

Ko-operation

The story of the establishment of the Associated Student Ko-op has been told in headlines. "Co-op to begin operation soon" said the first one in September, 1972. That was followed in early October by one which said: "Student co-op status still uncertain."

So it went until the Jan. 31 headline screamed: "Ten join Ko-op on first day." Two months later, this: "Ko-op stumbles, head quits."

But lately things have been looking up for this, the most recent continuous ASUN project. Until this autumn, it seemed a good description of the discount buying organization was "pay your money and take your chances." Now, however, about 40

Lincoln businesses have joined in to give students between five and 50 per cent discounts on goods or services purchased.

This change of fortune, due much to the hard work of this year's Ko-op leadership, still can't seem to spark the student interest necessary to make the organization an economic muscleman. Only about 600 students have been willing to slap down their \$5 membership fee. This is far short of the thousands projected by the group's originators.

The Ko-op has amassed debts of more than \$2,400. About \$700 of this has been repaid; add the value of its assets and the group is in the black by about \$200.

These things point toward a mix of success and failure. Some students and merchants are benefiting by the group's existence, but is it worth the hundreds of hours which student

government leaders are pouring into it? The answer is a qualified yes.

If the Ko-op can raise its membership to the 2,000 mark wanted by its leadership, the group could become worthwhile. With a lengthy membership list it would be more enticing to the "O Street Gang" which has been reluctant to join other businesses in the venture.

The ingredients for this success, however, are difficult to figure out. About 25 per cent of the group's budget is devoted to advertising. Memberships are sold every weekday. The leadership has the organization moving smoothly. Still it isn't growing at the rate necessary.

It appears that what is necessary is student support. If you have \$5, you might find the Ko-op a good investment.

Michael (O.J.) Nelson



Dear editor,

After coming in contact once again with one of Lincoln's monopolies, I feel enough frustration to write this letter. Each time I have had to deal with Lincoln Telephone and Telegraph has been an unbelievable run-around, but this experience is a prime example of their blundering inefficiency to provide comparable service apart from the Bell Telephone system.

Not long ago I called to report that I was moving and wanted to have my service transferred. I was told that I

would have to wait two weeks for a serviceman to call. This frustrated me because I was used to Northwestern Bell's service time of about two to three days.

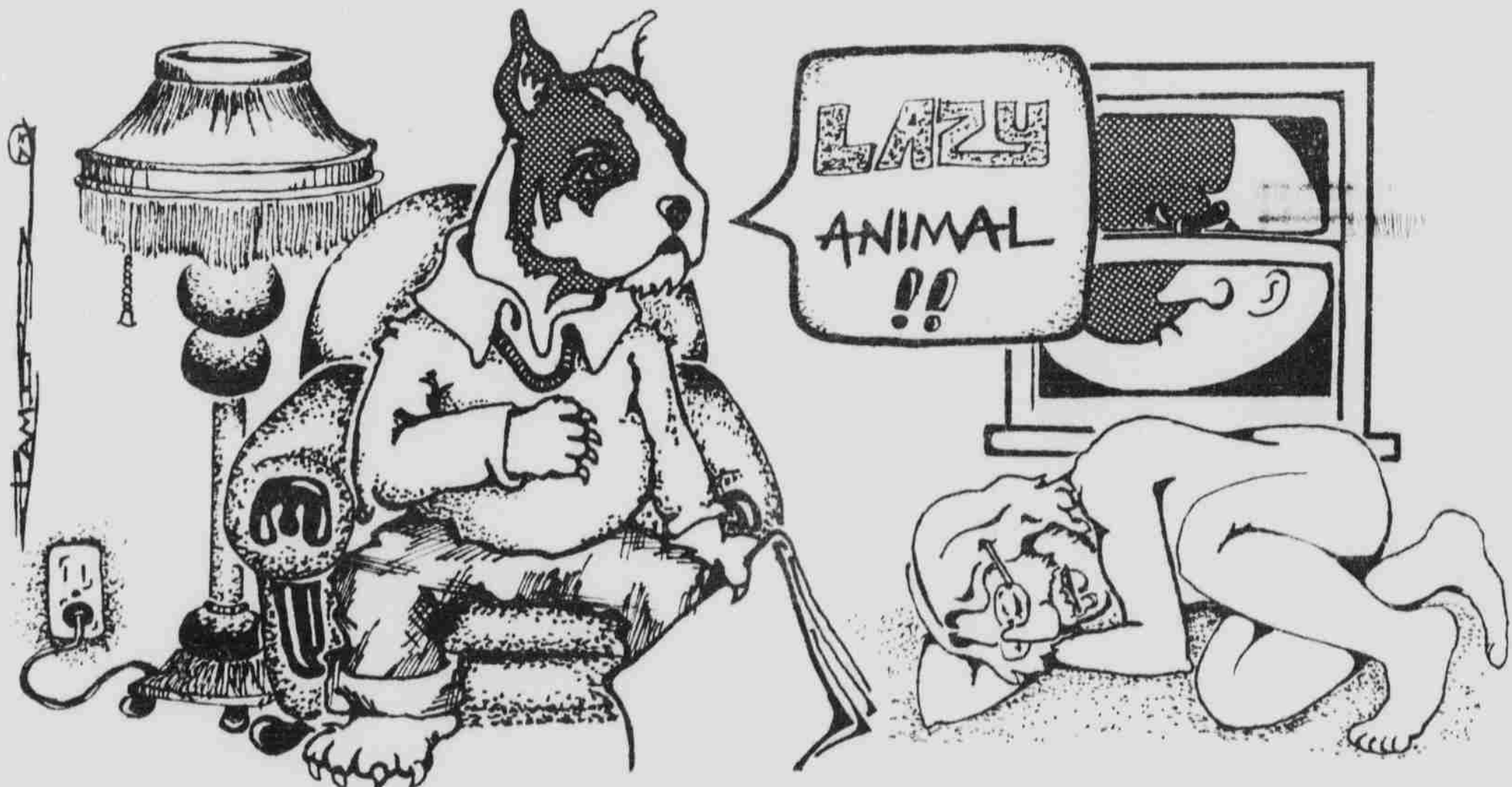
But I decided to wait the two weeks without telephone service and not bug the company. Finally the day rolled around, and I stayed home all day waiting for the serviceman to show. He never did. Upon calling the telephone company from a neighbor's house, I was told they had fallen behind and wouldn't be able to get it

until the next day. Talking to people made no difference; it had to be tomorrow.

Then a friend who works at a large discount store told me the store once ordered 25 phones and got them installed the same day.

What avenue of satisfaction, besides violence directed towards large companies, does the average consumer have? We are forced to accept LT&T's inefficiencies with a smile and without a chance of ever being able to change their ridiculous practices.

Tony Gevo



'Stoned' pet best companion for 'heatless' days

One of the most popular things to do in winter is to sit around and watch pets. But the question lingers: what is the best pet and why?

My roommate and I have two cats, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., and Chuck Johnson. Kurt is black, long haired, courageous and stupid. Chuck is grey with white tennis shoes, short haired, smart and scared.

Kurt and Chuck aren't most people's idea of the perfect pets, but their personalities seem to mesh well. For instance, Kurt is brave enough to go out on the fire escape but too stupid to find his way in again. Chuck could find his way back, but he's afraid to leave the apartment. Kurt is brave enough to fight Ruthie, the neighbor's cat, but too stupid to wait until he's big enough to win the fight. Together Chuck and Kurt equal one cat. Neither of them will ever amount to anything.

Dogs have advantages cats lack, for no one I know of has ever taught a cat to do anything useful. Dogs, on the other hand, can be taught to tear newspapers to shreds, to make puddles on floors and to howl.

But dogs can be every bit as stupid as our cat Kurt. Years ago, when I lived on 14th Street, we had a dog. Named—rather cleverly we all thought—after one of our friends Rookie was a marvelous example of canine clumsiness and naivete.

Rookie's problem was that he never really learned anything except his name. When his name was called,

he'd go rushing to the caller with such enthusiasm he often ran past him. Then Rookie would turn and run back, straight into the caller's legs.

For reasons of his own, Rookie never learned the difference between a newspaper and a car jet. So after six months of stepping over, around and into the results of his learning disability, we taught a child his name. Rookie did his running-into-legs trick (his only



trick), the child was charmed, and our problem was solved. Pity the child's mother but—well, one does what one must.

Dogs and cats are by no means the only pets around. Don Sutton, Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher, insists there is a lot to be said for snakes. Not all of

what is to be said is complimentary, however, for snakes lack warmth and aren't very cuddly.

Fish are a sort of combination of snakes and cats. They won't learn their names, don't do tricks and aren't very comforting at night. But they don't howl or make threatening gestures and are easy to entertain: just give them a bowl of water and they're happy.

Birds are fine for some people and if they don't work out they can be given to cats as Christmas gifts. Cats love birds and will play with them for about 20 minutes.

But my experience has convinced me no animal is a perfect pet. Dogs, cats, fish, birds and snakes have various imperfections. Iguanas are overly proud. Rabbits are promiscuous. Lions, tigers, and cheetahs are ostentatious. Cows and horses are difficult in dorms, Greek houses and apartments. Actually, the only perfect pet is a rock.

Any pet store can steer you toward someone who raises rocks and they're usually reasonably priced. Rocks are comfortable in closets if you don't have a back yard. Unlike most pets, they can be painted to go with the furniture. They don't chase cars.

Rocks won't do tricks or come when they're called, but then no one expects them to. They don't eat much, or bark or go into heat. And they don't have to be housebroken. It's surprising more people don't keep rocks as pets.