

Finding New Community Members: Your Publicity Toolbox

COMMUNITIES

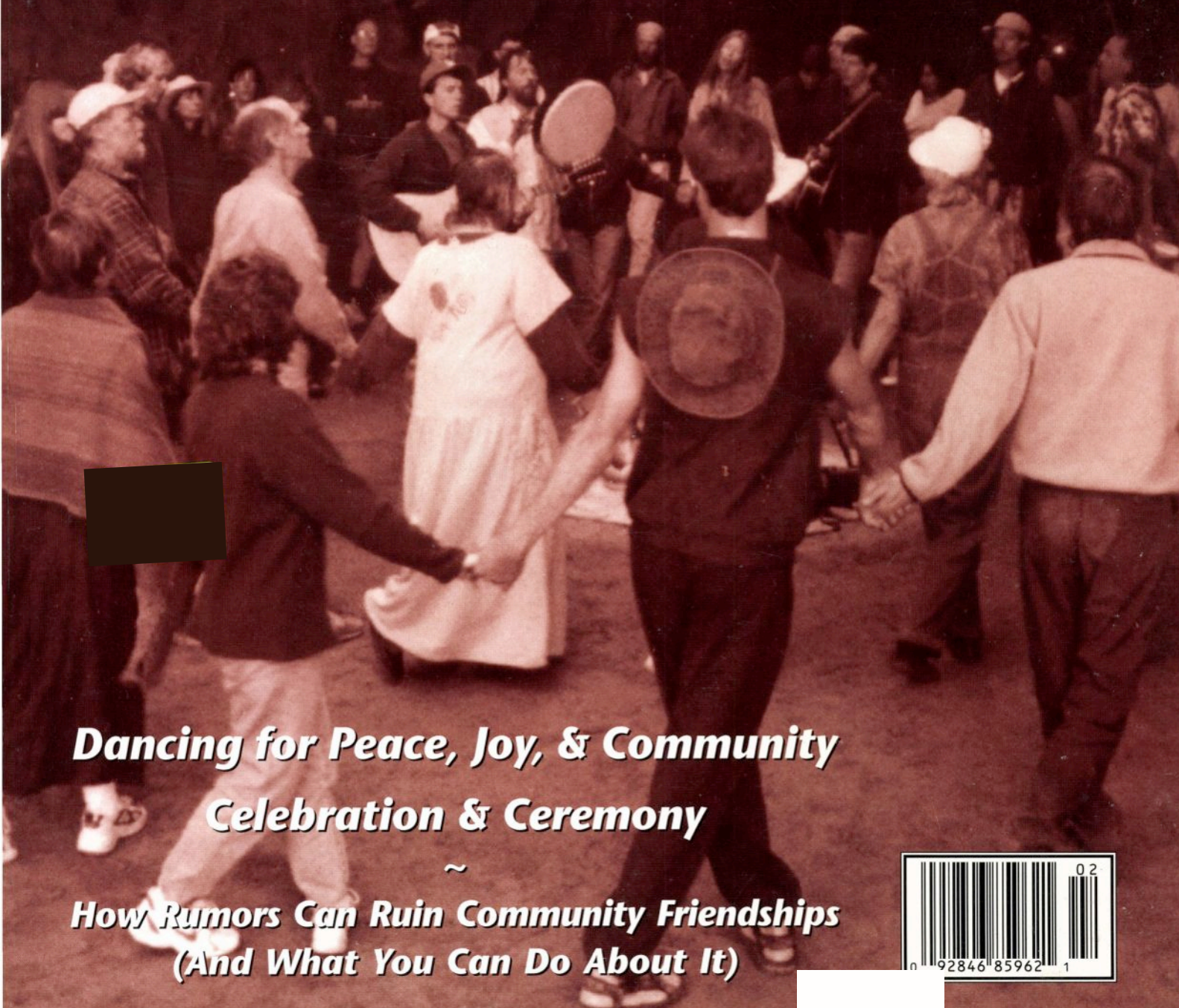
Journal of Cooperative Living

\$6.00

(\$8 Canada)

Summer 2000 (Issue #107)

Song, Dance, & Celebration: What Creates "Community Spirit"?



***Dancing for Peace, Joy, & Community
Celebration & Ceremony***

~

***How Rumors Can Ruin Community Friendships
(And What You Can Do About It)***



THE COMPLETELY UPDATED, ALL NEW COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTIONS

Over 600 North American and 100 international communities describe themselves—their structure, beliefs, mission, and visions of the future, and provide contact information.

33 NEW ARTICLES

Topics include: how to visit communities; why live in community and what it means to do so; financing and setting up the legal structures of communities; opportunities for older people in community; communities and “cults”; consensus process; raising children in community; dealing with conflict; an overview of Christian community; and more.

MAPS

Complete maps of North American communities. See at a glance what’s happening in your area.

CHARTS

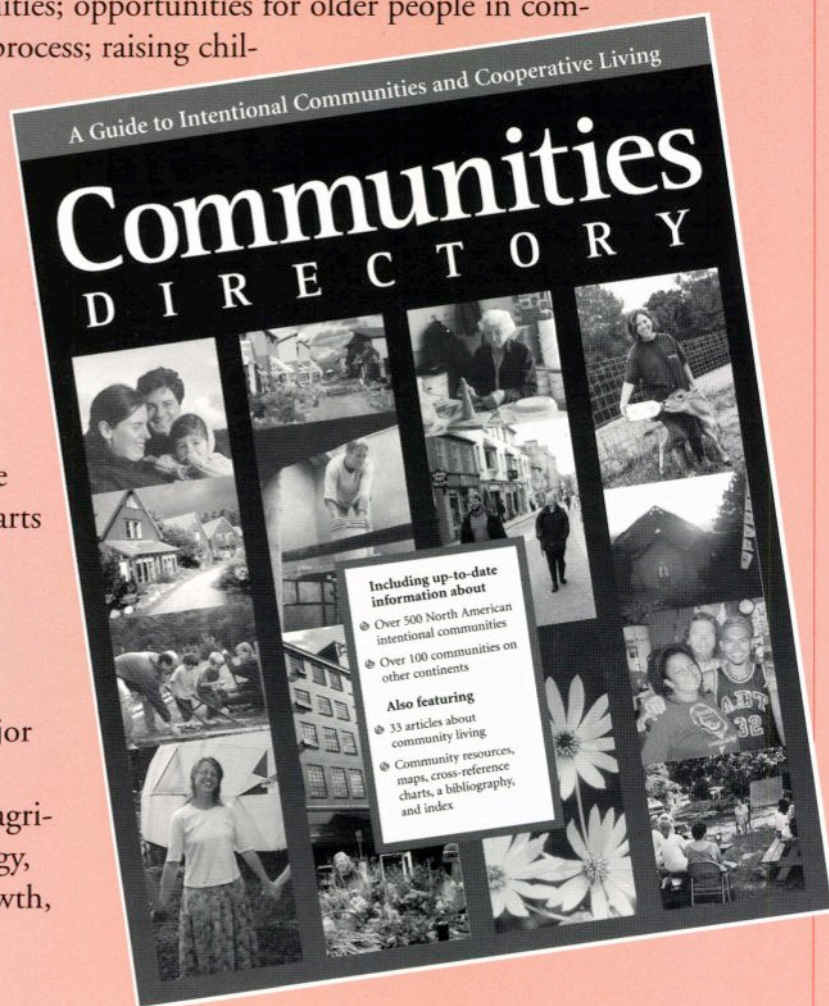
These charts allow you to quickly scan for the communities that fulfill your criteria. The charts will show you in a flash which communities match your needs and desires.

RESOURCES

Descriptions and contact information for major organizations within specific interest areas. Categories include: community networking, agriculture, ecology, energy, economics, technology, spirituality, education, sexuality, personal growth, and more.

NEW SECTION— RECOMMENDED READING LIST

An annotated collection of over 300 texts of interest to community-minded people.



SEE ORDER FORM ON PAGE 74.



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GANAS IS THE NYC RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

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IF SUCH THINGS FEEL RIGHT FOR YOU ... YOU ARE INVITED TO VISIT AND PERHAPS TO LIVE AND WORK WITH US

COMMUNITIES

Journal of Cooperative Living

FRONT COVER

Members of the Bozeman, Montana, Dances of Universal Peace community are among those attending a D.U.P. retreat at Canyonlands National Park, Utah.

Photo, Bob Spencer Photography.

BACK COVER

The Dances of Universal Peace tend to create community wherever they are practiced. Retreat at Canyonlands National Park, Utah.

Photo, Bob Spencer Photography.

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Song, Dance, & Celebration



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COMMUNITIES

Journal of Cooperative Living

EDITOR

Diana Leafe Christian (*GardenSpirit*)

DESIGN DIRECTOR

Paul DeLapa

LAYOUT

Lansing Scott (*Meridian House*)

ILLUSTRATIONS

Jacob Stevens (*Dancing Rabbit*)

Billie Miracle (*WomanShare*)

PHOTOS

Janice Doyama (*Pioneer Valley*)

John Fable (*Pioneer Valley*)

Patty Mara Gourley (*Tierra Nueva*)

Adam Grandin

Doug Jones (*Blrdsfoot*)

Carol Simons (*Common Place Land Trust*)

Bob Spencer Photography

COPY EDITING

Tree Ivy Beth Bressen (*Du-má*)

Marcy Michaud (*Teal Co-Op*)

PROOFREADING

Julie Van Pelt

REACH AND CLASSIFIED ADS

Patricia Greene

BUSINESS MANAGER

Marty Klaif

DATABASE MANAGER

Velma Kahn (*Abundant Dawn*)

CIRCULATION MANAGER

McCune Porter (*Twin Oaks*)

EDITORIAL REVIEW BOARD

Paul DeLapa

Betty Didcoct (*TIES Consulting*)

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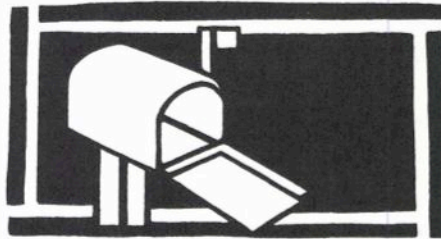
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LETTERS



Send letters to *Communities* magazine, 688 McEntire Rd., Tryon, NC 28782. Your letter may be edited or shortened. Thank you!

“Getting Real” in the Cohousing Issue

Dear Editor,

I just read most of the latest *Communities* issue on cohousing (*Spring '00, #106*)—an especially inspiring, nitty-gritty, get-real issue on a topic that settles at the seam of “mainstream” and “counter-culture,” letting us see that we really are all of a piece after all.

Yiscah Braha
Minneapolis, MN

Dear *Communities*:

I sent away for 50 copies of the Cohousing issue. I liked all the articles, but particularly Elena Kann and Bill Flemings’ “Community Process and Community Development.” Elena really zeroed in on a lot of the problems that afflict cohousing groups in the construction stages and came up with some excellent solutions. The issue is an excellent one, and I am very glad that I bought the 50 copies.

Diane
Cohousing-L List
cohousing-l@cohousing.org

Gap Between Rural Living and Job Opportunities

Dear *Communities* Editor:

I have just read your editorial, “Transition & Change,” (*Winter '99, #105*) comparing your experience in Colorado with snakes, cold, and high winds to your experience in Carolina with red mud, slow talk, and snug attic garrets in which to write. It interests me that you can edit a

publication from Carolina that’s published in Missouri, with contributions from all over North America.

I just read a series of articles about the simultaneous housing and employment crisis for North Carolinians of modest means, exacerbated by investments in upper-income retirement and vacation homes in that state. The same enlarging chasm based on resources seems evident in your magazine’s community housing ads, and in the community with which I am most familiar, The Farm in Tennessee.

I’m interested in the process of utilizing the Internet for and by non-traditional centers of intellectual and creative power, and wonder what can be done to better use the Internet in linking up progressive or humanistically oriented communities, whether urban, rural, intentional, cohousing, or a place like the “Little Five Points” Atlanta neighborhood where I live, which is part planned and part accidental.

I’d like to write an article on the availability, use, and access of federal low-interest loans to people in cohousing and other kinds of intentional communities—the barriers to access such funds, if any, and the availability. I’d like to know, for example, which communities have been creative in gaining access to such funds, whether the particular limitations on property transfer makes acquiring such funds for housing investment more difficult, and whether these can be overcome. Indeed, specific HUD programs exist that might be tapped by intentional communities. Would you be interested in such an article?

I have practiced law in Tennessee, where I worked with the open housing section of HUD, and I could interview, attorneys, bureaucrats, and so forth at the big regional office of HUD here in Atlanta. If any *Communities* readers have any anecdotes, leads, legal citations of cases, or other suggestions about federal low-interest loans to communities, or about use of the Internet, I’d appreciate hearing from you.

Congratulations on your publication, and on your creative “distance” editing.

Howard Romaine
Atlanta, Georgia
hromaine@mail.atl.bellsouth.net

Activist Tour Seeking Community Rest Stops

Dear *Communities*:

This fall some other young people and I are taking a bike trip across the country as a fundraiser for Heifer Projects International, which fights world hunger by giving cows, chickens, bees, fruit and nut trees, and other agricultural resources to farmers in Third World countries. I'm the main one in charge of the bike tour and we're doing all the work ourselves. Whatever we raise above costs goes to the Heifer Project. We're seeking communities that would be willing to contribute to the project by putting us up overnight, and people who would like to donate money or biking gear, from biking clothes to spare bicycle parts. Thanks so much. (By the way, I was raised at Sirius community in Massachusetts, which has contributed to my interest in this activist work.)

Llani Davidson

lan119@hotmail.com

From a Communities Founder

Hi folks:

I'm looking at a copy of *Communities* magazine's first issue, and am amazed that the little magazine our former Lime Saddle commune started in 1972 is still going strong. Over the years I've kept plugging along the utopian trail. For the last five years I've been involved with the little-known Heartlands environmental project to save Headwaters Forest in northern California, working directly with a local Native American tribe to recover this forest as part of the tribe's ancestral land. I also want *Communities* readers to know that a radical visionary new Christian Web site, The GaiaJah Spring (www.humboldt.net/~gaiajah) is online now, with much information on proposed spiritual and social/environmental changes. Especially check out the communitarian and Headwaters and Heartlands pages to see how some *Communities* magazine founders have found further fields of communitarian and spiritual change.

Stephen Lewis

Humboldt, California
ariel@humboldt.net

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Communities Editorial Policy

Communities is a forum for exploring intentional communities, cooperative living, and ways our readers can bring a sense of community into their daily lives. Contributors include people who live or have lived in community, and anyone with insights relevant to cooperative living.

Through fact, fiction, and opinion we offer fresh ideas about how to live cooperatively, how to solve problems peacefully, and how individual lives can be enhanced by living purposefully with others. We seek contributions that profile community living and why people choose it, descriptions of what's difficult and what works well, news about existing and forming communities, or articles that illuminate community experiences—past and present—offering insights into mainstream cultural issues.

We do not intend to promote one kind of community over another, and take no official position on a community's economic structure, political agenda, spiritual beliefs, environmental issues, or decision-making style. As long as submitted articles are related to the theme of community living, we will consider them for publication. However, we do not publish articles that 1) advocate violent practices, or 2) advocate that a community interferes with its members' right to leave.

Our aim is to be as balanced in our reporting as possible, and whenever we print an article critical of a particular community, we invite that community to respond with its own perspective.

Submissions Policy

To submit an article, please first request Writer's Guidelines: 688 McEntire Road, Tryon, NC 28782; 828-863-4425; communities@ic.org.

Advertising Policy

We accept paid advertising in *Communities* because our mission is to provide our readers with helpful and inspiring information—and because advertising revenues help pay the bills.

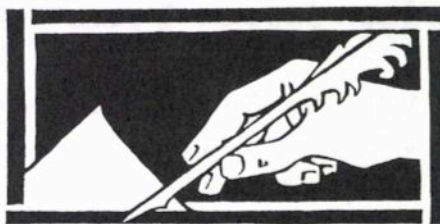
We hand pick our advertisers, selecting only those whose products and services we believe will be helpful to people interested in community living, cooperation, and sustainability. We hope you find this service useful, and we encourage your feedback.

Communities Advertising, 688 McEntire Road, Tryon, NC 28782; 828-863-4425; communities@ic.org.

What is an "Intentional Community"?

An "intentional community" is a group of people who have chosen to live or work together in pursuit of a common ideal or vision. Most, though not all, share land or housing. Intentional communities come in all shapes and sizes, and display amazing diversity in their common values, which may be social, economic, spiritual, political, and/or ecological. Some are rural; some urban. Some live all in a single residence; some in separate households. Some raise children; some don't. Some are secular, some are spiritually based, and others are both. For all their variety though, the communities featured in our magazine hold a common commitment to living cooperatively, to solving problems non-violently, and to sharing their experiences with others.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE



Communities Financial Report

IT'S TIME ONCE AGAIN FOR US TO PUBLICLY REVIEW THE FINANCIAL state of *Communities* magazine. Every June we publish our income and expense statement, both for the edification of our readers and to ground ourselves in the realities of publishing. Although *Communities* is a labor of love and an expression of our vision in the communities movement, it is also a business that must concern itself with the bottom line.

We can consider the value of a publication such as *Communities* magazine in various ways. Our publisher, the Fellowship for Intentional Community, has supported the magazine through many years when there was a net loss. We felt that having a regular forum in which to express ideas and acknowledge the vital and vibrant communities movement was worth absorbing that loss. Understanding the historical significance of the intellectual and social contributions of intentional communities gave us reason to continue to publish. So we persevered, hoping that we'd turn the corner and the magazine would become self-supporting and eventually profitable. The financial burden of the publisher would be lifted and the deserving magazine staff could be justly rewarded.

Suddenly, last year, we made a profit. We rejoiced and hoped, with caution, that a new era in the magazine's financial history had begun. However, we knew that it could be a fluke and that we might once again find ourselves supporting an unsustainable venture. This turned out to be the case. As noted above, there are lots of good reasons to bootstrap this publication. But, at some point, we must consider the hardship this creates for our financially struggling organization.

At this point, we are taking seriously the need to find ways to make the

Income, 1999:	
Subscriptions	\$30,803.87
Single issues	2,316.75
Back issues	3,738.81
Distributor sales	21,272.48
Advertising	13,194.81
Royalties	91.78
TOTAL INCOME:	\$71,418.50

Expenses, 1999:	
Printing	\$28,241.59
Office overhead	12,000.00
Labor	22,813.20
Office expenses	5,429.61
Advertising commissions	3,365.18
Promotion	1,796.90
Fulfillment	5,409.37
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$79,055.85

Net loss (\$7,637.35)

magazine pay for itself. We are aided in this effort by a more sophisticated book-keeping system that allows us to see, earlier, where we need to pay closer attention. For example, we need more efficient relationships with our distributors. We hope to find more ways to save money on printing. We know we must bolster our subscriptions—the lifeline of any publication. We must attract a wider group of readers and expose the magazine to the audience that will appreciate it.

So, our efforts will be on two fronts: saving money by being more efficient, and expanding our income base by reaching more potential readers. In the past year we chose a new printer who has made publication easier for us. We have continued to upgrade the look of the magazine. We expanded our editorial scope and our perspective about our potential audience. We forged alliances with like-minded organizations, which we hope will reap benefits for all concerned.

We hope this year will be one of promise and fulfilled dreams for you, our readers, as well as for *Communities* magazine.



Marty Klaif is Publications Manager for the Fellowship for Intentional Community. A former member of the Kerista community, he lives in Hillsboro, Oregon.

COMING IN FUTURE ISSUES

"Let's Go! Learning Opportunities in Community." Fall 2000. Learning about communities and community living through community educational and/or internship/apprenticeship programs. College-credit tours of sustainable communities. First-person accounts of program participants. How your community can sponsor an educational program. College and university programs, courses; community conferences, workshops, study groups; videotapes and other resources—where they are, what they offer. *Guest Editor, Daniel Greenberg, daniel@ic.org; 413-259-1199.*

"Decision Making in Community." Winter 2000. The range of options in community decision making; participatory democracy compared to hierarchical management (can having a leader be beneficial?); the consensus process—pros and cons, how to learn it, how to get trained as a facilitator. Contact *Communities, 688 McEntire Rd., Tryon, NC 28782; 828-863-4425; communities@ic.org.*

"Student Housing Co-ops." Spring 2001. What communitarians and the "community-interested" can learn from student housing co-ops: where they are; how they're financed, self-governed, and managed; their joys and challenges; how to start one. *Guest Editor Deniz Tuncer, deniztuncer@email.com, c/o 688 McEntire Rd., Tryon, NC 28782; 828-863-4425.*

"Appropriate Technology for Community Sustainability." Summer 2001. Our love-hate relationship with technology; Appropriate Technology (AT); options for sustainable technology in communities and learning to live with it; micro-hydro-electric, solar electric, wind generation; living with home-power systems; how future appropriate technologies will change our lives. *Guest Editor, Jeff Clearwater, clrwater@valinet.com.*



Art of Community Audiotapes

**Multigenerational Living in Communities:
Meeting Everyone's Needs**
Caroline Estes

**Finding Your Community:
An Art or a Science?**
Geoph Kozeny

**Manifesting Our Dreams:
Visioning, Strategic Planning,
& Fundraising**
Jeff Grossberg

**Raising & Educating Children
in Community**
*Diana Christian, Elke Lerman,
Martin Klaif, Judy Morris*

**Conflict: Fight, Flight, or
Opportunity?**
Laird Sandhill

**Consensus: Decisions That
Bring People Together**
Caroline Estes

**Six "Ingredients" for Forming
Communities (That Help Reduce
Conflict Down the Road)**
Diana Christian

**Building a Business While
Building Community**
*Carol Carlson, Lois Arkin, Harvey
Baker, Bill Becker, Judy Morris, Ira
Wallace*

Legal Options for Communities
*Allen Butcher, Aiy'm Fellman,
Stephen Johnson, Tony Sirna*

**We Tried Consensus and Got
Stuck. Now What?**
Caroline Estes & Laird Sandhill

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COMMUNITY GRAPEVINE



Bryn Gweled Homesteads in Southampton, Pennsylvania, will celebrate its 60th anniversary this summer. Inspired by Ralph Borsodi's School of Living, Bryn Gweled Homesteads was founded in 1940 to give 80 families enough land to

raise much of their own food. No longer a homesteading community, Bryn Gweled is now completely surrounded by Philadelphia suburbs. "But we've never lost sight of our founders' dedication to cooperation, environmentalism, and racial, economic, and religious diversity," notes member *Schera Chadwick*.

"We believe our community has survived because of our common land ownership (member families own their own homes but lease their lots from the community)," she writes, "and a formal membership process which requires that new-member applicants visit with every member."

Bryn Gweled's Anniversary Celebration will take place July 21–23, with more than 300 former members, guests, family, and friends expected from all over

North America. If you're a former member, contact them at 267-880-0637; GeoVis@erols.com; www.BrynGweled.org.

Bryn Gweled will also host a public seminar on community on October 20. See www.bryngweled.org/BG_60_fr.htm.



On April 15 about 35 people gathered at **Winslow Cohousing** on Bainbridge Island, Washington, for the spring gathering of the **Northwest Intentional Communities Association (NICA)**. "We had fairly heated exchanges between cohousers and members of and non-cohousing communities when we talked about what degree parents and other members might impose expectations about the behavior of community children," reports *Jonathan*

"Dream No Small Dreams!" A Farewell to Robert Theobald

"I MET ROBERT THEOBALD IN 1971 AND HE CHANGED MY LIFE," was typical of the emails from around the world read at his memorial service in December 1999, which celebrated Theobald's role as "bard of the communications era, teacher and colleague in the art of social transformation, and father of information networking," according to the *Christian Science Monitor*. Robert Theobald—the prolific writer, thinker, speaker, and internationally known socioeconomist, whom the *Encyclopaedia of the Future* had recently listed as one of the top 10 most influential contemporary futurists—died in Spokane, Washington on November 27, 1999.

"If his memorial service was any indication," continues his friend and colleague Stephen Silha in the *Monitor*, "... he helped a lot of people ask better questions and transform their lives. ... He devoted his life to helping people create a positive future." He had "an extraordinary ability to touch and inspire people at all levels of society," observes Australian activist Anne Deveson in a memorial essay.

"Robert acted as a kind of 'attractor' for people who are now identified as 'cultural creatives' in Paul Ray's research," says longtime friend and colleague Bob Stilger, former director of Northwest Regional Facilitators, now with New Stories. "He helped these people see that they weren't crazy, even though they might have *felt* crazy living in our society. He gave them language, ideas, and concepts to think and talk about the discontinuities they were experiencing. He helped articulate what people felt but didn't yet have words for. At his core he was a man who helped people find their own voices."

It's not surprising, then, that many veteran communitarians—who perhaps first began questioning our culture's assumptions and values in the '60s and '70s—might have once been influenced by Robert Theobald.

His first book, *The Rich and the Poor* (1960), challenged industrially rich countries to share their knowledge and techniques with underdeveloped countries while respecting their cultural differences. *The Challenge of Abundance* (1961) proposed that unbridled pursuit of economic growth doesn't necessarily foster quality of life. *An Alternative Future for America* (1970) suggested we are heading for the disaster of a police state, environmental meltdown, and economic disparity unless we create a different future.

Theobald didn't just influence us layfolk. He consulted with President Kennedy on economics, promoting the idea of a guaranteed annual income. In *The Triple Revolution* (1964), a collaborative report for President Johnson on the social challenges of cybernetics, weapons of mass destruction, and human rights, he again made the then-radical proposal that every citizen should be granted the minimum means for a decent livelihood. He worked with the United Nations, corporate executives, and citizen and church groups on how to create a better future. Over the years he wrote 25 books. His latest? *Reworking Success* (1998, New Society Publishers).

Some of his more memorable aphorisms:

"Abundance is a free gift."

"You can change the world, but you can't get credit for it."

"You can only teach a person what he already knows."

"When information doubles, knowledge halves and wisdom quarters."

"Dream no small dreams!"

We honor Robert Theobald and remember his gifts to all of us "cultural creatives" who attempt to create a kinder future by living a more simple and sane and sustainable way of life.

—Diana Leafe Christian Ω

Betz-Zall of **Bright Morning Star** in Seattle, "as well as the usually lively discussions on conflict resolution and facilitation." NICA will host a weekend communities camp-out gathering in July or August. For information, call *Jonathan* at 206-782-9305.



Since many communitarians are also political, environmental, or social justice activists, the **Rosenberg Fund for Children (RFC)** wanted *Communities* readers to know about its grants. The Rosenberg Fund provides for the educational and emotional needs of children in the United States whose parents have been harassed, injured, lost jobs, or died in the course of their progressive activities. Institutions and professionals are awarded grants to provide these children with services (school tuition, music lessons, summer camp, therapy, day care, travel to visit an incarcerated relative, etc.). Grants are given directly to institutions and individuals who cultivate positive human values,

and foster children's physical, mental, emotional, and cultural development while recognizing that children must be free to be children. If you know of a child of a targeted activist who might qualify for an RFC grant, or for more information, contact the *Rosenberg Fund for Children*, 1145 Main St. #408, Springfield, MA 01103; 413-739-9020; rfc@rfc.org; www.rfc.org.



Over the last several months the **Intentional Communities Web site** (www.ic.org) sponsored by the **Fellowship for Intentional Community** (publisher of *Communities* magazine), asked visitors to the Web site survey questions, with these results:

I. "Do you live in an intentional community?" (403 respondents)

1. Yes, I live cooperatively with others (12%)
2. No, I never have (56%)
3. No, but I used to (27%)
4. I'm not sure (5%)

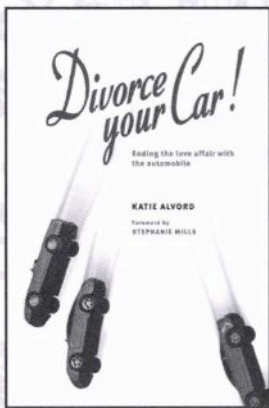
II. "Regarding community living, where are you at this point in your life?" (1080 respondents)

1. Searching for a community to join (41%)
2. Wanting to start a community (17%)
3. Planning to investigate community living (15%)
4. Interested in information on community (15%)
5. Living cooperatively in community now (7%)
6. Only mildly interested in community, yet curious (5%)

III. "If you could live in any type of intentional community, which would you choose?" (535 respondents)

1. Ecovillage (36%)
2. Rural Commune (24%)
3. Cohousing Community (11%)
4. Intentional Neighborhood (11%)
5. Ashram/Monastery (11%)
6. Urban Cooperative (7%)

IV. "What do you think is the most



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—JIM MOTAVALLI, EDITOR, *E MAGAZINE*

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important focus for intentional communities in today's world?" (538 respondents)

1. Ecological (34%)
2. Social (29%)
3. Spiritual (24%)
4. Political (6%)
5. Economic (5%)
6. Cultural (5%)

V. "What do you think is the biggest obstacle to moving to an existing intentional community?" (502 respondents)

1. Finding the right one (51%)
2. Financial debt (19%)
3. Work commitments (15%)
4. Life partner (7%)
5. My children (5%)
6. Friends'/relatives' disapproval (3%)



Any **New Yorkers** interested in intentional communities might want to check out monthly meetings in Manhattan devoted to that topic at the New School on 6th Avenue, in the conference room above the cafeteria. For further information contact

the folks at 212-539-2609 or create-comm@mail.com (no hyphen).



To learn more about the basics of community living in lively workshops and to meet other community aficionados in the upper Midwest, consider the annual conference of the **North American Students of Cooperation (NASCO)** November 3-5 at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The **Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC)** is sponsoring the "intentional communities track" of NASCO's annual conference (the NASCO "Institute"), where you'll find 10-12 two-hour workshops on topics ranging from consensus and facilitation to conflict, cohousing, visioning, forming new communities, and more. NASCO is the 32-year-old organization of the campus cooperative movement (student housing cooperatives, student-run worker co-ops) in the United States and Canada, and the conference will also offer many workshops on co-ops. The cost will range

from about \$200 to \$235. For more information, contact *Anjannette Bunce*, 734-663-0889; abunce@umich.edu; www.umich.edu/~nasco. Ω

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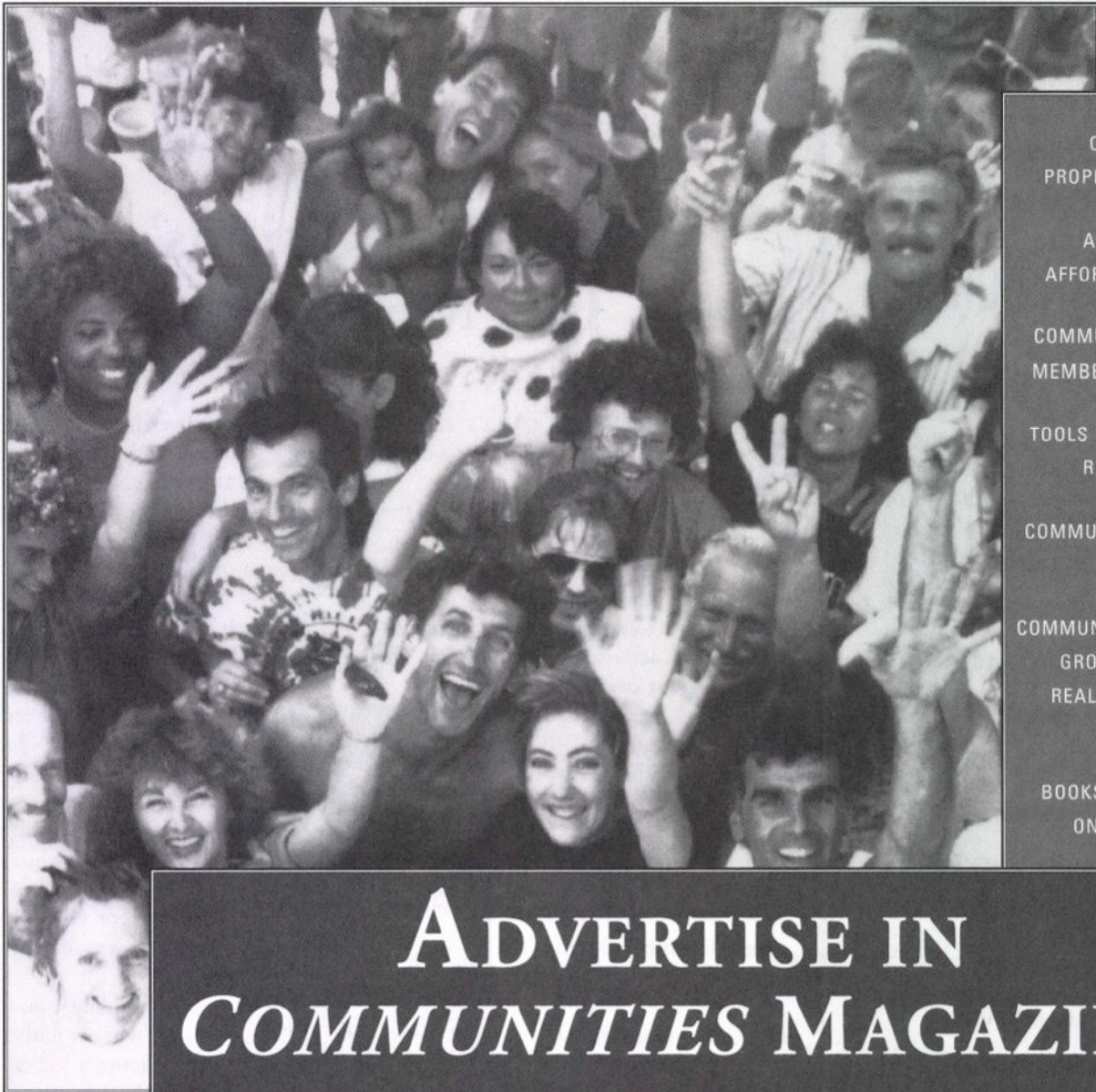
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A publication of the Fellowship for Intentional Community

www.ic.org

'True Confessions' of FIC Membership

IT STARTED OUT QUITE INNOCENTLY. In 1998 I was seeking a community to join.

At that year's summer gathering of the Network for a New Culture in Oregon, "An Experiment in Intimacy and Community," I found myself painting a bookshelf with a new acquaintance, veteran community activist Geoph Kozeny. We chatted about community, the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) organization and the work it was doing, and its premier reference work, the *Communities Directory*. Somewhere between the time I met Geoph and the time I left the gathering, I caught fire.

Over the next few months I explored the pages of the *Communities Directory* thoroughly, probing every nook and cranny of the communities movement. I made new and strengthened old contacts and built a vision of what community would look like for me, with the *Directory* as my guide.

One road led to another, and nine months later I was a long-term visitor at Alpha Farm in Oregon. I found myself trading ideas about marketing with Elph Morgan and Jillian Downey, other guests who were editing the third, year-2000 edition of the *Communities Directory*. Awash with glee at the opportunity, I had no doubt the *Directory* had been instrumental in changing my life. Better yet, I was making even more new friends through the FIC.

Within another three months I had become an "exploring member" of Lost Valley Educational Center. And ... I was now a member of the FIC's Marketing Team for the *Communities Directory* and had spent a couple of weeks at FIC's office at Sandhill Farm in Missouri. There, I found myself in on conference calls with FIC's Membership Committee and volunteering to help in increasing membership. I was, however, faced with a slight dilemma—I hadn't become a member of the FIC yet.

I had two choices—I could ask for a free membership for the volunteer work I was doing, or I could decide whether or not to actually join. I asked myself what would compel me to actually join and pay \$30 (\$15 low income) for

an individual membership? I was also curious: what were the convenient excuses I made to save a little money?

In terms of the value I'd already received, it would appear to be a no-brainer. After all, before the FIC's first *Directory* came out in 1990, community seekers had nowhere to get an overview of available communities and there was little information out there about how to visit communities. Just the existence of the *Directory* had saved me perhaps hundreds of hours of searching and probably many mistakes.

But the *Directory* is a product, I reasoned, and the reward for the publisher



Russ Reina is Marketing/Conference Coordinator of Lost Valley Educational Center, in Dexter, Oregon; 541-937-3351; russ@ic.org; www.lostvalley.org.

lay in my buying it. As for my new friends, well, they were new people that came into my life that happened to work or volunteer for the FIC. The organization could claim no ownership of them.

Yet, no one else was doing what the Fellowship was doing. Its subtle outreach was enough to open up a whole new world for me. At this realization I began to feel a little guilty. How easy it had been for me to avoid parting with a pittance to support a greater good.

How many of the tools of the FIC was I actually using, I wondered. After reading the *Directory* I had done some cross-reference work on the Internet, only to find that the FIC's Web site (www.ic.org) was the only comprehensive and easy-to-use resource with links to hundreds of communities whose Web sites yielded yet more information. *Communities* magazine was another publication I couldn't get enough of. I found myself entering a vibrant world of new ideas and challenged assumptions about what it takes to live cooperatively. I was also aware of the various Art of Community gatherings, and could see that this was an organization working hard to present choices to people interested in community.

Looking back, I realized that what I'd thought I was originally looking for was a community to join. What I found, however, was that the FIC had helped me get a sense of how to incorporate more community into my life *now*. Between the *Directory* and the other materials so readily available, I got a firm sense of balanced, guiding hands at work, subtly influencing me to think more deeply about my choices.

Something else. Very few of the FIC folks I'd met were actually being paid. Those few paid employees were putting far more hours in than they were compensated for, and, for the most part, they did this joyfully. Even the pay that there was (of course I asked!) wasn't anywhere comparable to "market-rate" work that demanded equal skill level.

So there I had it. I had been influenced by an organization dedicated to getting the word out about alternative ways of living that could add a new sense of enjoyment and satisfaction and purpose to my life. Their outreach had certainly affected me; their wealth of information had made my search much easier; and the FIC

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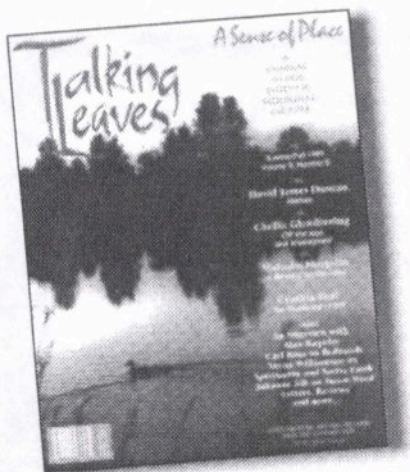
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people I met inspired me to want to build a life that could include them.

How easy it had been for me to take it all for granted! How many of you, for example, skipped the page on FIC membership in *Communities* magazine in favor of the article about romance in community? See how easy!

Additionally, all the time I'd been working with the FIC, *no one* had ever asked, "Russ, isn't it about time you joined the FIC?" The organization was so low key, so not into being pushy. My marketing background led me to ask if the organization was even developing reasons to compel new people to join. Here's what I found:

- FIC's "Community Bookshelf" mail-order service offers hard-to-find books on community living—with discounts for FIC members.

- The Third Edition of the *Communities Directory* is now out! This brand new edition has 33 new articles, almost 600 North American communities listed, and another 175 overseas, along with new resource listings, recommended reading lists, and the exceptional cross reference charts and maps that make it so easy to find a community most akin to your tastes. A discounted price for FIC members, of course.

- The FIC's brand-new video on community living, "Visions of Utopia," created by none other than my painting companion, Geoph Kozeny, is also available now. Professionally produced and

over two hours long, it includes profiles of 18 diverse communities—the perfect companion piece to the *Communities Directory*. Discounted price for members.

- An e-commerce Web site is being developed so that FIC-member communities can sell their products online.

- The organization's "Community Loan Fund" distributed \$30,000 in loans to FIC-member-communities' businesses and other community organizations in the last five years.

- The FIC has reprinted two classic, long-out-of-print books on consensus, *Building United Judgment* and *A Manual for Group Facilitators*. Available to FIC members at a discount.

I believe that each community in North America, each individual community member, each community seeker, and each person who wants to learn more about community benefits from the work of the FIC. My own personal experience is that most communities are searching for quality new members. The FIC acts as a friendly "agent" by which individuals with the will, desire, and talents can be referred to such communities. What better way to strengthen a movement than have an organization helping communities get stronger?

With my new inside view of the FIC, however, I know that the only factor making these things happen is people-power, tremendous pluck, and creativity, and an almost supernatural will to see good work done. Notice, I mention neither a flowing

Help More People Find Out About the New Communities Directory

The new edition of the *Communities Directory* is here! Because we're in a crucial window of opportunity for getting media attention for the book, we are asking community-minded folks across the country to donate an afternoon of time in the next few weeks to doing media outreach.

You know which media in your area may be receptive to ideas about community far better than we do! If you can help us get the word out, you have helped the FIC. It's really quite easy. We can send you a "media kit" that helps take you through the steps, including coaching on how to make calls to local publications, answers to questions their editors may ask you, and so on.

If you have direct media contacts you want to pass along for others to follow up on, that works too.

To receive a media kit, please contact our press coordinator, Amy Nesbitt, at press@ic.org, or call FIC's main office at 660-883-5545.

—Laird Schaub

bank account nor donor angels standing by ready to write checks. The FIC's good works happen now under the stressful pressure of inadequate funds. But it doesn't have to be this way. The deciding factor is to have the people who are most favorably affected by the FIC take more responsibility for its future.

Remember, I'm talking to myself here.

The only loose end for me was to ask, "What's in it for me *now*?" Here's what I found:

- A membership subscription to the FIC newsletter will inform me about new FIC developments that are furthering the communities movement.

- I'll have access to membership in Sunrise Credit Union, the only credit union located in an intentional community (Sunrise Ranch in Colorado). SCU's stated purpose is "to facilitate the work of its members in the revelation of exemplary character in the world." How's that vision compared to a regular bank!

- I'll be invited to and be able to attend Art of Community gatherings at discounted prices.

- I get a discounted price on *Communities* magazine and the new *Communities Directory* (and discounts if I ever want to advertise in either publication) as well as other discounts on buying publications mentioned earlier.

Quite frankly, these benefits pale in comparison to the others I have already derived from my association with FIC. Being a part of such a vital movement—one that I have seen give hope for connection to many people—is enough.

All of the FIC's work does cost time, resources, a tremendous amount of dedication and money. I'd like to see all of us who share in the benefits share these costs by supporting their work through annual membership.

Of course, I put my money where my heart is and joined. If you have benefited from any of the things that the FIC has brought to life, I ask you now, "What's holding you back?"

If you sincerely cannot afford the membership fee, then please consider volunteering your time. There's lots to do and the help is needed. Planting the seeds of community may be one of the most ecologically sound actions we can do. And we can do this together. Ω

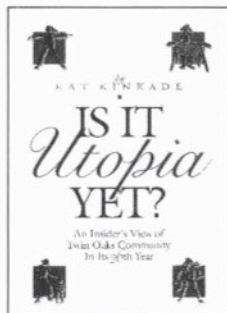
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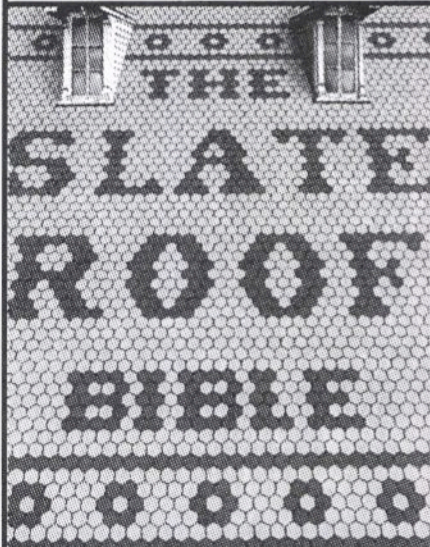
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Can People 'Afford' to Live in Community?

Dear *Communities*:

I'm searching for a community to call home, and I have so far visited three. One in particular I really liked, but my \$16,000 student loan debt complicated things. I asked various people in this rural community if I might work about 10–20 hours a week at a job in the nearby town in order to pay off my debt, but in my six weeks visiting there I never really got an answer. Some people were convinced I could; others swore that the community rules forbade it. One told me that previous visitors had actually felt they couldn't live at that community because of their debt. One member said he supported my idea to work in town, and that I should propose it in a meeting.

According to an article in the August *Atlantic* magazine, Generation X-ers have more debt than other generations. I'm 40. A \$16,000 student loan debt is about typical for a four-year degree. Yet the agreements of this community basically said, "We used to pay members' student loans, but we can't anymore. Many members feel visitors should take care of their debts before coming here." A \$16,000 debt is a 10-year debt. I'd be 50 before I could join that community!

What makes me angry is that members of that community and others seem to be disproportionately upper class. No Blacks! I grew up in a blue-collar part of town and I can say I saw few people there like those I grew up with. Instead, several of its members were away traveling inter-

nationally. One told me that her parents had paid for all four years of college. Another told me his dad is vice-president of a major corporation. Yes, I'm jealous! Those people could afford to drop out and join a commune and I can't.

Student loan debt is in a different class from credit card debt—garnishment of wages is more a sure bet; you'll never see a tax refund again; you can't declare bankruptcy; and to discourage default the government can increase the principal, i.e., \$10,000 debt can become \$14,000.

Is moving to a commune a relic of the past? Is it not possible in the modern world with so many people in debt? Is community living only for the wealthy who want to go slumming? What real harm could come from some people working small jobs outside?

Logan Harris
Louisville, Kentucky

The community you described sounds like an income-sharing community with community-owned businesses and a common purse. You described it, and your frustrations with it, as if their economic structure were the norm for communities in general; however, this is not the case. Most communities are not income sharing and members have independent finances: i.e., people can work off the property and spend their money as they wish.

Income-sharing communities, however, are sometimes organized as nonprofits with



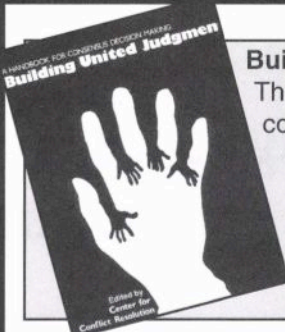
a 501(d) tax status, which allows the community to file with the IRS as one single economic entity and receive a favorable tax status. In recent years the IRS has accepted a broadening of the purposes of 501(d) groups to include any group that has a common treasury, so long as their income is substantially derived from activities on the property. To our knowledge there has been no legal refinement of the limits of what "substantially" means. This is a gray area and there is some risk that a community may jeopardize its favorable tax status if too much income is derived from outside activities. If the community you visited was an income-sharing 501(d) community, it's possible that some individual community members didn't know the origin of this rule.

However, raising the question about being able to "afford" to live in community is still valid. While you'd have no trouble having an outside job in a community that wasn't income sharing, in some of these communities you'd still need assets to live there—to pay a joining fee, to handle maintenance costs or other monthly fees, to purchase the right to a "footprint" of land on which to build your own house, or to outright buy a house and lot for sale in the community. Cohousing communities, for example, require enough money for a down payment and to qualify for a mortgage. Affordable housing co-ops also require that members qualify financially. Exceptions are those rural communities and urban group households where members pay monthly fees (just as they'd pay rent living elsewhere) and are free to spend the rest of their income however they choose, whether earned from a community business or an outside job.

—Communities magazine staff Ω


Community Questions?

Send your questions or burning issues about community life to *Communities* magazine, 688 McEntire Rd., Tryon, NC 28782, or communities@ic.org. If we print your question, one of the community veterans in the Fellowship for Intentional Community will respond, and we'll thank you with a free copy of that issue of the magazine. We look forward to hearing from you!



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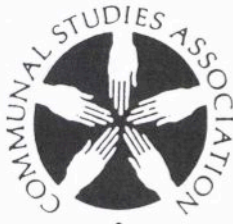
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Engaging the Americas in Common Effort ...

GREETINGS FROM THE Ecovillage Network of the Americas!

ENA is a not-for-profit organization serving the Americas as the western hemisphere regional representative of the Global Ecovillage Network, or GEN. Our mission is "To engage the peoples of the Americas in common effort to join the global transformation towards ecologically, economically, and culturally sustainable human settlement."

Four years ago we were a fledgling group of ecovillages, founding members with the ambitious vision to create a unified movement toward sustainable human settlement in the Western Hemisphere. Today, ENA is a 17-member council with representation from 11 nations (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico, United States, and Uruguay) and scores of ecovillages—and we are growing fast. We have strong working relationships with our parent, GEN; with the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC); and with numerous indigenous groups and villages and intentional communities throughout South and North America.

ENA is built on a strong foundation of cross-cultural relations—the result of years of networking by Council members Albert Bates, GEN's Secretariat for the Americas; Liora Adler of Huehucoytl Community in Mexico and the Rainbow Caravan for Peace; Giovanni Ciarlo of Huehucoytl; Andre Soares of Brazil; and Claudio

Madaune and Enrique Hidalgo of Bolivia, to name a few. All have contributed substantially to our North-South cultural bridging work. The marriage of the respective strengths of our many cultures give a vitality to ENA that is a joy to serve and work within. However, we have much work yet to do as we reach out to people of the Americas and provide them with a voice and the support needed to create and/or preserve sustainable communities.

ENA has eight regions:

Southern South America, Northern South America, Brazil, Meso-America, the Caribbean, Western United States, Eastern United States, and Canada. The Caravan for Peace is our ninth, traveling "region." Each sends a representative to our Council of the Americas. We meet at least once a year with some representatives meeting every year, and others meeting every other year.

In October 1999, 30 representatives from 10 nations met in Colorado at EarthArt Village (see "Community Grapevine," Spring '00 issue). We considered that meeting a great success in cementing the relationships between North and South, and we established a solid set of working committees and a strong organizational foundation. Since then we have begun the process of publishing a complete set of promotional materials including brochures, slide shows, and so on in three languages: English, Spanish, and Portuguese. (All of ENA's activities, including meetings and email communications, embrace these three languages.)



Jeff Clearwater is a Council member of ENA, founding member of Living Routes: Ecovillage Education Consortium, and principal in Ecovillage Design Associates. A 22-year social activist and designer of appropriate technology and renewable energy systems, he lives at Sirius Community in Massachusetts.

We have also launched a long-term fundraising campaign and are in the process of writing grant proposals for a score of foundations and major donors. Thanks to a generous grant from the Vanguard Foundation and some private donations, we have the seed money needed to set up our central office in Colorado and get our committees up and running.

We are also developing a system of Ecovillage Contact Offices, which we call "ECOs," in each of the eight regions. The ECOs will serve as primary nodes for ENA, organizing local networks in their regions, answering inquiries from the public, and conducting educational outreach on sustainable communities, permaculture practices, appropriate technology, and so on. If your ecovillage or aspiring ecovillage is willing to do this work, we encourage you to apply to be an ECO. (See contact information, below.)

We will use this ENA column to regularly report on the many activities of the ecovillage movement in this hemisphere. The region is vast, as are the numbers of projects and peoples joining together seeking planetary healing toward sustainability. From South America, where indigenous cultures struggle to preserve or reestablish sustainable ways of life in thousands of villages, to the pioneers in the North seeking to combine Earth-based wisdom with sustainable technologies, the Ecovillage Network of the Americas seeks to engage people in "common effort toward global transformation" that is now underway.

We have much work ahead of us. But there is a strong feeling amongst the Council that ENA has taken wing and is delighting in first flight. ENA is a vehicle through which people striving for a sustainable culture can gather, express, and rejoice—and work together.

We look forward to working with all of you.

For more information on ENA and the ecovillage movement: www.gaia.org (GEN); www.gaia.org/secretariats/enal (ENA); and www.LivingRoutes.org (ecovillage education).

Linda Joseph (ENA Council President), EarthArt Village, 64001 County Road DD, Moffat, CO 81143; 719-256-5002; linda@ecovillage.org.

Albert Bates, GEN Secretariat for the Americas, The Farm/Ecovillage Training Center, PO Box 90, Summertown, TN 38483-0090; 931-964-3992; ecovillage@thefarm.org. Ω

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JACOB STEVENS

How Rumors Can Ruin Community Friendships

(And What You Can Do About It)

BY ROB SANDELIN

THEY WERE REALLY GOOD FRIENDS, AND YOU WOULD often see them sitting together well after community meals, animatedly talking on any number of subjects. Often their energy would bring other people to the table and many great conversations would ensue. They had many interests in common and really seemed to enjoy being with other. However, he was a married man with children; she was a single woman, attractive, and interesting. It wasn't long before the rumors and innuendos began.

A common community dynamic seems to feed on assumptions about relationships between men and women. How could two people, so clearly enjoying each other, *not* be lovers?

In this particular cohousing community the assumptions began as a whispering campaign. Some of their neighbors saw the man and woman go into her house together and not come out for awhile. Aha! This became yet more fodder for “the affair.”

Since the man was a relative newcomer, and had previously lived in another, more liberal community, part of the rumor buzz revolved around his wife. Was this an “Open Marriage?” Was his wife OK with this or was she a victim? Some of the women in the community held a small circle vilifying the single woman, the assumed initiator of “the affair.” They talked about creating a united front to drive her out, perhaps feeling the threat of “husband poaching.”

The buzz grew louder. A cluster of neighbors would gather to speculate on all the juicy angles, careful to hush the conversation when someone not in the loop walked by. Eventually the wife heard the fully developed rumor that her husband was having an affair with the single woman.

The story, of course, was completely erroneous.

After a heartfelt conversation between the players, there were now three people who were completely upset, and angry with the unknown rumor mongers. How had this happened? Who started it? Why are people trying to hurt us? Do I really want to live in a community that behaves like this?

Eventually this will all blow over, right? People will talk about it for awhile, then it will pass. Or will it? The most obvious remainder of this episode is that the friendship that used to be is no more. And there is a clear distrust between some of the women. One bogus assumption—lots of damaged relationships.

This is an extreme example of an almost everyday occurrence: making assumptions and operating on them. It is part of the way people interact with the world to make observations, infer meaning, and then use that meaning to guide their actions and planning. This is normal, and we do it all the time.

However, such assumptions can bring grief in a community when they are taken as fact and not as hypothesis. One way to help clarify assumptions is to use open-ended language. Starting sentences with “I think,” “I believe,” or “In my opinion,” helps others understand that the observation is tentative and not yet proven or fully thought out. Another way to bring up assumptions is to ask for clarity.

“Is this a fact or an opinion?” “How do you know this is true?”

In the unfortunate tale above, the “evidence” for the affair was that the man and woman went into a house alone together—proof of a sexual liaison. Actually the two were working on a computer program. No one challenged the assumption, and this erroneous and very damaging assumption got passed along, without question, as truth.

Do I really want to live in a community that behaves like this?

Communities can help head off this dangerous tendency by playing the game, “Spot the Assumption.” Make up a sentence which has an obvious assumption and then ask others to find it. For example, “Joe doesn’t care about the community because he never comes to meetings anymore.” Or “Donna talks so much and hogs the conversation; she only cares about herself.” After playing

“Spot the Assumption” a few times people can get really good at breaking out assumptions. As your group gets good at spotting the obvious assumptions, create sentences which have more subtle assumptions in them. This exercise can help your community evaluate the information you receive and also get you looking for the assumptions that are built in to your work together.

Another exercise is called “Assumptions Dump.” This is a simple brainstorm to list all the assumptions that everybody has about living together in the community. You start off just writing a community value or principle on an easel pad and then have people either write down their assumptions about it on cards that you later post, or ask them to share their assumptions verbally. If you do this as part of your decision-making process, you will find that your communications will probably get much clearer, with less of the “But I thought we meant _____!” sorts of problems.

Learning how to spot assumptions being passed off as facts has potential to save a lot friendships. And save community good will! Ω

Rob Sandelin, a consensus facilitator and teacher, is a founder of the Northwest Intentional Communities Association (NICA), and author of the Intentional Community Resource Pages, a Web site on forming new communities and process issues: www.infoteam.com/nonprofit/nica/resource.html. He is author of “A Facilitator’s Guide to Making Consensus Work,” soon to be published on the Internet. He lives at Sharingwood Cohousing in Snohomish, Washington.



JOHN FABEL

What kind of new members does your community want? Patio at Muir Commons Cohousing, California.

FINDING NEW COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Part II: The Publicity Toolbox

BY LUC REID

MEADOWDANCE, OUR forming intentional community in Vermont, is on the front page of the *Boston Globe* today. I wish I could say we were directly responsible for the article, that we have a magic formula for getting publicity, but of course we don't. What I do have to share is a structure, gleaned from our experience and that of other communities, through which you can reach your goals for getting the word out about your community to prospective members.

The first step in publicizing your community is to establish goals. How many new members do you want to see, and when? What kinds of people do you hope to attract? Are you pursuing other publicity goals along with membership?

Second, it's important to determine your message. What do you need to get across to prospective members so that they'll be interested and have some idea of whether they might be a good fit? What are the most important things about your community that people need to know to consider joining?

Third, determine your methods. What are the most appropriate ways to get the word out, in order to reach the right people at the right time?

The fourth step is setting up your welcome wagon. If someone is interested, whom can they contact, and by what means? What information will you make available to prospective members, and how will you get it to them? How can an interested person become actively involved?

Now it is time to implement your plans. Place ads, construct the Web site, send out the press releases and flyers. This fifth stage is fairly straightforward if you have done your planning in step four.

Finally, review and redesign. Which methods brought in inquiries and which didn't? Which methods were more likely to attract people

who might actually become members? Did you receive too few responses? Are you overwhelmed with too many?

I. Goals

It might seem as though your goal should be to reach as many people as possible, but few communities can sustain an unlimited number of inquiries.

Every new inquiry will take energy, time, and attention, and no one has these in unlimited supply. Virtually every community has a limit on how quickly it can integrate new members or participants; if your community accepts people past this limit, you begin to lose identity and direction.

Communities seeking members can be thought of as passing through one of four stages. The “Visioning” stage is the earliest, wherein you’re seeking people with similar goals and values. Next comes the “Founding” stage, in which you may be looking for additional people who are willing and able to help start the community from scratch. Once you are established, in the “Growth” stage you might be looking for additional people to expand your community and grow to your maximum size over time. If you have reached a size that you consider a maximum, in the “Maintenance” stage you may be seeking people to replace members who leave or pass away. Thus, where you are in your development as a community determines something about the kind of people you’re looking for at any given time.

You may also be seeking people with specific skills or characteristics. For instance, your community might be geared primarily toward young people, gays or lesbians, or Buddhists, or you may be particularly seeking people with carpentry or healing skills. Keep this in mind when writing your message.

II. Message

Your message will be based on your goals, but regardless of what your membership goals may be, the heart of your message to potential members will always be your Vision Statement. I can’t suggest strongly enough that you come up with a Vision Statement: a one- or two-sentence summary stating what your community is about.

Our community’s Vision Statement reads “Meadowdance is an egalitarian, child-centered community that welcomes human diversity, ecological sensibility, mutual learn-

Virtually every community has a limit on how quickly it can integrate new members.



JANICE DOYAMA

Are you seeking families with young children? Tailor your publicity efforts to attract the kinds of people you want. Hanging out on a porch at Pioneer Valley Cohousing, Massachusetts.

ing, and joy.” This statement has come in handy uncounted times. It heads our Web page, our brochure, and our flyers. It is brief and pithy enough that newspapers tend to quote it, which gives us the important advantage of being able to *control the quick summary of who we are in the media.*

If you don’t write a one-sentence summary of your community yourselves, sooner or later someone else will. The quick summary of, say, an

unsympathetic local paper, may not be very accurate or helpful compared to what you would have written yourself.

Next, be sure to have a Mission Statement, by which I mean a few paragraphs that describe all of the key elements of your community, including an abstract summary of your values, goals, and dreams.

From that point on, the information you put together will be determined very much by what you’re

trying to achieve. It might include financial details, a question and answer document, photos of your land or community, bios of members, floor plans, bylaws or agreements, or whatever is important to you. If you construct a Web site, you have a good place to present all of this information. When you're sending out a printed packet, on the other hand, you'll need to trim it down to the most pertinent pieces.

Your message will be limited by the way it's delivered. For instance, a classified ad must be very concise, whereas the amount of information you put on a Web site has no practical limits. This is why it's so helpful to have your key information summarized in a Vision Statement and Mission Statement: it packages the most important information so that you can be sure to communicate that first.

Your medium will also affect your message by directing its tone. In a flyer you might go out of your way to sound friendly and personal while emphasizing your group's appeal. By contrast, in a press release you'll be shooting for something more objective and impersonal.

Be sure to include any membership limitations and constraints in your message. If your community is specifically for lesbians, Catholics, polyfidelitous groups, or for people who already live in your chosen locale, it's essential that you communicate this in every message you get out to the public. Add anything you can that will limit the number of potential mismatched responses without reducing potential responses from the kinds of people you really want.

III. Methods

We'll examine several methods briefly here, most of which are inexpensive or free.

It's important to understand that *the amount of effort* you invest in getting the word out doesn't necessarily

If you don't write a one-sentence summary of your community yourselves, sooner or later someone else will.

correlate with how many people you'll attract. Some approaches will be much more effective for you than others.

To evaluate the potential effectiveness of each method, ask yourselves four questions:

1. How many people will we reach through this method?
2. How likely is it that the average person reached through this method will be interested in our community?
3. In this method, how much of our message will we be able to get across?
4. What will we need to contribute in terms of time, materials, effort, and/or money to reach people this way? Is there any ongoing cost or effort involved?

If you have access to the World Wide Web, you can get more information about each of these methods in a more detailed version of this article. See www.meadowdance.org/publicity.

Web Site

Web sites aren't available to everyone, but they have the unique advantages of being available on demand, and the ability to include an enormous body of information at little or no cost.

You may want to pay a nominal fee to obtain a "domain name" such as earthflower.org or burrocommunity.com. These will generally not work with space borrowed from

someone else or on a free server, but if you have your own Web space they offer a much more easily-remembered (and shorter!) URL, as well as the promise of a permanent "home" for your group on the Web (even if you change service providers). Even if you don't yet have a place to use a domain name, you can get one from a domain registration company, for instance one from the list at www.internic.net/regist.html. Another option is to link your community's Web site to the Intentional Communities Web Site, www.ic.org, managed by the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC), publisher of this magazine. When you buy space for a site, the provider will generally set up the domain name to point to it for free or for a modest charge.

It's not essential that your Web site be beautiful or even carefully designed, although of course that helps. Two things are important, however: Make the information on your site easy to access, and register your site with search engines.

"Easy to access" generally means offering some kind of a menu or table of contents, usually on your home page (the first page visitors see when they come to your site). Consider a menu an absolute requirement if you have more than a couple of pages of information. Of course there are many other ways you can make your site more friendly and useful.

Registering the site with search engines means going to each of the major search engine Web sites and finding the menu item where you're allowed to add information about your Web site. It's not necessary to register your site with all of the hundreds of search engines on the Web; just reaching the top few will help the vast majority of Web searchers. (To begin registering your site, you can start at www.meadowdance.org/publicity/searchable.htm, where I've included links to the major search engine submission pages and some

suggested guidelines for submitting.) I recommend against services that register your page for you on many different search engines; they typically do a poor job for each individual search engine.

Web Classifieds

The FIC hosts a free, effective Web classifieds site for intentional communities, community seekers, and others, called REACHbook, and you can find it at elph.anu.net/reach/reachbook.html. Posting an ad there each month can create a steady trickle of like-minded people knocking at your door.

Many other opportunities exist on the Web to post free classifieds or

However, before you consider a press release, you should first ask yourselves if you want media attention. If you prefer to keep a low profile in your area, media attention is probably the last thing you'd want. Also, please consider how you'll feel if (I'm tempted to say "when") a reporter writes an article about your group that's misleading, inaccurate, or hostile. Fortunately, the more your press release reads like a standard newspaper article, the more likely it is that your own words will be used in the published article.

Press releases should always be based on something genuinely interesting that's going on in your community, particularly if your group

might interest local media, although this approach isn't useful if your community is "old news" in your area. Apart from your being an intentional community, there may be other features of potential news interest about you. Does your group help care for the elderly? Are you undertaking exciting projects in permaculture or sustainable building? Do you homeschool?

The ideal press release is a news piece about your group that is so interesting, so well written, and so objective (that is, don't use flattering adjectives about yourselves) that an editor will simply take it and print it as is. This kind of "journalistic style" press release states the most important information in the first paragraph (often called the "who, what, why, when, and where"), and works its way down to less important information in each subsequent paragraph. The benefit of this format is that if an editor has a blank spot of a particular size in a page of news, she can simply cut as many paragraphs from the bottom of your article until it's the right size and plug it into the page with little or no editing. More details on writing press releases are available in the online version of this article.

Lastly, please remember that you have no control over how your press release is used once you mail it out. No editor has to ask your permission to use it or change it. Your press release could very well serve as the impetus for someone to write a wildly inaccurate and/or hostile piece about your community, or to write about intentional communities in general while ignoring yours completely (and using paragraphs from your release)!

Classified Ads in Print

Communities magazine offers inexpensive classified ads for existing and forming communities as well as for community seekers. (See *Reach* section, p. 67.) Other publications



Do you want people skilled in gardening? Be specific when you write your message! Pulling weeds at East Wind, Missouri.

notices, but I'd recommend limiting yourselves only to those closely related to your group's identity, such as, for example, postings on sustainable living lists, or those related to co-ops or country living. This point also holds true for print ads.

Press Releases

A press release is a brief news article that you send to local media. It essentially offers them a free news story about your group.

has done or is about to do something newsworthy. These can include submitting building plans for permitting, celebrating an anniversary or milestone (e.g., 10 years since your founding), hosting a seminar or workshop that is open to the local community, or an unusual accomplishment (e.g., completing the first stage of a 200-acre reforestation plan), or similar events.

For many of us, just the fact that we are intentional communities

with specific readerships on related topics—sustainable living, and so on—may also be effective places to also place classified ads.

Flyers

Posting flyers is an inexpensive way to get the word out. They allow you to include a fair amount of information; they can be placed in highly appropriate locations; and they offer the advantage of stimulating only inquiries from local people, unless you mail them out to a mailing list covering a wider geographic region. There's often no immediate way for a reader to follow up on a flyer, so I strongly suggest having little pull-off tabs at the bottom with your contact information on them. Be sure to put the contact information on the flyer itself as well, in case all the tabs are taken.

You have two objectives in designing a flyer. The first is to attract the attention of people who might actually be interested in your group. Consider your message carefully: Remember, it's much more important to reach the right people than simply to reach a *lot* of people.

The second objective is to give people enough information to act on. Tell them both what you're doing and how they can get involved.

Flyers are particularly effective if you're having some sort of membership meeting or gathering, open house, or other scheduled event that would interest local community seekers.

IV. "Welcome Wagon"

Your publicity efforts will only be effective if one or more people in your group are willing to talk to people who respond.

You can make this process go much more smoothly and easily if you have prepared more information ahead of time to give those who inquire. Still, at a certain point any prospective member is going to want

Remember, it's much more important to reach the right people than simply to reach a lot of people.

to talk to a real live human being. Your information packet or Web site is a means to limit this as much as possible to only those who are seriously interested in your particular kind of community. This limits the "seeker fatigue" so many communities experience when they get a deluge of inquiries, most of which aren't from the kinds of people they're seeking to attract.

It's essential that the community member who takes on this "welcome wagon" role enjoys talking to new people about your community. If you don't have anyone like this yet, then at least try to share the responsibility among several of you to avoid burnout.

V. Implement Your Plan

At this point take whatever steps are needed to set up your welcome wagon, then follow through on the methods you've chosen. If you cannot generate enough enthusiasm among your members to cover the tasks of this stage, take it as a warning that it may be too soon to do much outreach, and consider scaling back your publicity plans.

VI. Review and Redesign

To get the most out of your planning, you need to assess your actual results and redesign your plan if need be. Ask everyone who inquires where they heard about your community. You may learn about a newspaper article you didn't know was written, or find that a local supporter has been getting the word out for you. At the very least, you'll begin to get an idea of how effective your various publicity means have been. Make note of what inquiries you get by each method, and be sure to note the names of the people who inquire; don't just take a head count. You'll want to be able to look back in a few months and see which approaches did the best job of bringing in actual members.

FEW PEOPLE IN OUR CULTURE know much about the option of intentional community living. Every step each of us takes in publicizing our communities also has the potential to increase understanding about intentional communities in general. May these publicity tools help you move ahead with your community goals, and bring the news of community living to ever more people. Ω

Luc Reid is a cofounder of Meadowdance in Vermont, where he lives with his son Ethan. He is an amateur writer and musician, a computer programmer, and an avid community builder. Contact: luc@meadowdance.org.

Part I of this article appeared in the Winter '99 issue.



DOUG JONES

Many communities use ritual and celebration for the sheer pleasure of it, not to mention the resulting "glue."
 May Day celebration, Birdsfoot Farm, New York.

Song, Dance, & Celebration

IT'S THE NIGHT OF THE WINTER SOLSTICE AT SONGAIA COHOUSING near Bothell, Washington. Night-black cedars and pines shiver in the chill North wind. Off the coast, the frigid Puget Sound rises and swells.

In a meeting room lit by flickering candles, 18 people gather in a circle, snuggled on couches and curled on the floor. It's a sacred time, a time of reflecting on the passing year and the new one coming. "What would you like to let go of this year?" they ask. ("About 20 pounds!" "Procrastination!") What promises do you claim? ("I claim the promise of hope." "I claim we'll have our buildings up this year!")

Community elder Stan Crow begins a reading from Thomas Berry's "Going Into the Darkness." As he reads, he

steps around the room and blows out every candle save one. Everyone sits in hushed darkness.

Finally someone speaks, sharing what the darkness means for her, and one by one others do the same. Someone begins a song, and the others, who know the verses well, join in. More songs are sung, and someone starts drumming. Soon the dark room is ringing with song and throbbing with drumming. The people are on their feet, dancing in a spiral, into the center and

out again. They relight each candle and raise their voices joyously, singing "Light is Returning!"

Songaia (a shortened form of "Song of the Living Earth") is by no means a typical cohousing community. It began as one of 29 ICA (Institute for Cultural Affairs) international service

FROM THE EDITOR

**What Creates
 "Community Spirit"?**



"Any excuse to sing, really," laughs Michelle.

communities. In the late '80s longtime ICA members, the Crows and the Lanphears, grew less involved in ICA and chose the cohousing development model to become a broader, more multi-generational community. At this writing their existing buildings are being remodeled and others are under construction to give them 13 homes and a Common House. Some of their members have lived on the property and others have lived nearby. They should all be on the land by Thanksgiving of 2000.

With its founders grounded in the traditions of ICA culture, Songaia is what you might call "ritual rich." They celebrate the Solstices. They honor birthdays with cake and ice cream and birthday questions: "What has been significant for you this year?" "What do you see coming for yourself in the next year?" They remember their dead at Halloween, bringing photos of family and ancestors to the circle, lighting candles, and telling the stories of their loved ones. Every May Day they host a big public festival, enacting a shortened version of John Seed's "Council of All Beings." "What does the Earth think about what we're doing?" they ask. "What can we give back to the Earth this year?" Then they plant a cedar tree, dance around the Maypole, and dig into the feast.

"We use ritual in healing ways too," says member Michelle Grandy. "Anyone can call a wisdom circle, either of a small group or the whole community, when someone wants greater clarity or group wisdom for a personal problem, or to heal differences with another." The participants light a candle, describe the issue, and share from the heart. Songaians also do a member check-in at every meeting, making sure they keep one another up to date on their lives.

And they *sing*. They sing before most meals; they sing to begin meetings. "We sing sad, dreary songs when we feel discouraged," says Michelle "and happy, blue-sky songs when we feel good or want to cheer ourselves up." They may burst into song when a visitor leaves the community, even if the visit was just for a day. They sing to celebrate transitions, such as when someone completes a major community project, or

moves from one committee to another. "Any excuse to sing, really," laughs Michelle.

It's safe to say that people feel well connected and bonded with each other at Songaia—their community "glue" is strong.

Is this what it takes? Lots of ritual, singing, and interpersonal sharing? What is it exactly, that makes one community stand out as deep and rich in connectedness and bonding and another community feel ... well, much less connected, even *dis-connected*? What do communities do—on purpose, or simply as a part of routine community life—that generates that rich and juicy sense of community that some call "community spirit"?

I called several communities to get a sampling of views on this, asking about the nature of community glue, how it's created (and diminished), and what we might each do, now, in each of our communities, to feel more connected and supported.

Their answers suggested that a whole constellation of factors give rise to community spirit:

- Working together
- Personal sharing time
- Conflict resolution time
- Shared meals
- Decision making that includes everyone
- Children in the community
- Shared values, a common vision and purpose
- Appreciating and acknowledging each other
- Singing, dancing, making music
- Celebrations and rituals

Here are a few stories about community "glue."



Pioneer Valley Cohousing, Massachusetts. Yukio Doyama (left), and Bick Corsa.

JANICE DOYAMA

Shared Work

It's 8:30 a.m. on a Saturday morning at Nature's Spirit, a three-year old spiritual community on 210 acres in rural South Carolina. As the dew burns off the lush foliage and the sun brightens the surface of their 11-acre lake, 20 members, interns, and visitors assemble in the garden for *Shramadana*, a Sri Lankan word meaning "coming together to share one's labor for the welfare of all." They begin with prayerful consecration of the work they'll be doing that day, honor the world's



"I just spent a day of hard work and it didn't feel like work!"

various spiritual paths and religions, hang the Peace Flag at their tool shed, and all participate in lighting the community oil lamp which they set on a nearby table. Then they jump in and enjoy the work project. At the end of the day they celebrate and share. "Wow, we got a lot done!" "I just spent a day of hard work and it didn't feel like work!" are typical responses according to member Joe Vaughan. "Working together feels good—we're able to talk together and get to know each other better as we do our tasks side by side. It helps both members and interns feel more a part of the community. It makes our spirits lighter and more in harmony with nature and spirit and each other."

At Abode of the Message in New Lebanon, New York, spiritually oriented work days are equally valued. At this rural Sufi community of 50, everyone gathers the first Saturday of the month. They begin with a hearty group breakfast, inspire themselves with readings from Sufi teachings, work for several hours, and end with a large celebratory lunch. "Even though it's often really hard work, it's still a lot of fun," says member Cynthia Davis. "It helps us feel a lot more connected."

Emotional Sharing, "Truth-Telling"

Connecting to each other emotionally through deep, personal sharing was the first thing mentioned by several communities when asked about community glue. Some have a special meeting especially for interpersonal issues.

Abundant Dawn, a five-year old community on 90 acres in rural Virginia, sets aside an hour and a half twice monthly for what member Joy Legendre called "personal/interpersonal time." People describe what's going on in their lives, Joy says, as well as delve into conflicts that may be going on between them. "Just knowing that space is there for us to bring these issues up," she says, "helps defuse the little tensions and problems. It's easier to let them go and not get bothered by them, just knowing that we can always discuss them at the meet-

ing." Like Songaia, Abundant Dawn also has check-ins at business meetings. They allow 15 to 30 minutes before getting down to business in order to let others know what's "up" for

them in their lives that week. This is both so others will know what each person is bringing to the meeting that may affect how he or she communicates, as well as events that may affect community business itself. "If we just learned that someone's father died that week, for example," says Joy, "then we'll all know why he hasn't been doing as much work lately." These practices go along with one of the core principles of Abundant Dawn's Vision Statement: "We meet each other face to face with openness and caring."

"Our Wednesday night sharing is a pretty sacred time," says Joe Vaughan at Nature's Spirit, "where we not only appreciate each other in our reflections but also deal with our 'shadow side.' We look into what makes our lives 'sticky' and 'not interdependent,' because, we *are* interdependent. We don't bury

wounds or hurts that might fester or incubate if we didn't hold them up to light and fresh air of direct inquiry."

For some, reflection, feedback, and deep sharing are central features of the group. This is the case with 55-member Zendik Arts Community in rural North Carolina, founded in 1969 as an arts community and "testing ground for creating a culture with integrity," says member Rinn Mandeville. "People here are encouraged to not hold back in saying what they really think and feel about each other, no matter that it's not 'nice' or not part of our cultural upbringing," she says. "We believe that honesty is the friendliest thing we can do for one another."

Shared Meals

"Food, shared around the dining room table, is often the focal point for creating a sense of community," observes Geoph Kozeny, a traveling "peripatetic" communitarian who has visited more than 300 intentional communities in North



East Wind, Missouri.

ADAM GRANDIN



“Dancing and singing seems to iron out all the wrinkles.”

America over the last 12 years. “Count up the number of days in a week that a group shares meals, and you’ll have a reasonably good barometer for measuring the closeness of that community.” But food must be shared frequently. “Having monthly or weekly community-wide potlucks seems just not enough time in fellowship for weaving folks’ lives together,” he says. “When the frequency gets up to four meals a week or so, somehow the social glue gets stronger. This bonding sometimes emerges through some formal sharing or ritual that happens at the common table, but I’ve witnessed it most often as a comfortable byproduct of informal conversations over a bowl of soup or a plate of lasagna.”

“Community dinners at the Common House are the central contact point for our community,” agrees long-time community activist Rob Sandelin of Sharingwood Cohousing in the Puget Sound region of Washington. “You can experience a palpable feeling of aliveness as people talk, get food, and move from table to table, and their kids play and tussle. Mealtime conversations often extend well beyond the dinner hour, and it’s not uncommon for the cleanup crew to sweep around one last table of hangers on, still talking well into the evening.”

Music, Singing, Dancing

It’s 7:30 in the morning at the Love Israel Family outside Arlington, Washington. The sound of voices raised in song echoes from their sanctuary in the former hayloft of their converted barn.

Our Father gave us golden wings so we could rise above.

All the dark and cloudy thoughts fly like angels on wings of love. ...

With its gambrel roof, arched trusses and beams, large stained glass window, colorful banners, grand piano, hand-carved wooden harp and other instruments, this room is the center of the 70-member community’s social and spiritual life. Every morning Love Israel members gather here to praise, celebrate, inspire themselves with the spiritual foundations of their community, make announcements—and sing!

“Singing is a major part of our culture,” says community elder Serious Israel. “We’ve probably got over 300 songs. Most of them we’ve written ourselves; a lot of them we know by heart—Psalms put to music, popular songs that stem from experiences we’ve had, commemorations of moments in our history. Most of the songs are joyful, poetic, and full of positive imagery.”

“Music and dance gives us a shared ritual; it bonds the group on a deep emotional and instinctual level,” says Haqqa Craig of Abode of the Message. They do this in many ways, such as the *Zikr*, where they rhythmically chant names of God in Arabic or do whirling dances to achieve a kind of meditative state. They also do Dances of Universal Peace, the circle dances first introduced by Murshid Samuel Lewis that use phrases, chants, music, and movements from many spiritual traditions—a kind of celebratory prayer in motion. “In the rhythmic, energy evocation of the Dances, when we look into each other’s eyes and hopefully recognize the divine spirit within, it helps me look beyond the fact that someone left hair in the bathroom sink, or that we had an argument last week,” says Abode



Birdsfoot Farm.

DOUG JONES

member Cynthia Davis. “I get in touch with a compassion for each of these people that I’ve never known before. Dancing and singing like this seems to iron out all these wrinkles on a divine level.”

“When our village sings and plays music together I experience sublime communion,” says River Jameson of Silver River Earth Village, a close-knit spiritual community of about 20 in the mountains of southern Colorado. Unlike in their early years, community members now spend much more time celebrating, having parties, making music, dancing, and singing—what they call “sacred fun.” “Was it all right to have this much ease,” we asked ourselves “this much creativity, this much communion? We decided it was!”

Celebration and Ritual

For many communities ritual is a major aspect of community culture, and ritual almost always also involves music, movement, and song.



"Honesty is the friendliest thing we can do for one another."

At their Spring Equinox celebration in March, the 50-member Earthaven community, a permaculture-oriented forming village near Black Mountain, North Carolina, gathered in their circular cob and straw-bale Council Hall to tell themselves "The Story of Earthaven." "Each of us, in order of arrival here, shared memories of our entrance into the community," notes Arjuna da Silva. "As we each took our turn, the others had an opportunity to honor each person for his or her best qualities, acts of service, trials of endurance, and other contributions to the community. After the ceremony," she reports, "the energy at Earthaven was noticeably sweeter and brighter. People said they felt more whole and connected."

Abode of the Message members ritually celebrate the holidays of the world's major religions as well as the solstices and equinoxes, and Blessing Way ceremonies for new mothers. At their weekly Universal Worship Service they light candles, read from scriptures of many traditions, and dance.

Cohousers at Pioneer Valley, a five-year old cohousing community in Amherst, Massachusetts, host special brunches or theme dinners (such as when "French chefs," complete with scarves, berets, and tiny drawn-on mustaches, serve the meal), as well as evenings of drumming and dancing. "Our most successful celebrations are rites of passage for our young people," says Ellin Randel.

"Holidays and festivals are important to us," says Claus Sproll, longtime resident of Camphill Special School, Beaver Run in Pennsylvania, a 160-resident community that cares for mentally retarded children. In addition to celebrating major Christian holidays and the solstices and equinoxes, they honor holidays every month of the year, for example, Candlemas (creating Earth candles to bring light and awareness of the forces of nature), Martin Luther King Day (gathering in assembly with prayers and guest speakers), and Mardi Gras (masks, wild costumes, and lots of dancing), to name a few.

In January, Abundant Dawn members come together for their annual Commitment Ceremony, declaring their time commitments to the community for various projects and tasks. "They don't need to be long commitments," says Joy

Legendre, "usually from one to three years. This has created a stability here, unlike communities I've seen with a high turnover."

Nature's Spirit members meet at 6:30 every morning for group meditation before beginning the day. After the consecration they chant together and hear readings from various spiritual teachings. Each person practices his or her own form of meditation, and they close with a shared "Om" or "Amen." Here spiritual practice itself is seen as part of the community experience. "Spirituality isn't just something that's between you and God alone," says Joe Vaughan.

What Is Ritual?

I learned more about the power of ritual from Selena Fox, a well-known ritual leader, teacher of ritual, and director of Circle Sanctuary, a nonresidential community 30 miles west of Madison, Wisconsin. Hundreds of members gather there regularly to celebrate Wiccan/Pagan and Ecospiritual traditions, celebrating the seasons and forces of nature, as well as calling for healing, blessings, rites of passage for members, and land-based ritual associated with

their 200-acre nature preserve.

"At Circle we do rituals in order to deepen our understanding of and connections with each other, the land, nature, and the Great Mystery—what some call God and/or Goddess," she said. "We not only acknowledge that we're a part of the larger circle of life, we make attempts to connect with it."

Ritual can happen for many reasons. In their Prairie Fire ceremony, for example, they not only perform physical tasks in order to aid prairie restoration, but also to deepen their understanding of nature and facilitate their relationships with each other and the prairie work they're doing. The ritual has a social function, a practical physical function, and an emotional/spiritual function.

"One definition of ritual is 'repeated, focused activity,'" Selena adds. "It's a combination of spiritual and psychological practices and behaviors, and almost always involves physical movement. We often gather in a circle, sometimes joining



Common Place Land Trust, New York.



“After the ceremony the energy was noticeably sweeter and brighter.”

hands. Sometimes we move in a large circle or concentric circles; sometimes we spiral in. We join our minds in creative imagery, all focusing creatively on a particular symbol or concept, such as connecting with a particular season or force of nature, for example. We often make time for sharing. (One kind of sharing that's very bonding is for people to say how long they've been connected with the community and what it's meant to them). Typically we make a sound together—chanting, harmonizing with tones, singing, or simply making rhythms with drums or rattles. We might also have costumes, masks, recitations, enactments. Pacing is important too, with a good balance between individual parts such as someone leading a meditation or saying a poem, for example, and activities the group does as a whole. A ritual needs a balance between sitting, standing, and moving, and in mood or tone: quiet and reflective times, and exuberant, moving, emoting, and percussion times.”

“A ritual connects you at deeper levels. When you make sounds together, do movements together, do some kind of creative experience together, you engage more of the whole person. Emotional energy is being worked with. Physical energy is worked with. Mental and spiritual energy are being worked with. In the best ritual, the group is functioning together at a deep soul/spiritual level. The energy this generates, which we each contribute to or draw to us, can be *felt*. It can feel pleasant; it often feels wonderful. It can be healing, calming, uplifting.”

Selena points out that a ritual is not just an exercise in feel-good psychology, but a practice that gets real results. “You can experience greater intuition, more ready access to creativity,” she says. “You come away with a more complete sense of yourself as an individual who is part of the group, as well as part of the larger circle of life. The group's own identity and internal process is enhanced, so that solving problems becomes easier; there's more harmony. And it deepens the relationship and creates greater harmony between the people involved, and between them and other facets of nature.”

Selena has very specific recommendations for people who want to strengthen their sense of community spirit and bonding. “Spend time on the land and invite the land to tell you what it wants,” she suggests. “Create sacred sites on the land, ritual places that remain after the ceremonies have ended, which remind people of the living presence of the

community as well as serve as focal points for communing with the land.” On Circle Sanctuary land, for example, a Maypole with twined ribbons remains all year. Another location hosts a large circle of stones which people have brought from all parts of the world and placed in a sacred way during ceremony. At their naturally occurring bubbling spring, people have sat in meditation, prayed for healing, and tied a colored ribbon on a nearby grapevine hoop: hundreds of ribbons flutter there still.

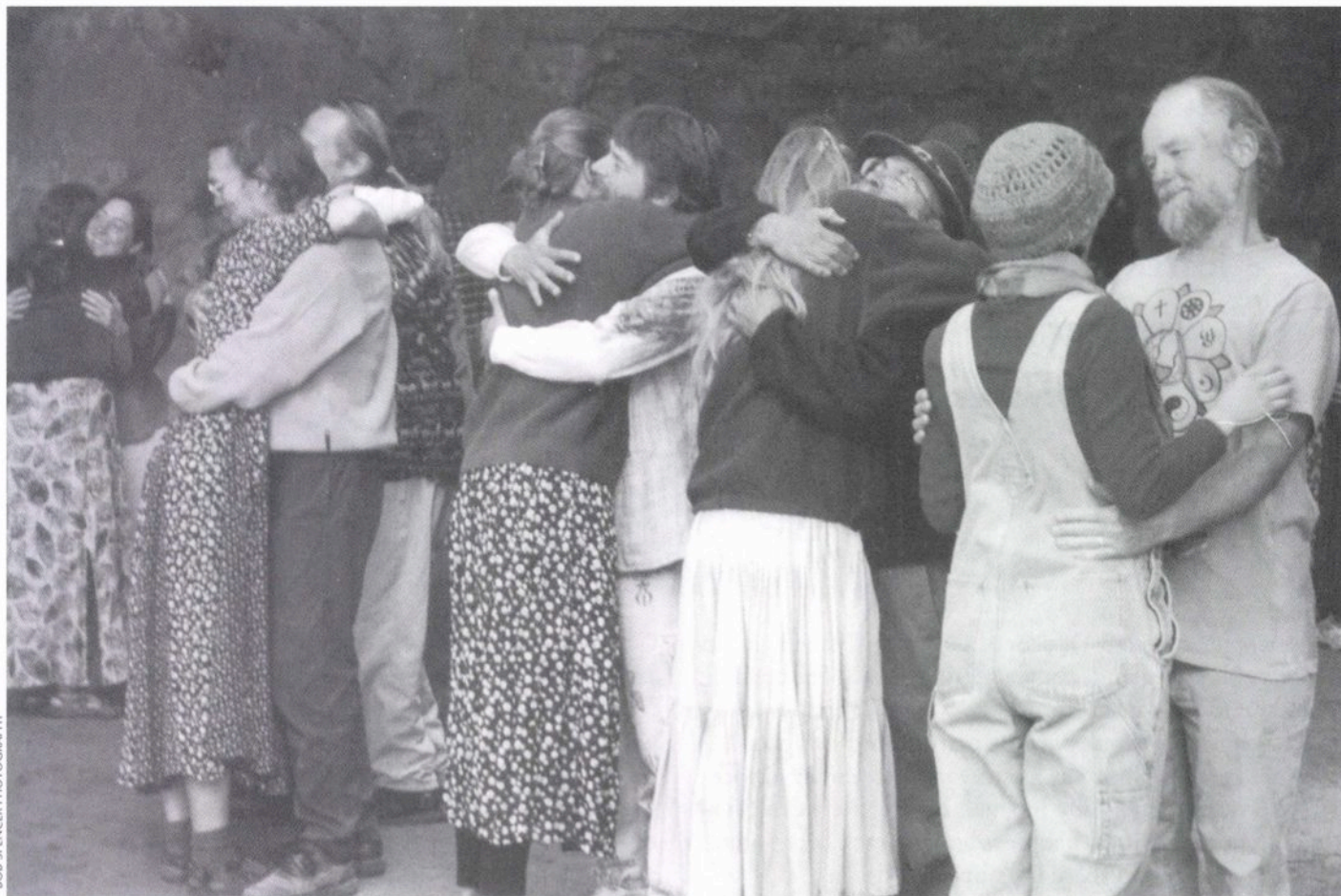
Thinking, Feeling, and “Moving the Limbs”

In the experience of Claus Sproll at Camphill Special School, Beaver Run, shared work and festivals bond people more deeply than other kinds of activities. He explained that Camphill communities worldwide are based on Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner's teaching that one's spirit can never be disabled or sick, so Camphill communities expose their handicapped members (and themselves) to activities he believed develop the spirit: ritual, pageantry, working, dancing, singing, as well as academic pursuits. Steiner also taught that human beings are moved by mental, emotional, and physical activities, however, it is physical activities—those that involve “moving the limbs” (and vocal chords), such as singing, dancing, manual labor, and doing rituals and pageants—that bond people at such deep levels that their connection has a greater likelihood of some longevity.

Claus has seen that when community members do activities together that do move the limbs, such as haying, folk dancing, working in the garden, or celebrating at a festival, it seems to create more community spirit and “glue” than any number of community meetings, parties, shared meals, or great conversations. “I've often wondered why many communities don't continue past the third generation,” he said. “I think if they did more manual labor and rituals together, they would. All these festivals we do; it looks like we're doing it for the children. But in fact we're doing it for *all* of us—it really builds community.” Ω

Diana Leafe Christian has edited Communities magazine since 1993. She is author of a forthcoming book about forming new intentional communities (New Society Publishers, 2001), and lives at GardenSpirit, a small forming community in North Carolina. Email: diana@ic.org.





Many Bozeman area dancers attend this semi-annual Dances of Universal Peace Retreat held at Canyonlands National Park in southern Utah.

DANCING FOR PEACE, JOY, AND COMMUNITY

BY TONY RASCH

THE YEAR 1999: THREE BIRTHS, TWO deaths, one marriage—quite a year for us. Memories floated through my mind as I celebrated New Year's Eve with my “family,” my community of choice.

About 30 of us had gathered to “Eat, dance, and pray together” as the millennium wound down—Bozeman, Montana, folks who celebrate the Dances of Universal Peace and actively seek to create community together. That evening we enjoyed hand-pressed cider, kiln-baked bread, and lovingly prepared potluck dishes. As the evening progressed we heard stories and poems and spent time in ritual expressing what we hoped to birth in the coming year. But mostly we danced. Young mothers, teenagers, grandparents, men and women of all ages formed into a circle holding hands. Together we sang and danced to words and sacred phrases from Jewish, Muslim, Eastern, Christian, and Pagan traditions. We looked into each others eyes and felt blessed indeed to be part of what many of us had spent years longing for—a sense of community.

The Dances of Universal Peace are body prayers which help us remember the truths all religions have in common and to forget the things that divide. Some of our

The dances tend to foster community, wherever they're practiced.



BOB SPENCER PHOTOGRAPHY

members have visited Dances of Universal Peace communities in New Zealand, Russia, Britain, and Mexico. The dances tend to foster community, wherever they're practiced—sometimes in very loose communities of people who rarely see each other outside of dance circles. More often, however, especially in small towns, the dances foster tight communities, people who love each other and who actively seek to share life's ups and downs.

Looking back over 1999 that night, I recalled some of the highs and lows of our Bozeman community. Two were deaths. For me the low point came when I picked up the phone and heard a voice say, "He just put a bullet through his head." What a blow! Our group had tried to help Ben, a 40-year-old man, through his depression and cocaine addiction. After Ben's previous attempted suicide with pills, one of our members intervened and took his guns away. Unfortunately, he missed one. The evening of Ben's death, we had a special Men's

Group meeting. Some were able to contact their grief and shed tears. For me, though, anger stood in the way. Even at the funeral my eyes were dry. It wasn't until two weeks later that grief came in from left field. I was at a neighboring dance community 150 miles away with people I knew well. We were doing a dance where we moved from person to person in a ritualized manner and sang the words from a John Denver song: "All this joy, all this sorrow, all this promise, all this pain. Such is life, such is being, such is spirit, such is love." Suddenly I found myself looking into people's eyes with salty tears streaming down my cheeks and my breast throbbing. I stayed with the song and afterwards shared my feelings with brothers and sisters who cared. What a healing experience!

The other death, paradoxically, provided one of the high points of the year. Terminal cancer ate away at a young man, Tom, who also had just turned 40. He wasn't

"EAT, DANCE, AND PRAY TOGETHER"

The Dances of Universal Peace came to us through the vision of Murshid Samuel Lewis. Samuel Lewis (Sufi Ahmed Murad Chishti, 1896–1971) believed that if people would "Eat, dance, and pray together" the possibility of peace within and among all people would be advanced considerably. The dances are simple, meditative, joyous, multicultural circle dances that use sacred phrases, chants, music, and movements from

the world's many traditions to touch the spiritual essence within ourselves and others. Based on Samuel Lewis's work in the late '60s, the dances promote peace and integration within individuals and groups. Currently they are celebrated by a worldwide network of half a million people. In practice the dances keep us returning to the truth of being in motion "towards the One" and that all paths lead to the One. They remind and

refresh us in compassion, mercy, and truth so we have the strength to carry out the work of community with all its ramifications. To discover the closest dance circle to you contact International Network for the Dances of Universal Peace, 444 NE Ravenna Blvd, #306, Seattle, WA 98115-6467; 206-522-4353; PeaceWorks@compuserve.com; www.DancesofUniversalPeace.org. Ω
—T.R.



GINGER LEE

OPPOSITE PAGE: *The Dances of Universal Peace use sacred phrases, chants, music, and movements from various spiritual traditions worldwide. At a DUP Retreat, Canyonlands National Park.*

ABOVE: *A Blessing Way ceremony for an expectant mother.*

RIGHT: *The Bozeman dance community regularly celebrates holidays as well as life passages together. Here, Kay Rasch (left) at her 56th birthday and Croning ceremony.*



GUIDA VERDONA

part of the Bozeman group, but was a member of our larger regional dance community. Tom lived in a town 200 miles away, estranged from his family. Under normal circumstances he would have spent his last days alone dying in an institution. We decided as a community to provide hospice for him here in Bozeman. Ginger and Eric volunteered their house and their time. The rest of us took turns with food, baby-sitting, and spending time with the dying man. During his two months of hospice, we held the dances at Ginger and Eric's house rather than at our usual place. We crowded into Tom's bedroom, joined his hands with our own in a circle, and began the evening with an invocation: "Towards the One ..." Then we moved into the cleared-out living room and danced. Often times we'd end the dance by moving into Tom's room and including him in our circle. He lay flat in bed, his ribs protruding, but smiling widely. His smile contrasted sharply with the tears on many of our own faces.

A few days before Tom died, Shree Maa, an Indian woman revered by many as one of the foremost saints of India, was in town. Members of our community had been active in bringing her to Bozeman, hosting her, and doing all of the logistical work involved with such a visit. We asked her to visit Tom and she did. I feel deeply

blessed to have been in the room when she was with him. I haven't the words to express the sacredness of that moment. Everyone in the room sensed she represented the Divine as she stood for long minutes gently holding Tom's hand. Finally she whispered, "You'll be home soon." Tom left his body a few days later, and his body retained the expression when he died: a huge smile. The women of the community washed his body and wrapped him in a special shroud. The men loaded his body into a van and carried him to the crematorium.

At the other end of the cycle, in 1999 we celebrated three births. Shortly before New Year's all three mothers came to the dances and stood in the circle holding their babies. The oldest was my own grandchild, Solomon, who had been blessed by Shree Maa while still in the womb. A month before Solomon's birth, the women of our community gathered with my daughter Heather, and spent an evening in a powerful Blessing Way ritual. They also helped with the birth. While a midwife attended Heather in her bedroom, she was surrounded by women chanting and beating drums and massaging her between contractions. After the birth, Heather ritually cut the umbilical cord.

Deaths and births and everything in between—I believe this is what real community is about. Perhaps

THE ONENESS PROJECT

by *Connie Delaney*

"We are a group of dancers who want to share the deep sense of connection evoked through the Dances of Universal Peace. Oneness Project promotes and enhances communities of people who 'Eat, dance, and pray together.'"

The Oneness Project began as a group of people in the Intermountain West who dance regularly and began to dream of building a retreat center and intentional community. To fund this dream a member of the Bozeman Dance community, Eric

Waldman, created "Dancing Dollars," an investment fund to raise money to buy land. Investors donated a percentage of their earnings to a nest egg. Scouts were sent out to find a parcel of land which, ideally, would be beautiful and centrally located to all our dancers. As we searched we also grew, attracting dancers from California, Washington, Colorado, Montana, Idaho, and beyond. We began to realize we had a problem. We people in 10 states; were could we buy land that would serve us all? What may have been a

moment of desperation turned into creativity as we realized that we already are a community! Since then the Oneness Project refocused its energy into finding ways to enhance our extended, and yet united, community. This may include a piece of land, several small or maybe traveling caravans of dancers. Meanwhile, we still dance! Ω

Connie Delaney is a certified dance leader in the Dances of Universal Peace, secretary and member of the Trustees Council of the Oneness Project, and a freelance writer who dances and works in Salmon, Idaho.

the biggest challenge for any community is reclaiming death and birth and spirituality, taking them back from institutions. Here in Bozeman we've been able to do just that. What has been the key to our success? A few years back, I doubt we would have been able to reclaim these sacred transitions but I'd say we've pulled it off as a result of our many small ritual and social practices together over time, which has helped us grow as a community.

At the same time, our "community" has no formal organization, no membership, and no guru, and we own no common buildings or land. We'd be hard pressed to define exactly who "we" are, yet there is no doubt that we

are a community. The dances lay a foundation. They draw spiritual seekers who realize there is something fundamentally wrong with our society as we normally live it. The majority of us over 30 are divorced or in our second or third marriages. We're folks who have experienced what doesn't work. Through the dances we get glimpses of the connections which are possible and for which we hunger, but the dances alone would not be enough. We find that a men's group, a women's group, potlucks, and rituals and celebrations of all kinds are important. We're blessed with

individuals who care deeply about community and are willing to donate the space, time, and energy necessary to develop it.

We've learned that mates or spouses are eventually going to be resentful if their significant other depends solely on them for emotional support. So many, although not all, of our community dancers belong to the Men's or Women's Groups. These groups are about practicing intimacy and contacting our deepest feelings. In a safe setting we talk about sex, money, communication, and all the other things it is difficult to get real about in our everyday world. Both groups have been meeting continuously for more than nine years in a format that allows for sharing, studying, and playing together. Just being listened to is important. The women often begin their meeting with a quote, "Let us listen with the ears of our heart to the other voices of my soul speaking." One year each woman had a whole evening to share her personal story. The men set aside weekends for similar purposes. Besides the biweekly meetings, the men occasionally gather together in a sweat lodge to sing or pray or talk. Both groups find ways to deepen bonds by having time for play. For many of us, having deep men or women friends makes it much easier for us to come together with the opposite sex in community.

Then there is ritual. This year our community celebrated its eighth annual winter solstice celebration with a large fire in the middle of a field of snow. Strong drummers set a beat so that all the men, women, and children could join in and feel the energy of the night. We made room for flute and didgeridoo. Eventually, we left the fire and entered the house, where a smudge of cedar and sage

Deaths and births and everything in between—I believe this is what real community is about.

**I haven't
the words
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moment.**

helped move us into ritual space. In this space we shared both the demons we are fighting and the dreams we hope to birth. We connected the turning of the season with the turnings in our own lives. Leaving ritual space we went to the food table for delicious soup and bread. Long into the night, conversations deepened the connections we were all feeling.

Our Winter Solstice ritual has been a constant. Less regular rituals have been celebrations around other Earth holidays: full moons, Summer Solstice, the equinoxes, Candlemas, Beltane, Lamas, and Halloween. One year at Halloween we all brought pictures of departed loved ones and shared stories about the pictures and

about our ancestors in general. At Beltane, we've danced around the Maypole, celebrating it for the fertility symbol it is.

Besides the Earth holidays and the cultural holidays such as Thanksgiving, Easter, and the Fourth of July, we're careful to celebrate personal milestones—marriages, birthdays, and births. When my wife Kay turned 56, we had a special Croning ceremony. Everyone came to the event wearing purple and prepared to share stories about elders, who had inspired them. We talked about what it meant to move from Maiden, to Mother, to Crone. For us, community means honoring all. Sometimes at birth-

days we have Blessing Way ceremonies in which we each share with the birthday celebrant what we love or admire about him or her. We learn how to give and receive compliments sincerely.

A final point, we make a conscious effort to include all generations. It is easy for aging hippies to get together and talk about love. It's harder to practice it across generations. We've been blessed with somehow being able to make it happen. This year 23 of us gathered for Thanksgiving. At one table, a great-grandmother sat at one end, a young mother with a newborn sat at the other. The women were not related, except by choice. Perhaps that is the beauty of intentional community.

Back to New Year's Eve, 1999. At the stroke of midnight we raised our arms and shouted "Hallelujah!" Then the hugs! Who knows what 2000 will bring? My prayer is that our community will continue to thrive and we'll be present and loving for each other, for whatever life brings. Ω

Tony Rasch, a member of the Oneness Project's Trustee Council, has been active in the Dances of Universal Peace since 1992. He is a hiker, gardener, writer, and hopes to become an elder, which, to him, means much more than simply growing old.

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In the courtyard one June 16th, Twin Oaks' Anniversary celebration. No special ritual here; it was just hot!

CELEBRATION & CEREMONY AT TWIN OAKS

BY VALERIE RENWICK-PORTER

THE LONGER I LIVE AT TWIN Oaks, the more I realize that although we identify as a community, we are also a village of 100 people, similar to villages throughout the world. We have our village herbalist, our village woodworker, and so on. We have also developed our own Twin Oaks culture, including rituals and ceremonies which are unique to village life at "the Oaks." Thanks to the organizational skills of one member who serves as our Holiday Man-

ager, we celebrate in style throughout the year.

Validation Day. This alternative to Valentine's Day is the result of "cross-fertilization" between two communities. In the '80s, when East Wind member Cristy moved to Twin Oaks, he brought with him the tradition that ensures that February 14 is special for everyone, not just those with romantic interests. A card is handmade for each member, individually designed with the recipients' interests in mind. The

cards are available for the first two weeks in February, during which time members are encouraged to write short validations in each card. "I appreciate your hard work as our garden manager—thanks for helping provide us with yummy organic veggies!" Or for a new parent: "I love seeing you blossom as a new dad, caring for the beautiful child you've brought into our world." Or a simple, "Seeing your quiet smile lightens my heart." The result is a personal card filled with loving, positive valida-



tions by the people we share our lives with. The finished products are handed out by the kids at a special Validation Day dinner.

Twin Oaks Anniversary. As our collective birthday, June 16 holds a place of honor in the constellation of our holidays. Most people take the day off to frolic in the pond, enjoy a barbecue picnic with ex-members who come by for the day, and boogie late into the night at a lavish dance party. The Holiday Manager

sometimes stages an Anniversary Fantasy Event, the most memorable of which was a 12-foot-long chocolate fudge sundae, eaten with one rule: no hands allowed!

Ritual Tree-Planting. Twin Oaks has a relatively low population of children (10 to 15 at any given time) and so a baby's birth or adoption by a member is an infrequent and special event. For each new child to join our village, we plant a fruit tree. Friends and well-wishers gather together, and a young tree is lowered into the ground, often along with the newborn's placenta, which has been saved for the occasion. Each person declares their hopes and dreams for the child's future as handfuls of dirt and compost fill in the space around the roots. This ritual provides a loving start in life for the child, and affirms the new parents' connection to the community.

Halloween Costume Parade. This is a perennial favorite, especially for the more creative among us. In mid-after-

noon Twin Oaks kids dress up and parade through the community, and in a turn of the tables, hand out candy to adults. The evening brings our Costume Parade, in which each member is invited up to the stage to present his or her costume or character. The latest trend is members disguising themselves as another member, borrowing distinctive articles of clothing, and adopting the chosen members' persona for the duration of the evening.

Thanksgiving Dinner Alternatives. Many Oakers spend this holiday with their biological families, and those who remain at home have several choices. Some opt for a delicious turkey or tofu dinner (turkeys provided by two ex-members who now run their own farm nearby). Others choose our "Simple Supper" of rice and beans, eaten with the awareness that for many people in the world, even a basic meal is enough to give thanks for. A few members fast for the day and send the money that would have been spent on food to organizations that fight world hunger.

Mid-Winter Celebrations. Twin Oaks follows no particular spiritual path and this choice is left up to individual members. As a result, we have quite an eclectic variety of mid-winter holiday celebrations. The Winter Solstice is observed by some hardy souls who stay out all night with a Yule log burning down to embers. Each December 24, Jake makes hot cider and we pass around *A Christmas Carol* for a collective retelling of Dickens' classic tale. Some members choose to participate in Kwaanza festivities in nearby Charlottesville, and others honor Hanukkah by bringing out their menorahs either in public space or for personal use.

ONE YEAR, AN ENTHUSIASTIC Holiday Manager tried to introduce "home-grown holidays" based on Federation of Egalitarian Communities principles such as income-sharing and shared decision making. A noble cul-

BELOW: (Left to right) Jaz, Pax, Hawina, and Shal represent Earth, Fire, Water, and Air during a Spring Equinox celebration and Handfasting ceremony for two Twin Oaks members.



tural pursuit, these holidays unfortunately never quite caught on. The posters the kids made of guns with big red X's through them (symbolizing nonviolence) graced the walls of the dining room for a few weeks, but we never managed to find just the right simple yet significant actions appropriate to the occasion.

In the meantime, we continue to celebrate holidays together in that certain Twin Oaks style. We can look forward to seeing new traditions emerge from the culture we are creating, as we live our lives in alignment with our deepest values. Ω

Valerie Renwick-Porter has lived at Twin Oaks community in Virginia for nine years. Her most recent community activist work is with Queer in Community (www.ic.org/qic). Valerie can be reached at valerie@ic.org.



JACOB STEVENS

NIGHT & FIRE, ROCKS & RITUAL

BY ALLEN BUTCHER

THE WORD SPREADS AMONG THE PEOPLE. Many of us feel the energy stir within, and when we meet on the paths or in our common buildings, the energy leaps as a spirit from one to another, commingling, uniting into something greater.

With each conversation, each caress of eye contact, the feeling is shared—it's time we meet in ceremony.

As a community we are collectively aware that our chosen lifestyle reflects the lifestyle of our ancestors. It is a village feeling. Our own tribal ethos builds here as we share our evening meal in the dining hall, as we share the joy and responsibility in caring for community children, and even as we take leave of one from another, dispersing to our private concerns. We are a people of the Earth, a people of the moon and of the stars, who know we can see the power in our intention to create the world of our choice.

As twilight falls, the many stars and our people come out together. As we slowly stream through the fields and down the path to the river, the Milky Way streams across the sky above us and down to the horizon. The fireflies in the river field become tiny flashing beacons in the darkness, leading us to the wooded hillside, where the ceremonial fire flickers between the shadows of tree and of human silhouette.

***We are one with our ancestors, with each other,
with the world around us.***

Our soft voices and careful movements around the fire reflect our reverence and respect for the tradition we are living. We are more than our physical forms; we are part of the whole of the universe. We are tree and flower, bird and fish. We are the flowing of river, and the blowing of wind. We are the crackle of fire and the silence of darkness, and in this knowing, our actions and lifestyle begin to affirm our feeling of connectedness to the natural world.

The ceremony is both a celebration of our place as the “crown of creation,” and a ritual observance of our comparative insignificance in the universe. At the same time, we recognize our community and the smaller gathering around the fire as symbolic of the circle of life and all the cycles in the universe. We are the world; we are the universe.

Quietly, with clothing laid aside, our circle slowly files into the sweat lodge, each blessing our relations with all the families of life and of non-living forms. Within, we converse in hushed voices until the hot stones are brought from the fire through a special opening in the lodge. The red, glowing stones piled together in the center faintly illuminate the faces of the people, each now sampling, then savoring, the sweet aroma of sage sprinkled on hot rocks. The incense serves as a cleansing agent, dispelling all negative and ill-seeking spirits. As water is sprinkled on the stones our spirits rise like the steam, flowing over and around us, building upon itself. Around the circle each person shares with ceremonial sincerity that which is most important in his or her life—thoughts, beliefs, feelings, emotions.

More water, more heat and steam, greater passion and emotion, rising, swirling, expanding. Some of us crouch closer to the ground to minimize the almost unbearable heat. Now, in the darkness, one of us calls for “spirit yells” which begin low and rise, louder and with greater force, each person giving voice to the purifying process of the steam heat upon our physical bodies, and of the spiritual cleansing within our minds and hearts. Wildly expressing the depth of our feeling and being, we are as

close as a people can be to the ancestral tribal heritage that this ceremony evokes.

As the stones cool, so does our energy. We emerge, again blessing all our relations—some of us to lie upon the bare ground, feeling its coolness; others diving into the river—then together we reenter the sweat lodge.

Four sessions we experience in the sweat. Sharing first our prayers for ourselves, each other, our families, our fellow community members, and for all of the peoples of the Earth. In the second we offer prayers for all of the other animals with whom we share this planet. In the third we pray for the plants which channel energy from the sun, and the gases of the air and the minerals of Earth, many of which support our existence. In the fourth sweat we share our blessings for the rocks and water that comprise the planet itself, and for all the celestial bodies of the universe. Suffering and sharing together in this ceremonial ritual we are one with our ancestors, with each other, with the world around us.

NOW WITH THE RISING SUN SHINING THROUGH THE trees, we walk in line along the path through the valley mist, up through the fields and to the awakening community, some to postpone sleep to engage in the morning activities of this culture we are creating. Combining elements of contemporary society with aspects of the ancient traditions, we are living the life of our collective choice. Ω

This sweat lodge ceremony took place on August 16, 1987, the eve of the “Harmonic Convergence,” among a small group of Twin Oakers (led by then-Twin Oaks member Kodiak) in recognition of the prophetic significance of this date in the Mayan and Aztec calendar systems, both of which ended on that date. The Mayan prophet Quetzalkoatl prophesied that a time of peace would follow. “Either by coincidence or fate,” notes author Allen Butcher, “the Cold War ended soon after.”

A former member of East Wind and of Twin Oaks communities, and a former member of boards of various community networking organizations, Allen Butcher is now working to build urban community in Denver.

CHALLENGE, RESOLUTION, DREAMS COME TRUE

*What makes for “community spirit”
after cohousing move-in?*

BY PATTY MARA GOURLEY

August 3

In a most celebratory mood, I am happy to announce that our escrow closed on July 31, after receiving final inspection on the first home at Tierra Nueva Cohousing. We’ll be the first family to move in—just a few weeks away now!

Needless to say, champagne and chocolate were plentiful Friday night as we gathered to celebrate a 10-year journey for the group and seven years of participation by my family. We toasted and danced while a gang of coho kids played hide’n’sseek outside in the twilight under a half moon. Within the next four weeks, the other five families of Phase One of our project will close their escrows and move in as well, while construction steams ahead on the remaining 21 homes. We’ll be living in a construction zone by day with relative quiet at night—as the only residents (for a limited time) on our community’s five-acre site.

All through the design phase, my family participated in designing the three-bedroom units. As time went on and cost estimates ballooned we found ourselves priced out, along with a few other families. In response to our dilemma we created a “budget” three-bedroom unit, with a narrower lot and smaller square footage. This new design was affordable, and we felt it worth the compromise to be able to stay in the community. Nonetheless, this unit design has never seemed to be “mine.” When we gathered at our newly purchased home last night and began to uncork the champagne I noticed a shift in my



The Foster Evans family chatting over the garden gate with their neighbors, Santo and Steph Ricceri.

ELLSWORTH WEAVER

As a midwife assistant, Patty Mara Gourley was present at 10 births of Tierra Nueva's children. Here she is in the Children's Garden with five of her "babies": Aiden, Nathan, Riley, John, and Leah Rose.



perception. As I looked around the room and saw my friends raising their glass in a welcome home toast I began to experience the alchemy of community in a new way. The architecture, with all its glitches and compromises and inadequacies really did become less important than the energy of extended family that filled the room. I finally began to feel a tiny glimmer of hope that this condo could become a nourishing home for my family. Hopefully, this glimmer will grow. We'll see.

August 5

The past few days have been mixed with both elation and some dread. We live in an enchanting redwood cottage surrounded by woods, groves, our private yard, and garden. I am sad to pack up and leave, but that is just what I am doing. Just over the hill is the avocado orchard where Tierra Nueva is under construction. I can hear the bulldozers doing final grading for the pathways.

Our latest troubling discovery is that our garages are too small. My husband was doing two- and three-point turns to get into our garage and, once in, there was so little clearance that he had to walk sideways to get out. What will it be like when we start filling it up with our stuff?

It appears that creating a cohousing community has been a constant challenge for us to release and surrender all of our most dearly held beliefs about what we need in our lives. All through the design and development process we had to practice this surrender. So we'll try living without a fireplace for the first time in 20 years. We'll let go of the affordable monthly rent, the large bedroom, the private yard, and the charm of our rustic redwood cottage. And just when we think we've done all the compromising we are capable of, along comes another chance to practice surrender and release. I'll park my tiny Honda

in the garage, my husband will park his pickup outside. We'll give away more of our stuff.

August 23

I'm writing from the chaos of packing and moving. Tomorrow the big moving truck will arrive.

More headaches. The phone service won't be available for at least three weeks! The telephone installer found the ground box absolutely empty of cable and our contractor missed some fine print in the contract that required him to measure the cable runs. We'll share a cell phone with our coho neighbors, dear friends who moved in last week. And for a week we'll be the only two families on site.

Construction has ground to a halt on the common house. Moisture tests of the concrete slab have indicated that the slab is too damp to lay the parquet flooring. Our flooring subcontractor is refusing to warranty the parquet if it is installed on damp concrete. So we are searching for solutions, and the common house remains "off limits" to us. So frustrating.

When the first family moved in, many folks showed up to help load and unload the truck and the move seemed to happen very quickly. Our family has chosen to do the move by ourselves, because we don't want to be obligated to move all the other 25 households in during the next three months. I wonder how other communities have solved this issue. There will be times when I know I will be happy to help out, and will, but I am less than

This is the nugget of my heart's desire—sharing food prep, eating together, and sitting around a campfire.

thrilled with the expectation to do it for everyone. So we have begun to process this at our business meetings, and folks seem to be in agreement. There may be some members who expect the entire community to move them. More communication and process work to follow, no doubt.

Architectural glitches still remain, such as wall sockets that don't work, goofy doors, and the shelfless pantry shaft. Nonetheless, I am looking forward to watching the stars transit our new windows tomorrow night.

October 12

We've been here since August 22, about seven weeks. For the first month nobody had telephone service. At this point there are six families in residence. Our wet slab

issue is now mostly resolved. We investigated dehumidifiers, sealers, and other flooring options and gave members their choice of solutions. The parquet wood floor in the common house has been replaced with tile, and we'll be doing the final walkthrough in a couple of days.

Not having access to our common house has been a cruel joke for those of us who have made the commitment to downsize our possessions and walk over to the common house for what we'd normally do in our own homes, such as laundry. But more importantly, it has been like we've been cut off from our heart center. For a time, everyone living here was fenced out of the common house and the surrounding construction because of a liability issue with our contractor. Gradually the fences have been coming down, and soon enough the common house will be ours.

To compensate for the lack of common cooking and dining, we formed a dinner club for all families in residence, plus community members living within walking distance. It has been a joyful experiment. We decided

I was faced with the dilemma of telling the truth ... or keeping quiet.

that each family, on their chosen night will do all the planning, shopping, cooking and cleaning for everyone (about 30, on average). On the night I cooked, I served almost 40 diners for less than \$25 total.

Living here has been wonderful. We have had glorious weather, so the evenings are still warm enough to eat outdoors. If one family is heading over to the pier to buy fresh fish off the boats, we all pitch in and buy together, then barbecue and eat communally in one of our joyfully jumbled yards. All of our picnic tables are gathered together in one yard or another for the community potlucks and fire circles. This is the nugget of my heart's desire—sharing food prep, eating together, and sitting around a campfire. It has been coming true over and over during the past seven weeks.

Construction seems to be behind schedule, so the remaining 21 families are stressing over the changing timelines and ambiguous move-in dates. One family is expecting a baby in February so the hope that we all move in by the end of the year is very dear to their hearts.

We've recently begun discussing the hot topics of fences and pets. It's interesting to see the differences of opinions expressed by folks who live here and by those who don't yet. Those who don't live here seem to want to defend a nebulous "cohousing" ideal of no fences. Those who do live here are faced with the reality of pet and tod-

dlers needs, not to mention the need to hide outdoor stuff such as recycling bins, garbage cans, wood piles, barbecues, bikes, and so on. And then there is the whole subject of "Private Outdoor Space," which those of us who already live here know is of such great importance. So the discussions are ongoing, and the fence committee has been unable to get the group's consensus on a policy for three meetings now.

I am delighted by the transformation I see in our kids. Our 14-year-old son Alex has rejoined the human community and actually leaves his room and computer to play outside with the younger kids. They spend hours on the trampoline, the hammocks, the continually changing climbing ropes, and the bike trails. The kids have taken over the lower orchard of mature avocado trees as their playground, a place of their own design and direction, that changes with their whims. When children of community members who don't live here yet come over, they simply refuse to leave. Lots of communal childcare is emerging, as well as shared creative ventures and trips to the beach, the dunes, and the movies.

I hardly miss my old lovely redwood cottage. Somehow this condo, with all of its design compromises and construction glitches, has won my heart. Our tiny kitchen, with the addition of a custom pantry and a wonderful butcher block cart, works great. My husband



Carl Samuelson shows John, Molly, and Nathan, how to feed corn to the newest residents of Tierra Nueva, nine chickens.

has finally arranged the stereo system so the music is good. And now that we've gotten the knack of closing windows at night we have begun to enjoy the benefits of passive solar living.

The monarch butterflies have returned to the eucalyptus grove which borders our site, and hawks circle overhead. Owls call in the dawn hours and the stars are brilliant. I'm off to bake a three-tiered cake for one of our community members, Kit, who is 70 tomorrow.

Adrian Lobdill demonstrating how to open the door when the contractor locked the common house during construction.



October 23

After eight weeks of living here at Tierra Nueva, big lessons about living in community are bubbling to the surface. Households continue to move in at about one or two a week now, so we are up to eight—with two more homes closing escrow this weekend.

We've established the pattern that when a new household arrives, we cook dinner for them during the moving chaos. This past week, three of us planned a dinner for two households, and since none of us had room to seat 15 people in our individual homes, we naturally decided to use the common house upper deck. I made a point to invite the other residents so there would be no sense of exclusion. On the evening of the dinner, a committee meeting of several members took place on the lower deck of the common house. Some of them were residents; others were members who hadn't moved in yet. When they saw us making preparations to eat, they got ready for another wonderful meal together. I was faced with the dilemma of telling the truth—that we had prepared enough food for 15—or keeping quiet, trusting in a miracle of “loaves and fishes” that there would be enough for all. I chose to tell the truth. One of the nonresident committee members turned around and went home, hurt and angry. Another stayed so we could process what had happened and discuss the larger issue: “When events occur in the common house, are they always open to

everyone?” We ended up encouraging the nonresidents to stay and eat with us, after telephoning the one who walked home. We had a good meal together, there was enough food for all, and the two new households felt welcomed.

For the three of us who did the planning and meal prep and cleanup, there were some mixed feelings. One of us was insistent that we must support the notion that sometimes not everyone is invited every time. That small gatherings can be planned. That we cannot be expected to feed or entertain everyone in the community all the time. When there were a smaller number of us living here, one of us could make dinner, wheel it over in the garden cart, and serve it to the new family. Easy. Now that there are more of us, I feel inclined to include everyone here, and that is probably my mistake. It led to the misunderstanding that it was a dinner group kind of event, which it wasn't. I tend to feel responsible for everyone's sense of belonging. I hope to learn how to set better boundaries, and not to feel the obligation to include everyone all the time.

November 23

Life is becoming less surreal for me, as the reality of living here fills my life. There are now 12 households in residence, with two more moving within the next two weeks.

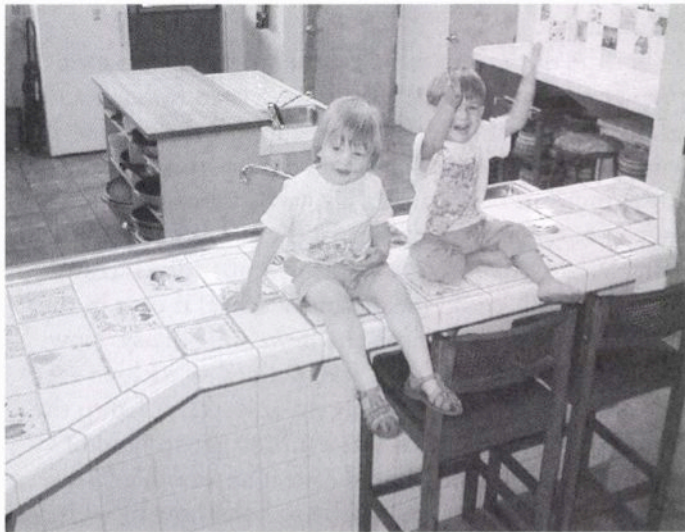
The common house is finally officially “ours”; we are no longer locked out by the contractors every night. It is a sweet joy to walk up to the common house with a load of laundry, and find it open and cleared of construction debris.

One hot issue now is kids in the common house. We have a room next to our large dining room, which is called the sitting room, library, living room, adult room,

I tend to feel responsible for everyone's sense of belonging.

or quiet room. The families with small children are raising the issue that to designate a room for adults only discriminates against children and is restrictive to the parents of toddlers. We have not officially designated this room as adult only, but some adults wish for it to be so. After a circle check at our last business meeting we came up with a nifty win/win. The room will be called the Quiet Room, and use of it will not be determined by age, but by behavior. Anyone willing to quietly read or play can use the space. Babies and toddlers will be accompanied by adults and no food allowed. So story time around the fire, discussion groups, board games, cards, quiet reading (our library is there) and even sing-alongs

Nathan and Aiden show off their original handprint and footprint tiles which they made for the common house kitchen counter. Community members each painted original tiles for the kitchen counters and backsplashes.



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are encouraged, as long as the tone is subdued. When it revs up to rowdy, there's our game room, kids room, mezzanine, and outdoor decks to spill into.

For Thanksgiving, in order to accommodate different travel schedules and family commitments and give a chance for everyone to be present, we've come up with two feasts: Thanksgiving on Thursday and Givingthanks on Saturday. Thursday's event will be the traditional fare, and Saturday's will be a Latin American theme potluck for dishes that use up leftovers. Expected offerings are turkey-feta enchiladas and cranberry-chipotle chili salsa. I hope we can find time and uninhibited energy to dance up a storm at both gatherings.

December 25

I just watched the Christmas sun set into the dunes from our new deck. All throughout the site and along the creek this morning there were monarch butterflies everywhere and a great blue heron, enjoying the warmth. It is very quiet here; of the 16 families who have moved into our homes, many have traveled elsewhere to be with parents or extended families. A couple of the single residents shared Christmas dinner at a local restaurant on the patio above the ocean. On site, the aromas of roasting and barbecuing turkeys filled the air as families gathered in their individual homes to share private Christmas dinners.

We celebrated as a community last Saturday night at the first annual Weird Food Cafe Dinner Dance. And dance we did under a disco ball, to the eclectic musical tastes of various community members, ranging from Manhattan Transfer to Ella Fitzgerald to Talking Heads. It was a raging success. Candlelight and a huge tree was the decorating theme, and it transformed our common house into a magical Yule garden. We planned to serve

the food in courses in different parts of the common house all through the evening to encourage people to stay late and dance in between courses. We had baked brie, curry mango chutney, fresh oysters on the half shell, Cajun chicken with a variety of hot mustards, prosciutto-wrapped asparagus, chocolate chicken, chocolate mousse, crab cakes (in the wee hours) and much champagne and eggnog. One of our senior members described the event as "the best party I've been to in 25 years!"

The night before, we celebrated Hanukkah with all of the kids lighting the many menorahs.

On New Year's Day, 15 or so of us are planning a "polar bear" ocean plunge to welcome in the new year. Right now it's time to gather at a community member's house for dessert. Cheesecake and gingerbread call!

January 18

Our community is full, with all of the homes sold and 18 households in residence, with two or three more moving in during the next week. Several are agonizing through the last-minute details of finding lenders, closing mortgages, and finishing work on their homes. In the midst of

We celebrated at our first annual Weird Food Cafe Dinner Dance ... a raging success.

this the rest of us are working every weekend on installing the landscaping and irrigation systems. This weekend we moved a mountain of mulch, planted dozens of trees and plants and set up drip lines. As more areas get weeded, mulched, planted, and watered the site is transforming before our eyes.

When the final homes are completed and everyone arrives, we'll deserve a huge, bodacious party. The family who is expecting their baby in February is moved in and nesting comfortably, preparing to give birth at home. What a wonderful way to consecrate a new home and a new community! Ω

Patty Mara Gourley and her family moved to Tierra Nueva Cohousing in August 1998. This article is excerpted with permission from CoHousing, the Journal of the Cohousing Network (Vol. 14, # 4); 510-486-2656; cohomag@aol.com.



SLEEPING TOGETHER FOR COMMUNITY BONDING

BY STEPHEN NIEZGODA

In many traditional ... cultures, sleep is a communal activity without the sexual overtones it has in the West today. [I] believe that it may be a vital social function, which plays a role as fundamental as communal eating.

—Christopher Alexander, “Communal Seeping,” *A Pattern Language*

LONG BEFORE WE HAD HEARD OF CHRISTOPHER Alexander or his classic work, *A Pattern Language*, we adopted ritual sleeping at Skywoods Cosynegal. It became an essential part of our community glue—and one that I tend to carry on the road with me as well.

By “ritual” I mean a physical and symbolic action whose purpose is to nurture, reaffirm, and reinforce essential beliefs and values. In our case, it is our belief that in our expanded family, everyone needs inclusion, intimacy, touch, and bonding and that we can nurture each others’ human needs just as much as our physical needs. By sleeping together, I mean communal sleeping.

I am not using this term as a euphemism for sexual behaviors. I am meaning to convey warm, trusting closeness, including physical contact, heart sharing, and interpersonal intimacy.

Communal sleeping, as we have practiced it here at Skywoods, is similar to traditional slumber parties, but with the additional closeness, comfort, snuggling, and intimacy that can occur with very close friends and family. These are three main reasons that we maintain our belief in communal sleeping as an important social bonding ritual.

1. Everybody needs warmth, security, nurturing, and a feeling of connection and inclusion. This usually includes physical closeness and touch. If we want to usher in a new paradigm, we need to attend to the needs of others as well as our own. Sleeping together is one way of doing this.

2. Communal sleeping can actually de-emphasize sexuality as the only way to get the touch, warmth, and connection we all need. This is not to say that it replaces

sexuality, but to acknowledge up front that many people confuse these important human needs with a desire for sex.

3. Communal sleeping is a way to break down barriers and connect with others who are close to us in a ritual designed to provide for these needs.

A few years ago, at the first permaculture course taught at the EcoVillage Training Center at The Farm community in Tennessee, more participants showed up than the center could accommodate; the housing facilities were full. I decided to sleep on the beautiful covered stage attached to the school facing the yard and fields. The next day, I told the folks I had ridden to The Farm with what a beautiful space it was to sleep in. That evening, a number of us had a long conversation with Farm founder Stephen Gaskin about the importance of taking care of and nurturing each other. I was able to share some of our experiences at Skywoods. That night, walking home, four other people decided to snuggle and share the covered sleeping space. The next day, at breakfast, more people expressed interest in our communal sleeping. Shortly, we had a family of six to eight people cuddling and sharing the night—men and women, gay and straight. This nighttime sharing propelled a heart and soul intimacy with each other. Our ability to trust physically was mirrored by our ability and desire to trust psychically and spiritually. This pattern continued until the end of the permaculture course, and many of us are still close friends—a bond which I believe was cemented by our communal sleeping.

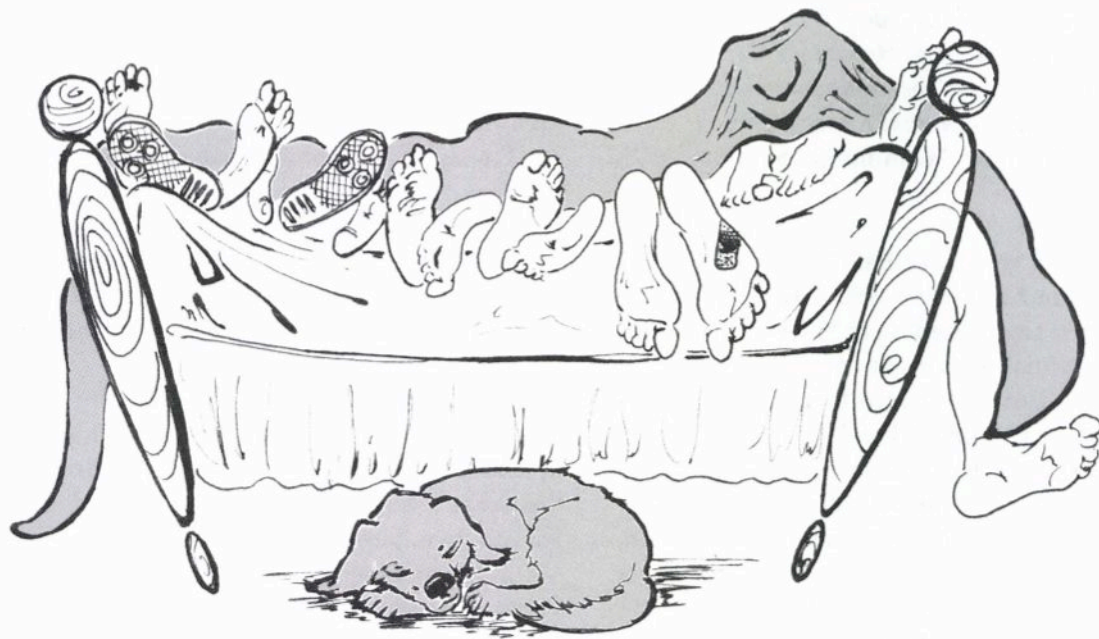
Recently I was helping friends prepare for a one-day conference. We spent a few long arduous days in preparation, and another day working at the conference. We were staying at a friend's house and decided that the best

way to sleep was *together*. There were other rooms and beds, but because of our closeness and trust—and to deepen closeness and trust—we wanted to spend the night together. Laughing, giggling, telling stories, sharing secrets and dreams, and snuggling. It was great! We all felt connected, included, and secure. The next day, one of my friends asked me, “Does this happen wherever you go?” I could only smile and reply, “I sure hope so.”

Communal sleeping is for all ages. Many people are aware of the advantages of communal sleeping for young children, perhaps from reading *The Family Bed* (Tine Thevenin, Avery, 1987) or *The Continuum Concept* (Jean Liedloff, Addison-Wesley, 1986). I believe my father's relationship with my intentional community members has deepened with his being included in our communal sleeping. Now almost 80 years old, my father is a frequent visitor, often staying a month at a time. At night he giggles, tells stories, and cuddles like a kid. He loves the warmth, connection, and sense of belonging that is the unspoken message of the ritual.

I believe that communal sleeping can powerfully aid personal, family, community, and social growth and cohesion, and by ritualizing our beliefs can internalize and then actualize them. If one new community paradigm is about trust, openness, and sharing, then not only our waking patterns, but also our sleeping patterns can help us actualize these values. Ω

Stephen Niezgodka, a founding member of Skywoods Cosynegal, is a designer, woodworker, gardener, and permaculture teacher. His community welcomes inquiries. Skywoods, PO Box 4176, Muskegon Heights, MI 49444; cosynegal@i2k.com.



ELLSWORTH WEAVER



ADAM GRANDIN

"The word 'community' can conjure up images of a place where everyone looks after each other, where everyone feels at home." Sandhill Farm's 25th Anniversary celebration.

Over the past decade, the word "community" has enjoyed a major resurgence in popularity, and has become a buzzword used to conjure up images of togetherness, cooperation, well-being, and a sense of belonging. The primal feeling evoked is that a community is a safe haven—a place where everyone looks after each other, where everyone feels at home, where everyone's needs are met.

SO BEGINS A CLIP FROM THE OPENING DIALOGUE OF "Visions of Utopia," my two-hour video documentary about intentional communities, in the hopper for three years now (due for release this summer!). One of my primary objectives was to capture, for each of the 18 featured communities, a sense of the "glue" that holds them together.

From what I've seen, it appears that the most important ingredient in this brew is how the members of a particular

COMMUNITY SPIRIT, COMMUNITY 'GLUE'

BY GEOPH KOZENY

community *feel* about their situation, rather than anything that is truly objective and measurable. To be sure, it's important to have shared goals and shared practices, but in terms of experiencing "community glue," it's the connections, more than the accomplishments, that make the difference.

I looked over the list of 18 communities and made a matrix to assess what their "values glue" might be. It was

an interesting exercise, in part because it was so subjective. I realized that my ratings were very intuitive, and would differ somewhat each time I filled out the grid. Further, the ratings were based on my sense of each community—which might not match the communities' own self-evaluations—and I would typically get varying answers if I looked at a group's founding vision as compared to its current reality, or at its written vision statement versus the feel

of the community in its everyday life. What I ended up asking myself was, “How much energy, how many resources, and how much emphasis does each community put into this area today?” (Please see sidebar, “Values of the Featured Communities.”)

My analysis suggests that the top five values shared by these communities are cooperation, a sense of neighborhood and/or community, equality/democracy, shared resources, and a safe environment.

In assessing how well each of the communities has been doing in terms of living up to their stated goals, I give the overall group a high rating. Not that any one of them has become a “Utopia” materialized—yet each community is a pretty fine place to live, and I’ve been quite impressed by the vision, dedication, and openness of the folks I’ve interviewed for the video. However, as noted in the matrix, the magic comes not so much from the focus, be it ever so lofty and worthwhile, but from the community members’ sense of connection.

I don’t mean to imply that accomplishments are not important, because, in fact, working together on a shared project is one of the major ways that we humans manage to get a taste of community. However, several other factors

It’s the connections, more than the accomplishments, that make the difference.

increase the probability that an individual will actually experience a sustained sense of “community spirit” in his or her life. In his or her community, for example:

- Do community members spend much time together—working, eating, worshipping, socializing, and so on?
- Are people generally supportive and helpful—do they pitch in when an extra hand is needed?
- Is there much time and opportunity for casual interactions—popping in at the neighbor’s to borrow a cup of sugar, or stopping to chat in the commons, or just “hanging out”?
- Are the members good at integrating folks on the fringes, and able to bring together people of differing backgrounds, interests, ages, needs?
- How well do the members really know each other—core values, likes and dislikes, idiosyncrasies, childhood issues, prejudices, insecurities?
- How open are they to talking about things that are meaningful to them?
- How good are they at bringing up frustrations, criticisms, and so on—and how effective is the group at working through the issues and the feelings that come up?



Do community members generally pitch in when help is needed? Digging the latrine at Common Place Land Trust, New York.

- How creative are they, collectively or individually, at helping individuals assess their stuck places and finding ways to manifest positive growth and change?
- Do community members have ways of acknowledging whatever growth and change actually does happen, for example celebrating individual and group accomplishments, of honoring births, deaths, assorted other losses, and rites of passage?

A group of people certainly doesn’t need to have all of these social skills to enjoy a deeply connected sense of community, though the more these skills are manifest, the more likely an individual member will feel connected. It helps to cultivate connections in every way possible. Community longevity can also help. The longer folks live under the same roof, or sit at the same table, or work on the same committee, the more likely it is they will experience that intangible sense of being somehow linked in community. In that context, patience and perseverance are great assets.

In contrast, at some of the larger communities, and even at one of the small ones, I noticed some members who had more or less withdrawn from the daily life of the community, and whose lives more closely resembled the life of a recluse. It was as though they were persevering, in a numbed-out sort of way, but not really participating. Obviously these people were getting some benefit from the association, but it didn’t look to me to be very much of an experience of community. On the one hand it seems important to honor their choice about how to live their lives, and on the other, it seems a shame to let the weeks and years roll by without offering an outstretched hand of



Is there much time and opportunity for just "hanging out"? Getting a haircut at Birdsfoot Farm, New York.

inspiration and encouragement. You never know if the person's choice is a conscious one until you ask, so initiate dialogue ... but don't push an agenda.

The bottom line? I don't believe there's one set of practices or beliefs that can guarantee an experience of "community spirit," so the best insurance is to nurture it from many angles. Establish lofty goals, and work together to achieve them. Set up your daily life so you are intentionally and accidentally encountering the other members of your community. Do big and small activities together regularly. Initiate dialogues, share what's important to you, invite reflection and participation. Learn techniques for identifying and moving through misunderstandings and disagreements. Reach out to those who aren't participating much, and appreciate their uniqueness and their gifts. Celebrate what you've accomplished together. And stick with it! It's rare that community happens overnight ... but maybe tonight's the night. Ω

Geoph Kozeny has lived in various kinds of communities for 27 years, and has been on the road for 12 years visiting communities: asking about their visions and realities, taking photos, and giving slide shows about the diversity and vitality of the communities movement. His video documentary, "Visions of Utopia: Experiments in Sustainable Culture," will be available in September for \$38 postpaid (US), and for FIC members, \$33 postpaid. Call 800-462-8240.

Values of the Featured Communities

In my "values glue" matrix, I weighted each of the shared visions/values as follows:

- 3 = Visions/values of primary importance
- 2 = Of secondary importance
- 1 = Occasional, or by individuals
- 0 = Not currently applicable

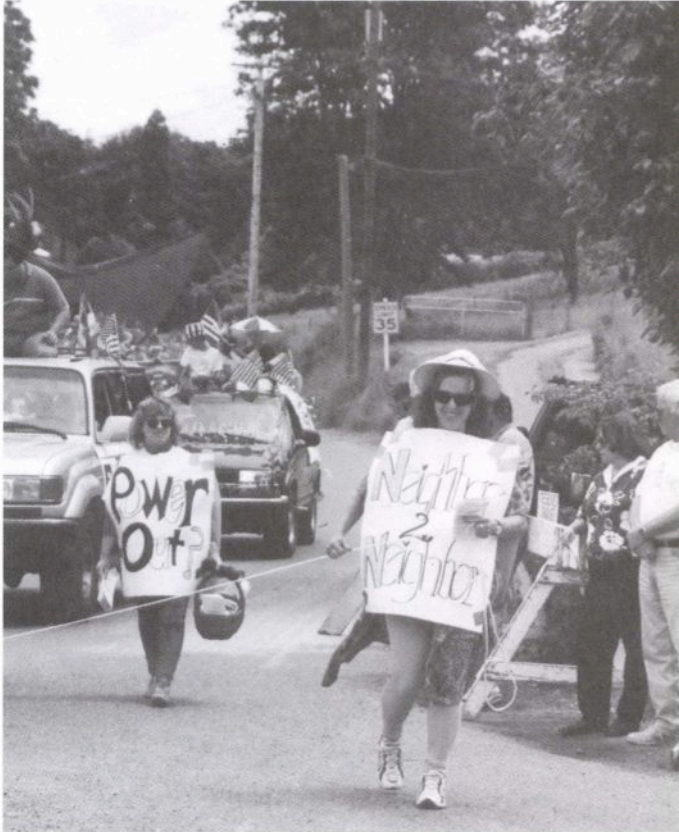
I ranked the results from the highest point total to the lowest. The first number is the number of communities out of the 18 that I gave the highest, "3" rating to for that value. The second number, in parentheses, is the total number of points for that value—the "importance" rating multiplied by the number of communities that have that value. In the first instance, for example, I noted that all 18 communities valued "cooperation" of primary importance, hence each got a "3."

- 18 (54) Cooperation
- 16 (52) Sense of neighborhood and/or community
- 14 (49) Equality, democracy
- 13 (48) Shared resources
- 11 (47) Safe environment
- 10 (42) Extended family (shared meals, chores, etc.)
- 9 (42) Earth stewardship
- 9 (41) Creating a replicable model
- 6 (34) Organic farming
- 6 (33) Children
- 6 (33) Self-sufficiency
- 6 (33) Personal growth, interpersonal "process"
- 5 (33) Being of service in the world
- 5 (32) Nonconsumerist lifestyle
- 4 (32) Social/political activism
- 3 (32) Operating shared businesses
- 5 (24) Spirituality
- 5 (23) Conference/retreat/education center

The communities featured in the video: *Spiritual Communities*: Ananda Village, CA; Camphill Special Schools, PA; Catholic Worker House, TX; The Farm, TN. *Rural Egalitarian Communities*: Riverspirit, CA; Sandhill Farm, MO; Twin Oaks, VA. *Urban Communities*: Ganas, NY; Goodenough, WA; Hearthaven, MO; Purple Rose Collective, CA. *Cooperatives*: Breitenbush, OR; Community Alternatives, BC; Fraser Farm, BC; Miccosukee Land Cooperative, FL. *Cohousing Communities*: N-Street Cohousing, CA; Nyland Cohousing, CO. *Ecovillages*: Earthaven, NC.

—G. K.

'CREATING COMMUNITY' ON SOUTH WHIDBEY ISLAND



The Neighbor to Neighbor Program helped stir community interest in emergency preparedness and mutual aid in the annual Maxwelltown Beach Fourth of July Parade.

How do you develop a sense of connection and “glue” in a larger, geographic community?

BY ROBERT KENNY

LAST FEBRUARY SIX COLLEAGUES AND I SAT IN the cozy sunken living room of a straw-bale home one of us had built a few years ago. The house seemed to reflect our way of being and working together. Its rounded, natural curves matched the safe, supportive working environment we had managed to create over the previous year. The warm red Mexican floor tiles mirrored our deeply felt connection to the Earth. The grove of strong, graceful Douglas firs outside the windows expressed our bond with the beautiful island we live on and the circle of strength we felt in each other. The natural light cascading through the tall windows expressed the way in which Spirit seemed to bless our meetings and in which we often uplifted and inspired each other.

We were gathered for our monthly five-hour retreat. We had just completed a dialogue about our purpose in working together and about our sense of the state of our geographic community, the 17,000 citizens of South Whidbey, the southern half of a beautiful, rural island about 45 minutes north of Seattle. One of our team members, a psychologist turned restaurateur, said, “I’ve never worked in a group like this before. I’ve usually found groups stifling or boring—and sometimes downright scary. But this group is very different. I’m excited about our creativity, our playful collaboration, our deep sense of community.” Her comments were not unusual. At the end of almost every weekly meeting, one or more of us has voiced gratitude for the blessed joy and delight we often feel while working together.

Who are we? In addition to the member mentioned above, our team is composed of a retired organizational consultant, two former members of intentional service communities, a pastor of a Methodist church, an astrologer/environmentalist, and the original “rediscoverer” and popularizer of the power of peer circles. Like many other folks on South Whidbey, we had moved here from various parts of the United States over the past seven years in order to live in an undeveloped, healing, and natural setting with a strong and vibrant community life. We’re in our 40s, 50s and 60s. We are socially liberal and active, deeply connected to our environment, and have done a lot of psychological and spiritual work over our lifetimes. We tend to balance our activism with spiritual practice, believing that the combination is potent, necessary, and highly effective.

We each have been volunteering up to 15 hours each week toward the Neighbor to Neighbor Program of the South Whidbey Community Resilience Project. The project is a grassroots initiative that emerged spontaneously in December 1998, out of a concern that Y2K might have devastating effects on our rural community, which suffers from a 45 percent poverty rate. In the event of a human-caused or natural disaster, Whidbey would be at the very late and distant end of supply chains for life-sustaining necessities, such as food and medicine.

Over time we have broadened our focus. We began to help the approximately 50 individual neighborhoods of South Whidbey prepare to deal with natural disasters. This was important, since, for example, we have five earthquake faults running under our island. Later on, we started to help neighborhoods increase their sense of neighborliness and mutual care. More recently, we are considering whether we have the resources to help the wider South Whidbey community develop a common mission and shared set of values about how to involve and support our young people in the community.

One of the key problems of our time is the systematic and relentless destruction of communities around the globe, caused in large part by the depersonalizing effects of mass telecommunications technology and the materialistic values often espoused by distant, multinational corporations focused solely on short-term profits, without regard for the effects of these values on human relationships and spirituality. So we have been trying to develop a local model that demonstrates a way for communities to survive and flourish in the midst of these strong, impersonal forces. We often speak of "island time," a slower speed of living that is tied to the natural, cyclical rhythm of nature. This rhythm is crucial to the development of healthy relationships, which cannot otherwise survive our culture's increasingly unhealthy focus on fast, primarily commercial, transactions. We also connect with the land on our beloved island and regularly create safe, sacred spaces, through monthly community forums and neighborhood meetings, where people can meet each other heart-to-heart, face-to-face, and be moved by our common human experience. In these meetings and forums, economic transactions take place within the context and in service of ongoing relationships, rather than the other way around. Money, posses-

sions, and status are secondary in importance to relationships and community. We buy locally, from people we know, rather than from impersonal entities at the end of an 800 phone number or through an Internet site.

What have we learned about building community?

First, developing inclusive, leaderful communities and decision-making processes facilitates creative collaboration and collective wisdom.



Christina Baldwin (left) and Ann Linnea (right), two members of the Neighbor to Neighbor team, do parking duty at a community New Year's Eve party on South Whidbey.

We share, rotate, and collaborate in our leadership. Instead of looking to an expert or "Lone Ranger" to solve problems and provide direction, we operate like a jazz ensemble. We improvise and explore the different aspects of a common theme, entering into a sensitively attuned and synchronized interplay, even anticipating intuitively each

other's moves. We have found that synergy develops and, as in any orchestra, the whole becomes far more than the sum of the parts.

For example, in my own 115-household neighborhood, three of us took on the role of neighborhood coordinators. We invited people to a series of monthly meetings regarding various topics on preparedness. After a few months, we spread the leadership by asking for volunteers who would be willing to serve as leaders of subgroups within our neighborhood, each of which would constitute a communication network in the event of a disaster. In other words, we expanded the leadership group from three to 10 members, rather than having the neighborhood depend solely upon us three original leaders.

Second, nurturing diversity by including key stakeholders from all community groups is essential to creative and wise problem solving. Groups naturally make wise decisions when they struggle with the rich tapestry of multiple experiences and perspectives. Doing so requires that group members move into spiritual emptiness and openness (both involving the absence of preoccupation,

judgment, and opinion). They then can delve together to the level of wisdom, discovering an inclusive perspective that incorporates and integrates, yet transcends, the sum of the viewpoints of individual members. This is an approach we are now exploring with a group of citizens who are trying to change the community's relationship with youth. There are many technologies for doing this, such as sponsoring "Future Search" conferences or "appreciative inquiry" processes, both of which bring the key stakeholders together to identify the community's resources and how they may be brought to bear upon the most pressing problems of the community.

Third, we build motivation and commitment when we establish leadership and governance processes through inclusive, pluralistic, egalitarian, open exchanges among key stakeholders in a community, rather than having a sole, expert leader prescribe the collective's values and norms. This was recently done when we involved a large number of volunteers, who planned a rich, 24-hour millennial celebration, using peer groups who worked together to create an amazing tapestry of events.

Fourth, sensing and working with the group's "field"—a palpable energy which reflects the group's intention, purpose, inclusiveness, and energy—enables members to take responsibility and choose their future with a sense of personal power, rather than dependency. The three of us who initially took the lead in organizing activities in my neighborhood met together before each meeting. I was astounded to discover that, when the three of us set ahead of time a clear purpose and intention for each meeting (what some call "setting the field"), we had to do very little facilitation of the meeting. The members of the neighborhood basically did the work, taking responsibility for the things that had to be done.

Fifth, speaking from and working with awareness of our hearts and bodies demonstrates a "felt commitment" to the well-being of all community members. Deep emotions are the path to connection and authentic care and service. We dared to be moved by the experience of others. By taking risks in our emotional expression, we found that we inspired each other to deeper levels of love and commitment.

Sixth, developing our intuitive skills enables us to sense and foster group wisdom. It allows us to express ideas without

attachment, competition, or needing to conform to group pressures for acceptance via uniformity and creativity-stifling group think.

Seventh, exploring partnership and collaboration, rather than domination, control, and competition, helps us free ourselves of pre-formed opinions, surrender to the unknown, and work to develop a shared vision.



The program suggested that everyone get a week to 10 day's supply of food and water, for themselves, and to share with others.

Eighth, by making our work together a spiritual, meditative, and contemplative practice, we eventually discover the "communion of our hearts," a life-changing experience that allows us to experience community anywhere with anyone at any time, rather than becoming attached to and defensive about the particular group to which we belong. By asking Spirit to express itself through the group and by using silence liberally, we experienced our deep connection with each other, with others in the community, and with nature.

We have found that developing collaborative leadership and collective wisdom helps members of our South Whidbey community address complex challenges that can feel overwhelming when faced alone. The recognition of and struggle to synthesize diverse perspectives has tended

to surface aspects of problems that might otherwise be overlooked. When key stakeholders participate in discovering a solution, they and their constituencies tend to support, rather than sabotage, that solution. Essential, root causes of problems are often dealt with and, at that deep, root level, problems are literally resolved (resolved). Most importantly, community members feel fulfilled and alive. As one of my neighbors said, "I'm so excited about connecting with my neighbors, some of whom I've lived near for 10 years but have never known. It's wonderful to work together and help each other!" Ω

Robert Kenny helped create an intentional community where he was a member for 27 years, and a multiservice youth center in New York City that used community as the central healing force. He participated in or facilitated numerous groups, teams, and communities, including a peer supervision group and a dialogue group. He has been researching the factors that help groups creatively collaborate. He is a Fellow of the Fetzer Institute, a non-profit, private, operating foundation. He can be reached at 7292 Maxwellton Road, Clinton, WA 98236; synergy@whidbey.com.

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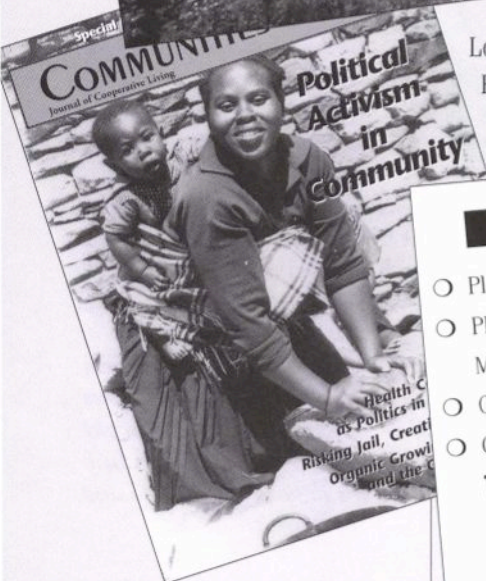
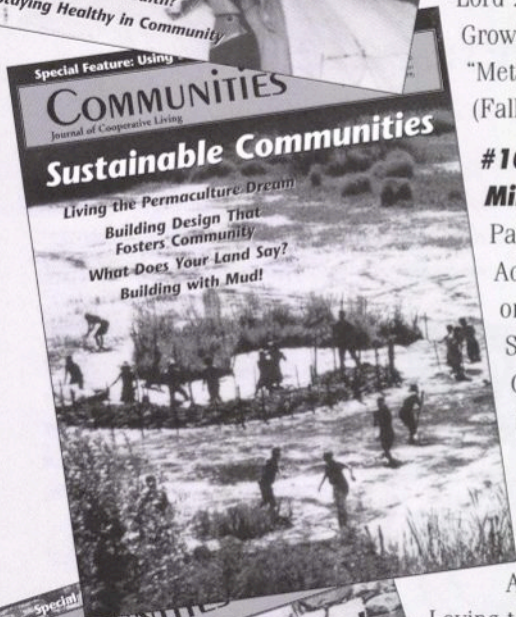
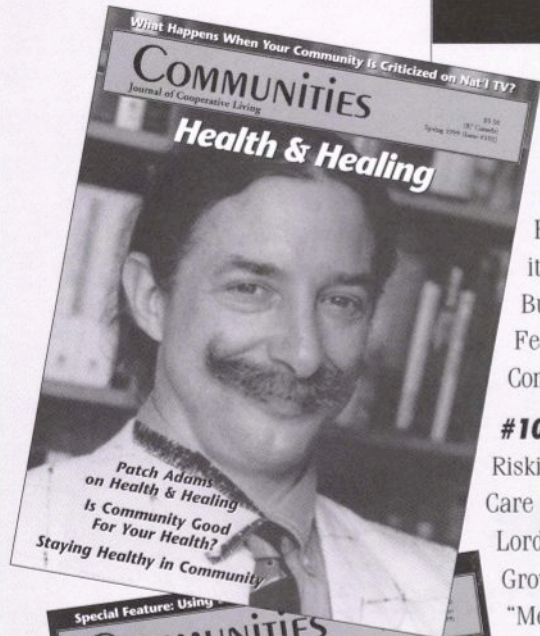
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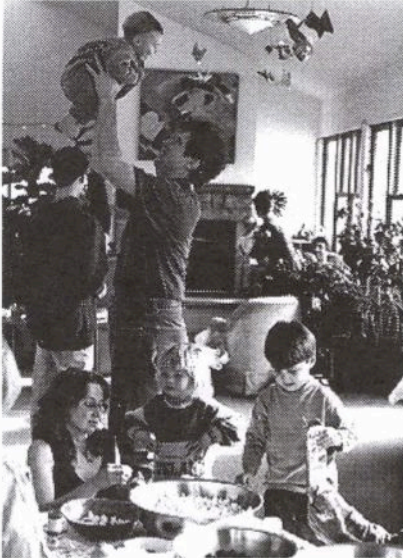
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Keeping Our Children Safe

I'VE FOUND IN MY RESEARCH THAT competing forces affect the physical safety of children in intentional communities. On the negative side, the majority of communities are rural and relatively hidden from public scrutiny or surveillance. In addition, community members are not immune to the belief that child-raising practices are up to the parents and one shouldn't interfere. In this case some members may be reluctant to intervene if they suspect child abuse, fearing that such a disclosure would rock the foundations of the community.

On the positive side, however, two characteristics of most communities help create safe environments for children. First, given the socially and environmentally conscious goals of most communities, it is not surprising that they tend to attract and screen for nonviolent members. For example, one community member asserted:

All of our parents, all of our community,

100%, are kind, loving, courteous and respectful to all of our children. The children don't know what it means to be treated with contempt or be told to shut up. ... I certainly approve of that. That's the way I treat children—with courtesy, respect and affection—and so do we all. None of them ever get hit. (Sometimes I don't think it wouldn't hurt them much, but we'll let that go.)



The second factor that promotes safe environments for children in intentional communities is "safety in numbers." Given the nonviolent attitudes of the vast majority of community members, as well as their sheer numbers, it follows that communitarians tend to watch themselves closely.

We don't let people just come in and say, "I have a preschool license and I want to start in your preschool." We don't put them in the childcare area until they've been here quite a while. We just ask them to make themselves at home here and encourage them to get to know the folks in the kitchen and

We don't let people just come in and say, "I have a preschool license and I want to start in your preschool." We don't put them in the childcare area until they've been here quite a while. We just ask them to make themselves at home here and encourage them to get to know the folks in the kitchen and

Daniel Greenberg, Ph.D., who surveyed over 200 intentional communities in the United States for his doctoral thesis, "Growing Up in Community," is Executive Director of Living Routes—Ecovillage Education Consortium, 72 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 888-515-7333; info@LivingRoutes.org; www.LivingRoutes.org.

around the mill first. We would never say, 'Oh, you're a teacher? OK, come on down. and meet the kids.'"

In fact, interviewees in two communities related similar stories of how an adult was immediately and forcefully ejected from the community after mistreating a child. These episodes tend to have dramatic and lasting effects on communities. For example, in one of these communities, a community member was discovered exposing himself to children and was

**Communities, especially those
in rural settings, act like
safety zones within the
broader society.**

run out by a communal posse. Soon afterward, the community adopted stringent procedures for visitors being with children. In my experience, with so many adults interacting with and caring for the children, such episodes are quite rare and generally short-lived.

So, except in rare cases, it seems that communities, especially those in rural environments, actually act like safety zones within the broader society. Children can roam about freely in most communities with little fear of being kidnapped or abused. People watch out for each other with less need of police forces or jails. This feeling was well expressed by a member of one rural community.

This is a very safe place to raise children just as it is a very safe place to live. When I lived in town I was always having to be aware of where it was OK to walk after dark and where it wasn't, and if I was in a laundromat late at night and a man came in I'd feel myself go all tense. There's none of that here. On the property, there's a feeling of total safety and all that tension is gone and it's gone both for me personally and around my kids. If my daughter doesn't show up 'til half an hour after dinner starts, I'll figure she's off sitting on a rock somewhere and forgot her watch. My first thought isn't, "Who has accosted her on the street?" like it used to be when I lived in town. That's really nice. Ω



Visions of Utopia: Intentional Communities ...

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Geoph Kozeny, a core staff member of the first two editions of the *Communities Directory*, has spent two years creating this documentary about intentional communities. Now you can actually see how some communities look "up close" while you listen to community members tell their stories in their own words.

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Moora Moora, Australia

I AM TRYING TO EAT LUNCH, SITTING crowded with about 40 adults and children in the dining room of a 28-year-old community near Melbourne, named for an Aboriginal word meaning “friendly spirit.” The spirit here certainly is friendly; in fact, the noise level is nearly deafening. Too many children for an old bachelor like me! Over soup I learn about Christian outreach events from one member and the scourge of rampant blackberry vines from another. At the main course I hear about communal budget problems as well as the health challenges of a member's newborn. During dessert I'm filled in an ongoing dispute between vegetarian and carnivore members.

Welcome to Moora Moora, one of Australia's oldest and best known intentional communities.

Moora Moora Community Settlement Society was formed by a group of Melbourne residents in 1972. Several

community founders had already been living in an urban commune, and all of them shared the desire to settle in the countryside near enough to Melbourne so they could commute to jobs. They found a 620-acre site on a 2400-foot-high plateau, Mount Toole-be-Wong, near Healesville, 46 miles east of Melbourne.

The founders negotiated a bank loan and began moving to the land in 1974. The original members and children lived communally in the property's six-bedroom “Lodge” as they built their own off-grid homes. Committed to avoiding the “suburban sprawl” that occurs in communities where people select random, isolated home sites, they built six

housing clusters along the central ridge, on the edge of the forest, naming them Yanginanook, Karingal, Nyora, Mudburra, Wombat Hollow, and Forest Edge.

Twenty eight years later, Moora Moora has 23 houses, 35 adults, and 25 children

COMMUNITY
LIVING
WORLDWIDE



BY BILL METCALF

Dr. Bill Metcalf of Griffith University, Australia, an expert in intentional communities worldwide, has since the early 1970s studied both contemporary and historical communal groups around the globe. He is President of the International Communal Studies Association, a Fellow of the Findhorn Foundation, and author of Shared Visions, Shared Lives: Communal Living Around the Globe (Findhorn Press, 1995; available from Bill Metcalf at w.metcalf@mailbox.gu.du.au) and From Utopian Dreaming to Communal Reality (University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, Australia, 1995). Bill has lived communally for about half of his adult life.

Note: We preserve the spelling of our Commonwealth authors.

and teenagers. Only two original members remain.

The Lodge is now the focus of community activities, where meetings and dinners are held. The Lodge can also sleep 25, and serves as the venue for the community's "Moora Moora Learning Centre for Co-operative Living," which offers a range of personal development and practical skills workshops. The Learning Centre is also rented out to other groups for weekend workshops, and it provides accommodation for the numerous WWOOF (Will-ing Workers On Organic Farms) visitors, who help with farm work in exchange for room and board. The Lodge offers magnificent views of Melbourne.

Lunch now over, I return to more Community Work Day tasks. Today people are fixing fences, sawing and splitting firewood, weeding the garden, grappling with blackberry roots, preparing food, cleaning and painting, repairing farm equipment, and other tasks needed to keep this community going.

In the morning I helped with cattle, being told to check if the three-month-old calves were male or female. Given that these are long-haired Galloways, I was bluntly told, "Just get your hand into their long fur and feel about for balls!" Males are to get a rubber band around their testes to cut off circulation and turn them into steers, while all calves get an injection. This is the first time these calves have had any human contact. As I fumble about, the calf's irate mother stands nearby, head down, eyes rolling, bellowing threats if I dare touch her darling offspring. Ah, the joys of being a communal scholar doing field research!

This afternoon my job is to help chop down and grub out blackberry roots. Moora Moora's Works Coordinator, Michelle, oblivious to my academic hands, which are more used to typing on a keyboard than swinging a pickaxe (or perhaps *because* of them?), assigned me this arduous task. My back aches and the blisters are rising, but the work is great, with plenty of joking interspersed with the hard slog.

"These are good people," I observe to

myself. "Interesting, intelligent, and passionate."

The six housing clusters provide the day-to-day social focus and personal support for most members. Residents of each cluster see each other frequently because of the proximity of their houses as well as shared gardens and childcare. Some cluster members eat dinner together once a week and do a cluster workday once a month.

Moora Moora doesn't share an overarching formal religious or spiritual base although some are involved in Christian or other religious groups. But the community does share a commitment to environmental responsibility, environmental education, and social change. Members demonstrate a commitment to responsible parenting, ethical land-use, and gender and racial equality, as well as a genuine determination to co-exist and enjoy living together in their beautiful surroundings. They tell me they are not retreating or "dropping-out" from society, but engaging in positive social change, and I believe them.

Although a critique of the nuclear family was part of Moora Moora's founding ideology, in practice members follow conventional family forms. All children are the responsibility of their parents although some shared childcare is evident. Members operated their own school for many years but closed it because of funding difficulties. Community children now attend public or Rudolf Steiner (Waldorf) schools.

Moora Moora members have chosen not to connect to the public electricity grid, so each house is solar powered, with access to a backup generator. They heat their homes with wood and cook with wood or gas. Most houses are built of timber and/or mud brick and rammed earth. In fact, creative house design is one of the most obvious and appealing features of Moora Moora. Spring water is pumped by hydraulic ram up to holding tanks which gravity feed the homes. At one point the community built a large Darrieus Wind Generator but it never worked efficiently. (Its main function now is

I was bluntly told, "Just get your hand into their long fur and feel about for balls!"

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probably as the community's oft-photographed, symbolic landmark.)

At their Annual General Meeting, members elect seven Directors as well as a Secretary, Treasurer, Works Coordinator, and Land Manager. The latter are paid positions. People participate in Works, Ecology, Land Management, Membership, Finance, and the Learning Centre committees. Directors meet twice a month: the first informally, to mull over contentious issues, and the second to reach decisions. Any member can attend and participate in Directors Meetings. Consensus decision making was the early ideal and practice at Moora Moora, but this has changed so that major decisions require a 2/3 majority vote and minor decisions a 51 percent vote.

Once a month, members come together informally to discuss some relevant issue or just enjoy a community dinner and games night.

At tonight's community meeting the talk is mainly about changes to the Moora Moora constitution, as well as ideas for a business plan and vision statement for their Learning Centre. Arguments are brisk, witty, and cutting. Having lived together for so long, members seem to have had their sharp corners somewhat knocked off, and know each others' strengths and weaknesses. Both bluntness and fondness permeate the meeting, leading to what I consider to be mature decisions. In some ways, this is an archetypal community meeting.

Moora Moora is legally structured as a cooperative. The first stage in becoming a member is to lend \$200 (US\$130) to become a "Friend of Moora Moora." Prospective members can usually rent a house. One member is appointed as "Mother Hen" to act as mediator between the prospective and current members. After a minimum two-month wait, the prospective member may seek nomination by at least eight members representing at least four clusters. After a further four months, he or she can become a full member, unless five or more current members object. In reality, most membership problems are avoided through the negotiations and guidance of the Mother Hen, so that, as one member stated, "We can have a welcoming party straight after the vote."

New members don't buy a house



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directly, but buy shares in the cooperative, currently costing \$26,000 (US\$16,000) per couple, or \$13,000 (US\$8,000) for an individual. This entitles the new person to buy one of the existing houses from a departing member or build a new residence. House prices currently range from \$30,000 (US\$20,000) to \$100,000 (US\$65,000). All houses legally belong to the cooperative, but members are granted an "occupancy right." Each individual contributes an assessed fee of about \$700 (US\$400) per year to the cooperative. This assessment, along with a nominal amount receiving from selling hay, organising events at the Learning Centre, and renting the Lodge to outside groups, provides the community's annual income.

When members leave, they can only sell their house and co-op shares to an approved, incoming member. Over the years, this policy had led to a backlog of unsold shares and houses, considerable frustration for departing members, and, at times, ill-will. To overcome this problem, members now contribute to a fund which is used to redeem the shares of departing members. This facilitates the departure of members who want to leave and the recruitment of younger families with less capital. The community regularly advertises for new members, but vacancies always exist.

When I was at Moora Moora six years ago, there were few young children, but the picture today is very different, with over a dozen babies and toddlers. Moora Moora's average age has obviously

dropped considerably, largely due to their deliberate policy of helping finance younger recruits. Have they tipped the demographic balance toward too many young families, I wonder?

As with most intentional communities, few of the children who grew up at Moora Moora remain as members, but most maintain close relationships within the community. There are many young adults in conventional urban careers who fondly recall growing up at Moora Moora.

Provision exists within the community constitution to expel a member who acts contrary to the interests of the group, but this has

never happened.

Moora Moora holds Open Day the first Sunday of each month, when visitors are given tours. Every second year the community hosts an "Alternatives Festival" as part of the Learning Centre's outreach and community development. Members hope that as the Learning Centre's workshop business increases, more members can work for the Centre and thereby need less outside employment.

Although the Moora Moora of today is different from the community its founders envisioned 28 years ago, it is undoubtedly a successful intentional community, a model which several other Australian intentional communities have followed. Moora Moora provides a healthy, stimulating home for about 60 people, and serves as a workable model of wise environmental management and sustainable community living.

I like it. Ω

**Arguments are
brisk, witty,
and cutting.**



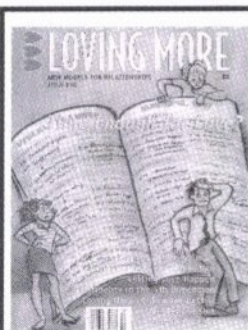
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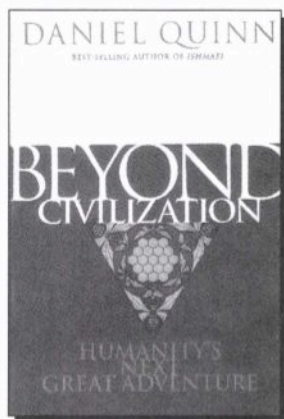


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REVIEWS



Beyond Civilization: Humanity's Next Great Adventure

by Daniel Quinn

Harmony Books, 1999
Hb., 202 pp. \$21.95

Reviewed by Richard Coon

DANIEL QUINN'S WIDELY READ FIRST novel, *Ishmael* (1992), dealt with a variety of questions relating to the way people live in modern, termed "taker," society. *Beyond Civilization*, Quinn's first nonfic-

tion work, sets forth his ideas unembellished by storyline. It represents a more direct call to action and more clarified statement of his ideas than his novels, and should interest anyone interested in alternative living.

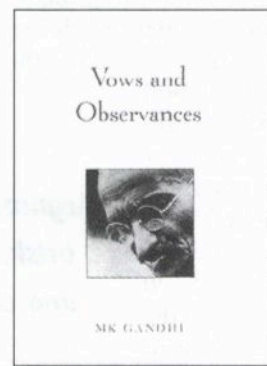
Issues such as overpopulation, food production, and relationships between people and the plant and animal kingdoms have been central to Quinn's books. In *Beyond Civilization* he attempts to encourage and inspire people to invent new ways of living which are less harmful to the natural world, focusing on such issues as our cultural mythology and memes, what people need and want, the "tribal solution," learning from what works, and "the new tribal revolution."

For example, he calls for a reorganization of our priorities regarding work. For me, this quickly expanded to reorganizing ourselves in terms of almost all of our institutions. Quinn believes we can learn much from the ways of our indigenous relatives. By inventively "re-tribalizing" ourselves, by rethinking our relationship to food and consumption, and by creatively narrating a new guiding mythic vision, we can begin, he says, the process of going beyond "the culture of maximum harm"—that is, "civilization."

Quinn argues for a new vision of civilization, and points out the backlash faced by those who don't follow the story told by "Mother Culture." He notes the significance of acting in community. He speaks to the harm our present social arrangements wreak on the natural world. Significantly, he understands that the world will not be changed all at once, that the changes will be many and varied, and they begin existentially the moment one

steps outside the dominant paradigm and begins to act on a new vision. Let's do it!

Richard Coon is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin.



Vows and Observances

by Mohandas K. Gandhi.

Berkeley Hills Books, 1999.
Pb., 160 pp., \$13

Reviewed by Robert Rhodes

FOR GANDHI—THE BESPECTACLED, rail-thin holy man known to the world as *Mahatma*—there was no lack of clarity on the issue of violence. To Gandhi and the proponents of his philosophy of *ahimsa* and *satyagraha* (nonviolence and nonviolent resistance), there was no just war, no mitigated killing, and no compromise that could even allude to the harm of another being.

Gandhi, like so many other proponents of peace, died by a singular act of violence—by the gun of a Hindu extremist in 1948. This has only cemented his stature as a saint of the holiest order, a man who defied his own religion and culture to redefine all religions and all cultures as functions of a greater community of love.

In *Vows and Observances* we see Gandhi's outlook on nonviolence crystallized in his views on communal living. This volume brings together parts of four different writings, including the "rule" of life and worship in Gandhi's community, the Satyagraha Ashram in India. Other selections focus on the "Eleven Observances" of truth-based, nonviolent community and the history of the ashram.

As the founder of several previous communities, including two in South Africa—one named for another proponent of nonviolent community whom he

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admired, Leo Tolstoy—Gandhi identified the common life with the elements of trust and an innate, spiritual refusal to do violence of any kind to another living being. In Gandhi's ashrams, all lived together as brothers and sisters amid an evolving ideal of celibacy and renunciation of personal property. At the same time, all were called to action and social responsibility, shunning the ascetic image of the Himalayan cave-dweller in favor of an outward, visible activism for the people of India and the world. Gandhi hoped to establish communes that would accept all who were willing to follow the ashram's rules, and by building community, to promote peace, nonviolence, and greater awareness of spiritual and social ideals. By turning as equals to prayer, manual labor, and simple living—no small achievement in caste-driven India—Gandhi and his fellow aspirants hoped not only to purify themselves but the whole world by the light of their example.

Though his ashrams were predominantly Hindu, people of all faiths were welcomed. And as we see in this "rule," Gandhi drew on many western sources, including Christian monasticism, to design and execute his "experiment."

At the heart of the ashram was to dwell an abiding sense of responsibility and love toward every other person. As Gandhi wrote: "All living beings are members one of another so that a person's every act has a beneficial or harmful influence on the whole world. We cannot see this, near-sighted as we are. The influence of a single act of an individual on the world may be negligible. But that influence is there all the same, and an awareness of this truth should make us realize our responsibility."

Gandhi never pretended to have built the perfect community. These writings allude quite often to differences of opinion among the ashramites. Still, at the heart of Gandhi's outlook, and at the center of the communities he established, was an undying sense of the spiritual alive in everyone.

In this book of ideals, Gandhi points again and again to the love that's needed to find true fulfillment—transcending money, transcending caste, and most of all, transcending the deadly cliffs and landslides of the self in earnest devotion to peace. Ω

Robert Rhodes, a former newspaper editor, lives at Starland Hutterite Colony in Minnesota.

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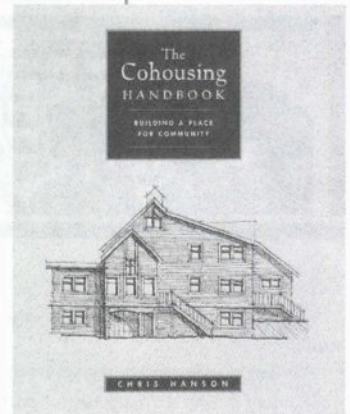
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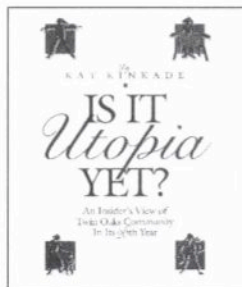
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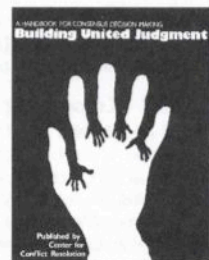
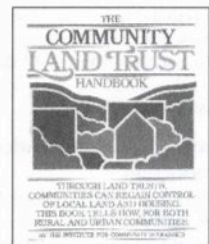
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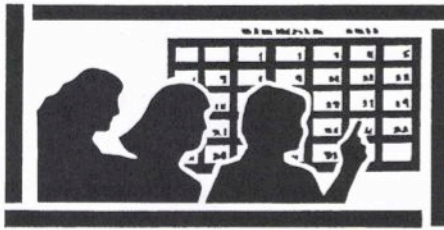
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR



This is a calendar of:

1) events organized or hosted by intentional communities;

2) events specifically focusing on community living;

3) major events with significant participation by members of the communities "movement."

Most of these events occur with some regularity, so this calendar is a fairly accurate template for what to expect next year. Events listed as "hosted" are generally scheduled at a new site for each meeting.

Please send us suggestions about what we might include in future calendars: Community Calendar, 688 McEntire Rd., Tryon, NC 28782. Also note that the Fellowship publishes a quarterly newsletter (free to FIC members) that includes announcements of and reports about similar events. Information about joining the FIC can be found on p. 74.

Ongoing • Apprenticeships in Permaculture and Organic Gardening

Dexter, OR. Lost Valley Educational Center. Intensive community experiences focusing on permaculture or organic gardening, as well as appropriate technology, ecological living skills, personal growth, community living, and more. 81868 Lost Valley Lane, Dexter, OR 97431; 541-937-3351; info@lostvalley.org; www.lostvalley.org.

Ongoing • Sirius Apprenticeship Program

Shutesbury, MA. Sirius Community. 35 hrs/wk; min. one-month commitments: Organic gardens, kitchen, or guest department. 72 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-1254; sirius@siriuscommunity.org; www.siriuscommunity.org.

Summer 2000 • Apprenticeship, Organic Food Production

Summertown, TN. EcoVillage Training Center, The Farm community. Pay board and lodging for free participation in most ETC courses and training in organic gardening, constructing artificial wetlands, building in mud, stone, straw and cob with master builder Joe Kennedy. PO Box 90, Summertown TN, 38483; 931-964-4475; ecovillage@thefarm.org; www.thefarm.org/etc/.

Jun 24-Jul 1 • Co-op Camp Sierra

Camp Sierra, 60 miles NE of Fresno, California. Family camp in majestic mountain setting on co-ops and cooperation for all ages, including singles and single parents. Decision making, ecology and recycling, co-op history and education. Nightly folk dancing, campfire sing-alongs, auction. Childcare, outdoor events. Co-op Camp Sierra, PMB #415, 1442-A Walnut Street, Berkeley, CA 94709; 888-708-2267; coop-camp@pacbell.net; www.coopcamp.com.

Jun 25-Jul 2 • Build Here Now

Taos, NM. The Lama Foundation. Second annual national natural building colloquium and permaculture convergence. Workshops on permaculture, natural building, appropriate technology. Lama@compuserve.com; www.strawhomes.com.

Jun 28-Jul 10 • 29th Annual Rainbow Gathering

Montana or Idaho. www.welcomehome.org.

Jun 30-Jul 2 • Earth Plasters and Natural Plastering

Rutledge, MO. Dancing Rabbit ecovillage. Assessing plaster mix, applying scratch, infill, finish coats, mixing plaster, overview of benefits and challenges of earth plasters in natural building. \$150-\$60 sliding scale, includes food, camping space. 660-883-5511; njeanha@hotmail.com.

Jul 1-8 • Co-op Camp Sierra

Camp Sierra. See Jun 24-Jul 1.

Jul 7-Aug 18 • Summer Institute in Sustainable Living

Sirius Community, Shutesbury, MA, and EcoVillage at Ithaca, NY. Holistic awareness practices, seminars, readings, an ecological design project, bioregional field trips, and integration into day-to-day life at Sirius, a spiritual community, education center, and ecovillage, and Ecovillage at Ithaca, an ecological cohousing community. 8 semester credits, Greenfield Community College. Living Routes, Ecovillage Education Consortium; 72 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-0025; 888-515-7333; mailto:info@LivingRoutes.org; www.LivingRoutes.org.

Jul 21-Aug 6 • ZEGG Summer Camp 2000

Belzig, Germany. ZEGG (Center for Experimental Culture Design). With Sobonfu Some, Hans de Boer. Festival for personal development, exploring world views, personal and planetary healing. Children and youth camp, women's day, men's day, parents' forum, meditation, ecological workshops, dance, music, swimming. ZEGG, Rosa-Luxemburg-Strasse 89, D-14806 Belzig; +49-(0)33841/595-10; fax +49-(0)33841/595-12; emplang@zegg.de; www.zegg.de.

Jul 21-24 • Naka-Ima

Dexter, OR. Lost Valley Educational Center. Through the practice of honesty and learning to recognize and let go of attachments, rediscover the depths of the essential self, moving towards greater intimacy, connection, enjoyment, and community. \$295-\$395 s/s, incl. meals and lodging. Limited scholarships, work trade. 81868 Lost Valley Lane, Dexter, OR 97431; 541-937-3351; larry@lostvalley.org; www.lostvalley.org.

Jul 24-28 • Natural Floors and Plasters

Occidental, CA. Occidental Arts and Ecology Center. Clay-based scratch coats, finish plasters, colorful washes for natural, breathable walls, with cheap or free non-toxic ingredients. Install beautiful, durable poured adobe floor. With Michael Smith, Janine Björnson. \$550, incl. food, lodging. 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 95465; 707-874-1557; oaec@oaec.org.

Jul 27-30 • Global Change Through Ascension Science

Sedona, AZ. Aquarian Concepts Community. Successful community living, based on Fifth and Continuing Fifth Epochal Revelation with Gabriel of Sedona. PO Box 3946, Sedona, AZ 86340; 520-204-1206; aquarianconcepts@sedona.net; www.aquarianconcepts.com.

Jul 28-30 • Loving More Conference, East Coast

Parkville, NY. Grow II Resort. Annual conference on polyamory, polyfidelity, sponsored by Loving More magazine. Box 4358, Boulder, CO 80306; 800-424-9561; 303-543-7540; ryam@techmesa.com; www.lovemore.com.

Aug 3-20 • Permaculture Skills Course

Orcas Island, WA. Bullock Brothers' Homestead. Hands-on permaculture certification course: mapping, water systems, greenhouse operation, plant propagation, food forests and orchards, wetland restoration, wildcrafting, natural building, solar water heating, solar electricity, ecovillage design. \$1000, food, camping space. Bullock Workshops, c/o WE-Design, PO Box 45472, Seattle, WA 98145; 206-459-7022; michaellockman@juno.com.

Aug 4-6 • Shalom Connections Conference

Evanston, IL. Reba Place Fellowship, "The Living Word Creates a People: Gathering of Christian Intentional Communities and Seekers of a Shared Life in Christ." \$30; \$60 w/lodging. David Janzen, PO Box 6575, Evanston, IL 60204; 847-328-6066, days; 847-475-8715, eves; dj-janzen@juno.com.

Aug 4-6 • Seed Saving: From Seed to Seed

Occidental, CA. Occidental Arts and Ecology Center. With Doug Gosling. \$325, incl. food, lodging. 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 95465; 707-874-1557; oaec@oaec.org.

Aug 4-6 • Earth Plasters and Natural Plastering (Women)

Rutledge, MO. See Jun 30-Jul 2.

Aug 8-20 • Network for a New Culture Summer Camp 2000

Oregon. NFNC offers workshops and activities focused on conscious relationships. PO Box 42282, Portland, OR 97242; 800-624-8445; sc2k@nfnc.org; www.nfnc.org.

Aug 11-13 • Loving More Conference, West Coast

Middletown, CA. Harbin Hot Springs. See Jul 28-30.

Aug 11-19 • Village Design Practicum

Black Mountain, NC. Earthaven Community. Combines larger subjects of permaculture curriculum with focus of design of Earthaven village landscape and culture; this course with the Fundamentals course completes requirements for Permaculture Design Certificate. With Peter Bane, Chuck Marsh, Patricia Allison. \$600-\$800 s/s incl. food, lodging. Culture's Edge, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 828-298-2399; culturesedge@earthaven.com; www.earthaven.org.

Aug 11-20 • Natural Building Intensive

Summertown, TN. EcoVillage Training Center, The Farm community. Wattle and daub, mud and stone, turf and timber. Build with straw, cob, wood and other natural materials. Architect/engineer Joe Kennedy has given this course on six continents. Assisting instructors: Howard Switzer, Albert Bates. \$800, incl. meals, lodging. PO Box 90, Summertown, TN 38483; 931-964-4475; ecovillage@thefarm.org; www.thefarm.org/etc/.

Aug 12-18 • 31st Annual Human Relations Laboratory

Seabeck, WA. "Community Living: A Step Beyond Ordinary Reality." The Goodenough Community's week-long unique experiential laboratory learning event at an idyllic retreat setting offers large and small group interaction, time for experimentation, and opportunities for collaboration, creative expression, reflection, and play. Designed to support the development needs of individuals, couples, and families, including children and teenagers. \$750, incl. room & board; family rates too. 2007 33rd Ave South, Seattle, WA 98144; 206-323-4653; goodenough@aboutcommunity.org; www.goodenough.org.

Aug 16-20 • Earthstewards Gathering

Dexter, OR. Lost Valley Educational Center. Earthstewards Network, nonprofit international organization devoted to bringing positive change through grassroots efforts of worldwide network doing people-to-people diplomacy, environmental service, global communication and conflict resolution, and creating positive models of grassroots leadership for cultural change. Samuel Ready, 925-938-0804; sready@hotmail.com; www.earthstewards.org.

Aug 21-25 • Starting and Sustaining Intentional Communities

Occidental, CA. Occidental Arts and Ecology Center. Finding and financing land; legal forms for holding land; "for profit" or "nonprofit"; group decision making; finding like-minded people; financial organization; legal/insurance issues, costs; county/city zoning and regulations; planning for long term. Visits to intentional communities. With Dave Henson and Adam Wolpert. \$550, incl. food, lodging. 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 95465; 707-874-1557; oaec@oaec.org.

Aug 25-27 • Twin Oaks Women's Gathering

Louisa, VA. Twin Oaks. Dance, movement, drumming, swimming, creative activities, workshops, sweats, mud pit, ritual, singing, games. \$40-\$140, s/s, incl. meals, camping. 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa VA 23093; 540-894-4112; gathering@twin Oaks.org; medusa.twin Oaks.org/cmyt/women/.

Aug 27-Dec 9 • Geo Communities Semester

US, France, India. Living Routes, Ecovillage Education Consortium. Sustainable living practices, world population, globalization, habitat destruction, intercultural exchange, biological restoration, mindfulness training. Begin in New Hampshire; 10 days at Plum Village, Thich Nhat Hanh's Buddhist monastery in France; two months at Auroville, an ecovillage/spiritual community, and 10 days at Mitraniketan, a Gandhian community promoting village renewal, both in India; finish at Sirius Community in Massachusetts. 12 semester credits, University of New Hampshire. Formerly Geocommons College Program. Living Routes, 72 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-0025; 888-515-7333; mailto:info@LivingRoutes.org; www.LivingRoutes.org.

Aug 31- Dec 9 • Findhorn Community Semester

Findhorn Foundation, Scotland. Living Routes, Ecovillage Education Consortium. Semester program in sustainable living. Experiential study of community, creative spirituality, ecology of place through living/learning immersion in community life at Findhorn Foundation, a thriving community of 300+ from over 20 countries. 16 semester credits, Pacific Lutheran University. Living Routes, 72 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-0025; 888-515-7333; 413-259-1255, fax; mailto:info@LivingRoutes.org; www.LivingRoutes.org.

Sep 1-3 • Twin Oaks Communities Conference

Louisa, VA. Twin Oaks' annual networking and learning opportunity. Group decision making, community economics, appropriate technology, collective child raising, sustainable agriculture, dancing, shared meals, slideshows, campfires. \$50-\$150 s/s, incl. meals, camping. 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa VA 23093; 540-894-5126; conference@twin Oaks.org; medusa.twin Oaks.org/cmyt/conf/.

Sep 1-4 • Naka-Ima Summer Arts Camp

Dexter, OR. Lost Valley Educational Center. Using creative arts— theater, dance, music, visual and literary arts, crafts, ritual, and the healing arts—to explore and deepen our relationships with ourselves, one another, and the natural world. For anyone who values connection over content and means over ends, regardless of familiarity with Naka-Ima. \$125-\$250 s/s, incl. meals and camping; indoor lodging, additional \$10/night. Advance registration required. Limited work trade available. 81868 Lost Valley Lane, Dexter, OR 97431; 541-937-3351; larry@lostvalley.org; www.lostvalley.org.

Sep 2-4 • Earth Plasters and Natural Plastering

Rutledge, MO. See Jun 30-Jul 2.

Sep 8-11 • Naka-Ima

Dexter, OR. See Jul 21-24.

Sep 21-24 • Global Change Through Ascension Science

Sedona, AZ. See Jul 27-30.

Sep 22-24 • Earth Plasters and Natural Plastering

Rutledge, MO. See Jun 30-Jul 2.

Sep 22-24 • 4th Annual Northwest Regional Permaculture Gathering

Dexter, OR. Lost Valley Educational Center and Eugene Permaculture Guild. Networking, workshops, hands-on demonstrations, presentations. Advance registration \$60-\$100 s/s, incl. food and camping; \$75-\$100 day of event. \$25, single days. Children welcome, cooperative childcare. Jono Neiger, 81868 Lost Valley Lane, Dexter, OR 97431; 541-937-3351; permaculture@lostvalley.org; www.lostvalley.org.

Sep 28-30 • Communal Studies Association's 26th Annual Conference

Ephrata, PA. "Charismatic Leaders and Family Relations: Promise and Problem," held at Ephrata Cloister, home of a former radical Pietist community. Presentations, papers, banquet, socializing, tours of historic sites, including Ephrata Cloister and the Moravian Complex at Litzitz, for community members, scholars, and anyone interested in communal societies and intentional communities. Accommodations at Ephrata Cloister and Eden Resort Inn, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, or other nearby motels. CSA, PO Box 122, Amana, IA; 319-622-6446; csa@netins.net; www.ic.org/csa/.



New cohousing starting in Western North Carolina. Check it out in ND/B's pages at www.sheltertech.com
elanakann@mindspring.com

Building Cooperative Neighborhoods

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Occidental Arts & Ecology Center Can Help!

OAEC is an organic farm, educational retreat center and intentional community on 80 acres in western Sonoma County, 65 miles north of San Francisco. We can help you to learn about, design and implement systems for sustainable living and intentional community. OAEC offers residential workshops and consulting services year round.

Selected Courses for 2000

Organic Gardening	July 7-9
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Natural Building: Floors & Plasters	July 24-28
Seed Saving	August 4-6
Starting a Community Watershed Group	August 7-11
Restorative Forestry	August 27

Multi-day courses at OAEC include lodging and incredible vegetarian meals with vegetables, herbs, flowers and fruit harvested from our gardens and orchards. Most courses are offered on a sliding scale.



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707.874.1557 • oaec@oaec.org • www.oaec.org



Contact us for a catalog of OAEC courses, programs & work trade opportunities.

CLASSIFIEDS



Communities classified ads reach almost 5,000 people who are seriously interested in community. They include:

- any service, product, workshop or publication that is useful to people living in, or interested in living in communities
- products produced by people living in community
- land for sale which may be of interest to people forming or expanding communities
- personal ads.

Please note that the CLASSIFIED DEADLINE FOR THE FALL 2000 ISSUE (OUT IN SEPTEMBER) IS JULY 10.

The classified rate is \$.50 per word. We now have a discounted rate of \$.40/wd. for a four time insertion and if you are an FIC member, you may take off an additional five percent. We appreciate your payment on ordering. Make check or money order out to Communities and send it, your typed or clearly printed copy with specified word count, how many times you wish the ad to appear and under which category (you may suggest a new category) to: (NOTE THIS IS A NEW ADDRESS!) Patricia Greene, 13 West Branch Rd., Heath, MA 01339; phone or fax, 413-337-4037; email, peagreen@javanet.com. If you are emailing me an ad, please include the copy within the body of the letter, rather than as an attachment and be sure to send your mailing address and put the check in the mail at the same time.

An additional benefit of advertising in Communities classifieds is that you get a half price listing on our Marketplace Web page if you like. To place your Web ad: www.ic.org.

All other listings can be found in the Reach and Calendar departments.

CLASSES, WORKSHOPS, CONFERENCES

COMMUNITY DIALOGS across North America, sponsored by the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC), publisher of this magazine. What does "community" mean to you? What would help you create more community in your life? And how can the FIC help? Community Dialogs are happening in many towns and cities across the continent; your area could be next. Seeking local hosts to bring people together for a discussion exploring these and other topics. For more information, contact the FIC's project coordinator *Tree Bressen*, 2244 Alder St., Eugene, OR 97405; 541-343-5023; tree@ic.org.

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EXPERIENCED COMMUNITARIAN who has helped dozens of communities run better meetings and work together. Let me help you with new ideas and inspirations for working together. Weekend consensus workshops custom designed for your group at affordable rates. Workshops include notebook full of ideas and a full year of remote consulting. I can help you get past your blocks and become aware of the fullness and potential of your group. For more information: *Rob Sandelin* at 360-668-2043; floriferous@msn.com; www.infoteam.com/nonprofit/nica/cw1.htm;

LAND FOR SALE

CENTRAL TEXAS. 60-80 beautiful country acres, 30 minutes west of Austin. Partly wooded south-east slope to seasonal creek; elevation 1,000 ft., two wells, no zoning. 512-288-1287.

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easy access to Long Lake. Irrigated gardens, year-round spring, two small ponds, meadows, woods. Beautiful views, surrounding forests. Spokane Mesa. \$285,000. 509-258-9443; MargaretRhode@aol.com

SHENANDOAH VALLEY, Virginia. Small homestead/house, fertile garden, fruit trees, spring, ready for goats/rabbits/poultry. \$67,500. 540-828-2034.

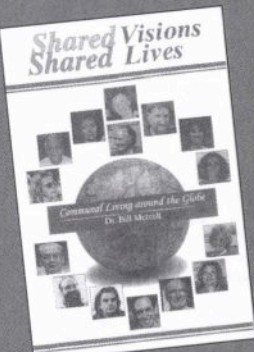
MAGAZINES, NEWSLETTERS

WHY PAY RENT OR MAKE MORTGAGE PAYMENTS, when you can live rent free? The Caretaker Gazette contains property caretaking/housesitting openings, advice and information for property caretakers, housesitters and landowners. Published since 1983. Subscribers receive 700+ property caretaking opportunities each year, worldwide. Some estate management positions start at \$50,000/yr., plus benefits. Subscriptions; \$27/yr. *The Caretaker Gazette*, POB 5887-1, Carefree, AZ 85377; 480-488-1970; www.angelfire.com/wa/caretaker.

PERSONALS

GREEN SINGLES NEWSLETTER. Connecting singles in the environmental, vegetarian, and animal rights communities for friendship, dating and romance. Membership around the world and around the corner. Since 1985. Free information: Box 69-CM, Pickerington, OH 43147; www.greensingles.com.

EARTH MOTHER/MOUNTAIN HOMESTEADER seeks gentle, soulful companion/partner to share and love life with. Interests: simple mindful country living, spirituality, personal/planetary responsibility, self-sufficiency, family life, organic gardening/food production, herbology, beekeeping, animals, homebuilding/restoration, stone masonry, independent energy, nature/wilderness appreciation, health, alternative healing, antiques, old Victorian homes and farmhouses, barns, woodstoves, romance, woods walking. Attractive, gentle, quiet, respectful, 49, Caucasian with Colorado log homestead. Wish to relocate, preferably to ecovillage/intentional community. *Sarabeth*, c/o *Frieda*, 250 Comanche Lane, Lake Havasu, AZ 86403.



SHARED VISIONS, SHARED LIVES
Communal Living Around the Globe
Dr Bill Metcalf

Revealing, personal accounts of dreams, joys, challenges, failures, and successes of 15 communities worldwide, as told by founders and elders of communities in France, Germany, Israel, UK, Brazil, Mexico, US, Canada, India, New Zealand, and Japan. With many illustrations, *Shared Visions* offers a wealth of fascinating detail.

Available from US sources for \$14 postpaid. Available fr. Australia f/ roughly equivalent price). Contact Bill Metcalf, w.metcalf@mailbox.gu.edu.au.

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REACH



Reach is a regular feature intended to help match people looking for communities with communities looking for people. As the most up-to-date and widely read clearinghouse available to you, it reaches those who are seriously interested in community.

You may use the form on the last page of Reach to place an ad. Note: THE REACH DEADLINE FOR THE FALL 2000 ISSUE (OUT IN SEPTEMBER) IS JULY 10!

The special Reach rate is only \$.25 per word (up to 100 words, \$.50 per word thereafter) so why not use this opportunity to network with others interested in community? We offer discounts for multiple insertions as well: \$.23 per word for two times and \$.20 per word for four times. If you are an FIC member, you can take off an additional five percent.

Please make check or money order payable to Communities, and send it, plus your ad copy, word count, number of insertions and category to: (NOTE THIS IS A NEW ADDRESS AND PHONE!) Patricia Greene, 13 West Branch Rd., Heath, MA 01339; phone and fax, 413-337-4037; email, peagreen@javanet.com. (If you email an ad, please include your mailing address and be sure to mail off the check at the same.)

Suggestions to advertisers: get a larger response by including address, phone/fax, and e-mail, if you have it. If you require a financial investment, target your ad to people with financial resources by letting readers know this. Caveat to readers: never, but never, drop in on any community unannounced!

Listings for workshops, land, books, products, etc. including personals, belong in the Classifieds and are charged at a \$.50/wd. rate. Please see that department for instructions.

COMMUNITIES WITH OPENINGS

ABUNDANT DAWN COMMUNITY, Floyd, Virginia. Experienced community founders seek pioneers. We are committed to dealing openly with conflict and to considering carefully the impacts of our actions on the planet. Our 90 acres of beautiful southern Appalachian land has building sites for four or five small sub-communities ("pods"). So far we are two pods: Tekiah (an income sharing group) and Dayspring Circle (an independent income group). We want to grow, both by taking on new members in existing pods, and by taking on new groups. Business opportunities include organic gardening, portable sawmill operation, and a hemp hammock business. Some members work in nearby cities. We include a diversity of spiritual and sexual orientations. Families welcome. POB 433, Floyd, VA 24091; abundantdawn@ic.org; www.abundantdawn.org.

ACORN, Mineral, Virginia. We are a young consensus community creating an egalitarian culture that values fun, children, relationships and varied, fulfilling work. We share income from selling crafts, organic farming and occasional outside jobs and work together to build and maintain our home on 72 acres. Acorn, 1259-CM11 Indian Creek Rd., Mineral, VA 23117; 540-894-0595; acorn@ic.org.

AQUARIAN CONCEPTS, Sedona, Arizona. Founded by Gabriel of Sedona and Niann Emerson Chase in 1989. Currently 100 members full-time. We love children. International flavor. Global change work for Destiny Reservists in Divine Administration. God-centered community based on teachings of The URANTIA Book and Continuing Fifth Epochal Revelation—The Cosmic Family Volumes as received by Gabriel of Sedona. Clean air, pure water, organic gardens. Starseed Schools of Melchizedek (all ages) and healing environment which includes morontian counseling and other alternative practices. Global Change Music with Gabriel of Sedona and the Bright and Morning Star Band with the vocal CDs

"Holy City" and "CosmoPop 2000," and Future Studios with CosmoArt, CosmoTheater and video productions. Planetary Family Services, including light construction, stone masonry, landscaping, cleaning and maintenance, teepees and yurts, computer services, elder home care. Serious spiritual commitment required. Student commitment also available. POB 3946, Sedona, AZ 86340; 520-204-1206; aquarianconcepts@sedona.net; www.aquarianconcepts.com.

ARC RETREAT CENTER, Stanchfield, Minnesota. 55 miles north of Minneapolis. Emphasizing peace, justice, prayer, simplicity. Has openings for adult volunteers and staff for one year or longer commitments, to join a resident ecumenical community which provides hospitality for guests seeking retreat and renewal. For information contact: ARC, 1680-373rd Ave., NE, Stanchfield, MN 55080; 763-689-3540; arcetreat@hotmail.com.

BREITENBUSH HOT SPRINGS, Detroit, Oregon. We are a wilderness retreat and conference center owned and operated by an intentional community, organized as a worker-owned cooperative. Breitenbush is surrounded by old growth temperate rain forest, one of the last of its kind on Earth, and possesses the highest concentration of thermal springs in the Oregon Cascades. We have a variety of hot tubs, natural hot spring pools, a steam sauna and all buildings are heated geothermally. The work and business ethic is one of stewardship; caring for the land while insuring accessibility of the healing waters to all who respect them. Breitenbush hosts events involving human potential: meditation, yoga, theater, dance... Breitenbush provides housing and a variety of benefits for its staff of 40 to 60 people. We are looking for talented, dedicated people in the areas of housekeeping, cooking, office (reservations, registration and administration), maintenance, construction and massage therapy (Oregon LMT required). Breitenbush's mission is to provide a safe and potent environment for social and personal growth. Breitenbush Hot Springs, Personnel Director, POB 578, Detroit, OR 92342; 503-854-3320.



Northwest Intentional Communities Association



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For sample newsletter send \$1 or SASE to: NICA 22020 East Lost Lake Rd.
Snohomish, WA 98296 Email floriferous@msn.com

CAMPBILL VILLAGE MINNESOTA, Sauk Centre, Minnesota. Part of the International Camphill movement. Located in rural central Minnesota. Life-sharing community of 60 people, 25 of whom are adults with special needs. We are on 400 acres-woods, fields, river, ponds. We have a dairy farm, beef farm, weavery (rugs and scarves), woodshop (toys and household items), bakery (bread, cookies, cereals), dollmaking shop, food processing kitchen and large vegetable gardens. We provide our own bread and biodynamic/organic meat, milk and vegetables. We live and work together with respect for each person's abilities. Although we work out of a non-denominational Christian philosophy, we accept people of all spiritual paths. Fostering a mood of reverence and gratitude is an essential part of Camphill life. We celebrate the seasonal and Christian festivals of the year with songs, stories, plays and other activities that are prepared together in the community. We seek people to join us—families, couples, single people. We need people who can be Houseparents (usually with four special needs people and one or two other "coworkers"), a dairy farmer, gardeners, and people willing to lend a hand wherever needed. We are looking for long term, committed people generally starting with a six month get-acquainted period. We provide health insurance, three weeks vacation, and meet each person's needs as possible. For information: Rt. 3, Box 249, Sauk

Centre, MN 56378; 320-732-6365; fax, 320-732-3204; CVMN@rea-alp.com.

CHILDREN FOR THE FUTURE, Champaign, Illinois. Our new, peace-oriented community of five adult non-smokers and three children is just two blocks from the University of Illinois. We are non-sectarian, are starting a small grade school, and hope to start a pre-school. One of us is finishing a PhD and two work in town. We are academically-oriented and are happy to have student members as part of our community. We love children and hope to have and raise many intelligent and well-rounded children who will contribute positively to society in the future. 800-498-7781; C4TF@cs.com; www.childrenforthefuture.org.

DANCING RABBIT, Rutledge, Missouri. Highly motivated, community and ecologically minded, and experienced group is looking for individuals, families, and communities to help create the ideal rural ecovillage. Fourteen of us are constructing off-the-grid straw-bale and cob homes on our 280 beautiful, rolling acres in northeast Missouri. Dancing Rabbit will be a large community with many different subcommunities that interact socially and economically. Our goal is to build a small town that is truly sustainable and socially responsible. Potential living options include DR's first subcommunity, Skyhouse (an FEC community of five adults) and private individual or family homes. We have a

close working relationship with Sandhill Farm, a 23-year-old egalitarian community nearby, and are especially interested in other existing community groups joining us. We've got the ideas, the energy and the land, all we need is you! Contact us now to arrange a visit. 1 Dancing Rabbit Lane, Rutledge, MO 63563; 660-883-5511; dancingrabbit@ic.org; www.dancingrabbit.org.

BROADDUS FARM, East Central New Mexico. Nonsmokers only, no illegal substances. Organic gardening. Helping in community is expected to receive free vegetables and live rent free. No particular mind-set expected. Quiet and private. Request details: Broaddus Farm, POB 153, Elida, NM 88116; 505-274-6440.

EAST WIND, Tecumseh, Missouri. A 75-member Federation of Egalitarian (FEC) community, est. 1973. Located on 1,045 acres of land in the Ozark foothills of southern Missouri. The topography is heavily forested and scenic. Like other FEC communities, East Wind members value ecological awareness, equality, cooperation, and nonviolence. Personal freedom is important to us. We enjoy flexible work schedules, incorporating choices from our successful businesses and domestic labors. Write or call and please contact us before visiting. East Wind Community, Box CM-R, Tecumseh, MO 65760; 417-679-4682; visit@eastwind.org.

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2000

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Aug 27 **Geocommons Fall Semester**
Dec 9 Plum Village - France, Auroville - India

2001

Jan 3 **Permaculture Practicum**
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Feb 1 **Community Studies Program**
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ECOVILLAGE COHOUSING, Ithaca, New York. A great place to live! We are creating an environmental village that will be composed of several cohousing communities integrated with a working farm and education center. As an experiment in sustainable living, we already inspire visitors from around the world. We are seeking new members to join our second neighborhood group (SoNG), which plans to begin building in 1999. Come see our beautiful 176 acre site near a vibrant college town. Stay overnight in our first neighborhood, a lively community of 30 families, share a meal in the common house or visit our 9.5 acre organic farm. EcoVillage welcomes you! Check out our Web site at www.cfe.cornell.edu/ecovillage and contact: Liz Walker, 607-255-8276; ecovillage@cornell.edu; EcoVillage, Anabelle Taylor Hall, Cornell Univ., Ithaca, NY 14853.

THE FELLOWSHIP COMMUNITY, Spring Valley, New York. Located 30 minutes north of NYC, we are an intergenerational community founded in 1966 centered around the care of the elderly. Now numbering about 150, we grow most of our vegetable needs biodynamically, enjoy a variety of animals, an apple orchard as well as practical work activities such as a candle shop, metal shop, wood shop, weavery/handwork, greenhouse, publication press, bakery, outlet store, medical practice. Children, co-workers and the elderly all may work together in these activities. The spiritual

science (anthroposophy) of Rudolf Steiner is the basis for our work. There is a Waldorf School and several other anthroposophical initiatives in the neighborhood. Our lifestyle is an intense social/cultural commitment to the future of mankind. Check out our Web site at www.FellowshipCommunity.org. Write to Ann Scharff, c/o The Executive Circle at 241 Hungry Hollow Rd., Spring Valley, NY 10977, or call 914-356-8494.

FEMINIST EDUCATION CENTER, Athens, Ohio. 151 acres only 20 minutes from Ohio University, Hocking College and other intentional communities. SASE. Susan B. Anthony Women's Land Trust, POB 5853, Athens, OH 45701; ad965@seorf.ohiou.edu.

GANAS, Staten Island, New York. Ganas moved to NYC in 1979 with six people (all still here.) Now we're about 75 adults of many ages, ethnicities and life views. Conflicts that arise usually get resolved quickly because we discuss them before they get hot. Every day half of us talk together about work, community, and personal issues. Our purpose is to learn to exchange truth with love, intelligence and pleasure. Some live here and choose not to participate in Ganas process, work or goals. But almost everyone has become part of a caring extended family. Personal feedback is important to us, but it happens only with consent. We live in nine well-maintained buildings with lovely gardens, good

living space and excellent food. Our four stores repair and resell furniture, clothing, artwork, and much more. People who qualify to work here receive all expenses plus up to \$300 a month and a share of our profits. Others pay all their expenses with \$500-\$650 per month. Long or short term visitors are welcome. Ganas, 135 Corson Ave., Staten Island, NY 10301-2933; 718-720-5378; fax 718-448-6842; ganas@well.com www.well.com/~ganas.

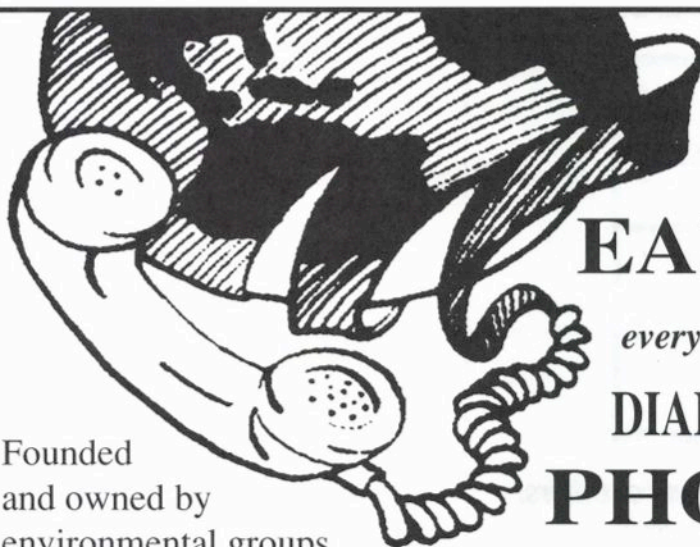
G.R.O.W.II, Parkville, New York. G.R.O.W. II is a 55-room country hotel, conference center, workshop facility, campground and concert area on 70 beautiful acres in the Catskill Mountains, 100 miles from NYC. We are looking for people interested in starting a new community in these facilities or just working here with us. There is land to garden or farm (if you like.) We will try to support whatever industry you develop if we can. You might partner in our conference center work. If you want to start your own workshops, we will try to help. In return, you can help us. Ganas people host weekend events during the summer and work in the NYC facility year round. Good people are needed to help in both places. G.R.O.W. II, 548 Cooley Rd., Parkville, NY 12768; 914-295-0655; or contact Ganas at 718-720-5378; fax 718-448-6842; ganas@well.com; www.ganas.org. (See full page ad, p. 1.)

L.A. ECO-VILLAGE, Los Angeles, California. In process, near downtown L.A.. We seek friendly,

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POTASH HILL COMMUNITY, Cummington, Massachusetts. On 115 acres of woods and pastures in western Mass., 25 miles west of Northampton, a five-college town. 13 privately owned two-to-five-acre lots ranging from \$23,000-\$30,000 surrounded by 60 acre land trust. Community building and sauna. Six households established. Our fundamental principle is to establish and uphold harmony, cooperation, creativity, and reciprocity of support. We value personal autonomy, relationships, business, the arts, natural healing, education, gardening, celebration, and fun. We foresee a community of independent thinkers with the initiative to take responsibility for shaping their lives and their community. SASE to: *Neel or Deborah, 9 Frazier Lane, Cummington, MA 01026; 413-634-0181.*

RIVER GROVE SANCTUARY, nr. Palm Springs, California. Single, completely private, near uni-

versities. Optionally participate with reforestation, species restoration, gardening. \$350 monthly. *909-925-8110; 310-457-1268; e-m@mail.com.*

SALT CREEK INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY, Port Angeles, Washington. We are four non-sectarian adults who own 55 acres of forest/farmland with a salmon spawning creek on the north Olympic Peninsula, Washington, near the Olympic National Park. We are seeking community members who share our vision, living cooperatively and lightly on the land, organic gardening, and who have the financial resources to buy a share in the community of six residential lots and common land. Since we have not yet formalized the legal structure of our community we invite anyone with skills in this area to assist us. We are located 13 miles from Port Angeles, a town of 20,000 people on the Strait of Juan de Fuca across from Victoria, British Columbia. Contact *Janevavani@aol.com* or send SASE to *Salt Creek Intentional Community, 585 Wasankari Rd., Port Angeles, WA 98363.*

SANDHILL FARM, Rutledge, Missouri. Family-style, income-sharing, egalitarian community looking for new members to help build a caring, sustainable lifestyle, respectful of the earth and each other. We support ourselves growing and selling organic food (sorghum, honey, mustard, tempeh, garlic, horseradish), helping build the communities movement (we do administrative work for FIC), and by having fun! We grow most of our own food and value the energy put into that process. We operate by consensus and hold group meetings twice weekly. We are looking for people who value simple living, are self-motivated, conscientious, self-aware, and willing to follow through with conflict resolution. Having a sense of humor and a joy for living are big pluses. We have recently joined energies with Dancing Rabbit (a community two miles away aiming to build a sustainable ecovillage.) We are five adult members and one child. Interns welcome April-November. Come be part of the excitement! *Sandhill Farm, Rt. 1, Box 155-C, Rutledge, MO 63563; 660-883-5543; sandhill@ic.org.*

TERRA NOVA, Columbia, Missouri. Looking for a community in the Midwest? Columbia is a

university town, large enough to offer a wide range of opportunities, small enough to eliminate the commute. Write for more information. *1404 Gary, Columbia, MO 65203; 573-443-5253; terranovacommunity@juno.com.*

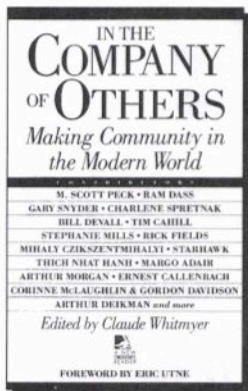
TWIN OAKS, Louisa, Virginia. Twin Oaks has been a model of sustainable community living for over 30 years. We are currently looking for new members, and would love to have you visit. We can offer you: a flexible work schedule in our community businesses, an abundance of homegrown organic food, a thriving social scene, and an established culture of non-violence and egalitarianism. You can offer us: your talents and skills (or your unskilled enthusiasm) and your desire to live lightly on the land and share income. For information: *Twin Oaks, 138-R Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093; 540-894-5126; twinoaks@ic.org; www.twinoaks.org.*

WINDTREE RANCH, Douglas, Arizona. Remote foothills, eco-sustainable, poly, Pagan, naturist, vegan, toxin-free, non-profit. *RR2, Box 1, Douglas, AZ 85607-9802; 520-364-4611; windtreeranch@theriver.com; www.windtree.org.*

COMMUNITY HOUSES FOR SALE

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAINS, Paradox, New York. Former farm/school/community in beautiful wilderness valley in upstate New York. Owner-built three bedroom log cabin, two two-bedroom A frames, 55 acres. \$189,000. Two barns and additional 35 acres available. *802-863-5485.*

COMMON PLACE LAND COOPERATIVE, Truxton, New York. Besides many undeveloped housesites available, we have two inexpensive homes for sale. One is a small, rustic, hexagonal cabin with outhouse, propane, running water, wood heat, no electric. Four wheel drive needed for winter access. In cluster of four hill-top homes. Swimming pond nearby. The other is a 192 12' by 60' trailer on a fertile leasehold. Easy access, needs repairs. Septic, shared well, electric, propane, wood heat, front porch, and storage trailer. Rent either during six-month clearness process, purchase when member.



In the Company of Others: Making Community in the Modern World

Claude Whitmyer, Editor

Contributions by M. Scott Peck, Ram Dass, Thich Nhat Hanh, Arthur Morgan, Geoph Kozeny, Kathryn McCamant & Charles Durrett, Corinne McLaughlin & Gordon Davidson, and more...

\$14 postpaid. *FIC, Rt. 1, Box 155, Rutledge, MO 63563; 660-883-5545.*

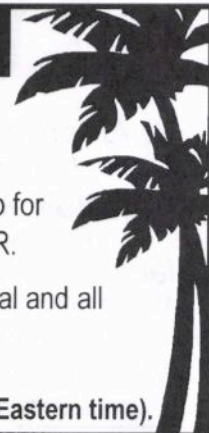
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For info: JoeandAlda@cs.com or (617) 770-9384 (evenings Eastern time).



CPLC, 4211 Route 13, Truxton, NY 13158; 607-842-6799 or 607-842-6849.

INTENTIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD, Eugene, Oregon. Home for sale. Be part of a dynamic and supportive living environment by purchasing this beautiful, finely crafted home with exquisite details and finishes. Highly energy efficient, it utilizes straw-bale construction with passive solar and radiant floor heating. Low toxic materials, hand troweled plaster and stucco. Three bedrooms, two baths, carport, atrium, balcony, plus detached studio. The neighborhood consists of 12 families in single-family dwellings. \$239,000. 985 Tiara, Eugene, OR 97405; 541-302-3397; jackandmae@earthlink.net.

MIDDLE ROAD COMMUNITY, Nelson, British Columbia. Beautiful home (three and one half years old), seven miles from Nelson. The house is a five bedroom, 2,700 sq. ft., plus a 600 sq. ft. office/guest suite space. Radiant floor heating, three bathrooms, steam room, loft, den, vaulted ceiling in living room, skylights, open kitchen/dining area concept, many artistic touches, lots more! We share 52 acres, nestled in the Kootenay Mountains on a bench above the lake. Each lot is approximately one and one half acres with 30 acres of common land—forests, creeks, fields, and wetland/bird sanctuary. Also a three-acre garden. In the middle is a common house where we eat, play, dance, and hold

regular meetings based on consensus. Close to Waldorf, regular schools, (some of us home-school), skiing, canoeing, hot springs, and lots more. The people are of diverse philosophies. \$378,000 (Canadian) Phone toll free: 888-337-0009; cmoon@visionmountain.com.

WISE ACRES COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, Indianola, Washington. Custom home in 17 acre, nine-household intentional community in north Kitsap County across Puget Sound from Seattle. The house: 2,000 sq. ft., built 1994, four bedrooms, two offices/guest rooms, one and one half baths with composting toilet, three decks, covered entry, mud room. 14-tree orchard on our one third acre parcel. Wise Acres Community Association: 13 adults, nine children share lives, twice-weekly dinners, maintenance of 14 wooded acres with trails, gravel roads, well, hot tub, commons. Ten minute walk to beach, 10/25 minute drives to Edmonds/Seattle ferries. \$265,000. Call owners Deborah and Dwight Wilson in Seattle: 206-632-1581; ddavis@tscnet.com.

COMMUNITIES FORMING

COHOUSING GROUP, Chattanooga, Tennessee. A group of fairly normal folks are forming a cohousing community in Chattanooga. Roy at 423-622-0604; Bill at 423-624-6821; royjh@att.net.

COLUMBIA COHOUSING, Columbia, Missouri. We will cluster about 20 private homes around a common house to facilitate sharing and social interaction. In such a community, we feel more connected to other people and more committed to things beyond ourselves. We believe Columbia, a progressive university town, is an ideal location. We hope to build next summer. 5316 Godas Circle, Columbia, MO 65202; 573-814-3632; <http://cohousing.missouri.org>.

ECOVILLAGE OF LOUDOUN COUNTY, Northern Virginia. Building community...respecting the Earth. Imagine living on 180 acres of beautiful, rolling hills with mature trees, incredible vistas, several streams and easy access to the Potomac River. Think about living in a convenient location (whether working in Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia or Frederick, Maryland) with a five minute trip to train, bus, and major roadways. Enjoy a dynamic, environmentally oriented community where you know your neighbors yet are afforded the balance of privacy. Become part of this unique neighborhood that combines the principles of an ecovillage and cohousing community. Find out more. Grady O'Rear, 1726 Shookstown Rd., Frederick, MD 21702; 301-662-4646; Ecovillages@aol.com; www.ecovillages.com/.

EDEN RANCH, Paonia, Colorado. Seeking members desiring rural, spiritual environment. Sharing labor and resources on planned biody-

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EDEN ECOVILLAGE PROJECT, Mendocino, California. An earth restored and a world at peace, permaculture, egalitarianism, sustainable living, right livelihood, creating a natural learning and healing environment. 84 passive solar homesites, good farmland, 1,600 acre valley with forests, meadows, lakes, mountains, clean water, sunshine, and good rainfall! *Eden Journal!*, four issues \$7; Payable: *T. McClure, POB 571, Kenwood, CA 95452.*

GARDENSPIRIT, Asheville, North Carolina. Creating small (eventually 8-10 people), sustainable, self-reliant community on 11 acres with two houses, large organic garden, and off-grid solar system in rural, rolling hills an hour south of Asheville. Individual dwellings and shared

households planned. Seeking open-hearted, responsible, spiritually oriented people to join us. For more info: www.ic.org/gardenspirit/ or contact: *GardenSpirit, 688 McEntire Rd., Tryon, NC 28782; diana@ic.org.*

NOAH'S ARK 2, Texas. One hour east of Austin. Establishing open-hearted, earth-sheltered, "survival/escape" center for friendly, progressive folks since 1995. *4001 Oakridge, Houston, TX 77009; 713-863-0433; Quddusc@aol.com.*

PLEASANT HILL COHOUSING, San Francisco Bay Area, California. Cohousing group seeks members, especially families with young children. Our vision is to create and live in a diverse community which fosters harmony with each other, the larger community, and nature. We are currently 15 committed households planning to build 32 units on our 2.2 acre site 20 miles east of San Francisco. The site is adjacent to a walking/biking trail and an elementary school and park. It has a wonderful old oak tree, a beautiful view of Mt. Diablo, and easy access via freeway or public transit to Walnut Creek, Berkeley/Oakland, and San Francisco. Pleasant Hill (pop. 31,000) is primarily a residential community with scattered retail/commercial areas. Diablo Valley College and Briones Regional Park are nearby. Plans include common areas for shared dining, children's playroom, sitting area, workshop, guestroom, laundry, organic garden, and a pool (we're in a Bay Area location that has a real summer!). Private homes are one, two, three, and four bedroom flats and townhouses. The site is under contract and we've recently submitted our plans to the City for approval. We are working with The Cohousing Company and Wonderland Development. For more info, contact *Barbara at 925-256-1085; dancerBarb@aol.com; http://members.aol.com/dancerBarb/.*

ROLLING MEADOWS FARM SPIRIT COMMUNITY, Van Etten, New York. Cabins and gardening space available near Ithaca, New York on 85 acres. Write and say something about yourself. *Rolling Meadows Farm Spirit Community, 467 Langford Creek Rd., Van Etten, NY 14889.*

SEEKING PARTNERS: about a dozen adults committed that integrity is the source of workability in the matter, to forward the communal experiment "ethical science theatre." *Alexis, 631-736-3085.*

PEOPLE LOOKING

54-YEAR-OLD SINGLE FEMALE relocating to Berkeley-Oakland area at end of year seeks cohousing in existing or in-formation community. I'm a political activist and animal lover who enjoys nature, gardening, gourmet cooking, caring, compassionate and committed people. I'm willing to help organize, like to join a mixed-age, multi-ethnic group with diverse sexual orientations. Please write to: *Chandra Hauptman, 110 Clinton Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11205; 718-797-2527.*

EARTH MOTHER, 49, with five y/o twins seeks opening in ecovillage/intentional community. Spiritual, gentle, quiet, respectful. Philosophy/values/skills/gifts: Personal/planetary responsibility/healing, sustainable self-sufficient simple living, organic gardening/agriculture/food production, beekeeping, nature/wilderness appreciation, ecosystem preservation/restoration, homebuilding/restoration, stone masonry, furniture restoration, herbology, alternative healing, registered nurse, yoga, mediation, consensus decision making, skilled group facilitator, homeschooling. Currently live in Colorado in owner-built log and stone home, off the grid with independent energy system, heat with woodstoves. Operated an organic greenhouse home business for several years and sold honey from my beehives. Especially interested to a child-friendly community in WV, VA, NC, TN, MO, or NY, but will consider any forested location. I wish to live lightly upon the land, respectful of all life forms, among like-minded souls who endeavor to live from their hearts, joyfully, mindfully, and lovingly in the moment. With folks who possess the integrity and strength to manifest dreams into reality. Please call *Sarabeth, 303-567-4886.*

ADULT MALE, 59 YEARS OLD. While I'm disabled-Cerebral Palsy and use an attendant, I am

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mentally alert and very independent. I want to live in a community. I have personal focuses of spirituality and growth. The gifts that I offer to others are healing, writing, sharing and listening. Other interests I have are reading, music and continuing education. I'd be interested in hearing from you. *J. Carey, 1717 S. Douglas, Springfield, IL 62704; jbc1717@eosinc.com.*

INTERNS AND WORK OPPORTUNITIES

ADIRONDACK HERBS, Galway, New York. Open positions: A. Firewood Reader; B. New Science Officer—must be a person of Atlantian background familiar with Ancient Technologies of Free Energy and Perpetual Motion; C. Meteorological Officer—must observe work from a reclining position and promptly warn workers if it starts to rain; D. Slow Motion Researcher—must be able to move small objects very slowly from one place to another for no apparent reason. We are also starting a serious e-business and offer shares to programmer and engineer residing at another community. 518-883-3453; *herb@klink.net.*

AQUARIAN CONCEPTS, Sedona, Arizona. Lead guitarist wanted for Gabriel of Sedona's Bright and Morning Star Band. Male or Female. Send demo. See our community listing under "Communities with Openings" above. Also, Choir Director wanted. Young, vivacious female wanted for 40 voice choir and eight piece orchestra, Gabriel of Sedona's Bright and Morning Star Choir. All original CosmoWorship compositions. Must be willing to become a committed community member. Send picture and resume. See listing above for address.

BREITENBUSH HOT SPRINGS, Detroit, Orgeon. Worker-owned cooperative seeks Business Director for remote, holistic retreat and conference center located in Oregon Cascades. Organized, self motivated, responsible, creative,

flexible individual with strong work ethic/values, and excellent communication skills required. Experience in financial, computer, personnel management and conflict resolution necessary. Benefits include: living in a supportive intentional community, housing, full medical benefits, meals/groceries at cost, plus salary. For an application packet contact: *Breitenbush Hot Springs, Attn.: Personnel, POB 578, Detroit, OR 97342; 503-854-3320; ccoleman@breitenbush.com.*

FELLOWSHIP OF INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES (FIC), Rutledge, Missouri. Office Manager for FIC in northeast Missouri (at Sandhill Farm, three miles from Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage). Up to 30 hours/week managing a small staff and responsibility for own tasks including: accounting, publication fulfillment, conference registration, inquiries. Skills: computer (Mac/PC), customer service, organizational, communication. Self-starter needed for consensus-based organization with geographically dispersed staff. Detail orientation and long-term vision needed. Modest wage, fulfilling service work. Membership openings at both communities, see Reach ads this issue. Contact *Cecil at fic@ic.org; RR 1, Box 156, Rutledge, MO 63563.*

OJAI FOUNDATION, Ojai, California. Residential Work Retreat and Internship opportunities for those who are interested in exploring the relationship between mindful work, spiritual practice, community experience, and personal retreat time. The foundation provides a learning community; a rites of passage center; a place for retreat, reflection, and healing; opportunities to participate in the creation of a caring, mindful culture; and a training center for bringing the Way of Council to the educational, business and therapeutic communities. 805-646-8343; Fax: 805-646-2456; *ojaidn@jetlink.net; www.ojaifoundation.org.*

SANDHILL FARM, Rutledge, Missouri. Internships in Sustainable Living. April to November. Gain experience in organic farming,

construction, communication, rural and community living. Learning is informal and hands-on. Come for six weeks or longer. See community description under "Communities with Openings" above. *Sandhill Farm, RR1, Box 155-C, Rutledge, MO 63563; 660-883-5543; sandhill@ic.org.*

THREE SPRINGS GARDENS, North Fork, California. We are looking for gardener/member. The gardens are currently one and one half acres and in their fifth year of hand-tilled biointensive cultivation. The emphasis of the garden is our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, which supports 40 families. Each year we offer two educational apprenticeships. Michelle, the garden manager, is looking for a like-minded garden spirit who has the skills and dedication to share the responsibility of managing the CSA and planning the growth of the garden together. Three Springs Community Land Trust is an eight member, rural-based intentional community. Send cover letter and resume to: *Three Springs Gardens, c/o Michelle Vesser, 59820 Italian Bar Rd., North Fork, CA 93643.*

RESOURCES

ALTERNATIVE EGALITARIAN COMMUNITIES. NO MONEY DOWN! We invite you to join our existing businesses and housing—all we ask for is a cooperative attitude and willingness to work hard. Live with others who value equality, ecology and pacifism. For our booklet, send \$3 to: *Federation of Egalitarian Communities, HC-3, Box 3370-CM98, Tecumseh, MO 65760; 417-679-4682; fec@ic.org.*

INTERESTED IN JOINING A BRUDERHOF COMMUNITY? We'll put you in touch with former members of the Hutterian Brethren/Bruderhof. *Peregrine Foundation, PO Box 460141, San Francisco, CA 94146; 415-821-2090.*

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Please specify which section you wish your ad to appear under:

- Communities with Openings
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Cost: 25¢/wd. to 100 words, 50¢/wd. thereafter.
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- built and maintains the Intentional Communities site on the World Wide Web

<www.ic.org>

- hosts gatherings and events about community.
- builds bridges between communities and the wider culture.
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#107

- Please don't share my name with other like-minded organizations.

Photocopy and mail to: **FIC, 138-CM Twin Oaks Rd, Louisa VA 23093. Ph 800-462-8240**

PERIPATETIC COMMUNITARIAN
(continued from p. 76)

can switch from one to the other without warning. The community way of life is not for the faint of heart nor the weak of spirit. It is a warrior's path, for those whose vision (or bullheaded stubbornness) is stronger than their desire for comfort. Comfort, however, can be a good thing, and in my weaker moments I have succumbed to thoughts of returning to the good life, from which I bid a hasty retreat five years ago. Then I remember. "Wherever I go, there I am." This is as good as it gets.

Yet Lost Valley is a functioning, nourishing community. Something is working. Perhaps all this is what it takes to create the space in which our love and compassion can grow. Welcome to community. Applications now being accepted. And don't forget to wash your hands before dinner. Ω

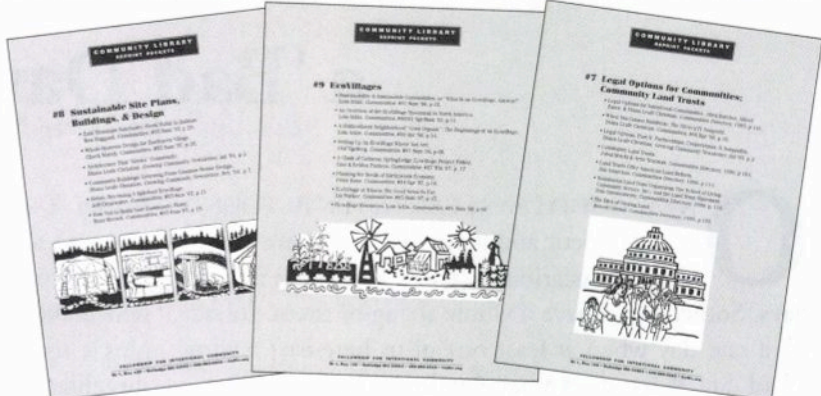
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This article originally appeared in Talking Leaves, a Journal of Our Evolving Ecological Culture. (\$18/yr, 81868 Lost Valley Lane, Dexter, OR 97431; 541-937-3351; editor@talkingleaves.org; www.talkingleaves.org.) Information about Lost Valley can be found on their Web site at www.lostvalley.org.

Larry Kaplowitz, program coordinator at Lost Valley Educational Center in Dexter, Oregon, and associate editor of Talking Leaves, is happy to report that the phones, water, and sewage systems are all working again, and that the bread box is currently full.

(Geoph Kozeny's Peripatetic Communitarian column, normally found in this spot, will resume with our Fall '00. See his article, p. 49.)

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Yes, I'm interested! Send me the following Community Library Reprint Packets:
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Send me the whole set. I've enclosed \$40.

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Photocopy and mail to: **Reprint Packets, FIC, RR 1, Box 156, Rutledge MO 63563**

Community on a 'Bad Day'

ON MY GOOD DAYS I CAN OFTEN BE FOUND waxing poetic about our idyllic life here at Lost Valley Educational Center. I also have my bad days. Sometimes I have a whole string of them. In fact it's a rare day when at least one of us here isn't having a bad day. What does a bad day look like for me?

It's been raining non-stop for a week in a month that has seen only three dry days. My family are all irritable and edgy from having spent the whole weekend cooped up in our one-room house. I am frustrated because my "variety in work" has left me with uncompleted projects wherever I look, and my backlog of phone messages and correspondence waiting to be answered has grown to an absurd level, causing me a continual, low-grade sense of guilt. The food orderer has been on vacation and we're out of fruit, vegetables, and bread. Our recent deep freeze, in addition to bursting many pipes, killed most of our overwintering crops in the gardens. Several community members are sick, in the throes of yet another microbial onslaught, delivered by one of our continual stream of visitors, apprentices, and conference guests who have partaken in our touchy-feely lifestyle. Consequently, every pre-meal circle now ends with a frenzied flight to the washrooms, where we queue up for the anti-bacterial soap to disinfect ourselves from our hygienically corrupt hand holding. The phones are malfunctioning, causing every other incoming call to get cut off, and our computers all have viruses.

At our morning circle in the kitchen, everyone is soggy and puffy-eyed and the energy is grim. Someone is heating up week-old rice, which is burning in the pan, and another is looking forlornly at the barren

toaster. During Lost Valley winters, our primary diversion and comfort is toast, and the empty breadbox is a cruel insult. We circle, and after a long silence during which everyone looks at the floor, someone finally begins a song. Several of us join in despondently, with dirgelike effect, until the song raggedly peters out. It is

Monday morning and on the plate for today are the cheery tasks of trying to figure out why our sewage system, water system, and phone system are all malfunctioning. We also have to work on next year's budget to find a way to recover from our deficit last year, and to once more redesign our organizational structure so we don't end yet another conference season burned out, frustrated, and broke. Several of us are beginning to feel desperate because it seems like it will never get done, should have been completed a month ago, and probably won't work anyway. Add to this mix occasional Y2K panic attacks, relationship blowouts, existential crises, automobile breakdowns, lice, pinworms, mysterious rashes, and seemingly irreconcilable philosophical differences, and I begin counting the hours to bedtime.

I sometimes think of Lost Valley as a whirling centrifuge, where all our impurities, both individual and cultural, are pushed to the surface at an accelerated pace, continually erupting to the surface like boils. While this affords tremendous opportunities for growth, self-discovery, and healing, it also makes for an unrelenting intensity, particularly in the summer, when dozens of new people are thrown into the hopper every week. Depending on my mood and frame of mind, this can make for abject agony or blissful ecstasy. And I

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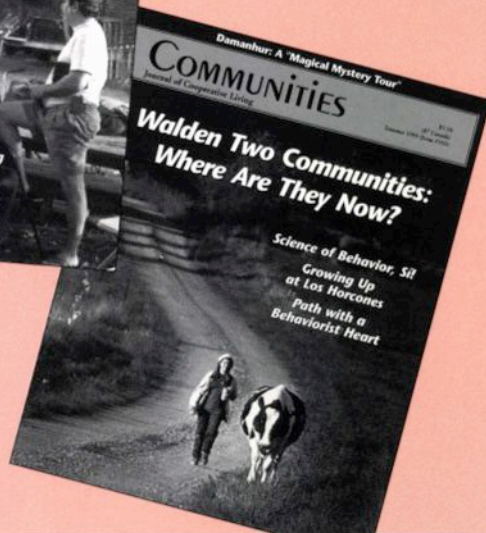
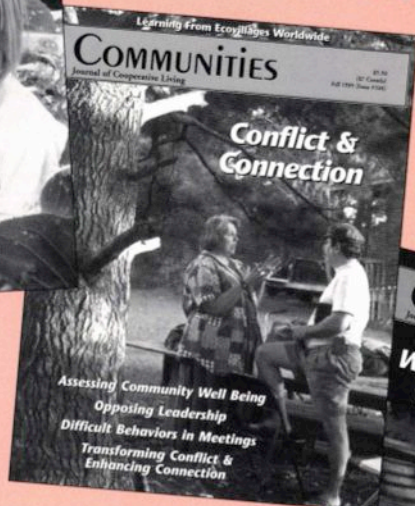
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