the most ambitious and successful experiment in public housing in U.S. history. Despite their grand plans, only three garden cities were completed, the other two in Ohio and Wisconsin. Construction began on Greenbelt in October, 1935, just a month after the approval of the program by President Roosevelt. In 1936-1937 the progress was rapid, and Greenbelt construction absorbed all the unemployed relief labor in Washington and the adjacent Maryland counties. The first units were occupied in September, 1937, and it was the first of the garden cities to be completed. Unlike the other cities in the project, Greenbelt land was not suitable for farming. The first tenant families were primarily wage earners and government workers, the average age of adults being thirty-one years.

Community co-operation was stressed in all Greenbelt activities. The central shopping center was based on the concept of a "restricted market," with only one shop allowed for each type of business or service, and all under community control. The residents established a consumer co-op, which took over all retail services, and soon returned a regular profit. They organized a co-operative credit union and group medical services. The public school was an experiment in progressive education, and the children operated a co-operative commissary in the school.

The New Deal program was attacked in the press as costly and subversive. The Federal project was abruptly shut down in 1939 and much of it sold off to speculators. However, the cooperative traditions remained. As late as 1960, Greenbelt was praised as "still the most beautiful and efficient suburb in the US for low income families." In the 1970s it was home to the second largest concentration of consumer co-ops in the United States. Greenbelt Co-op continues today.

COUNTERCULTURE

Baltimore-DC was one of the many centers of the countercultural movement of the mid-1960s and 1970s, with numerous collective/cooperative groups involved in a great variety of activities.

In that era both urban and rural areas were host to intentional communities and community land trusts. Two of the most successful and lasting are the Columbia Heights Community Ownership Project in DC, and Heathcote Community, 30 miles north of Baltimore, both begun in 1975-'76. That legacy continues today: the 2011 Communities Directory lists 22 intentional communities in Maryland and seven in DC.

The "new wave" food co-ops and collectives of the 1970s were pioneers in the natural and organic foods movement. In Baltimore's Waverly neighborhood was Sam's Belly Co-op. The Maryland Food Co-op, started at the University of Maryland in 1975, is still a worker-owned collectively-run natural food store today. In the DC area, the most successful food co-op of the era was Bethesda Co-op, also known as Bethesda Community Food Store, founded in 1975 as a collective "on the principles of education, equality and giving back to the community." Other food collectives in DC in the '70s included Stone Soup store and Community Warehouse distributors. Bethesda Co-op is still in business today, relocated in Cabin John, MD. It remains a center for local farmers to bring their harvest, for local artisans to bring their wares, and is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, Local 400.

John Curl is author of For All The People: Uncovering the Hidden History of Cooperation, Cooperative Movements, and Communalism in America

Baltimore Bicycle Works:

We all simply loved bikes and wanted to make our living selling and servicing them

By Meredith Mitchell

The members on the orange cargo bike are Meredith Mitchell (handle bar), Josh Keogh, and Tommy Nash (standing in the back rack).

Baltimore Bicycle Works was started in October 2008 with five worker-members. At the time the goal of the project was twofold:

First, and most importantly, to create a business that would sustain us now and into the future as well as create employment opportunities where workers have control over their labor;

Second, was to help enhance the important role we believe bicycles play in the city's growing need for accessible and environmentally-responsible alternative transportation. Additionally, it is fair to say that we all simply loved bikes and wanted to make our living selling and servicing them.

Baltimore Bicycle Works officially opened our doors in December 2008 with the little funds that we could pull together from our personal resources. Most of our start-up money went to rehabbing our shop into usable retail space. We had to take down walls, paint, and build a storefront. After that, we were left with less than $10,000 to purchase inventory, fixtures, tools and other necessary equipment. As a result, we opened our doors with three bikes for sale, a few tires and tubes and a very limited selection of accessories.

We located the shop in the center of the Baltimore, miles away from any of the other shops and on the newly-built Jones Falls bike trail. This location made us very accessible to many surrounding neighborhoods and a convenient stop for bike commuters traveling north and south, to and from work.

With not much to sell in those early days, we focused on what we were good at: customer service and mechanics. We were lucky to have two of the best bike mechanics in the city and the rest of us made sure every customer was greeted with a smile and treated fairly no matter how much or little bike knowledge they had.

Over the course of the next two years we reinvested every dollar we made into the shop, and barely paid ourselves. Most of us continued to work other jobs to support ourselves and worked at the shop nights and weekends. The hours were

Members of Baltimore Bicycle Works

Meredith Mitchell
Josh Keogh
Tommy Nash
Brent Boggs
Lindsey Meisinger
Laura Murray

long and many, but we could see our hard work paying off as new customers began to arrive and tell their friends about the friendly new bike shop in town.

In February of 2010 we welcomed our first apprentice into the shop. By May she had completed her 500-hour requirement and became our sixth worker-member. Just this spring we hired two more apprentices and are hopeful we will expand our group to eight.

We continue to face struggles and hardship regularly, but we have also had our share of good fortune and much to be proud of. Our structure as a workers' cooperative sets us apart to our customers and can be attributed to much of our success. We are such a friendly welcoming bike shop, because we all care so much about the experience of every customer. We share the responsibilities and tough decisions and it only enhances our pride in the shop and our individual contributions.

Baltimore Bicycle Works
1813 Falls Road
Baltimore, MD 21201
www.BaltimoreBicycleWorks.com
Contact: MeredithaMitchell@gmail.com

Just Walk:

Transformation Through Dog Walking and Pet Care

By Joshua Stephens

Just Walk began as a thought experiment, after one of its founders co-founded, helped build, and ultimately left an altogether other collectively-run dogwalking and petcare agency. That first project had gone from an under-the-table, one-man freelance operation to a seven-person professional outfit offering workers full decision-making power, full health-benefits, and six weeks annual paid leave in less than three years. And its approach to marketing and public presentation doubled as playful, political agit-prop, routinely producing vibrant conversations about social transformation between people whose paths were unlikely to cross otherwise.

But it wasn't enough. Stripping away hierarchy in any context necessarily requires certain things of us – both in the abstract and the immediate. On one hand, turning away from the devil we know calls on us to cultivate the discipline necessary to meaningfully carry out given projects on our own terms. And on another, it requires a rather candid recognition of the learning curves and labor pains of beginning anew; creating the new. To the extent that we entrust our long-term livelihoods to such a vision, these things have to be real and they have to work. Moreover, they need to live and breathe beyond the aspirations, charisma, or energy of particular individuals, and must meaningfully attempt to provide returns for people's lives beyond idealism.

Just Walk was conceived as an attempt at striking some productive balance therein, beginning – quite simply – where we were, in the trade we know: Dogwalking. That is, petcare, client acquisition and management, marketing a virtual location, and radically innovating the experience for both workers and clients, down to seemingly insignificant details.

The first pillar of this is apprenticeship, and tackling the learning curve that comes with self-management set against the backdrop of conventional workplaces. We've sought to institutionalize the production of a workforce not simply skilled in the demands of its trade, but skilled in making sophisticated, educated, critical decisions that reflect both an understanding of the operational and ethical stakes, and an investment in long-term viability.

The second pillar is equity. While this is still a work in progress for us, it's clear that the hegemony of volunteerism in the anarchist tradition from which we come produces a regrettable de-valuing of labor, and an array of supplementary lifestyle-workarounds, rather than a fundamental re-thinking of production, value, and the long-term needs of people who will grow, age, potentially have families. There is little compelling political value to a model in which one works for a number of years, producing for an enterprise that grows as a result of one's contributions, only to walk away with nothing. The institutions we create – whatever their character or function – ought to leave our lives measurably better on a reasonable timeline.

The third pillar is perhaps the most experimental: Geographic federation. We began in DC, with an eye toward NYC, and unexpectedly made rapid gains with a branch in Baltimore. Primarily, we wanted to see how participation would need to be structured across these branches, as well as what sorts of internal economics this would require. Being in a relatively low-capital, high-margin trade, we could afford to challenge our own boundaries a bit, and see what it yielded. Simultaneously, from a marketing standpoint, openly working from multiple cities gives us a competitive advantage, as a claim few in our trade can make. It implies a seriousness and rigor well past what even occurs to the average client.

Ultimately, our hope is that our work becomes something in which we can both thrive and challenge conventions – simply at the level of what we know. If transformation cannot begin exactly where we find ourselves; if it cannot spring from simply putting one foot in front of the other, it's not terribly interesting as a proposition.

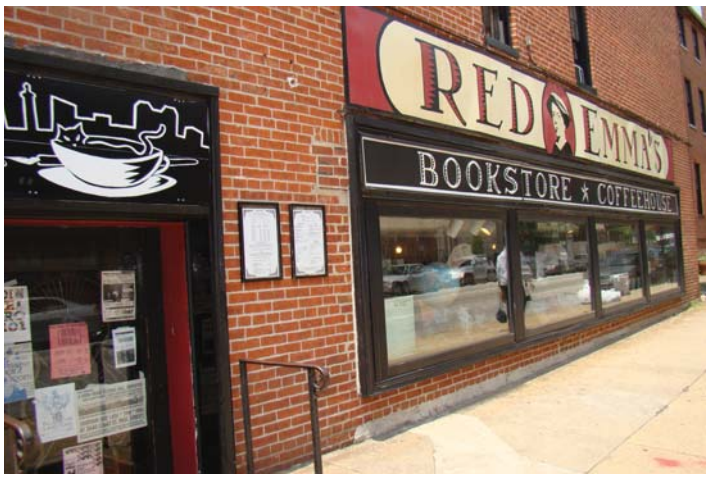
www.lesstalkmorewalk.com

(443) 470-WALK (9255)

Red Emma's Bookstore Coffeehouse

Building bridges rather than erecting walls

By Cullen Nawalkowsky



Red Emma's is Baltimore's only collectively-owned, democratically self-managed bookstore and coffeehouse. Nestled in a basement storefront at the corner of Madison and Saint Paul Streets in the Mount Vernon historical district, Red Emma's boasts a carefully-curated selection of radical, left, and countercultural literature, ranging in subject from feminism to philosophy, political economy, art, DIY, sustainability, labor history, religion, and beyond.

Its vegetarian cafe serves a variety of organic and fair-trade coffees and teas, including a rotating "social justice" blend roasted by the Just Coffee Cooperative in Madison, Wisconsin, and a light menu of sandwiches, salads, and soups, all of which are maximally organic and/or locally-sourced, and many of which are available in vegan varieties.

Also included in the storefront is a mini computer lab run using open-source software, with three public terminals available for anyone, and free public wifi. The storefront hosts lectures, screenings, book talks, workshops, and other events several nights of the week, all of which are free and open to the public.

Red Emma's is envisioned as a non-sectarian platform for a wide range of radical and progressive views -- building bridges rather than erecting walls – and the curation of books and events is a reflection of that broad scope.

Red Emma's was founded in 2003 after the closure of long-time Baltimore anarchist bookstore, Black Planet Books, with the explicit goal of serving as a model for worker self-management and non-hierarchical organizing within the workplace.

John Duda inside Red Emma's

Today, the project is managed by a 10-person collective. The group holds open meetings once a week, where the bulk of decisions are made, and details about the past week's operations are discussed. While collective members do specialize in one or more area of the project, there are no management positions, and decisions are made collectively using a modified consensus process.

Membership is open, but does require a several-month volunteer and training period, and approval from all active collective members. Members are paid for their labor behind the counter or behind the scenes of the project, but all collective members must meet a five-hour weekly volunteer minimum before they are eligible for compensation.

Over the course of the past seven years, Red Emma's has become a thriving center of radical culture in the mid-Atlantic. Since 2006, the collective has organized the Mid-Atlantic Radical Bookfair, which is now a part of the larger Baltimore Book Festival, a city-sponsored event that draws over 40,000 visitors annually. The collective

has co-organized a number of networking gatherings and conferences as well, including the National Infoshop Gathering in 2006, the City from Below Conference in 2009, and the Renewing the Anarchist Tradition Conference in 2010.

The larger Red Emma's family also encompasses two sister spaces: The 2640 Space, a 4,000-square-foot radical arts and cultural center located in the former great hall at Saint John's United Methodist Church in Charles Village, and The Baltimore Free School, a no-cost educational experiment that provides classroom space for anyone wishing to teach, and anyone wishing to learn. All of the Red Emma's projects are collectively-owned and -operated, and all seek to provide educational and informational resources to the greater Baltimore community and beyond.

Red Emma's Bookstore Coffeehouse is located at 800 Saint Paul Street

(http://www.redemmas.org), and is open from 10AM – 10PM Monday –

Saturday, and 10AM – 6PM on Sundays.

The 2640 Project is located at 2640 Saint Paul Street

(http://2640.redemmas.org).

The Baltimore Free School is located at 1323 N. Calvert Street

(http://freeschool.redemmas.org).

Red Emma's can be contacted at: info@redemmas.org

Photos by Ajowa Nzinga Ifateyo

AK Press:

An International Collective and Publishers of Mind-Altering Materials

By Kate Khatib

AK Press is a worker-run collective that publishes and distributes books, visual and audio media, and other mind-altering material. We offer a range of titles exploring such essential topics as anarchist history and theory, US and world politics, labor, race, gender, radical arts and culture, ecology and sustainable living, and many more.

We exist to publish and distribute materials that contribute to social and political changes based on Anarchist principles. These principles integrate the abolition of government, the destruction of capitalism, and the replacement of hierarchies and prejudices by constructing egalitarian structures based on freedom, equality and self-determination. We do not seek to merely criticize or escape the existing state of the world, but to offer and function as a better alternative.

AK Press was founded in Edinburgh, Scotland in the late '80s, and became an official collective entity in 1990. The publishing and distribution efforts grew and grew and, in 1994, the founder came to San Francisco from Edinburgh to start AK Press in the US. From 1994 to 2000 AK grew into a much larger operation and eventually moved to Oakland, where the main warehouse is still located. We now have an office in Baltimore as well, which is the home for our sales, marketing and publicity work, and one half of our editorial power duo! We continue to collaborate with our sister collective in Edinburgh, Scotland. They operate a separate distribution effort in the UK, and we publish books jointly as an international collective. We have a general meeting at least once a year, where everyone from AK in the US and the UK can meet up to discuss our goals and mission as a publisher.

"It's important to us to know that someone browsing the shelves of their local bookstore or library, or someone attending their first radical event or punk show, might stumble across one of our titles and change the way they think about the world."

We're anarchists, which is reflected both in the books in our catalog and in the way we organize our business. Decisions at AK Press are made collectively, with each collective member having equal-decision making power. We each get one vote on all decisions affecting the collective, from what we publish and what we distribute, to who we're going to take on as new collective members and how we structure our labor. And we all take home the same wage.

Currently our collective in the United States is made up of eight people, with our efforts split up between two main departments, publishing and distribution, with some crossover and shared responsibilities between the two. This "departments" model allows us to focus our labor and improve our functioning, and make our work lives more comfortable. Our distribution department handles wholesale distribution for hundreds of self-and independent publishers, and handles exclusive distribution for a few dozen more. The publishing department currently coordinates approximately 20 titles a year of our own titles, ushering them from manuscripts to the amazing books you find on your shelves. Though we technically have this division of labor, all of these things are really a collective effort, with everyone stepping in wherever needed. We have weekly meetings for each department, and one weekly meeting for the entire collective to discuss proposed publishing projects. We also have a monthly collective meeting to discuss general operational matters.

Through both our publishing and distribution efforts, we hope to amplify the voices of people and movements

that are asking challenging questions and providing thought-provoking answers. And through our very existence, we hope to demonstrate that it is, in fact, possible and desirable for workers to self-manage. We're doing it all without bosses or managers, because we feel that people working together, for ourselves and for each other, is more productive than selling our labor to an employer who will then turn it around to produce a profit.

Our goal isn't profit, although we do have to pay the rent. Our goal is supplying radical words and images to as many people as possible. It's important to us to know that someone browsing the shelves of their local bookstore or library, or someone attending their first radical event or punk show, might stumble across one of our titles and change the way they think about the world.

More about AK Press: http://www.akpress.org

Other Co-operative and Collaborative Groups

Anacostia Hours

Since 2006, Anacostia Hours Inc. has operated a local currency system that promotes local economic strength and community self-reliance in ways that will support economic and social justice, ecology, community participation and human aspirations, and strengthen community in the Hyattsville, Mount Rainer, Brentwood and Riverdale communities in the capital area of Maryland. The Anacostia Dollar helps to "realize the environmental benefits of keeping jobs and shopping close to home, provides increased economic opportunities to residents of all levels of skills and talents so everyone's needs are met, and reduces our dependence on the larger corporate economy and their chain stores, which drains our communities of wealth."

Phone: 301-277-5318; website: http://www.anacostiahours.org/

Baltimore Algebra Project

A democratic, student-run and organized program mainly focused on the one-on-one tutoring of math at the middle and high schools. The Baltimore Algebra project is the local chapter of the National Algebra Project. In Baltimore, the chapter has taken on a more activist role in protesting the city's recent budget that allocates more money for policing while shortchanging student educational needs. Word is the non-profit organization is considering becoming a worker cooperative. Facebook, http://www.facebook.com/baltimorealgebraproject?sk=info

Baltimore Green Currency

"Dollars are universal, but they don't have the same power that local currencies have, to promote and grow a local economy, in ways that benefit the people and not banks." So says the Baltimore Green Currency Association. The local money can only be used at local businesses so there's no chance a Wal-Mart can take money out of the community and close down local businesses. Website: http://baltimoregreencurrency.org/about-local-currency

The Charm City Art Space

At the Charm City Art Space "… you'll also find no booze, drugs, or corporations. And shows are early, which is a very good thing for kids in school—or people with jobs," according to its website. The Art Space is dedicated to providing the Baltimore community with access to musical and visual artists from all over the world. Founded

in 2002, and now in an expanded location, this collectively-owned and -operated project continues to be a cultural hub catering to underground artists and patrons of all ages. Website: http://www.ccspace.org/

DC Time Bank

Time Banks promote exchanges that honor five core values: Assets (we are all assets), Redefining Work (some work is beyond price), Reciprocity (helping works better as a two-way street), Social Network (we need each other) and Respect (every human being matters).

Website: http://www.dctimebank.org/ (no phone)

Glut Food Co-op

The Washington, DC area's oldest worker cooperative, Glut Food Co-op started in July 1969 out of 1704 Q Street, NW. in Washington, DC as a buying club for three or four communal houses on Q Street NW. Conscientious objectors to the Vietnam War lived in those houses and helped form the co-op. After four months the operation moved to the Church of the Pilgrims at 22nd and P Streets, NW. In 1973 the co-op moved to its current location on the DC-Maryland border. The "funky" store has worker –owners and paid volunteers, and operates as a nonprofit charitable trust. Phone: 301-779-1978, Website: http://www.glutfood.org/History.htm

Greenbelt Cooperative Community

Greenbelt was one of three "green" planned communities built by the federal government in 1937 as a means of providing affordable housing. (The other two were in Greendale, WI near Milwaukee and Greenhills, OH, near Cincinnati.) Located in the suburbs of Washington, DC, the community formed Greenbelt Consumer Services, Inc. that operated a gas station, food store, drugstore, barber shop, movie theater, valet shop, beauty parlor, variety shop and tobacco shop. When Congress voted to sell the homes in 1952, the community formed a housing cooperative – Greenbelt Homes, Inc. and bought the homes. Though many of the shops no longer exist, the community is a thriving community today.

Greenbelt Homes, http://www.greenbelthomes.net/content/ghi-greenbelt-history

History, http://www.greenbeltmd.gov/about_greenbelt/history.htm

Maryland Brush Company

Maryland Brush Company is proud to be an employee-owned firm that provides quality stock and custom industrial brush products and related merchandise at reasonable prices to the metal rolling mill, rubber, pipeline/ welding and other industries. The company opened its doors in 1851, as a supplier of paint and maintenance brushes. They have been at their current site on Frederick Avenue in Baltimore since 1904. In 1990 the company was incorporated as Maryland Brush Company, Inc., a 100% employee- owned company. Employee owners make

it their goal to produce and deliver on-time, quality products that exceed customers' requirements. Today, the company continues to grow and diversify, with its most recent entry as a manufacturer and supplier of proprietary solar/daylighting systems. Website: http://www.marylandbrush.com/about_us_maryland_brush_company.php

MOTHER MADE is a cooperatively operated business that produces reusable produce bags, shopping bags and milk bottle carriers in Baltimore City. Our products reduce plastic bag use in grocery stores and farmer's markets by offering consumers an alternative. The mission of MOTHER MADE is to promote the financial independence and job training of low-income mothers/women by creating and selling products that reduce the impact of consumers on the environment. MMB is operated under the auspices of Episcopal Community Services of Maryland. Look for MOTHER MADE at the Jones Falls Expressway Farmer's Market this summer!

mother.made.baltimore@gmail.com

mothermadebaltimore.com

One DC

Organizing Neighborhood Equity, DC is a grassroots organization based in the Shaw neighborhood of Washington, DC. The group creates collective action principally around the right to housing/land, right to income and the right to wellness. Its predecessor, Manna Community Development Corporation, organized two cooperatives – a temporary workers cooperative, a bicycle cooperative and an ice cream shop whose profits were projected to be used to fund its organizing work. Phone: 202-232-2915; website: http://www.onedconline.org/

Real Food Farm

Baltimore's urban service corps, Civic Works' has created an innovative urban agricultural enterprise, Real Food Farm, which teaches young people to grow fresh produce on six acres of land in Clifton Park in northeast Baltimore. The community gets healthier food, and the environment is cared for, and the youth learn valuable skills. Phone: 410-366-8533 ext 203;

http://www.realfoodfarm.org/

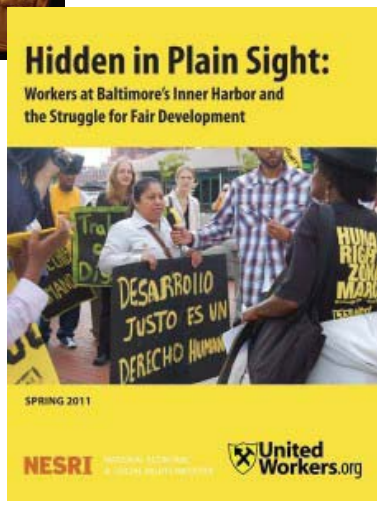
Sojourner-Douglass College

Sojourner-Douglass College's soon-to-be-launched Center for Community Prosperity and a Change4Real coalition to create bottom-up development that results in the entire community prospering. Sojourner-Douglass College has been involved with empowering community residents for over 36 years through long standing educational programs that focus on self-determination and community transformation. The city of Baltimore is devoting significant resources to develop a Master Plan for the revitalization of the neighborhoods surrounding Sojourner-Douglass College's East Baltimore campus known as Oldtown. The College plans to undertake the creation of a "model" cooperative community and cooperative economy which would include running a community-owned hotel as a training facility for hospitality management, build a cooperative food neighborhood food infrastructure and train workers to create jobs in green energy and weatherization.

http://www.sdc.edu/departments/outreach/c4r/

United Workers

Members celebrating victory in obtaining living wage.



The United Workers is a human rights organization led by low
ers. The group was founded in 2002 by homeless day laborers meeting in an abandoned firehouse-turned-shelter. We were inspired by past human rights struggles, such as the fight to end slavery, the struggle for civil rights, calls for immigration with dignity, the labor movement, the fight for international economic justice and other human rights and justice movements. For the first years of our founding, we focused on understanding the root causes of poverty and dedicated ourselves to organizing around universal human rights. The group fights for living wages for workers and fair and sustainable development.

Phone: 410-230-1998; website: http://unitedworkers.org/our-history/

Velocipede Bike Project

Baltimore's cooperative bike shop, Velocipede Bike Project provides access to second hand bicycles and hands-on education in a shared work space. We envision a future where bicycling is no longer an alternate form of transportation, and will serve Baltimore by empowering people of all backgrounds to take that transportation into their own hands.
Website: http://velocipedebikeproject.org/bike_shop/ (No phone listed)

The Woman's Industrial Exchange

Operating since 1880, The Woman's Industrial Exchange provides opportunities for local craft artists to refine, market, and sell their handmade goods to supplement their income.
Phone: 410-685-4388; website: http://womansindustrialexchange.org/

Women's Growth Center

The Women's Growth Center is a small, non-profit collective of therapists providing individual therapy, couples counseling, family therapy, group therapy, and workshops. "Our practitioners are aware of the impact that discrimination and oppression may have had on a client's life, including, but not limited to gender, race, class, size, religion, sexual orientation, age, and health issues." All decisions at the Women's Growth Center are made by the consensus.

Phone: 410-532-2476; website: http://www.womensgrowthcenter.com/WGC/home.html