

No.1

\$1.00

COMMUNITAS

a new community journal



Why Communitas?

A reprint from our April announcement

Throughout the country, people concerned with radically changing their life styles are shifting their emphasis from communes to community. It is the intent of *Communitas* to encourage this movement, to help community become a viable alternative and solution to the problems of society. We create new communities to fulfill essential human needs that have been long neglected. We want to live in communities where there is a real sense of cooperating, sharing and belonging. We see community as a healing process that restores wholeness and brotherhood to our lives. People in early folk societies lived lives of mutual love and respect. By forming new communities, we can rediscover these qualities and re-create a true *common wealth*, both spiritually and materially.

Communitas will facilitate the development of community in several specific ways. We will be a bimonthly forum for the exchange of experiences, feelings and ideas between those people and groups interested in new communities. We will emphasize communities formed within the last five years, but also include accounts of older, relevant communities. We have particular interest in those communities with more than ten to fifteen adults and children. That is about the maximum number that can, while living under the same roof, effectively use face-to-face relating to resolve their problems. Different types of structures (be they interpersonal, educational, architectural etc.) need to be created in groups with more than ten to fifteen adults and children.

Communitas will publish its first issue on or before July 1, 1972, and have the following regular features:

Community Reports

Articles on specific communities that are forming, established or expired. Articles being prepared for issue No. 1 are:

Alpha — Glenn Hovemann, a 23 year old conscientious objector, describes how their group of thirteen (Alpha) is creating a community on 300 acres of Oregon land starting in April 1972. The group is quite diverse, ranging from two couples in their 50's with backgrounds in education, biology and journalism; to both older and adopted children; to people in their 20's with young children. This heterogeneity is balanced by a common spiritual outlook, primarily Quaker.

Virginia-The New Dominion of Community — A detailed description of the new vigor in community building in Virginia (four new communities) and how they are linking together for support.

Conversation with Jud Jerome — Jud, author of *Culture Out of Anarchy*, is now preparing a book on the contemporary commune movement. He has current, first-hand knowledge of many communes

and communities and shares this with us. He and others are now forming their own community on 100 acres of land in southern Pennsylvania.

In later issues we will have *Griscom Morgan of Community Service* in Yellow Springs, Ohio on the complex issues involved in relating rural new community efforts to the native people of southeastern Ohio. And we will have *Jim Morey*, head of the *New City Project* in Cambridge, Mass reviewing their efforts to create a new, radical city.

Principles of Community — Is There Any Consensus? — Existing communities respond to a suggested list of community principles prepared by *Communitas*, and their comments and criticisms are explored in depth.

Common Sense

A section devoted to our philosophy of community, where we and others can comment about important community issues and respond to articles within the journal itself.

Roots of Community

Here we blend the best of conservative-radical thought and harken back to our heritage, discovering that much of the knowledge about viable communities was known by our ancestors and then lost.

Community Grapevine

Many communities now put out newsletters. Here we summarize the most interesting, pertinent happenings, including our own collective efforts to form community. Here also we review important books and magazine articles.

Dear Communitas

Letters from our readers which we want to share.

Community Clearinghouse

This section puts people and communities in contact with each other, particularly existing communes and communities. New community builders face a common dilemma — e.g. people living in an urban commune with close personal relationships who desire to move to the country may not be able to agree on a location; on the other hand, those who do want to go to the same area are often scattered about and not personally close. The goal of *Clearinghouse* is to put you in contact with enough people in your area (actual and planned), so that a number of small groups emerge each with its own personal and geographic identity. The entries will be arranged alphabetically by states that people want to be in. This will enhance the *Clearinghouse's* usefulness to you.

continued inside back cover

Yellow Springs and Our Friends

Communitas, a new community journal? What's a new community journal? Well, it could be a new. . . . community journal or a journal about new community, and indeed it is both. Attention to the history and theory of "community" is mixed with news of what is developing now.

We have started *Communitas* in the Village of Yellow Springs, Ohio. Yellow Springs with Antioch College has a reputation as a progressive oasis within the Midwest. Few places in the U.S. have more intersections in the net of radical activism than are located here. *Communitas* was born within this tight spot in the net.

Communitas first began to coalesce New Year's Day 1972 at a Community Builders' weekend. These weekends had been organized by Ray and Pat Olds of Yellow Springs in an effort to bring folks interested in new community together for a few nights. Different people wanted to settle in as many different parts of the country. The idea of a clearinghouse for people and land grew. As people spoke about their different concepts and expectations of community it seemed that these ideas needed to brew a lot more. This sparked the plan for a new community journal. Gradually the New Community Project developed, incorporating clearinghouse and journal plans with the idea of a loan fund. As people were able to shift from other jobs more time was spent on the Project. We decided to concentrate first on the new community journal, adopting a name, *Communitas*.

Although conceived separately, *Communitas* has in many ways grown out of Community Service, Inc. of Yellow Springs. Community Service has been developing ideas and patterns of community for over thirty years. Much of the character of Yellow Springs and Antioch College is a result of Community Service's and its founder, Arthur Morgan's work.

This work continues with conferences, organizing in S.E. Ohio, consulting in S.W. Ohio on a new city plan, travel & speaking, book sales. One striking long term project has been support of Mitraniketana, a struggling community in southern India. Griscom Morgan of Community Service regularly counsels individuals and groups interested in community. It is to his hours of counsel and the support of all in the C.S. office that we owe direct thanks.

The enthusiasm of the *Yellow Springs News* for our ideas has helped us along in these first months of planning and initiating the *Communitas* effort. People at the *News* integrate daily living and work in ways we very much respect. In particular, Ken Champney of the *News* has spent many hours setting type, helping us with layout and freely giving of his knowledge and experience.

They have helped many movement press efforts in the past decades. Our announcement of *Communitas* was printed on the same sheets with issues of *The Peacemaker*. We shared tables with the Antioch College *Record* and the Wilmington College *Witness*. The folding machine that we used serves the *Dayton AFSC Newsletter*. So we are not the only ones who have the *Yellow Springs News* to thank.

Dear Communitas

I was very interested in your letter as well as in the enclosed memorandum concerning the New Communities Project [now *Communitas*]. I also believe that the impulse toward communities in general is slowly beginning to enter a second stage in which the more deeply searching and more difficult to attain fundamentals of real community life are being sought for and explored. It will be found that they are not innumerable. Certain basic elements will have not only to be pinpointed but one will have to understand the techniques and endeavors required to transform them from mere ideas into daily actions. Such processes are slow and cannot be detached from honest, equally slow processes of self-development. I know that everyone in Camphill will be glad if we can be of any help in this respect to anybody looking for such help. . . .

Carlo Pietzner, Camphill Village, N.Y.

Your new journal sounds as if it might fill a need. . . . I want to suggest that you feature two matters which have to do with building new communities which most people ignore. One is the system of land tenure and the other is the credit system to make it possible to get land and to finance building. You ought to include material on land trusts and on the experiment in which a few friends of mine at the University of N.H. are taking part [info on this in November *Communitas*]

Ralph Borsodi, New Hampshire

I was delighted to see your announcement of *Communitas*; it seems thoughtful, feelingful and practical—and much needed. Herewith my check. . . .

Good luck with the effort!

Gar Alperovitz, Cambridge Institute
Cambridge, Mass.

Please count me among your future contributors to *Communitas*, a good title and a good idea. Especially your emphasis on the shift from commune to community.

Also consider this just the first of many letters and articles to you—it's short because I want to get it off and find out when your next deadline is. Two projects underway here: 1. We're buying land and starting a community—and I'll send you a full description of our problems in finding people, land and money. We're looking for some more pioneers who are crazy enough to want to live in this absurd climate—there's still (March 15) snow on the ground and still coming down outside my study window at this very moment.

2. I'm beginning "research" on a book which concentrates on the more practical—economic, technical and political—aspects of making communities viable for a broad cross-section of the society. I'll send you an outline of the book. . . .

Robert Houriet
Vermont

So hello!

We're delighted to discover that the area we stumbled into is what [your] careful research would recommend; there's a constant dialogue around here: "Shouldn't we sell what we've got and move to West Virginia where land is \$25 an acre?" Maybe you have a good answer to that? . . .

It's going to take some dialogue, some living together, to figure out where we [Nethers-Communitas] all are in relation to each others' visions. My first impression, from reading your material, is that at the very least, we should be happy neighbors, fitting into the idea of a network of communities which could reinforce, and stimulate each other.

I will be very interested in your reaction to our material. . . .

Some possible points of divergence: . . . I wrote that and then turned to read your sheet on which mainly I find points of agreement: at least two similar communities nearby . . . that's really good; working with local people . . . immeasurably important; . . . "forming a sound economic base" ah . . . easier said than done; "bends technology to the needs of the people" . . . I hope this means finding out how to use technology without polluting (Can't you just see this horse and buggy gaily trotting back and forth between our communities?) Ah . . . "community will not succeed without participation of minorities" Here's a difference. 25 to 100 people (Nethers thinks of 25 people, we now have 16) . . . that's still small and intimate, it's like a marriage . . . the old saw that people of varying cultures and religions should not marry has some truth . . . cultural differences are hard to reconcile, especially at close range. . . I think you'd be smarter to have some communities of poor; some of middle class . . . and lots of co-operation between the two. . . . You are clearly more certain about chucking the nuclear family than I am.

Before I go on let me say that no matter what you say, and no matter how clearly you spell it out, people will gravitate to you for their own reasons, and project upon your aims their aims; and maybe you'll manage to be more soberly, sternly cold-bloodedly evaluative about this than I was. At least I'd advise you to be, I constantly give myself this advice. . . .

Carla, Nethers (school community)
Virginia

I have now had time to really read your prospectus, and I like it, it is clear and compelling, it is good. I even like *Communitas* better as a name than *Community*. Much better, dammit. Not that it's a perfect name, but it's pretty good, and better than mine. If you land around here permanently, which I hope you and Ellen will, it would be fun to be a part of the magazine staff. I have no illusions about spending the rest of my days editing copy and writing articles, but there might be some things I would enjoy doing. Anyway, I feel sure this magazine will "go." A tremendous gap to be filled, and it can fill it. As always, the rough time will be the early issues cost, but once over the hump it ought to be fully self-supporting and more. Hey, I can hardly wait for the first issue!

Ed Harris
Huntly, Va.

. . . I will eagerly devour any ideas which treat the problem of ownership of land (and other resources), and especially those which address themselves to ways to affect a transition between the present realities of private ownership & control and the longed for state of trusteeship over resources, as the American Indians practice(d).

Margaret DeMarco,
Moorestown, New Jersey

I just received your News Letter proclaiming the birth of *Communitas* and I was duly amazed cause this has been something that I and the community have wanted to do for a long time. It's a fantastic idea, now it will take a lot of dedication and want from people around the country to make it happen. To become that kind of center, that you want to become, will take a lot of heart, cause most of the people who have gone to live in communities, whether in a city or country, have joined in order to find that truth, that God given privilege to seek their own hearts in whatever way they choose. . . .

Dick, Fort Hill-American Avatar
Roxbury, Mass.

I never was much of a comunard and now, approaching 40, would have to convince one wife, two children, and several animals to partake in any moves I make. And they're not easily convinced. But basically I am one of those people (not so rare as they seem) who intensely enjoys what he's doing and where he's doing it. I like the mix of privacy and community that contemporary, average American life can give, and think that community can be achieved without "Community." I am half-inclined to agree with the social scientist who said that in retrospect the 1970's may be considered the last Golden Age—the last time a mass of people enjoyed a high standard of living and personal freedom before society began to pay the price in scarcities and rationing. And real snooping.

Though I wouldn't live in a capital "C" Community, I like the idea of them. Different strokes. . . . The economic base should precede if possible the Community. Industry Outlives Ideology. Put that on your bumper sticker (by the way, that would be a nice cottage industry—personalized bumperstickers at \$5-\$10 each—it's our national means of expression, and no one has really capitalized on it yet . . .). I think bumperstickers could be called "non-exploitive." Especially if made out of recycled paper. Remember, before it turned to silver, the Oneida colony made most of its money on Newhouse's deadly animal traps.

I'd like to see the journal and I'd like to contribute to it. I'd stay away from my own lack of enthusiasm for communal living and extended families, but would like to suggest several formulae for success. The most important rule—and one which I'd back up with historical and contemporary examples—is to stay loose, to have a minimal ideology and minimal formalization. In a sense, with community the harder you try the more apt you are to fail, whereas the most viable Communities "just grew" out of a small set of important, commonly-held values.

Mike Halberstam, Washington, D.C.

communitas people

Ellen Don
Brian Marlene
Margot Carol

and helpful friends

Pat & Ray Olds
Joyce Sirlin
Musa Kadish
Susan & Charles Knight
Henry & Chris Bolter
Hank Maiden
Larry Grauman
Ralph & Lyla Templin
Bob Fogarty
Barbara Wallraff
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Contents

Virginia: the new dominion of community	4
Would you believe a newsletter?	12
Homer Morris conference on community	14
Philadelphia Life Center	16
Alpha: a new community in Oregon	20
A community of communes	36
Trekin' thru West Virginia	42
Conversation with Jud Jerome	24
Yellow Springs and our friends	1
Dear Communitas	1
A community forming in Canada	30
The Village: a poem	31
Communitas folk	41
Community queries	35
Pioneer Health	46
Grapevine	47
Community calendar	47
Community loan fund	52
Clearinghouse	53
Reviews	57
Resources	59
Credits	41
Unclassifieds	58
How you can help Communitas	60
Ads	61
Coming issues	64

Virginia



The New Dominion of Community

Virginia, the Old Dominion, the once formidable bastion of conservatism, is becoming an area where new radical communities are putting down roots. Twin Oaks was the first new community in 1967, and now in 1972 Acorn has become the eighth we know of. The approximate location of all these groups is shown on the illustrated map.

Radical ideas do have their precedents in Virginia's history. Thomas Jefferson founded the University of Virginia in 1819 with the stipulation that students were permitted to select whatever subjects they wished to pursue in any order that pleased them for as long as they liked. He opposed the granting of degrees on the grounds that they were "artificial embellishments." Jefferson was also a genius at creating ecologically sound, labor-saving devices for his Monticello home. Clearly, there are radical roots in Virginia's past well worth tapping!

New communities are locating in Virginia for several reasons. The mild climate is quite attractive. Winter starts in late December and ends in mid-March. In January, when it is an average of 11 degrees in Caribou, Maine, it is 41 degrees in Norfolk, Va. Richmond, Va., has not had a below zero temperature in *eight years*. The growing season near Charlottesville, Va., is 210 days, with April 20 to October 20 being frost free. This greatly increases the income potential for organic farming, makes heating of greenhouses and homes quite inexpensive, and even makes solar heating feasible. Such cost savings would offset higher land costs (compared, for example, to West Virginia). Another attraction of Virginia is the low population density in those counties about 75-125 miles from Washington, D.C. There are 26 counties with less than 30 people per square mile and less than 10,000 people per county. This is partly explained by Virginia being a large state (6000 square miles larger than Maine) that is not yet highly industrialized.

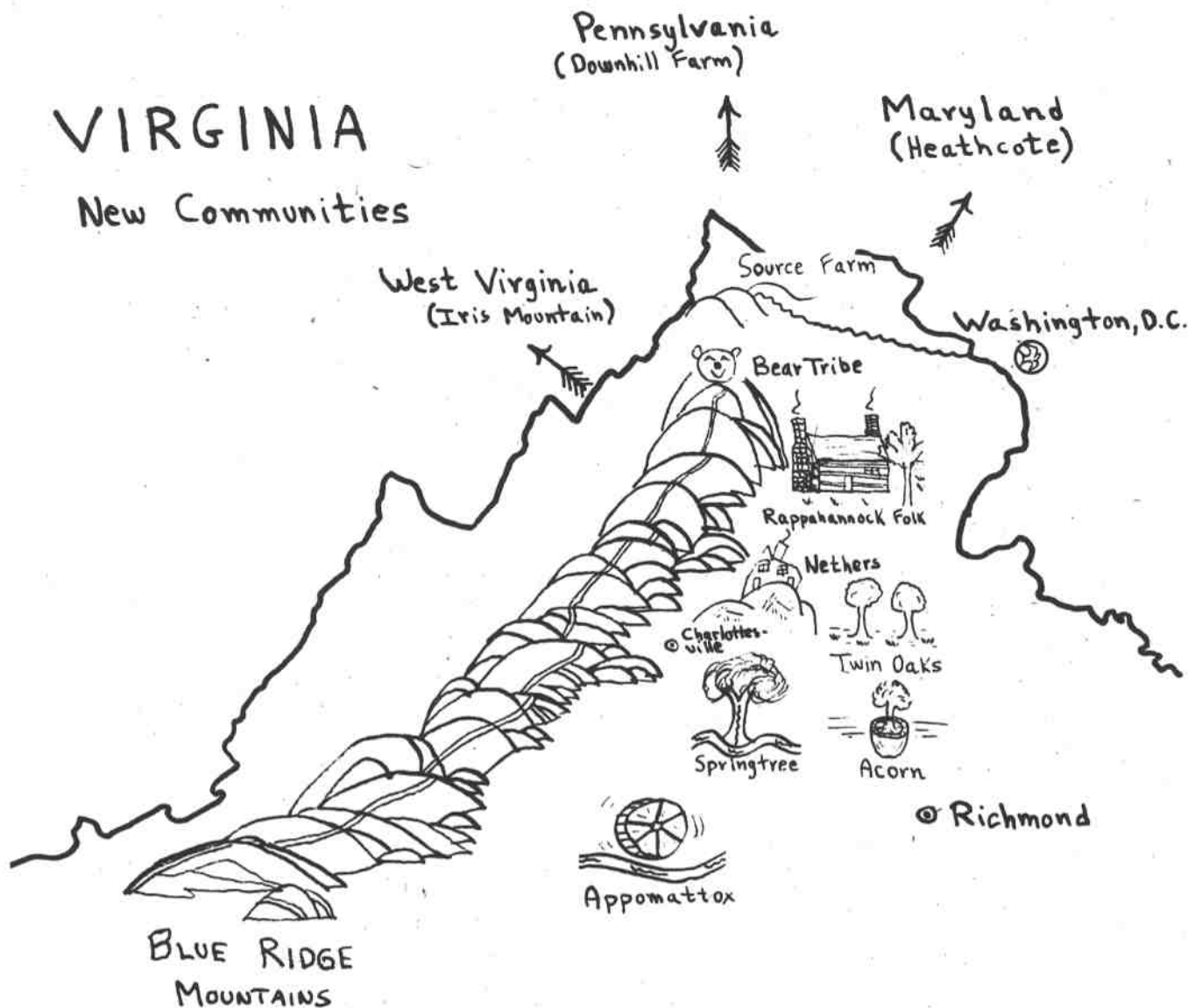
Geographically, counties within fifty miles of Charlottesville, Va., seem to be the most promising for location of new communities. These counties are two hours drive from downtown Washington, D.C. and only one hour from Richmond, Va. Washington and Richmond would be excellent markets for organic produce, and trucks could easily make *two* trips a day. Other major cities do not have such rural areas until you get *two* hundred miles away from them. Washington also has a large, mobile, liberal-radical population to provide new members. There is no need to elaborate the educational, professional and cultural advantages of being near Washington, Richmond and Charlottesville. These cities would provide part time jobs and training for those professionally inclined and keep new communities from becoming too isolated and provincial.

Eventually, new communities could have significant political control over their own lives. Virginia is the only state in the country that allows areas with population over 1000 people to incorporate and become a town, and then, at a population of 5000, become an independent city. These towns and cities are almost entirely separate from the county government, particularly the cities.* Relating to conservative people has not been a serious problem for existing groups. The major problem has been the \$200-\$500/acre price of land.

Springtree

Turning now to existing new communities, one of the most interesting we visited during March of 1972 was Springtree, half an hour's drive southeast of Charlottesville, Va. As we arrived they were planting their early garden and staking out an acre of grapes. The group is almost entirely families, with parents in their late 20's and early 30's. Most of the children are young elementary school age. Presently, there are 12 adults

*See *Locating New City: The Case for Virginia*—a 70-page study by Brian Bouton of *Communitas*.



and 8 children, and they want more young people and old people.

Their 100 acres of land is beautiful. We entered on a winding dirt road, a third of a mile in from the state road. Our first view was of the half finished (floor in, half walls in) first building. It is long and rectangular with two sleeping lofts. The south sleeping loft looks down a gentle slope to the Hardware river — fairly fast flowing, 10-15 feet wide, both swimmable and canoeable. The new building will be used for living quarters this summer, but eventually will serve as a general purpose workshop and office area.

Springtree people originally met at the 1971 Twin Oaks conference on community, and then on August 26, 1971 put the following letter in the Leaves of Twin Oaks:

"We are in the process of becoming an incorporated community—a legal person — and we have bought ourselves a farm. It is 25 miles from TO, with whom we hope to cooperate extensively. It is a beautiful

place with 50 acres of oak woods and 1/3 mile of river frontage. There is a great gnarled tree with a spring coming out of its roots — from this we get our name.

... We have set an eventual goal of fourteen families as the limit that the land can support in comfort. Our children will live with their parents until they are old enough to decide for themselves where they want to live. There will be a communal nursery, but it will not become the child's home as in the kibbutz. We plan to cook, eat, launder, garden, swim, etc. collectively. Each family will have a private place of its own (probably two rooms with an entrance on a public corridor) to which they can retire. Like Twin Oaks, we plan to use the labor credit and manager systems, which have impressed us with their efficiency in eliminating hassles. Our new farm has no buildings on it, [hence the low price of \$250/acre — Ed.], but we hope to start our first building this fall . . ."

One of the members, Eric Cole, was able to move onto the land right away. Luckily, Eric was skilled at

construction and began work on their first building. The other people have commuted on weekends from North Carolina, Chicago and Washington, staying at a nearby rented farmhouse.

Springtree folk are putting many hours into organic gardening. Around Thanksgiving they dug asparagus trenches and planted 100 asparagus crowns and six rhubarb plants, mulching them with old hay. They also set and mulched 36 fruit trees (dwarf apple and pear, cherry, plum, nectarine, peach and fig). They bailed ice water out of the huge tree holes, and set the trees in a mixture of leaf-mold, old sawdust, bone meal, lime, rock phosphate, cow manure and topsoil. This spring they eagerly awaited the resurrection of last fall's work.

In addition to the early and late vegetable gardens, there are sites for berry plants and a grape vineyard. They plan to produce most of their own food, with some left over for cash sale. The grape experiment, 560 French hybrid vines on one acre, is their first step toward major cash income from the land. They hope to break even within three years and then have an income of \$1000/acre of grapes. If the first acre is successful, grapes will provide their *primary* source of income within ten years.

Although they espouse no particular ideology, Springtree people share beliefs in natural, organic foods, permissive child rearing (e.g. learning to stay out of the kids' fights), interest in the human potential movement, and a desire to live harmoniously with nature. Issues like political or sexual activity are weighed as they come up.

Relationships with local people are good. They say, "our new neighbors are gentle, friendly and helpful. Our ignorance in such matters as tractors, goats, thistle eradication and dairying is abysmal, and we have gotten good advice . . . they agree with us about the horrors of city living and realize that one of the farmer's greatest difficulties is finding reliable labor. The sharing of tools and labor is a common practice here . . ."

Newsletters from Springtree devote pages to children and how they grow and learn in a community setting. A school for the older children will start this summer; one possible plan is for each child to receive an hour a day of "lessons" plus extra reading with an adult. Adult labor is scarce and they are concerned about how much time "school" will take. They hope that Springtree itself will be a considerable resource. Children find the "woods, fields, river and creeks of Springtree are a wonderful playground. The kids bring back rocks, bugs, mushrooms, leaves and turtles . . . two playhouses are under construction down in the woods and we are getting requests for technical advice (How do you keep a wall from falling down?)" The oldest child at Springtree is nine and they feel it is more important for children this age to run and play than to sit still and study.

We were quite impressed with Springtree, indeed tempted to become provisional members. Their effort at blending community, children and ecology together is one of the most promising we have seen yet. The setting is idyllic: rolling fields and gardens, river and cliff. We had reservations about their plans to be one

large commune with only one kitchen and one dining room. Twin Oaks itself is in the process of "decentralizing" their facilities, so that people can share living and eating space with several close friends. Tree people pointed out that the "single commune" nature of their community is not a certainty yet, but they are leaning in that direction. We left there feeling very good about our all too short visit, but fairly certain we had yet to find our kind of community.

Appomattox

Twenty-five miles south of Springtree, Stonewall Mill Farm is just starting on 90 acres of beautiful farmland in Appomattox county. Penny Shea lives there with her three daughters (ages 4-12) in a big old farmhouse. They have a large, fascinating old grist mill that was still operating just 4-5 years ago. They are eager to meet other people interested in community, and Springtree people themselves just made a visit there. Penny's land is also bordered by a good sized river. It seems that a pond or river is an essential to get through those hot Virginia summers! Penny described this for us in a down-to-earth letter:

"My three young daughters, Julie, 13, Emily, 4 and Amy, 1, acquired 93 acres in Appomattox in December, and moved here in early January 1972. We have about 80 acres in hilly, rocky timberland, and about 14 cleared acres suitable for farming. The property includes a six-room house, a three-story mill, a log cabin, a tobacco drying barn, and several other outbuildings, all in fairly good repair, but needing paint. Wreck Island Creek runs through the property, as well as several other smaller streams. A large dam, waterfall, and mill pond are added features. A lightly traveled state maintained dirt road divides the property; except for that, we are quite secluded. The nearest neighbor lives a mile away.



Farmhouse at Appomattox

Our life style is very simple. We have no telephone, no TV, use an outhouse, and our water supply comes from a gravity spring. We use wood burning stoves for heat and cook on a gas stove. We have electricity and hot and cold running water.

We have goats, chickens, bees, a horse, a large organic garden, fruit and nut trees, lots of berry vines and bushes. We will can, freeze, and preserve our garden produce, as well as all the wild foods (including mushrooms) we forage.

I believe that separate dwellings are important for the success of a community, so individuals or families joining us will be expected to build themselves a dwelling separate from those here. I also believe a good community includes the full age range. One of the people planning to join us soon is 71 years old. An eighteen year old woman, and a twenty-four year old man will be here by July. We hope to break down the roles into which men and women have been cast. We hope to be nearly perfect, ecologically.

We want to be a service to the community around us. Some ideas we have along these lines are to work with the farmers around us for barter and trade, sending haying teams out, etc, being available to help during those times when the work load is heavy and help for the farmers is scarce, perhaps thereby providing encouragement and hope to small farmers who are giving up, quitting farming, and going to the city to work because they can't make enough money farming.

Another idea we have is to get our mill running again on a small scale. In addition to this, we hope to make the mill available for groups for conferences. We have a kitchen in the mill, and the open spaces could easily accommodate 50-75 people for sleeping and group meetings.

Some ideas we have for making money are teaching, making and selling crafts (I am a weaver and potter, do macrame, and am teaching myself leather

work, and am learning chair caning). We also plan to grow and sell herbs for our main source of income.

We hope to develop our community with a spiritual emphasis, including Quaker Meetings.

To date we have no name. We have to be here a while and feel out what our name will be.

Through talking with the neighbors, after moving here, I learned that this place, a long time ago, was a community in full swing, including a store, mill, wheelwright, blacksmith, and tannery.

We have been very well received here in the community. The people are very friendly and helpful, and are good, genuine people. I have met most of the neighbors through attending the local churches, which in the country is a very important part of the community. I have taught my Sunday School class at the Methodist Church, and helped give a program on welfare and poverty to the women's group there. That was interesting because I am living on welfare.

I have gotten a cooperative babysitting arrangement going here, with the objective of freeing mothers one day a week. I am also working with the Agricultural Extension Office on educating the poor about low cost, high protein foods, such as soybeans, sprouts, and brewer's yeast.

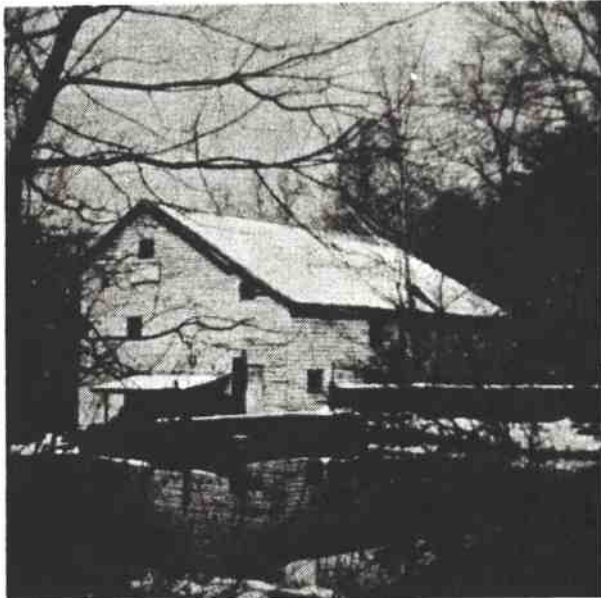
Many of our friends from Washington have been here on week-ends, helping with the work of repairing and painting the house, clearing brush, building a fence, hauling away the junk piles. We ask visitors to contribute \$1.00 per visit to help cover the cost of food."

Twin Oaks

Twin Oaks, located on 123 acres near Louisa, Virginia is now five years old and almost 50 members strong. Marnie Oats of Twin Oaks says, in *Women: A Journal of Liberation* Vol 2 No. 4, "Twin Oaks is a community of people trying to live experimentally and equitably. It is modelled after B.F. Skinner's utopian novel, *Walden Two*, which describes a community based on behavioral principles, a labor credit system, and a planner-manager form of decision making. We believe that the environment shapes the individual and that if one has a system of labor distribution and government that prevents exploitation, it will be difficult for any person to abuse another." There are three planners who appoint managers for housing, health, gardens, visitors etc. Power trips are avoided by denying planners and managers any extra labor credits for the work they do.

Twin Oaks members are putting down roots. The rate of turnover has dramatically decreased and members are increasingly able to devote time to the community movement as a whole. Erik Rolfsen has helped *Communitarian*, *Alternatives Magazine* and *Comunitas* in their beginning efforts at reporting the community movement. Other members have helped the communities of Springtree and Acorn (see below) get started.

Turnover is so low that new members have to wait a year for a room. Five years ago the average stay was three months, but now the average stay is over a year and many members have no intention of leaving. The drop in turnover has also helped them set up a routine for admission of new members:



The Mill at Appomattox



Twin Oaks' new building, Ta-Chai, seen through the rye.

"People who want to join come and stay for two weeks as visitors. Community members then fill out a poll on them, telling whether they like them or not, consider them good workers, think their opinions acceptable, and generally want to accept them as members. After that the applicant goes on a waiting list. When we have an opening (somebody leaves or we build new rooms), we take the person on the waiting list who was most highly recommended by the membership. If the recommendations look very similar, we take the applicants first come, first admit."

Twin Oaks has no children. Although this has diminished the relevance of their efforts, members have strongly felt they should get themselves together before taking on the considerable task of raising young ones. Marnie Oats writes . . . "When I arrived at Twin Oaks two years ago, women's consciousness was very low . . . To become a manager of an area a woman needed to be twice as competent as a man . . . Then everyone got together for people's liberation meetings . . . women wanted men to be able to touch each other affectionately; we wanted to be talked with and listened to more in groups; we wanted to be allowed to hammer if we were clumsy at first . . . after that there were slow steady changes . . . Now most overt chauvinistic and repressive behaviors have been eliminated here".

How well they have freed themselves from stereo-

typed sexual roles will be put to the test in the Spring of 1973 when they expect their first child. That means the conception (conceptions?) will take place around the time of Twin Oaks' July 1972 conference on community — it should be a very productive conference! Can't you just see Twin Oakers changing five or six sets of diapers next Spring? All jokes aside, we are glad to see them take this great leap forward.

Twin Oaks is also doing very well financially. Last year they sold 1200 hammocks (about \$36,000 gross income), and 1972 should be even better, mostly because of better sales efforts and advertising. Their total income was about \$145,000 — one quarter from hammocks, one third from outside work and almost one half from smaller industries and lecture invitations.

With more people wanting to join and fewer members leaving, Twin Oaks is experiencing the pain of success. They want to take more people but cannot because of inadequate kitchen facilities. A new kitchen and children's building are under construction, but meantime the "line at the front door gets longer and longer." Even with their relatively small size some members already feel they want to live in a small family-sized group, rather than a large, *Walden Two* type community. This was stated in the Leaves of Twin Oaks as follows:

"What if Twin Oaks consisted of several domestic units instead of just one? Each could have its own kitchen and dining, its own sleeping units, and its own yard. Each could be separated from the others by fields



Ta Chai up close - all do-it-yourself, too

and woods. But all could share in a common treasury and a common labor pool. Each subgroup could determine its own size — some staying small and others growing large. Each could have slightly different life styles — some perhaps vegetarian, some mystical . . . The Twin Oaks structures [governmental] would still insure basic equality, while the decentralist trend would allow for different experiments on a domestic level. We talked a lot about this plan and we like it . . . So here is the plan: Twin Oaks will buy a farm . . .”

Acorn

And thus Acorn was born. This plan has much in common with the plans in the *Community of Communes* article on page 36. It also parallels the central idea in *Communitas*' plan for a rural new community, to wit:

“In larger communities it is advantageous to have several houses with distinct (primarily communal) groups in each one. People can flow back and forth between the more personal communal setting and the more varied community scene”.

Acorn is not only a group of people (Twin Oakers and people from the waiting list), but it is now a place. They just made an offer on a farm three miles away from Twin Oaks and it appears it will be accepted. Three months ago, at the Homer Morris conference, Dave of Acorn summed up what they hoped to become:

“Acorn will exist before six months are up. Right now we are looking for land close to Twin Oaks, since

we want to be closely affiliated with them. We will have labor and government systems similar to theirs. Acorn is not just a replica of Twin Oaks: we want to keep our eventual size down to 25 whereas they are interested in ever expanding. We will have a more spiritual, mystical emphasis, though we won't turn away agnostics. We will strive for more closeness and harmony. We want to simplify our needs, be closer to the land and harness the energy of sun, water and wind. The birth of Acorn is not because of ideological differences with Twin Oaks.”

Nethers Community School

Fifty miles northwest of Acorn and Twin Oaks, nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains, is Nethers Community School. Nethers is in Rappahannock county, where land is unfortunately skyrocketing in price (from \$300 to \$500/acre for parcels over 200 acres). They own 27 acres with a large main house perched on top of a pasture hill. People live communally in the large house, but hope to occupy individual structures as they are built.

There is a school for students ages 11-18 and plans for a future village for inner-city poor. With less than five students, the school is struggling along. They want more students, but limited funds force them to rely on mostly word-of-mouth advertising. They see their Community School as “blurring the normal boundaries between life and school. Everything that happens here is school — bull sessions, classes, community meetings,

building houses, organic farming, sleeping under the stars, caring for animals, music, dance and poetry." Their advice to students has the flavor of Summerhill: "If you choose to daydream in the meadow, that may be what you need to do . . . Don't expect life here to be easy . . . The freedom to control your own time may be a bit frightening at first. Then it begins to feel natural".

Their diet is almost entirely organic foods and newcomers are offered brown rice, goat milk, soy beans, whole grain bread, Walnut Acres peanut butter, etc. One member, Carla, was able to conquer twenty years of asthma and throw away her Tedral by keeping to an organic diet of fresh fruit, vegetables and nuts.

Nethers has good relationships with neighbors. Local authorities have visited and were surprisingly helpful. Nearby people have brought over compost, vegetables, and home-baked apple pies; others have cleared out snow, helped track down a lost horse and subscribed to *Notes from Nethers*.

Nethers does face problems outside their control. The high price of land (\$550 per acre) will discourage other groups from settling nearby. Nethers was forced to let options lapse on two contiguous tracts of land because the price was too high. We (*Communitas*) favored Rappahannock over all Virginia counties, but have now ruled it out because of a near doubling of land prices there in the last two years. Another problem for Nethers is their land itself — the acreage is too small for any significant growth, and there is no swimming or forest area near the house, which becomes important in hot summer weather.

Ragged Mountain

Going further west, into the big mountains of Rappahannock, you come to Ragged Mountain. William Pettie owns several hundred acres of land there and has declared it to be open land. Pettie and his wife live off and on in the *Orchard House* which is open 24 hours a day for visitors, if they give some advance

notice of their coming.

Members of the Bear Tribe are living in the woods across from the Pettie's house. The only information we have about them is from the October 1971 *Seed*:

"The Bear Tribe is . . . a group of traditional Indians and non-Indian people who are coming together and learning to place their dependencies upon the Earth Mother and each other. We began in November 1970 and have grown in number from 5 to 150 since then. We have eighteen bases in California and also have land in Maine and Virginia . . . we look to get people out on the land, help them get their heads straight and learn to really live together as brothers and sisters. We have three laws necessary at this time: no hard drugs, no alcohol and no possessive trips, either of people, of things, or of land. Indians felt they were not *owners* but *keepers* of the Earth: you cannot sell your mother . . . We have respect for all life, whether it grows rooted with a stalk or with feet and two legs . . . we see ourselves as a tribe of teachers . . . our children belong to the tribe as a whole".

Rappahannock County

During the spring of 1971 we wrote to Virginia realtors about land for sale, and then in June four of us from the New City Project in Cambridge, Mass. went on a field trip to Virginia. We had written to one realtor in Rappahannock named Ed who lived with his wife Miriam at Hidden Valley Farm. We expected to meet a Virginia gentleman dressed for the hunt, but as Miriam greeted us, we noticed a copy of Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch* on the table, and then Ed came in, an eloquent, affable 55 year old with long flowing grey hair! That shook up our stereotypes about Virginians!

On our last Virginia trip in March 1972 we met with many of Ed and Miriam's young friends who are wholeheartedly into organic farming and homesteading.

They are also helping Ed and Miriam battle the con-



Foothill land in
Rappahannock's Blue
Ridge Mountains

struction of a high intensity power line right across their property. Unfortunately, the price of land forces these young people to rent. Ed and Miriam used to own an 800 acre farm with a very large Victorian type farmhouse, and they wish they still had the land so their friends could join in and create a community. Ed gave us a brief rundown of their cooperative efforts:

"As you know, it's just a number of people who have settled down in the Flint Hill area of Rappahannock County, in clusters on various parcels of land, around twenty in all, and we've gotten to know each other and like each other because each of us is interested in getting back to the land, in being close to nature, in growing things, in feeling warmth and offering what help we can to other living things, including human beings, and in having the broad natural goals of non-violence, non-competitiveness, non-pecking order, and no hassling. Nearly everyone has his own vegetable garden, and we share rototillers and information on organic methods and sometimes share tree pruning (apple trees) and often share our leisure time, bringing each other natural-made bread, granola, and so on. It's not really a "community" at all, but a loose grouping of like-minded individuals, but we have some sound ideas for the future and we know that we live in some of the most beautiful mountain foothills in America. I think basically what we share is a common belief in a workable alternative life style. As to income, some operate a local drive-in theatre, one alternately works in a local garment-making plant and does housework, two work as teachers in a Montessori School, several do landscape gardening and sometimes fence-building for gentleman farmers, and so it goes.

Denny has just moved from an old log cabin to a very old, small stone house three miles back in the foothills, (no plumbing, of course, but he is happy). Jeffrey, Kevin and Barrett, along with Annie and Elice, are operating the drive-in and the snack bar, which offers among other things organic foods and bread. Peggy, whose father is a Philadelphia doctor,

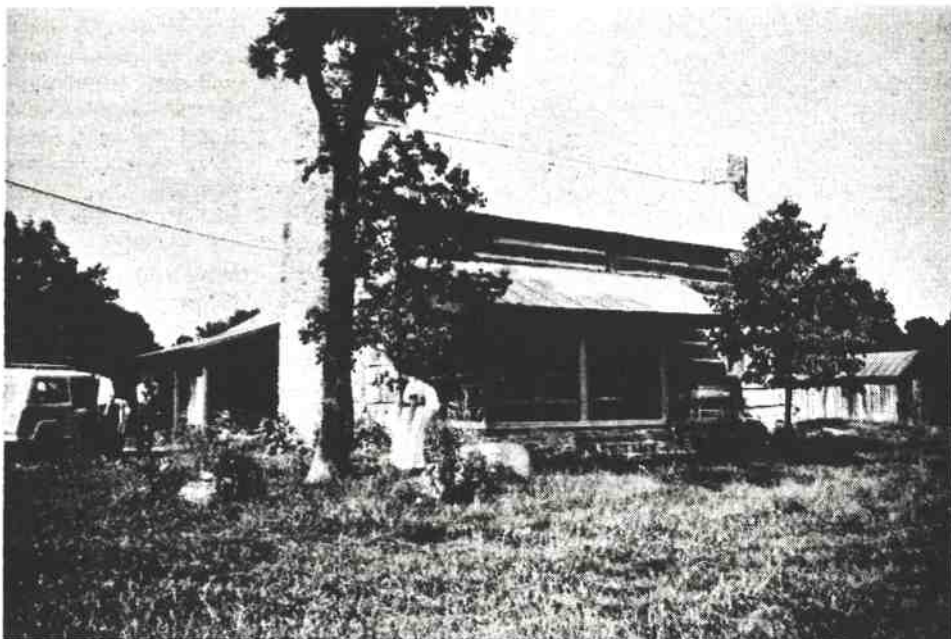
works like a man at landscaping and other jobs. Ginnie fixed up a very old, falling down frame house on a large farm, also sans plumbing, and in exchange for the house helps an 83-year-old farm hand with the fencing and other jobs. Billsie and Linda have a great garden, are into Yoga and many other things, love their horses, dogs, cats and goats (they drink as much goat milk as possible and give or exchange the excess for eggs, etc). Dick and Nancy make Oom Bars which they sell to health food stores. Winder Bill often goes to Charlottesville to lead Yoga classes. Ed and Miriam, the "patriarch and matriarch" of the community, have lived in the county for nearly two decades and try to smooth the transition for many of the newcomers from city life to the country alternative style."

Source Farm

The final community we know about is the Source Collective, which has a thirty-acre farm in Shenandoah county in north-western Virginia. We met Rex Chisholm in Washington, D.C. where six of them are putting out the Source catalog. Their first issue is an excellent compilation of movement groups in the area of communication. Their next two issues look particularly interesting. The first will be on urban community and the second on rural community. They had so much material, that two separate issues on community were needed. In addition to more catalogs, they plan to run an organizer's resource and training center. As soon as they recruit a few more people, some of them will be at the farm and some in D.C. They may be the first group to operate rural and urban bases successfully.

There are three communities very close to Virginia which we will report on in a later issue. These are Iris Mountain in Unger, West Virginia, Downhill Farm near Hancock, Maryland and Heathcote in Freeland, Maryland. These communities have joined with those in Virginia to circulate a round-robin newsletter among themselves, the details of which are summarized on the next page.

New City Project
people at the
Harris' log cabin



Would you believe a newsletter?

“Surely we can already feel
the precursory breath of the
great wind which is arising,
striking us in rapid gusts...”

de Chardin

At the Homer Morris Fund meeting at Tanguy April 18-19 there was a discussion of regional cooperation, particularly of rural communities in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia. We agreed that though all of us were resistant to formal organization, we needed more communication and exchange. I volunteered to start a round-robin newsletter which might circulate among these communities carrying personal and practical news. We thought the communities involved should be close enough (e.g., a half-day's drive) so that the people could become personally acquainted in time. Though we want very much to figure out a good way of relating to the many urban communes (e.g., in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Washing-

ton, Baltimore), we thought that an association with a large membership would quickly become too impersonal. We thought a round-robin format would have several advantages: if your community receives such a newsletter you have a motive to participate personally and to send it on rapidly. We agreed that each of our communities has a web of other relationships — which might be interested or might be helpful, and that nothing prevented our copying information from the newsletter to send to others (or, indeed, photocopying the newsletter and sending it to others who are not on the distribution list); therefore information should not be included which is a security risk. I am sending this initial announcement to some indivi-

duals who were present at the meeting, but whose names do not appear below on the list of communities; if the number of recipients grows too large, the round-robin letters will lose currency in the process of circulation. If you want to receive the newsletter regularly, and your name is not on the list below, I suggest that you arrange for this by contacting the community closest to you. If your community does not want to participate, I would appreciate your letting me know. If you do want to participate:

1) Decide which individual in your group will be chiefly responsible for receiving and sending on the newsletter.

2) Write that name on the enclosed sheet, adding a brief description of your community, including an inventory of resources which might be available to others for sale, barter, etc., including skills (e.g., "We have an electrician, pediatrician, accountant, etc.").

3) Put in any news, comments, etc., you want to share. One device might be to post the newsletter for a couple of days, an open invitation for individuals to write on comments, draw pictures, or what have you.

4) Within a week, mail the newsletter on to the next community on the list.

There are twelve communities on this original list. Some of them were not present at the meeting and may not want to be included. There may be others which should be included. (Adding a community is simple: send this explanation and the newsletter to them, with instructions as to which community they should send the letter to next.) Since I am mailing this simultaneously to all twelve, that will put twelve letters in circulation — which doesn't seem to me to be too many, as some will surely disappear. (Figuring on a week per community for receiving, adding info, sending it on, a single letter will take 12 weeks to go the rounds.) When a circulating letter comes back to you, you can snip off your last entry, so it doesn't get too bulky.

Nothing, of course, *limits* you to this means of communication. You may well want to write some of these communities directly, or establish closer relationships. Also, bulletins could go out at any time. For instance, one community has 2000 bushels of apples in cold storage it needs to dispose of. They also need labor for pruning. Another might have an encounter group leader available and looking for action. Some emergencies or opportunities won't wait until the letter circulates. We by no means intended to create an "organization," to set up "rules," or to create obligations. We hope to foster interaction and cooperation. There were ideas about group medical plans, a credit union, and other more elaborate cooperative arrangements — and these might well develop if someone has the energy to initiate and formulate. For now we just wanted to set off a gust that might contribute to the great wind.

Jud Jerome — Downhill

1. Downhill Farm
Hancock, Maryland 21750

2. Twin Oaks and Acorn
Louisa, Virginia 23093

3. Springtree Community
Scottsville, Virginia 24590

4. Nethers Community School
Woodville, Virginia 22749

5. Heathcote
School of Living
Freeland, Md. 21053

6. Iris Mountain
Unger, West Va. 25447

7. Tanguy Homesteads
c/o Ruben Close
RD 1, Box 174
Glen Mills, Pa. 19342

8. Full Circle Farm RD 1
Beavertown, Pa. 17813

9. Oneida II
West Mifflin, Pa. 15122

10. Ragged Mountain Ranch
Sperryville, Va. 22749

11. Walden 3
Annex Station Box 1152
Providence, R.I. 02901

Gust no. 1

This is mailed (3/26/72) simultaneously to 12 communities on the list. Please add news about your community and, within a week, mail to next community on list. (If you want to participate.)

Downhill Farm — Presently 7 people in 3 large buildings on 100 acres. We are just starting (March), and hope to grow. We have for sale, barter or gifts: a large natural gas furnace, sundry chicken-raising pieces of equipment such as gas brooders, feeders, etc., and need a truck, siding, garden implements. We are doing a book (on a grant from a foundation in New York, The Twentieth Century Fund, to Judson Jerome) covering the contemporary commune movement, so have much information on communes, files of periodicals, books, professors, and some office equipment. We are working too hard now to spend much time with visitors, but you can call us at 717-294-3345 if you want to get in touch. And we aren't all *that* anti-social.

Contact: Herb Goldstein

[Two more communities, Appomatox Farm and Source Farm, should be added to this list. For details see Virginia... article and Grapevine-Ed]

Homer Morris Conference On Community

(March 23-25, 1972)

For the last twenty years, the Homer Morris Fund has sponsored conferences on intentional communities. The fund has about seventeen thousand dollars with which it makes short term loans to groups genuinely involved in the new community movement. This past year loans were made to groups like Koinonia in Americus, Georgia and Mulberry Farm in Arkansas. About thirty people attended the conference, and there were several interesting developments.

New Journals on Community

First of all, Walden Three people arrived with their magazine, *Communitarian*. They printed up 10,000 copies and were visiting various cities arranging distribution. Their magazine is aimed toward mainstream America, and they hope to make enough profit to move out of the city and buy land for their own rural community, yet maintaining an urban base for members working on the magazine. Their orientation is Skinnerian and they have a number of their people well trained in electronics, carpentry and plumbing.

Secondly, *Communitas* (represented by Brian) arrived with an armful of four page announcements about our journal. Brian pointed out that we were aiming at a more selected audience than *Communitarian*, namely those people already involved or seriously interested in new communities.

Erik Rolfsen from Twin Oaks expressed concern that we avoid needlessly duplicating magazines, and that he had already felt personal conflict about which magazines to send articles to. Finally, he expressed the hope that we would keep channels of communication open to resolve the inevitable conflicts that will arise. Another person felt that the people they knew in communities did not want to sit down and read magazines. Replying to that, Brian said, "it depends whether the magazine meets their needs and enables them to get in touch with the kind of people and ideas that enrich their lives and help them do more than just scratch an existence from the land. We are concerned about the rural areas and their loss of young people to the cities. We hope our journal will enable rural people and new community people to mutually help each other and begin to revitalize rural America. That we have all this interest in communication about communities now makes this an exciting moment for me." Jack McLanahan of Tanguy then added, "Personally, I welcome the yeasty proliferation of journals. To try and limit this now would be out of order. Hopefully, they will overlap, rather than directly conflict."

In addition to the birth of two journals on community, there was the creation of an informal, round-robin newsletter whose main purpose is to increase re-

gional cooperation among the rural new communities of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia. This is described further in the article on Virginia beginning on page 4. That article also contains several current reports from communities present at the Homer Morris Conference. The following summarizes reports from Koinonia, the Llano del Rio case, and Full Circle Farm.

Reports About Communities

Al Zook talked about Koinonia which is in Americus, Georgia and now almost 30 years old. They are an agriculturally based, deeply Christian group of thirty people. Although most families live in individual homes, there is extensive cultural and economic cooperation. Over half their members are black, and there are an additional fifty semi-transient people living there at any one time.

Presently they have 1400 acres and are trying to buy 200 more. An eventual goal is to get this land back into usership by the local, black people who are natives there, and also bring back those blacks who have left for the city. Their biggest problem with land buying is the high rate of interest charged. Members practice what they call "partnership farming" and raise vegetables, peanuts, corn and grapes. Since they believe land is for usership, not ownership, members own title to the houses, but not to the land itself. Houses are sold to members over a 20 year period with no interest charged. Members are given a thirty year, renewable lease on their land, and have to keep it up and pay the land taxes. Through their *Fund for Humanity*, money is lent to members at no interest to purchase seed and equipment. With thousands of visitors a year, they find it hard to keep up with their growth, as evidenced by their already having 29,000 people on their mailing list.



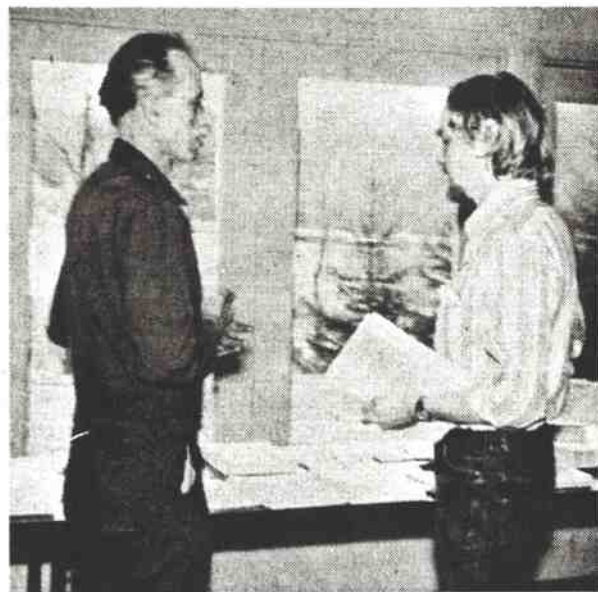
Griscom Morgan & David French confer

Llano del Río was a large cooperative community of over 300 people which fell apart in 1936 due to internal political strife, after twenty-two years of existence in Vernon Parish, Louisiana. The 20,000 acres of land (worth \$17 million in 1936) was sold for a trifle by conspiring local officials. Most of the land is now in the hands of the Anderson-Post Lumber company. The original shareholders of Llano pursued their case in court, and almost won it when they ran out of funds. Presently, people from Twin Oaks and Community Service are encouraging young people interested in the future of the new community movement to buy stock from these original shareholders and continue the struggle legally. There are about 17,000 shares valued at the nominal sum of \$1.00 a share. If the funds or land could be recovered, it would be a significant victory for the people's movement — e.g. making it financially possible for poor people and minorities to become a significant part of the new community movement. Erik and Josie Rolfsen from Twin Oaks recently spent two weeks investigating the Llano situation, and feel that the case, although legally complicated, is still worth our time and money. (Communitas will gladly forward any offers of time, money and talent to Erik and Josie).

Communitas feels the following report is of particular interest to groups of families planning to form a new community. It is from a talk by Betty Weismell of *Full Circle Farm*, and describes the problems they ran into with refreshing openness:

Full Circle Farm: "Well, it started out as a group of five families and eight children. My husband, child and I arrived a year ago after one of the original families left because the work required for the orchard did not leave them enough time for their other interests. The land is beautiful — 112 acres, 70 of them orchard and was bought for \$550 per acre. The people got together before buying the orchard, and there was a division between those wanting to do large scale organic orcharding and those wanting to do subsistence only. Most of the big capital-big orchard people have left and we will now probably diversify and not do the orchard as large as last year. The original couples chipped in to buy the land. They were all over 30, married for 10 years or more, living in their individual homes doing individual work; none of them had ever farmed or worked an orchard, most were professionals (teachers with Masters, computer analysts, etc.) They were breaking lifelong habits and it was a real struggle. At one point there were 10 adults and 8 children. Two children were born in the last year and here we were trying to prune trees, pick apples, work a one acre garden, build a wing and kitchen, raise children and teach at a university! We were so overloaded we could not expose our inner beings to each other. We are working it out and want people who want to share and are not into a private property thing, or a separateness. For example, we have one house and two trailers and this is a problem. When we wanted to cook breakfast in the house, the house people said to us, "You have a kitchen in the trailer, what are you doing here?!" Those people are leaving and that will take pressure off.

Unfortunately, the money was not managed well and we are broke. We allowed people to leave with big



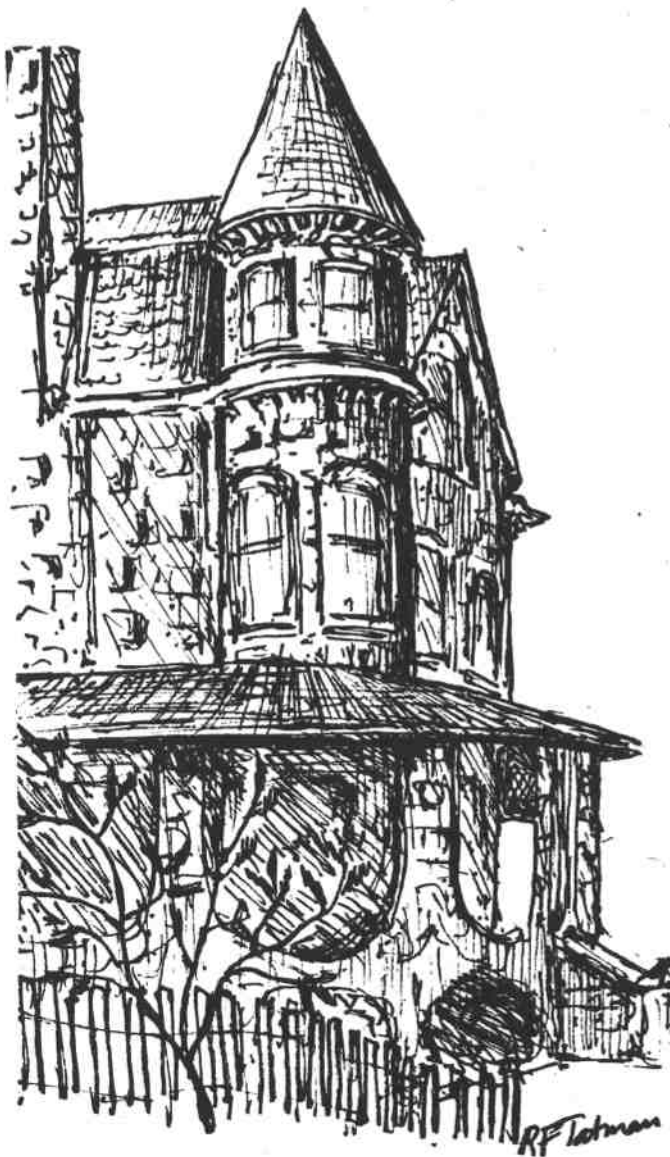
John Groutt, Jud Jerome & Myron Marks

debts behind them and now we are forced to get outside jobs. A lot of things were foolishly bought with the idea of making it a big operation. People, especially certain men, thought we had a lot of money and were into buying big, mechanized machines — and they kept buying on time! We had a central treasury, but we were not as smart as Twin Oaks — we had it that anyone could sign the checks. I see it now, we really let ourselves be ripped off. Now only four people can sign the checks. But we also have charge accounts all over the place, and we need to stop that too. Added to all this is the 4000 bushels of apples that someone bought and then backed out of (he was going to make organic baby food), so that we had to put the apples in storage and are now trying to get rid of them.

We also have not settled the problem of private funds. One fellow wanted bees, but because there was no money in the budget, he used his own money to buy bees because he felt the trees needed to be pollinated. We didn't reimburse him, but what if I want to have chickens and I don't have a private fund? Do I start resenting his having private funds? Do we want that kind of private money — shouldn't we just do without bees for the year? The last couple to leave owned half of the farm, but we have been fortunate since they don't need the money and we have time to pay them back. We need some kind of land trust or system, to make us less vulnerable to people pulling out. I am very optimistic with the way it is going now. We have very good fruit and you can even pick your own!"

Overall, the conference was enervating, and it seems the momentum will be continued with Heathcote, Twin Oaks and Community Service all having conferences in June, July and August respectively. Check our Community Calendar at the beginning of the Community Grapevine section.

philadelphia
life center



The Life Center in Philadelphia is a group of about fifty people, half of them Quaker, who are trying to live, as well as create, a nonviolent revolution in our country. To carry out these goals, Life Center people have formed a nationwide group, the *Movement for a New Society*. In early 1971 many MNS members were then part of A Quaker Action Group (AQAG) and felt the need to deepen and widen their attempts to bring about social change and a sense of community among themselves. Living their conventional lives, making decisions, demonstrating and leaving the clerical work to a paid staff was felt to be increasingly alienating. By living together communally, they could simplify their material needs and free themselves for the risk-taking of nonviolent action in a dangerous world.

Out of these desires, in the fall of 1971, was born the Life Center, now a cluster of five communes (e.g. Stone House, Daybreak, the gathering and Fat Man's Jug Band) in the West Philadelphia area. Together they form an unusual *urban community*: they live together communally in a radical life style with a diverse mixture of parents, children, single people and older people; they are linked up together, cooperating with food, education and health care; they are responsive to their immediate neighborhood, assuming leadership in community efforts; and they are involved in radical, direct nonviolent action locally, nationally and in other countries.

Communal Life Style

Each household is responsible for its own lifestyle, and members help each other find part-time jobs (1-2 days a week) which frees most of their energies for movement work. The communes describe themselves as "making the revolution now" and as "a community of learners experimenting with non-violent action; a community of action working for radical change; and a community of people who care for and share with each other".

Communitas (Brian) visited one of the Life Center communes, Stone House, during February 1972. Stone House is indeed a massive, castlelike stone structure, complete with turrets and stone arches. The first floor includes a large living room, large office space, play room-medical clinic; in the basement is a large kitchen with twin cooking stoves and long dining table, a cooling-food storage room, and workshop areas; and on the second and third floors are ten bedrooms and assorted baths. The place teems with action, information plastered over large bulletin boards, and an 80,000 person computerized mailing list.

I arrived just in time for the 4 p.m. Sunday Quaker meeting for worship in the living room, which was accompanied by the sounds of an African drumbeat from the street. Afterwards there was vigorous, joyful singing. The warmth, openness, energy and good humor of the members helped me feel quite welcome. About thirty high school students arrived to share in the pot-luck supper and were brought into the family with ease and alacrity.

Over dishes I talked with George Willoughby, age 56, who lives at Stone House and is developing the program of the Life Center—training organizers for non-violent social change. George is a warm, cheerful soul with long flowing grey hair which blends into side-

burns going way down to his chin. His wife, Lillian is a 55 year old dietician who is knowledgeable about organic foods and consults three days a week with a local hospital about their nutrition needs.

George was in prison as a CO in World War II and has been active with Quaker peace groups since then. A few years ago, with George Lakey, he founded the Martin Luther King School of Social Change. Gradually, however, they became convinced that such a school with its budgets and hierarchy was not really effective, and what they needed was a "school" where students and teachers learned from each other in a living-learning environment. George feels it is important to form small collective and communal living groups that are scattered around the country and working together to bring about social change.

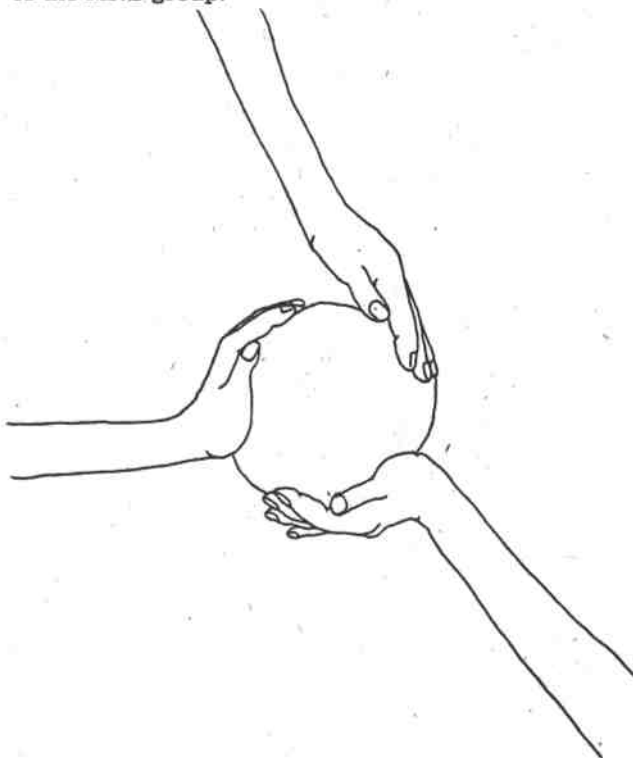
George Lakey, age 34, is a tall, lean fellow with energy and *joie-de-vivre* who is married to Berit, a Norwegian. They live in Spring Garden House and have two adopted, interracial children, and a younger one year old. They jokingly refer to themselves as an "international, inter-racial, inter-familial and intersexual family." Although George is an irrepressible natural leader, he does consciously strive to avoid being cast in a charismatic, guru role. He has written extensively on the sociology of non-violent action and was part of the AQAG group that sailed on the ship Phoenix with medical supplies for North Vietnam. Presently, along with Dick Taylor and Bill Moyer of Daybreak House, he is co-authoring a forthcoming book called *Revolution: A Quaker Prescription for A Sick Society*.

Daybreak house is the most explicitly political of all the Life Center communes, in contrast to Fat Man's Jug Band which emphasizes more the personal relationships within their commune, and *the gathering*, which is more oriented to the religious elements in the Quaker heritage. Daybreak calls itself a "nonviolent analysis center" and puts out a comprehensive social change reading list.

There are three couples at Daybreak, two of them married with children—David and Janet Hartsough have two towheads, ages one and three; Phyllis and Dick Taylor's children are eight and nine. The third couple, Bill and Sue, share child care with the parents. Although they all share in providing each other with adequate food, clothing, health care and shelter, there is no definite system for income sharing as yet. Some of the members have been good friends for years and their living communally is a natural extension of this closeness.

The house is legally "owned" by the Taylors, but since the money for it came from stock profits within the Taylor family, the group considers it "property stolen from the people" and feel the house is for all people, not just themselves. Dick Taylor is a 38 year old non-violent socialist and community organizer, and Bill Moyer is a 38 year old organizer for the Movement for a New Society and one of the coordinators of the Pakistani freighters blockade in summer 1971 (see below). Sue is currently working with the New Society branch of AFSC in Boston, trying to redefine AFSC's role. Phyllis teaches nursing at the Univ of Penn, and also works to improve prison medical care.

The Hartsoughs are just over 30, both quite tall and blond, and radiate warm vibes and energy. Jan is involved with training of non-violent revolutionary groups and teaches at a Quaker high school. David is involved with the radical caucus of the Philadelphia AFSC and coordinates the overseas non-violent actions of the MNS group.



An article by Edward Fiske in the April 6, 1972 New York Times described *the gathering* in detail:

"The most overtly religious of the groups is *the gathering*, which is in a rundown three-story house that members are slowly renovating. Residents include two men and three women, all single, as well as a long-term guest who identified himself as Jack of New Swarthmoor.

Members support themselves with part-time jobs ranging from teaching to renovating other houses, and most make an effort to make less than the \$1700 that would require them to pay income taxes and thus help support the war in Southeast Asia. For similar reasons they also refuse to pay their telephone tax.

A conscious objective of the house is to recover the simplicity of life style that characterized early Quakers. "We just don't need all of the things that people spend money for," said Ellen Deacon, 27, who was raised as a Methodist in Grapevine, Tex.

This religious objective is reinforced by dedication to ecological soundness. Jack of New Swarthmoor, who described himself as an "ecology freak", takes used bottles to a local recycling plant twice a week and goes through the trash to see what can be salvaged.

Members of *the gathering* meet every Sunday night for frank discussions of personal and community affairs, and most are involved in a form of two-person encounters known as "re-evaluation counseling". [Communitas will have an article about this in our Sept 1972 issue —Ed]



Meeting in the Stone House basement

Participants say that both activities are based on the fundamental Quaker assumption that all men contain the spirit of God within them. They have also been compared with the Quaker tradition of "eldering" whereby individuals assume responsibility for each other's moral and spiritual development.

Communal Link-Up

The communes operate a food coop for themselves and people in the immediate neighborhood. Phyllis provides basic medical care at a specially equipped free clinic in Stone House. Her efforts are backed up by volunteer, on-call physicians. Everyone has major medical insurance and there is a mutual aid fund. Although the work of communal members provides for their daily needs, gifts are accepted for land, buildings, equipment, and their training and action programs.

Short and long term programs are given by members at the Stone House to help people become trainers for nonviolent social change. Typical workshops include: skills and techniques of organizing . . . building alternative societies..community justice organizing . . . non-violent conflict resolution. One benefit of such collective work is the increased contact among members from the different communes. Members worked together to produce By-Laws for the Life Center, some of which are: "Membership consists of persons interested in the goals of the Life Center as

demonstrated by willingness to assume responsibility, participation in activities, and a dedication to non-violent personal and social change . . . meetings of the Life Center make decisions by unified consent of the entire membership present . . . all meetings of the Life Center or any of its committees are open to anybody".

Involvement with Immediate Neighborhood

While I was at Stone House, George Willoughby received a phone call about a black family that had moved into a nearby all-white block and just had a brick thrown through their window. George asked a friend who lived close to this family to go over and offer both his help and the support of the Life Center people. After this phone call, George asked another member to remind him to follow up on a ten year old girl who visited the center on her own. Then he said they were helping the neighborhood people get together and talk about what they could do about the recent increase of rapes in the area. It is this kind of concern and attention to their neighborhood's needs that distinguishes this group from most other communal networks. Admittedly, their neighborhood is weighted toward single people, students and teachers; but they are bringing people together. For example, people have united in an attempt to block further expansion of the Univ. of Penn. into the area, because the expansion raises rentals and forces poorer people to seek housing elsewhere.

Direct Non-Violent Action

At the heart of the non-violent radical action technique is the non-violent revolutionary group (NRG). NRG's are small groups of 3-12 people who seek to live the revolution now, and are also experimenting with shared, simple life styles. As one MNS brochure says, "the NRG team can be the building block of a mass movement because it meets the dilemma of collectivism vs individualism. Unlike some of the old communist cells it is not secret or conspiratorial, and therefore cannot hold individuals to it rigidly with implicit threats. On the other hand, there is sufficient community to help people overcome their excessive attachment to self...in a movement of small groups we can hold hands against repression and continue to struggle". NRG groups stress decentralization, group dynamics training, political analysis, and direct non-violent action. NRG groups are part of an increasingly mature sense of community. Moyer and Taylor say, "individuals are reaching out—across the lines of religious denominations, political organization, generation and family. As the American empire decays, the need for living community grows. Community building is a major dimension of the strategy for a new society; communities both large and small will be the core of the mass nonviolent movement."

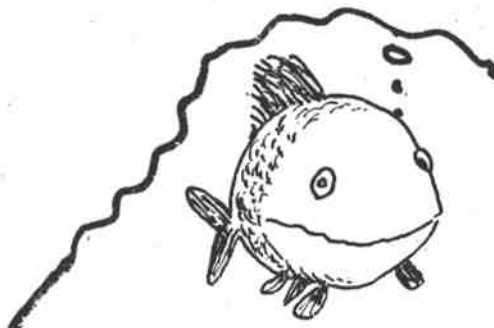
In July of 1971, a small NRG group from Philadelphia managed to blockade the Pakistani freighter *Al Ahmadi* from taking on a load of U.S. weapons for Pakistan. Although their canoes were eventually rounded up by the harbor police, they managed to gain the sympathy of the longshoremen who refused to load the arms—an example of daring non-violent action combined with skillful community organizing in the world of the longshoremen. Their direct action had political effect, not only with extensive news coverage, but also influencing a congressional committee to cut off aid to Greece and Pakistan. They feel their actions also made an important contribution to informing people of the clandestine role of the U.S. in Pakistan. They also provided an example of how "ordinary citizens can move beyond a sense of helplessness and into meaningful action to counter an obvious evil".

In *Liberated to Act* George Lakey describes the transformation of A Quaker Action Group (AQAG) into Movement for a New Society (MNS). AQAG was born in 1966 partly out of frustration with AFSC's inability to take direct action and respond to current crises. They demonstrated against the bombing of Hanoi in 1966 by holding a silent vigil in the Senate visitor's gallery. Horace Champney of Yellow Springs, Ohio, then brought the idea of the Phoenix project to AQAG. They boxed in the government — if the voyage was allowed, the U.S. would suffer loss of face and increased publicity about war casualties; if the voyage was stopped, the U.S. would receive adverse publicity for persecuting humanitarian Quakers. George Lakey states, "In concept, these voyages were acting out the future in the present. The day when people will express community with those who are suffering, whoever they may be was brought into the grim present where governments try to decide who may and may not receive aid. Like the black sit-inners of the American

South, we did what will be, and confronted the agents of injustice with a new status quo. This is action more direct than picketing can ever be". AQAG helped organize the protest on the Capitol steps where names of Vietnam dead were read. They also spent a week trying to plant a pine tree at the Edgewood Arsenal in Maryland, calling the tree a symbol of life. The Baltimore Evening Sun (7-16-70) commented, "when the tree said life, all Edgewood could say back was death..."

Life Center people are continuing with their efforts for peace. On April 23, 1972, twenty-one members of MNS were arrested, among them Dick and Phyllis Taylor of Daybreak. At a naval base in Middletown, N.J. they attempted both a land blockade (e.g. Taylor lying down in front of an ammunition train) and a sea blockade (with a ring of 22 canoes) of the U.S.S. Nitro [is there a sister ship — the U.S.S. Glycerine?!] an ammunition ship bound for Vietnam. Bill Moyer told the NY Times that they were protesting the escalation of bombing in Vietnam and U.S. support of military dictatorships.

Intense, radical non-violent actions like these are wearying and time-consuming. Life Center people try to lighten the load with touches like the following newsletter excerpt:



THE FRIVOLITY CAUCUS

The Frivolity Caucus, the ultimate radical group, has coagulated. Born of 5 months of struggle and strife, which left our sense of humour in shreds and our ability to have fun severely damaged, this non-caucus arose to restore these, our two most important faculties.

The first action was to call a "Chinese Firedrill" after two hours of a heavy meeting. This was an undisputed success as the rest of the business was completed in 15 minutes in good humour.

We hope to avoid being coopted into an "instant fun" resource. FRIVOLITY is our basic cause. Remember, the revolution is fun; if not why are we doing it?

ALPHA

by Glenn Hovemann

The Wayside Inn at Warwick, Massachusetts, offers live Country & Western music on Friday and Sunday nights, and romantic music to dance by on Saturdays. It was a Saturday evening in early May, 1971 when the six of us from Philadelphia who roomed for the night at the quaint old inn—the hot spot of the sleepy little village just south of the Vermont/New Hampshire line—watched the locals gather and listened to the off-key strains from a table in the next room. What was it that had brought us together, we asked ourselves, and what did we really want to do? Were we spinning intellectual daydreams or were we serious? And if we were serious, shouldn't we be committing ourselves to action?

That evening, in the unlikely place of Warwick, Massachusetts, our community was conceived. Five months later and 3,000 miles away, the embryo quickened and began to take form; nine months later, in January of this year, Alpha was born. By the end of this summer, thirteen people ranging in age from a newly born infant to a fifty-three year old, will be living on a 280-acre farm in western Oregon in a multi-occupational, multi-racial intentional community.

Only a few months before, these six people—a middle aged couple with a teenage daughter, plus three younger single people—began to discover in each other a strong friendship. Indeed, it was more than a friendship; it was rather like a spiritual kinship, a shared approach to life and a caring for each other that drew us closer and closer until we began to call ourselves a "family". Most of us had met through a coop for organic food that we struggled to establish in Philadelphia; it seemed similarly organic to begin to meet regularly as a vegetarian dinner group.

Around the table at many a dinner we and numerous guests explored our understandings of what was happening to the United States — politically, economically, socially, spiritually. We discussed what

was happening to each of us as a result of living in a large city ("In my dreams I see myself turning to stone," one said); and what an alternative way of organizing our lives would be. A mutual friend, as well as a mutual interest in communities, brought us to Warwick, which is near the large quasi-religious commune, Brotherhood of the Spirit, where our friend was living. Our thinking became progressively specific.

By September, five of us were in Oregon looking for a piece of land spacious enough to accommodate a community of up to twenty. We had neither money nor people. We had only an idea. Nevertheless we signed our names to an offer of \$90,000 (which was accepted) for a farm which comprised an entire small finger valley in Oregon's Coast Range of mountains, west of Eugene. Old maps of the place dating back to the stage-coach era named it Alpha. We could not have come up with a more suitable name: Alpha, the beginning.

We were satisfied. The land was ideal for the kind of community we envisioned. There was sufficient bottomland to do some cash farming as well as raise food for our own consumption; there was ample forest land for wood; there were mountaintops for a future meditation center or retreat; and there was a sufficient number of potential homesites to house people with privacy.

But how were we ever to raise that kind of money? Between debits and credits our total assets came out in the black, but by nothing approaching ninety grand. However, since we had already settled on about twenty people as an ideal maximum number that could be integrated into a "family," if each member could account for \$5,000, Alpha would have \$100,000 and be paid for. That was the long-range plan to finance Alpha. But for the moment it was a rather theoretical plan, because there were not nearly twenty of us, nor did we each have \$5,000, nor could we ever establish a strict monetary figure as the price of a ticket to Alpha.

We were also clear, however, that we did not want to finance the farm with bank loans, for the commercial banks epitomize the erroneous channels of money in this society: investments are dictated by profit margins rather than by human need, and those who most dearly need money are the last to get it. Banks contradict our ideas of a reordered society.

Instead we sought personal loans, particularly as an investment by sympathetic friends. To do that we needed to explain ourselves.

"We seek the opportunity to create," we said in a six-page prospectus written upon our return east, "in an atmosphere of freedom and reality, a viable alternative for ourselves and, we hope, for our brothers and sisters caught in similar situations. For this opportunity we have decided to risk our present positions and securities. What action is necessary to unlock the boxes of society and the boxes of our own minds to live more fully?"

We set forth our working assumptions:

Each of us has spent years in city living, working and hoping for its revitalization. We have spent major portions of our lives and energies working for peace and social change. We have come to realize, however, that our work, while necessary and gripping, is outwardly focussed. We have sought to change the minds, hearts and actions of others. But the renewal of the social order, we now see, must begin with ourselves and our relations with it. We seek to change our basic assumptions and patterns of daily living; to accomplish this we must alter our patterns of thought. We must live ourselves into the future we seek.

Socially, we envision a modified style of family life that overcomes the isolation and rigid classifications of single persons, couples, and separate families. We intend to encourage and succor nuclear families in Alpha; and we consider physical privacy for each individual to be an elementary right and need. Simultaneously we seek to correct the isolation and built-in tensions of the nuclear family which has occurred in the industrial age. Children and adults alike need to share emotional and physical support with more than one or two individuals. Community members of all ages will participate together in the living and growing of each other.

Economically, we place greater trust in the strength and stability of an integrated living/working group, than in separate, competing economic units. Recent American experience has bestowed prosperity on many; but some of us remember it not always being thus, and are concerned for the future. We are of the opinion that a family-like sharing of our resources and skills affords greater security than bank accounts or individual property. This presupposes a spiritually and psychologically integrated "family," complete with the love, care, and responsibility of a true family. We expect it will be needful, as Alpha grows, to form new "families" within the community to preserve the intimacy that comes with small numbers (we envision 20 persons as being near the ideal maximum for a "family"— although this, as with everything else, would be determined by the consensus of the group). Without retreating into economic isolation, we wish to retrieve some of the self-sufficiency of our lives which



From small beginnings...

is made impossible as single individuals in a society sharply dependent on technology. Technology has made obsolete the romantic era of the independent pioneer; technology has even made obsolete the notion of a genuinely self-dependent nuclear family. A measure of self-sufficiency today can be accomplished only as a group.

Politically, we seek a climate which, at least on the local level, is congenial and receptive to new ideas. We consider it important to have open and communicating relationships with people in the area of Alpha. Far from withdrawing into ourselves, the establishment of trust and non-exploitive relations with others is one of the primary aspects of the Alpha experiment. We intend to learn from our neighbors and to share with them both in business and personal relations. Government is important to us also, and we seek local government on a sufficiently small scale to play a meaningful part in it. We are rankled by uncontrolled corruption and the quasi-police state we now see around us, and desire a situation where our numbers might bring more visible results to our efforts. Such government services as education are important to our children and the family as a whole, and we cannot tolerate any longer the gross inadequacies and mis-education that passes for school systems in major cities. Although we will have qualified educators at Alpha, we intend to work through the public system as much as possible, and to participate constructively in other public functions.

Spiritual values are hardly separate, in practice, from social, political and economic values. Just as Alpha is our attempt to build a life around our greatest joys, Alpha also seeks to embody in practice our best spiritual understandings. Most of the members of Alpha at this early stage have come to accept the basic understandings of Quakerism: simplicity, pacifism, respect for the "Inner Light" of each individual, and consensus as a method of working together. We seek at Alpha to be in a spiritual community with each other to improve these beginning understandings.

We did not underestimate the challenge of raising money. A friend who works for the federal government in Washington, D.C. wrote that Alpha as a business investment was risky, "mostly because we would be dealing with an unknown extended family with no record of performance...Personally I don't share your enthusiasm for the simple life even as I sometimes feel nostalgic for an earlier day when cost-benefit ratios did not overshadow everything." Yet he loaned us \$2,000.

Another young friend, until recently a conscientious objector and now a medical student, loaned us \$8,000, our largest personal loan. We had no idea he had such money to invest. Other friends, too, made loans, including *Communitas*.

Meanwhile, Alpha grew. Two families, one from Yellow Springs, Ohio, the other from San Francisco, asked to be part of Alpha. By New Year's, our numbers included:

Caroline E., in her mid-40s, formerly a legal secretary and teacher of the deaf in California. For the last five years a personnel administrator at the American Friends Service Committee in Philadelphia, where

James E., 50, has been active in the peace education work of the AFSC. He is formerly a newspaperman with the San Francisco Chronicle. James and Caroline have been active in various political, social and community work before, including working with San Francisco gangs.

Maria E., 16, the adopted daughter of Caroline and James, is a talented potter. She is deaf.

Linda W., 23, from New York State, was a student of art and the first manager of the organic food coop in Philadelphia. She, too, is a potter, and is also a talented gardener and cook.

Gary S., 26, also worked with the American Friends Service Committee, in San Francisco, in a "new vocations" project (alternative job counseling and helping write *Working Loose*) Before that he worked for an insurance company. Gary, along with wife and child, spent almost a year in Europe; he apprenticed himself to a furniture and loom-maker in Spain. His wife,

Rachael S., is skilled at weaving. She and Gary have a 3-year old daughter, Andrea, and expect a second child this summer.

Jules W., 53, of Yellow Springs, is a greenhouse manager for Wilberforce University, formerly a farm planner for the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. He has farming experience.

Kate W., also 53, has for many years been a primary and nursery school teacher. She and Jules have four children, the youngest of whom is

Alice W., 11, a tall and energetic girl. The three older children have married or live elsewhere.

Ronnie Mae McK., 17, from Philadelphia, is a black girl formerly a gang leader in her native ghetto. Ronnie Mae spent the last two years at a farm school for girls as a warden of the court; through the E's, whom she knew and lived with for some time earlier, she chose to live in a different environment and go with the E's to Oregon. She is excellent at knitting.

Glenn H., 24, from Minnesota, is a former newspaperman and columnist who worked as a conscientious objector at the American Friends Service

Committee in Philadelphia.

Frequently the farm seemed impossibly beyond our financial reach; but by January, following much financial juggling, the deal was closed. We could, perhaps, have first tried to recruit like-minded people and waited until sufficient money was in hand to buy the farm. A wiser course, we thought, was to allow the community to grow more slowly, building it person by person and family by family, so that it might have a gradual "settling in" and solid foundations. And we thought it better to build the community around a nucleus of people *already at the site* rather than have a large group of people attempt to agree on a common piece of land. (Other friends have tried it this way, and been unable to agree on a location.) The difficulty with the Alpha approach, however, is that a small group has to bear the initial financial burden in the interim.

A key to understanding how Alpha will work is the Quaker-style self-governmental process that will be followed. Only a few of the people at Alpha are themselves members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), but all, or nearly all, have had some exposure to the method of Quaker consensus. In it no votes are taken, but rather a "sense of the meeting" is arrived at, if possible. Decisions are not made with haste but with great care for the opinions of individuals, especially those not in agreement with the rest. If after extended discussion—and postponement of a decision, if possible—a dissenter fails either to be convinced or to change the opinion of others, he will usually "stand aside" and allow the group to proceed. If it is a matter of sufficient importance or conscience, he can stand firm—and without unity the group cannot take any action.

By this process Alpha will decide who can be a member of the community, how money shall be distributed, and other important matters.

Alpha as a community has only just begun, and undoubtedly a year hence mistakes will have been made, lessons learned, and thinking changed. But as of now, these are some of our ideas:

Living arrangements: Alpha was conceived not as a commune, with the psychological pressure-cooker that "commune" sometimes implies, but as an intentional community where a balance is achieved between individual and group lives. Each family or individual will have separate quarters (unless desired otherwise), even if merely an A-frame cabin for a single person. The geography of Alpha would allow for rather private locations not too far from common facilities: the main kitchen, dining room, music and reading rooms, laundry facilities, etc. Ownership of buildings will probably be by Alpha rather than by individuals: individually designed, cooperatively built, community owned. There would have to be some common approval of designs, however, to make sure that they are reasonably suited to others in the future.

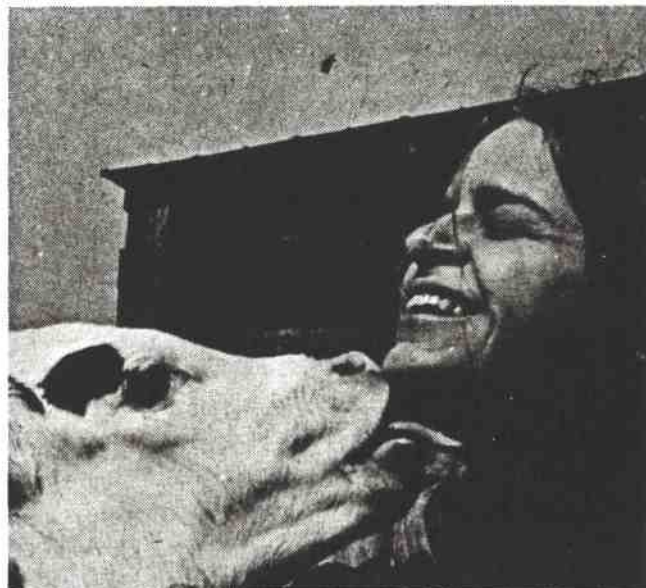
Money: Despite efforts towards self-sufficiency, Alpha will need some cash income to survive. But it cannot allow the same values that the outside world puts on money or the ability to raise money to dictate Alpha's internal values and judgments. The outside world may buy the skills of a professional for a high

price; but shall Alpha likewise reward such skill more highly than the skills of those of us who (for example) raise our food? Clearly not. We cannot allow the class distinctions that result from gross economic inequality to spring up among us. At the same time we all seek a degree of economic freedom within the scope of a somewhat simplified style of living. Therefore it is planned that each individual or family grouping at Alpha will assume responsibility for some minimum cash income figure—perhaps \$1,000 or \$1,500 per annum—but all income, regardless of amount, will go toward the community. The community as a whole will pay expenses plus individual “allowances,” with each person receiving an agreed-upon monthly income to pay for clothing, vacations, books, movies, magazines, etc. Alpha as a whole pays for food, shelter, routine transportation, utilities, health insurance, tuition, equipment, and similar shared expenses. Just as Alpha is not a place for perpetual vacationing, neither is it expected that the group will approve of the accumulation of wealth, even by Alpha itself. We have little doubt that by sharing talents and living a somewhat simplified life, we will be able to support ourselves comfortably; a long-range goal is to have the people of Alpha work no more than half time in support of the community, and have the other half free to read, relax, travel, meditate, or work on volunteer projects for the good of others.

Occupations: Although most of the initial people at Alpha will seek to establish cottage industries, some will probably earn from outside jobs. Jules W. will be the farm manager, and at harvest-time all hands will turn out to help. At other times those hands will be busy: Gary S., for example, is establishing a loom-making business, utilizing as much as possible the native woods raised on Alpha's land (which is prime timber-producing country).

Growth: It is expected that Alpha's population will be stable for at least the next year, perhaps two. This will allow time for people to get accustomed to the community, and for precedents to be established. Also, Alpha cannot readily house more people without construction of new housing. When the time is ripe, new people will be welcomed, probably with a trial period of three to six months. Over the long range, we anticipate many more people to be interested in this kind of community arrangement than we could ever absorb (the numerical limitation of 20 is, we think, important), although additional communities may be “spun off” from Alpha in the future.

Outward-directedness: Despite the many things to be resolved internally, Alpha is not intended to be a Shangri-la, a retreat from the world. Rather it is intended to be a very active participant in the life of the larger community. Indeed, the lives of most of the people at Alpha have been in large part focused on restoring peace and social sanity; and these people have no intention of turning tail. One jumping-off point into the greater community being contemplated is the purchase of the general store that is for sale in a nearby town. It would force us to relate on very practical terms to the needs of the community—and general stores might well become community centers and a catalyst for almost any type of organizing work needed in the community or the county. Since it is physically isolated (surrounded mostly by National Forest) and



Dairy Country

eight miles from the nearest village, Alpha's outward focus must be deliberate. This area of Oregon is rich with communes and community-minded people (the Black Bart Brigade magazine describes it as “one of the fastest growing communal areas in the country”), and Alpha has begun to make contact with these. Our most immediate neighbor (over a mountain) we know already: he first told us of the availability of the land.

What is it that holds Alpha together? Perhaps a shared sense of “manifest destiny” more than anything else. The group has a strong compatible Quaker/Unitarian/Eastern/eclectic religious base, but it is not a shared ceremony or dogma that binds us. Alpha has an unofficial leader—Caroline E. is the primary conceiver, idea-person and strategist of the experiment, and is at the center of Alpha more than any other person—yet the others are by no means dominated by or beholden to her. Neither is Alpha held together by a tightly-ordered social philosophy: we have found some very practical guiding ideas of living that we share, but are flexible and not welded to any social or political dogma. History has frequently seen communities centered strongly around a single person, or a religious idea, or socio-political philosophy: but Alpha, while it may combine a small bit of each, seems not to fit readily into any of those precedents. We would like to think that Alpha, rather than being a special accomplishment, is simply a practical way for some people to re-arrange their lives. We hope it is an idea whose time has come.

The creation of Alpha demanded faith, vision, and a willingness to take risks. Faith requires a religious-like certainty that an intelligence and power greater than we will be a guide, despite the bleakness of the present. Vision is the ability to see what can be, rather than what merely is. And a willingness to risk present securities and to take *action*—to lay the first brick of the future—is the only way to break the grip of the status quo. Those at Alpha have laid the first brick; Alpha is just the beginning.

Conversation with Jud Jerome



BRIAN: Jud, you've been studying the commune movement for quite a while now, and you are writing a book on it. Could you give us an overall view of the commune and community movement?

JUD: There's a big distinction between commune and community in the movement. The community movement is more along the lines of cooperative arrangements in which people try to create neighborhoods or villages of compatibility with interfamilial relationships, more self-sufficiency, and economically beneficial ways of life. For example, a co-op as a buying unit can save money which they can use for other things. It isn't a necessity to stop consuming, but to consume more efficiently. Usually the relationships between people in the intentional community are closer, more neighbourly, but more or less in the standard family pattern, and don't raise radical questions in terms of the overall design of society. Within a beneficial and pluralistic society there is room for these more intimate and efficient groups to form. Very often, intentional communities of the past have been held together by religious or political commitments.

A commune seems to be more of an intentional family than an intentional community. The contemporary communes tend to average about a dozen adults plus children. They seem to be a desire to recreate the extended family broken down by World War II, by the mobility that followed that, and by the emphasis upon individual consumerism. They are much more radical in that they imply a deliberate challenge to the nuclear family, to marriage itself, and to a person's possession of another—whether it's possession of a child or spouse. They therefore imply a more intense emotional relationship. The likelihood is they are going to share quarters, if not sleeping quarters, at least a lot of public ground. They tend to share meals and recreation space, and live more closely together than people in an intentional community are likely to do.

BRIAN: So they are much more radical in terms of a personal life style, personal relationships, rather than in a political radical sense. . . .

JUD: They also tend to be politically radical, but not in the conventional sense. They may not be the people

Jud Jerome, author of *Culture Out of Anarchy*, is an over forty communitarian who is now busy writing a book on the contemporary commune movement while he is on leave from Antioch College. Jud is also the author of the poem, *The Village*, in the centerfold of this issue. With his wife Marty and their three children, Jud lives in both Columbia, Md. and at *Downhill Farm*, a one hundred acre community in southern Pennsylvania.

who are militant in the sense of trying to change political organizations, but there's a very definite silent politics about what they are doing—they imply deliberate rejection of the consumer society and the implications that holds of finding satisfaction through privacy, property, and individualism. In this sense, they constitute a challenge, first of all to the economic structure of our society, and in the second place to the political structure.

BRIAN: What were some of the highlights of your experiences of travelling around the country and seeing some of these communes? I gather from your comments that most of it was on the commune, rather than on the community, level.

JUD: Yes. I guess it's a temperamental distinction. Although I admire and respect the community movements, I don't feel temperamentally drawn to them, and I'd rather be in a "catch-as-catch-can" kind of commune rather than go into an intentional community which seems to share some of the qualities of "small town America"—a kind of closeness that implies constraint without freedom or liberty or radical challenge. I also believe very seriously that our civilization is facing crisis, both ecological and political, in terms of its relationship with the rest of the world, and it seems to me that the commune is being more responsive to these larger questions than the intentional

community. So, I've been visiting communes — mostly rural New England communes.

The highlight that stands out in my mind is a house-raising at a commune called "Wooden Shoe" in New Hampshire where the communards had learned, by studying books, to build a mortise and tenon structure without pegs or nails. They had cut the pieces for this by hand methods, and had them all lying on the ground. Then they had a kind of festival, a house-raising, and they invited people from all around the region—they had very good community relationships with the farmers and local townspeople. There must have been about a hundred people, lots of kids and cider, home brew and pot-luck lunch, and the very spirited experience of raising the beams and locking them into place. It was a very primitive and beautiful experience of people working very hard together and deriving esthetic and ethical satisfaction from a deliberately chosen way of life which was rejecting the technology and the systems of the society around them.

"... there's a very definite silent politics about what they [communes] are doing — they imply deliberate rejection of the consumer society and the implications that holds of finding satisfaction through privacy, property, and individualism."

BRIAN: How representative is Wooden Shoe of the communes you saw in general?

JUD: It's an exception in the sense that it works better than most of the others, but in another sense it's quite classical. They're closer to doing what the other rural communes are trying to do—achieve a closer extended family, to create a complete commune in the sense of property being pooled, all work effort being pooled, and the breakdown of male and female roles. One of the things they do to create an income is to take on jobs in the surrounding community. They send teams of men and women indiscriminately to dig ditches or clean houses or whatever, and are quite conscious of the effect they have on the traditional New Englanders who were quite resistant to the idea at first, but came to love it.

BRIAN: Sounds like Twin Oaks that sends people regardless of sex or age to outside jobs. . .

JUD: Yes. I think that this conscious effort characterizes communes when they're functioning well. In many cases, especially in rural communes, people are defeated simply by the environment and economic circumstances, and so forth. They then do things the easiest way, and forget some of the ideals that caused them to seek an alternative way of life in the first place. However, when the energy is high enough, when there is co-operation, and a little luck, they can maintain an edge of challenge to established ways. The morale is

high and the sense of purpose is strong. I think this is true of what I saw of Wooden Shoe.

BRIAN: Could you give us some idea of what the book on the contemporary commune movement is all about? What is the major thrust within it?

JUD: Well, I'm trying to figure out what is different about what's happened in the States since 1965 from communities of the past and other countries. I think that there is something quite distinctive about the counter-culture and the communal form that it takes. My book is a kind of survey by topic of different aspects of communal living—economics, sex, education, interpersonal relations, structure, and so forth. I don't talk about communes individually, but try to get at the most general characteristics. For this reason, I don't pay much attention to some of the very fascinating or exceptional ones such as Steve Gaskin's Caravan, Brotherhood of the Spirit, and so on. I'm more interested in the typical commune, whether urban or rural, whose median age is in the late twenties, and whose general disposition is anarchistic. That is, they have very little unity in economic purpose, and a very loosely defined sense of purpose in themselves. There are literally tens of thousands of communes around the country that fit this description, and why that's happening, and what that means in terms of future developments of our society is what I'm trying to explore.

BRIAN: You mentioned that there is a difference between the pre-'68 and the post-'68 communes; can you explain that?

JUD: I think that with the collapse of Haight-Ashbury and the general movement that people called "hippie" back in the mid-sixties, the next phase of development was for people to move out to the country in search of some kind of exotic freedom. Most of the public image of the commune movement was formed during that period when Life magazine, Newsweek, and films like *Easy Rider* romanticized a kind of weird life-style that was invented by romantic young people who were trying to go back out to the land. I think that 1968 was a very critical year that ended the 60's in many ways—the assassination of King, the rise of Black separatism, the decline of white support in the objectives of an integrated society, the disillusionment over the Democratic convention, and the invasion of Czechoslovakia. All of this caused an upsurge in communal development.

It seems to me that there's a different quality in many of these post-'68 communes, both an indifference to the outer forms of politics, and a seriousness about the creation of an alternative society that did not characterize the '65-'68 communes. The early communes tended to be exclusive and extreme. Some of them were very drug-oriented, some were very religious, some were sexual experiments like Greenfeet, which was an attempt to achieve total sexual liberation. The post-'68 communes seem to me to be much more moderate as they seriously attempt to create familial relationships within the commune, community relationships with surrounding people, and networks of communication and economic co-operation which would

truly decentralize the organization of society.

BRIAN: Is this because the young people in the preceding communes are growing up and having families, or is this because of the influx of older people with a more committed outlook?

JUD: Probably both. One of the major functions of the commune before '68 was as a crash pad and half-way house for people who had suffered lives of disorientation because of drugs or other kinds of problems; so there was always a fluid population of young people in the communes. But, even from the beginning—and this, I think, is not well realized—many of the communes were started by middle-aged people. There has always been a substantial component of older people in the communes.

By now, of course, people who were twenty-five in 1965 are thirty-two—they have become a different age group. Of course, a lot of them have had children, whereas there were very few children in the early communes. Also, there is a large increase in the number of middle-aged people who have been exploring alternatives, often professional people, people who have been quite affluent, successful in careers and positions in society, who are looking for some kind of radical change in life-style.

"The early ['65-'68] communes tended to be exclusive and extreme. Some of them were very drug-oriented, some were sexual experiments like Greenfeet . . . The post-68 communes seem to me to be much more moderate as they seriously attempt to create familial relationships within the commune, community relationships with surrounding people, and networks of communication and economic cooperation which would truly decentralize the organization of society."

BRIAN: You've mentioned that you use the term 'peak-out' rather than drop-out. What exactly does that mean?

JUD: Well, I think that the best analogy I can think of is studies that have been done of college students who have left college. They have a higher than normal percentage of achievement and ability, and they are the ones who become frustrated by the routine mediocrity and irrelevance of what they sense to be the available educational pattern. And I think that the same applies to people who may have been selling insurance, and have a couple of cars, and a yacht, and so forth. In other words, in terms of what the society has defined as success, they have made it, found it to be empty, and moved beyond it. I think that the same applies to many marriages, that they peak-out rather than fail. That is, the very intensity of a good relationship, an all-encompassing type of relationship of total honesty and

mutual freedom, very often leads to separation or expansion of the marital relationship for more of the same rather than less. Instead of running away and avoiding one another, they want simply to extend the relationship and experience more variety. So, there are marriages that have lasted for many years, that move into commune situations where, if they are not disbanded, are at least diluted or dissolved; and there are careers that are abandoned after success patterns that would never have led one to predict that they would ever become frustrated. I think, also, that in the middle-age case, the very patterns that make for success in the outer society very often lead to neurotic patterns of behavior—alcoholism, personal crankiness, obsessiveness, or ulcers—different kinds of behavior that are killing people—and for their own salvation, physical salvation in many cases, they realize that some kind of break with the rat-race is necessary, and look for a different kind of life.

BRIAN: Have you known or met any of these people who have peaked-out?

JUD: Yes, practically every commune has a few. A lot of them are professors and businessmen. I met one man who was very successful with an oil company, and was making about six figures a year. He suggested to his wife that he would like to cut his income down to about \$50,000 a year, which he figured he could make by consulting a couple of days during the week. His wife said that she couldn't live on \$50,000 a year, so he walked out on her, the kids, the car, the yacht, and everything. I've met a number of people like that. There's one man, a very successful and able engineer, emotionally well-balanced and mature, who is getting Aid for the Totally Disabled because he has been classified as unfit for employment. Well, he is, because he won't take any job that's available in society, and he would be a wreck if he were employed at a regular job. In the commune he has a very significant position, and a very fulfilling life.

BRIAN: I understand that you have gone through a number of changes yourself in the last few years, and that writing a book is not merely an intellectual exercise, but also a personal statement of your own views on lifestyle and community.

JUD: Yes. I think what I just said about other people in part applies to me. During twenty years of being a college professor, I've been on a steady trajectory of rising success and prominence—doing all the right things, and publishing in all the right places. A couple of years ago, I began to be overwhelmed by the meaninglessness of a good deal of it, particularly as regards higher education. My last book, which was about higher education and especially experimental education, led me to profound disillusionment with reform as a means of addressing the kinds of questions that were involved. For example, the idea of vocationalism still governs most of the colleges, even though they may call themselves "liberal arts" institutions. The whole importance of degrees and credentials is based on the assumption that people are going to be earning a living

or fitting into some kind of niche. I think that full employment is an impossibility; the whole idea of attaching earning a living to survival is an impossible one to maintain in our present state of technological development and population size. We don't know anything about education for leisure, about educating people to integrate their experiences, or to live full and whole lives. I can see the effects of this on myself in terms of my own values, and my own relationship to my family, friends, neighbours, and colleagues. I discovered in myself aggression, narrowness, and obsession which were very dysfunctional in terms of my own happiness and the happiness of people I was relating to, although they were very functional in terms of achieving the kind of success my profession had defined for me.

I began quite deliberately to try to figure out how I might relate to a tolerable world and a tolerable society of the future. I think this is both a prediction of what I think is going to happen, and a conviction that this is what ought to happen. Many people will start to cut down their levels of consumption, and get themselves out of the kinds of demands that tear them apart; they'll go through a conversion process in their own values in which some of the empty values of the success mythology of the American civilization will be surrendered. They break down the sex roles, the general dynamics of the nuclear family, and try to create situations in which they are more open, integrated, and back in touch with themselves. When I got a Ph.D., it

"Q: Have you met any of these people who have 'peaked out'?"

"A: There's one man, a very successful and able engineer, emotionally well-balanced and mature, who is getting Aid for the Totally Disabled because he has been classified as unfit for employment. Well, he is, because he won't take any job that's available in society, and he would be a wreck if he were employed at a regular job. In the commune he has a very significant position, and a very fulfilling life."

was a document that guaranteed that I didn't know how my body worked, how my car worked, how my society worked, how my family worked—I didn't know anything except 17th century literature. In that situation, it became very necessary that I perpetuate institutions in which people who knew about 17th century English literature were needed, and were rewarded. I just had to kick the habit of perpetuating those institutions. So, it was a considerable personal risk in many ways. . . I'm now planning to retire at age forty-five. My family bought a farm, and we're planning to build a life which is outside the system to as great an extent as we can make it.

BRIAN: How much did travelling around visiting these communities affect you? We know that Robert Houriet, from his book, *Getting Back Together*, changed quite a bit in his outlook, and is himself planning a community. Would you have come to this anyway?

JUD: In many ways, I would have come to it anyway, because by the time my book and travelling got

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started, I was already convinced that, in some form or another, I wanted to become part of or create some kind of community which was different from the middle-class, suburban pattern that I was living in. It was only a question of which style, what place, and what way to do it. As a matter of fact, I read Houriet's book very early in my own investigation, and had a sense of "Welcome!" rather than, "Well, that's what lies ahead!"

The actual visiting of communes in many cases was discouraging because my dreams of what was occurring in the communes were stronger than my sense of reality. I didn't find any communes that I wanted to join; most of the communes had a dominant population younger than my wife and myself, and there were few children the ages of our own children. In many cases, I sensed a kind of extremism, a neo-puritanism — no electricity, running water, or white sugar—the deliberate and extreme rejection of something that was a little bit too far out for my own kind of life style. So, it became a matter of starting our own community rather than joining one of those which we found available.

BRIAN: A lot of people with families find that when they get interested in communes, that often times the wife or husband changes their values more quickly than the other, and there's a great stress.

JUD: I would say that the odds are that there will be a split or important change of some sort when a couple moves into a commune, sometimes in the form of their splitting before, so that only one member goes to join. Sometimes it happens after they get in, or there's a divergence or reshuffling, which may be absorbed in an extended relationship with another man or woman or more than one man or woman. The dynamics of most marriages or couple relationships seem to imply that somebody always has to be playing the conservative, and somebody by playing the radical. In some couples,

people trade these roles back and forth, whereas in others, they're fixed. It's a healthful and necessary dynamic in a couple relationship; however, in the commune it's less necessary. There more people are playing different roles, and the traditional function isn't required in the same way. One of the things that surprised me is that there are probably more peak-out women than men. I would have thought that the man would be the one to abandon the responsibility of raising and tending the family, and all of that. But women with children, and sometimes without, seem to feel the emptiness and sterility of their life-pattern at least as intolerably as men do, and look for alternatives. For many women, the commune is the only real option available if they want to have children, but don't want to be locked into a couple relationship.

BRIAN: That's interesting . . . There's a commune called New City Commune in Cambridge where there are two women who are divorced and have young daughters living with them. It appeared to us that they were able to take part in the life of the commune and carry on with their jobs in a much more creative way than if they had been living by themselves.

JUD: Exactly. It's easier for them to be creative in such a situation than if they were stuck in an apartment, and had to hold a regular job. Most things done in communes are done together in groups; there are a lot of people around to help remove the prison of the home in which so many women are trapped.

BRIAN: A number of people, including ourselves, are concerned about linking up communes either physically or cooperatively in networks. Do you have any idea of a web being formed, or of a web yet to be formed? What kind of structure might it take to form an effective web?

JUD: I think that the web has yet to be formed. There are some areas like Free Vermont and Berkeley that have a pretty closely related group of communes, but generally the commune is an isolated community. I was

"One of the things that surprised me is that there are probably more peak-out women than men."

struck by something that one of the members of Twin Oaks said the other day; he said that in the early days they used all of their energy attending to their own internal affairs, and getting going economically and psychologically. As they mature, however, — they are four years old now—, they find that they have energy to spare, so that they go to conferences and have more interest in developing other communes and relationships with them.

I think that's probably predictable. I know that even from our brief experience with our own commune the idea of being sociable, even with people that we love very much, seems like an expense we can't afford because there's so much work to be done. And it's

not only the physical work of getting the garden going, getting the building done, getting the place arranged and functioning, but also a good deal of community building. This requires more closeness than most of us are used to, more understanding and development as to how you maintain your individuality in a very close community. Questions of this sort can't be worked out if you're always running about relating to other people.

BRIAN: So for most of the communes that have been forming since '68 there's an absorption in internal workings which might take two or three years. Maybe this is why there is a charge of cop-out, since the groups require a certain amount of togetherness before they can reach out to the outside world.

JUD: It shouldn't be thought of as an entirely negative thing. One of the reasons you go to a commune is to put up front in your value system the very kinds of personal relationships you're talking about. If, for example, one of the things I feel, and this to a certain degree is

" . . . in the early days they [Twin Oaks] used all of their energy attending to their own internal affairs, and getting going economically and psychologically. As they mature, however, they are four years old now, they find that they have energy to spare, so that they go to conferences and have more interest in developing other communes and relationships with them."

true, is that my profession is separating me from my family, then I change so that I'm spending more time with my family. That should be looked upon, not as a burden, but as a deliberate attempt to put human relationships first, and first of all the human relationships within the commune itself. Beyond that, there is undeniably a fraternity or tribal relationship among communards. They recognize one another on the streets of Brattleborough, and you can tell by the dress. There's a lot of intercommunal visitation in Northern Oregon and in New England, where it's a sociable thing. The whole commune will pack up and get in cars, and go visit another commune twenty miles away. That kind of thing does develop.

Another kind of problem, particularly with the rural communes, is that the particular kinds of farmland that are available and suitable for communal development are scattered and far apart. You tend to find isolated farm land where it's difficult to communicate without telephones. Most of them are not into writing, and most of the daylight hours are put into work. Driving around is expensive and time-consuming. There just isn't as much communication linkage as might develop later on. I think that this is less true of urban communes because they tend to be in the same area of the city. Especially in the inner city where things are fairly cheap, and you can be fairly free with

building codes and things like that, because nobody's enforcing it any more. I think that they tend to have a much more fluid and meaningful inter-relationship than most of the rural communes.

BRIAN: Did you see much linking up of rural and urban communes in any way?

JUD: No, not very often. It's very common to hear people expressing the dreams of both a rural and urban base, but I've never seen a single example of this in actual operation. We tried to do this in our own operation, thinking that we would have a house in Columbia, Maryland, and the farm a hundred miles away. People could then move back and forth. Columbia's a better place for employment and school, and if someone wanted to get away from it all, he could go to the farm. However, the arrangement quickly broke down, because the economics of rural and urban living are so very different that you can't run them as if it were on the same kind of basis, or maintain a sense of community between the people who are living in the city and people who are living on the farm. But that may happen . . . people may still be able to develop that kind of pattern where they have more than one base and are still part of the same commune. The urban communes very often help rural communards in terms of marketing organic products and craft products, and provide crash pads when they come into the city.

"It's very common to hear people expressing the dreams of both a rural and urban base, but I've never seen a single example of this in actual operation."

BRIAN: One final question... Critics of communes try to have it both ways... Not only is there the comment that the attempts of rural community are not relevant to the social needs of the country, but they also say that these communes are "harbouring thieves and beggars" or people who are just drifting and have no sense of roots. How about these criticisms?

JUD: Well, I don't see how the second comment is a criticism. It's quite true that there are people living on communes who would otherwise be living at public expense in institutions such as juvenile homes, the army, hospitals, etc.. If they are living at very little public expense — and food stamps are the main way that they obtain an economic subsidy — then I think that these difficult social problems are being handled at significantly lower costs via the communes than otherwise.

BRIAN: In other words, the communes are socially relevant, and some of their members are often people who have serious problems...

JUD: I would say that there is a certain percentage on most communes who would have to have some kind of institutional solution for their own life situation. That doesn't mean that the majority are, by any means, of that sort.

The question about listlessness is many-faceted. For one thing, there is a regional difference. In California, for example, there is a good deal more leisure in communes than there is in New England — just because the climate and the general orientation of west and east coast differences, whether you are on communes or in the cities. The New England communes tend to be extremely hard-working, almost puritan in dedication to work, and the same applies to many of the marginal areas of New Mexico; but, where the climate is more propitious, there may be somewhat less industry.

On the other hand, the high value placed upon the whole idea of industriousness is maybe one of the diseases of mind that our society has to overcome. We are in a mad spiral of production and consumption that somehow has to break because the planet can't tolerate it. In a sense, our society is over-productive, just as it is over-consumptive. As you increase production, you have to increase consumption. The communes attack both of these levels—they're neither quite as productive nor as consumptive. This is one of the ways in which communes are political; they deliberately try to get off that cycle, and re-interpret work, so work is that which is satisfying in itself rather than a way of scoring points for achievement.

" . . . Creating a decent spiritual and economic connection to the land . . . can't be done by organizations, but only by individuals, families and small informal groups. It will have to be done by leaving the cities and the suburbs and making a bond with some place, and by living there — doing the work the place requires, repairing the damage other men have done to it, preserving its woods, building back its fertility and its ecological health — undertaking, that is, the labor, the necessary difficulty and clumsiness of discovering, at this late date and in the most taxing of circumstances, a form of human life that is not destructive."

Wendell Berry
The Long-Legged House

A Community in Canada

An effort is being made to start an experimental community in Canada, and anyone sharing the premises on which it is being started is invited to participate. The basic premise is the need to prove the workability of an alternative to our present social structure, and that a community patterned somewhat after the Israeli kibbutzim offers greater prospects for doing this than the small communes presently existing in North America. It is also deemed necessary that all decisions should be made by participatory democracy, and hence that the group involved must spend the coming winter making its decisions before looking for a site in the spring of 1973.

The first goal of the community should be economic self-sufficiency. By this we do not mean that the community could or should produce everything its members need; it should, however, produce sufficient surplus in whatever commodities it does turn out to sell or barter for the remainder of its needs. This should be possible if the members bring a variety of skills and ideas.

The small communes of today are financially dependent upon the economic system they despise and seek alternatives to. They are started with money earned at straight jobs, and when the money runs out their members must return to the straight jobs, which in the case of a rural commune usually entails leaving the commune either temporarily or permanently. Rarely do such communes succeed in improving their economic position, due to difficulties in making marginal farming pay and the failure of most small communes to attain the inherent dynamic which would enable their members to stay together for more than a relatively short period of time. If two or three members of a small commune discover that their commitment to communal living and to their group is not as great as they had originally supposed, their waning of enthusiasm can have a very contagious effect on their comrades and their departure may well trigger the break-up of the group as a whole.

Even if successful, communes do not meet the needs of large numbers of people who feel the need for alternative modes of living. Part of the reason for this is social; if the living arrangements are made by closely knit affinity groups, it is difficult or impossible for anyone not part of such a group to establish himself in

a commune. If people who do not know each other very well agree to live together, they frequently find themselves temperamentally unsuited for the close personal interdependence which such arrangements require.

The attempt to organize a community is being coordinated by Gary Moffatt, former editor of *Alternate Society* magazine which has published several articles exploring the reasons for the failures of both small communes and the larger communities which were started in the 19th century. These studies pointed to the conclusion that communities failed not so much because of the irreversible will of Providence as definable errors which the Israeli kibbutzim and certain religious communities in North America survived by avoiding. These include a lack of common purpose, too-open membership, poor choice of land, excessive reliance on strong leadership, attempts by the founders to dictate policy and bad public relations. It is hoped that through participatory democracy the group will define its purposes and sift out those unable to mesh with these goals before the community is actually started.

Although it is anticipated that the community will start in a rural area, this does not necessarily indicate a back-to-the-land philosophy. The attractiveness of isolation from one's fellow man, however evident from the city, begins to pall after months or years of being experienced. Even if there is enough land for significant numbers of people to go back to (a doubtful proposition) it is very questionable whether attempting to return to a pioneer way of life is an adequate response to the problems of the 20th century. We must try not to throw technology out the window, but to have it serve man rather than the other way round. It is probable that this challenge can only be met in areas of fairly high population density. Once the community is on its feet, it can do several things to help bring its philosophy of a better way of life to the existing cities (for instance, it can run a free school for children from the cities as well as those of its own members, or it can help subsidize community organizers in the cities.)

If you are seriously interested in considering involvement in the community, you are invited to write Gary Moffatt, Rochdale College, room 1403, 341 Bloor St., West Toronto 181, Ontario.

Gary Moffatt

The Village

by Jud Jerome

i. Saturday

tomorrow we take her to the village
a sturdy seven
Jenny is oval of face her small eyes darting mischief
she looks sideways teasing giggling
her few words
arduous grunts and squeals she runs tottery trounces
her little brother
the moment swells a translucent balloon
before her eyes the past *gone gone* the future like
Good Humor meltingly offered just beyond grasp
about
tomorrow she knows her clothes toys books are packed in boxes
I stand at my study door
outside she swings on a rope
from the oak happiest by herself
the neighbor children
cannot understand her they are brain damaged
we who lean on tomorrow do not understand

ii. Sunday

all of us edgy to leave
Jenny goes out to wait
in the car flies back flatfooted running ponytail swinging
to fetch her yellow lunchbox one doesn't go to school
without a peanut butter sandwich
we laugh and load
for the family trip through rolling Pennsylvania
three hours of autumn Jenny hooting gladly pointing
at passing trucks ponds cows
she pulls her mother's chin
around to be sure she is getting through
and when we find
the gravel road to the village
the cottage assigned
she knows
wing wing! she shouts and scrambles out to try
the swing
by the door
adults fumble through introductions while
she darts into bedrooms bathroom locates piano and toys
riding her moment like a surfer carrying her
essential world in her head
it is distressingly
simple we invent anxieties about
her toilet sleep food language
it seems as though there ought
to be more papers to shuffle even death requires
more preparation
we leave
the car vacant and still

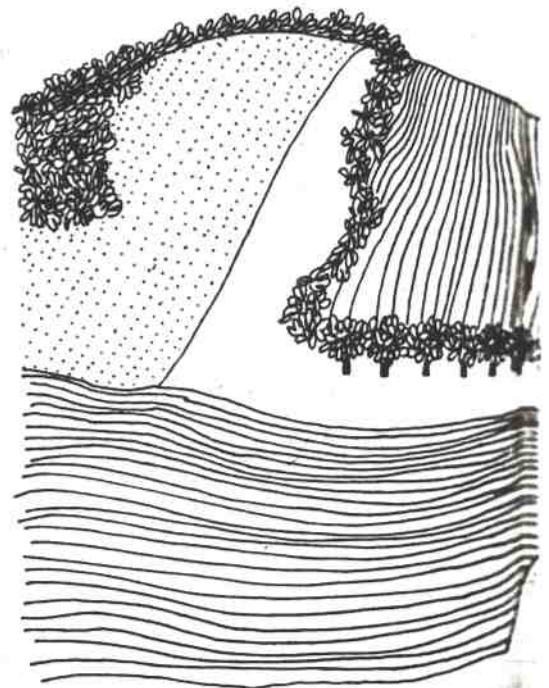


iii. *The Village*

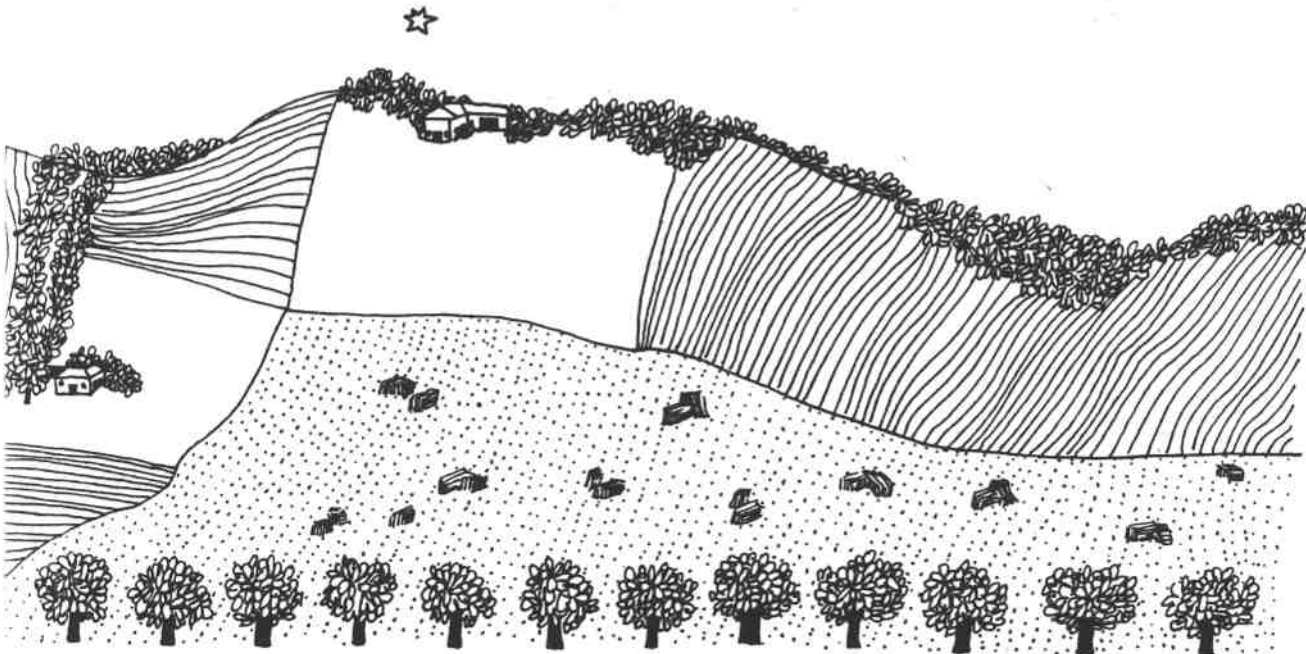
"Stupid means nothing in nature.
You are what you are." Jacques Cousteau

driving away my mind plays tricks
 a village just for people who lived in care
 another where
 not
 with what one has make do
 spreading its cottages and economical gardens
 on the verdant hills
 together to work play learn worship in joy
 names
 of life being
 I try to imagine yearning for nothing having enough
 food warmth company
 our own music bread and love
 imagine congruence of need and delight
 sinking into the downy bed of the earth's abundance
 letting now be adequate
 I dream a village
 for seasons
 the dawn

suppose there were
 of one
 differences were expected
 judge
 I see a village
 people sharing whatever
 coming
 no last
 the sexes mingling
 the point
 nurture fulfillment happiness
 reading no ads
 imagine making
 have we brains enough among us?
 imagine
 there is nothing but now
 rooted and spreading
 ready
 riding the earth round steadily into

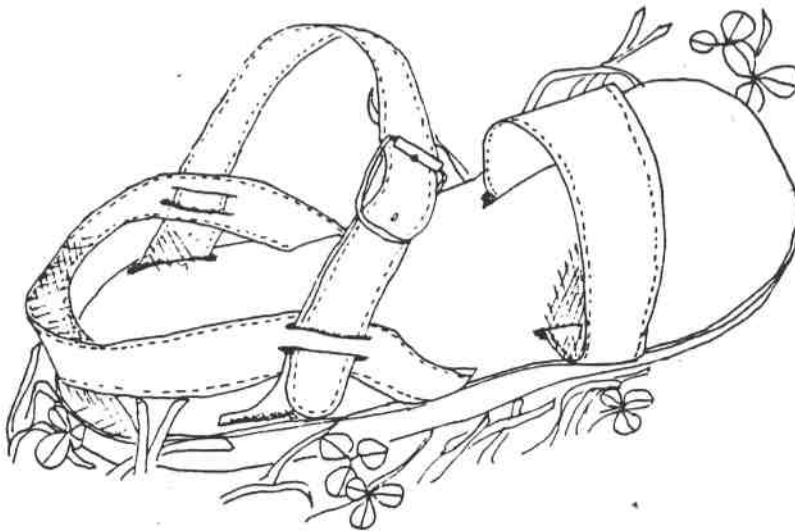


we are excluded
 on the freeway speeding
 cursed with the knowledge of our own mortality
 striving against that limit
 believing a living is
 something to be earned
 memory clogged with guilt
 future a terror
 present a point of balance we
 have lost
 * * *
 there they believe inside each one is one
 dwelling in splendor
 beyond all damage
 beyond all
 distinctions
 free of the yoke of time
 a self a presence
 (I speak with eyes to her in there: hello Jenny)
 there they believe the body with its senses
 mind
 with sense
 are tricks of light on the face of the troubled pool
 I try
 to imagine believing
 flesh is not me
 I am not
 a sum of deeds
 these very thoughts are a mere flux
 of current
 I cannot think my way to the still depths
 * * *
 we are excluded
 we are normal
 we would be bored
 in that village
 we would organize it for profit



iv. Monday

we rearrange the house it is strangely quiet
without
her random energy careening through the day
the night is undisturbed
we are guiltily relieved
of soiled pants clutter spills howls fights blaring TV
things put away stay put away
Jenny is guiltless
rolling her day before her like a ball
we call
to find she loved the school slept well
they are overwhelmed
by her relentless curiosity
I smile
knowing they will be won
wryly knowing
the bother
exasperation weariness the worry
(when sick
she lies so wordless in her body
rapidly breathing)
knowing the lesson she teaches in unconditional love
at home we look at one another newly
there is
much we have neglected between us much we have
poured in a bottomless receptacle much
to be built
in us are planted
Jenny's slanted humor
trust and desperate vitality
we search
out innocent ground
the place the friends the strength
to farm



COMMUNITY

QUERIES

What specific goals and principles does your community have? Socially, economically, politically, spiritually, educationally etc. How has living together altered previously determined goals and values? How can newly forming groups benefit from the experiences of older groups?

Socially, where along the continuum of isolated nuclear family to fully communal group marriage does your group lie? (e.g. homesteading cooperative, extended non-related family, communal cooperative?). How are your needs for privacy and intimacy balanced out? Where does your community lie on the scale of totally open to intensive selection procedures? Do you have temporary members? How do you avoid excessive turnover and transiency? What policies are there about visitors, relatives and friends?

Economically: Money — how do you support yourselves? live off the land, businesses/crafts, outside work, welfare or rich uncles? *Support* — is there income sharing? debt sharing? *Work* — How is it divided up with reasonable fairness? Are art, music and writing considered work? Are people motivated by chants, communication or credits? *Housing* — how is it designed, financed and built? *Possessions* — How do you determine what is personal property if all but that is shared? Are savings, stocks, antiques, rare items etc. thrown in the common pot or not?

Politically, How important is it to relate well

with your neighbors? Is the climate one of hospitality or one of hostility? In what ways have you been able to improve your relationship with local people. Do you take any part in local meetings and politics? Is there mutual aid between you and the low income/minority people in the area? Internally, how do you make decisions? If by consensus, how do you avoid stalemates? What are your ideas about leadership, hierarchy and power within your community?

Spiritually, what common values hold you all together? Is there a shared philosophy of life or a shared vision — e.g. pacifism, mutual respect, an inner faith in man and God?

Educationally, how well do you approximate the ideal of community as a learning environment? Do children attend your own community school or a public school? How do you resolve the inevitable tradeoffs between equality and quality in education? What agreements have you reached on child rearing, sexuality and drugs?

Geographically, how did you decide on a location — e.g. land was easily available or cheap, favorable climate, presence of similar groups, proximity to an urban area? What is your land like, how many acres and what was the initial cost? How many people do you want and can the land support them ecologically? How is the land being settled and used?

This is the forum section of the journal where we encourage readers to engage in dialogues with each other. We need many more specific questions and answers than the few listed below. Most of all we need answers, how your group has solved some of the more difficult problems. Ideally, we all will join in a mutual uncharted search and voyage.

A COMMUNITY OF COMMUNES

In an upstate New York county a conscious effort is being made by a Center for Alternatives to create an alternative social and economic network. The county seat can already boast various "fringe" alternatives, i.e. free clinic, underground papers, open public schools. With sixty percent of the county's electorate under twenty-five the situation is ripe for more basic changes.

The Center for Alternatives publishes *Guava Jelly*, a monthly newsheet, and provides Vocations for Social Change counselling. They are developing non-profit work co-ops; one is a furniture shop. To insure reasonable prices, worker salaries and overhead costs are posted in the store. Only those who do the work share in the income. A three to four percent price mark-up goes to an Alternatives Fund to help start other co-ops and support further organizing activity in the area.

David, of the Center for Alternatives, advertised the beginning of a "community of communes" on 220 acres of land which he bought for this purpose. After meeting with interested people in Boston and New York, a small group in and about the Center sponsored a weekend conference. Communitas got wind of this gathering and sent Don as a representative.

The conference was held April 21-23, three miles from the proposed community site at the camp facilities of a speech clinic. A third of the thirty-five people present are now in communes or living co-ops. A half dozen have been committed to the new community movement for over two years. This made it a bit like a small gathering of the clans with folks once involved in Fort Hill of Roxbury, the Camphill movement, Beansprout collective and People's Information Center of Greenwich Village.

A half dozen engineers and electricians gave the conference a technology flavor with their discussion of building materials, design, and desirable technological forms. Three of the electricians work at the nearby Lafayette repair center and want to start their own non-profit operation based in an old school bus so that they can serve outlying towns. They would expect to share income with others in their communes.

Four people at the speech clinic gathering were working with town planning, most from the New City Project of the Cambridge Institute. Susan and Charles brought a ten page position paper outlining possible economic models for the community of communes and discussing ways of relating to neighbors in the township. They planned development through four stages: getting together in communal groups, settling into the neighborhood, expansion, and reforming the region. The town planners helped deal with questions about types of land ownership, zoning rules, tax loss

financing* — help which few communards get.

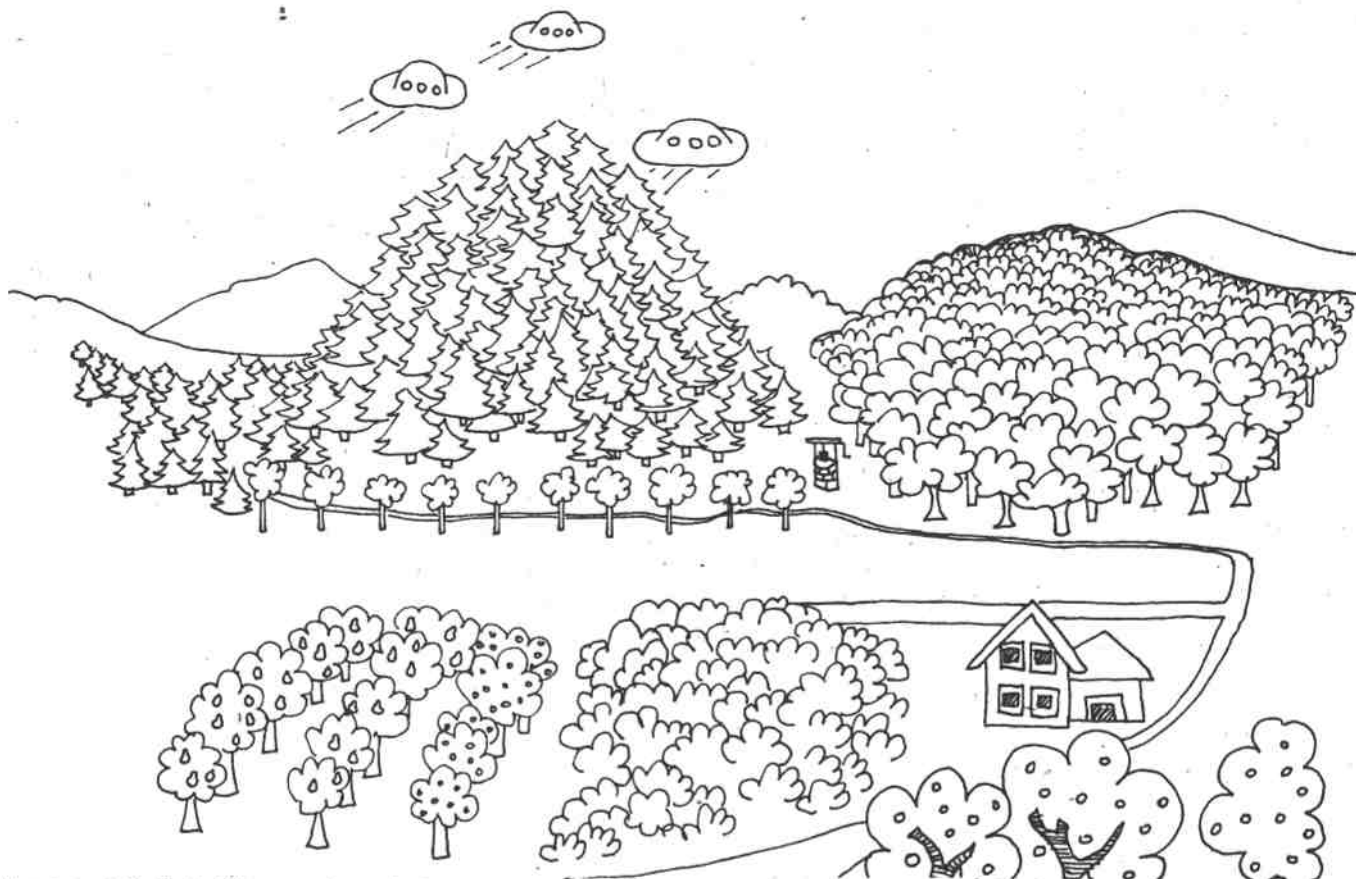
The teachers and gardeners were in lower profile. Ira, an area school teacher, wrote up a free school prospectus for the conference and there was discussion of it among the teachers present. Most others were enthusiastic about the school helping them relate to their neighbors. As an afterthought people were appointed to research orchard care and gardening. The feeling seemed to be that such a community should have a school and gardens.

Friday night, people gathered around the large fireplace of the speech clinic to share their interests and expectations. Most had come as individuals, only recognizing a few names or faces. All were excited by the idea of planning a community of communes. Several communes will form a physical cluster to share the land. A variety of communal styles gives flexibility and widens the chance for growth and change, e.g., if people are frustrated with each other they can play "musical communes" for awhile without having to leave the community itself. Some communes may just pull up stakes and move on to the land. Others may develop around the particular work interests — furniture making, electronics, or a school — forming a base for part of the projected county-wide alternatives network.

Thus spoke the pink paper. It may be an important experiment in living. Encouraging diversity leads to a little fruitful friction. Where other groups tend to stagnate this one may generate new questions and ideas. A cluster can support more services, child care, a school, medical care. The political impact can be greater.

So much for the dream. The speech clinic conference went on to consider — How to make community decisions? Who can join? What legal arrangements for land ownership do we want? People felt the community would govern itself through a periodic town meeting making decisions by consensus. The group ignored the suggestion of a representative governing board. Selection of members was then taken up, with the immediate consensus that there be at least a trial period of thirty days on the land for prospective members. Different plans were proposed for weeding out the initial group after the trial period. Some people suggested voting on each other's membership in turn

*tax loss financing — rich individual pays for buildings and writes off annual depreciation as a loss. After five to ten years of your maintaining them you buy the buildings for a song.



by secret ballot. Others advocated open membership for the initial group. Finally David was chosen to start the member selection process after one month of group living. By that time everyone will have special responsibility to tell others how he feels about living with them. Then David will choose one person he would be comfortable living with. Together these two will choose a third. The three will choose a fourth . . . and on. At the end of the choosing process the first five in the group will be dropped and added to the pool of "unchosen." Then members chosen later will get a chance to judge the first ones. [Dizzy?]

Opinions on land ownership were fuzzy. David wants to avoid a landowner role and further, will sell it at a loss. He paid \$8,430 on a \$25,300 mortgage, \$190 to be paid monthly. People wanted to take over mortgage payments and start to pay back David as they got settled on the land, but were not sure who should hold title. There was talk of forming a membership corporation or a land trust.

Sunday morning the rainy weekend weather had cleared, and we went en masse (en seven cars) to see the land. The 220 acres stretch from a low area covered with pear and apple orchard (no one seemed to know how many acres, perhaps ten, of orchard), over a stream, up through woods, across a sloping hay field and on up to the top of a forested hill.* Where should houses go on this varied terrain? Above the hay field, there are level areas, one with a foundation and well.

*The hill is a well known landing spot for flying saucers. An area university has even investigated it.

Why such a cheap purchase price? Although the orchard crop is sold each year much of its area is overgrown with sumac and brambles. The hay field is too hilly for much more than hay or well placed gardens. Most of what was probably pasture has a ten year growth of saplings and brush. Even if the land was cleared, commercial farming would be rough. Two established communes are a few miles east; the county seat with its attractions is only eight miles north. All in all people were very happy with the land.

A conflict of attitude, "A successful community is a planned community," against, "A good community just grows," ran through each large discussion. One woman described her feeling towards planning, "If I don't think about it [community] I feel a lot happier." Just do it. However, the planning attitude prevailed most of the time. A few people left the conference early, apparently as a result of the mechanical flavor. Seth of Cambridge felt the conference should serve to get people together. He thought most communal groups failed not because of economic or organizational problems, but because relations among members broke down. He was largely ignored and once directly contradicted; he left by the next morning.

The planning that was done left out consideration of lifestyles. Part of the pink paper described the type of commune that David favored: "A 'primary' family—not made up of 'couples' and yet satisfying for its members those basic needs one usually tries to satisfy in a couple relationship — an experiment in a non-monogamous setting." At no point was this statement discussed in the group as a whole. No one dealt with the questions of children, perhaps because only one

woman interested in joining the effort had a child. Such problems of life style were left to each commune to decide as it developed. The group's concern was for the overall structure of the cluster.

Eighteen people said they would move onto the farm in four weeks. Some considered coming as their jobs or other commitments ended. Others came away interested by the plans, yet . . . Those that already live nearby will erect a temporary A-frame and plant gardens. A meeting of folks in the Boston area was planned on the next weekend.

And that is how things went at the speech clinic.

Communitas was attracted to the conference by its similarity to our ideas. We want to share in such efforts toward community living. Here is a group well along in the formative process. They have land, skills, people and definite plans. People at the conference asked that *Communitas* withhold their location, but act as a forwarding agent for letters from interested groups and individuals. Letters of inquiry are welcome. Send them to: Community of Communes c/o *Communitas*.

This community of communes plan seems in part to answer the following letter:

Dear Friends,

I am a young person working in the movement in Philadelphia and for a few years now have been interested in and developing an alternative life style, that is, a human alternative to the plastic, destructive, dehumanizing urban existence that our capitalist society has fostered.

This interest, I am beginning to find, has been a continually growing inner directive arising from my past, existing in the present and moving toward the future. It amazes me sometimes to watch the interconnections of this self-development as months and years later I realize that events, ideas, and people from the past are like pieces of a puzzle that do indeed begin to fit together. They support an almost intuitive feeling within me that we are putting together a strange new gestalt or pattern that speaks of a new life and a new way of being.

To use myself as a specific example of how this process works — I grew up in a small town in central Pennsylvania called Middleburg, not far from Walnut Acres, Paul and Betty Keene's now huge organic farm-industry. Their daughter Jocelyn was my closest friend throughout highschool and our friendship has persisted despite years and miles between us. At the same time my relationship with Paul and Betty has matured and deepened as we discover a unity to our interests, a respect for living on the land, in balance with nature in reverence for the earth and for the decentralizing of concentrated urban populations into small rural communities. Betty and I have discovered that we both

share a strong commitment to the liberation of women's potential. I attended Bryn Mawr College where I studied Political Science and Sociology and was heavily influenced by Eugene Schneider, a Marxist-socialist scholar who has done a great deal of writing on the sociology of labor and industry. My senior year I did an honors project with him on the industrial organization of employees at Walnut Acres. Walnut Acres has tried to institute certain forms of worker control over the industry through worker membership on the Board of Directors, stock ownership, etc. Researching this paper entailed reading and synthesizing of early socialist thinkers, Marx, present day labor and work relations analysts, and theories of industrial de-centralization.

For the last two years I have been working primarily with the Philadelphia Women's Movement and with a small community called Powelton Village where people are living out the concepts of community control through cooperation. We have a completely volunteer-run food cooperative that has been running over a year and which serves over 700 people every week with discount and alternative foods. Behind the food coop is a cooperative garage, down the street a community center-coffee house while many of the houses are liberated buildings and communes. We have close to 25 communes within a four square block area. Powelton is also living and creating the philosophy of bringing art back to the people. There are many accomplished musicians both learning themselves and training others. It is not uncommon to have night-long jam sessions with flutes, organs, guitars, banjos, drums, fiddles — everyone awakening to the joy of making their own music. Music is just one of the arts being re-developed in a non-competitive, cooperative spirit — writing, film, photography are all beginning to flourish. People are learning the expansiveness of themselves — to be music, hear music and make music, to be color, see color and make color, to mold, paint, dance, and sing. People are making the meaning to their existence rather than passively accepting the limiting structures that society would impose on them.

Presently I am working with Father David Gracie, Urban Missioner for the Episcopal Church. Our job involves relating to the Philadelphia Movement, supporting it with resources and interconnecting the Peace Movement, Black Movement, Women's Movement and New Left in order to develop a supportive growing framework of struggle.

However, I believe deeply that in order for people to move and grow they must be able to believe that a better possibility exists and for them to believe in that possibility of a better life, one which this present capitalist structure can never bring them (at least without sacrifice of lives in other parts of the world), we are going to have to create that alternative. A crucial part of such an alternative is a natural environment. Can a truly revolutionary life style ever be lived on concrete land where 5000 lb. death machines whizz by every second, polluting and distorting the very air we breathe? It seems unlikely right now that a human existence can be built on, in and surrounded by the structures of urban capitalist society. Such a life can

only be built on a natural base, not on distorted, corrupted decay.

But many of us who are deeply committed to a full human life for all people can not accept an individual solution to the problem. Any alternative we build for ourselves cannot be built on the basis of middle class privilege. It cannot forget the poor and oppressed, nor can it be separated from the overall struggle. Finally, many of us who have discussed building the alternative in the country find the idea of either an isolated family or commune unsatisfactory. We are interested in building communities of alive, skilled, and committed people.

To sum up then, our problem is this:

1. To build an alternative, cooperative community in a rural, natural environment.

2. This community must be integrally related to the overall struggle going on in the country and specifically the struggle in the city.

3. We must find a way to include poor people in the building of these new alternatives and communities. We must provide the opportunity for all of us to live a good life, not just the white, upper-middle class, skilled elite.

These are my interests, the direction that my past and present suggest to me — and they reflect the direction of many people in Philadelphia at this time. Now we must begin finding ways to actualize these seemingly impossible goals. My own first step is writing to you for information you could share about your experiences since you have succeeded at least to a certain degree in building the kind of communities I have talked about. Paul Keene referred your name to me when I explained to him the kind of direction myself and other Philadelphia people were moving in. I am interested in finding out as much as possible from you about your successes, your problems, your reflections about the possibility of beginning other communities, perhaps the possibility of visiting with you sometime during the summer. One further idea we had here while pondering point three above was the possibility of matching up small farmers, who would inevitably lose their farms to the ever encroaching process of land centralization in the hands of the super-farmers, with communities of people from the city who have some skills the system is willing to buy (to help pay for farm expenses such as taxes) and other skills such as carpentry, gardening, organizational skills which would keep the farm running and supporting the community. In other words what might be the possibility of getting together people who do not want to leave the land but have to with people who want to get back to the land but can't. But this is just one outlandish possibility and there will probably be many more before we succeed in building the kind of life we are looking for. The important thing, I think, is to be clear at least about what we want and from that point to create solutions to the problems that stand in the way. The first problem is gathering information so that we can look at the situation realistically. We have very little such information now.

I have included details about my own background only so that you could understand that I am serious about this information, it is not just a whim or a fad but a developing trend in my life and that I am sincere

in wanting to be able to share such information with other people in the Philadelphia community. From my office in Center City Philadelphia and my contacts with the movement in Philadelphia I am in a position to share what resources you could offer me.

Thank you for taking the time to read this lengthy plea for assistance. I look forward to hearing from you.

Joyce Reimherr
Urban Mission

This letter, printed in *Alternate Society*, develops the community of communes idea in more detail:

THE OBJECTIVE

The objective of an alternative economy would be to provide another system of relationships and structures whereby persons could obtain the material products and the non-material services (1) necessary to life maintenance, and (2) potentially valuable as life enrichments, without having to participate in the parent economy, or at least, through a minimized participation in it.

THE PRESENT SITUATION

With the possible exceptions of the Taos complex and the experimental communities in the San Francisco Bay region, communal experiments are widely scattered, very individual affairs. Intercommunal trade and communications are limited by factors of geography and expense. Since every commune requires a great many manufactured items, it is forced to rely on the parent economy for many supplies and also for markets for the items which it manufactures.

Consequently, while many intentional communities are geographically separate from the establishment system, their economic reliance is intimate. A few major exceptions exist to this situation, and they represent real strides toward self-support and general economic autonomy. We refer here to the fact that most communes produce their own food supplies either in part or in whole, and own and maintain their own living quarters. The freedom from the exploitation of landlords and the "poisonous" food processing industry which this represents should not be underestimated. Two basic survival needs, food and shelter, are being met on an independent basis.

But as we move into some spheres, we can begin to note the intimate dependency of the communes on the parent economy. Textiles for clothing manufacture, leather, tools, building materials for houses, medical supplies, numerous household necessities and production of electric power are all "imported."

As we begin to list the number of items necessary to maintain the simplest of communities in something other than a really "primitive" life-style, we soon just acknowledge that no single community can ever hope to be self-sufficient and at the same time lay claim to the advantages of small group living and the beneficial uses of technology. Banal necessities and many "luxuries" which we may think twice about sacrificing

all come from sources beyond the commune itself. In all fairness we do not need toilet paper, or tampons or light bulbs or refrigerators or metal sewing needles or glass jars, but they certainly are handy and their uses, while not significantly complicating the ideal of a simple, non-materialistic "people-directed" life-style, nevertheless makes living much easier and more enjoyable.

THE MEANS

In view of our goal of evolving a truly alternative pattern of living and our recognition that an autonomous economy represents at least one foundation stone of the effort, we are lead to ask: How can we extend our measure of economic self-determination within the matrix of ideas which have already evolved the commune lifestyle itself?

One might then propose the following answer. We know that the present small, scattered communes cannot possibly attain an economic self-sufficiency and at the same time use some of the obvious advantages of technology. Perhaps, however, we could expand our control over our own lives by repeating the concept on a slightly larger scale. Communes themselves have evolved as a result of many individuals coming together to live and work as a group. Many beautiful things have happened as a result. Why not bring several individual communes together under the idea of creating a near-self-sufficient communal economy? An elaboration of this idea will help to flesh out the rather skeletal sounding concept.

Suppose a tract of land is available, say, 500 acres, at least half of which is arable. A plot of this size would probably be outside the financial means of most communes-in-embryo to acquire. But suppose a number of communal groups pooled some of their resources and acquired the land. For purposes of discussion, let us say we have ten groups of twenty people or so in each group. The land is purchased, divided into ten plots of 50 acres each and each group gets one. Each group builds its own living quarters, plans its own gardens; thus each group is self-sufficient in terms of food and shelter.

At this point we diverge from history. Each group will probably be manufacturing something, and the close geographical arrangement of the communes will greatly facilitate trade. Instead of every individual group making its own clothes from textiles manufactured in the parent economy, perhaps one group could devote its efforts to attaining raw wool and cotton and spinning and weaving textiles for all the communes in the complex. Every group could still make its own clothing, but an important "industry" has been scaled to human proportions and absorbed into the communal culture. Perhaps the raw fibres could be obtained from communes in other countries capable of growing them. Another group might make pottery; a third, bricks and lumber for building; a fourth furniture (purchasing its materials from the lumber producer) and so forth.

In a limited sense, what is being proposed here is a form of specialization. But it should not be interpreted as hyper-specialization or forced specialization. It is assumed that the communal groups could avoid the alienation of a hyper-specialized economy by ensuring that each group produced a finished product which had a real use and was also a representation of

a satisfying and creative experience for the person who manufactured it. Likewise, nothing at all should inhibit the freedom of anybody to produce his own furniture or his own clothing if he wants to.

The point to be made is that many economic functions could be taken over by a group of interdependent communes which would otherwise remain outside the reach of single groups working alone. The advantages are obvious since they would permit an ever-expanding absorption of secondary manufacturing functions and correspondingly would reduce the groups' dependency on the parent economy for materials and markets.

This kind of scheme also implies a fair amount of inter-communal co-operation. Just as the commune has come to represent a challenge and a growing experience for the individuals who live in them, perhaps the intercommunal economy would pose similar challenges and offer its own opportunities for communal growth and development. Too, there appears to be no reason why this economic arrangement should infringe on the small group life-style advantages of the commune itself. The groups would still remain relatively autonomous in their decision-making and group life arrangements. The above proposal merely represents a shift in focus regarding where the necessities and secondary commodities of life can be manufactured and marketed.

The scheme for the economy could be correspondingly expanded to include an intercommunal transport and communications system as well. Paths for foot traffic or bicycles could be cut to connect the cluster of communes together. Access roads for a few vehicles could supply the means of transporting heavy items by car or truck if necessary. The close clustering of a number of communes on a small amount of land would then come to embody a practical switch-over from a civilization designed around the automobile to one designed around people.

Naturally, we assume here that the production, consumption and transport of goods and services would be governed by the principles of sound ecological planning from the outset. Wherever possible we would expect to see every manufactured item being built to last and the employment of recycling procedures as a matter of custom. Thus fusing an ecological awareness with the principles of communities designed to meet the needs of men, instead of machines, and the requirements of a life-support, we could hope to see the evolution of a genuine alternate society.

—Mark Alan Burch



COMMUNITAS FOLK

Communitas is a group effort, though the group is rather loose. Some people are only involved now and then, a few of us regularly. Work is centered at Brian and Ellen's house. Don lives there, too, and our office is in the garage. We get together twice a week for a meal and a meeting.

Marlene Wigston was introduced to Communitas by Don when they met through a Rudolf Steiner study group at Antioch. Don shared his enthusiasm for the journal with her and, feeling that it was worthwhile and real, she joined the project. Marlene has done other community work, helping to create a youth counselling and information center in her hometown, Timmins, Ontario, but she never felt the satisfaction of working for basic changes as she has at Communitas and Community Service. At present she lives in the Vale.

Don Hollister has committed himself to the Communitas project effort after three years of working/wandering as gardener-teacher-carpenter in Quaker circles and Camphill communities. His life is intertwined with Yellow Springs and Antioch; he grew up here, lived with Arthur Morgan and around Community Service and has researched the Morgan-Horace Mann history of the town. When Communitas moves to Virginia, Don expects to split his time between the journal and farming.

Carol Kolodny, our "artist in residence," designed the cover and did most of the artwork for this first issue. Carol is an art major at Antioch and will spend the summer working with Communitas.

Margot Barnett met the Communitas people through the Friends' Meeting and a shared interest in community. She is now living in the Vale and she plans to work with Communitas at least through the summer. She has done the calligraphy in this issue.

Brian Bouton proposed the plan for Communitas on New Year's Day, 1972. He is trained in child, adolescent, and community psychiatry. Ellen is trained as a children's librarian and is currently studying recorder and early music. Brian and Ellen have two children - Steven, 6, and Sharon, 4. In their last year in Cambridge, Mass. Brian worked on the New City Project, completing a study of Virginia. After 8 months in the Air Force at Wright-Patterson AFB. near Yellow Springs, he was honorably discharged as a "protester and dissenter." This freed his energies to work on the journal while doing part-time psychiatric work.

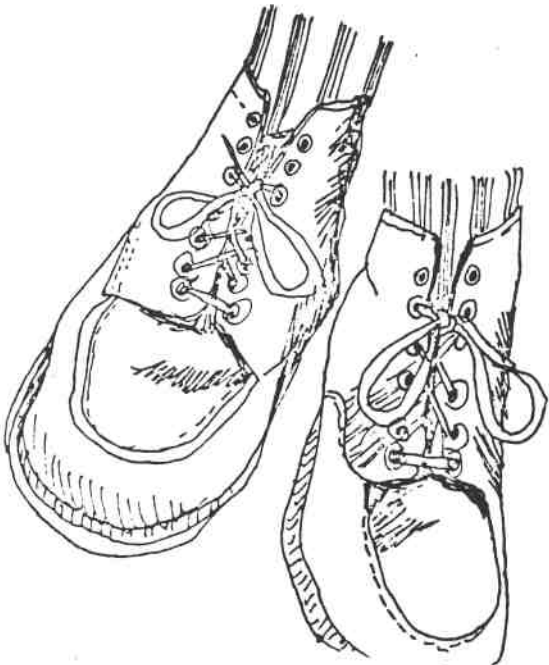
Move to Virginia? That is right. Before this year's Twin Oaks conference, we will try to purchase 150 acres near Charlottesville, Va. Next spring Communitas, perhaps with friends from Dayton, Ohio and Cambridge, will establish the first of a number of communes, eventually creating a community of communes. In the next few months we hope to find other groups with similar or different dreams who share our commitment to this type of community.

Trekkin' with Chuck Matthei of Peacemaker thru West Virginia

Chuck spent the summer of 1971 travelling over West Virginia for a total of 15,000 miles. He was partly looking for land for the Peacemaker land trust. They had been given \$16,000 from an estate and have used part of that to buy two parcels of land, one 40 acres and one 115 acres. They paid \$40-50 per acre and found that they passed up several places that in retrospect they should have purchased. One of them that they passed up was in Hacker Valley 74 miles east of Charleston, W. Va. A neighbor's son was interested in it and they did not want to compete with local people. As it turned out the land (with a good orchard, swimmable river and a couple of barns) went to someone else, a school teacher, for \$30 an acre (90 acres at \$2700).

Unfortunately, W. Va is following in the footsteps of Vermont in becoming a second-home, vacation mecca for city people. There is a real estate dealer named Crook (sic!) who has bought up countless farms in the Alderson area (West of Covington, W. Va.) at \$50 per acre and sells them to city folk at \$100 an acre a few weeks later, which enables him to buy up more farms, etc. He owns ridge after ridge. Once this land goes into the hands of city people, it's lost to the mountain people. Furthermore, the mountain people really don't profit at all. For example, an old couple in their 80's have a farm, but are physically unable to care for it and have no money to pay for heavy medical expenses. Many folks like these have sold their 100 acre farms and bought a quarter acre in town with a house worse than the one they sold, and with no money left over! Land prices are low because people in the area have little money. The vacation home buyer and the tourist throw this rather stable economy all out of kilter and encourage the trend toward people losing their native skills and becoming dependent on the coal companies, the tourists and the welfare system.

Chuck feels we need to encourage self-sufficiency and community in areas like West Virginia through co-operatives and people giving each other support. For example, they almost bought a farm with virgin timber on it, primarily sugar maple. The owner had 8 kids and



was behind in his FHA payments and was ready to sell the 100 acres for \$5000. Chuck and others at *Peacemaker* felt that it was not morally right to buy land from someone that was hard pressed, in effect capitalizing on his predicament. They did not buy it and the man ended up selling the timber rights to a lumber company, which was undesirable ecologically, but at least enabled the man to stay on the land and provide for his family. They came across countless families who were forced to sell because of financial problems, because sons were grown up or because they were too old to tend the land. Some of the children are returning and working for OEO and Community Action Programs (CAP's). Chuck would not himself work for CAP's because he feels they are not geared enough to self-sufficiency (see the review of Wendell Berry's *Long Legged House* on page 57).

Chuck found it most effective to skip real estate dealers all together, and would go to the country store and chat for half an hour with the local people, enjoy himself, and gradually find out about several farms in the area. He was repeatedly astounded at the depth and detail of knowledge about the people and the land that the farmers had. Chuck sees realtors making money off the poor people and feels it is wrong to use their services. He saw some land where the mineral rights belonged to coal companies — the attitude of people in such counties was that you take that chance and life is a gamble anyway; whereas people in counties without broadform deeds repeatedly warned against buying land without the mineral rights coming with it. Familiarity breeds contempt?

There is a startling reversal of our ordinary sense of things in the recognition that we are the belongings of the world, not its owners.

*Wendell Berry
The Long-Legged House*

Chuck felt one solution to the problem of buying up poor peoples' land and displacing them might be to have them stay on the land and teach the new people what they know. Many people who are older have amazing knowledge about how to live off the land, but have let it lie idle because of lack of young, strong bodies to help them. One man owns 100 acres with a mill that was running until 10 years ago when his children grew up and moved away. He has kept the mill wheel in good shape and a group of people could learn a great deal from him, while getting a water mill working again. Can we create an alliance between the grandparents and grandchildren to re-create community and self-sufficiency?

The Peacemaker land trust has had about 50 responses, but most of these have been general interest and not many people are seriously pursuing living on the land as of yet. The land does have several drawbacks in terms of fairly exhausted soil, rickety buildings, no large rivers or ponds and one parcel having a road running through the middle of it. Nevertheless it is a beginning. One guideline is that any structures that people erect belong to the land and cannot be sold. So, if some people sink \$10,000 into a house, they cannot sell that to another person, unless they make a private deal with the understanding there is no title passed and all that is being bought is the use of the house — and even then, other people on the land also have a say as to the use of that building. Undoubtedly there will be squabbles about use of land and building and in the event of an impasse *Peacemaker* would act as "impartial" arbitrator.

There is a great need to save and enrich the elements of community that still exist in the mountains and one way is to have small groups buy land from mountain people with the provision that these people can live out the rest of their lives as equal members of the community. This might be one way to bridge the artificial gap that separates the old from the young.

Since the above article only briefly mentions the Peacemaker Land Trust, we are reproducing the entire description of it here, along with comments from Peacemaker readers:

Usership, Not Ownership

For some time there has been an active, on-going discussion within the Peacemaker community about land, about our feeling for it and our use and distribution of it. Many of us feel that land, like air and water, is not rightfully subject to ownership; that each of us has a natural right — a right to life — to use the land we need to live and make a living, but not to abuse any land or to hold and limit the availability to others of land beyond our real needs. We are concerned about ecology and conservation, about the health of the earth and our own health, which is part of it. We are disturbed to see land, the "owner" of all of us, regarded as a possession and a commodity, a subject for speculation and profit-making, a form of wealth, a means to exploit and live off the labor of others. We are anxious that land be available to all according to their needs, as a place to live and a freer opportunity to experiment with new styles of living. We do not want to see land, as "private property," seized by the government for our refusal to pay federal taxes and court fines.

It was motives such as these that led us to look for a practical way to move away from a system and psychology of ownership to one of usership, or trusteeship. We wanted to find a new perspective and practice that would reflect and encourage collective rather than private, responsibility toward the land, based on the recognition that we are all involved with and affected by the use of all the land. It was decided that Peacemakers should try to develop a land trust.

After two years of discussion and preparation, the

Peacemaker Land Trust has been established. It is a vehicle through which land can be taken out of private ownership and placed into collective trusthold in perpetuity. Once placed into the Trust, the land will never be sold, rented, or used as a form of capital or wealth to make profit from the labor of others (as in tenant farming or wages unequal to the proportion of work done).

The land held in trust will be made available to individuals, families, community groups or combinations of these. An attempt will be made to arrange for full and equal use of the land, consistent with the welfare of the land itself, the wildlife, and the users. The land will be offered on a basis of need, without rental costs and without regard to personal philosophy or prior involvement with Peacemakers.

It will be expected that the users of the Trust lands own no other land while they use them, that they live with a sensitivity to the natural environment, and that they not use the land to make profit off others. The users will be responsible for the labor and expense of upkeep and maintenance of the land.

Decisions about the structure and operation of the Trust, and any changes in these, will be made by a consensus agreement of all concerned, through the periodic Peacemaker Continuation meetings. They will be carried out on a regular basis by the working Land Trust Committee.

Individual Peacemakers are encouraged to consider their own views and practices with regard to the holding and use of land, and to help to spread the word about the Trust. We hope the Trust will be a growing reality and example; its growth will depend largely upon donations of land.

Land Acquired

The Peacemaker Land Trust has acquired two farms in West Virginia. They are now available for use.

One is near Indian Mills (about 22 miles southeast of Hinton). It is approximately forty acres, in a small valley, lying on either side of unpaved public road, one half mile from a hard road. The land on one side of the road is mostly forested hillsides, with a few small level places, one cleared with a well in it. On the other side of the road is a 12-acre meadow, a spring and creek, several smaller level areas, and another wooded hillside.

The other farm is 12 miles north of Alderson. It is 115 acres at the juncture of a long, Y-shaped hollow (narrow valley). A dirt road leaves the paved road at the mouth of the hollow and goes about a mile and a half to the farm. There are about 20-30 acres of level cleared land, in fields and patches on each branch of the Y; the rear is forested hillsides and tops. Two creeks, coming from either branch, join at the center. There are two wells and several springs, and a small untended orchard. There is a house on this property.

We are anxious that this land be distributed and put into use as soon as possible, in the interest of those who will use it and to get the Trust into full operation.

Any persons interested in using the Trust lands should write for full details about the places and directions to them. They should be prepared to visit the land, and to join in a meeting with others who would

like to live on the land or are concerned about the Trust to decide together how the land might best be distributed, according to the needs of the people interested and the principles of the Trust.

All correspondence about these two farms, or the Land Trust in general, should be addressed to Peggy Laramee, 4818 Florence Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19143.

A Note of Caution

I don't believe there has been any extensive discussion of whether or not it should be Peacemaker policy to try to do away with private ownership of land. So I would like to continue the discussion of it that has already started.

The Peacemaker aversion to legal documents means that a person who lives on land in the Peacemaker Land Trust will not have a legal document giving him possession of the land as long as he lives. This will mean a reluctance to invest a substantial amount of money in permanent improvements such as buildings, water systems and expensive soil conservation measures, for the future will be uncertain.

I think that land would more likely be subject to abuse, exploitation and deteriorating improvements under the Land Trust than when a person has paid to acquire the land and will see his investment dwindle if he does not take care of it. Of course, whether under private ownership or a Land Trust, much will depend upon the sort of person on the land.

A good thing about private ownership is that a person may feel emotionally attached to his land and feel that it is a part of him if he lives on it for most of his life. That may be more true of one that has a few acres than of one that has 5000 acres.

The bad thing about private ownership is that only those with sufficient money can acquire it. Other evils may be attributed to ownership of land, such as gaining wealth by renting it or exploiting labor that works on it. But privately owned land is not necessarily rented to others and labor is not necessarily exploited. I should think moral suasion on landowners would be more effective than moral suasion on the few that might settle on Land Trust land.

With all the land there is in the U.S., I don't think the infinitesimal amount Peacemakers might acquire would be of enough significance in ending private ownership of land to justify the purchase of land on which nonpacifists might live, even if that is desirable. We have no Vinoba Bhave to beg land from the rich.

I see a need for a different kind of land trust though; one which Peacemakers could donate land to and get a life estate in return. Then, I do not think the land could be taken for payment of fines or income taxes.

Walter Gormly
P.O. Box 172
Mt. Vernon, Iowa 52314

Property Is Theft

We recently looked at several farms with the idea of buying, only to be thrown back into our anarchist ideas: property is theft. More and more land is being owned by big corporations and land speculators while

those who would use it, who need it, are left wanting. Wage slavery seems to be their only (legal) alternative.

I question the Land Trust on this: the system of owning property was established by landowners to protect and to expand their ownership. The system works to deprive the poor and to add their land onto the lands of the rich. To play that game is to risk getting "added in"; and might not accepting having one's small holding left alone be equivalent to accepting C.O. classification?

So we are thinking about the squatters' movement in northern Brazil; landowners owned all the land while the peasants starved. The peasants began squatting on the landowners's land, building huts and planting gardens. They were thrown in jail. More came. The ones who went to jail came back to squat when they got out. I don't know how it turned out or what's happening now. But it seems such an illegal thing is needed here to reclaim the land for use rather than for profit-speculation. But then it comes back to am I ready to go to jail over this?

The exploitation in Brazil was hard; here it's made as comfortable as possible. Still, a squatters' movement — property resistance — would seem to be a logical follow-up to draft and tax resistance. Wouldn't the conclusion of it all be a total government or System resistance? Sometimes, this business of resisting various little things the System does seems like treating the symptoms rather than the causes of the disease.

Mel and Amy Acheson
Box 728
Paonia, Colorado 81428

Responsibility to Land

From Walter Gormly's letter in the last issue, it seems that there may be a misunderstanding about the Land Trust. There is no time limit on the tenure of land-users; they may stay on the Trust land indefinitely. And it is possible for a land-owner to donate his/her land to the Trust with the understanding that he/she can remain on the land, consistent with the principles of the Trust.

As for the possibility that the land will be abused because the users are not legal owners and may not "feel emotionally attached to the land"—we are prepared to take this risk. The Trust is meant as a witness against ownership, particularly private ownership of land, and as an attempt to begin to move away from it. It is hoped that the Trust can help to promote a deeper kind of responsibility than is usually associated with the present system—a responsibility not just for oneself and the present moment only, but for each other and the land itself and the future as well.

Of course the Peacemaker Land Trust is a small beginning, but it can be an important experiment and example. Its growth depends on many of us taking its principles seriously, reconsidering our own land-holding involvements, if any, and raising these questions with others.

Mel and Amy Acheson suggest that squatting is more consistent with the basic principles of the Trust. I agree. The Trust has always been thought of as a step in the right direction, still far from the end of the road.

More discussion-ideas-action on a nonviolent squatting movement would be welcome.

A note on the present state of the Peacemaker Land Trust: there have been many inquiries about the Trust and about the two farms in West Virginia which are open to be settled; there are no people on the land yet, and anyone who may be interested in using either farm should write to Peg Laramée, 4818 Florence, Phila., Pa.

—Chuck Matthei

Leasehold Contract

Unfortunately, I have not read the whole dialogue on the "land trust" that seems to have developed on the pages of *The Peacemaker*. But from Walter Gormly's letter of April 8th, it seems there is an impression the choice is only between giving people "free" use of land (unfettered by a contractual agreement) and selling it for private (and perhaps-exploitive) use.

We probably share what I feel is your view: that land is a God-given resource which should not be owned by individuals and bought and sold like a commodity. Besides the fact that this leads to the exploitation of resources and people, it also dislocates the economy in a way that hits the poor the hardest, through underemployment, endemic inflation, etc.

But we do not feel that the "land trust" concept need be based solely on the faith that users of "free" land will invest the capital and hard work that will be needed to make the land productive, or necessarily respect it as a resource to be preserved for future generations.

In Israel 60% of the productive land area is owned not privately, but by the Jewish National Fund. The JNF holds this land in trust for the long range benefit of the whole society. It is leased to groups (kibbutzim moshav shitufi, moshav ovdim) to develop communities as they see fit within certain broad guidelines spelled out by the trustees. The land is protected from exploitation and speculation by a *leasehold contract* between the trustees and the using group. In the United States a 5700-acre land trust called New Communities, Inc. has been established to make land available to black farmers in the South; this makes use of the JNF concept. [See *Grapevine* under Georgia.]

We do not see anything wrong with protecting land—our most precious resource—by a formal leasehold arrangement between trustees and users (which can run for a lifetime and be passed on to descendants.) It is the key to ethical land use and at the same time has been demonstrated to be practical.

We have recently completed an in-depth study of the land trust concept called, "The Community Land Trust: A Guide to a New Model for Land Tenure in the United States." It will be published in June and will be available from International Independence Institute, West Road, Ashby, Mass. 01431 (for \$3.50!).

—Ted Webster
West Road, Box 183
Ashby, Mass.

[*Communitas* will have a long review of the Community Land Trust Guide in the September 1972 issue.]

PIONEER HEALTH

Pioneer Health is a regular feature of *Communitas* written primarily by two physicians, Dan Rosenn and Stu Copans. Dan, 30, was a classmate with Stu at Stanford Medical School, California. He has done a pediatric internship, and has spent the last two years in the Public Health Service working on an Indian reservation in New Mexico. Starting in July 1972, he will work with Dr. T. Berry Brazelton in Cambridge, Mass. on problems of child development. Stu Copans, 29, did a rotating internship and one year of neurology residency in Vermont. While there he gained experience providing medical care to communes and is editor of the *Home Health Handbook*.

One of the problems a lot of us have is keeping healthy. It is a problem that is especially important in our new communities because of several things: 1) New life styles expose many of us to new diseases. We come into contact with these diseases because of our new environments, and because of lack of sufficient concern with problems of sanitation; 2) New diets may be hard to adjust to at first, and unless carefully planned can lead to deficiencies, especially in growing children; 3) The nature of communal and eating arrangements often makes it easier for disease to spread rapidly through a small community; 4) Living with other people can be beautiful, but it can also be hard. When a community is going through a difficult time, people's susceptibility to various diseases seems to increase.

The practice of medicine today often reflects the impersonality of our present urban society. The large city hospital, the packed waiting room, the harried, unsympathetic physician, are all part of the dehumanizing lifestyle that many of us are trying to change. As we build alternative communities, we must include medical care in our plans. Medicine in our new communities, however, must humanize, not dehumanize; it must teach self-sufficiency, not dependence; it must deal with health, not simply disease.

What we hope to do in this column is act as resources for people who are interested in learning to care for

themselves as much as possible. We hope, in later columns, to present some of our own ideas on how they could best accomplish this. We are both physicians, and are relatively conservative in matters of medical judgment, although not in politics. We are intolerant of experimentation that endangers human life, whether it is carried out by a research physician, or by an advocate of a radical diet.

We do believe that a healthy diet, adequate exercise, good sanitation, and psychological well-being play an important role in preventing illness. We further believe that folk remedies, when used appropriately, may be of more help than over-the-counter remedies for minor illnesses. In the case of potentially serious or life threatening diseases, however, we would want to use all the technology and medicines currently available.

To the extent that we can, we will try to answer individual questions sent to us; however, time and energy limitations may force us to answer only questions of general interest. Some of the areas we plan to write about are:

- Plans for a community-based medical care system
- Community sanitation
- Childbirth
- Childhood development and communal child rearing
- Psychiatric problems in a small community
- Common rural emergencies
- Nutrition
- Canning, cooking and gastro-intestinal diseases
- Hepatitis
- Birth control and venereal disease
- The uses and abuses of medication

We would appreciate specific questions that people have about these and other areas, for example first-hand accounts of public health problems that actual communities have encountered.

Send all correspondence to Dan Rosenn and Stu Copans, c/o *Communitas*, 121 West Center College St., Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387

CREDITS

Don Hollister wrote *Community of Communes* and all but one review.

Marlene Wigston edited *Conversation with Jud Jerome*.

Pat Olds wrote the review of *The Long Legged House*.

Briak Bouton wrote *Virginia: The new dominion of community*, *Homer Morris Conference on community*, *Philadelphia Life Center*, and *West Virginia*.

Glen Hovemann wrote *Alpha*.

Grapevine

Our policy in both Clearinghouse and Grapevine is to print the full name and address of all sources unless we are specifically requested in writing not to. We want free flow of information between community people. We would appreciate receiving a copy of any letters you directly send to people listed here - this helps us build up our files. See Clearinghouse (page 53) for how to contact groups where no address is given.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR 1972

June 23, 24, 25 School of Living conference: Adequate Action for a Human Future.

At World Fellowship Camp, Conway, N.H.

Seminars on Organic farming, decentralization, alternative sources of energy, functions of community, land trusts. Program leaders include Ralph Borsodi, Paul Goodman, the Nearings, Murray Bookchin, Robert Houriet.

Write: John Tewinkle, 4 Sanderson Ave, Northampton, Mass. 01060

July 2, 3, 4 Twin Oaks Conference on Community:

Main purpose is to catalyze the formation of more new communities. If you are going to do this in the next year, this is the place to meet 200 like-minded souls. Communitas and friends will be there - how about you? Write: Twin Oaks, Box 169, Rt. 4 Louisa, Va. 23093

August 4, 5, 6 Community Service Conference on Communities: Formation and Transformation:

A working conference of people concerned with creating both self-reliance and interdependence in communities. Pre-conference planning July 7, 8, 9. Write: Community Service, Box 243, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387.

more grapevine

More Grapevine

ALABAMA

Resurrection City is a group of poor, black and white people trying to make a go of it in a farming community in Alabama. They cannot afford to pay 98 cents for organic celery, so subsist on fatback, beans, cornbread and pork. Cheryl Buswell-Robinson and Ray Robinson, along with their children, are the residents at the People's Farm in Resurrection City and they sponsor work brigades where groups of movement people go down there and pitch in. They feel: "we have something very important to offer folks involved in intentional community. We have a concrete program: growing food for hungry people. That's real, something everybody should be able to relate to. Intentional communities, for the most part, are too ingrown, looking for personal solutions to today's problem. They are often unavoidably elitist, white, middle class people off on too many head trips."

Participants in the Work & Rap sessions have felt that community members come on too hard with a rigid Maoist line and are not open enough. You can see for yourself by contacting Cheryl and Ray at: People's Farm, Resurrection City, Rte 1, Box 125A, Brown, Alabama 36724.

The following letter (from *Peacemaker* March 18, 1972) explains more about Resurrection City and the problems of relationships between peace folk and Third World people:

"I read the reactions to the Work & Rap session at Resurrection City — People's Farm in *The Peacemaker* of Feb. 5. I want to speak to the large question which I feel has been raised. The issue seems to me to be: what is the relation of Peacemakers and other peace people to our sisters and brothers who are our co-workers in the building of a new society, and who are not committed to non-violence? The working of my question was inspired by an article by Barbara Deming in *Liberation* magazine (Nov. '71) entitled "On Anger." I hope everyone who has a chance to will read it. (75 cents from 339 Lafayette St., N.Y., N.Y. 10012). Barbara communicates, much more eloquently than I, the need for peace people to start dealing with the reason these people are not committed to nonviolence. In her article, Barbara talks about anger — the anger of oppressed people and our own anger — and how important it is for us to face both.

I want to talk some about Resurrection City because I think it is a good example of what I'm trying to communicate. I've been to People's Farm three times, only for a few days each time (varying from two to five days). I found it a difficult place to live because it took so much energy to do the physical work (things I was unfamiliar with) and participate in the discussions that we had. Yet it was very stimulating and I'm glad I had the chance to be there. It helped me better understand the anger of people more oppressed than myself, and my own anger somewhat too. The important thing about

them, in my mind, is that they are trying to do their part in building the kind of society we all want, where people are truly equal and sharing with each other. They are in the same struggle we are in. I don't mean there are no differences at all, but that we need to affirm our unity.

The Robinsons are growing lots of food, which they share with other people. When I was there, everything they had was mine — food, clothes, whatever I needed. Some of their food they give to the Panthers' breakfast program, which, I believe, was upsetting to some of the Work & Rap participants. This I don't understand. As far as I know, the breakfast program involves providing breakfast for children whose families are too poor to afford good nourishing breakfasts. I don't feel it matters what philosophy is espoused by those who hand out the food, even if they preach it to the recipients. A goal of People's Farm is to become as self-sufficient as possible — to depend on "the man", the establishment, for nothing vital. They are setting an example for the people living around them, poor black subsistence farmers, (mainly) that it is possible to exist on very little in the rural south and be pretty much independent of the white power structure.

All of these things that the Robinsons are trying to do are good and important things, in my opinion. I feel that creating alternatives to living within the system is something peace people need to do more of, and should encourage others to do. I feel it's important not only for us to support poor and oppressed people, but to learn from their example, how they are overcoming their oppression, how they are building new lives.

I'm hoping that this letter will encourage people's responses, help start a continuing dialog about how peace folks relate to third world people. Probably some of what I've said is overgeneralized or oversimplified; my purpose is to try to communicate a spirit I feel we need in the peace movement, in Peacemakers, a spirit that flows into action wherever it seems appropriate.

In the case of People's Farm I think it is appropriate to send money, to spend time there helping with the physical work, to join them, perhaps, on a longer-term basis. As far as I know they are still looking for a medical doctor who is interested in helping set up a people's clinic there. I'm glad Peacemakers had a Work & Rap session there; I hope we don't neglect places like that in the future.

Sharon Long
c/o Longs
4 Waverly Pl.
Albany, N.Y.

ARIZONA

Sri Ram Ashrama, a religious community in Arizona, has joined with other community groups to oppose the construction of seven mammoth power plants in the Four Corners area. These plants will create extensive air pollution, drain scarce water resources and

scar the land with the strip mines needed to feed them. The community calls upon people living in the area to help with the protracted legal battles ahead. Contact: Sri Rama Ashrama PO Box AR, Benson, Arizona 85602. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*)

ARKANSAS

Ethos is a community-farm in Northern Arkansas. They have learned a lot in their not-always pleasant birth throes, and would like to get in touch with other communes-communities in Arkansas to share advice and suggestions about such matters as community resources, purchasing land, and community philosophy. If interested, get in touch with Jim Lendall, P.O. Box 1175, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203.

CALIFORNIA

The Bear Tribe has undergone mitosis. Originally a 70 person tribal group in the high Sierras of California, they have recently spawned groups in Connecticut and at Ragged Mountain in Rappahannock, Virginia. The tribe sees earth as the Mother, who may not be bought, sold or possessed. They are caretakers of nature and land. Their last known mailing address was: PO Box 1222 Sacramento, Calif. 95806.

The New Earth Brotherhood Community welcomes anyone who's willing to cooperate and work with others to establish a new community. We've yet to decide where to locate (the group as a whole will do that) but we want to begin next summer on land which is at least partly farmable, with water and growing season enough to allow a large variety of naturally grown crops.

We'll live according to the principles of common ownership of land, cooperation in economic life, attainment of self-reliance, respect for human beings, compassion for all living things, ecological sanity and rejection of dogma. We intend to weigh and consider the ideas of each member and friend with respect, make decisions democratically and help one another to develop personal virtues and talents.

We have children of our own (hope to have a school some day) and will welcome families as well as individuals and groups of friends. If you're interested in joining, have or know of land for sale at a good price or are rolling around in money (we're poor) and would like to help a good cause, please write. We'll send you a statement of what the New Earth Brotherhood is trying to do.

M. Blanck
445 East St. No. 4
Pittsburg, Calif.

We, the Tierra Verde Fellowship, are a group of ten people (ages 14 to 52) farming and developing a 50-acre parcel of land near Philo, in Mendocino County, California. We're currently seeking six to eight more folks to help us create a really multifaceted life style.

We're into natural farming of vegetables, fruit and herbs for our own use, but the herbs will also be sold at the farm and through the mail. Any surplus will be purchased through existing contracts by an internationally known firm.

The Fellowship also raises earthworms, goats and rabbits and will develop other livestock projects as the interest arises and the members wish to shoulder the responsibility.

We are now building a workshop inside the barn for those who want to create pottery, leather goods, weaving candles or whatever. Craft items will be sold in a store at the base of our water tower, and the proceeds returned to the individual craftsmen.

In time, part of our 100-year-old farm house will be used as a family style restaurant and part as a sales area for refinished old furniture and antiques in general.

We're not seeking people to work for us, but with us, on a share-and-share-alike basis. If you wish to join us, your initial dollar investment for a full share would be less than \$600 and your expenses for the first year should be under \$1200. You'll also be required to work two to six hours a day, depending on the time of year. In return you'll receive room and board, a share of the profits from 12 or more projects, money for the hours worked, a paid health plan, a place to enjoy fresh air and sunshine and an opportunity for equal ownership of the ranch property.

If you share our belief that decentralization of our over-populated cities and a great dependency on self and friends for the goods and services that we need are two of the key answers to our country's ecological and economical survival . . . then let's get together and rap.

Send us your name, address and phone number and we'll set up a time to get together.

Tierra Verde Fellowship
Mr. V.E. Jensen
PO Box 2856
Rockridge Station
Oakland, Calif. 94618

From T.M.E.N.

Ma-Na-Har means peace and harmony. Ghandian, non-violent, positive-actionists. Co-operative community living based on these principles. Visits (except for day-trippers) welcomed. Costs about \$2/day. A desert sanctuary — why not? For further info, contact Bhodan center, Sierra, Cahurst, Ca. 93694.

Kerensa Cooperative Community is being formed by mostly middleclass family people right now. They believe that security and happiness are to be found in a group of caring people rather than in individual accumulations of wealth and power. They believe in a community where no one need fear hunger, old age, illness or abandonment. They are now searching for property and wish to buy the land outright and have enough funds to start and maintain the community for one year. They have plans for small industries to produce income. They

want land with habitable houses but will also use mobile homes. They number 20 folk now, but need and want more members. Contact Rodney and Betty Owen, 945 Woodland Ave., Menlo Park, Calif. 94025. Phone: (415) 325-3374. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*)

Neverland is no more. Once incorporated as a religious society they've now scattered in different ways — why, we don't know. Living in Menlo Park, they had plans to buy an Oregon Farm to start living on the land this spring. A few former Neverlanders have joined the Alternatives Foundation to assume responsibility for publishing the *Alternatives* newsmagazine, which grew out of the late *Modern Utopian*. Check out the Summer 72 issue — see *Alternatives* in Resources for description and address.

COLORADO

Hard-working man with two youngsters desires to organically farm a few acres among friendly, creative, cooperative people. . . ideally with own free school. Have tools, welding and plumbing equipment. Prefer mild, dry climate. Contact: Bernie Bernstein, 2456 Lafayette St., Denver, Col. 80205

(Reprinted from *Alternatives*)

Community Design Institute, born July 1971 in the foothills of Virginia, died Dec. 1971, in the mountains of Colorado. Torn apart by clashes between doing-your-own-thing and behaviorism, the communal operation of the house closed down. It will still be maintained as a cooperative living arrangement with the construction industry as a source of income. For more info, write, Community Design Institute, 2456 Lafayette St., Denver, Colorado, 80205.

CONNECTICUT

East River Farm is a five-family commune in Conn. Most of the members already lived in the area when they began communal living two years ago. Adults range in age from late 20's to early 50's with a dozen children elementary thru high school aged. Several members work outside. *Communitas's* information is now pretty stale, but we trust things are still going well on the farm. Contact: East River Farm, Guilford, Conn.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Source Catalogue is into sharing information about our Movement. Information is power, and Source no. 1 is out and covers COMMUNICATIONS of every conceivable type. Twelve more 100-200 page catalogues are planned. No. 2 covers urban and rural communities. No. 3 covers economics. They also have a 35 acre farm in Shenandoah county, Virginia and are trying to be a rural community and an urban collective at the same time. Address: Source, PO Box 21066, Washington, D.C. 20009.

GEORGIA

Southwest Georgia Project is a community of Black people, working towards creating "a unit capable of speaking and acting powerfully in the interests of Black people." Their methods in striving towards that goal include a 6,000 acre plot of land of which one-fourth is farmed and harvested,

a training program for local leadership, community education program, and posals in the process of being developed a newspaper press and a program in photography. Write: SWGP, 615 S. Jefferson Albany, Georgia 31701

IOWA

East Street Gallery: this begin commune rejects the small 'back-to-the-land' movement, and attempts to relate its activities to large technologically advanced groups of people. Sounds super-rational in stance, and wants to conduct experiments with social structures. Their present form for human life includes an equal number men and women, and a work-credit scheme. Hetero-sexual relationships will be experimented with now. Visitors are welcome, check in advance. No guarantee of fresh yurts for breakfast, though.

1408 East
Grinnell
501

MAINE

Clearlight Farm is purchasing 400 acres near Cutler, Maine in Washington county. They have a libertarian, anarchist outlook and are interested in a cooperative with individual homes. They expect to have at least five households and will cooperate on land and pasture, equipment, sauna bath, school, crafts and an activities building. Contact: Yerma at Clearlight Farm, Cutler, Me 04122

MANITOBA

Bethesda Colony is a small Christian intentional community in central Canada, three miles from town. They have their own garden, some animals, publish a magazine, do radio broadcasts and operate a Free Bible School. They are Christians and strongly believe non-resistance as a way of life. Although they have Hutterian roots, they welcome people of all faiths. Visitors, whether short term, long term, or prospective members, are asked to write in advance coming due to limited space. They would particularly like to hear from Peacemakers. Their address: Bethesda Colony, Gladstone Manitoba, Roj-oto, Canada. Phone Gladstone 307 Ring 14.

MARYLAND

Savitria is a spiritual community at which the spiritual organization AUM resides. The members are presently trying to build a home environment promoting spiritual growth, individually and through group meditation. The externalization of the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man is their chief principle. This summer, there will be two summer sessions of five weeks each from June 10 — July 22; July 24-Sept. 2 conducted at Savitria. Write: AUM, 2405 Ruscomb Lane, Baltimore, Md. 21209

Koinonia Community* is located on 44 acres north of Baltimore, Maryland, and has nine major buildings, 50 people and big oak trees. Founded as a missionary training center 20 years ago, it has taken a new direction under the leadership of David Poist and is now an Alternative School where students learn by doing and living. The core staff, 23 in all, range from their early

twenties to the seventies. Dick, their organic farmer, has been getting high yields from their land for twenty years. They compost their waste, process their own sewage and reclaim their cans and glass. The easiest way to become part of the community is to apply for student status. The school is accredited by Maryland and costs \$500 per semester, room and board included. Address: Koinonia P.O. Box 5744, Baltimore, Md. 21208. Phone: (301) 486-6262.

*This group is distinct from the Georgia Community, Koinonia Partners

The School of Living is one of those rare communities dedicated in work and deed to organic and creative aspects of living. Non-profit, it opens its doors to about a dozen students and apprentices each year at \$2/day (Cheap!) Its philosophy of living is centered on 1) the organic and creative rather than the mechanical aspects of life; 2) life-styles consistent with this philosophy primarily the modern homestead, intentional communities and decentralization) 3) social, economic, and political changes to allow ready access to land and natural resources; 4) psychological insight into and understanding of one's self; 5) and education based in major universal problems of living and their human solutions. Sounds like a nourishing environment for many who want to create a wholesome and effectively radical way of life. Write The Heathcote School of Living, Rt. 1, Box 129, Freeland, Md. 21053.

Downhill Farm has more writers per acre than any other new community! Founded in March 1972 by Jud and Marty Jerome, Downhill has already grown to over ten people. Income is primarily from a grant Jud received to write a book on the contemporary commune movement, and most of them are helping with the book. Jud is an honorary member of *Communitas*' staff since he is featured this issue in: *Conversation*, his poem, *The Village*, and also wrote *Would You Believe a Newsletter!* They have three large buildings and 100 acres, but at 1500' elevation are low on oxygen. Contact: Jud Jerome, Box 177, RR 1, Downhill Farm, Hancock, Md. 21750. Phone: (717) 294-3345.

MASSACHUSETTS

New Community Projects, serving New England, helps create communal situations for suburbanites and working class families. Activities include twice weekly meetings where commune groups meet prospective members. Twenty-six communes have been formed from this interaction. Operates Referral Service—individuals and groups hooked up with each other through file system—135 communes served this way; also life-style counselling, suburban Adult Life Style Meetings; legal assistance; urban-rural network; consciousness-raising data collection; and real estate services. They put out a newsletter — *Commune-ication*. Sounds like a sophisticated and well-organized resource. Write: New Community Projects, 302 Berkeley St, Boston, Mass. 02116.

We are extremely happy to learn of your publication and proposed activities. The Hunger Mountain Community is now in its earliest planning phases, and we shall certainly benefit greatly from *Communitas*.

We are a small group of people wishing to create a center for spiritual enquiry, work, education, artistic endeavor and the free

flight of the spirit into its own unknown potential and growth. We wish, above all, to provide, ultimately, a kind of school for the young and also adults where the delicate sense of an inward life is fostered and not fractured; where the spirit of inward inquiry is allowed to grow and flower; where the growth and development of each human being is given the widest freedom, fired by that deep love which knows no disorder, no division. . .

Our initial plans include the construction of two meditation hermitages, one a dome type, the production of a meditation-chanting record, and the planning of summer-camp type activities aimed at the full sharing of life's energies together and at the full realization of that state of mind which knows no conflict. Not an ashram or a commune, not an alternative or an escape from the world, but a unique experiment in growth arising from our own dissatisfaction and our deepest intuitive response to that dissatisfaction. . .

We shall shortly be sending some material out of our own endeavor which may be of interest to you for publication. We are highly keen that our own successes and failures, our own experiments and inspirations be of help to others in this, which is perhaps humanity's most urgent crisis: To learn to live a life of absolute integrity and to recognize the necessity of a radical and total transformation of the human condition.

Contact:
William Morgan
P.O. Box 285
Monterey, Mass
01245

Fort Hill Community publishes *American Avatar* and has been going for several years. Mel Lyman is their charismatic leader in the same vein as Michael Metelica of Brotherhood of the Spirit and Stephen Gaskin of Caravan. Fort Hill says, "be committed to lose everything and be totally committed to something you don't understand. . . We destroy and rebuild each other every day". Address:

27 Fort Ave
Roxbury, Mass 02119

MICHIGAN

Sunshower Farm is a midwest nonviolent community with an urban-rural base. Their rural base is 140 miles east of Chicago on I-94, just southeast of Lawrence, Mich. They have an 80 acre organic fruit farm with about 3/2 acres in garden. There are 1600 fruit trees, 900 of them apple. Those on the farm have direct and indirect ties with communes and other folks in Chicago. Their food cooperative even supplies some free food. They want to develop into a center for non-violence. Presently, four people own the farm together, but they are interested in new members. Urban contact: Paul Schultz, 1210, W. Wellington, Chicago, Ill. . . Rural contact: Sunshower Farm, Box 26, Lawrence, Mich. 49064. Phone: 674-3103.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The International Independence Institute is a non-profit educational corporation devoted to revivifying the economic and community life of technologically undeveloped rural areas. The chief tool of this undertaking is the provision of credit. The Institute has its

headquarters in Exeter, N.H., and its President is Bob Swann, long identified with the peace movement through his activity, along with his wife Marjorie, in the New England Committee for Non-Violent Action, of Voluntown, Conn. For example, they consulted with the Southwest Georgia Project. They have given loans to small farms in Puerto Rico and to farm families in Mexico to aid in growing organic fruit. This June they are publishing a 100 page *Guide to Setting Up Land Trusts*, available for \$3.50. Contact: Robert Swann, Exeter, N.H. 03833.

NEW YORK

Earth People is a group of earthlings into community in the largest sense of the word. Buckminster Fullerish, they are determined to make Planet Earth into a harmonious spaceship. They are excited about connecting people with people and resources, and are working on a communication system that will disseminate any individual's ideas to the greatest number of interested others. They've done practical things, like influencing Gov't policy so that native Alaskans get land and royalties on mineral wealth. If you're a global village type, and care about all of Mother Earth's children, you might want to be on their mailing list. It's free!

WE, Inc.
19 Troutman St
Brooklyn NY 11206

Arrakis is no longer. It was a family of about 8 adults and 3 children living on a 37 acre farm in Jeffersonville, New York. They had three large organic gardens, a VW service and repair place, and a number of members involved in gestalt and encounter therapy. The farm was sold in September 1971 and members are scattered about, several in the New England area. One of the members, Judy Norsigian, can be contacted at 11 Donnell St. Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

The Center for Ithaca Alternatives is hoping to form an alternatives network in and around Ithaca, N.Y. In this context a Community of Communes is being formed on a 220 acre eight miles south of Ithaca. The land has a pear and apple orchard, stream, well, hay field, and marketable Christmas trees. Nearby are such established communes as Dawes Hill and Fool on the Hill. Write: Dan Hunt, 200 Highland Ave., Ithaca, NY 14850 (for details see article in this issue)

NORTH CAROLINA

The Mountain Cooperative Leadership is a coming together of Appalachian leaders. Idea is to cultivate mutual help, cooperative lifestyle, self-reliance, Workshops from Aug. 20 — Sept. 2. Costs \$200 (a few scholarships available). Since the program is geared to enrich your whole community, maybe all could throw in for the cost. Activities range from guest speakers and discussion to group tours and role-playing. Find out more by contacting the Campbell Folk School, Brass-town N.C., 28902.

The Arthur Morgan School. . . a trail-blazer in alternative education. More of a learning community for "junior high than a school. Set in beautiful mountain country. Presently looking for director, teachers (Art, Music, Math, Science, Social Studies), dietician, and housekeeper. School is part of

the Celo community — a loosely knit fellowship of about a dozen families who collectively own 1200 acres of land. Must write before visiting: Herb Smith, Arthur Morgan School, Burnsville, N.C. 28714

OHIO

Raven Rocks is the name given to 800 acres in eastern Ohio that nineteen alumni and teachers of Friends Boarding School in Barnesville, Ohio, bought, planning to start a community. Presently the group is scattered between Virginia Beach, Celo in North Carolina and Barnesville. They are trying to cover land payments by selling Christmas trees grown on the land. The group is not recruiting new members, but if you have a special interest in this part of the country you might write: Dick Stratton, Friends Boarding School, Barnesville, Ohio.

The New Earth Community is in the process of becoming an international community. Their idea is to live simply, but not primitively. Self-supporting through variety of community industries; jobs rotated and shared to avoid sex roles and overspecialization. Possible industries include production of medicinal herbs, wooden toys, furniture, hand-printed fabrics, and whole-grain breads. One group from the community operates a health-restaurant in Cleveland; one is interested in a construction co-op, and another in an auto-repair co-op. Services to the surrounding community include circulation of Tillerman newsletter, regional conferences, festivals, and workshops. Committed to setting up a school to serve their own community as well as folks from the nearby areas. An extension of the school would be a center for continuing education and growth-workshops in meditation, organic farming, social changes, community skills. Planning now for spring. Interested people contact New Earth, Hiram, Ohio 44234.

ONTARIO

The *Lanark Hills Community* is a proposed community in the Rideau Lakes area of Ontario. The site is an abandoned 135-acre farm, and its people want to hear from interested folk of all ages and backgrounds; those who want a firm, loving alternative. The vision is of a non-denominational religious community — religious in its reverence for inner life and qualities. Not interested in drugs or sexual experiments. Strong emphasis on growing organic foods, developing planned elementary school, and industries such as toy-making and book publishing. Accommodations will be mostly communal, and land will be held in common. If sincerely interested, write Jim Deacove, R.R. 1, Hillsburgh, Ontario, Canada.

OREGON

Mu Farm is developing into a community of individual dwellings. They plan a "hippy trailer park" at the front of their land as a catchment basin for visitors. The main economic base is a goat dairy. Some milk, cheese and yogurt is distributed in the area. A retail store for the dairy products is planned. Egg production is being built up. The "Mu Farm Electric Band" has played in the area with some success. Neighbors are amiable, perhaps impressed by the "farmers" working and spending of money (\$32,000

since July '71). Mu Farm, Rt. 1, Box 143, Yoncalla, Oregon 97499 (Abstracted from *Alternatives*)

Alpha is beginning. Thirteen adults and children, multiracial, multigenerational, 280 acres, a finger valley in the hills and forests of Oregon. Deeply pacifistic, Quaker heritage, socially conscious group. Contact: Alpha, Deadwood, Oregon 97430 (Note — an article by Glenn Hovemann of Alpha is featured in this issue).

PENNSYLVANIA

Life Center is a community of learners experimenting with nonviolent alternatives. Has five communes including Daybreak, the gathering, and The Fat Man's Jugband. Long term training for people who want to give several years of their lives working for non-violent social change, Workshops geared to trained organizers who are skilled in working with people, and who have a vision of a society worth struggling for. '72-'73 program begins in Sept., 9-12 months duration. Participants should be full-time, and willing to live communally. Check it out with The Training Collective, 1006 S. 48th Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19143.

New Community Farm is a free-school for people aged 14-19 on a small organic farm in Pennsylvania. Life centers around the operation of the homestead; staff and students live and work in two large houses on the farm. Academic work self-motivated, classes organized around common interests. Nearby universities are valuable resources. Half of the students choose to go on to college, and are accepted by the colleges they choose. Tuition, including room and board, is \$1200 for 12-month period. Tries not to turn down students for financial reasons. Prospective students should write New Community Farm, Coburn, Pennsylvania, 16832. Also, see Clearinghouse for help needed by Community Farm.

Full Circle Farm is now a group of several families on 112 acres of land near Walnut Acres in Pennsylvania. Over half of their land is apple orchard. They plan to diversify and not make the orchard as primary as it was. They have learned a lot about community building. (see article on the Homer Morris Conference for more details). Contact: Betty Weismell, RD 1, Beavertown, Pa. 17813.

RHODE ISLAND

Walden Three, fellow chroniclers of community, is putting out the *Communitarian*, also a bimonthly magazine geared toward middle class Americans interested in the idea of new communities. They live in two urban communes and hope to find a rural base soon. For details see article on Homer Morris Conference, editorial on communication, and the ads). Address: *Communitarian*/Walden Three, Annex Station, Box 969, Providence, Rhode Island 02901.

TENNESSEE

The Farm consists of about 500 people living together as a spiritual community under the guidance of Stephen Gaskin. The community owns 1,014 acres of land near Summertown, Tennessee, most of which is

wooded. Most of the people live in groups of 4 to 12 people in buses or army tents which are scattered about the woods. Several houses are being built. They plan to grow as much of their own food as they can, with added income coming from a sorghum mill in which they will process their own and neighbors' sorghum crops.

The atmosphere on the Farm is one of unusual intensity, since the main emphasis there is to maintain as high a level of energy and openness and paying attention as they can, all working together.

Members of the community have decided that the Farm is full, since they feel that 500 is all that can get to know one another as well as they would like to. They still welcome visitors, however, to stay for a full day and a night. Address: Rt. 1, Box 197 A, Summertown, Tenn. 38483.

VIRGINIA

Twin Oaks has given birth to twins. Acorn was born just four weeks ago and will grow up on a large farm just three miles from Mother Oak. The other twin is yet to be, but rumor has it that co will make co's debut in the spring of 1973. Yes, folks, Twin Oaks has decided to have a real baby and you can read all about it in this issue's article on *Virginia*. . . If you want to keep up with the news at Twin Oaks we urge you to send in \$10 — \$5 for the bimonthly *Leaves of Twin Oaks* and \$5 for the *Collected Leaves of Twin Oaks*, both being must reading for new community buffs. Address: Twin Oaks, Rte 4, Box 169, Louisa, Virginia 23093 Phone: (703) 894-4171.

Nethers Community School is a place to both live and learn. With an atmosphere like Summerhill's, Nethers has students from 11-18, who live and work right along with community members — building houses, eating homemade whole wheat bread, or milking the Nubian and Toggenburg goats. They have 27 acres, but there is still room in their large main house for more members. Located in the beautiful mountain country of Rappahannock county they are worth contacting at: Nethers Community School, Box 41, Woodville, Virginia 22749. (see also *Virginia: The New Dominion of Community* in this issue).

Springtree, near Charlottesville, Va., is 100 acres of beautiful land with meadows, sloping hills, oak and pine forests and medium sized river. Born at the 1971 Twin Oaks community conference, Springtree is now thriving: 12 adults, 8 children, one almost finished building, acres of organic gardens, even a vineyard! Featured in our *Virginia* . . . article, they can be contacted at: Springtree Community, Box 446, Scottsville, Va. 24590. Phone (703) 286-2415. (P.S. Their newsletter, at \$5/yr is excellent).

In late Sept., '72 the *Family Farm* will begin functioning as a school for people who are intently interested in becoming useful members of humanity. We will teach the crafts and skills necessary for the sustenance of satisfying, self-sufficient physical and intellectual lives. We will currently deal with these worldly crafts in their relation to creation as a whole, becoming aware of who and what we are, and what superior laws we are responsible to. We will teach (and learn) farming, shelter construction, clothes making, rug making, pottery, furniture making etc. as well as the liberal arts when so desired. We

will establish our own self-supporting economic system, eliminating eventually any tuition costs. We will operate as a family cooperative economically and emotionally and seek to establish a firm foundation for spiritual realization and growth. The farm itself is 227 acres of forest, meadow and streams bordered on three sides by the Rapidan River, 20 miles northeast of Charlottesville, Va. We are seeking one more married teaching couple and students ages 10-18. Contact: The Family Farm, Box 73 A, Barboursville, Va. 22923. Phone: (703) 985-7422. (Abstracted from New Schools Exchange Newsletter, No. 77.)

Ragged Mountain Ranch, several hundred acres of mountain land on the eastern border of Shenandoah National Park, is owned by William Pettie and has been declared open land. Part of the Bear Tribe is living in one of the forests. We would like to know more about this community. Interested people can write: Ragged Mountain Ranch, Sperryville, Va. 22749 (see article on Virginia... for more details).

VERMONT

Man and His Environment is a temporary learning community made up of 20 young adults (16 and over) living with nature and each other in facilities of the Farm and Wilderness Camps in Vermont. This spring, people worked with carpentry, weaving, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, and first aid. Fall may find Man and his Environment in the British Virgin Islands. Write: Man and His Environment, Farm and Wilderness Camps, Plymouth Union, Vt. 05057.

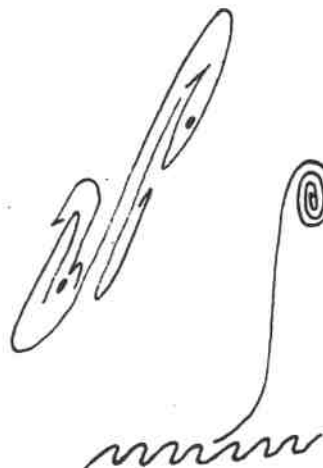
WASHINGTON

The Peace, Bread and Land Foundation (formerly Natural Liberation Front) is trying to build a work group around a people's band and have just moved to a 21 acre farm where they also intend to set up an alternative group home for teenagers. They are looking for three people with creativity and talent. No meat, tobacco, drugs. Visitors write ahead of time to: PBL P.O. Box 12644 Seattle, Wash. 98111.

WEST VIRGINIA

Under the leadership of Swami Prabhupada, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) is building New Vrindaban, a country ashram covering 365 acres in the hills of West Virginia just south of Wheeling. About 60 people are now housed in seventeen dwellings, but their eventual goal is a city two square miles in area. Six people settled the land in 1968, subsisting mainly on a bumper blackberry crop. The original farm cost \$4000 and since then two additional, adjacent farms have been acquired — capital for land purchase accrues through sales of their *Back to Godhead* magazine and *Spiritual Sky* incense. Ecology is king here: work horses are bought in pairs complete with non-polluting lungs and biodegradable waste products. Bulls are converted into oxen, and cows give milk (they don't "bloody their fangs" with meat, so there is no butchering). They urge others to establish new rural communities and are ready to offer assistance. Contact: New Vrindaban RD 3, Moundsville, West Virginia 26041. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*).

Iris Mountain, producer of sensitivity training, irises, and custom printing, is a community of several people on the very top of a mountain in West Virginia. They put out a newsletter, are interested in becoming a therapeutic community and want to cooperate with other community groups in the area. (They will be written up in detail in our September issue). Contact: Lydia Williams, Iris Mountain, Unger, W. Va. 25477.



Grapes from Communitas

COMMUNITY LOAN FUND AND LAND TRUST

In our April announcement, we described a Community Loan Fund designed to meet the multiple needs of new communities for capital. Already we have nine charter lifetime subscribers, who have contributed most of the \$259 in the loan fund. The lifetime subscription (half of which goes to the loan fund) is offered at a loss to *Communitas* in order to make the loan fund a solid reality.

In addition to the uses of the fund described on the inside of this issue's back cover, we feel the fund can be used to buy land quite close to existing community groups, enabling them to cooperate and share much more easily. The fund can eventually become a Community Land Trust (see West Virginia article), purchasing and holding land in trust for a number of communities in a geographic region. Finally, the fund could be used to finance periodic searches for desirable land and purchase options on it, especially land near already existing groups.

The securing of loans could be done by groups putting up their fixed assets as collateral, or by established community groups in the area or state being co-signers of the loan. We need ideas about this from people with legal backgrounds and hope that readers will exchange their views with us.

Plain Talk About Finances

Each issue will contain a candid rundown of our current financial picture. As of June 9, 1972 we have a total of 162 paid subscribers and 16 free or exchange subscribers. Our total income to date is \$1036 including \$225 from nine lifetime subscribers.

10,000 copies of the first issue have been printed, and expenses now total \$2500 — \$1000 printing costs, \$500 mailing, \$500 composing of copy and \$500 for announcements and office expenses. None of us working on the journal receive payment for our efforts. The final per copy cost should not exceed 30 cents; therefore, we need to sell about 3000 copies of each issue to break even. To facilitate such sales, we are distributing several thousand free sample copies of this issue to every person and group we have an address for. Any eventual profit will go towards a better quality journal or the Community Loan Fund. Thirty cents per copy is less cost than we anticipated, so we have reduced the per copy price to \$1.00 and the subscription rate to \$5.00. Those subscribers who paid the old rate of \$6.00 get one extra issue; those who paid \$11.00 get two extra issues.

We emphasize again that we are basically anti-profit, and any person or group that is genuinely involved in the new community movement is eligible for a free subscription as long as they are willing to exchange energy and ideas with us — e.g. sending us their journal or paper, contributing an article or poem, helping us distribute the journal etc.

Community Clearinghouse

Clearinghouse tries to help individuals and groups get in touch with each other. *Communitas* will forward answers to entries in Clearinghouse. 1.) Put each response into a separate envelope. 2.) Stamp and seal all the envelopes, penciling in each name to send to. 3.) Put everything in a larger envelope with \$5.00 (to cover handling and postage) and send to us.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

So you're seriously interested in communal marriage. You've read Rimmer's stuff, aren't idealistic about it, realize the myriad of ideas people have about "group marriage," love your old lady, have a pre-school child you'd like to educate within the family, aren't looking for a panacea for a failing marriage, but feel that a multilateral free relationship is your "place to make a stand" . . . and you'd like to have that small piece of semiisolated land somewhere on the B.C. coast, maybe near Powell River.

If this is you, please get in touch with us. We plan a permanent multilateral relationship with a maximum of 6 adults . . . enough to give us our individuality without losing intimacy (as would happen in a larger group).

We don't plan to rush, but would like to get to know the right people and move slowly into an expanded family. We've a few ideas for communal industry, also, so that we could live at a just-comfortable-non-nine-to-five income level, with lots of time to share with the people we love.

Danny, Sherry and Danielle Redick
7538 240th St., RR 6
Langley, B.C., Canada

CALIFORNIA

We've been trying to get a nature-oriented art community/school going on 20 acres of land in Pine Grove, Calif. (nine miles from Jackson in the Mother Lode). We need people who aren't afraid of work. We have spring water, natural clay, soap stone and 2000 tons of 25 year old sawdust from an old mill, all in a beautiful, wooded, hilly section. Address: Helen Wilson P. O. Box 338, Columbia, CA 95310. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*).

Several teachers and graduates of the LA Free School now live communally and want to create an educational environment in the country. . . They want to break down the artificial barriers between school and life, work and joy. They will farm organically and strive for self-sufficiency. By living communally they hope to create an educational environment for people of all ages. They do accept some students on a tuition basis. Contact: LA Free School Community 3651 Roseview, Los Angeles, CA 90065. Phone: (213) 222-6311. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*).

For the past six years have been reading about different cultures . . . alternative life

styles . . . Well, I think that dream is a reality now. It all happened so slowly my husband and I did not realize it until after the fact. We have six young adults living on our ranch . . . Each one of them are searching like we are, and each loves and respects the peace and living with nature that our ranch offers. They would like them/me/us to start an open school. Contact: Sandra Carlson, 81-410 Riverlane Drive, Indio, CA 92201. Phone: 347-7575. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*).

Can anyone out there help us to locate 10 or so acres in the Southeast for our back-to-the-land thing? And while we're looking we'd like to contact others who are looking too (we're a potter and a weaver, both 36, with three children and a candle business that supports us all).

Let's consider joining together to buy land (it's cheaper that way) or maybe forming a community . . . we're not interested in political or religious freakism, though, just a return to a simpler, independent and individual survival.

Howard and Jane Wilson
360 Milani Dr.
Ukiah, Calif. 95482

Pioneers wanted: former kibbutzniks, Peace Corps and Vista volunteers, intentional community veterans, comunards and other experienced in getting it together are invited to join our developing community. Only earnest, aware and sensitive people need inquire.

Quiet Village
Box 82
Sebastopol, Calif. 95472

APPRENTICESHIP SERVICE PROGRAM needs help. It intends to give high school people an alternative to in-school learning by helping them find people near or far-away from home to study with them. There is a lot of interest in the area of traditional crafts and trades, farming, business, and politics. If you can help out, write Apprenticeship Service Program, P.O. Box 908, Motara, Ca. 94037.

We, Joyce and Ron, are ready to buy land with others who are in agreement with a "community philosophy" as described in the announcement of *Communitas*. We are now looking for that "community." We prefer a northern state with four seasons, glaciated soil, and a long, hot summer for good growing. We have considered northern Mich., Minn., and Idaho, perhaps northern Maine, because the prices seem reasonable enough there. Please contact us if you are serious and ready for organic living and socialistic community. We can work out the rest later. We are interested in crafts, carpentry and ironwork, but probably most of our living will be by subsistence farming, some livestock, fishing and hunting. Our main goal is to become self-sufficient, to avoid dependency on our corrupt government and its capitalistic market economy. We favor cooperative or collective community projects

and want to maintain an interest in politics. We are optimistic about finding people for this. Please write.

Joyce and Ron Salvage
Berkeley, California

Equitable Farm, an agrarian cooperative of (potentially) four families is looking, in a low-key and rather selective way for a couple (preferably with children) to fill a vacancy. We are farmers, intellectuals, mushroom collectors, etc. We garden and husband animals on our 20 acres and share all farm expenses and products. We eat together 4 nights a week, and all else is "family business." Ages range from 10 to 58. We are not into welfare or revolution. Write: Equitable Farm, Star Route, Little River, CA 95456. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*).

A group in Sacramento is planning a rural cooperative community. Contact: Ron Kidd, P. O. Box 7272, Sacramento 95826. Phone: 363-6330.

CONNECTICUT

We need people who primarily feel non-violence is an essential ingredient for bringing about constructive social change and who are willing to take action and help others initiate action on that basis. Besides our action projects, we also have a 40 acre farm to keep up, a home to keep going and children to take care of, as well as visitors to talk with about our work. If all of this turns you on, if your head is relatively together but very open to an uncharted future, if you can live happily without the use of dope or liquor, if you have at least six months to invest, if you are willing to work for no salary (room and board are provided), please call or write us to arrange a visit: New England Committee for Nonviolent Action, RFD No. 1, Box 430, Voluntown, Conn. 06384. Phone: (203) 376-9970. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*).

We're ten people who've been lucky enough to raise some money — approximately \$20,000 — and we intend to buy land in Maine in the spring of 1972 and make something very wonderful happen.

Some qualified people are behind us, and now we wonder about doing a really great thing and getting together many more people who intend to buy Maine land this year.

Our lawyers have advised us that if parcels of contiguous land are purchased, covenants of an ecological nature may be drawn up . . . these will run with the land for at least 50 years, even if the land is afterwards sold by the original owner.

We're hoping that people interested in buying land in Maine in '72 and restricting it for ecological use will get in touch with us as soon as possible.

Pete McKelvey
5 Tibbals St.
Milford, Conn. 06460
from T.M.E.N.

FLORIDA

Galaxy K Commune is an urban group experimenting with the *Walden Two* labor credit system and income sharing, with members putting 75% of their weekly salary into the communal kitty. They have no religious or political preferences and feel they are trying to live simply and cooperatively. They all work outside the commune, hoping to acquire land, but meanwhile need a bigger house. They also need more members, who are invited to come to the Friday night meetings. Address: Galaxy K Commune 10201 Snug Harbor Rd., St. Petersburg, Fla. 33702. Phone: 525-9426. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*).

HAWAII

"Numana House is a family of seven adults and three children living in suburban Honolulu. The nucleus has been together for seven months. All of us (the adults) are committed to working to bring radical social change to Hawaii. Several of us have dependable "straight" jobs to provide the economic backbone for Numana House, the others contributing what they can, when they can. Those without straight jobs work full-time in social change activities . . . and include: the catholic action group's campaign against the air war in Indochina. . . ; the Women's Union; People Not Profits, a non-profit corporation that has established a rapidly-growing food conspiracy. . . ; Youth Action, a social welfare (non-profit) corporation in the process of reorganization to make a serious effort to organize youth along the union model. . . ; The People's Fund. . . ; and The Liberated Barracks, a group deeply into organizing GIs. . . Our goal, also, is to establish a way of living that discourages material and human possessiveness, chauvinism, self-centeredness, gossiping, and negativism; while it encourages patience, tolerance, experimentation, and happiness. Steve Norris [We need their address. Ed.] (Abstracted from *Leaves of Twin Oaks*.)

Ohana Aloha Village is in the process of acquiring very beautiful acreage at the foot of the Koolau Mountains on windward Oahu. We have six adult members plus three children and several prospective members. We are interested in new members of all ages, sexes and races, particularly those with money, talents, or willing hands. Contact: Sami, 110 Kuulei Road, Kailua, Oahu, Hawaii 96734. (Reprinted from *Alternatives*).

IDAHO

The Idaho-Montana area sounds like nice country to us and, since we (John, 20, Shari, 20 and Shawn, 1) are selling our store and moving onto the land this spring, we'd like to contact some person or family in that area who is interested in nature and who knows his state. We'll answer all replies immediately.

J. Springer
2104 Green
Manhattan, Kansas 66502

from T.M.E.N.

ILLINOIS

Here in Chicago we are in the process of setting up a resource center for communal efforts in and around the city. There are nine of us in an urban commune, planning now for

a counterpart in the country. Contact: Paul LaChance, Franciscan Fraternity, 4617 N. Beacon, Chicago, Ill. 60640.

MAINE

Steve and Tacha, 22 and 21, are looking for a permanent, rural cooperative community with alternate life styles and extended families. They prefer Maine, Appalachia and Canada. They eat and garden organically, like vegetarianism and like creating and working with their own hands. They can contribute about \$2000 themselves and hope to form a nonprofit corporation to buy the land, so they can avoid an ownership trip. Contact: Steve and Tacha Vosburgh, Gray, Maine 04039. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*).

MARYLAND

We would like a communal community where people could live separately or together as they chose in small dwellings basically for sleeping (this of course is open too, but the economics make sense). It seems ideal to have a farm with a big house for the common building — eating, playing. We dig deep personal relations with others. . . We're doing bioenergetics, encounters, some Yoga . . . could these be used for economic support? We started a free school here and would want that for the community — perhaps it could make money for the community. If you know of people or communes with similar ideas, let us know. Contact: Emily Bennett, 7403 Holly Ave., Takoma Park, Md. 20012. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*).

MASSACHUSETTS

New *Community Projects* is looking for two people to work at Country Place Farm in Greenville, New Hampshire: 1) One woman with experience in environmental control to work with Greenville community to try to keep the city out of the country; 2) One person with extensive organizing experience and knowledge of rural life styles to work with the rural communes in the area. Car very desirable. Also, N.C.P. needs volunteers to help out with office work, building a library, real estate, rural communes, etc. Contact New Community Projects, 302 Berkeley St., Boston 02116.

MICHIGAN

We'd like to become part of a community of organic homesteaders, sharing ideas and moral support. To this end, we're planning an extended camping trip of the United States and maybe Canada this summer to meet people and find some land (fairly inexpensive, with good growing season and accessible water supply). We have lots of tools and sufficient experience to cope with most of the problems that will arise in a rural setting. Any homesteaders (or would-be homesteaders) interested in having compatible neighbors like us?

Byron D. Zuch
18660 Ohio
Detroit, Mich. 48221
from T.M.E.N.

For all the fine folks who may be considering the Traverse City area in Michigan as a possible future home, Community

Environmental Services is acting as a sort of clearing house for information about the bay region. More and more people are getting into good things here and a lot of projects are jelling, including a community weekly newspaper, an Environmental Action Center, a drug-help program and dabblings in "new communities", co-ops, organic farming and general innovative and alternate community-individual directions.

If you're thinking of settling in our area, we'd be glad to help you out. At present, a self-addressed, stamped envelope for replies would be appreciated . . . and send your love.

Bob Lueallen
Community Environmental Services
415 S. Union
Traverse City, Mich. 49684
from T.M.E.N.

If kids, animals, organic living, free schools, and community turn you on, maybe you'd like to talk/visit with us (4 adults, 3 kids) about a farming commune in the southern Appalachians.

A simple life with a loving family is what we're looking for. But we're not isolationists, and will seek interaction with the social and political structure of the greater community.

We have some experience in communal living, a little money, and more detailed plans we'd like to share with interested folks. Those with at least minimal farming and/or mechanical skills would be most welcome. Reply to Bill Byford, Rt. 3, Box 352, South Haven, Michigan 49090.

NEW BRUNSWICK

Here at the Homesteader's Lending Library, we share our books with interested readers in two ways: through printed bibliographies and through lending by mail.

The bibliography is a 14-page list (available with supplements for \$1.00 a year) of our holdings . . . strong in the fields of homesteading, home repair, organic gardening, wild edible plants, herbs, cooking, nutrition, natural history and family life. Borrowing these involves a \$5.00 membership fee and \$5.00 postage deposit annually.

We've also begun to publish a quarterly newsletter, *The North Wind*, to share our homesteading experiences and to pass along information on some of the back-to-the-land subjects we taught in Connecticut last year. Subscriptions are \$3.00 a year.

Homesteader's Lending Library
Maplevale Farm
Cross Creek, N.B.
Canada

NEW MEXICO

News from New Mexico: Some folks have recently come into possession of several hundred acres of prairie land in southern New Mexico, 140 miles south of Albuquerque, and 24 miles southeast of Truth or Consequences (the county seat). This is largely undeveloped land, but good water is available 90 feet below the surface. The north-south freight line of the Atchison-Topeka-Santa-Fe railroad goes through the property, and if a community of any size could be built in this area, it could be a freight stop on the line. If any group would be interested in this area, please contact May O. Weston, 444 W. Woodlawn St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19144.

NORTH CAROLINA

I'm trying to discover national dimensions and common themes in the bursting out movements into communes, co-operatives, free schools, underground churches, free stores, etc. This story (I feel) is being interpreted to the larger public in contradictory, negative and antagonistic ways and such bad publicity is the source of a lot of hassles.

For the sake of my group, other groups and those in the establishment who are hunting for valid information but don't get into the underground press (or magazines like MOTHER), I want to get together a straightforward analysis based on a wide range of experiences. Tell me about your group . . . its hopes and dreams, how it got started, the major hassles involved.

Patrick W. Conover
123 McIver
from T.M.E.N. Greensboro, N.C. 27403

OHIO

We at the Kent Community Project feel that a potential exists in this country for creating a stable alternative economy by pooling the resources of community co-ops and other such organizations. If based on trade instead of money-profit economics, this co-op economy could function independently of the usual prosperity-depression cycle, helping people to avoid the suffering that would come to the rest of the nation in a recession. The availability of goods and services, made by co-operating groups and bartered among them need not be affected by the value of anyone's dollar.

As they currently exist, the majority of co-ops are involved almost entirely with the distribution of goods and services. In order to attain the kind of independent alternative economy that we envision, more of us must get into the production of critical commodities. We need to operate farms to raise food and open shops to make bikes, clothes, camping equipment and other items necessary for survival in some sort of real terms.

In order to implement the idea of productive co-ops, we could like to serve as a clearing house through which people working in various locales can benefit from the experience of others. What we propose is that co-op members around the country write articles on what they are doing—or would like to see done—along these lines and mail them to us. We will Xerox the articles and send them out monthly to all the co-ops we've heard from. Thus each participating co-op can share the ideas of all the contributors.

Another thing we hope to do shortly is establish a regional warehouse to serve co-ops in northern Ohio, southern Michigan, and western Pennsylvania. Through this facility, many co-ops could buy goods together in a larger volume and, therefore, at lower prices than individual co-ops can.

Anyone who would like to hear more, or who would like to send articles, can reach us at:

Kent Community Project
135 S. Water St.
Kent, Ohio 44240
from T.M.E.N.

PENNSYLVANIA

NEW CARTHAGE ARAB COMMUNE:
American citizens of Arab descent intend to establish a rural commune by June of 1974.

and have several areas in mind. Persons interested should contact: New Carthage Arab Commune, c/o A.S.P., P.O. Box 15710, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103.

TEXAS

Currently, we are entering into a Skinnerian "time out" from a group marriage attempt. As Dick Fairfield says (Modern Utopian), a group marriage takes time.

Meanwhile, my wife Rene and our three children and friends (9, 7, & 6) and myself are re-evaluating our own position. Our major concern is in contacting either established "families" or interested parties which may be receptive to multilateral relationships.

In many ways, we are urban and technological. My background covers electronics, photography, teaching, journalism and philosophy. Rene is into Yoga and expanded awareness and childcare among other things. Beth, our eldest (9) is into the viola; Bill (7), reading; Mary (6), freedom.

That's us. Hopeful and ever-conscious for the need to relate. "Proposition 31" is our inefficient guide. Where from here? We would like to explore relationships which are healthy and meaningful. Anyone who would like to respond, write to: Bill & Rene Whitney; P. O. Box 21441, Dallas, Texas 75211.

VERMONT

People are needed to help develop a small farming and crafts community in northeastern Vermont.

We have 100 acres (mostly wooded) that need sound and imaginative development . . . farmland, house sites, etc. One house was built last summer and more are planned, but we need the help, good vibes and potential of more hands and heads. Anyone can join us (temporarily or permanently) as long as they cover a fair share of the living expenses. Write and tell us about you.

APOCALYPSE Farms
from T.M.E.N. West Danville, Vt.

VIRGIN ISLANDS

LAND IN BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS: A group of five friends (Quakers) have a 99 year lease on a tropical paradise in the British Virgin Islands: 150 acres of unspoiled wilderness with two sandy beaches, arable farm land and forested mountain slopes on the northeast coast of Virgin Gorda, "garden island" of the British Virgins.

Growth of a school and community mixing mainlanders with islanders is planned. More money is needed to hold the lease.

Interested? Write about your talents, skills, or money, to: Ken Webb, Plymouth Union, Vermont 05057.

VIRGINIA

We are seriously considering joining or helping to organize an intentional community. Recently we visited Twin Oaks . . . We are both over 40 and a professional urban commune might be best for us, but we are open to other ideas. . . We have experience in research, writing, civil liberties, politics, foreign affairs, race relations, administration and social psychology. We appreciate all suggestions for channelling

these backgrounds. Contact: Norma and Gordon Chapman, 4205 South 35th St., Arlington, Va., 22206. (Abstracted from *Alternatives*).

WEST VIRGINIA

BURK family writes: "A year ago this spring, the four of us (Lin, Carl, Brian, Jeff) set out from a job in a public school and suburban Phila. for an alternative life-style of an extended family. We visited communes and homesteading families and found neither of these life-styles satisfactory for our needs. We are very interested in developing an alternative to the public schools for Brian and Jeff. We became discouraged from finding an existing community and settled here on an old hill farm in West Virginia. We sincerely want to share our lives with others, and while we feel that this is a favourable location for a community, we are willing to go elsewhere. We're not inclined towards a highly structured organization, but rather we seek a small group of people with whom a warm and caring relationship can grow, and who can help each other toward an expanded awareness of self and others and nature." The Burk family is presently living on a 134-acre farm. Their address is: Box 7, Harmony, West Virginia, 25246.

I'm homesteading in West Virginia and find myself wanting some communication with other homesteaders in this area. If you're settled anywhere in West Virginia or southeastern Ohio and want to share experiences and build friendships, please write.

Lyn Damron
705 S. Park Rd.
Charleston, W. Va. 25304
from T.M.E.N.

LATE OHIO NEWS

if you want to
help save the
Earth and you're
wondering how . . .

if you want to work
and play and learn
with others along
the way . . .

write: David
earth free school
318 W. South College St.
Yellow Springs, Ohio

45387
OM ☺ ☸ Ω SHANTI

Dear Communitas

Continued

Thank you for your commune-ique! I was very interested in reading the newsletter about the forthcoming journal. It seems as if you're into a lot of valuable and necessary kinds of work. N.C.P. has nothing quite so philosophically comprehensive right now, but I'll send you some material on what we're doing here. I think it'd be valuable for Communitas and N.C.P. to keep in touch since we're into similar endeavors. Keep up the good work!

Kathy Longhan
New Community Projects
Boston

... My interest in community dates back to the early 30's when Alfred and Norma Jacobs had a center in Jamaica, Vt., which was part of the CCC (Cooperative Community Conference — not Civilian Conservation Corps). Ralph Borsodi, who was in Tuxedo Park, N. Y., was promoting his new city. They have all disappeared, leaving scarcely a trace . . . [Borsodi has hardly disappeared! — Ed.]

Susan Webb and I made our own tentative experiments in cooperative community, discovering sadly that the motivating idea among the people we attracted was to cooperate by settling in and enjoying the facilities we managed to produce thru our own blood, sweat and tears. When we began to suggest that the preservation of community required deep commitment of time, effort, and labor on the part of all, they left — full of resentment. . .

Ken Webb, Plymouth Union, Vermont

This "subscription letter" was sent to one no longer living in our house, but I was so interested in your ideas that I am happily and eagerly subscribing. I have been living in a house-commune situation for several years and have been observing from a personal standpoint the viability of this type of living. The awakening ideas you present, — of communities forming, living practically, and supporting themselves economically, emotionally and ideologically, etc. inspire me in that I see people *actually trying out* new ways of living together. I look forward to receiving *Communitas*. . .

Molly Sloca
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I was very excited when I read your prospectus for *Communitas* — a new community journal. This is the kind of thing that the War Resisters League likes to keep on top of.

Unfortunately the League does not have a budget for publications, even ones as vital as yours. What we would like to do is have you send us a subscription to *Communitas* in exchange for a subscription to our own *WRL News*. I've gone ahead and placed you on our list

of exchange publications and I hope that you will do the same for us.

I'm looking forward to seeing your first issue. Good luck.

For Peace & Liberation,

Jerry D. Coffin

We're part of a communal group but don't live together — nor are we rurally oriented.

We're 12 families who for the most part live in an integrated section of Philadelphia. We're into experiencing being Jewish together. Here's some of the kinds of things we do:

- 1.) Once a month, a creative service followed by a communal dinner, then folk singing and dancing (this includes the children — newborn to about 10)
- 2.) consciousness-raising sessions for the adults
- 3.) holiday experiences for the children
- 4.) freedom seder
- 5.) celebrating . . . etc. etc.

We get together about once a week.

We kind of view each other as a modified extended family (especially liking the multi-age relationships for children plus relating to other adults). We do discuss community problems, political stuff, education, etc. . .

Shoshana Silberman
Philadelphia, Pa.

... How about establishing a network of technical advisors — somewhat like VITA, but geared to our needs, less restricted than VITA. Many places need assistance not only about methane generators and alternative sources of resources, but also about solid waste disposal, what to do about land crawfish, information about laws. . .

Hal Lenke
Union, West Virginia

... May I give you a couple of thoughts on successful communal life from my point of view?

We are a small group who have been living together harmoniously for over thirty years. We are not self-supporting, however, though we do grow our own vegetables, and share what income we have.

Our experience has taught us that a community cannot succeed unless the members are all attuned to one common key-note — the Creator's Presence within each one. Also all should strive together to overcome self desires and to serve the whole.

In addition, our experience has proved that there should be one head, or chief, whom all respect and love, whose wisdom will be accepted when the board of directors is stymied. There should always be a chief to whom the members can turn for advice, just as humanity on earth has a Father-Mother Creator to whom to turn in time of need. You wouldn't want to see a body walking around without a head would you? . . . [perhaps not, but we feel there are too many heads walking around who are not in touch with their bodies — Ed.]

Dorothy Lewis
Duxbury, Mass.



THE LONG-LEGGED HOUSE
by Wendell Berry
An Audubon/Ballantine Book, \$1.25

At last we have a real son of Thoreau to inspire us to break out of the ruts of today! Berry's *The Long-Legged House* is just as real and just as symbolic as Thoreau's \$28.12½ cabin. Berry and Thoreau are very much alike in their love of nature and their indignation at what men have done to it. Both books are hodgepodes — part autobiography, part diatribe against society, part poetry, part mysticism.

Wendell, like Henry, is concerned with one particular place as a metaphor for the world. The place is East Kentucky and the first person we meet is a skilled furniture maker who cannot make a living because his work is too good (Thoreau, in the conclusion of *Walden*, had said of another wood carver, "The material was pure, and his art was pure; how could the result be other than wonderful?") The region is controlled by the strip mines, and anything which does not serve them does not survive.

Berry's prose is even more powerful when he expresses his indignation at the non-corporate pollution created by vacationers. He calls them "The Nature Consumers." They disturb the peace not only with the noise of the motors but with P.A. systems, loud radios, and gratuitous pistol shots in the air. They leave their garbage everywhere.

"They come in search of peace and quiet, solitude, some restorative contact with the natural world. Which is a little like going in search of a forest with a logging crew. Once they have got it, they have lost it. They come to seek the stillness of a natural place, and their way of seeking assures the failure of their search. They seek relief from restlessness and anxiety in these expensive, fast, superhorsepowered boats, which are embodiments of restlessness and anxiety. They go toward their desire with such violence of haste that they can never arrive."

The long-legged house itself was originally built by Wendell Berry's great-uncle, Curran Mathews, a lovable misfit. The writer escaped to "the camp" often during childhood and adolescence. After college and a few years in Europe and New York, he felt a need to return to his roots, so he took a job at the University of Kentucky and began the long work of reconstructing the long-legged house on higher ground. (It was built on stilts to enable it to survive high water.)

So many threads of meaning are combined in this book: a sense of the past, both generalized and specific, through the figure of Curran Mathews; concern for current issues ("A Statement Against the War in Vietnam" and "Thoughts on Citizenship and Conscience"); and a description of a rational way of life. Even though Berry has not started a community around the long-legged house, he details the thought processes most of us go through on our way to the communal goal. It is, in spite of the gloomy chapters on strip mining, pollution and Vietnam, primarily an optimistic and inspiring book.

In the conclusion of *Walden*, Thoreau says: "If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will put some things behind, will pass an invisible boundary; new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish themselves around and within him."

This same spirit pervades the conclusion of *The Long-Legged House*: "For I have turned aside from much that I knew, and have given up much that went before. What will not bring me, more certainly than before, to where I am is of no use to me. I have stepped out of the clearing into the woods. I have thrown away my lantern, and I can see the dark."

WORDS

While our culture compounds, hyphenates and fixes words in an effort to fit words to definitions, the vocabulary of community remains simple and vague. Exploring these vagaries is rather revealing.

UTOPIA is a word coined by Thomas More to name an imaginary island described in his book *Utopia*. Literally the word means "The land of noplacement." In a book titled *Nowhere Was Somewhere*,* Arthur Morgan demonstrates that More may actually have used pre-Columbian explorers' reports of the Incan empire as a basis for his book. This historical perspective smudges our use of the word. Nevertheless most people seem to see UTOPIA as an impossible dream, giving "utopian community" an implication of principled stasis.

The terms COUNTER CULTURE and ALTERNATIVE CULTURE represent two different attitudes. COUNTER CULTURE has a reactive, perhaps negative tone; ALTERNATIVE CULTURE denotes a constructive approach. Getting even more simplistic, one could characterize hippies and the drug culture as COUNTER, while free clinics and schools are ALTERNATIVE. There may be a necessary connection between the two attitudes. That is, one reacts against a system before seeking alternatives. Now many folk are making an effort to use only ALTERNATIVE CULTURE or SOCIETY, affirming the move to build new systems parallel to the establishment.

COMMUNE comes from the Latin "communico," to communicate, and "communis," common. A commune follows the principle of common property. Often lost in our emphasis on economics is the communication aspect of COMMUNE, yet the implication of familiarity, mutual exchange and, thus, small size remains in this word.

Our winning vagary is COMMUNITY. Examine its Latin ancestor, *communitas*, derived from "com," together, and "munie," effort. To the extent that people are working together to meet common needs there is "community." This sliding definition leaves out specifics such as living close together (neighborhood), and formal organization. INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY denotes a neighborhood grouping with formal agreements. The new community movement of the 1940's and 1950's adopted INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY; the term now has a more establishment air.

Ralph Borsodi, *Flight from the City*, Harper & Row, Pub., Inc. 1933. Harper Colophon Books, New York 1972

In its day *Flight from the City* was a popular book. The depression was topping out as our city culture lay gasping. People were eager to find a basis for survival separate from American industrial economy and outside the cities. Ralph Borsodi's story of homesteading success was a welcome word. And now we need the message again.

Subsistence homesteading can work. It can work with fabulous success. Borsodi details the economic benefits of homestead production. Figuring labor cost, materials, equipment depreciation — the total cost analysis — a self made product is cheaper. In our global village advertising and distribution take the lion's share of the cost to the consumer. With careful use of technology and organization a homestead forms a more efficient economic basis than a factory and market system. People can enjoy their own work, yet have time freed for other activities. Homemade articles or foods are a source of personal satisfaction and tend to be of better quality . . . It can be done.

Flight describes the decentralist way back to the land. A grassroots economy is to be built. Ralph Borsodi places emphasis on the individual family homestead, distinct from the present trend toward communal living and community building. In later books, however, Borsodi does develop ideas like cooperative communities and school as an integral part of the community.

William Alfred Nines [Oneida Colony]. *American Communities*. New York, Corinth Books, 1961. (First published in 1878.)

Robert S. Fogarty. *American Utopianism*. (Primary Sources in American History.) Itasca, Ill., F. E. Peacock, 1972.

Plymouth Rock to Drop City, North America has long had a stream of new community efforts. What we face today in building community has grown out of this past work. Many of our ideas of life style come through the precedent setting communities of centuries ago.

One hundred years apart, Fogarty and Hines describe historic communities. Hines joined the Oneida Colony at age 16 and writes as a seasoned communist (his word) about one year's travels among communities. Most of his book, *American Communities*, is first hand reporting with cross references between the descriptions. Government and court cases get detailed attention. While Hines was in the Movement of his day, Fogarty writes in retrospect. He has edited a series of letters and reports by communards dating from the 1600's to 1971. So his *American Utopianism* is a source-book of historic communities.

Historical perspective is much derided these days. But by whatever phrase is acceptable, here it is. Reading these two books gives one a variety of ideas for community living. And perhaps this is what we need.

Unclassifieds

UNCLASSIFIED ads are 15 cents per word, payable in advance, capitalized words costing double. Minimum insertion, 10 words.

Rilke-Robert Bly, first ten *Sonnets to Orpheus*, \$1, Zephyrus Image, 126 Anza, San Francisco 94118.

ALWAYS LOSING TOUCH WITH FRIENDS? The NEW EARTH DISPATCHER is a permanent mailing-address service so we can always find each other — free info — P. O. Box 192, Hiram, Ohio 44234.

THE GREEN REVOLUTION: The original School of Living, decentralist, back-to-the-land movement newspaper. Articles ranging from land tenure questions, natural living, ecology, to intentional communities. \$4 for 12 issues, sample copy, booklist, or Philosophy sheet for self-addressed stamped envelope. The Green Revolution, Freeland, Md. 21053.

Handmade articles produced by cooperatives, communes, and intentional communities. \$1.00. Write COMMUNITY MARKET CATALOG, 437 Abbott Road, East Lansing, Mich. 48823.

PEOPLE INTERESTED IN COMMUNITY will find these helpful: *The Community as Educator & The Human Scale in Schools; The Community Economy; The Future of Cities (An Intentional Community Handbook)* \$1.00 each. *Intentional Community & The Folk Society and The Heritage of Community* — \$1.50. All five of these for \$5; Subscription \$2/yr. Membership \$5/yr. Free literature list on request. Community Service, Inc., Box 243, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387.

RABBITS, POULTRY, GOATS, GARDENS — even solar heat and wind electricity — that's mini-farming. It's all in Countryside. \$3/yr. Rt. 2, Marshall, Wisconsin 53559.

LADYBUGS, for biological control of garden pests. These delightful creatures will quickly rid your garden of destructive insects. For free brochure write: ORGANIC SUPPLY COMPANY, P. O. Box 1607, Auburn, Calif. 95603.

Southwest Georgia Project needs volunteer labor for thinning and weeding watermelon, okra, peanuts. Room and board provided. Contact: SWGP, 615 S. Jefferson St., Albany, Ga. 31701.

ACCESS CATALOG, a readers and researchers guide to alternatives. Articles, reviews, and bibliographies about alternative skills and technologies. \$8/yr., monthly. New Life Environmental Designs Institute, Box 648, Kalamazoo, Mich. 49005.

LEAVES OF TWIN OAKS, the bi-monthly chronicle of a four and a half year old Walden Two styled intentional community. One year \$3.00. "Leaves," Twin Oaks Community, Louisa, Virginia 23093.

ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY. Bimonthly newsletter on solar, wind, and water power. \$1/year. Don Marier, 300 So. Taylor Ave., Oak Park, Illinois 60302.

Community Resources

Alternatives Newsmagazine has published *Communal Living*, issue No. 3 (Summer 1972). One section, *Communes Report*, elaborates on groups like Caravan in Tenn., Mu Farm in Arkansas and Twin Oaks. The *Communes Forming* and *People Seeking* sections list over fifty people and communes in search of one another. If response warrants, the newsmagazine will publish regularly. Subscription costs \$10. Write: Alternatives Foundation, P. O. Drawer A, Diamond Heights Station, San Francisco, California 94131.

Alternative Press Index is published and compiled quarterly by the Radical Research Center. This is a computer print out of article titles from the underground press arranged by subject. An invaluable aid in finding where the information is. Radical Research Center, Bag Service 2500, Postal Station E, Toronto, Canada.

Black Bart Brigade, The Outlaw Magazine, is published "frequently" by the Canyon Collective (of *Vocations for Social Change* fame). *Black Bart* is aimed at older generation members with personal tales of their contemporaries who have dropped out of the system. Some more general material on the movement and philosophy makes the magazine useful to outlaws of all ages. *Black Bart Brigade*, P. O. Box 84, Canyon, Ca. 94516.

The Catholic Worker is the organ for the Catholic Worker Movement of hospitality farms and houses. Catholic Workers have been living communally in the city and in the country even before most contemporary communards were born. With such shining lights as Dorothy Day, the late Peter Maurin and Ammon Hennacy, no community builder should be without the bimonthly (sort of) inspiration of *The Catholic Worker*, 36 East First St., New York, NY 10003.

The Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors helps objectors to military service with draft counseling and training programs for counselors. They publish *CCCO News Notes*, the *Handbook for CO's* and up to date material for draft counselors. The CCCO, now with offices in four regions, is one of the long standing peace organizations. CCCO, 2016 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19103.

CITY (Community Improvement Through Youth) is a non-profit group working for reform in higher education and involving students in community action. Their plan is to start a college, to be called *Communitas* (!), working to bring school into the community and community into school. They put out a resource catalog and a newsletter which includes a calendar of Washington events. Write: CITY, 1755 Church St. NW, Washington, D.C.

Communitarian is published by Walden Three, a commune trying to experiment with B.F. Skinner's ideas in the book *Walden Two*. The magazine comes out bimonthly featuring various communes and dealing with areas related to the new community movement. They are trying to provide information in a form acceptable by mainstream America. \$1/sample copy, \$5.50/6 issues. Write: *Communitarian*, Annex Station Box 969, Providence, RI 02901.

Community Service, Inc., has been trying to encourage community development for over thirty years. Founded by Arthur Morgan, president emeritus of Antioch College and first chairman of the TVA, to study small communities as an alternative to city culture, Community Service under Griscom Morgan's direction has been one of the leaders in developing patterns of intentional community. They serve as an information center, counseling communards, selling books and publishing *An Intentional Community Handbook*, *Community Service Newsletter*, and a quarterly, *Community Comments*. Write for literature list and membership info: Community Service, Inc., Box 243, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387.

The Green Revolution has been published monthly by the School of Living since 1943. It serves the general movement towards a decentralized civilization, writing about homestead technology, theory, up coming conferences, practical medicine . . . you name it. *The Green Revolution*, School of Living, Rt. 1, Box 129, Freeland, Md. 21063.

The HOMER L MORRIS FUND offers short-term financing for intentional communities at reasonable rates of interest to tide communities over emergencies, and to finance undertakings that orthodox banks and loan agencies will not consider. A number one resource that helped the Koinonia community pull through after bombing and boycott from racists. Also helped Source Catalogue and Mulberry Farm. See article on Homer Morris Conference. Address care of Griscom Morgan, Community Service, P. O. Box 243, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387.

MANAS is a journal of independent inquiry, concerned with study of the principles which move world society on its present course, and with search for contrasting principles — that may be capable of supporting intelligent idealism under the conditions of life in the twentieth century. *Manas* is concerned, therefore, with philosophy and with practical psychology, in as direct and simple a manner as its editors and contributors can write. The word "manas" comes from a common root suggesting "man" or "the thinker." Editorial articles are unsigned, since *Manas* wishes to present ideas and viewpoints, not personalities. *Manas Publishing Co.*, P. O. Box 32112, El Sereno Station, Los Angeles, Calif. 90032.

The Mother Earth News is a magazine about homestead technology. They call themselves the *Popular Mechanics* of hipdom. One of the success stories of the alternative press, *Mother* does much to help others starting to publish (like *Communitas*). They have pioneered among magazine clearinghouses in their Contact section. Soon *Mother* will give birth to *Son of Mother*, (John Shuttleworth says *Mother* already has chosen the real name, but wants it to be a secret). *Son* is to be a magazine about alternative lifestyles incorporating the Contact section of *Mother*. For *Mother*: \$1.35/single copy and \$6/one year (6 issues) Write: *The Mother Earth News*, P. O. Box 38, Madison, Ohio 44057.

NASCO puts out *Community Market Catalog* and is concerned with strengthening and expanding the cooperative movement. They have published special issues of their journal, *The New Harbinger*, on Food Co-ops and Education Co-ops. Send to: NASCO Publications, 2546 S.A.B., Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104.

The Peacemaker is the organ of the Peacemaker Movement, published every three weeks with some exceptions. Peacemakers is one of the oldest anarchist non-organizations around, fighting the draft, and war taxes since the 1940's. Ohio resisters know well the folding parties held every three weeks prior to mailing *The Peacemaker*. *The Peacemaker* has the ear of many of the older war resisters. Besides publishing, a Sharing Fund for families of imprisoned resisters is maintained, an annual New Year's conference is held, summer workshops in non-violent resistance are conducted, and a land trust has just been established. \$3/year, if you can afford it. *The Peacemaker*, 10208 Sylvan Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio 45241.

Source catalog No. 1 is about communications for the Movement. There are sections on mass media, music, literature, theater. Catalog numbers two and three will be on urban and rural communities. See *Grapevine*. Source, P. O. Box 21066, Washington, D.C. 20009.

Vocations for Social Change prints dated employment information, news, loads of information about Movement organizations and a few articles relevant to a process of self liberation. VSC counseling has become a movement in itself. The magazine tells who in your region will help in finding alternative jobs. This is chuck full of info on taking the first break away steps. *Vocations for Social Change*, Box 13, Canyon, Ca. 94516.

WIN magazine is published 21 times a year by the *WIN* publishing empire with a little help from their friends at War Resisters League. *WIN* provides anti-war news and ideas for social change. For seven years now *WIN* has been one of the dependables in the Movement. \$5/year *WIN*, Box 547, Rifton, NY 12471.

Women: a Journal of Liberation is a quarterly offering news of the women's movement and articles covering the spectrum of related topics. Here is the thoughtful exploration of issues that we can respect, in fact *Communitas* sees *Women* . . . as a model to follow. \$4/4 issues. *Women: a Journal of Liberation*, 3028 Greenmount Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21218.

How You Can Help *Communitas*

- Write letters to us about where you are at with respect to community.
- Write articles about new communities for us, preferably from the perspective of specific experiences in such communities. For those who need money, we pay \$25-\$100 per article, depending on quality and length. Consult *Community Queries* on page 35 for suggested topics.
- Send in designs, drawings, cartoons, poetry, concise opinions, songs and photos. Photos should be black and white, glossy, *with* negative. Color slides and color prints are next best.
- Become a regional correspondent or distributor for the journal. Check out area publications and send us copies of any articles about communes or communities. Send clippings or copies of your local underground papers. We can use mailing lists of organizations whose members are apt to like the journal.
- Send lists of shops, newsstands, stores (especially college bookstores) that would like the journal and ask them to carry it and other alternative publications.
- Special friendly deal: Send us the names and addresses of at least five friends plus one dollar (ten friends, two dollars, etc.) and we will send them a brand new copy of our current issue.
- Send us ads (regular or exchange). A full quarter page (7 x 9 image area) ad costs \$30. Unclassified ads — see page 58.
- Send us a subscription (form on page 64) — \$5 for six issues per year.
- Best yet, send us a **CHARTER LIFETIME SUBSCRIPTION**. This offer is being extended only to August 1st, 1972. Send us \$50 before then and you get *Communitas* for life. After that, a lifetime subscription will cost \$100. In either case, *half* of the lifetime subscription goes to the Community Loan Fund (see page 52).
- Finally, clip out the ads below and ask local underground papers and publications to run them for us. Thanks for reading all this!
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We want to stress again that anyone genuinely involved in the new community movement, but hard-pressed for money, will receive free subscriptions, free ads etc.

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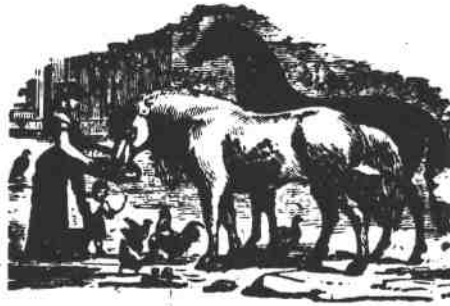
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- Conversation with Arthur Morgan, a brilliant innovator in the early community movement, author of *Dams and Other Disasters*, a devastating indictment of the Army Corps of Engineers.
- The Yellow House Community in New Hampshire.
- *The New City Project: A Review* by Jim Morey of the Cambridge Institute.
- Beyond Virginia: Reports on Downhill Farm in Pennsylvania, Heathcote in Maryland, and Iris Mountain in West Virginia.

ISSUE NUMBER THREE—NOVEMBER 1972

- Economic and Legal Problems of New Communities.
- Producer-Consumer Cooperatives: An Overview with articles by James Wyker of Berea, Kentucky plus others.
- Land Trusts and By-Laws in Communities.
- Settlement Strategies for New Communities.
- *Llano Reborn* by Griscom Morgan of Community Service.

These issues are by no means complete. *Communitas* will continue to do original reports on communities, but we need your help. We need first hand, *in-depth* accounts from members of existing communities. We feel we have a good thing started; let's all of us keep it going. If you cannot send articles yet, then help us out by subscribing and writing us a letter about what you liked and didn't like about this issue.

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Community Queries

The right answers are not often found until we ask the right questions. Here we encourage our readers to engage in a dialogue trying to help one another. To start things off, we present *Communitas'* first selection of queries (see table of contents).

Communitas as Catalyst

This is our *action arm*, where we try to *carry out* the ideas of the other sections. We have several projects planned, one being to meet the need of communities for capital by forming a *Community Loan Fund*. We will apply to foundations for unrestricted grants and conduct a large fund-raising effort. The uses of such a fund will include: 1) Provide loans to beginning groups to purchase land they have located; 2) Provide loans for construction of housing and work spaces; 3) Locate and purchase appropriate tracts to be held in trust for future groups; 4) Make short term, emergency loans to communities that need them — e.g. to ward off foreclosures and creditors, to exercise land options, to meet medical and legal bills, to provide essential technical advice. 5) Eventually, funds could be used to finance conferences, create coops to transport organic foods to the cities, begin an inter-community library and research center. It is *crucial* that an effort like this not be co-opted and centralized. It is not worth doing unless we all work together in a truly sharing, decentralized fashion.

For every person that enters a new community, there are several others seriously considering it. Many of these people have savings and stocks that support the military-industrial empires. They are looking for worthwhile, *life-oriented* alternatives to invest in. We already know of a number of communities that need capital *now* and are worthwhile alternatives for short and long term loans at modest (e.g. 4%) interest rates.

Communitas' Philosophy Of Rural New Community

Most of us have spent our adult lives in the city, working 'within the system' for peace and social change. We set up free clinics and tried to return power to the people — work which is necessary and vital. Yet we were trying to change *others*, rather than changing *ourselves*. Too often we acted like colonial powers, knowing what was best for the poor and thereby adding to their oppression. To radically transform the social order, we must now begin with ourselves, markedly altering our life style. For us and many others this is best done by forming a rural new community.

For too long the cities have drained the rural areas of their best human and material resources. It is time to reach out to the rural people, helping each other to reverse the drain. Forming community in rural areas is just as relevant and socially conscious as community organizing with city poor. The quality of housing, education and health care in rural areas is worse than

that of the city. Poverty is widespread, blacks are reluctantly abandoning their farming and moving to city ghettos. The challenge is great — have we strength and heart enough?

Gradually, we have gathered our own guidelines for our rural new community. We noticed that most people became dissatisfied with communal living when the number of people in one house was over ten. The place felt more like a boarding house than a warm, intimate, extended family. In larger communities it is advantageous to have several houses with distinct (communal or otherwise) groups in each one. People can flow back and forth between the more personal communal setting and the more varied community scene. A *single* commune on its own cannot meet the members needs for health care, education, and cultural and racial diversity. One pluralistic solution is to link up such a commune in a federation with other communes that settle close by, sharing the same land in common. Ties with the local people, though essential, would not meet these broader needs soon enough. At present it is mostly by chance that communes and other groups settle near each other. *Communitas* will help that process be less haphazard and put similarly oriented groups, communes and communities in touch with each other.

Socially, we envision for *ourselves* a rurally-based, multi-generational community that includes single families, extended non-related families living communally (our personal preference), homesteaders and even a hermit or two. We feel the extended family framework, as practiced now in some communes, with children and older people, strikes a useful balance between the needs for privacy and intimacy. It retains the nuclear family as *primary*, while providing family members the benefit of emotional and physical support from others.

Economically, all land, buildings, cars and businesses will be owned by our community, which is collectively responsible for providing free and equal housing, clothing, food, health care and education for each member of the community. There will be a small discretionary income for each individual's personal use. Hopefully, each group joining the community would have at least one type of ecologically sound, rurally adaptable, economic base. The community should have reasonable access (under 100 miles) to an urban city as a market for community products. The community should strive for independence and self-sufficiency, bending technology to our human needs, and having no illusions about becoming romantic pioneers.

Politically, we will govern ourselves via a mixture of consensus and rotation of decision-making jobs, trying to avoid over-specialization and concentration of power. We must reach out to work and mutually share with local people, minorities and low income people. On a small scale, the community can and should participate in local politics; and on a larger scale we support the trend toward a decentralized socialism and will work for government to become more egalitarian and participatory.

