

The Village Blooms in the City: Portland's Natural Building Convergence

COMMUNITIES

JOURNAL of COOPERATIVE Living

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Summer 2002 (Issue #115)



The Heart of Sustainability

Everybody Loves Strawbale

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***More Sustainable Than Thou:
An Eco-Communitarian's Recovery***

22



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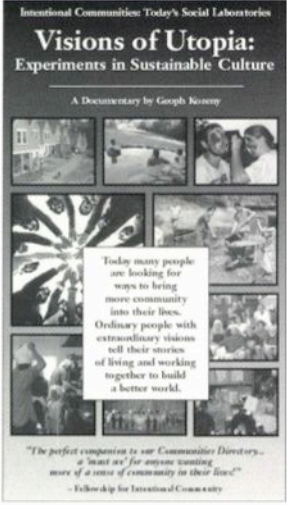
Visions of Utopia Video

Tape One

by Geoph Kozeny

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After exploring the *Communities Directory*, you'll want to experience some of the communities listed -- "up close." See and hear community members tell their stories in their own words. This documentary, more than four years in the making, has been produced by Community Catalyst Project in association with the FIC. The project's producer/director, Geoph Kozeny, is a veteran community networker, community consultant, author, and former long-term FIC board member. The two 90-minute VHS tapes are in color and professionally produced.

Tape One (now available) includes:

- Profiles of seven very diverse communities.
- Exploration of the "glue" that holds communities together.
- Honest revelations about what is working and what is not.
- A brief history of 2500 years of shared living.

Tape Two (still in the editing phase) will feature profiles of 11 additional communities. See <http://fic.ic.org/video/communities.html> for a list of the communities featured, and for updates on availability.

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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 the “cult” issue; 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

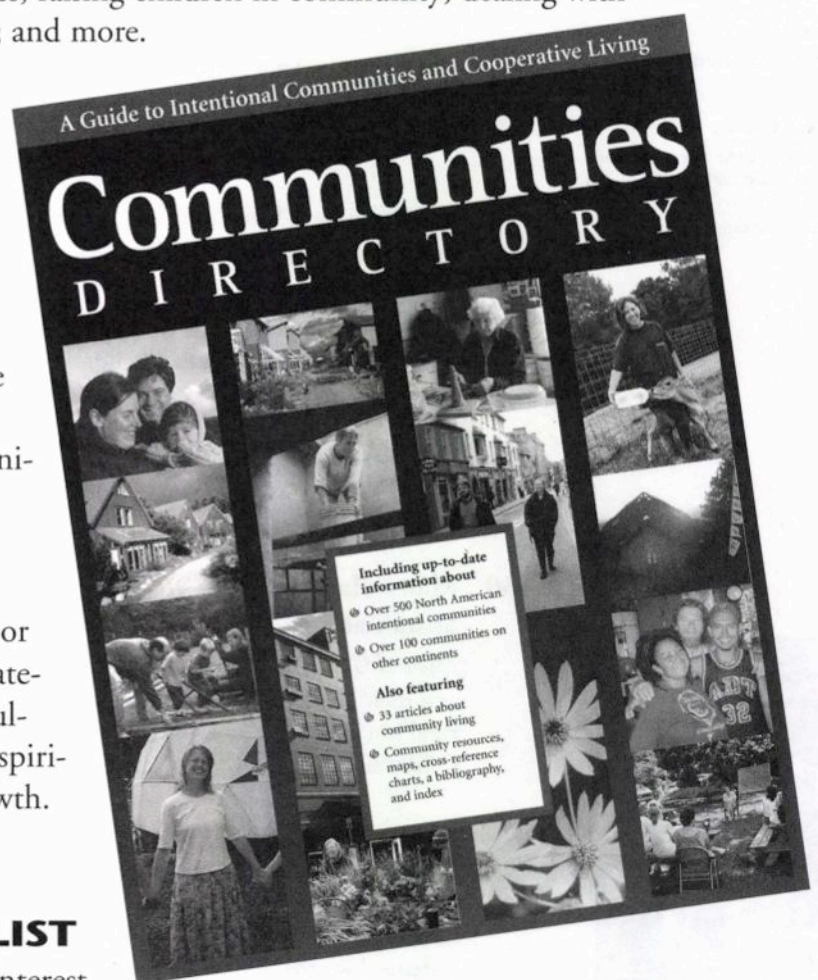
These charts allow you to quickly scan for the communities that fulfill your criteria. The charts will show you in a flash which communities match your needs and desires.

RESOURCES

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

NEW SECTION— RECOMMENDED READING LIST

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



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COMMUNITIES

Journal of Cooperative Living

FRONT COVER

A cob wall is under construction at Portland's Natural Building Convergence.

Photo: Tom Hovland

BACK COVER

Children help in a work party at Emerald Earth community in California.

Photo: Margaret Howe



FOCUS

The Heart of Sustainability

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The Heart of Sustainability—

Diana Christian

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Mark Lakeman helped organize city officials, funders, leading natural building activists, and more than a thousand people in this progressive city to work and play in straw, clay, cob, and stone and help stimulate more pleasure and delight in neighborhood community.

30 Many Hands Make Sustainability Work

Michael G. Smith explores work parties and their benefits at Emerald Earth, a rural intentional community in Northern California.

35 Sustainability in the City of the Angels

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- What Is L.A. Eco-Village?

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48 The Haybox Cooker: Why Every Community Needs One

A simple hands-on device you can build after breakfast and save cooking fuel or watt-hours by dinner. *Chris Roth*.

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Sometimes it takes a some hard knocks to distinguish between sacrificing for the community or "for the cause" (because it looks good and you get strokes), and giving up something significant because you're following your heart's true path. *Ma'ikwe Ludwig.*



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COMMUNITIES

Journal of Cooperative Living

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LETTERS



Send letters to *Communities* magazine, 52 Willow St., Marion, NC 28752, or communities@ic.org. Your letter may be edited or shortened. Thank you!

Was It Cultural Imperialism After All?

Dear *Communities*:

While I appreciate Laird Schaub's desire to lead from his joy in teaching songs from other cultures ("*Publisher's Note*," *Spring issue*, '02), I felt embarrassed when I read his defense of what I think he rightly terms "cultural imperialism."

Good intentions are nice, but they are not enough. Laird mentions a few key details in his audience's response, apparently without "getting it" or feeling any responsibility to alter his behavior. The audience members who were uncomfortable with his teaching of African songs weren't joyless spoilsports trying to rain on his parade. It sounded like they would have been delighted with his offering if he had: (a) known the place of origin of the song, (b) known the meaning of the lyrics, and (c) confirmed that there was permission to borrow. Mainstream U.S. culture has been built on exploitation of those with less power and privilege. We are the bullies of the world. I applaud Laird's Boston audience for their attempts to be sensitive to that history while still supporting sharing and exchange. It's a shift among the privileged that is long overdue. No one was telling him to stop singing—rather, they were urging him to sing in a new way, one that respects other cultures.

Tree Bressen

Walnut Street Co-op
Eugene, Oregon

Note, this reader uses the lower-case "i" spelling intentionally.

Communication and Process Articles Strike a Chord

Dear *Communities*:

I enjoyed the Winter 2001 issue on Communication and Process, especially the articles about the art of giving and receiving feedback and Hummingbird Ranch.

Kirsten Rohde

Goodenough Community, Seattle

Never Has Studying Intentional Communities Been More Important ...

Dear *Communities*:

My friend Johannes Zinzendorf, in his recent letter (*Winter 2001 issue*), reports that at the 2001 International Communal Studies Conference I "expressed skepticism as to the continued relevancy both of studying communities and of living in them" Actually, my main point was just the opposite. I argued that while society as a whole is full of anti-communal values and forces, never has studying and living in communities been more important than it is today—indeed, that the world needs community as never before.

A short version of my conference talk, "Out to Save the World: Why Communal Studies Matters for the Twenty-First Century," was reprinted in the fall, 2000, ICSA newsletter. The complete text of all the conference presentations is available at the ICSA website, www.ic.org/icsa/conference.html#Anchor-Conference-47857 (and then click on "conference proceedings").

By the way, thanks for yet another good issue (*Communication and Process*, *Winter '01*). I never fail to be impressed with what a marvelous work you are pulling off every quarter. My hat is off, as always.

Tim Miller

Lawrence, Kansas
tkansas@ku.edu

Community Land Can Be Affordable in Vermont

Dear *Communities*:

I found Patricia Greene's article, "Seriously Seeking Community, Part II" (in *Multi-generational Community*, *Fall '01 issue*) interesting and informative, but having participated in extensive land searches for our Vermont community, I wanted to correct

what I think is a misconception she mentions about land in the Green Mountain State.

Patricia writes, "Yet across the border in Vermont, where so many people think they would like to start communities (including us at first), land prices are \$1,200 and \$1,600 an acre, and the zoning super-strict."

In our land search, we've visited dozens of land parcels and assessed hundreds on paper. Very few were as much as the \$400 per acre Patricia mentions as being considered cheap for the Adirondacks; the one we recently purchased was just under \$100/acre, and to the best of my knowledge there is only one review process we need to get through other than the septic permit; a clustered residential community is already a permitted use of that land. In Chittenden County (near Burlington), land prices are generally much higher and zoning much stricter. But in less developed parts of the state, one piece of land we saw recently was about 500 acres of fields and woods for \$350,000 in a town with no zoning about 30 minutes from one of the largest cities in the state. (Admittedly, we go in for pretty tiny cities here.)

Community groups looking for land in Vermont to build an ecologically-minded community are welcome to contact me if I can be of any help. As a matter of fact, we may have a 12-bedroom house for sale in Springfield soon if anyone's looking, probably for under \$200,000.

As an aside, it occurred to me that the points Patricia makes about having to pay a joining fee and having to have money to build or finance a house don't necessarily apply to many income-sharing communities.

Luc Reid

luc@meadowdance.org
Meadowdance Community
Springfield, Vermont

A Dignified and Healthy Retirement in Communities

Dear *Communities*:

Might the principles of intentional community be used to provide a dignified and healthy retirement? I envision intentional communities organized retirement cooperatives that would provide a comfortable standard of living that might not be obtainable otherwise.

A facility could be created that allowed for private rooms as well as common areas such as a kitchen, laundry, and dining and

living rooms. Transportation needs could be met with a large van and a shared telephone and computer could meet the need to stay in touch. As the baby-boomers near retirement many will find they lack sufficient funds.

A senior co-op may be a welcome alternative for those who would like occasional use of items that could be better shared and who need to stretch their funds.

Garrett Needham
Deerfield, Michigan

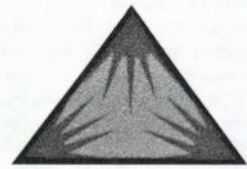
Some communities are already organized as you describe; for example, Santa Rosa Creek Commons in Santa Rosa, California, which is organized as a limited equity housing cooperative (although they accept people of all ages), and various other senior housing co-ops. The National Association of Housing Cooperatives has information: coophousing@usa.net; www.coophousing.org. —Ed.

Why Not Offer Free Care to Disabled or Elderly Communitarians?

Dear *Communities*:

I have found myself taken aback on several occasions by comments from intentional communities regarding their acceptance (or lack thereof) of physical disability when considering people for membership. In the "Letters" section of your Winter, 2001 issue, I had this experience when reading the listing information for "Communities Seeking Elders" by Keith of Alpha Farm community.

While most of what he said sounded positive and upbeat about age acceptance, the statement: "we are most interested in people who can contribute productively," revealed that the benefits elders bring to community are welcome as long as they are not accompanied by too many needs. I certainly got the impression that a person with severe disability would probably not be welcome at all as he/she would be considered a drain of resources. As a person who does caregiving for a living I can attest to the amount of energy and resources that caregiving requires, however I can also attest to the right feeling of taking care of a fellow human being in need, and the energy that flows from it. This feeling often expands to a sense of hope that when the time comes that I need such help, there might be a universe which does not withhold this care from me because most people have what they might consider better, more productive things to do.



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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: *Communities*, 52 Willow St., Marion NC, 28752, 828-652-8517; 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.

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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 nonviolently, and to sharing their experiences with others.

I apologize if I have misread Alpha Farm's position or been unduly harsh in my assessment. I do hope I have misjudged, and I invite all communitarians, and all people to recognize and embrace the fact that we are all in possession of bodies which are subject to various misfortunes and malfunctions and that these same issues, while presenting difficulties and requiring vast amounts of time, attention and resources, can be and usually are opportunities for equally vast growth and maturity on the part of the givers and the receivers of care. I believe we must all play both roles—but how, if we shun the experience? I would love to hear from people/communities on this subject. I would like to start a community which expressly welcomes caregiving as an indispensable spoke in the wheel of life.

Serrana Kassamali

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bonicity.abmp.com

Richmond, California

There may be communities out there that are endowed by wealthy people with the intention of helping and serving elders or disabled people for free, but I'm not aware of any, other than the Gesundheit! Institute's (Patch Adams) intention to create a 40-bed free hospital on their property in West Virginia. (See "A Circle of Care" in our Health and Healing issue, Spring '99.)

Some communities exist specifically to help and serve elders or disabled people and do so for a fee, which is how they create their community income. The nine or so Camphill communities in North America (and dozens in Europe) serve elderly folks or disabled adults or children, as does Innisfree Village in Virginia, and Rocinante at The Farm in Tennessee. (See "Everyone Feels Useful Here," in our Spring '99 Health & Healing issue, and "Retiring to the Good Life," in our Growing Older in Community, Winter '95 issue.)

Most communities are organized with a different common purpose, and some use their assets to take care of and serve their own elderly and disabled people who've lived there for years. (See "Loving to the End," and "Taking the Leap of Faith," also in our Spring '99 issue, and "Choosing to Age in Community," Winter '95.)

As far as I know most communities not organized specifically to offer care to elderly and disabled members for a fee cannot afford to do so, because it would require using up any community assets to pay caregivers or asking

members to stop working so they could give care for free, and few communitarians can afford not to work.

Most communities exist in the first place because one or more founders put up all or some part of their life savings to buy and develop their property, and all members, including incoming members, pay some kind of fee that reimburses the founders. Income-sharing communities such as Alpha Farm operate differently: money doesn't come from members' monthly or annual fees, but from their labor, as they work at various community businesses and the business income pays community expenses. (Alpha Farm has two elderly members who've lived there 30 years and the community has every intention of caring for them when they can no longer work.)

Financially, communities are like individuals or families in that they must pay rent or mortgage payments, taxes, insurance, maintenance expenses, and food, etc. Assuming that communities ought to welcome and care for disabled or elderly and infirm new members is like assuming you or I should welcome into our homes and take care of disabled or elderly people for free. It would be wonderful and kindly if we could afford to do this, but I believe few people or communities are wealthy enough to offer such a service.

The profession of caregiving is similar. Most caregivers may offer their care professionally and receive a salary or wages for it, however, some professional caregivers may do it for free because they are well-off enough to afford it. But I don't know of any communities in that position, at least, not so far. —Ed.

Student Co-op Issue Helps Student Find a Community Home

Dear *Communities*:

I stopped by one of the student co-op houses at UC Davis (in Davis, California) over the weekend with a friend. We ran into someone who recognized my name as Guest Editor of *Communities* magazine's Student Co-op Issue (*Student Co-ops: What I Really Learned in College, Spring '01*). Apparently he just happened across that issue of the magazine in a bookstore in Sonoma County, and it in part inspired him to move into the Davis co-op he's living in now. Very cool! I like to think that for every story like that, there are others similar that we just don't hear about.

Deniz Tuncer

Sacramento, California

PUBLISHER'S NOTE



The Red and the Black

*A Report on Magazine Finances and FIC's
Efforts to Cope with a Deficit*

AFTER A MODEST NET PROFIT IN 2000, *COMMUNITIES* MAGAZINE slipped back into red ink in 2001, losing \$4,138 for the year. This marked the eighth year in 10 that the magazine closed with a negative bottom line, though it's only the second time in the last four years. We're bobbing to keep our head above water and last year we took another dunk.

On the expense side, there was a modest four percent increase overall, pushed by a seven percent rise in printing costs. The income side has been more volatile. The biggest surprise was a precipitous 23 percent drop in subscription income. In fact, the \$26,478 total was our lowest since 1995, when we were still rebuilding the magazine after several years of dormancy. This represented an \$8,000 drop over subscription revenues in 2000, single-handedly accounting for more than the overall \$6,000 decrease in 2001 net profit as compared with 2000 net profit. While there has been plenty of head scratching over what the free fall in subscription income means, we have no profound insights. There have been no significant changes in procedures or prices over the last year. There was no industry trend that explains it, nor any single issue that was a newsstand flop. We just don't know what happened.

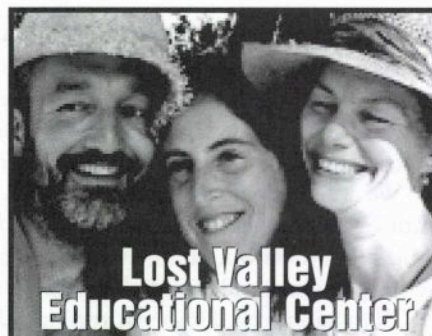
Fortunately, early signs in 2002 indicate that subscription income is bouncing back. Unfortunately—though relieved—we don't know why that's happening either. Quite a science, this magazine business.

Watching the numbers is more than an academic exercise because the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC), as publisher, must balance its budget, and areas which

COMING IN FUTURE ISSUES

"Can We Afford to Live in Community?" Fall '02. The many ways communities organize their internal economies; making a living in community, from community businesses to cottage industries and on-site jobs; the relationship between expenses (mortgage payments, taxes, insurance, and maintenance) and income (member assessments, joining fees, site-lease fees); whether or not—and how—members might have equity in the property.

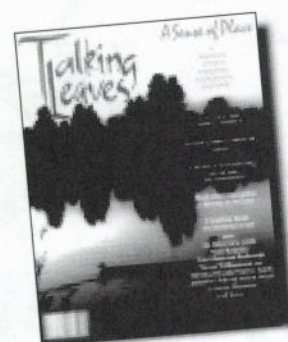
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lose money (as this magazine did last year) put a strain on everything else. As an organization, communication and education are FIC's principle functions. To that end, we can tolerate the magazine not making money, but we cannot countenance operating at a loss. Especially when costs have already been cut to the bone and we don't have reserves in other areas from which to draw support.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated staff and volunteer authors willing to accept little or no compensation for work they believe in—most magazines with only 1,500 paid subscribers would not even approach breaking even. *Communities* is an excellent tool for making available the inspiration and ideas of community living, and it fits the FIC's mission well. However, running the magazine also needs to be an excellent fit with our budget or we won't be able to keep all the balls in the air.

What are we doing about it? We're fundraising to capitalize a revolving fund to solicit new subscriptions. We're joining a marketing consortium for alternative publications. We're posting the table of contents for every single back issue of *Communities* at our website: store.ic.org. We're piggybacking on the excitement for the release of Geoph Kozeny's video, "Visions of Utopia."

How can you help? Place an ad for your organization, product, or service in an upcoming issue. Buy subscriptions—helping the people you care about by giving the magazine you care about. Don't wait until Christmas.

Pulling together, perhaps we won't need to use parentheses to bracket the last number in next year's report.

Laird Schaus

Communities Magazine 2001

Financial Statement

Income	
Subscriptions	\$26,478
Single Issues	706
Back Issues	2,558
Distributor Sales	21,831
Advertising	14,266
Royalties	539
<u>Donations</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Income	\$66,378
Expenses	
Printing	\$21,213
Office Overhead	3,806
Labor	26,363
Office expenses	3,686
Promotion	1,583
Fulfillment	12,771
<u>Bad Debt</u>	<u>1,096</u>
Total Expenses	\$70,516
Net Profit (Loss)	(\$4,138)



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COMMUNITY GRAPEVINE



The first videotape of peripatetic communitarian Geoph Kozeny's long awaited two-part video documentary series, **Visions of Utopia: Experiments in Sustainable Culture**, has finally been released. (See Review, pg. 59.) Featuring an overview and brief history of intentional communities since the first Buddhist monastery, it profiles seven contemporary North American communities as a way to introduce viewers to the breadth and scope of the diverse communities movement. **Camphill Special School at Beaver Run** (Pennsylvania),

Twin Oaks (Virginia), **Purple Rose** (San Francisco), **Breitenbush Hot Springs** (Oregon), **Ananda Village** (California), **Earthaven Ecovillage** (North Carolina), and **Nyland Cohousing** (Colorado) are featured with members' comments and scenes of community life. Many contributors to *Communities* magazine over the years and *Communities* magazine staff people appear in these scenes and interviews, including *Claus Sproll* (Camphill Special School); *Valerie Renwick-Porter*, *Alex McGee*, *Kat Kinkade*, co-guest editor of our political activism issue *Gordon Sproule*, Circulation Manager *McCune Porter*, and *Paxus Calta* (this issue, pg. 57) (Twin Oaks); *Peter Bane*, *Chuck Marsh*, *Mollie Curry*, *Kyle "Turtle" Peshke*, and *Patricia Allison* (Earthaven); "Mr. Cohousing" and former FIC Board Member *Zev Paiss*, as well as *Jeff Jones* and *Bruce Poulter* (this issue, pg.12) (Nyland Cohousing).

As of this writing Geoph is on a national promotional tour, showing *Visions of Utopia* to enthusiastic audiences around the country. Part Two, to be released sometime in the next two years,

will feature *Catholic Worker House of San Antonio* (Texas), **Community Alternatives Society** (British Columbia), **The Farm** (Tennessee), **Fraser Common Farm** (British Columbia), **Ganas** (New York), **Goodenough Community** (Washington), **Hearthaven** (Missouri), **Micosukee Land Cooperative** (Florida), **N Street Cohousing** (California), **Remote Hamlet** (California), and **Sandhill Farm** (Missouri).

Part One of *Visions of Utopia* is available for \$33 postpaid from the **Fellowship for Intentional Community**, the nonprofit publisher of this magazine, which will receive a portion of the proceeds: store@ic.org; fic@ic.org; 800-993-8342. To arrange for Geoph to show *Visions of Utopia* at your community, contact him at geoph@ic.org.



The Cohousing Network (TCN), the nonprofit that helps foster the cohousing movement in North America and publishes Cohousing magazine, has hired a

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new Executive Director, Roy L. O'Shaunnessy. Roy has worked with dozens of organizations as a nonprofit management consultant, and is frequently called on to assess and provide new direction to organizations in trouble or those in the midst of significant transitions. He has made a three-year commitment to work with TCN, starting with an in-depth 90-day assessment. "We're thrilled that a person of such caliber and experience is both willing and able to work with us at this time," says TCN board member Joani Blank of **Swan's Market Cohousing** in Oakland, California.



The Foundation for Community Encouragement (FCE), founded by Dr. M. Scott Peck (author of *The Road Less Traveled* and *The Different Drum: Community Making & Peace*), held its final community-building workshop at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina in July 2002 before disbanding as an organization. Formed after the upwelling of reader interest in the experience of community as a result of Dr. Peck's books, the FCE sought to catalyze principles of community in individ-

Art Rosenblum Remembered

The Communities Movement lost one of its best-known and most colorful activists when Art Rosenblum, 74, perished in a car accident June 5.

I first met Art in spring 1988, when I shared a room with him at Green Pastures, an Emissary community in Greenville, New Hampshire. We were there for the fledgling FIC's spring board meeting—the organization was not quite a year old then.

Art came to the meeting to tell his story of personal diplomacy in Russia (the Berlin Wall was still standing then) on the topic of community. Amazingly, acting on his own, he threaded his way through the Moscow bureaucracy and secured an interview which led to a subsequent visit to the United States by a cultural attache, where Art flew his guest around the country in his single-engine Cessna, "Birdie," visiting communities. Video footage of that trip eventually became *Where's Utopia?*, one of the earliest attempts at using that medium to introduce the excitement and promise of community to a world hungry for positive alternatives to the alienation of modern culture.

This was classic Art: not knowing that he had no chance at succeeding in his Russian mission, he persisted until he did. He rarely let a little thing like lack of money or connections stop him from attempting grand things once he got excited—and he got excited often. "The difficult things we do right away," he used to say. "The impossible takes a bit longer."

Art had a lifelong interest in community. He joined the Bruderhof community in Paraguay in 1946, where he lived for 18 years, and lived briefly at various other communities over the years since. He founded the Aquarian Research Foundation (ARF) in Philadelphia in 1969, which he operated with his wife Judy up until his death. While it never became an ongoing residential community, the ARF newsletter has been an important resource center and its newsletter kept readers informed of cutting-edge ideas for 33 years.

Art was a gadfly, looking for the point of leverage on big issues. Art left his mark as an inspirational writer and speaker, as someone who tried to put people and ideas together in creative and effective ways. He championed communal living and intentional communities, natural birth control, home birth, breastfeeding, home schooling, polyamory, natural foods, seaweed, and alternative medicine. Art and I communicated about a number of such issues, including Sonic Bloom (a way to stimulate plant growth through sound waves) and Dr. Randell Mills' Blacklight Power. Always on the edge, quirky in his style and eclectic in his thinking, I didn't always understand or agree with Art's ideas, but it was a mistake to dismiss them without reflection.

—Laird Schaub,
FIC Executive Secretary

uals, groups, and organizations through their weekend community-building workshops. Their workshops were based on the principles of communicating with authenticity, dealing with difficult issues, bridging differences with integrity, relating to others with compassion and respect, and welcoming and affirming diversity. The Board of the Foundation for Community Encouragement concluded that "community building should be a movement rather than a nonprofit organization," and there are many other organizations trying to bring peace to the world. "It is our hope that by closing the Foundation, we will free people to take what they have learned from us and work through all avenues and models available to them to build community/peace where they live and work," said *Bonnie Poindexter*, Co-Chair of the FCE Board.

Fortunately community building is in fact a movement, since the **Fellowship for Intentional Community**, **The Cohousing Network**, **Federation of Egalitarian Communities**, **Ecovillage Network of the Americas**, and **Northwest Intentional Communities Association**, all nonprofit organizations, have been fostering community for years.



Meadowdance community, a 10-member group with a cooperative economy, closed on their purchase of 200 acres of woods and meadows in Marshfield, Vermont on June 29th, 2002, according to member *Luc Reid*. They're currently working on temporary housing plans so that they can move to Marshfield to begin constructing their community building, and later, clustered housing around it, provided permitting goes through. Their current community home, a 14-bedroom cooperative house in Springfield, Vermont, will be up for sale in Fall 2002 or Spring 2003.



Shari Leach of **Wild Sage Cohousing** in Colorado, and process consultant for many cohousing communities through **Wonderland Hill Development Company**, completed her masters thesis at Prescott College entitled "Facilitating

Cohousing Community Development." *Shari*, who wrote "Who Says We Can't Consense to Vote?" for our *Winter '01 Process and Communication* issue, hopes the thesis will become a book, not necessarily specific to cohousing, in order to broaden its reach.



And organizational transformation and facilitation trainer *Jim Rough's* new book, *Society's Breakthrough! Releasing Essential Wisdom and Virtue in All the People*, includes the Communities magazine article, "How to Make a Decision without Really Making a Decision," by Tom Atlee (*Winter 2000 issue*). www.SocietysBreakthrough.com.



Karl R. Johnson of **Shannon Farm** community in Virginia passed away on April 20th, 2002. "An adventurous spirit with a desire to push the envelope were part of his character to the end," says fellow Shannon Farm member and FIC Publications Manager *Marty Klaiif*. While living in Denver as a conscientious objector, Karl picked up a copy of Communities magazine, which led to his search for community. "He did a brief tour of mid-Atlantic communities and fell in love with and joined Shannon Farm," says Marty. With help from community members Karl designed and built two passive solar houses and helped build various other houses there, as well as helping design Shannon Farm's planned community center.

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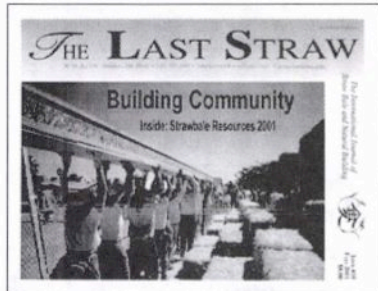
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How a Communitarian Running for High Public Office Influenced Party Politics in Colorado

One evening when the sun was low in the sky and the summer heat was letting up, I took an evening stroll around our community. Nyland Cohousing is located on 30 acres with a view of the city of Boulder and the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies to the west. Nyland's colorful houses are clustered along two parallel pedestrian pathways. As I walked, my eyes were locked on the brilliant horizontal swatches of orange and red in the western Colorado sky. I'm convinced that there is something magical about this time of day when light yields to darkness. Possibilities expand.

Turning onto the north pedestrian pathway, I felt grateful for being alive, being able to walk out my door and enjoy such natural beauty. I mused that in the process of the natural cycle, there are times when light always yields to darkness, and darkness always yields to light. Soon I spotted three year-old Esma sitting on the steps of her front porch with her eyes closed and her fists clenched.

“Why do you have your eyes closed?” I asked.

“I did a bad thing,” she explained. “I'm so ashamed of myself; if I keep my eyes closed no one will see me.”

I understood. Sometimes I've had a similar experience when making decisions at Nyland. When people speak

harshly or sharply to others in a meeting, their opinion may very well carry the decision. And even if I agree with the decision, I don't like our group process in those instances. I have felt disappointed about choosing the easy way out and going along with that process—I close my eyes.

At its best, I see the decision-making process as welcoming questions in which people seek to genuinely understand the different positions and needs of others. This intention alone creates space for people to shift from their originally held positions, allowing collective wisdom to emerge. Often, what emerges out of a group will far surpass the best ideas of any one individual. And in every group that operates with some form of cooperative decision-making (whether an intentional community or not), the group's collective wisdom can potentially guide the group towards meeting their collective needs.



Recently a fellow Nyland member didn't “close his eyes” but chose to speak for his ideals and principles in a decision-making process, on a much larger scale—the process of choosing a Democratic candidate from Colorado for the United States Senate. Witnessing this process, I saw a direct correlation between the challenges of decision-making in intentional communities and the democratic process in mainstream politics.

Jeff Jones is a member of Nyland Cohousing Community in Lafayette, Colorado.

Bruce Poulter, one of the early visionaries of the Nyland Community, saw what he interpreted as a travesty of democracy in the Colorado Democratic Party when they eliminated the Democratic primary election last year and decided that they, not the public, would just chose one candidate.

This because six years earlier, in the previous Colorado Democratic primary for US Senate, the two candidates got into a highly charged exchange of invective and mudslinging. I assume that the Democratic Party delegates at that time felt disgusted and irritated because they would have preferred to choose between candidates who demonstrated integrity and honesty and who would illuminate the significant issues, and support the delegates' final choice. The outcome was a painful split in the party and a wound that hadn't healed in six years. Presum-

Bruce saw a wave of relief moving through the crowd as they applauded and shouted.

ably, the current group of party delegates eliminated the primary election and selected a sole candidate as an attempt to prevent a repeat of that experience.

"I understand the logic but don't agree with it," Bruce said, "because the people in power are saying that the outcome is more important than the process."

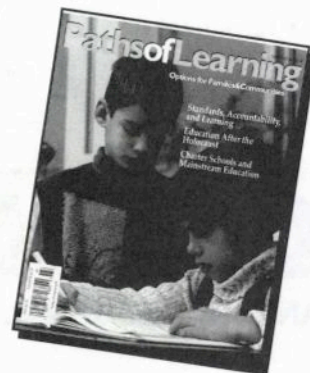
So Bruce—a father, public health professional, registered nurse, builder, mechanic, and community member, and a man with a strong desire to make the world a better place—decided to become one of the candidates delegates could choose for their Senatorial candidate, on a platform of value-based decision-making. He wanted to help shift the political decision-making process to directly reflect the voices and interests of the people and strengthen the democratic decision-making process. Ω

Bruce expressed his idealistic vision

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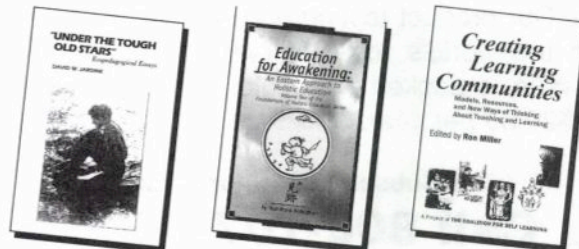
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Camphill Soltane is a lively Anthroposophically-based community for and with young adults with developmental disabilities. Through a

dynamic combination of community life, education and training, work with the arts and on the land, a job placement program, and active strategic alliances with organizations in the surrounding area, Camphill Soltane accompanies these young adults through their age-appropriate quest for meaning and purpose in their lives.

Camphill Soltane offers numerous benefits to coworkers, including AmeriCorps education awards! We are interested in talking with families and individuals (including college interns) over the age of 19 about opportunities for becoming involved with us.

with practical goals—campaign reform, rational defense strategies, domestic security, increased access to quality education, better public health, and an improvement of air, water, and soil quality. His mission was to provide an alternate choice from decision-making based on how people could gain financially, to decision-making based on their actual needs. Bruce supports the shift to a paradigm in which people thrive when they're connected with the true power within themselves ("leaders come from communities, not from political parties"), and when they share this power with others through collaborative decision-making on a community level ("collectively making decisions that reflect the majority of people, not the majority of dollars"). He wants collaborative community decisions to influence how political decisions are made ("politicians are public servants to the communities they serve").

The day before the Democratic Party delegates were to vote for their Senatorial candidate and make it "official," Bruce was told that expressing to the delegates how he truly felt about issues (such as education, drugs, prisons, and money) at this stage of the process would be political suicide. He was told that his running for Senate against the candidate that the Democratic party had already pre-selected would cause another split in the support of the Party, and potentially add salt to the six-year wound. Fear was in the air.

The next day, June 1st, 2002, Bruce had the opportunity to speak to the 1500 + Colorado Democratic delegates. In his five months of giving speeches, Bruce had learned the political norm—build your image by denigrating your "opponent" (mudslinging), and say as little as possible about your stance on issues, because if some people didn't like any one of them it could detract from your number of votes, financial support, or potential victory. But he chose to be true to his own values. In his speech he acknowledged the common political practice but chose not to hide what he supported. He acknowledged how, as a citizen, various of his needs, and presumably the needs of other citizens, were not being met. Then he spoke about positive actions we as a country might take to help people meet these needs.

Bruce needed the vote of 30 percent of

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the delegates to even get onto their ballot of potential Senate candidates they'd later vote for. He received nearly 10 percent, more than 120 party delegates. Before the results were announced, the winning candidate asked Bruce if he would be willing to join him during his acceptance speech and give him his endorsement right then and there. Bruce's first reaction was to say "no." Would he be "selling out" his principles, his issues, if he endorsed that candidate? He allowed all of the voices he had heard on the campaign, and all of his internal voices and concerns to be present, to have their place, and to settle inside of himself. His inner response? Endorse the candidate.

After hastily scribbling a few notes, Bruce found himself on stage with the man who less than an hour earlier had been his "opponent." Speaking first, Bruce thanked his supporters, congratulated the other candidate, and then said, "In the spirit of the diverse voices in the Democratic Party, I'd like to offer my support to the winning candidate." Bruce saw a wave of relief moving through the crowd as they applauded and shouted. He was amazed at the intensity of their reaction. He finally realized that the delegates were experiencing healing from the wounds of the previous senatorial race. Bruce found himself standing between the candidate and the candidate's mother. They all held raised hands in victory and the crowd went wild.

Bruce's candidacy triggered hopes and fears about much bigger issues than his personal self. Despite its lack of money and professional staff, his candidacy could have crystallized the dissatisfaction of the Left wing of the Democratic Party and significantly weakened their support for the winning candidate. By conducting his campaign with integrity and focusing on the issues, his ability to respectfully disagree had allowed a marginalized voice to be heard. Unbeknownst to Bruce at the time, his campaign made a subtle, yet powerful contribution. By respecting the decision of the majority of delegates, and following his own complex process in agreeing to endorse, he contributed to healing the historic wound that had divided the Colorado Democratic Party. Ω

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The Arts—An Elemental Necessity of Community

During a breakout session at the Fellowship for Intentional Community's Art of Community gathering in the Catskills in 1999, I overheard some participants say that their favorite part of community living is that they get to meet so many interesting people from every part of society—from famous personalities to preservers of local traditions. They felt immensely enriched by the simple fact of living in a place that generates interest so widely. From folks who are just curious, to visitors seeking to experience intentional community, to those who want to join or create one, a growing stream of people visit intentional communities around the world.

I could easily relate to that observation, since for the last 25 years I've been a member of Huehuecoyotl, an intentional community in Mexico. This aspect of community living was vividly demonstrated in March, 2002, when we celebrated our 20th anniversary in a way that exemplifies the spirit of our community. Huehuecoyotl is an aspiring ecovillage founded on the basis of our dedication to the arts, ecology, and spirituality. In the

last two decades we have seen a great number of people from all walks of life visit the whole community or one of our members. Visitors have included many artists from all artistic fields, as well as scientists, visionaries, prophets, and "fools" of all kinds. We have always embraced every human being (and most other life forms) that have found their way to our remote location in the mountains of central Mexico. We have particularly nourished those with an artistic talent, and have often helped them find their way along the uncertain and challenging path of the committed artist.

We do not look at the arts as a commercial undertaking or a quest for fame and recognition, but rather as an elemental necessity of community and the most sublime expression of the human condition. In this way art is like bread for social movements and community. With this philosophy we have organized numerous events over the years centered on peace, justice, ecology, and humanity—each involving many artists from all over the world. We always take advantage of visiting troubadours and other roaming troupes of *eco-*

ECOVILLAGE
NETWORK OF
THE AMERICAS



BY GIOVANNI
CIARLO

Giovanni Ciarlo co-founded "The Illuminated Elephants Gypsy Theatre and Artistic Community" with people from eight different countries, and in 1982, with a group of Mexican activists, bought land and created Huehuecoyotl Ecoaldea in Tepoztlan, Mexico, an eco-settlement based on the arts, ecology, and spirituality (www.ecovillages.org/mexico/huehue).

Giovanni and his wife Kathleen Sartor are performers and educators in a musical group called Sirius Coyote. Giovanni is the Mesoamérica representative of the Ecovillage Network of the Americas Council, and co-founder of Red de Ecoaldeas de México (The Network of Mexican Ecovillages). (www.laneta.apc.org/rem/). giovanni@ecovillage.org;

Ecovillage Network of the Americas; www.ecovillage.org; ena@ecovillage.org.

locos that have found their way to our small village. When we decided to host anniversary celebration this past March it was obvious that we would try to contact some performing artists to help us in the celebration.

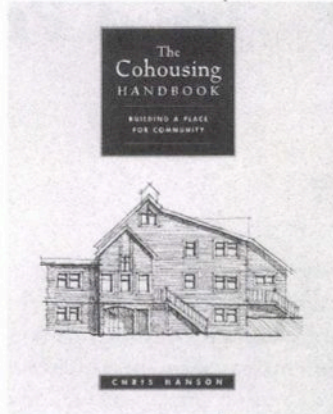
We were amazed by the response and the number of performers who offered their talents. However, we had no idea how many of them would actually show up, or what level of quality they would bring to the event. As it turned out, we had two solid days of performances that included over 25 acts featuring music, poetry, theater, comedy, dance, vaudeville, acrobatics, clowns, painters, and puppets.

We had two solid days of performances—music, poetry, theater, comedy, dance, vaudeville, acrobatics, clowns, painters, and puppets.

It was clear to see that the nourishment we had given over the years to all those aspiring artists had multiplied by scores and that Huehue had become the home of their artistic ideals. All of the groups and individual artists that presented their work did so without charge, as a demonstration of their gratitude for the inspiration and direction that Huehuecoyotl offered them over the years, and their work was of the best quality to be found anywhere. Artists came from the surrounding area, but also traveled from as far away as Argentina, the United States, and Europe. I wish I had space here to list them all, but Huehuecoyotl is not about the individual artists and their great accomplishments, rather about how the artists fit into the fabric of community and how their hard work and dedication makes community living a rich and meaningful experience for us all. I reflect back to that comment I overheard at the Art of Community gathering in the Catskills in 1999, and for me, it is now more meaningful than ever before. Ω

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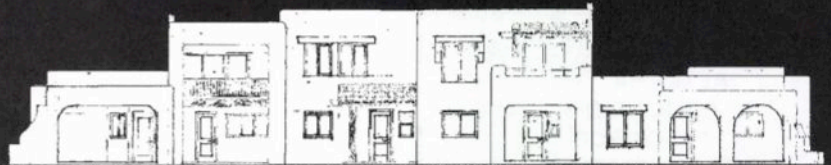
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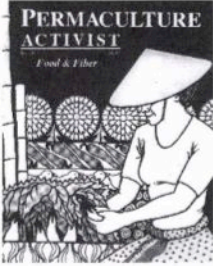
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"What Do You Mean? Food Processing?"

Last summer when I was an intern at Sandhill Farm in Missouri, the community more than tripled its population with up to eight interns, several visitors, and various prospective members staying there at any given time. While we were invited to participate in all aspects of the community, most of us realized that communicating in a new, ever-changing environment takes practice. Living at Sandhill was the first experience living in an intentional community for many of us, and we were unfamiliar with the group's language, if not its values. Once I asked my fellow interns what they thought about the community's processing. "What do you mean?" one replied. "Food processing?" I rephrased my question: "How can communities help us understand their values about communication and empower us to participate?"

How a community communicates is defined by the examples of its members. Processing in community, whether between two people or in a group, involves commonly held assumptions and expectations. When new people arrive they may find it difficult to know the community's communication ideals, not to mention how these ideals are practiced. While an intern's intuitive wisdom can transcend his or her inexperience, a little explanation and experience doesn't hurt and, in truth, is often

vital to understanding. Nevertheless, members can over-explain. Is there a danger of devaluing interns' abilities to discern these values or ask questions for themselves? Of creating a hierarchy of the experienced and the inexperienced? Of closing the door to contribution and interpretation? Here are a few suggestions to help ease interns, as well as residents and visitors, into a community's particular communication style.

A community could begin by describing its communication and processing style up front. In communities where members hold a broad spectrum of opinions about communication, this may prove difficult, yet naming the various points of divergence may be more fruitful (and more realistic) than ignoring these differences. While interns supposedly have some knowledge

of the community they're entering, they and community members each have assumptions. Identifying these assumptions early on may prevent members from having to say, "That's not something we believe here." A statement like that can present an unnecessary ultimatum, alienate the interns, and create a knowledge hierarchy, with the knowers overseeing those who don't know (or know less). At Sandhill interns at times wrestled with a self-imposed hierarchy created not only by the experience dynamic but also by condi-



Kristy SeBlonka, who wrote this article in September, 2001, lives in Madison, Wisconsin with another former Sandhill intern. She works as a planner in the development office of Community Action Coalition, a nonprofit organization that helps develop economic and social capacities of low-income people.

tioned responses to the age dynamic between young interns and older community members. Naming the community's approach to communication provides a solid working base from which to disassemble such hierarchies.

Interns also need reinforcement about their status in the community. Sandhill members invited interns to be co-creators of the community and take an active role in communication. Members often reinforced interns' input in meetings by openly answering their questions about past events and thanking them for offering new interpretations, even when the members felt the interns weren't exactly right on. Nevertheless, the temporary residency of interns affects their participation in discussions. Interns at Sandhill sometimes seemed to devalue their own input on issues or decisions because, as temporary residents, they didn't know the preliminary discussions, and knew they wouldn't be around for the outcome of the decisions. Likewise, while acknowledging that interns didn't know the history of an agenda item, Sandhill members didn't always have the time to explain for their benefit. Whether or not communities intend for their interns to be on an equal footing with members, they can ask themselves what limitations to interns' equality might exist within the community and how those limitations can be worked out. Not all interns and not all community members may agree on the position of interns within the community. Regardless, communities that specifically describe the status of their interns within that community will see results in greater intern participation and understanding.

Community members can also become more conscious of their language, particularly if they use specialized vocabulary and syntax. Members who are fluent from daily communication practice (and perhaps trained in particular communication processes) talk with ease about "processing," "group dynamics," "vision," "needs," "holding an idea," and so on. Interns may pick up the meaning of these concepts from context, and should no doubt ask if they don't understand. However, members who are conscious of their language are more likely to communicate better with interns. At Sandhill, this was usually done informally. A member might say, "We have learned that it's sometimes helpful to use 'I' statements," and then give an example. In


the height of the harvest season, that was sometimes all there was time for. Again, it is difficult to know when it's best to make these comments, but such comments can ease the intern into community culture more gracefully.

Ideally interns would be introduced to communication processes when they arrive. Worst-case scenario: handing the interns a glossary of communication terms for that (though I admit this could be useful). Best-case scenario: creating an interactive discussion about communication within and beyond the community. At Sandhill, interns arrived at various times over the summer months, and a formal introduction would have been impossible, as well as out of character in Sandhill's intimate, self-directed, and loosely structured environment. Instead, discussions about communication often occurred in interpersonal meetings. This allowed for instant critiques of communication as it happened. I vividly recall one extended meeting about an interpersonal conflict. At the end one intern asked with frustration, "Has anything changed since the beginning of the meeting?" Seemingly in one accord, the members confidently outlined the subtle achievements of an ongoing discussion that hadn't reached its conclusion. The intern, seeing the landmarks of progress fall into place, expressed relieved gratitude.

Communities might also set up events in which the discussion of communication itself is the focus, for instance, a seminar where members and interns could voice questions and concerns. This would allow interns to informally integrate themselves into the community culture and develop their own responses. Such seminars would also break the teacher-student model and empower interns by broadening the subject so that members and interns alike could have significant input—especially since newcomers often see past a group's verbalized ideals to its actual communication processes. Discussions like these sometimes happened informally at Sandhill, but often just among interns.

Whether intern or member, everyone in a community shares responsibility for integrating interns into its communication culture. By become more conscious about this process, communities can make it easier for interns, as well as guests and visitors, to understand, enjoy, and contribute to the community, to everyone's benefit. Ω


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Noble Suffering and Appropriate Sacrifice



BY MA'IKWE LUDWIG

“Noble suffering,’ That’s the ‘Look at me up on my cross’ stance.” Bill does an irreverent imitation of a crucifixion, managing to look both annoyingly pious and tortured at the same time. We’re deep in a conversation in which he’s helping me understand the difference between an appropriate sacrifice for one’s own chosen goals and what he calls “noble suffering.”

I start to giggle, then abruptly stop, as a picture of my last home in my former community flashes into my mind—the tiny, half-finished cabin with a “porch” fashioned from rickety stacked-together pallets, perched on an exposed hill overlooking the main parking lot. My family of three lived, worked, and stumbled over each other in this postage-stamp space for two and half years in the name of being “good pioneer community members.” Look at how I suffered for the cause. I was righteous; I was a model community member. In that instant, one of my former community’s patterns—and my own self-righteousness—are exposed.

“I might as well,” I think to myself sourly, “have installed a neon sign with big arrows: *Noble Suffering—here!*”

“Ugh. Yuck!” I hear myself say.

“Bingo. Noble suffering,” Bill says with a grin. And, yes, the feeling behind what I recall as my own noble suffering is a definite “yuck.” I realize with some real sadness that it probably felt that way to everyone who visited our small spiritual community in the Ozarks. No wonder recruiting new members wasn’t always easy.

Noble suffering feels awful, and is usually ego-driven on some level. It often comes from following someone else’s standards, and definitely *doesn’t* build community. *It is also frequently confused with appropriate, self-chosen sacrifice made in alignment with a positive goal.*

Seeing more clearly the implications of my life in my tiny cramped cabin is just one piece of the process that I’ve undertaken since I left the community, as I’ve slowly been untangling my own version of self-abuse. I’ve come to a sobering conclusion: noble suffering creates an atmosphere where people’s genuine, basic human needs are put at odds

with their heart’s deepest desire to feel more connected to others. And in community, this tension can be destructive.

Noble suffering is an unhealthy ego thing. A healthy ego would never allow us to treat ourselves that way! Noble suffering feeds on guilt, shame, or the desire for someone else’s approval or sympathy.

In my case, staying in miserably inadequate housing meant I was applauded by one of the two community founders for being “willing to give up material desires” in favor of building a new culture. At the same time my situation garnered all sorts of sympathy from the *other* founder, who was genuinely uncomfortable with people living for long periods of time in inadequate housing. The result? My ego was literally getting stroked on both sides. I got respect and approval; I got nurturing sympathy. So, ego being what it is, there was no *way* I was going to give up that shanty on the hill—no matter how disempowering it was to live there.

It seems to me that this is often how noble suffering gets set up: one person’s ego needs for approval or sympathy interact with another person’s dogma (about social change, a spiritual lifestyle, or sustainable living), the result is a tangle of power dynamics and pain for everyone involved. In community, this dynamic taints the whole environment because few people of conscience are comfortable seeing others exploited—even when that exploitation is ultimately self-inflicted.

I could have short-circuited the whole experience of ego strokes and noble suffering in that cabin by reconnecting with my own deepest values and goals. In fact, doing so has become a priority, because there is great value in appropriate sacrifice—what I’ve come to see as the letting go of or doing without something that was formerly important,

because doing so is aligned with and supports one’s principles. It had become abundantly clear to me that my discernment about the difference between noble suffering and appropriate sacrifice was shaky at best.

As I continued to explore the issue, I began to notice that some choices I had made felt very different from living in the cabin on the hill. They had no

It’s an unhealthy ego thing. A healthy ego would never allow us to treat ourselves that way!

drama associated with them. Once I had made these decisions, I never questioned them again. Most of all, they felt good—no squirmy “yuck” response when I recalled them.

I *had* made appropriate sacrifices in my life! More importantly, I was starting to understand what characterizes an appropriate sacrifice.

For instance, I have a young son, and several years ago I decided to not have any more children. Was this a sacrifice? A letting go? Absolutely! But what made it possible to do was that I was following *my own* path to get to that decision.

A healthy, sustainable environment has always been important to me, and when I looked at this issue using *my own* logic and *my own* grounded sense of fairness, having more children didn’t look or feel appropriate. Once I came to that conclusion, and let myself experience and let pass the needy and scared feelings that came up (and which had been

blocking that decision), my decision settled in and became a non-charged, appropriate sacrifice.

And last March I stopped eating meat. I had been vegetarian off and on for a dozen years, characterized by constant waffling between eating vegetarian and self-beratement, usually sparked by a moment of guilt, or a lover's pressure, or a desire to be seen as a "good environmentalist." My vegetarian diet never lasted long and had always felt difficult.

But Keith Akers, author of the *Vegetarian Sourcebook*, visited our community last spring. As I sat on the living room floor listening to him, he seemed to speak in a voice remarkably similar to my most reasonable and compassionate *internal* voice. After a few minutes, the crystal clear thought went through my head, "Eating meat isn't aligned for me. It's time to stop." And I did. That night.

I suffered for the cause. I was righteous; I was a model community member.

It was the recognition that eating meat wasn't personally aligned with *my own standards*—and that I was causing myself pain by constantly rehashing the issue—that made the difference. In both of these choices I have never looked back. In

fact, I was stunned to realize a couple months ago that it had been a year since I'd eaten meat.

Now I can see that I make appropriate sacrifices simply to be at peace with my own conscience. It doesn't feel like an imposition or a big deal. *It just is.*

Noble suffering is a display for the outside world; appropriate sacrifice is a *self*-alignment, a sacrifice that is as uniquely your own as your fingerprints. It furthers those goals that you are truly, honorably committed to. It has nothing to do with what anyone else thinks or does, it has to do with you and only you.

I now see it is that members and their communities must first have an honest alignment in values. If communities seeking new members are more interested in encouraging people to join who are already aligned with their values and goals rather than "selling" their particular communities, we'll be less likely to set people up to go against their own values just to fit in. By being more honest together, we can avoid the pitfalls of creating a community culture of noble suffering. Ω

Ma'ikwe Ludwig has lived in community for six years, and with her mother and stepfather is a founding member of October Sky Community. 517-522-4771; seasonalsigns@hotmail.com.

Author
Ma'ikwe
Ludwig.



Suffering and Sacrifice

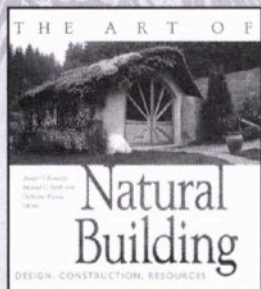
Noble Suffering ❖ Appropriate Self-Sacrifice

- Feels difficult, "yucky," or like an imposition ❖ Feels good and matter-of-fact
- Drains your energy and willpower ❖ Generates energy and willpower
- Comes from dogma, from the outside ❖ Is self-generated and aligns with your own intuition
- You refuse to see other perspectives; feel defensive ❖ You are able to hear other perspectives
- Your motivations feel confused ❖ Is clearly a choice you've made
- Hurts; takes work to maintain ❖ Requires a letting go, which may be temporarily painful, but then it feels fine
- Internal debate is ongoing; creates internal tension or struggle ❖ Generates a sense of resolution; resolves internal tension or struggle
- Attention stays stuck on the topic ❖ Attention is free for other matters
- Wants to be announced (seeks approval) ❖ Decision is easily, but not compulsively, shared
- May seem reasonable but it feels wrong ❖ Simultaneously seems reasonable and feels right
- Aligns with the fragile ego ❖ Aligns with and contributes to a higher purpose

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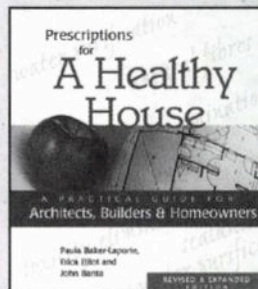


The Art of Natural Building *Design, Construction, Resources*

Joseph E. Kennedy,
Michael G. Smith
& Catherine Wanek, Editors

From straw bale and cob to recycled concrete and salvaged materials, this anthology of articles from leaders in the field focuses on both the practical and the aesthetic concerns of ecological building designs and techniques. Complementary systems such as solar appliances, composting toilets, and alternative power systems are also covered.

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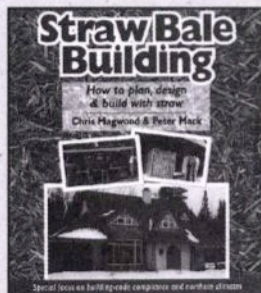


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Paula Baker-LaPorte,
Erica Elliott & John Bante

This guide for sufferers of multiple chemical sensitivity disorder, homeowners, architects, builders, and medical doctors explains where and why standard building practices are not healthful, what to do differently, and how to obtain alternative materials and expertise. The appendices offer a trove of manufacturer, service provider, and catalog resources.

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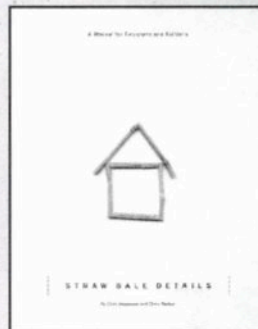


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Chris Magwood & Peter Mack

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Chris Magwood & Chris Walker

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Robert Bolman, above, leads crew on structural cob wall and community information kiosk during Portland's Natural Building Convergence.

DIANA LEAFE CHRISTIAN

THE HEART OF SUSTAINABILITY

Last June 65 people showed up for the Allison-Armstrong family's work party at Earthaven Ecovillage in North Carolina.

All the usual features of a sustainable homestead were there. Power for the day's carpentry was generated by PV panels and a micro-hydro system. The toilet was a composting outhouse. The garden was rows of mulched raised beds. The partially constructed house was built with mostly recycled materials—rows of used 4'x4' plywood fruit juice container/pallets comprised the second and third floors and detached plywood squares sheathed the roof and exterior walls. And most the new lumber was felled and milled from trees on the land.

But what really said "community sustainability" to me was the crowd of fellow community residents, community interns on their day off, community members from town, and visitors who'd taken the morning's Saturday tour and asked, "Can I help?"

The workers swarmed over the entire three-story building and the grounds as well. Amidst the syn-copated bang of hammers and whine of table saw, hardy men and women nailed siding to third-floor dormers; closed in the west wall with more pallet squares; and moved methodically across the second and third floors filling in the strips between pallets to make flat-surface subfloors. Three carpenters built the stairway to the third floor while women and two small girls painted freshly milled 1'x4's for window trim. A crew of three quietly wired all three stories. A quartet of sweaty guys with shovels dug out and leveled the space for the planned ferro-cement cistern while a group of

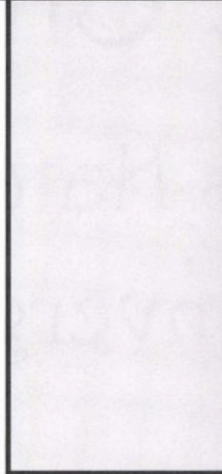
young men and women laughingly bent the rebar framework for it. Three men with scythes and clippers and a gleam in their eyes turned the yard's jungle overgrowth into flat piles of mulch-worthy biomass. Under the shady folks with cordless drills detached yet more plywood squares from used juice pallets.

It wasn't all hammers and scythes. Quite a few women, including my 86-year-old mom, spent two days shopping for food and helping cook the brunch, lunch, snack, and dinner, and party feasts. One community member from town drove out and prepared his famous specialties all day, as helpers ferried all these dishes over from the community kitchen.

By the end of the day the house project had moved forward significantly, and the family was ecstatic. Everyone was tired, sweaty, paint- or dirt-stained, happy, and famished. After a dinner on the second floor, with cooling breezes flowing through the giant window openings and while determined workers continued nailing up siding into the twilight, the dance party began. It lasted, thumping and rocking on the sturdy new subfloor, till the wee hours.

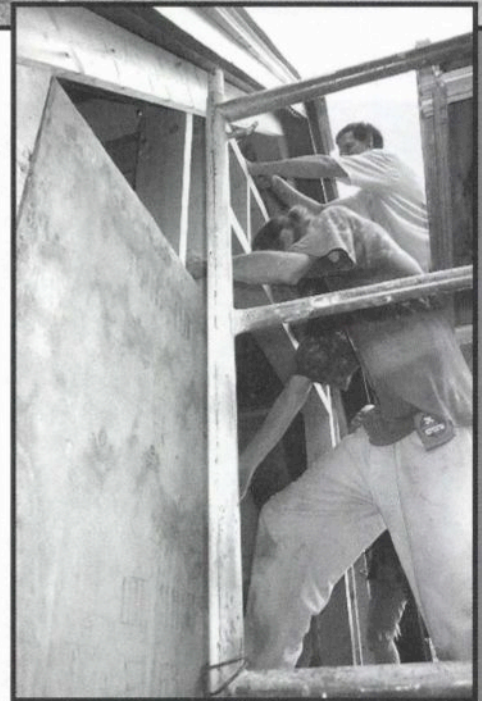
This outpouring of many hands and good will was just what the project, the family, and the community needed. All the solar panels and compost toilets in the world couldn't have accomplished what happened that day—but the combination of these sustainable systems and people happily employing them got the job done and lifted everyone's spirits.

And that's what this issue is about. The focused intention of people, working with their sustainable tools and processes, to create something greater than themselves. You'll see how a thousand people did this in Portland, how small groups do it regularly at Emerald Earth, and how individuals take the initiative to do it at L.A. Eco-Village. And you'll see the inverse—how the "people"



factor can go south, when a sustainability ethic without heart becomes a community-eroding eco-fundamentalist religion, and how we can heal from it. (You'll also find practical tips for saving fuel when cooking and the latest techniques and tools on strawbale building.) Sustainable communities, whether ecovillages or whole cities, are a matter of heart, as well as head and hands. We hope you're experiencing this head-and-heart sustainability process in your own community, or in the group of friends or family or work colleagues or neighbors you're creating community with where you are. Good reading! Ω

Diana Leafe Christian is editor of Communities magazine.



The Village Blooms in the City

Portland's Natural
Building Convergence

BY MARK LAKEMAN

School children, as well as preschoolers like these, helped create the cob bench at the corner Memorial Lifehouse.

TOM HOVLAND





TOM HOVLAND

(Above) Many natural building experts from the Pacific Northwest helped focalize each of the eight projects. Cob teacher Becky Bee, left, with Katy Langstaff (Below) The cob dragon bench on SE Main St., one of two cob sculptures created by natural Builder Elke Cole and scores of school children.

Robert Bolman was smiling. In fact, he was so happy he was shaking with excitement. As the lights went down, the crowd attending his Saturday night keynote presentation at Portland's first Natural Building Convergence in May, 2002 were as excited, inspired, exhausted, and giddy as he was. This had been the first day in which leading natural building activists and over a thousand Portland residents had come together to simultaneously create ecological urban gathering places of strawbale, cob, straw-clay, and other natural building techniques at eight sites in the Sunnyside and Hosford-Abernathy neighborhoods. Their aim was to build sacred places in public spaces, places for communication and sharing. Besides Robert Bolman of Mitrea EcoVillage in Eugene, Oregon, site leaders included Joseph Kennedy of Builders without Borders, Elke Cole of Cobworks, Becky Bee of Groundworks, David Eisenburg of The Development Center for Appropriate Technology, Amber Wiggett of Spiralworks, and Natural Builder Gregg Marchese. They were joined by permaculture designers Penny Livingston-

Stark, Toby Hemenway, and members of Lost Valley Educational Center, as well as local visionary natural builders Kiko Denzer, Sun Ray Kelly, and Olle Erson. Each site leader had the opportunity to provide an evening keynote presentation where their inspiration and larger vision could be shared, and tonight was Robert's turn. "Welcome to this historic event," he said. And it was indeed historic—natural building had arrived in the urban grid in a big way.

And for the next ten days, from morning to late evening, the projects grew and the people grew. Whole classes of school kids of all ages came to visit, learn about the issues of community gathering and public space, and lend their hands and feet. For many of the urban activists who also work to defend forests, it was inspiring indeed to learn



TOM HOVLAND

how we can not only go beyond saving ancient forests and ecosystems, we can actually build structures without destroying the land or the trees, we can build with the ground under our feet, and we can reuse the materials all around us.

The Natural Building Convergence was a bloom of community action and ecological vision on a massive scale, but it took lot of work to do it. For over a decade, annual natural building colloquia have brought together natural



Memorial Lifehouse completed. Commemorative cob pillar with bench, solar-powered light, and living roof.

MARK LAKEMAN

Coordinators of the Natural Building Convergence dancing in the Sunnyside Piazza's newly painted intersection.

builders from across North America. Usually held in remote rural locations, these events have provided an open setting for sharing ideas and techniques, and for the convergence of a community of people passionately motivated by earth-based construction. Beyond the cob, strawbale, cordwood, rammed earth, and earth bag demonstrations there is always the underlying impulse of community participation—reinforcing the message that it takes villagers to build a village. The participants have returned to their own regions with renewed energy and more ideas, and though some have managed to build small-scale, isolated demonstrations within urban areas, city bureaucracies have mostly prevented ecological alternatives from emerging. Until now.

A bicycle frame sits among flowers at the corner of Southeast 37th and Taylor, resting against a street sign. Four years ago Matt Schekel was riding it at this corner when a truck struck and killed him. Though many people have died in bicycle accidents, somehow Matt's death has become a cause, as if we have at last had enough. Though people who live within the city rarely spend time with

their neighbors, during the ten days of the Natural Building Convergence many people were outside in the streets, working, eating, playing together, and creating remarkable structures. Something had changed; something was different this time. Indeed, where Matt was killed now stands a giant pillar of cob surrounded by swirling mosaic glass, which glows with stored sunlight from a small PV panel at night, topped by a living roof. This is the Memorial Lifehouse at Southeast 37th and Taylor, with site leader Joseph Kennedy and created by a community to mark a life, make a sacred place, and to state a vision of how the world can be better for those who remain.

Two classes of school children descend upon natural builder Elke Cole at once. She asks them to take off their shoes and socks and directs them to a wide, flat pile of mud on a tarp. With all those tiny feet happily churning the clay, sand, and straw together to make the cob, who needs an industrial mixer? Within a couple of days, a nondescript, institutional neighborhood association building on Southeast Main Street in the Sunnyside neighborhood is trans-

formed, with a new, curving forecourt plaza of stone and two cob sculptures to mark the entrance. One is a bench shaped like a smiling dragon and a sleeping girl; the other a solar-powered information kiosk with a living roof. These remarkable structures animate the public realm around them and provide powerful examples of permanent ecological building.

Because of these and the six other Convergence sites, a substantial portion of Portlanders now interact with natural buildings every day. How did we accomplish so much so quickly? Many Portland neighborhoods have been active for years, initiating, advocating, interlinking, and joining together to take the lead and propel the leaders. Neighborhood organizing has become a widespread phenomena here, and local community activists are making headway on all fronts. Though we're seeing some amount of conservative backlash, it is being overwhelmed by increasingly concentrated numbers of action-oriented Portlanders with communitarian values. New ways of solving problems are emerging, which is how the Natural Building Convergence grew from the grassroots.



TOM HOVLAND



MARK LAKEMAN

The other cob sculpture in the SE Main St. site, an information kiosk with a living roof, lit at night by solar power.

Organizers of the Convergence—people with skills and knowledge as well as those with no experience at all—are people who like to use their hands and directly engage the world. But it isn't easy to build structures like these in a city for the first time, and it required a great deal of cooperation. Political leaders had to move the bureaucracy to allow natural buildings to be built in public places, and other city bureaus were active in providing funding and project support. Coordinating the Convergence included major energy from two Portland nonprofits, Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition and The City Repair Project, also co-organizers of Portland's annual Earth Day Celebrations. The community-building processes inherent to natural building were compelling to both these organizations because they already work to involve citizens in ways that directly impact their communities.

(Other City Repair projects with ecological dimensions include the recent "Intersection Repair" Ordinance, which allows all Portland neighborhoods to convert an unlimited number of street intersections into public squares, and a portable teahouse on a truck with gigan-

tic wing-canopies, built by homeless youth.)

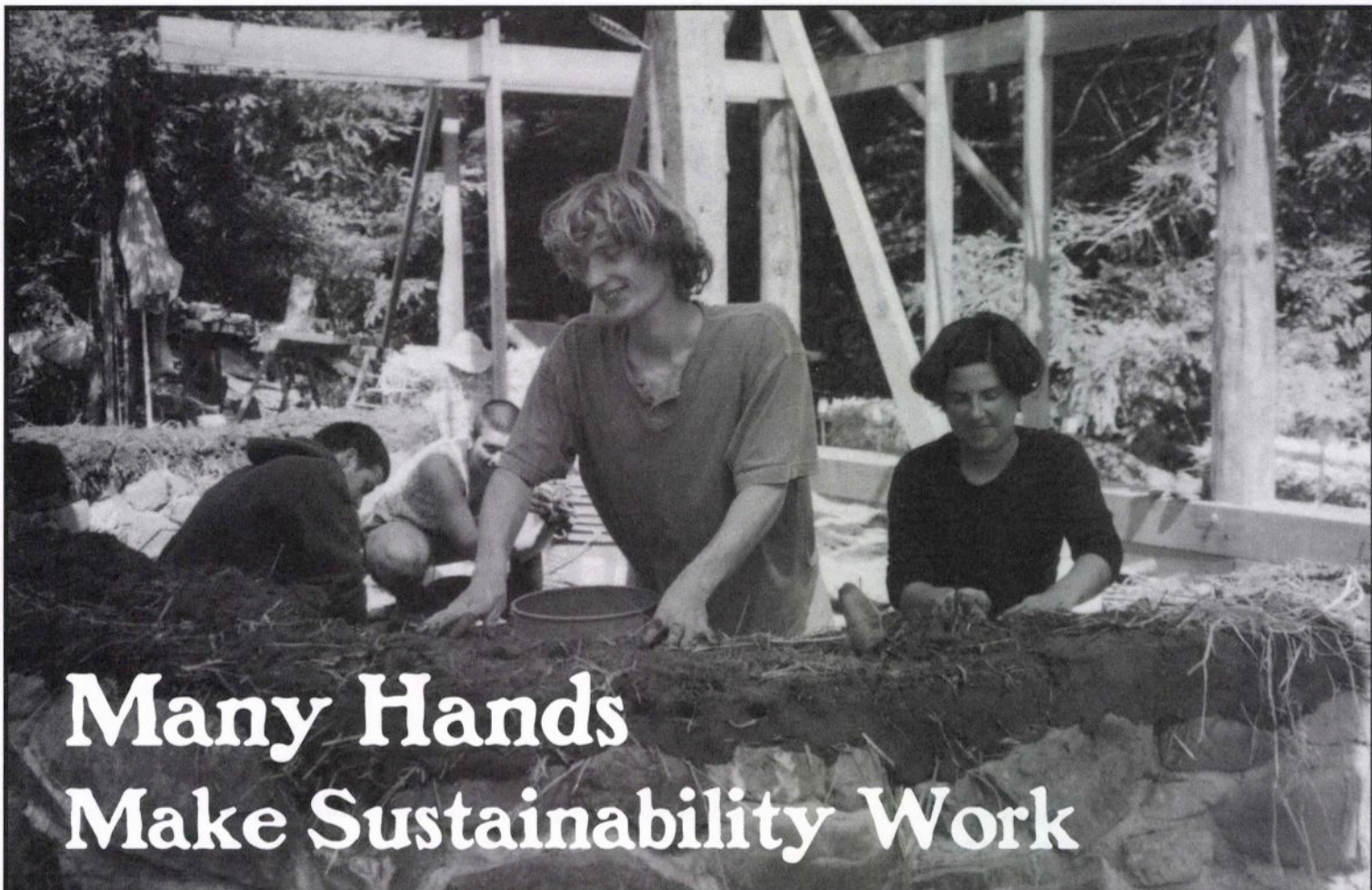
The connection between ecological survival, community empowerment, and cultural development is becoming obvious enough in Portland to attract active local government support and funding. City officials were attracted to natural building projects which also generate a community-building process, and liked that the proposed projects would be designed, built, and inhabited by all the same people. This is an extremely important development, since the basis for unsustainable structures which stratify and isolate people and compel wasteful consumption are concentrated in the history and structure of the city itself. At the Convergence, on the contrary, public art and public places have been built by and for the people. At the WTO protests in Seattle many people chanted, "Whose streets? Our streets!" At the Natural Building Convergence public space was simply reclaimed and remade as a reflection of community aspiration, and as an expression of culture.

The Natural Building Convergence had an immediate impact, and moved

numerous Portland neighborhood communities to rethink where they live, to be villagers again, to live as people working, playing, and creating together in the midst of a city not originally designed for community to root and grow into culture. Many people who participated in the Convergence were moved to cry, to give deep thanks, to spend much more time than they had imagined giving as they helped raise the walls and literally build a common vision of a new cultural landscape.

Each person who helped make the eight structures, and each person who experiences them from now on, will be able to take an inspiration home with them—of beauty, and of ways they can rebuild their world—especially if they share the work and play of the rebuilding process with others. Ω

Mark Lakeman is the Co-Director of Creative Vision for The City Repair Project of Portland, Oregon, a nonprofit organization which assists communities in the creation of their own culturally oriented gathering places for communication, interaction, decision making and creative expression. www.cityrepair.org; moontrout@yahoo.com.



Many Hands Make Sustainability Work

BY MICHAEL G. SMITH

Work party members at Emerald Earth learn to build a cob wall. More experienced participants take an active role in teaching others.

SARAH MCCAMANT

A bell peals three times from a stand of redwoods; the sound lingering, then fading, in the foggy morning air. It's the second morning of a work party at Emerald Earth, a rural intentional community in Northern California. About 30 people in the outdoor eating area are finishing up their muffins, washing their bowls, and pouring themselves a second cup of tea. At the sound of the bell they find places in a ring of benches just starting to warm in the emerging sun.

Margaret is in charge of the morning circle today. She jokes that she feels like a summer camp counselor, then asks one of the visitors to open the circle with a song we learned in the sauna last night. Since several people have arrived since the last circle yesterday afternoon, we all introduce ourselves briefly. "My name is Green. I'm from San Francisco. My pas-

sion is growing food in the city." "I'm Kristen. I live here at Emerald Earth. I like to talk about Organizational Development." "My name is Andrew. I'm here from Cupertino. I'm really excited about the World Cup right now."

Some of the faces are familiar from past work parties. A few are friends who live nearby. But many have never been here before. They are friends of previous visitors, or they found out about the work party from an Emerald Earth newsletter, or they looked us up in the *Communities Directory*. Today's visitors range in age from six to 60, and they have come for many different reasons. One couple who will soon build their own strawbale home are looking for ideas and hands-on experience. An old college friend of several Emerald Earth members has come to find out what they've been up to all these years. Two

young women apprenticing at a nearby research farm have come to spend their only day off sweating and eating and laughing in the company of like-minded people.

By the second day of every work party, the seemingly random collection of visitors begins to merge into a cohesive whole. In some mysterious way, the permanent community of Emerald Earth catalyzes the creation of a new community which exists for only a couple of days, but which nonetheless contains in microcosm many of the characteristics of longterm community. Friendships arise, and so do conflicts. The culture of the group is slightly different every time. Watching it grow is like watching an unknown seed sprout and wondering what kind of flower it will bear.

After introductions and announcements, it's time to talk about the morning's activities. Various Emerald Earth members describe the projects they're leading and how many helpers they want. Before it gets too hot, Sara will take a group to finish digging swales on the south-facing meadow that we're developing as a new garden and food forest. Darryl wants four people to dig a small constructed wetlands and some connecting trenches for a graywater treatment system. Mitch and I are ready to start installing the adobe floor in the new cabin. We need three or four people to mix clay, water, sand, gravel, and straw, and a few more to pour, level, and trowel it in place. Gary will take anyone who's left to finish clipping the fence and do some sheet mulching.

Everyone disperses to the various work sites, picking up tools along the way. Sweaters come off and leather

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movement.***

gloves go on. Kids and dogs run around in the tall grass. After a while, a few people go off to start preparing lunch.

Less than four years ago, Emerald Earth was on the point of collapse. Jim was the only human resident. He had been here six years, much of that time by himself, trying to keep the spring from

clogging up, the common house roof from leaking, and the footbridge from collapsing. Today we have 10 permanent residents, including two children. In the three years since the community was reinvigorated, we have created a great deal of physical infrastructure. We've completed three new cabins, each built of round poles and lumber milled on-site, with walls of strawbale, cob, and straw-clay, and with earthbag and redwood foundations, shredded redwood bark insulation, clay plasters, natural paints, and living roofs. We've expanded the vegetable garden, and planted fruit trees and medicinal herbs. We've set up an outdoor kitchen and dining area for groups, and built a cob pizza oven. We've installed a remote telephone with its own solar panel and battery and a quarter mile of phone line. We've built a chicken coop with two attached straw yards and maintained a

ROBYN KINKER

Everyone loves to play in the mud. Children at a work party help mix clay, sand, straw, and water for an adobe floor.



flock of 15 chickens. We've begun a wood shop, a cob greenhouse, a sauna, a bathhouse, and a guest loft, most of which are nearing completion. We've overhauled and expanded our gravity-fed spring water system and solar electric system, and run both to all the new buildings. Experimenting with reclaiming graywater from our common house, we've come up with a system that seems to work, running the water into mulch basins planted with fruit trees. By the end of this summer we will have hosted and taught a dozen hands-on workshops on topics from herbal medicine to permaculture gardening to natural building. Current projects include building a fourth cabin, developing new water sources for expanded agriculture, starting a small on-site business growing gourmet and medicinal mushrooms, and converting several of our vehicles to run on biodiesel. All of this while raising two young children and working off-site part-time for money to support

ourselves and the community. We also meet at least twice a week, both to keep communication open and relationships healthy, as well as to work on the enormous "invisible infrastructure" of the agreements, policies, and plans necessary to manifest our vision.

It's hard to imagine how we could have accomplished all this without work parties. We schedule from four to six work parties every year, each lasting from two to seven days. The work party dates go out well in advance in our newsletter, and anyone is welcome to attend, although we have learned to cap the number of visitors at 20 to 25 in order to keep everyone well fed and productively involved.

For us, part of sustainability means using local resources to meet our needs for shelter, food, and energy. This reduces our dependence on industrial manufacturing, industrial agriculture, and long-distance transportation, with their associated environmental and

social costs. But local materials are available in a raw state, and not always in the most convenient places. So sustainability brings with it a need for lots of human labor, especially in the early stages of development.

One good example is our sand and gravel harvesting operation. The kind of building we do requires large quantities of gravel for drainage in rubble trench foundations and under adobe floors; large quantities of sand for cob, mortars, and plasters; and a mixture of both for adobe floors and to fill earthbags. Sand and gravel are available commercially from riverbank dredging, which, among other impacts, releases large quantities of silt that buries the gravel bars necessary for salmon spawning, and from mining operations where rock hillsides are blasted apart and then crunched up by huge machines. A couple of times we have bought gravel from this second source, but we prefer to process our own material on site from our seasonal creek, which

DARIUS RICHMOND

Raising a timber frame the old-fashioned way is the quintessential work party experience.





During one week-long work party, participants built the foundation, strawbale walls, roof beams and rafters of this 400 sq. ft. cabin.

MARGARET HOWE

flows from about December to May. For most of its course it has steep, well-defined banks, but in one place close to our cabins it opens out into a broad bar, where several feet of sand and gravel have been deposited. Over three seasons of construction, we have harvested many yards of material from this part of the creek. Darryl rigged up a simple screening device that allows us to separate each shovelful into up to four different size grades: large rocks, coarse gravel, pea gravel, and sand. There is no vehicle access to the creek bed, so all of these many tons of material have been hauled up the banks by wheelbarrow. A common scene during work parties involves a couple of people working with picks and shovels to keep the screen fed, while others push heavy loads up the hill. At its best, this operation is a smooth-running team effort reminiscent of a less mechanized place or time. Short term visitors seem to enjoy the workout and

the novelty of the experience.

Our gravel mine is also an example of what I call "regenerative building." In addition to reducing fossil fuel use, pollution and environmental devastation elsewhere by not ordering material from off-site, we are trying to help restore our local ecosystem to health. Our gravel-mining efforts have excavated a large pool in the creek bed where winter runoff slows down and drops some of its load of silt and sand, picked up in part as a result of logging upstream. This means less silt downstream in the salmon spawning grounds and a potentially long-term renewable resource for us.

Other labor-intensive projects at Emerald Earth which have been made faster and more fun by work parties include digging foundation trenches, turning garden beds, pulling up cattails to prevent their taking over the pond, harvesting leaf compost from our seasonal swamp, fencing, sheet mulching, rais-

ing strawbale walls, building cob and straw-clay walls, plastering, moving piles of lumber, and harvesting labor-intensive crops like chamomile. Each of these activities is transformed from a tedious chore to an enjoyable social and educational activity by the presence of an energetic group. We try to have several different types of projects happening simultaneously, and we encourage people to switch if they get bored or take a break if they get tired.

Work parties not only allow us to get projects requiring lots of labor done quicker (with less burnout for community members); they also enable us to achieve things that would be practically impossible otherwise. For example, the frame for our first cabin was put together from local redwood poles connected with traditional mortise-and-tenon joinery. To allow precise fitting of these wood-to-wood joints, several posts and beams have to be assembled together on

the ground, then raised up as a single unit called a “bent.” The joinery was finished before a work party, then the bents were assembled and raised by the group. Each bent was 16 feet wide, 16 feet tall, and heavy. The frame was raised by a closely coordinated team of a dozen people lifting in different ways: with their hands; with a rope through a block and tackle in a tree above the site; and with long, notched poles used to push the top beams into their final position. The only practical alternative would have been to bring in heavy machinery, which would have broken our budget and made a mess of the site. Everyone who participated felt an incredible sense of achievement bordering on euphoria. We had only just

enough people present to raise the frame, so everyone felt needed. We got a good sense of what an old-time barn raising must have felt like.

This sense of empowerment is not an incidental product of our work parties. Because some people return year after year, and many thank us profusely for the opportunity to sweat and get blisters, we know that we’re providing a service. This service includes education. At our work parties, people interested in sustainable living techniques find an accessible hands-on learning opportunity—cheaper and less intimidating than a formal workshop. We take the time to answer questions, give detailed tours, and sometimes do a little informal consulting. Visitors leave

inspired by seeing so many interrelated sustainable systems being developed and by visiting a vibrant intentional community. They feel good about having contributed to a valuable demonstration project. And they feel supported by the confluence of like-minded people working together toward a common goal. Besides all that, our work parties are fun! We spend about six hours each day working. The rest of the time is spent swimming in the pond, playing games, hiking, talking, singing in the sauna or playing music around the campfire. People make new friends and, if they return, eventually feel like part of an extended family.

For our part of the exchange, Emerald Earth receives much more than a pool of free labor. The connections and relation-

MARGARET HOWE

Children are enthusiastic participants in both the work and the party aspects of work parties.



ships that develop at work parties are vital to our sense of purpose. We don't want to hide away in the woods creating our own paradise; we need to feel like an interconnected part of a larger social movement. Without visitors, we can feel isolated, frustrated, and overwhelmed by the amount of work before us. The excitement generated at work parties reminds us of the importance of what we are doing, and helps keep us motivated.

We also learn a lot from visitors about their own experiences with the kinds of things we are attempting, and about the successes and failures of other intentional communities and demonstration projects.

Because this exchange is mostly independent of money (although we do ask for a donation for food costs), work parties seem like a promising example of sustainable economy. This is a part of the sustainability puzzle that urgently needs development. It is a revelation to some people that they can provide a service and receive a service from complete strangers without any money trading hands.

The bell rings again to mark the end of the work period. Tools are gathered and returned to the shed and muddy visitors head to the pond for a quick swim before dinner. Swales have been dug; the fence has been clipped; the graywater pond is a couple of feet deeper. The adobe floor is finished, spread out like a pan of unbaked brownies in the redwood foundation.

The group gathers around the dinner laid out on the outdoor serving table. There is polenta, ratatouille, salad from the garden, and garlic bread. Somebody brought olives, somebody else brought some local beer, and there will be chocolate cake later. The community that has

come together for this rich but brief time joins hands in a circle one final time. We close our eyes in silent gratitude for the food which is about to fill us, the nurturing land that holds us, the tiredness in our bodies, and the new thoughts in our heads and new people in our hearts. A pair of ravens pass noisily overhead, and we can hear the call of wild turkeys in the distance.

Soon the circle will disperse, and this particular manifestation of community will be no more. The ephemeral flower is going to seed, and the wind is about to blow. But those seeds will find fertile ground in the wide world. The energy generated here this weekend, the enthusiasm, new ideas and new relationships will be carried in many directions. The values of community and the tools of sustainable living will be passed to new people, some of whom may show up here for our next work party.

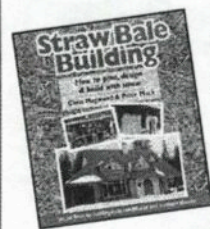
At Emerald Earth we believe the path to sustainability has at least three parallel tracks: right relationship with each other, right relationship with the land and its non-human inhabitants, and right relationship with the greater world. Work parties are one of the ways we participate in an interchange of positive energy and mutual support with the larger community beyond our borders. Ω

Emerald Earth is looking for new members as well as short term work traders. For information about membership, work trade, work parties, or natural building workshops, please email lorax@ap.net or send a SASE to Emerald Earth, PO Box 764, Boonville, CA 95415.

Michael G. Smith is the author or co-author of four books on natural building, including The Cobber's Companion and The Art of Natural Building.

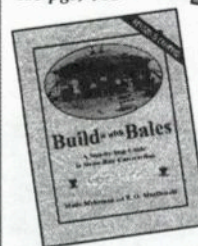
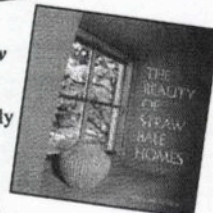
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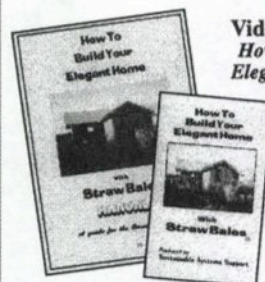
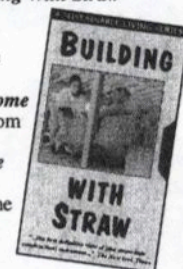
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SUSTAINABILITY

IN THE CITY OF THE ANGELS

PHOTOS: JESSE MOORMAN

BY LOIS ARKIN
AND JESSE MOORMAN

"These flies don't land on people, they just like to be around compost," I (Lois) told the L.A. County Health Inspector, confident he would understand. We were touring the gardens surrounding our buildings at Los Angeles Eco-Village (LAEV) in a follow-up inspection on our composting systems.

"That doesn't matter," the inspector shot back. "And this here, too; this has got to go," he added, pointing to a small pile of odorless composted horse manure beside a new raised garden bed.

"But that's fully aged and composted manure; it doesn't smell and it doesn't attract flies at all," I protested.

"That doesn't matter," he retorted. "This is the third time I've been out here on these issues, and I'm putting your buildings into the REAP program."

I could feel my blood pressure rising.

L.A. Eco-Villager Lara Morrison shows off LAEV's solar gargoyle fountain, which runs a stream of water that delights garden visitors when the sun shines.

CRSP, the nonprofit organization that sponsors L.A. Ecovillage, along with 700 other nonprofit housing developers in Los Angeles, was an advocate for the REAP program Rent Escrow Account Program (REAP). Under the REAP program, tenants must pay their rent directly into a city fund until the landlord corrects any health and safety violations they've been cited for. L.A. Ecovillage may not be winning any prizes for neatness, but after six years and \$200,000 of conscientious upgrades, our two apartment buildings are in far better shape than the slum apartments they were in when we acquired them.

A few days later Joe and I were sitting in the office of the health inspector's supervisor, explaining our efforts to improve the appearance of the compost. We explained how important neighborhood composting is to the community's organic food supply, how much particulate matter we prevented from being

spewed into our air by composting on site rather than having the city's diesel trucks pick our materials up for far-away composting, how we were teaching other neighbors about the composting process, and how the city encourages what we are doing. The supervisor, interested and sympathetic, was convinced that we would make our compost neater and move it farther from the building to avoid any possibility of odors or flies molesting the residents. As we were about to leave, he mentioned, "By the way, I heard about that nice article you had in the *L.A. Times* recently, something about a composting toilet."


"Oops," I thought.

When the *Los Angeles Times* reporter said she might include something on the composting toilet, I had thought that educating the public about this important aspect of sustainable living would be beneficial. On the other hand, my worst nightmare was that someone in the County Health Department would

notice the article and create problems for us. But one of the necessary steps in bringing about change is for sympathetic public officials to realize that devices like composting toilets are in the public interest. The testimony of health officials will be important when our legislative proposal for composting toilets is introduced by our city council person within the next few years. So here was an opportunity to make this public official a fan.

"Yes," I added excitedly. "We have a demonstration composting toilet which we explain in our public tours. It's a commercial variety frequently used in places where water is not practical. Would you like me to send you some information on it?" I added, ever hopeful.

"Please do," he said, much to our delight. "I'd like to learn more about them and how they work." We left, beaming.



Jen Peterson and Ron Milam with the tandem bicycle the community gave them as a wedding present, with Julio Santizo and Tina Wang, in front of LAEV's large apartment building where they all live

What Is L.A. Eco-Village?

Los Angeles Eco-Village (LAEV) is a two-block neighborhood in densely populated central Los Angeles founded at the corner of White House and Bimini Place in central Los Angeles in 1993. An intentional community of 35 intentional neighbors working with other neighbors and the city at large to demonstrate the processes for creating a sustainable neighborhood and city. We are attempting to integrate the social, economic, and ecological systems of the neighborhood in order to show others that lower-impact living patterns can result in a higher quality of life. The Cooperative Resources & Services Project (CRSP) founded in 1980, is the nonprofit sponsor of LAEV.



The famous four-plex at White House and Bimini Place, fate currently unknown, where author Lois Arkin lived and the L.A. Eco-Village got its start

CRSP owns two apartment buildings consisting of 48 units of permanently affordable housing planned for cooperative ownership. The 80-year-old buildings were slum-like when CRSP bought them in 1996 and 1999.

While 35 neighbors have moved to L.A. EcoVillage to be part of the demonstration, the group shares the buildings and the

neighborhood with many pre-existing neighbors. Nearly one-third of the intentional EcoVillagers have moved here in the past year, making the social learning curve rather steep.

A resident committee meets weekly to make a variety of building and community decisions. Sunday community potlucks and spontaneous mid-week meals add to the social glue of the community, along with spontaneous and planned work parties. The group is in its sixth year of eco-retrofitting the larger 40 unit building and plans more new development on its property. CRSP's Ecological Revolving Loan Fund, the project lender, has raised over \$1 million in loans from private individuals and organizations, and has paid back over \$400,000 in the past six years.

Members of L.A. EcoVillage have developed and maintain several small organic gardens and orchards in and around the two buildings. Several small businesses are in early planning stages, including a bike repair co-op, a bed and breakfast, a healing center, and food co-op/cafe. Many residents engage in a variety of local urban planning, environmental, and social justice activities. CRSP provides public tours several times each month (by reservation only), and visitors frequently stay in one of our apartment units at reasonable rates. We hold special events and workshops and add interested people to our email mailing list. We are in the process of accelerating our Trainings for Urban Ecovillages (TRUE) project.

While the ecovillage moment has generally settled on the spelling "ecovillage," L.A. Eco-Village is spelled with a hyphen and capital "E." —Ed.

Getting Ready for the Next Generation

A test of our community's social sustainability came when Jen Petersen and Ron Milam, both active L.A. EcoVillage members, became engaged to marry. Each had a two-room unit, and they wanted to take a newly vacant three-room apartment after their wedding. Since our main apartment building has mostly two-room units, we have tended to reserve the larger units for families with children. But no such family was ready to claim the apartment, and we were likely to lose Jen and Ron if they could not have the larger unit.

We recognize the need for members to choose long-term residency in LAEV, even as family size and composition change. Accommodating Jen and Ron in the larger unit is our first real test of creating a durable community, at least in its early stages.

The No-Car Rent Discount

LAEV aims to minimize the impacts of cars on our environment. We have no car amenities like off-street or secure parking. To encourage car-light living in our transit-rich neighborhood, we decided that all car-free households in our 40-unit building would receive a \$20 discount on their monthly rent. Of 35 intentional L.A. EcoVillage members, 13 arrived in the community not owning a car, and seven have shed their cars since moving here. We hope to inspire other property owners in transit-rich areas of Los Angeles to give similar rent discounts. Many EcoVillagers are actively working to improve bicycle, pedestrian and public transit in the city through their participation in public planning processes.

The Bicycle Repair Workshop

It's Tuesday evening, and the talk in Unit #110 is hot and heavy about the latest in bicycle amenities as visitors and Eco-Villager members learn bicycle repair from Jimmy and Randy. The two EcoVillagers make their living as bicycle messengers in close-by downtown, but their passion for bicycles goes beyond their daily livelihood activities: They've started a bicycle messenger worker owned co-op and plan to eventually transform the small bike repair co-op into a viable business that can support several EcoVillagers.

Solar Brainstorming on the Roof

"I'm almost there," I groan as I pull my senior limbs up the final five feet from the top of the ladder through the hatch onto the roof. Others had already moved to the other end of the big building's flat roof, with EcoVillagers T.H. Culhane and Angel Orozco leading the pack. Visitors Claudio Maduane and Luisa Fernanda Giraldo from Darien Ecovillage in Colombia, and Jeff Clearwater, the Ecovillage Network of the Americas' solar guru, join us and a few other friends for a brainstorming session on improving LAEV's solar capacity.

T.H., a PhD student in international development, is committed to helping break the United States' dependency on oil and other fossil fuels. His small residence in this building may be the first apartment in the United States to be 100 percent off the grid. T.H. has invested several thousand dollars for his solar-powered haven, and the electric powered devices he owns include an air conditioner, freezer, phone equipment, computer, radio, TV and VCR, lights, generators, pumps ... and his electric guitar. It's his passion to demonstrate that any electrical appliance used within a mainstream US household can be used with home-generated, off-the-grid power (although, in this case, not all at the same time!).

"Life is much more mundane now that I have 12 solar panels on the roof," says T.H. "I no longer have to hook up my bike to my bike-powered generator to get power in my apartment; now the sun does it all. My bike riding is now exclusively to get places. But should the sun refuse to shine, I always have that back-up!"

Inspired by T.H.'s example, other EcoVillagers are now starting to invest in their own rooftop solar equipment.

A Bathtub-Scale "Living Machine"

"Amazing!" was the typical response from people taking tours of LAEV when they'd get to T.H.'s bathroom. His bathtub was filled 18" deep with 20 gallons of water (non-chlorinated). Lovely water hyacinths and other fresh-water pond plants floated on the surface, snails and small bottom-dwelling fish lived below, a continuous gentle spray came into the tub from the shower head. A solar generator ran a pump that recirculated the water continuously, so each time T.H. took a shower (standing on a small brick and flagstone "island" rising several inches above the water) it was with the same water, but cleaned since the previous shower by the "living machine" organisms in the tub.

But after several months of trying to adjust the pump's filter to deal with soap

scum, T.H. found the experiment wasn't quite working. So he created a temporary solution by running a 10-foot pipe from the tub drain outside to a 50-gallon plastic box with a six-inch layer of sand and gravel. Two screens on the plastic box pre-filter the troublesome soap scum. Small holes in the bottom of the box drain the filtered water into a second perforated box, with more layers of sand and gravel. Beneath the lower box, a small channel in the garden drains the cleaned shower water directly to our mango and papaya trees.

But this is only an interim solution. T.H. next version of the living machine is to recirculate shower water through a series of tubs on the roof. He's been haunting local aquarium shops for ideas and equipment. He is now constructing a system that passes the shower water through a Venturi foam fractionator



LAEV compost queen Vanessa Ragan helps the community get cleaner, neater compost.



L.A. Eco-Villagers are proud of their new strawbale and earth bag bench, which they helped build in workshop led by Albert Bates of Ecovillage Training Center at Farm. (Left to right) Tina Wang, Dedan Gills, and co-author, Lois Arkin

designed in a permaculture fashion and named the Bimini Slough Nature Park. Northeast Trees, a local permaculture-oriented landscape architect, is designing the park. The park will cleanse all the storm water as it returns to the aquifer or enters a storm drain that goes directly to the ocean. Storm water runoff is now recognized as a major polluter of our local coastline, and this park will become an important demonstration for future redevelopment in our city.

Jeff has now started to take up the call for the EcoVillage vision of recreating the Bimini Baths from the hot mineral springs deep below our streets. Ecological planning will include use of the waters for geothermal heating in the neighborhood and cleansing the waters in a biological

living machine to be returned to the aquifer. The at-risk youth at the Bresee center, the local middle school students, members of L.A. Eco-Villager, and the city at large will benefit from the future recreation of the Bimini Baths, which we expect will also become an important point of eco-tourism in our city.

Too Much Money for These Projects?

A source of controversy among some EcoVillagers is that the nearly \$750,000 in public monies could alternatively be spent in redeveloping many pedestrian- and bike-friendly streets or creating many more mini-parks. Should we engage in public advocacy for neighborhood responsibility to design and build these projects instead of the city and the MTA? Some of us can stand on the street and envision redesigned “traffic calmed” streets—beautiful, practical and more ecological. We have resources for planning and implementing those designs at a fraction of the cost of public sector projects. Isn't this an important aspect of working toward a more sustainable city?

Neighborhood groups will surely feel more ownership and take more care if they are doing the work. This will be part of the future work of urban ecovillagers everywhere! And here in Los Angeles, some of the new neighborhood councils will be doing this type of advo-

(known in pet stores as a “protein skimmer”), a biological filter, and an ozone generator, to end up the same quality of clean water that keeps sensitive tropical fish alive. He’s testing the system on the roof and he’ll soon connect it to his home-built solar water heater.

T.H. chooses many of his LAEV activities to add to his repertoire of low-cost self-help alternatives to wasteful US living patterns. He enthusiastically shares his findings with other EcoVillagers and groups he works with in other parts of the world.

Neighborhood Activism Pays Off

Nearly \$750,000 in public money is committed to redesign our streets, thanks to veteran Eco-Villager Joe Linton and “intentional neighbor” Jeff Carr.

To create a “shared street” project in the East Hollywood area of Los Angeles not far from here, Joe enlisted other EcoVillagers to help with neighborhood surveys, organizing meetings with public and community representatives, and holding workshops in the street to engage neighbors in envisioning possibilities. He got a \$291,000 grant from the City of Los Angeles and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) for the demonstration “shared street” project. The City’s formal design effort will begin later this year and the street will be

reconstructed in late 2003.

To set the stage for the MTA proposal, a dozen EcoVillagers participated in a two-year planning process to create a specific plan for this part of the city. The specific plan includes a demonstration car-free neighborhood, more parks and community gardens, childcare centers, combined live/work spaces, affordable housing, mixed land uses, improved public transit, bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly streets, and more. The mainstream is now calling these eco-city strategies “smart growth” and “urban villages.”

On the other end of our block, Jeff Carr, the executive director of the Bresee Foundation, an organization serving local youth, has worked to turn the side street into a park. The street closing was approved by our city council person, and Jeff got a grant from the state for \$250,000. After Jeff, Joe, and others worked diligently to weave the community interests together, the Mayor’s office committed another \$200,000.

Our two-block neighborhood has a rich natural history. The Bimini Slough seasonal wetlands used to be right here, which gave rise to the hot springs that fed the internationally renowned Bimini Baths. (Although long paved over, this gave rise to one of the street names of our corner, “Bimini Place.”) So EcoVillagers advocated for the park to be

cacy work once they get better established. For now, we are grateful to Joe, Jeff, and our elected officials for the opportunity to demonstrate a few more aspects of a sustainable urban neighborhood with the full support of the public sector.

Save the Corner Campaign

For the last 22 years I've lived in an apartment in a four-plex on the corner of White House St. and Bimini Place at the center of L.A. EcoVillage. The whole block is owned by the Los Angeles Unified School District, the rest of which is a public K-2 grammar school. In the early 90s EcoVillagers started lush organic gardens on this site (which now has 22 fruit trees) as an outdoor classroom for the children of this school.

For the last six years LAEV has struggled with the school district for control of this corner. (And soon after the teachers were instructed to no longer bring classes here for outdoor education). Several times the school district has begun eviction procedures with a plan to raze the building and fruit trees to create a parking lot, and each time EcoVillagers have garnered enough support from public officials to stop them. We've also tried to buy the corner. But the school district has prevailed, and by the time this is published, I will have moved my home and office to LAEV's 40-unit apartment building across the street, owned by CRSP. School district officials don't currently have plans for the corner.

Several EcoVillagers have been trying to work out a plan through our city council person, Eric Garcetti, and our school board member, Jose Huizar, to create a state-of-the-art green school on the entire block, which, besides the four-plex on corner, consists of a dozen temporary classroom bungalows and an asphalt yard surrounded by a chain link fence. What better place to develop such a school than in the middle of Los Angeles EcoVillage? The mostly low-income immigrant children who attend this school and their families would have a true head start working in partnership with EcoVillagers to reinvent

the way we live in this city.

Because developing an authentic green school on the larger school site would take five to ten years to implement, as an interim measure we are trying again to negotiate with the school district to sell the corner four-plex to CRSP. We would do a high-grade ecological retrofit in a short time and develop a school with an ecovillage theme.

Training for Urban EcoVillages (TRUE)

While we are still in the process of learning to live sustainably, we are starting to share what we have learned with others through our Trainings for Urban Ecovillages (TRUE) project. During the past few years, we have sponsored workshops with nationally recognized trainers on permaculture, natural building, fruit-tree pruning, composting, consensus decision-making, nonviolent communication, the productive use of conflict, as well as numerous slideshow presentations by visiting members from ecovillages around the world. We envision providing urban ecovillage training opportunities to the emerging neighborhood councils being certified by the City of Los Angeles. We are hopeful that we will help change the world by reinventing urban living patterns and sharing that knowledge and experience with others in the heart of the City of Angels. Ω

Lois Arkin is the founder of the Los Angeles EcoVillage and its nonprofit sponsor CRSP. She co-edited two books, Sustainable Cities and Cooperative Housing Compendium (U.C. Davis Center for Cooperatives), and has authored numerous articles on L.A. EcoVillage and urban sustainability. She is a founding member of the Ecovillage Network of the Americas, is representative to the ENA Council, and is a former board member of the Fellowship for Intentional Community. For more information: 213-738-1254; crsp@igc.org; www.ic.org/laev; www.ecovillage.org.

Jesse Moorman is a six-year resident of L.A. EcoVillage, a board member of CRSP, a founding member of the California Green Party, and the 1992 Green Party candidate for Congress. A former resident of Prasanthi Nilayam Ashram in India, he works as an immigration and human rights lawyer.

Editorial assistance provided by Jane "Yevgenya" Shevtsov.

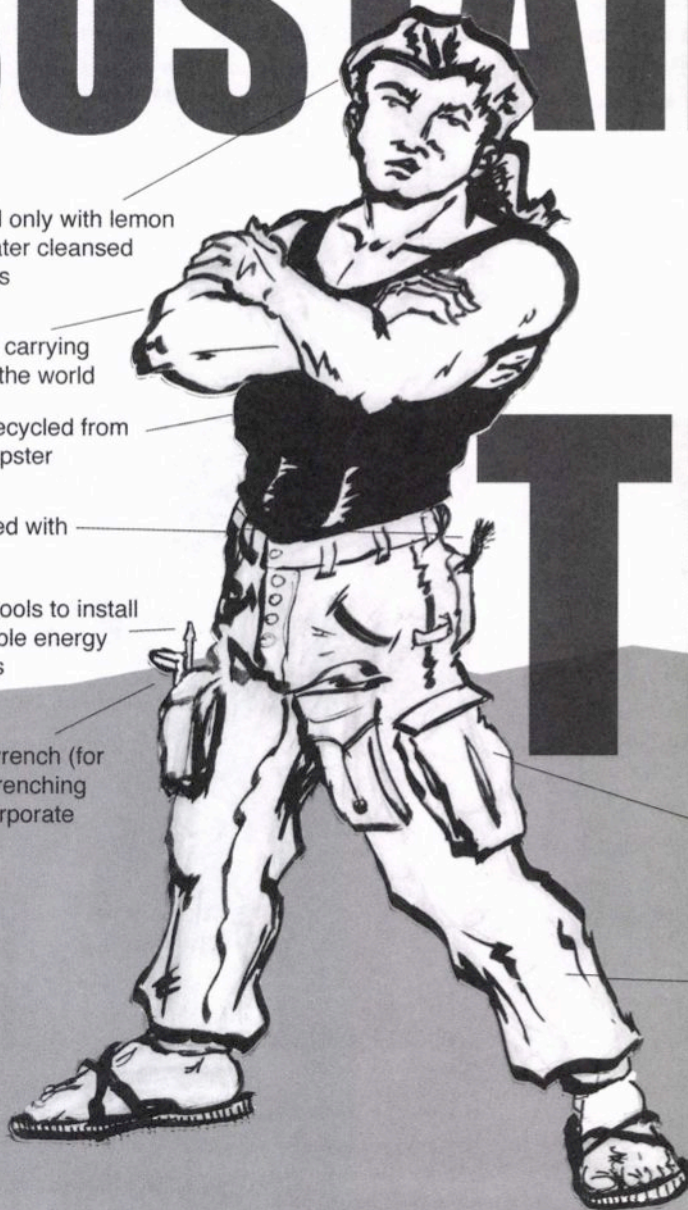


Lara Morrison uses a hotel-sized fridge in her apartment, saving energy, space, and materials.



MORE SUSTAINABLE THAN THOU

BY CHRIS ROTH



Hair washed only with lemon juice and water cleansed by flow forms

Muscles from carrying the weight of the world

Tank top recycled from urban dumpster

Teeth brushed with frayed twig

Handy tools to install renewable energy systems

Monkey wrench (for monkeywrenching greedy corporate abusers)

Organic root and seed snacks collected by hand

100% organic cotton produced bioregionally by unionized workers

Sandals crafted from tire scraps reclaimed from illegal dumping site

ILLUSTRATIONS: JACOB STEVENS

When I first encountered a community I'll call "Fir Ridge," it seemed like a dream come true. Finally, two years after graduating from an eco-consciousness-raising college program, I had found a place dedicated to practicing physical sustainability. Fir Ridge was widely regarded as the most hard-core ecologically-oriented intentional community in the region: the place where true eco-fanatics went to live close to the land and away from mainstream consumer society. It was also a place dedicated to being of public service, the headquarters of a nonprofit association whose work involved researching various appropriate technologies and simple living techniques for use around the globe.

Although I didn't know it at the time, Fir Ridge would be the start of a journey from a "more sustainable than thou" paradigm to a much healthier approach to sustainable living at a community I'll call "Maple Creek."

Joining Fir Ridge when I was 24, I experienced a way of life that I had barely imagined previously. The organization had acquired the 40-acre site to serve as a training center suitable for Third World development workers—which, to a large extent, it had become. We tried to exist with as little money and as much resourcefulness as possible, minimizing both imports to and exports from the land and making do with whatever was at hand. We ate year-round out of our garden (which I apprenticed in and then was put in charge of), virtually never buying produce. (We did buy bulk grains, beans, cooking oil, and a few other items.) The community constructed its buildings, without permits or code compliance, from recycled and homegrown natural materials. We heated only with wood from the land. We maintained our own spring-fed water system, and, again in defiance of code, had no septic system, only composting toilets, outhouses, and graywater systems. We even had our own dump, where any "garbage" was put, so as to measure and demonstrate the impact of any nonrenewable resource use we engaged in.

Because we operated on such a small budget, we could not afford to purchase an alternative power system, but we did

keep our electric bills to less than \$10 a month, for a population ranging from approximately four to fourteen at any one time. We maintained a large section of the land as a nature preserve (only foot trails, no logging or other extraction allowed), and managed the rest of the mostly wooded acreage according to sustainable forestry principles. We held periodic courses and workshops, published a magazine and a newsletter, and conducted research on various appropriate technologies and ecological-living techniques. Because we had little need for money, most of us supported ourselves on site, and made little if any use of automobiles.

Judged by its physical characteristics

At Fir Ridge our approach to sustainability was self-satisfied and often arrogant.

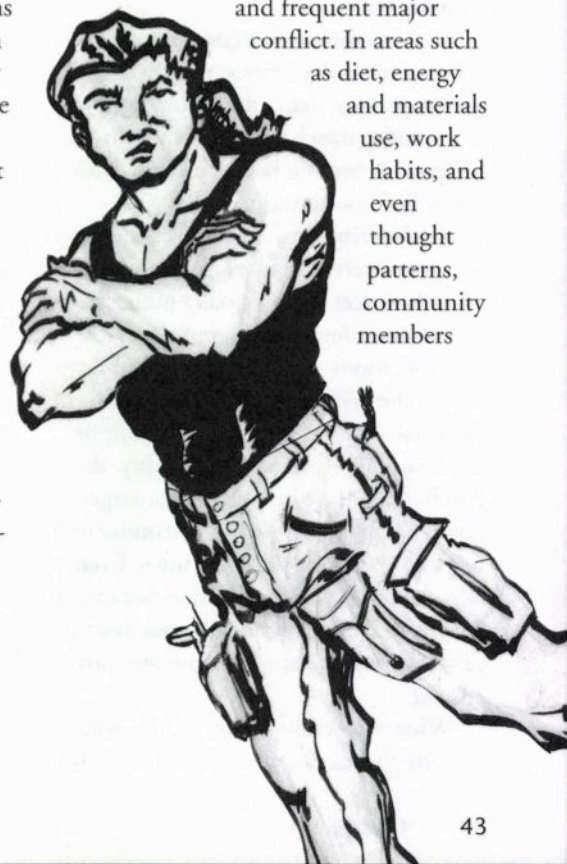
alone, Fir Ridge had achieved a relatively large degree of sustainability. Our systems weren't perfect, and we still depended on some purchased food and grid electricity (though candles and lanterns would serve in a pinch—and eventually small-scale photovoltaics came into the picture), but we had reached higher degrees of self-reliance and direct physical relationship with our land than most other people we knew. Granted, we had defied local zoning regulations and building codes, and most of our physical systems were illegal, but as one founder put it, "We're more than half an hour from the coffee machine, so they're not going to bother us." By certain definitions, we were "sustainable." In fact, we were "more sustainable than thou." And therein lay one of our major problems.

Our approach to sustainability (an approach which was, in retrospect, self-satisfied, often arrogant, and extremely limited) alienated not only many of our visitors, but ourselves as well. Single-

minded commitment to principle frequently became narrow-minded adherence to ideas. It's true that at times, we community members embraced our lifestyle choices joyfully and voluntarily. Yet I suspect we were often on automatic pilot, missionaries for causes that were not entirely our own. In fact, because of internal power dynamics, which had resulted in Fir Ridge becoming so identified with "eco-correctness" in the first place, most of our lifestyle "choices" were not even actually choices. No alternative choices really existed, if one wanted to work and live at Fir Ridge.

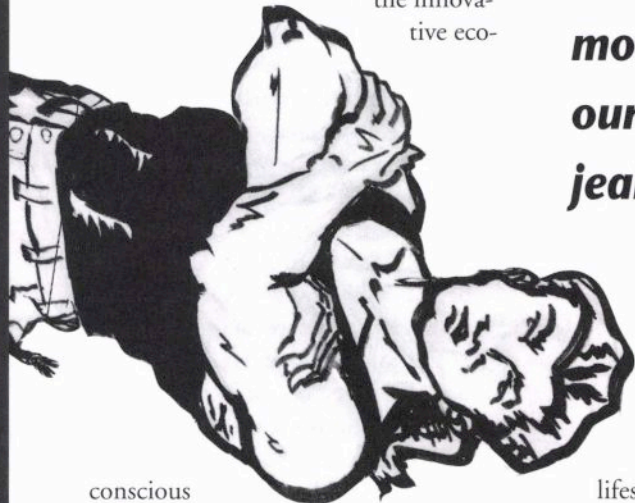
The charismatic leader who had established Fir Ridge was an articulate visionary, and also a well-traveled ecologist, landscape designer, and practitioner of various self-reliant arts. From the beginning, he had set the community's tone, the standards by which all actions were to be judged (including the idea that all actions were to be judged). Community members earned his respect by doing their best to follow these standards. He, in turn, earned our respect by the facility with which he was able to discern and set these standards.

And yet Fir Ridge was the scene of constant petty bickering and frequent major conflict. In areas such as diet, energy and materials use, work habits, and even thought patterns, community members



vied with each other to see who could be “more sustainable.” Arguments erupted over small details and became ongoing feuds. Members struggled against the domination of the charismatic leader, sometimes disputing his definitions of sustainability. While some visitors were

inspired by all
the innova-
tive eco-



conscious techniques and technologies we had incorporated into our lives, others left feeling inadequate, guilty, upset, or annoyed by the self-righteous proselytizing that could creep into our public presentations. And prospective longterm members left in droves, usually within a year or less of moving to the community.

Physical discomfort contributed to some of these departures: roofs leaked, buildings were frequently cold, damp, and moldy (the charismatic leader believed in heating bodies directly with quick fires, not interior spaces with longer-burning fires, so none of the buildings were well insulated), and child-friendly spaces were virtually nonexistent, to cite just a few examples of debatable interpretations of physical sustainability. But in the great majority of cases, interpersonal conflicts (often playing out in these arguments over sustainability, the familiar language in which most larger power struggles seemed to be conducted) helped precipitate the departures. Eventually, the interpersonal conflicts became so serious that eviction notices were posted, physical violence erupted, and lawsuits ensued.

What was wrong? Why did Fir Ridge, initially the model of sustainability from

my naive 24-year-old perspective, have such a hard time being sustainable as a community? Why, even for devoted Luddites who courted physical discomfort as a way of getting closer to the Earth, was

Our worldview was monotheistic, and our Eco-God was jealous.

living there so patently *unsustainable*? (Even the founder was eventually evicted, through court action.)

I don't believe the specific lifestyle choices we made (or which were made for us, by circumstance or by fiat) were primarily to blame—at least not in themselves. After all, people can form community and establish lasting bonds even in quite adverse physical conditions, as long as they feel united by a common spirit and are engaged in creating their own futures and following their own aspirations.

It would also be too easy to blame the charismatic founder, to label him as a “petty tyrant” without whom everything would have been fine. In reality, Fir Ridge's patterns of dysfunction and codependence extended far beyond this one individual. The organization and community have in fact become less prone to dysfunction, and perhaps more sustainable, since his departure, but this process has taken many years.

It is more useful to ask: what were the assumptions and worldviews that caused each of us who were part of Fir Ridge in those days to veer so far away from true sustainability, and to become, instead, “more sustainable than thou”?

Most of us, I believe, pursued sustainability partly to enhance feelings of self-worth, or at least to mitigate our feelings of guilt as we awakened into ecological and social consciousness. Each of us had realized that the world was in ecological tatters, and beset by massive

inequality—both phenomena directly linked to our unconscious actions as North American consumers. Along with my own environmental education came a very large dose of guilt—the result of a much larger societal paradigm in which guilt, sin, and blame were acceptable, even dominant, concepts. Through my obsessive pursuit of sustainability, I attempted to redeem myself—because, as a human being (and even worse, an American citizen) on the Earth in the late twentieth century, I was inherently a sinner, or felt that way.

It is little wonder that we in Fir Ridge experienced so much judgment, and so little joy. We were a community of people constantly judging ourselves, and as a consequence (whether consciously or unconsciously) judging others. Our efforts to draw the public into the sustainability fold, or even to maintain a viable community ourselves, were thwarted by this fundamental misunderstanding, this immersion in a paradigm in which sin, guilt, blame, and fear replaced beauty, appreciation, empowerment of self and others, and love.

To make matters worse, our general lack of self-acceptance also translated into an unwillingness to truly share ourselves, to communicate deeply about anything involving our own inner beings, our personal lives, our spiritual journeys. The most influential longterm members generally scoffed at spirituality, personal growth, and efforts to encourage closer communication and community bonding. People who already placed high priority on such things in their lives would sense the “vibe” at Fir Ridge immediately, and would leave quickly. Others would be stopped before they arrived. I remember in particular the charismatic leader's warning about one potential community member: “First of all, she describes herself as a feminist. Red flag, red flag.” He also neatly summarized his outlook on matters of potentially diverse opinion: “Either you're with me, or you're against me.” His definition of the word “cooperate” seemed to be “do what I say.” Even though many of us strongly disagreed with such sentiments, we submitted to them rather than being booted out of the community altogether. Fir Ridge placed an exceedingly low premium on self-

empowerment among its members—and this problem only exacerbated itself.

For these reasons, only people willing or eager to forego many of the personal and social dimensions of creating sustainability, in favor of focusing on the physical dimensions, would end up living at Fir Ridge. After all, if we were basically guilty and of very little merit anyway unless we were constantly engaged in heroic acts of ecological sustainability, why would we do anything but promote sustainability on a physical plane? The rest was all distraction, woo-woo, a waste of time, and a way of avoiding our responsibility to push ourselves to or beyond our physical limits in service of our mission. We sometimes acted as if our goal was to suffer as much as possible, short of killing ourselves, to atone for the sin of being born into this world.

We claimed to appreciate the diversity inherent in nature, but disdained others who had viewpoints on sustainability that differed from ours. In religious terms, our worldview was monotheistic, and our Eco-God was jealous. We sought personal absolution through pursuit of the “one true way,” but our efforts never quite sufficed. True, we were “more sustainable than thou.” But we weren’t sustainable enough.

I first visited Maple Creek while still living at Fir Ridge. Things had changed substantially at Fir Ridge in this post-law-suit, post-charismatic leader period (I had left, then returned once the political situation had settled), but I was learning more about myself and eventually realized that, despite the mutual evolution that had occurred, Fir Ridge and I were not a suitable longterm match. Meanwhile, after repeated visits, I noticed that Maple Creek felt much more like home. I gave notice at Fir Ridge and started the membership process at Maple Creek.

Maple Creek, too, was founded on principles of sustainability. On a practical level, the community I discovered here was also growing much of its own food, running a gardening apprenticeship program, stewarding 87 acres according to ecological principles, offering courses and workshops in Permaculture, eco-building, and other aspects of physical sustainability, and doing other public outreach. But

there were, and are, some vital differences from what I experienced in my first years at Fir Ridge that offer clues about why sustainability as practiced here seems joyful, not judgmental, healthy, not addictive, effective, not futile.

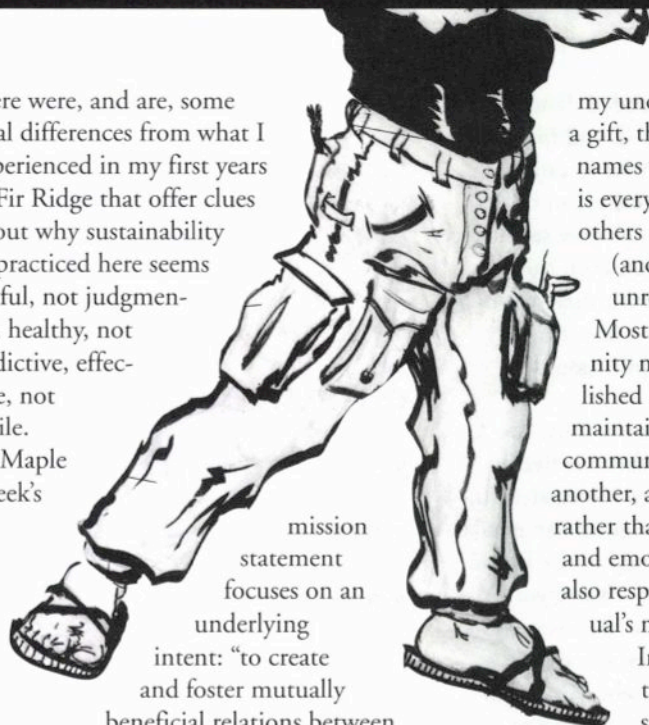
Maple Creek’s

mission statement focuses on an underlying intent: “to create and foster mutually beneficial relations between humans and all parts of the web of existence.” Its educational goals encompass “personal and spiritual growth” as well as ecology and sustainable agriculture; its

Prospective members left in droves.

ethic includes openness to spiritual diversity, support for individuals in their personal growth and healing, and a dedication to healing the land. And in contrast to the exclusivity I frequently encountered in my first years at Fir Ridge, members here aim to “participate in the global community, network with others, and facilitate the evolution of cooperative societies and socially responsible relationships at every level.”

The main differences, however, lie not in stated intentions, but in ways of being and of understanding the world. No charismatic (or uncharismatic) leader dominates Maple Creek; the community operates by consensus in the true sense of the word, with a strong commitment to listening to every voice. Members discuss and deal with perceived power imbalances openly, and generally appreciate, rather than disapprove of, uniqueness and diversity. At Maple Creek, I feel support for



my understanding that life is a gift, that spirit (whatever names we want to give to it) is everywhere, that we and others are basically good (and that “bad” is just an unrealized form of good). Most important, community members have established forums for maintaining open lines of communication with one another, actively seeking, rather than avoiding, honesty and emotional intimacy—and also respecting each individual’s need for space.

In sharp contrast to the grim, impersonal sustainability paradigm that once dominated my outlook, I now live in another inner world, one which, most of the time, seems to also be a shared reality with others in my daily life. In this happier world, I and my fellow communitarians listen to and honor our own and one another’s voices, looking for and expressing what is true within each one of us. We are committed to supporting one another in accepting ourselves. We may not always agree with one another’s opinions, on sustainability or any other category of issues (we have quite diverse attitudes toward lawnmower use, personal dietary choices, domestic animals, etc.), but we respect what one another has to say, and incorporate all perspectives when we make decisions. We recognize that everyone’s feelings are real, and, as such, have inherent validity. And we remind ourselves to take responsibility for our own feelings, instead of holding others accountable for them. We communicate about what is difficult in our relationships, and about what is joyful. We find ways to work and live together that, in the words of Marshall Rosenberg (originator of the Nonviolent Communication process which many of us study and practice), “make life more wonderful” for all involved.

At Maple Creek, we certainly don’t do everything “right,” and harbor no illusions of being paragons of unadulterated sustainability. Like almost all people in our culture, we sometimes waste

resources, inflict unintended damage to sensitive areas of our land, and manifest many other inconsistencies in our attempts to live ecologically. But the terms "right" and "wrong" now seem "old paradigm" to me, because even things that we get "wrong" are ultimately mistakes we can learn from. As such, they are not even mistakes, just lessons which help us evolve.

We attempt to make the most sustainable choices, but, when we live in the holistic vision we are committed to, we are not trying to be "good enough." As living parts of the body of the Earth, we are already perfect. So is everyone else. Since our actions to increase physical sustainability are then not driven by the need to redeem ourselves from our inherent sinfulness, not intended to relieve guilt, they are undertaken out of appreciation and caring. Nor, at our best, do we blame or shame others for making different choices. Communication about issues of sustainability can thus become a constructive exchange of ideas, experiences, and understandings, rather than an attack or a sparring match. Our choices regarding food, shelter, transportation,

more fear, guilt, and blame. Organic gardens, natural earth shelters, renewable energy systems, and regenerating forests naturally inspire wonder and appreciation

**Through my
obsessive pursuit of
sustainability, I
attempted to
redeem myself.**

in any untraumatized child or adult—if we experience anything else when we encounter them, we have some healing to do.

Of course, even here, all of us still *do* have healing to do—and the occasional "sparring match" may still erupt between individuals—but in the supportive context of Maple Creek, wiser perspectives and help in re-establishing constructive

follow an approach to Earth-attuned living that is gentle, not severe, inviting, not intimidating, inclusive, not exclusive, "as sustainable as thou," not more so. In this worldview, we are all one family, and our impacts on the Earth cannot be measured by individual ledger sheets, but only by the cumulative effects of our loving or fear-based actions, words, thoughts, and prayers. Physical sustainability now appears as the real abstraction, since the world is a place of constant change; spiritual sustainability and emotional sustainability seem much more likely to lead us to truly sustainable ways of living. This approach honors diversity, varied perspectives, even radically different opinions. It can laugh at itself. As long as it encompasses economic sustainability, it can sustain us indefinitely, and help us start to think in terms of the next seven generations, rather than the next seven months, when we contemplate the future.

A holistic sustainability paradigm allows us to be physically comfortable, and shows us how easy and non-impactful that can be. Nothing beats a solar shower or a dip in the creek at the end of a sunny day. No food tastes better than



Corrections

- **“More Sustainable Than Thou” Article—Our Mistake!**

We apologize to author Chris Roth and readers of his wonderful “More Sustainable Than Thou” article (Summer '02 issue, “The Heart of Sustainability”), for the missing words at the bottom of each column on page 46. The bottom of the first column should read:

Our choices regarding food, shelter, transportation, energy use, and the other details of daily life become opportunities to express love and understanding, not to experience more fear, guilt, and blame.

The bottom of the second column and beginning of the third column should read:

Of course, even here, all of us still do have healing to do—and the occasional “sparring match” may still erupt between individuals—but in the supportive context of Maple Creek, wiser perspectives and help in re-establishing constructive communication usually seem close at hand, helping breaches to heal rapidly. I and others at Maple Creek seek to follow an approach to Earth-attuned living that is gentle, not severe; inviting, not intimidating; inclusive, not exclusive; “as sustainable as thou,” not more so.

The bottom of the third column should read:

No food tastes better than what we harvest fresh from the garden—especially if we haven’t ruined our ability to enjoy it by abusing our bodies through overwork.

—Editor

overwork. A truly sustainable community also needs to be a good place to raise children in or to grow old in—a place where members appreciate, rather than denigrate, the contributions of youth, and honor, rather than rebel against, the wisdom of elders. In such an ecologically evolved communal culture, we can play and pray, work and love—all without fear of being ridiculed or being “wrong” for failing to measure up to some arbitrary standard of sustainability.

At Maple Creek we seek to follow an approach that is gentle, not severe, inviting, not intimidating.

Reviving the lost arts of physical sustainability and exploring new ones are integral parts of the work of creating ecological culture, but ultimately, the only real sustainability is found in love for ourselves, for others, and for the Earth. And none of those forms of love can exist fully without the other two. It's been a long journey for me to rediscover this basic truth, articulated by enlightened communitarians since the dawn of time: it is love, not fear (or guilt, sin, or judgment) that sustains the world. It always has, and always will. Our job is to let it flow. Ω

Chris Roth lives at Maple Creek, also known as Lost Valley Educational Center (www.lostvalley.org), where he co-facilitates the Organic Gardening, Permaculture, & Community apprenticeship program and edits Talking Leaves: A Journal of Our Evolving Ecological Culture (www.talkingleaves.org). Contact him at 81868 Lost Valley Lane, Dexter, OR 97431; 541-937-3351 ext. 116; chris@talkingleaves.org.

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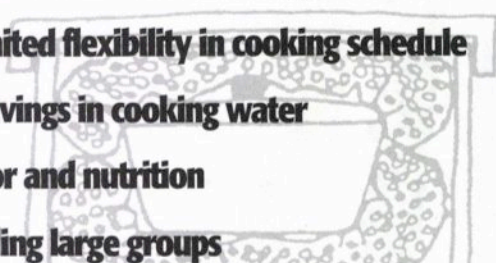
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The Haybox Cooker: Why Every Community Needs One

BY CHRIS ROTH

If the above were an actual ad, it would likely provoke a few questions:

(1) *Is this just a lot of hype?*

Fortunately, no. This essential kitchen device actually performs as described.

(2) *If such a device exists, why doesn't everyone have one?*

Everyone should have one. We live in a culture where do-it-yourself ecologically sound devices are not promoted because they don't make anyone a fast buck or increase the GNP.

(3) *How can my household or community get one?*

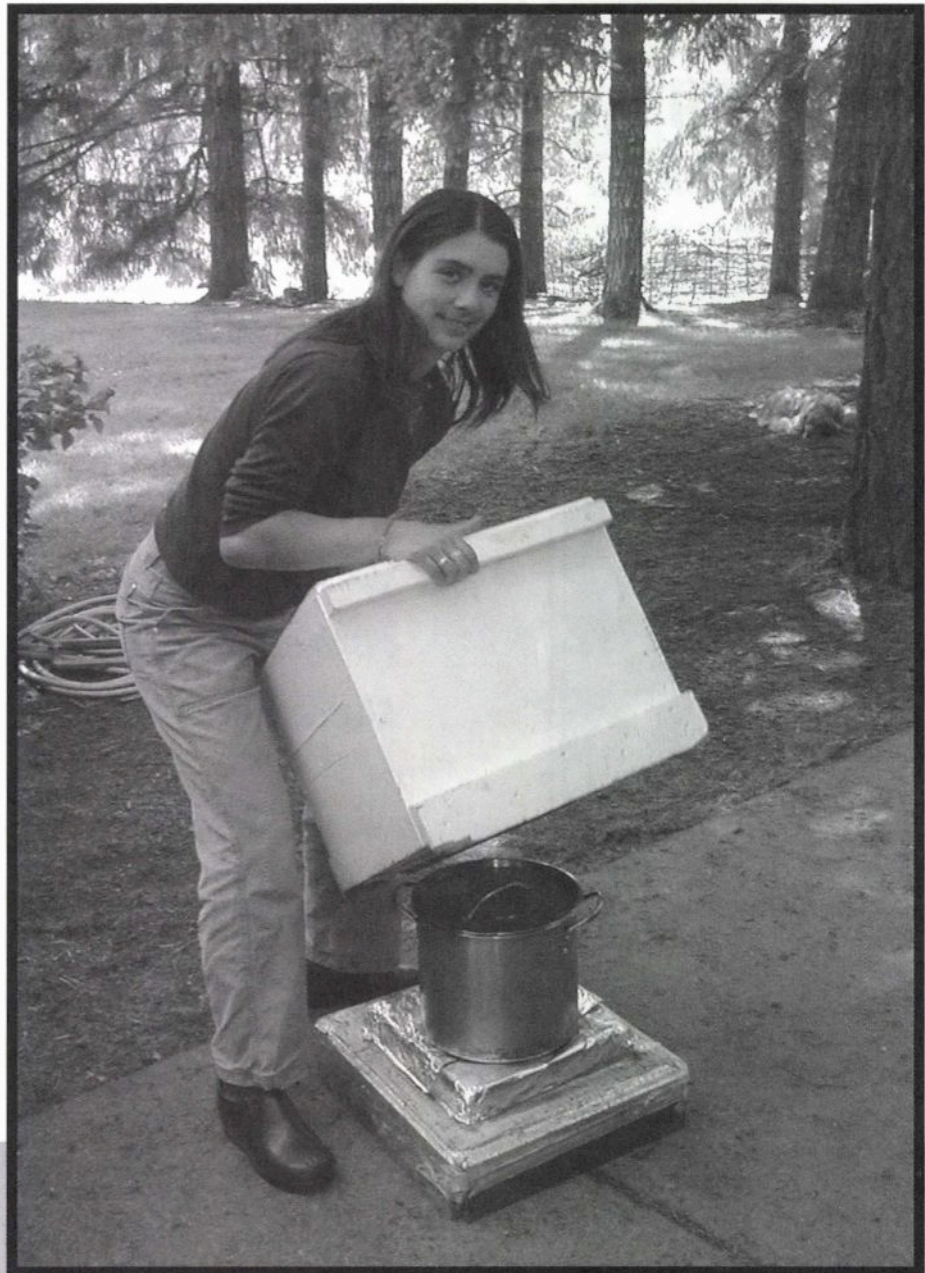
It's easy: make it yourself.

The device I've described is a haybox, also known as a retained-heat cooker, insulated cooker, or wonder box. (And

“hay” actually means “straw,” not the considerably more expensive alfalfa or grass hay.) Of all the sustainable technologies I’ve encountered in my years of community living, the haybox is the most universally applicable. In short, every community and household should have one—or ideally, more than one. At Lost Valley Educational Center we have five; Twin Oaks has a couple; Aprovecho Research Center (which led the way in educating people about them) has at least half a dozen; and various cohousing and other groups are discovering them.

Hayboxes work on the simple principle that if the heat applied to food in the cooking process can be retained within that food, rather than lost to the environment, no “replacement heat” is needed to keep the food cooking. In conventional cooking, any heat applied to a pot after food reaches boiling temperatures is merely replacing heat lost to the air by the pot. In haybox cooking, food is brought to a boil on the stove, simmered for a few minutes (5 minutes for rice or other grains, 15 minutes for large dry beans or whole potatoes), then put into an insulated box, where it completes its cooking.

Although it’s sometimes longer, food can be ready in as little as one to one-and-a-half times the “normal” completion time, with no tending needed and no danger of burning, and will stay piping hot for many hours, allowing maximum flexibility in the cook’s and the eaters’ schedules. For grains or beans, water is reduced by one-quarter, because water is retained within the food rather than simmered away into the air (it’s important to use pots with tight-fitting lids in haybox cooking). The larger the quantity cooked, the more effective this technique is (the hotter the food will stay, for longer), because increased thermal mass holds more heat. And because most of the cooking occurs in the 180°F-212°F range, rather than at a constant 212°, more flavor and nutrients are preserved.



Sharon Dougherty, Lost Valley’s Kitchen Goddess, demonstrates using a haybox.

As in conventional cooking, presoaking and draining beans makes them easier to cook and to digest. A few particularly long-cooking foods, such as garbanzo beans, may need reboiling part-way through the cooking process. For health reasons, meat dishes should always be reboiled before serving—but all other foods should be safe to eat straight out of the haybox. (However, don’t put a partially-eaten pot of lukewarm food back into the haybox, without first reheating it, since hayboxes are

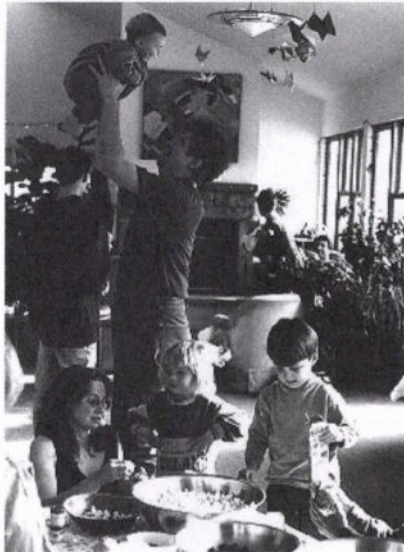
not only excellent cookers but also ideal incubation chambers for yogurt and other bacteria-rich food.)

Hayboxes are easy to construct through a variety of methods. The haybox itself is any kind of insulated container that can withstand cooking temperatures and fits relatively snugly around the pot. Effective insulation materials include hay, straw, wool, feathers, cotton, rice hulls, cardboard, aluminum foil, newspaper, fiberglass, fur, rigid foam, and others. The insula-

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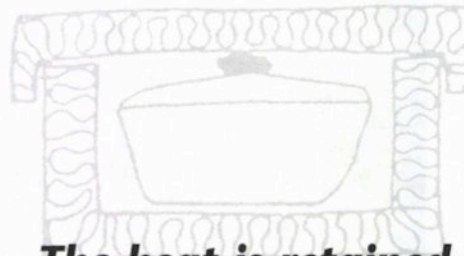
The Cohousing Network

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tion is placed between the rigid walls of a box, within a double bag of material, or lining a hole in the ground. Campers have created "instant hayboxes" by wrapping a sleeping bag, blankets, and/or pil-

constructing a wooden box, with a "hat" type lid (so that the opening is at the bottom, to minimize heat loss). Attach handles to make lifting this upper section easier, and line the inner

walls with mylar if possible (it can be salvaged from used food storage containers, balloons, etc.). If you can't find mylar, be prepared to replace your aluminum foil lining periodically. Depending on where you are using the haybox, you may want to attach casters to the bottom of your base. Find a good place to store and use your haybox, within or easily accessible to the kitchen.



The heat is retained within the food, rather than lost to the environment.

lows around a pot. The most effective insulating materials create many separate pockets of air, which slow down the movement of heat. Two to four inches of thickness, depending on the material, are necessary for good insulation. Some materials, such as aluminum foil or mylar, actually reflect heat back toward the pot.

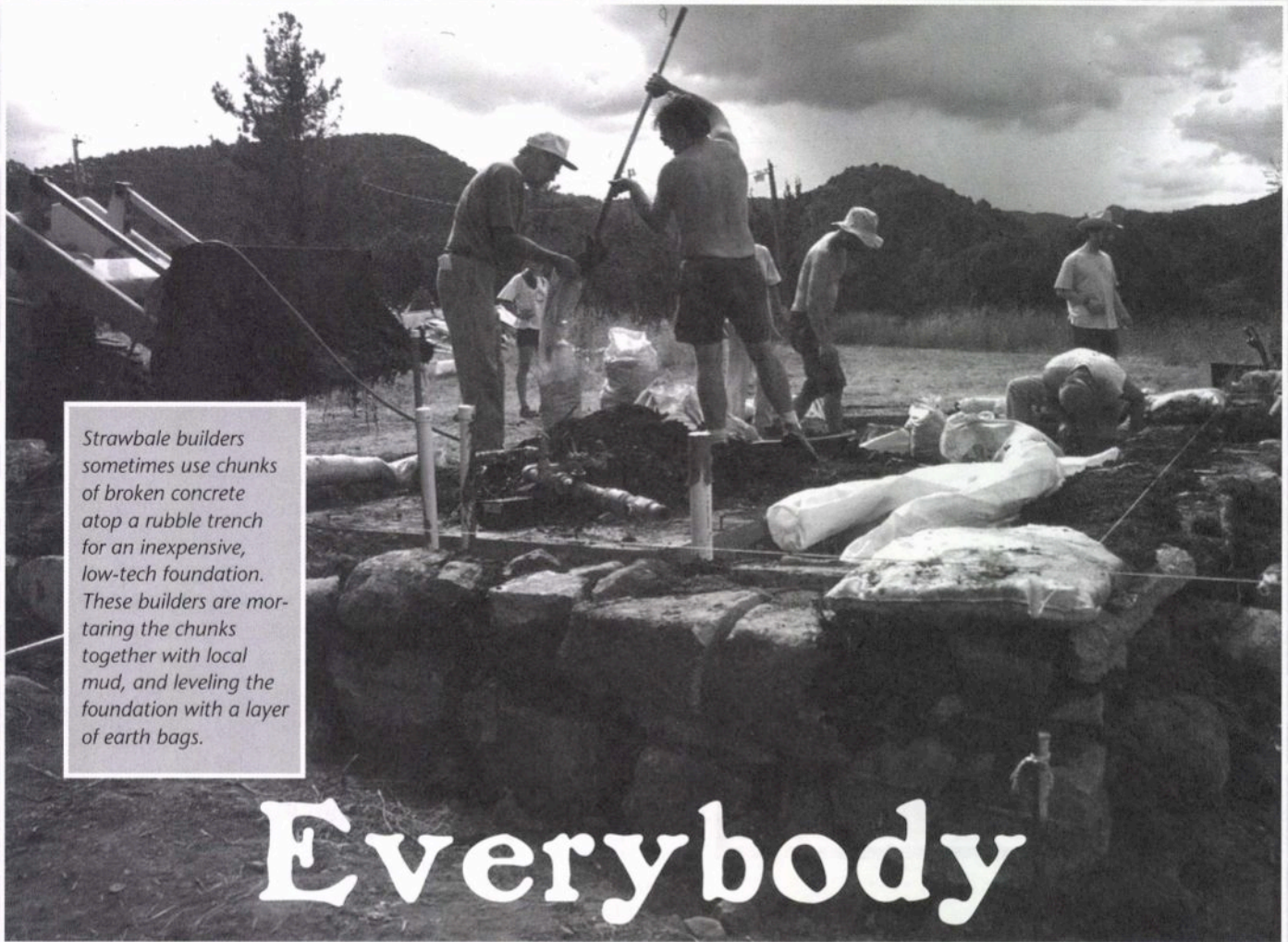
Any material used must withstand temperatures up to 212°F without melting (exposed styrofoam won't work), and without releasing toxic fumes or dangerous fibers (rigid foam and fiberglass both need to be covered). The insulation also must be dry, and be kept dry (an inner layer of aluminum foil or mylar can help prevent cooking moisture from entering the wall of the box). The box should be as snug-fitting as possible around the pot, with a tight seal so that heat does not escape from the cooking cavity. Build your haybox to fit your largest pot; for smaller pots in the same box, you can increase performance by wrapping towels, blankets, or pillows around the pot.

Hayboxes used in community settings need to be durable: I'd recommend

One final guarantee: once you're a haybox devotee, you will never willingly go back to conventional methods of preparing pots of grains, beans, or long-cooking soups again, especially if you're feeding a group. Happy cooking! Ω

For further information, contact Aprovecho Research Center, 80574 Hazelton Rd., Cottage Grove, OR 97424; 541-942-8198; apro@efn.org, www.efn.org/-apro. Illustrations courtesy of Aprovecho Research Center.

Chris Roth is a haybox devotee and editor of Talking Leaves magazine. He lives at Lost Valley Educational Center in Dexter, Oregon, www.lostvalley.org.



Strawbale builders sometimes use chunks of broken concrete atop a rubble trench for an inexpensive, low-tech foundation. These builders are mortaring the chunks together with local mud, and leveling the foundation with a layer of earth bags.

Everybody Loves Strawbale

BY CATHERINE WANER

A wonderful irony about strawbale builders is that they often started out as complete skeptics. “Doesn’t it rot? Doesn’t it burn? What about the Big Bad Wolf?” We converts who’ve heard this before have learned to smile patiently. After all, it was just a decade ago that modern-day pioneers seeking affordable, ecological, beautiful housing built the first code-approved strawbale homes, and now they are in every state in the United States and all over the world. It’s likely that any “Doubting Thomas” will soon be converted to a grinning, wide-eyed natural builder, by the amazing potential of the humble bale.

Individually, a stalk of straw seems fragile, but hundreds together, compressed and baled, make a sturdy building block. Stack a bunch of these blocks together and walls can go up in a hurry—especially if you enlist your family and friends to help. Roof and plaster it, and you have a super-insulated house; the

concept is simple and intuitive. And straw bales, soft and sculptable, can be shaped into cozy spaces, forming a home that feels like an embrace.

This home not only feels good, but you can feel good about it—straw is commonly underutilized, as it’s composted or burned as an agricultural waste product. The “staff” of the staff of life, straw is available at a cheap price wherever grain is grown. And stacked like giant bricks to form a thick wall, bales offer super insulation from the heat or cold or noise outside, providing a quiet, comfortable living space with modest life-time energy requirements. Replacing stick frame walls with bales can cut by half the amount of timber needed in a modern home, reducing demand on forest resources.

Unlike manufactured insulation materials, straw is



Using "exterior pinning" like this works far better than interior pins to stabilize bale walls, and is rapidly becoming the preferred method worldwide.

natural and non-toxic, and very low in embodied energy—the energy required to process and deliver a material to a building site. Should a fire get started, lab tests and experience have shown that foam insulations ignite at low temperatures and release poisonous fumes, and wood studs and trim will burn readily. But bales, compressed and sealed with plaster, are starved of oxygen and resist combustion. If they do catch on fire, they merely smolder, allowing precious time for occupants to exit and for help to arrive.

Building with bales also has the potential to impact global warming by significantly reducing fossil fuel consumption. Preliminary studies in China and Mongolia indicate that each stawbale home built there, over a projected 30-year life (and they should last much longer), will reduce the amount of carbon entering the atmosphere by 150 tons. Combined with China's locally-available supplies of straw, bale-building

millennia. It's not surprising that appropriate bale-building design is consistent with good design practice for homes in general.

A well-designed roof and foundation ("hat and shoes") will prevent most problems with moisture in bale structures. Raising stawbales 6" to 10" above grade and installing a moisture barrier (or "damp-proof course") between the stemwall and first course of bales should eliminate moisture wicking up from the ground. It's also wise to create a "toe-up" for stawbales, above the final floor level in case of interior flooding from a plumbing problem.

A roof design that incorporates wide

technology holds out the promise of affordable, ecological housing to literally billions of people.

Good Design and Detailing

To live up to its promise, stawbale building systems must be understood and optimized. The number one nemesis of straw is water, the universal solvent. Exposed to above 20 percent moisture content (about 80 percent relative humidity), bales will support fungal growth and begin to decompose. Wet bales have also been linked to insect infestations, which, however, seem to disappear as the bales dry out. Conversely, kept perfectly dry, straw can remain inert for centuries, even

eaves (two to three feet if possible) is also highly recommended. Not only will it shed rain and snow far from bale walls, but it will protect earthen plasters from erosion and cement stucco from becoming water-saturated. Additionally, wide overhangs, portals, and porches offer the cheapest living/storage space possible, and are useful in any climate. Flat roofs and parapet walls, common in the Southwest, are not recommended. Unless their detailing and maintenance is impeccable they will eventually leak, causing problems no matter what your wall system.

Good window detailing is also critical to avoid moisture infiltration. Commonly, windows are set all the way to the outside of an opening, leaving a bale-wide shelf or window-seat on the inside, and the minimum surface needing protection from the weather outside. Where window ledges are exposed, proper flashing is essential, and a "drip edge" recommended.

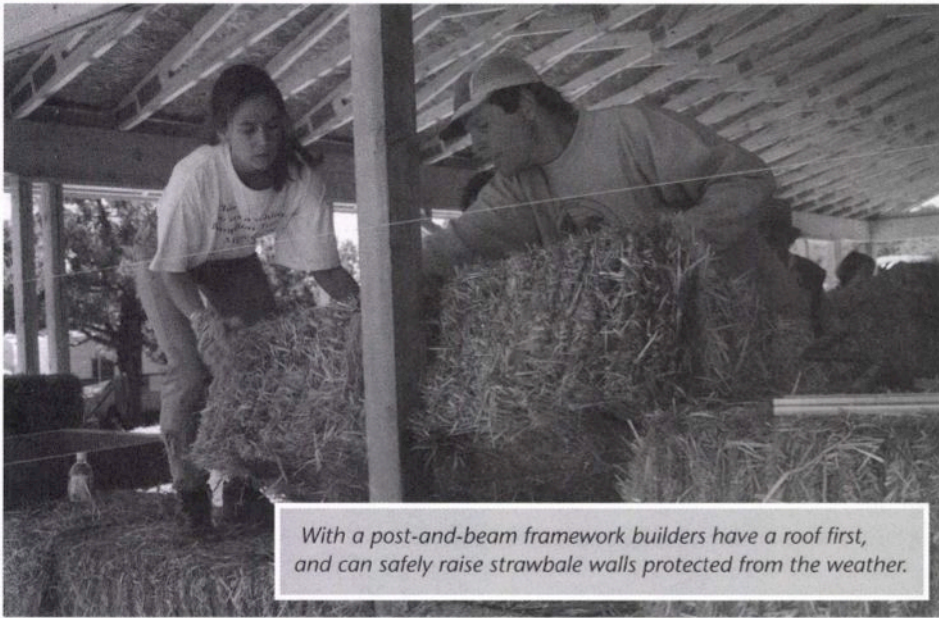
Earthen Plasters and Stucco

Finish plasters serve multiple functions. Protecting stawbale walls from wind and rain, they also seal bales from birds and rodents that find them to be an attractive home too. Plasters add structural strength to the wall—especially cement-based stuccos. In laboratory tests, compression strength, wind resistance, and racking shear strength were

significantly enhanced after stucco was applied, irrespective of whether wire mesh was used. However, in seismically-active areas, a bale/stucco/wire-mesh structural combination is recommended—where it has shown great promise as a safe building system.

It's also important to plaster both sides of a stawbale wall for fire resistance, to seal out oxygen. For example, if an interior wall were "furred out" with studs to attach dry-

Replacing stick frame walls with bales can cut by half the amount of timber needed.



With a post-and-beam framework builders have a roof first, and can safely raise strawbale walls protected from the weather.

to their surrounding air temperatures gradually, tending to moderate the climate around them. A thick plaster on stawbale interior walls adds up to provide a significant part of thermal mass required for effective solar design. Earthen plasters will also moderate humidity inside homes, providing the perfect range for human health, according to baubiologists (people who study how building materials affect health). Praised for absorbing odors and softening sounds, plasters of earth are also renowned for their beauty.

Earthen plasters have an added advantage of being hydrophilic, which means that they will always wick moisture from straw, acting to protect it from rot. Historical examples are English and Welsh cob houses and German straw-clay infill walls, many of which are still lived in today after centuries of use. It appears that clay combined with straw has a preservative effect, and is much less vulnerable to moisture. Earthen plasters on stawbale walls may also have this kind of long-term beneficial effect.

Load-bearing versus Post-and-Beam

A modest single-story rectangular building lends itself to load-bearing design, and will generally be cheaper to

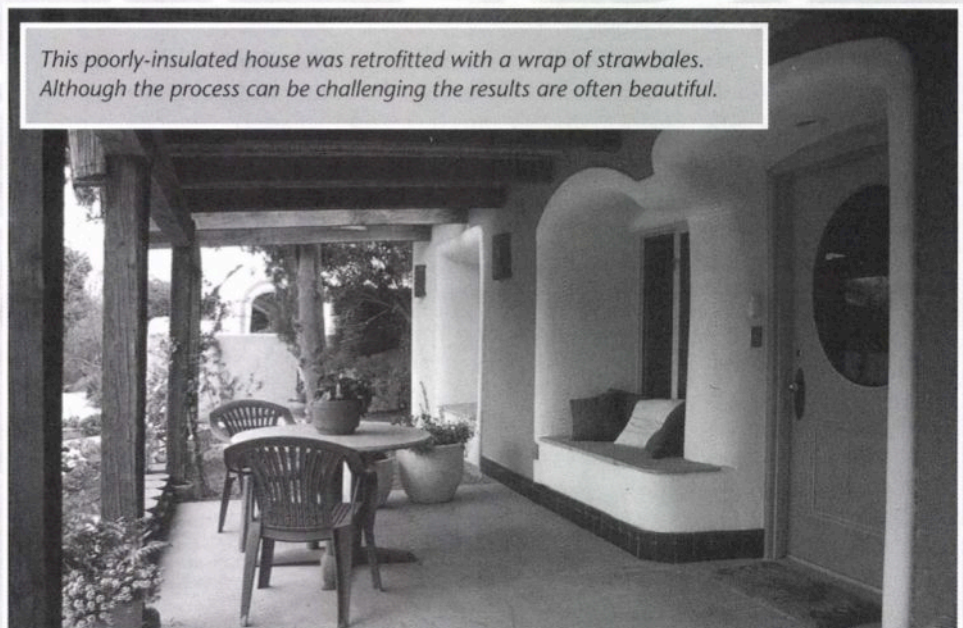
wall, without plastering it first, the resulting air space would act as a chimney in case of a fire. A well-sealed bale wall is also critical for energy-efficiency, as even minor gaps will allow air infiltration through the porous bale, reducing its effective R-value.

Conventional builders often want to add an air-barrier (Tyvek and the like) to the outside of a bale wall, under the exterior plaster, to eliminate air infiltration. This is not only unnecessary—as a well-detailed plaster is sufficient for this purpose—but can be a critical mistake. Such an air barrier will prevent the exterior plaster from “keying in” or bonding to the straw bales, reducing the wall’s structural strength. Worse yet, as interior water vapor migrates to the colder exterior through the stawbale wall, it will tend to condense on the inside of this air barrier. This moisture will now dry out very slowly, and when the temperature warms, it can produce conditions ripe for fungal growth.

To optimize the thermal performance of stawbale wall systems, it’s useful remember that most heat loss and gain is through the roof. Without ceiling insulation, a stawbale house is like a thermos bottle without a lid. Whatever insulation you choose, air infiltration will significantly compromise its perfor-

mance, so take care to seal any cracks, especially the joint where the walls meet the ceiling. If bales are used as roof insulation, space the trusses or rafters so the bales fit tightly together. It is also wise to plaster any exposed surface, as a fire-retarding measure. While an earthen slip should be adequate, be sure it dries out fully.

In cold climates, floors, stem walls, and foundations should also be insulated from the ground and outside air. Incorporating passive-solar design provides free heat from the sun, which is stored in interior mass floors, walls, and objects. Thermal mass materials equalize



This poorly-insulated house was retrofitted with a wrap of strawbales. Although the process can be challenging the results are often beautiful.

build than a post-and-beam and bale structure, primarily through reduced lumber costs. Load-bearing bale walls can generally be erected faster, too, as they avoid the inevitable interface with the structural system. Both modern testing and historic stawbale homes in

Nebraska indicate that bales are sturdy building blocks that can bear the roof load and stand the test of time in a well-built house.

Larger, more complicated floor plans must generally incorporate a post-and-beam structural system, with bale infill.

One big advantage of this method is the possibility of raising the roof before the bales arrive on site. This provides a ready place to store bales out of the weather, and virtually guarantees no wet bales—which has proven to be a nightmare to many a careless builder. Be sure to think through how your structure and bales will meet, as designing to minimize notching and custom bales will pay off in ease of construction. One common approach is to wrap the bale walls around the outside, leaving the posts exposed inside. This results in a tight, insulating envelope and an interior structure that is easy to tie into. If your posts are trees left naturally round, it is all the more beautiful.

Builders without Borders

By Joseph F. Kennedy

Builders without Borders, a new non-profit organization, is an international network of ecological builders who form partnerships with communities and organizations around the world. We advocate the use of straw, earth, and other easily-obtainable materials to construct homes, and to help decrease reliance on expensive, and often unavailable, alternatives.

Many people around the world are chronically underhoused, and increasing numbers are also homeless due to war and environmental disaster. But many housing projects proposed to solve this housing crisis are dependent on energy-intensive industrialized models that are often inappropriate to climate, culturally inflexible, wasteful, environmentally destructive and expensive.

Builders without Borders proposes to do better. Through improved design, appropriate use of materials, creative networking and a human-centered process, we can create real homes for those most in need. Simple structures can provide quick shelter in an emergency, yet can be replaced or expanded in the future. Designs can be flexible to adapt to the materials and skills available and fit within cultural and social mores. The catalytic addition of minimal modern technology to the timeless wisdom of traditional building techniques can create “hybrid” structures with greatly improved strength and durability, using locally-available, energy-efficient and earth-friendly materials. These buildings can also mitigate environmental damage and save energy by utilizing resources like sun and wind.

One of our main objectives is to develop educational resources that promote natural building methods and ways of working with others that are culturally-sensitive, fun and effective. Our first effort, *Building without Borders*, will be published in 2003.

Formed in 1999 as a project of NetWorks Productions, Inc., Builders without Borders also focuses on training programs, workshops and cooperative community building projects to instruct people in ecological design and building. Our developing projects include work on the US/Mexico border, Indian reservations in New Mexico, California, and South Dakota, and potential work in Afghanistan.

Joseph F. Kennedy is the Director of Builders Without Borders. For more information: Builders without Borders, Star Rt. 2 Box 119, Kingston, NM 88042; 505- 895-5400; mail@builderswithoutborders.com.

Building Codes

Stawbale construction has been adopted in a number of building codes, including the state of New Mexico, and many counties in Arizona and California. This has been both a blessing and a curse for architects and builders. They have discovered that the codes they fought to have accepted are now, just a few years later, inflexible and restrictive, hindering new, improved bale-building methodologies.

Still, code approval has helped stawbale building gain acceptance with lenders and insurance companies, paving the way for mainstream applications. And, energy efficiency is increasingly being mandated by new codes, which reflect our society's growing awareness of the need for conservation. In this context, stawbale construction offers a “green” alternative to conventional housing, and, for many, a steppingstone towards natural building and sustainability.

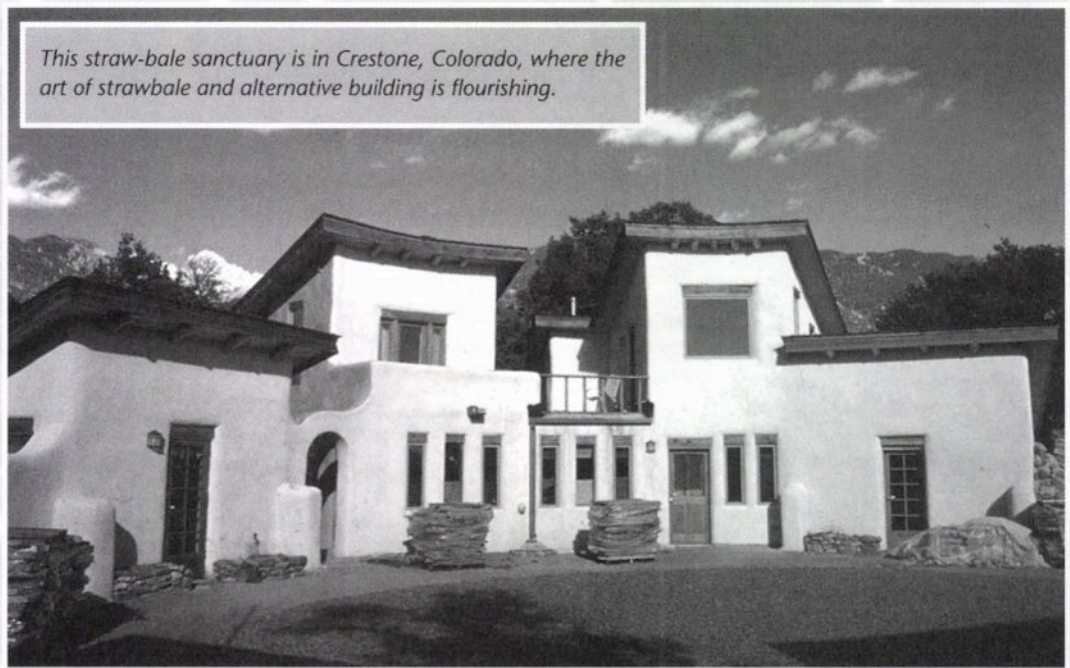
Trends

Despite code restrictions, experimentation continues towards simplifying bale-wall construction, reducing costs and improving performance. In a poor, but vibrant, neighborhood in Sonora, Mexico, Athena and Bill Steen have worked with local builders to develop an affordable stawbale home with locally-available materials. Together they dis-

covered simple solutions to working with poor-quality bales, including a technique many professionals north of the border are adopting—known as exterior pinning, exterior ribs, or the “corset” system. Conventionally, bale builders will pin courses of bales together by pounding overlapping rebar, bamboo, or wooden stakes down through them. The Steens discovered that it is far stronger to place a “pin” vertically on each side of the bale wall, then attach them with twine or wire pushed horizontally through the bale. This cinches the bale wall tightly together, and can firm up an otherwise shaky wall. The Steens use a local reed called Carrizo, but in other regions, any plentiful sapling would probably serve the purpose. The Steens’ work with earthen and lime plasters also inspires many builders who seek a beautiful alternative to energy-intensive cement stucco.

Retrofitting existing buildings with stawbale insulation shows great promise in urban areas. While a quality job requires much planning and attention to detail, wrapping a sound-but-inefficient building can make a huge difference in energy bills, comfort and aesthetics. A recent retrofit by stawbale pioneers Matts Myhrman and Judy Knox in Tucson transformed a homely block home into a work of art. In many situations, this choice to retrofit can save valuable existing resources, and reduce the energy drain of poor design.

Pushing the boundaries of stawbale, a number of builders have been experimenting with vaults, notably Berkeley, California architects Dan Smith, Bob Theis, and Kelly Lerner. Using bamboo



This straw-bale sanctuary is in Crestone, Colorado, where the art of strawbale and alternative building is flourishing.

“exoskeletons,” bales are carefully stacked and supported with falsework, until the vault is completed, then the supports are removed and the bales are plastered. The primary advantage of vaults are resource efficiency—the inexpensive bale is used for both wall and “ceiling” insulation, and provides its own structure. Thus a vault could be

built almost anywhere with a very modest cost for materials. Disadvantages include difficulties in roofing, and/or making the bales watertight, as creating a

watertight skin will also prevent water vapor from transpiring through the wall/roof area, which could cause moisture to condense in the bales. Still, Smith and Associates have secured the first permit to build a stawbale vault, in a seismic zone of California. With continued pioneering, the stawbale vault may yet emerge as the most cost-effective and energy-efficient bale structure possible.

The good feelings that seem to emerge when people work together to

help each other is probably the strongest magnet attracting people to stawbale and natural building. As we work and sweat and laugh together, we remember our interdependence, and connect with those around us in an essential way. This is where building with bales is more than a methodology for a resource-efficient future, it becomes a doorway into a community that holds a hand out to those coming up behind them. Ω

Excerpted with permission from The Art of Natural Building: Design, Construction, Resources, by Joseph E. Kennedy, Michael G. Smith, and Catherine Wanek. New Society Publishers (2002). \$26.95. Order directly online: www.newsociety.com, or 800-567-6772, or wherever books are sold.

*Catherine Wanek has traveled from Orange County to Red Square, learning about and documenting stawbale projects. Since 1992 she has produced five stawbale videos, and spent three years managing and editing *The Last Straw, the International Journal of Stawbale and Natural Building*.*

Straw is natural and non-toxic, and very low in embodied energy.

Resources



Books:

Alternative Construction: Contemporary Natural Building Methods, Lynne Elizabeth and Cassandra Adams, Eds, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2000. Contains an excellent introductory chapter on straw bale, along with several fascinating case studies of straw bale as a housing solution for the poor in the U.S., Mexico, and China.

The Art of Natural Building, Catherine Wanek, Joseph F. Kennedy, and Michael G. Smith, Eds. New Society Publishers, 2002. A collection of articles by 50 leaders of the sustainable building movement. Natural building in terms of economics, social justice and sustainability; design and planning issues; natural building materials and techniques; case studies. Many color and black & white photos.

The Beauty of Straw Bale Homes, Athena and Bill Steen, Chelsea Green, White River Jct., VT, 2000. 2000. A color-photo-filled book that shows the range and aesthetic possibilities of building with straw.

Build it With Bales: A Step-by-Step Guide to Stawbale Construction, Matts Myhrman and S.O. MacDonald, Out On Bale, Tucson, AZ, 1997. The indispensable guide to all phases of construction, from planning through plastering.

Serious Straw Bale: A Construction Guide for All Climates, Paul Lacinski and Michel Bergeron, Chelsea Green, White River Jct., VT, 2000. This excellent how-to guide focuses particularly on good detailing for cold and wet climates.

Straw Bale Building: How to Plan, Design, and Build with Straw by Chris Magwood and Peter Mack, New Society, Gabriola Island, B.C., Canada, 2000. This clear, step-by-step guide is

especially useful for the planning process, whether you intend to build your own or hire a contractor. Good info on permitting, budgeting, designing and drawing up plans, and shopping for materials.

The Straw Bale House by Athena Swentzell Steen, Bill Steen, David Bainbridge and David Eisenberg, Chelsea Green, White River Jct., VT, USA, 1994. This is the best-selling book that helped push stawbale building into mainstream American consciousness. Describes the history and philosophy of stawbale building, design options, and construction details. Revised edition, 2001.

Periodicals:

The Last Straw: The International Journal of Straw Bale and Natural Building, 505-895-5400; thelaststraw@strawhomes.com; www.strawhomes.com. This large quarterly journal is packed with up-to-date information on the international movement, resources, and the latest technical developments.

Videos:

Building with Straw, Vol. 1: A Stawbale Workshop. Covers the basics of straw bale construction and the many different reasons that people are attracted to it. From Black Range Films, Star Rt. 2 Box 119, Kingston, NM 88042 USA, 1994; blackrange@zianet.com; www.strawbalecentral.com.

Building with Straw, Vol. 2: A Stawbale Homes Tour. Introduces ten houses with a wide range of building styles, from elaborate mansions to simple bungalows, with narration by the owners. From Black Range Films, Star Rt. 2 Box 119, Kingston, NM 88042 USA, 1994; blackrange@zianet.com; www.strawbalecentral.com .

How to Build Your Elegant Home with Straw Bales. How-to guide to load-bearing stawbale con-

struction, comes with a manual. Available from Sustainable Systems Support, (See below.)

The Straw Bale Solution. Superb introduction to bale building, narrated by Bill and Athena Steen and featuring their work in Mexico, 1997. NetWorks Productions Inc., HC 66, Box 119, Hillsboro NM 88042, USA; www.NetworkEarth.org; www.networkearth.org .

Organizations:

California Straw Builders Association (CASBA), P.O. Box 1293, Angels Camp, CA 95222, USA; casba@strawbuilding.org; www.strawbuilding.org. Good support group for regional designers and builders. Holds an annual conference, produces a newsletter, and conducts hands-on workshops.

The Canelo Project, HC1 Box 324, Elgin, AZ 85611 phone: 520-455-5548; fax: 520-455-9360 bsteem@dakotacom.net; www.caneloproject.com. Athena and Bill Steen's non-profit educational organization offers workshops on stawbale and other natural building techniques, work-study tours to Mexico.

MidAmerica Straw Bale Association (MASBA). 2110 S. 33rd St., Lincoln, NE 68506-6001; 402-483-5135; jc10508@alltel.net; www.strawhomes.com. Based in Nebraska, where bale building began, this organization is forming state affiliates and an owner-builder network throughout the Midwest.

Straw Bale Association of Texas (SBAT). P O Box 49318, Austin, TX 78765; 512-302-6766; sbat-

girl@greenbuilder.com; www.greenbuilder.com/sbat. With monthly meetings and an online newsletter, SBAT offers a variety of support to professionals and owner-builders.

Out on Bale (un)Ltd. 2509 N. Campbell Ave. #292, Tucson, AZ 85719; 520-622-6896; biwb@juno.com. The godparents of the stawbale revival, Judy Knox and Matts Myhrman give public presentations, design consulting, customized workshops and stawbale workshops.

Sustainable Systems Support, P.O. Box 318, Bisbee, AZ 85603; 520-432-4292; sssalive@earthlink.net; www.bisbeenet.com/buildnatural. Steve Kemble and Carol Escott provide stawbale workshops, training, consulting, engineered building plans, building services, tours, and mail-order resources.

Websites:

CREST Stawbale Listserve. An email discussion group with lively and often useful discussion on mostly technical aspects of bale building. To subscribe, type "subscribe stawbale" in the first line of an email message to majordomo@crest.org.

Surfin' Stawbale A collection of links to other straw bale web pages, online at www.strawhomes.com and moxvox.com/surfsolo.

Greening Twin Oaks

The Federation of Egalitarian Communities (FEC) is a mutual-support organization for a dozen North American communities that value income-sharing, nonviolence, participatory decision-making, and ecological practices.

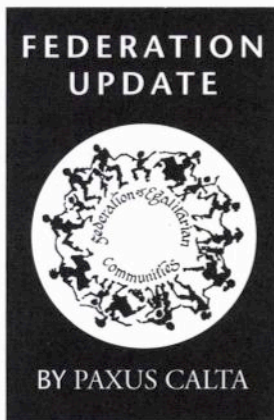
Two years ago a small group of enthusiastic new members came up with a radical plan, the "Wigwam Project," to make Twin Oaks more ecologically sustainable. We wanted to use more of our labor and less of our money to meet our food, energy, and cultural needs. The most controversial part of this elaborate program was to build and live in primitive structures on a nearby parcel of community property. Unlike many of the FEC communities, Twin Oaks has a long-term ban on "personal shelters," and this part of the proposal—to build wigwams as the native Americans of this region did—was ultimately scrapped.

But much of the rest of the proposal lived on. In the first year, we made improvements and repairs to the solar hot water systems on two buildings. We built a hoop house for winter gardening and

planted our first set of crops. We got our common bicycle fleet running again. The labor to site and erect a large yurt (which was donated to the community) came from this project. This year another 600 hours have been granted by the community to continue work in sustainability including funds for our first cistern/gray water system.

But sustainability (in the eyes of the Wigwamers at least) is more than just appropriate technology and greater food self-reliance. Intentionally building our internal community culture is also an integral part. A portion of the Wigwam budget went to restarting community coffeeshops, which featured our own community talent. These well-attended events were outdoors for as long as the weather permitted and then moved into Tupelo, the community residence in

which many of the musicians live and the home of most of the community instruments. Wigwam hours went to fixing many of the community's guitars. Hours also went into preparing and presenting workshops on the intentional creation of culture for both the annual Twin Oaks



Paxus Calta is a political activist and member of Twin Oaks community in Louisa, Virginia.

Dancing Rabbit's ecological covenant: www.dancingrabbit.org; Southern Exposure Seed Exchange: www.sese.com; 1259 Indian Creek Road, Mineral VA 23117.

Books by Joseph Jenkins

Jenkins' first two titles have been recognized at the 1998 and 2001 Three Rivers Environmental Awards, the 2000 Foreword Magazine Book of the Year Awards, 2000 Benjamin Franklin Awards, 2001 Gold Circle Awards, and the 2000 Independent Publisher Outstanding Book of the Year Awards.

His third and new book, **BALANCE POINT**, has been described as:



"Perhaps the best environmental book I have ever read."

(Ark. Env. Educ. Assn. Newsletter)

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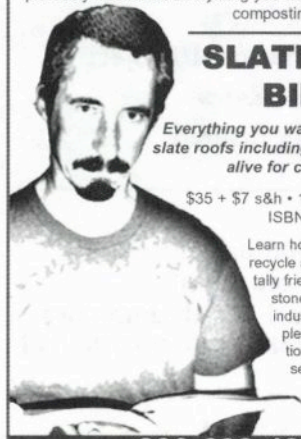
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Communities Conference and Weaving the Web of Community, a December, 2001 Twin Oaks networking event of regional activists, artists, and communarians.

The Wigwam Project (now called the Sustainability Project) largely avoided using computers. All of our proposals were written out in longhand and put on the central discussion board in the dining room for all to see. There is no web page detailing all the sustainable projects attempted, and no spread sheet tracking the numbers of hours spent. The honchos of the effort are not dogmatic about this approach being used everywhere, but did feel strongly that computers were not necessary for this project and thus did without.

Unlike Dancing Rabbit, an aspiring ecovillage in Missouri, Twin Oaks does not have an explicit Sustainability Covenant.

Dancing Rabbit builds from local or re-used materials, runs their vehicles primarily on homemade biodiesel fuel, and serves a low-ecological-impact diet (generally vegetarian, often vegan) grown seasonally and bioregionally, much of it in their own organic garden. But while ecological concerns are not stated in Twin Oaks' Bylaws, they are a high priority for the community. A recent recruiting survey showed that two-thirds of the membership wanted ecological awareness and ecological practices to be a principal consideration for recruiting new people—by far the single most popular choice of the two dozen options offered on the survey.

It is also clear that a number of Twin Oaks members are looking for more ecologically aware living options. The most popular short-term residency option at Twin Oaks has been the ecovillage internship. The community was somewhat overwhelmed last summer when four eco-interns showed up at the same time. We are now redesigning the program with more specific projects, clearer training requirements, and more active project supervision.

Not all of the sustainability project's efforts have been tremendous successes. The effort to plant winter crops in our

new hoop house was partially thwarted by voles that burrowed in from the nearby stacked hay bales and feasted on the tender new plants. And an especially windy winter storm blew the hoop house several feet from its original location. But the hoop house will likely be used for off season flowers starting this year (now that the hay bales have been safely relocated). Also, since it is modeled after versions of hoop houses designed for growing vegetables all winter in Maine (which has much more serious winters than Virginia), we are confident that ultimately

the hoop house will be supplementing our already luxurious organic garden with salad greens and other vegetables in the off season.

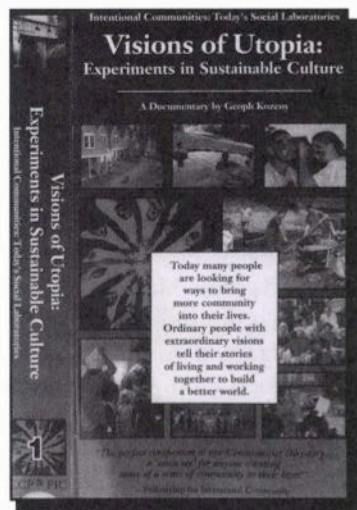
Sustainability Project honchos don't want to create a new work area responsible for making Twin Oaks more green, but rather to help launch projects which then take

off independently or become integrated into already existing community work areas. Already in its second year, much of the music creation and instrument repair the Sustainability Project originally funded is now its own separate project area. The initiative to assist Acorn, our nearby sister community, with its seed business (Southern Exposure Seed Exchange) by sending Twin Oakers to help with labor, is also done separately from the Sustainability Project. The bike manager who turned things around to provide the best level of bike service the community has seen in years is now operating exclusively under a separate budget these days.

There is still lots to do. The initial work on a Green Audit of the entire community calls out to be finished so that we can direct our efforts more strategically. But clearly we are on the right road. And the next time a radical young group comes up with a complex plan about how things might be better, the Wigwamers are here to help them. Ω

But sustainability is more than just appropriate technology and greater food self-reliance.

REVIEWS



Visions of Utopia: Experiments in Sustainable Culture

Geoph Kozeny, producer/editor

94 minutes. VHS. Color.

2002 Community Catalyst Project, \$33 postpaid.

Available from:

FIC Rt 1, Box 156 Rutledge, MO 63563

800-995-8342; store@ic.org.

Reviewed by Diana Leafé Christian

I SAT THERE SMILING AS I watched the first of Geoph Kozeny's two-part video documentary *Visions of Utopia*. There it was—an overview of what I most want people to know about community living—delivered in the comments and insights of dozens of community members at seven widely different communities.

The style is engaging and effortless. You see a community member commenting on his or her community, followed by

various scenes of people working and interacting in the community that illustrate what the person is saying, with close-ups and panoramic shots, then back to the person, and so on, as first one community member, then another, comments on life in their community. You'll see communitarians gardening, cooking, sharing meals, meeting, working, playing, laughing, crying, and caring for children. They are all ages, from toddlers to white-haired elders, and range from obviously countercultural folks to those indistinguishable from anyone in the mainstream. It's as if you're meeting these people and paying their community a small visit. You'll probably find yourself smiling as you watch it too.

At the first community profiled, Camphill Special School at Beaver Run, Pennsylvania, we meet people caring for and living in community with mentally and physically disabled children. I loved it that viewers who know nothing about communities might be warmed and inspired by a glimpse of community life based on service, kindness, and the belief that art, music, celebration, and shared ritual seems to help disabled people live more functional lives as well as bring deep richness to the "normal" people who care for them. This was just the right community to begin with.

The profile of Twin Oaks, featured next, is the most comprehensive and balanced presentation of this well-known and long-lived community I've seen yet. In it, and indeed, at all the community profiles, people's comments illuminate not only what is wonderful and unique about their community, but what has been challenging, and sometimes, what early illusions they may have had about community living that they revised after gaining more experience.

Geoph's choice of featured communities shows viewers there are many ways to express community—which vary widely in size, location, purpose, and organizational principles. Besides a large rural spiritually based service-oriented community (*Camphill Special School*) and a large rural income-sharing egalitarian community (*Twin Oaks*), *Visions of Utopia* features a small urban collective household (*Purple Rose*), a rural retreat conference center community (*Brietenbush Hot Springs*), a large rural spiritual

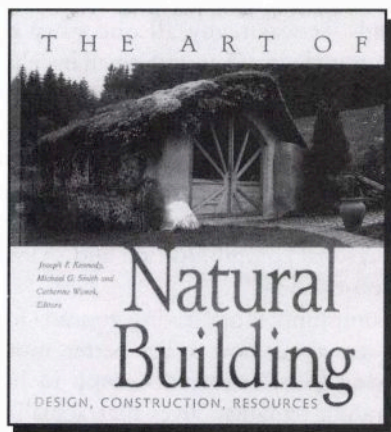
community (*Ananda Village, California*), a rural aspiring ecovillage (*Earthaven*), and large suburban cohousing community (*Nyland Cohousing*), which introduces viewers to the whole cohousing movement.

And while the widely differing community members demonstrate each community's own unique flavor—whether political activists at Purple Rose, healers and body workers at Brietenbush, yoga practitioners at Ananda, permaculture designers at Earthaven, or the more mainstream yet progressive families at Nyland—it was really all one story of community living. Through small insights and larger overviews of their communities, these people painted a picture about community living day-to-day—the shared vision, hard work, cooperative ownership, and the need develop good processes for interpersonal communication and shared decision-making.

"Communities are testing grounds for new ideas about how to live better, more satisfying lives," observes Geoph in his concluding remarks, "lives that actualize our untapped human potential in a way that is environmentally and socially sustainable." Having visited almost 350 different intentional communities by now, Geoph probably knows more about them than anyone in North America. He's seen almost every kind of governance and decision-making mode, for example, from anarchic to cooperative, hierarchical, and even benevolent dictatorships. Any of them can be healthy or dysfunctional, he says, but any of these seem to thrive when the members wholly believe in their system and participate in it with enthusiasm. What seems to make a community successful? "Clarity of vision, open mindedness, good communication skills, the spirit of cooperation, common sense, and plain old hard work." And what most communitarians seek in community life is not so different from what most people want: "A stable home and good education for their children, meaningful and satisfying work, a safe neighborhood, a pollution-free environment, and for many, a spiritual path that provides a basis for their other goals."

While Geoph is normally a rather quiet, slow-talking man, he delivers his introductory and concluding remarks at a pretty fast clip. I assume it's because he's

trying to get across a great deal of information in a limited amount of time, the better to spend precious video footage on the communities themselves. But this is a minor quibble in an otherwise powerfully effective video. I consider *Visions of Utopia* a "must have" resource for anyone who wants to better understand life in intentional communities, or who'd like an easy, relatively inexpensive way to show family and friends the appeal of the cooperative, resource-sharing way of life.



The Art of Natural Building: Design, Construction, Resources

Joseph F. Kennedy, Michael G. Smith, and Catherine Wanek, Editors

New Society Publishers, 2002
Pb., 291 pp., \$26.95 (Canada \$36.95)

THIS RESOURCE GUIDE AND practical handbook offers a rich smorgasbord of the why, what, and how of a wide range of the kinds of Earth-friendly sustainable buildings communitarians love. More than 50 natural-building activists share their insights about the practical and aesthetic issues of natural building design and techniques, in exceptionally short, easily-digested chapters.

A natural building, says editor Michael G. Smith in the first section, The Context of Natural Building, is any building system "that places the highest value on social and environmental sustainability," minimizes environmental impact, and provides "healthy, beautiful,

comfortable, and spiritually uplifting homes." Natural builders, he says, employ simple, easy-to-learn techniques with locally available, renewable resources and human labor and creativity instead of high budgets, complex technology, or specialized skills.

The second section offers practical tips from designers and builders about planning healthy, natural, dwellings, from using nontoxic materials to siting buildings on the landscape. My favorite chapters were Peter Bane's "The Permaculture House," Joseph F. Kennedy's "Ecovillages and Sustainable Communities," and Robert Gay's "Eight Design Principles to Make Square Feet Work Harder."

The Natural Building Materials and Techniques section—30 chapters on the many kinds of natural construction—is the real heart of the book. Natural building methods range from rubble trench foundations, timberframing, earthen floors, and natural insulations, through walls of stone, adobe, rammed earth, cob, earthbags, cordwood masonry, hemp-lime, straw-clay, strawbale, and papercrete, to earthen plasters, natural paints and finishes, living roofs, and thatched roofs. The authors don't provide comprehensive information about these techniques, but a sampling of the unique aspects of each and plenty resources for learning more. (Each author suggests titles for further reading on his or her specialty, and the editors list their favorite natural building and ecological design books, periodicals, and learning centers.) While *The Art of Natural Building* isn't a how-to book, it introduces the wide range of building techniques, so you can choose those that fit your climate, locally available materials, and aesthetic taste.

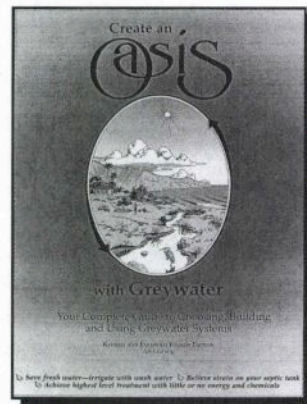
The last section consists of inspirational case studies of natural building examples worldwide, from Hassan Fathy's domed adobe buildings in Egypt to an earthbag-papercrete house in Colorado. The book is illustrated more than 100 black and white drawings and photos and an eight-page color section.

The editors are three natural building pioneers, each of whom, coincidentally, has contributed to this issue. Joseph F. Kennedy is an ecological designer, artist, and natural building teacher. (See

"*Builders Without Borders*," pg. 54.) Michael G. Smith is a natural builder and author of *The Cobber's Companion* (Cob Cottage, 1998) and co-author of *The Hand-Sculpted House* (Chelsea Green, 2002). (See "Many Hands Make Sustainability Work," pg. 30.) Catherine Wanek is a natural builder and editor of *The Last Straw Journal*. (See "Everybody Loves Strawbale!", pg. 51.)

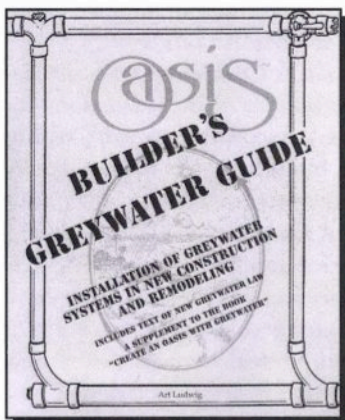
The *Art of Natural Building* also has its share of intentional community influence. Michael Smith is a member of Emerald Earth community in California, and Joseph Kennedy has lived and worked in ecovillage projects worldwide. The Foreword is by frequent contributor Albert Bates of The Farm's Ecovillage Training Center in Tennessee. And contributors to the planning and case study sections include Peter Bane and Chuck Marsh of Earthaven Ecovillage in North Carolina, and Satprem Maini of Auroville community in south India.

If you're planning your own natural building project soon, or are simply intrigued by how beautiful, inexpensive, and "vibe"-harmonious natural buildings can be, *The Art of Natural Building* is an engaging, information-rich, inspiring place to start.

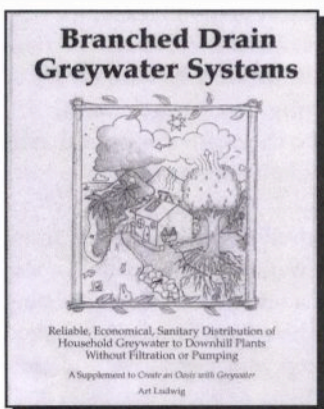


Create an Oasis with Greywater: Your Complete Guide to Choosing, Building, and Using Greywater Systems, Revised and Expanded Fourth Edition

**Builder's Greywater Guide:
Installation of Greywater Systems
in New Construction and
Remodeling**



**Branched Drain Greywater
Systems:
Reliable, Economical, Sanitary
Distribution of Household
Greywater to Downhill Plants
without Filtration or Pumping**



by Art Ludwig

Oasis Design, 2001.
50-page booklets, \$14.50 each
Available from:
Oasis Design,
5 San Marcos Trout Club
Santa Barbara, CA 931-5-9726
805-967-9956; odesign@sprynet.com;
www.oasisdesign.net

IN RURAL COMMUNITIES IN ARID climates or those creating their own off-grid utilities, vital aspects of sustainabili-

ty are water catchment, water storage, and water re-use. Enter the Oasis Greywater booklets, which describe how you can double your water resources by irrigating your garden with reused wash water.

When author Art Ludwig was a teenager, he moved out to a shed in his family's back yard in Santa Barbara. His water supply was one hose bib, and he taught himself enough plumbing to run a completely independent household until he went off to study ecological design at U.C. Berkeley. His thesis there was: "Every house can be surrounded with an oasis of biological productivity nourished by the flow of nutrients and water from the home." This seemed reasonable, since most of the elements added to water in the home—food particles, skin oils and skin flakes, and so on—also nourish plants. Not only that, but greywater is purified naturally when it passes slowly through healthy (that is, biologically active) topsoil. If only the small amount of toxins in cleaning agents could be eliminated, he thought, post-sink water from the home could nurture edible landscaping on a longterm basis. But he couldn't find bio-compatible cleaning agents—those which actually benefit plants. So with the help of experts, the author developed Oasis Biocompatible Cleaners to help people nourish their plants as they did the dishes or took showers. The Oasis greywater booklets began as a pamphlet to save time answering customers' questions but eventually superseded the cleaning products business, which he later sold. Over the years he methodically researched the applicability and real-life performance of every greywater system he could find, and designed new ones to work better.

Create an Oasis with Greywater, 4th Edition, describes how to choose, build, and use 20 different, practical, common-sense greywater systems that work, from simple laundry-only systems for droughts, to a greywatered solar greenhouse, and those that divert all household greywater to garden beds and fruit trees. It covers legalities (many municipalities look the other way as long as it's plumbed safely), greywater sources and irrigation requirements, coordination with rainwater catchment, common mistakes and preferred practices, health



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931-964-4475
ecovillage@thefarm.org



www.thefarm.org/etc

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Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia



- Features of the land include:**
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 33 beautiful acres – half in mature forest
 Convenient to town, VA Tech, & bike route
- Features of the neighborhood will include:**
 Designed and managed by residents
 Privately owned homes with yards
 Pedestrian friendly with parking at the periphery
 Large community building, gathering plaza
 Nature trail through woods, community garden

Construction to begin in 2001

www.shadowlakevillage.org
 (540)552-1425 nrvcoho@aol.com

guidelines, plumbing principles, preserving soil quality, adaptations for cold or wet conditions, maintenance and troubleshooting, and a comprehensive list of suppliers and references. And it's interesting reading (now I know that P-traps and vents prevent noxious drain gases from hitting us as we brush our teeth).

The Builder's Greywater Guide supplements this booklet with instructions for builders or homeowners to work within or around building codes to successfully include greywater systems in new construction or remodeling. Topics include a flow chart for choosing a system, suggestions for dealing with inspectors, a legal requirements checklist, detailed review of system options with respect to the new laws, construction details and design tips, maintenance suggestions, equations for estimating irrigation demand (and for Californians, the complete text of the widely emulated California greywater law).

For *Branched Drain Greywater Systems* the author questioned everything about conventional greywater system design, stripping away every bit of complexity until the essence of a gravity-based greywater system remained—a cheap and easy branched drain system to create pipe network for distributing greywater to trees downhill from the outlet. With no filtration, pumping, or surge tanks, it's designed to be the most economical, reliable, sanitary, and low-maintenance greywater system.

If you're tired of wasting water and a constructed wetland isn't feasible, these booklets and a few off-the-shelf plumbing supplies can help benefit your watershed while you keep your vegetables and fruit trees watered.

Diana Leaf Christian is editor of Communities magazine.

Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage

Come help us create a new way of life!

At Dancing Rabbit we're building a rural ecovillage, learning about sustainable living while we educate others. We're open to all kinds of individuals, families, and groups, who, like us, are committed to sustainability, consensus, feminism, and building for the future.



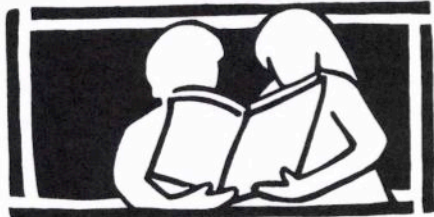
At Dancing Rabbit we:

- Eat dinner together
- Grow our own organic food
- Use solar and wind power
- Share a car co-op
- Host internships and workshops
- Run our vehicles on biodiesel
- Barter goods and services
- Have fun!

www.dancingrabbit.org
 1 Dancing Rabbit Lane
 Rutledge, MO 63563
dancingrabbit@ic.org



DIRECTORIES UPDATES



One of the Fellowship for Intentional Community's primary objectives is to provide the most up-to-date contact information for intentional communities that we can find, and our Communities Directory is the centerpiece of that work.

While we do all we can to make the Directory as current and comprehensive as possible, it takes us more than two years to complete and every week we receive new leads for communities, plus numerous address and phone changes. Rather than trying to create an updated directory every few months, we regularly publish the late-breaking information here in *Communities* magazine. All of the information contained in this update was received after the 1995 Directory was released.

The information here is condensed and abbreviated, and will be more thoroughly presented in future Directories. For example, the book format includes a cross-reference chart of many features including population statistics, number of acres, leadership and decision-making structures, diet, schooling, spiritual practices, and so on, plus maps showing approximate location. If you would like to examine a copy of the current edition, please contact us at the telephone number listed below and we can direct you to nearby libraries that have copies.

You can help us, too! Please let us know if you discover any leads about new communities, or find that we have incorrect information in current listings. Please send to *Directory Update*, 138 Twin Oaks Rd, Louisa VA 23093. Or contact dir-updates@ic.org 540-894-5798. Thank you!

New

Almidety (Forming/Cohousing)

Attn: Robbi Zeper
Yardley, PA
609-538-0111 ext. 1
Demialli10@aol.com
5/2002.

Austin Rural Cohousing (Forming)

Attn: Selwyn Polit
Austin, TX
512-926-7876
selwyn@austintx.com
5/2002.

Summer 2002

Beannachar Camphill Community

Attn: Richard Phethean
South Deeside Road
Banchory-Devenick
Aberdeen AB12 5YL
SCOTLAND UK
(01224) 869251
(01224) 869251
richard.beannachar@talk21.com
<http://www.beannachar.co.uk>
7/2002.

Buddhist CoHousing (Forming)

Attn: Tim Clark
Boston, MA
510 524 1110
gsadix@earthlink.net
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BuCoHo/>
Differs from a rural group in Boston of the same name. 5/2002.

Canberra Cohousing

Canberra ACT
Australia
info@canberracohousing.co
<http://www.canberracohousing.com/>
Seeking land. 5/2002.

Cincinnati Ecovillage

Cincinnati, OH
CintiEcovillage@aol.com
PgAnderson@aol.com
<http://members.aol.com/cintiecovillage/>
5/2002.

Community Forming (England)

Attn: Alan Heeks
Garden Lodge, Winchester Road
King's Somborne SO20 6NY
England 01794-388707
alan@workingvision.com
6/2002.

The Community Project

Lewes
United Kingdom
01323 815725
newmembers@thecommunityproject.com
angela@laughtonlodge.org
<http://www.cohousing.co.uk/cmtyproj.htm>
21 units on 23 acres. 5/2002.

Coyote Crossing (Cohousing)

Kristina Mutén
Santa Cruz, CA
[Kristina Mutén kmuten@coho.org](mailto:Kristina.Muten@coho.org)
<http://www.coho.org/>
16 units on 5 acres. 5/2002.
Dearborn Commons Cohousing
Attn: Kelly
Seattle, WA
(206) 842-9160
Info@cohousingresources.com
<http://www.dearborncommons.com>
5/2002.

Dorothy Day Cohousing

Attn: Karen House
1840 Hogan Street
Saint Louis, MO 63106
314-621-4052
314-436-0277
teka10@juno.com
5/2002.

Merrimac Valley CoHousing

1 High Street #30
Amesbury, MA
978-388-4224
wggrover@aol.com
5/2002.

New Berkeley Cohousing (Forming)

Attn: Abigail Surasky, Olga Draper
2006 Dwight Way, Suite 208
Berkeley, CA 94704
510-845-8017
acubabe_2000@yahoo.com
odraper@nature.berkeley.edu
5/2002.

Oak Village Commons (Cohousing)

Austin, TX
512-301-9917
[Cat Barron <cbbarron@io.com>](mailto:CatBarron<cbbarron@io.com>)
Seeking land. 5/2002.

Paraiso Costa Rica (Forming)

Attn: Meli Chang-Turpen
Apdo. #12
Santa Cruz, Guanacaste
Costa Rica
(506) 658-8160 Ray Beise
WaterSpryt@aol.com
<http://members.aol.com/WaterSpryt>

Help us create community on 321 acres on the northern Pacific coast of Costa Rica. The project is open to families and individuals who wish to build/become part of this new community. If you agree with the ideas set forth on the PIC Site, we are ready to join forces with you!

The property has a tiny house, and three working wells, one of which is rigged with electricity, for easy use. The other 2 are rope and bucket jobbies. There is also a natural spring which flows 9-10 months a year. The land is situated in an area, which for half the year is almost desert-like, in areas where there are few trees for shade and water retention. The land also has some wooded portions, and a gorgeous ocean view. It is hilly, in part, with open pasture in other areas.

There are some small stores nearby, but if you want a good sized grocery store, bank, post office, or other establishments, you must drive, walk, or hitchhike 20 miles. The land is 200 miles from Costa Rica's capital, San José, and 90 minutes from Liberia, which has an International Airport.

The land was purchased on credit. The community will need to work to pay back the loan, with interest, over the years. There are many ways to do this, and each commu-

nity member will need to help, whether with cash, ingenious business ideas, excellent grant proposals, pure elbow grease, or whatever works. It is not necessary to have money to contribute to join this community, but in the beginning, until we have enough garden / orchard resources in place to feed us all, everyone who comes must at least be able to feed him or herself, and any dependents. Please see our website for more details! 3/2002.

Samenhuizen (Belgian Cohousing Network)

C. Meunierstraat 57
3000 Leuven
Belgium
info@samenhuizen.be
roland@samenhuizen.be
<http://www.samenhuizen.be/>
5/2002.

Samenhuizing West-Brabant (Forming)

Attn: Luk Jonckheere
Brussels
Belgium
l.jonckheere@pi.be
5/2002.

Santa Cruz County Cohousing

Attn: Randa Johnson
Santa Cruz, CA
(831) 763-7939
randa@labyris.com
5/2002.

Turanga Farm Cohousing (Forming)

Attn: Jill Whitmore
3 Thompson Rd
Panmure, Auckland 1006
New Zealand
+64 9 527-3140
jillwhitmore@orcon.net.nz
<http://www.geocities.com/turangafarm/>
12 units 145 acres. 5/2002.

Vecino Cohousing

Los Angeles, CA
323-860-8825
truffula_tuft@hotmail.com
<http://www.primedigital.com/cohousing/>
5/2002.

Wawavox

Kastanienalle 77
10435 Berlin
Germany
+49 (0)30 449 4330
k77projects@gmx.de
12/2001.

Changes

Blue Moon Cooperative

24 Bluemoon Rd
South Strafford, VT 05070
Description and address change:
pop 18 not 17, diet mixed. Delete "Also
known as Golden Lotus, Inc." 3/2002.

COMN Ground

Attn: Michael Manor
5343 Tompkins Ave Apt 2
Cincinnati, OH 45227-214
Change of address. 5/2002.

Comunidad de Los Horcones

(52) (662) 2147219
(52) (662) 2638308
walden2@terra.com.mx
New email and phone numbers. 1/2002.

Mulvey Creek Land Co-operative

Attn Sandy Blaikie, Secretary
Box 286
250-226-7850
Contact, address and description changes:
Founding 1993 NOT 1991, Pop 8 NOT 22,
Acres 235. Add at the end of description:
"There are sales and rentals available."
2/2002.

Namasté Greenfire

Ctr Barnstead, NH
Slight name change from Namasté Green to
Namasté Greenfire. 6/2002.

Ofek Shalom Co-op

[deleted street address]
Madison, WI
608-257-8880
608-442-8649
New phone numbers. Address deleted.
Changed pop to 10. 3/2002.

Piñon Ecovillage

PO Box 3537
Santa Fe, NM 87501-3537
505-455-2595
<http://www.pinon-ecovillage.org/>
Address, URL and description update: 1.5
acres, 4 units. Income sharing subgroup cre-
ated named "Aspenwood". 5/2002.

Rainbow Farm (was Oakwood Farm)

Selma, IN
Name change from Oakwood Farm to Rain-
bow Farm. Description change:
Rainbow Farm is an International Emissary
Community dedicated to the spiritual regen-
eration of humankind and stewardship of the
earth. It is located in east-central Indiana on
326 acres of forest and field. The current focus
is the provision and creation of sacred space
for healing and transformational work. The
community operates a year 'round / full ser-
vice retreat facility (Oakwood Retreat Center
at Rainbow Farm) and hosts a wide variety of
events and visitors. Please call ahead to visit.
5/2002.

Rocky Hill Cohousing

<http://rockyhillcohousing.org/>
(This new group was listed for the first time in
Directory Update 2001.) Minor description
change: 28 units, 28 acres. New additional
website. 5/2002.



Frugal, self-sufficient living, and
low environmental impact.

Carrowmore Community

489 Potter Hill Road, Petersburg, New York 12138
518-658-9629 = homewright@taconic.net

Located in upstate New York, near the Vermont and Massachusetts borders, on 14 rural, wooded acres. We have a passive-solar, stone common house, a 1/4-acre organic garden, 2 greenhouses, and all the essential tools for community designed/built housing. We seek individuals and families with skills in gardening, construction, crafts, and mechanics; who are also vegetarian, non-smokers, non drug/alcohol dependent, and financially stable. Our goal is to live simply and share community resources to reduce traditional wage earning. We can offer affordable housing and shared equity. The area has numerous outdoor and cultural activities: hiking, sailing, kayaking and canoeing; wildlife and nature preserves; museums, universities and the performing arts.

FOR INFORMATION, CALL US OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

www2.taconic.net/homewright

Sacred Mountain Ranch
janiece@starband.net
http://differentway.net/smr
New email & new URL. 2/2002.

Takoma Village Cohousing
Or: Cindy Cohen
6827 4th St NW # 313
Washington, DC 20012-1936
Address update. 7/2002.

Turtles Island
Attn: Wayne Seales
1701 Glasco Tpke
Woodstock, NY 12498-2104
Postal address change. 5/2002.

Westside Community
Los Angeles, CA
Name and description changes: Was "Westside Vegetarian Community. Began 1990 [not 1993]. Cross out diet vegetarian. Change word to "individuals" instead of "vegetarians" in the first sentence. 3/2002.

Lost/Disbanded

Dome Country
Barrie, ON
CANADA
Email and postal addresses lost. 5/2002.

Flowering Desert Community
Tucson, AZ
Disbanded. 3/2002.

Free-the-Land NYC Squatters' Community
New York, NY
Lost address and URL. 6/2002.

High Wind Association
Plymouth, WI
Disbanded. Remain available to consult. See email and phone numbers listed in the Directory. 11/2001.

Hill Top Farm
Vinton, OH
Postal lost. 5/2002.

Shepherd's Gate
Denver, CO
Disbanded. 3/2002.

Song of the Morning
Vanderbilt, MI
Postal lost. 5/2002.

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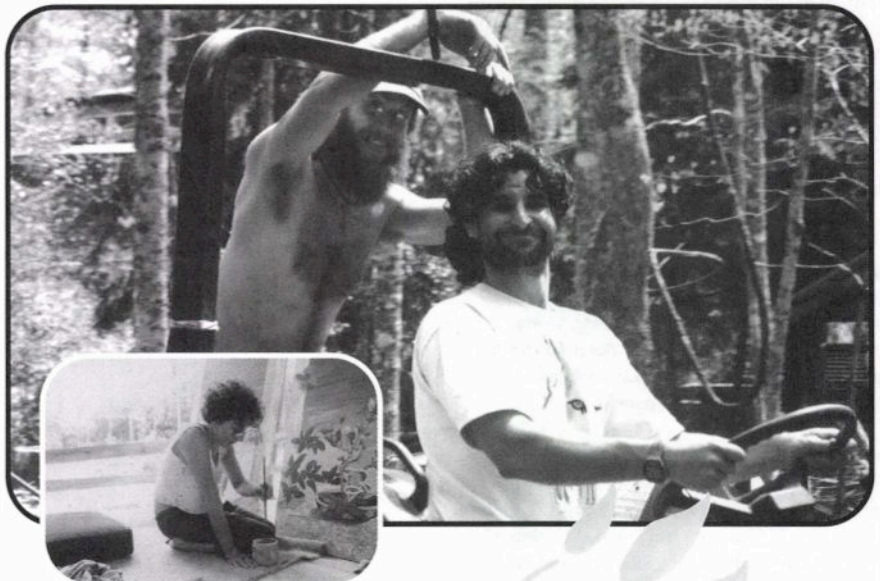
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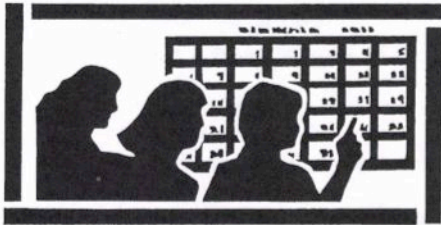


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community calendar



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. 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. 78.

Spring '03 Courses, Living Routes—Ecovillage Education Consortium

Jan 2-23 o Ecovillage Development in Senegal Senegal, Africa. Eco Yoff Community. Three-week program in the theory and practice of sustainable development. College credit anticipated through UMass, Amherst. *Daniel Greenberg, Living Routes—Ecovillage Education, 85 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 888-515-7333; info@LivingRoutes.org; www.LivingRoutes.org.*

Jan 8-31 • Ecovillage Design and Sustainable Living Course

Crystal Waters Permaculture Village, Queensland, Australia. January-term permaculture certification course. College credit available through Pacific Lutheran University. *Daniel Greenberg, Living Routes—Ecovillage Education, 85 Baker Rd. Shutesbury, MA 01072; 888-515-7333; info@LivingRoutes.org; www.LivingRoutes.org.*

Jan 31-May 9 • Findhorn Community Semester

Findhorn Foundation, Scotland. Courses on permaculture, psychology, art, and creative writing. College credit through Pacific Lutheran University. *Daniel Greenberg, Living Routes—Ecovillage Education, 85 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 888-515-7333; info@LivingRoutes.org; www.LivingRoutes.org.*

Jan 19-May 3 • Geo Communities Semester

Auroville Community, India. Full semester program with travel through south India. College credit through University of New Hampshire. *Daniel*

Greenberg, Living Routes—Ecovillage Education, 85 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 888-515-7333; info@LivingRoutes.org; www.LivingRoutes.org.

Jan '03 • EcoDwelling Three-Semester Concentration

New College of California, North Bay Campus (Santa Rosa). Culture, Ecology and Sustainable Community program, spring semester. Design equitable, sustainable, universally affordable housing alternatives. Implement vision, theory, and design. Steve Beck, Joseph F. Kennedy, Coordinators. Spring Semester (January, 2003). *New College of California; 99 6th St., Santa Rosa, CA 95401; 707-568-3093.*

Sep 28-Oct 11 • Permaculture Design

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center. Occidental, CA. Two-week certificate course. Permaculture theory, food diversity, soil enrichment, water use, erosion control, natural building, forest farming. Brock Dolman, Penny Livingston. \$1,200, incl. meals, lodging. *OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 95465; 707-874-1557; oaec@oaec.org.*

Oct 5-6 • Transforming Woman: Support for Midlife Changes

The Farm, Summertown, TN. Self-nurturing w/healing energy and visualization to reduce stress, protect the heart, and boost immunity. Certified Healing touch practitioner Kathleen Rosemary and Farm midwife Pamela Hunt guide you through physical, emotional, and sexual changes. Share stories with other women. \$250 (+\$40 for Friday night arrival) incl. meals, lodging. *Kathleen Rosemary; 615-383-7661; katrose@juno.com; nelliegd@yahoo.com.*

Oct 11-14 • Naka-Ima

Lost Valley Educational Center, Dexter, OR. Naka-Ima is about realizing your vision and facing and dissolving the obstacles in the way of being fully and authentically yourself. Through the practice of honesty, in the context of support and loving community, we will explore together how to be alive, in the moment, and deeply connected with others. Sl/Sc: \$500-\$300, incl. meals, lodging. *LVEC, 81868 Lost Valley Lane, Dexter, Oregon 97431; 541-937-3351; info@lostvalley.org; www.lostvalley.org.*

Oct 13-19 • Midwifery Assistant Workshop, Level I

The Farm, Summertown, TN. 931-964-2472; www.midwiferyworkshops.org.

Oct 18-20 • Bioneers Conference

Marin Center, San Rafael, CA. Presenters include Jeanne Achterberg, Julia Butterfly Hill, Fritjof Capra, Larry Dossey, Paul Hawken, Christopher Hobbs, Sondra Ingerman, David Orr, John Todd, and many more. Topics include Visionary & Practical Solutions for Restoring the Earth, Ecological Medicine, Ecoliteracy, Natural Medicine, Environmental Justice, Green Design, Spirit & Nature, Genetic Roulette, Indigenous Vision. 877-BIONEER; info@bioneers.org; www.bioneers.org.

Oct 20-25 • Permaculture Teacher's Training

Earthaven/Culture's Edge, Black Mountain, NC. An intensive exposure to curriculum and practical methods for organizing long and short permaculture workshops. Open to graduates of the Permaculture Design Course. Peter Bane, Patricia Allison, Chuck Marsh, and other members of Earthaven's permaculture team. \$375 incl. meals, camping. *Culture's Edge, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 828-669-3937; culturesedge@earthaven.org; www.earthaven.org.*

Oct 24-27 • Society for Utopian Studies 27th Annual Conference

Orlando, FL. Founded in 1975, the Society is an international, interdisciplinary association devoted to the study of utopianism in all its forms, with a particular emphasis on literary and experimental utopias. www.utoronto.ca/utopia.SUS.2002.

Oct 25-27 • Democratic Decision-Making

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center, Occidental, CA. Practical tools for more effective and participatory meetings—values, goals, democratic organizational structures, consensus and other forms of decision-making, facilitation skills, running effective meetings, conflict resolution, crafting agreements. Dave Henson, Adam Wolpert. Sl/Sc: \$350-\$300 incl. meals, lodging. *OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 95465; 707-874-1557; oaec@oaec.org.*

Oct 26-27 • How to Start an Ecovillage

Earthaven/Culture's Edge, Black Mountain, NC. From inception to manifestation, explore the elements of forming a sustainable community. Learn how to find land, prepare legal documents, develop an internal economy and more, drawing on the mistakes and successes of Earthaven. Valerie Naiman. \$125. incl. meals, camping. *Culture's Edge, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 828-669-3937; culturesedge@earthaven.org; www.earthaven.org.*

Nov 2-3 • Mushroom Propagation for Food and Medicine

Earthaven/Culture's Edge, Black Mountain, NC. Home propagation of shiitake, oyster, and other mushrooms. Take home a shiitake log or bag of inoculated medium to grow. Keith Johnson. \$125 incl. meals, camping. *Culture's Edge, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 828-669-3937; culturesedge@earthaven.org; www.earthaven.org.*

Nov. 8-11 • Naka-Ima

Lost Valley Educational Center, Dexter, OR. (See Oct. 11-14.)

Nov 9 • Growing Shiitake Commercially

The Farm, Summertown, TN. Ecovillage Training Center, PO box 90, Summertown, TN 38483; 931-964-4475; 931-964-2200; ecovillage@the-farm.org.

Nov 15-18 • Fellowship for Intentional Community's Fall Meeting

Tahuya Lodge, Seattle, WA. Public welcome. 660-883-5545; jenny@ic.org.

Nov 15-17 • Introduction to Permaculture

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center, Occidental, CA. Fundamentals of permaculture design and ethics explored through lectures, discussion, and hands-on practice. Pattern observation, water catchment, erosion control, forest farming, polycultural food diversity, microclimate analysis, natural building. Brock Dolman. SI/Sc. \$350-\$300 incl. meals, lodging. OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 95465; 707-874-1557; oaec@oaec.org.

Nov 21-24 • Living in Actualization in an Interuniversal-Soul Cultural Community
Sedona, AZ. Aquarian Concepts. See Sep 26-29.

Nov. 21-25 • The Practice: Creating Intimacy and Community Through the Practice of Honesty

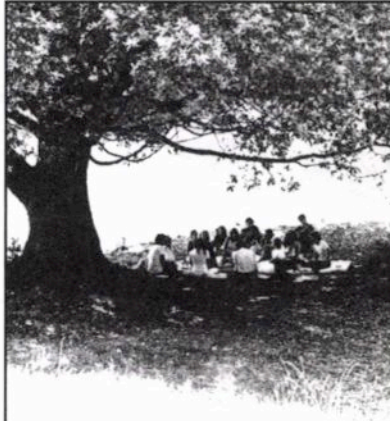
Lost Valley Educational Center, Dexter, OR. Companion course to Naka-Ima, designed to give a deeper experience and an understanding of the tools and concepts. Exercises designed to allow participants to understand and let go of attachments and anger held from childhood. Focus on communicating clearly and honestly with one another. Requirement: completion of basic Naka-Ima workshop. SI/Sc: \$700/\$375, incl. meals, lodging. LVEC, 81868 Lost Valley Lane, Dexter, Oregon 97431; 541-937-3351; info@lostvalley.org; www.lostvalley.org.

Nov 22-24 • Starting and Sustaining Intentional Communities

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center, Occidental, CA. Actualize your dream of a land-based intentional community: finding land, financing a purchase, legal entities available, group decision-making process, finding like-minded people, financial organization, legal and insurance issues, dealing with zoning, long-term planning. Extensive tours of community. Dave Henson, Adam Wolpert. SI/Sc: \$600-\$525, incl. meals, lodging. OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 95465; 707-874-1557; oaec@oaec.org.

Dec 11-15 • Federation of Egalitarian Community's Fall Assembly

East Wind Community, Tecumseh, Missouri. fec@ic.org; www.thefec.org.



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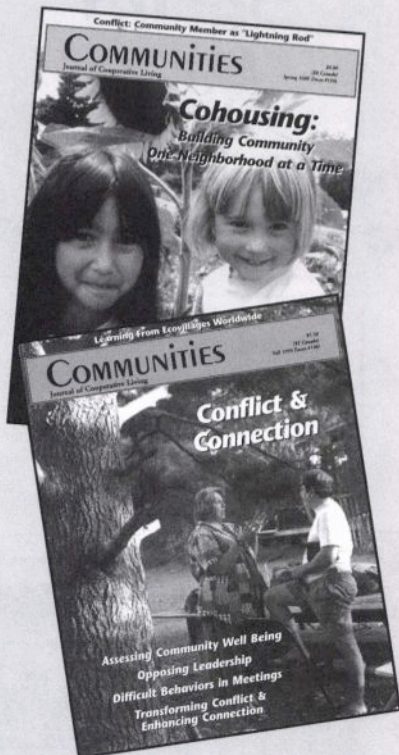
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Reach



REACH HAS CHANGED! We have combined our regular Classified column to create one column for all your Classified needs. In addition to ads intended to help match people looking for communities with communities looking for people, Reach now has ads for workshops, goods, services, books, products and personals of interest to people interested in Communities. All ads will run at the discounted Reach rate.

You may use the form on the last page of Reach to place an ad.

Note: THE REACH DEADLINE FOR THE FALL 2002 ISSUE (OUT IN MID NOVEMBER IS OCTOBER 1ST)

The special Reach rate is only \$.25 per word (up to 100 words, \$.50 per word thereafter for all ads) 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, 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: Patricia Greene, 13 West Branch Rd., Heath, MA 01339; phone and fax, 413-337-4037, email: patricia@ic.org (If you email an ad, please include your mailing address, phone number and be sure to send off the check at the same time.)

Suggestion: get a larger response by not excluding anyone. Include not just email, but address and phone. Caveat to readers: never, but never, drop in on any community unannounced!

Communities listed in our Directory are entitled to one free update to their listing. Updates submitted for that purpose will appear in the Directory Updates section of Communities magazine, not in Reach. New, forming or existing communities not listed in our Directory may also receive a one-time free listing in the Directory Updates section. We suggest advertising in Reach as well to increase and extend publicity for your group. Contact: dir-updates@ic.org or 540-894-5798 for more information on these free listings.

COMMUNITIES WITH OPENINGS

ABUNDANT DAWN COMMUNITY, Floyd, Virginia. Our 90 acres of beautiful mountain land is home to two small sub-communities: 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. We are committed to dealing thoughtfully with conflict and to considering carefully the impacts of our actions on the planet. We eat together regularly. We offer stability, experience (our "average" member has been here five years, and has lived in community 16 years), a river, pond, forests, pastures, gardens, basic infrastructure and limited housing. We seek builders, organic growers, musicians, business people, experienced communitarians, people who like to walk up and down hills and people who are fun to be around. We include a diversity of spiritual and sexual orientations. Families are welcome. POB 433, Floyd, VA 24091; abundantdawn@ic.org; www.abundantdawn.org

ACORN, Mineral, Virginia. Acorn is 72 acres of beautiful country located in the heart of Central Virginia. We are a young community that uses consensus and income sharing to create an egalitarian culture which values hard work as well as an easy-going atmosphere. Skills that can be learned at Acorn include hammock making, organic gardening and tinnery where we create beautiful and functional artwork out of recycled tin. A main source of income is our exciting new business, Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, which offers many varieties of herb, flower, vegetable and grain seeds. Recently certified organic, we specialize in open pollinated varieties, traditional favorites and heirlooms. The new business is taking off at lightening speed and Acorn members are finding much delight and fulfillment in its success. Acorn, 1259-CM12 Indian Creek Rd., Mineral, VA 23117; 540-894-0595; acorn@ic.org

AQUARIAN CONCEPTS COMMUNITY, Sedona, Arizona. Founded by Gabriel of Sedona and Niann Emerson Chase in 1989. Currently 100 adults and children full-time. International members. Global change work for Destiny Reservoirs 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. Organic gardens. Starseed Schools of Melchizedek. Global Change Music with Gabriel of Sedona and The Bright and Morning Star Band with the vocal CDs Wake Up America and CosmoPop 2000. Future Studios with CosmoArt, CosmoTheater and audio and video productions. Planetary Family Services, light construction, stone masonry, landscaping, cleaning and maintenance, teepees and yurts, computer services, elder home care. Serious spiritual commitment required. POB 3946, Sedona, AZ 86340; 928-204-1206; info@aquarianconcepts.org; http://www.aquarianconcepts.org; http://www.globalchangemusic.org

AQUARIUS COMMUNITY, Vail, Arizona. Picturesque mountain wilderness blessed with ideal weather. Hour commute to Tucson. Accepting solvent liberal people living the nirvana. Tell us why we would like you. Box 69, Vail, AZ 85641-0069; jkubias@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). Our mission is to provide a safe and potent environment for social and personal growth. *Breitenbush Hot Springs, Personnel, POB 578, Detroit, OR 97342; 503-854-3320.*

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 House parents (usually with four special needs people and one or two other "co-workers"), 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: 15136 Celtic Drive, Sauk Centre, MN 56378; 320-732-6365; Fax: 320-732-3204; CVMN@rea-alp.com; www.camphillvillage-minnesota.org

CHILDREN FOR THE FUTURE, Champaign, Illinois. Join our child-friendly, peace-oriented,

income-sharing community of students and grads. We are currently five adult non-smokers and three children. Our houses are just two blocks from the University of Illinois. We are academically oriented, non-sectarian and home school. Student members are subsidized and pay just \$110/mo room/board. Members get back 25% of earning for personal expenses. Student loans and moving expenses are paid by the community. We hope to have and raise many intelligent and well-rounded children who will contribute positively to society. 800-498-7781; C4TF@cs.com; www.childrenforthefuture.org

CHUCKLEBERRY COMMUNITY, eight miles west of Nelson, British Columbia. Situated on 23 acres of sunny, serene and wild mountain land, our western boundary is a whitewater creek that rushes past old growth trees with numerous waterfalls and swimming holes. We live here in the heart of nature dedicated to rich, fulfilling relationships and meaningful life work. Most members serve in the healing arts such as Shiat-su Massage, Workshop and Retreat Facilitation, Relationship Counseling, Men and Women's Groups, Yoga and Meditation Retreats. We have four acreages, two with existing homes on them available to new members. Internships available. Jon 250-359-6669.

COMMON PLACE LAND COOPERATIVE, Truxton, New York. We are a 432-acre intentional community and land trust located in the hills of central New York State seeking new residential members. The land is mixed forest and fields on

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a south slope with ravine running down to a river and backed by a state forest. At present we are 14 adults and 12 children living on the land in energy efficient, owner-built homes, many using alternative power. Our children are both home-schooled and public schooled and have lots of room to play. There are several land-based member businesses, including several landscapers, a fencing company and an organic vegetable farm and CSA. We meet twice monthly and use consensus decision making. There is traditional housing available and there are several small houses for sale, as well as many undeveloped residential leasehold sites. We host two annual festivals in the summer in late June and mid-August. For more information and to set up a visit, please write to CPLC, 4211 Rte. 13, Truxton, NY 13158, or call Alison Frost 607-842-6799; frostym@swns.net

DANCING RABBIT, Rutledge, Missouri. We are actively seeking new members to join us in creating our vibrant home and sustainability demonstration project. We are building our homes with earth-friendly materials on our 280 beautiful, rolling acres in northeast Missouri. We live, work and play together; with cooperation and feminism as basic principles. We grow much of our food and share delicious organic meals together every day. We make our decisions by consensus. If you're looking for a nurturing home where you can live more sustainability and make a difference in the world, come visit us. Help make our ecovillage grow! *One-CM Dancing Rabbit Lane, Rutledge, MO 63563; 660-883-5511; dancingrabbit@ic.org; www.dancingrabbit.org*

EARTHAVEN, Black Mountain, North Carolina. Thriving ecospiritual, permaculture-based, off-grid community on 325 forested acres 45 minutes from culture-rich Asheville. Streams, ponds, and gardens. Consensus decisions. Self-financed. Microhydro and solar power, composting toilets, constructed wetlands. Beautiful passive solar natural buildings—Council Hall, kitchen/dining room, trading post, members' café, cabins, multi-family dwellings, homes under construction. 40+ on site members include permaculture professionals, artists, woodworkers, engineers and entrepreneurs in Forestry Co-op, Red Moon Herbs, Imani Farm, Permaculture Activist magazine, business consulting, Culture's Edge permaculture workshops. Multigenerational, children welcome. www.earthaven.org; Send for Information Pack (including video): info@earthaven.org; 1125 Camp Elliott Road, Black Mountain, NC 28711; 828-669-3937.

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*

ECOVILLAGE COHOUSING, Ithaca, New York.

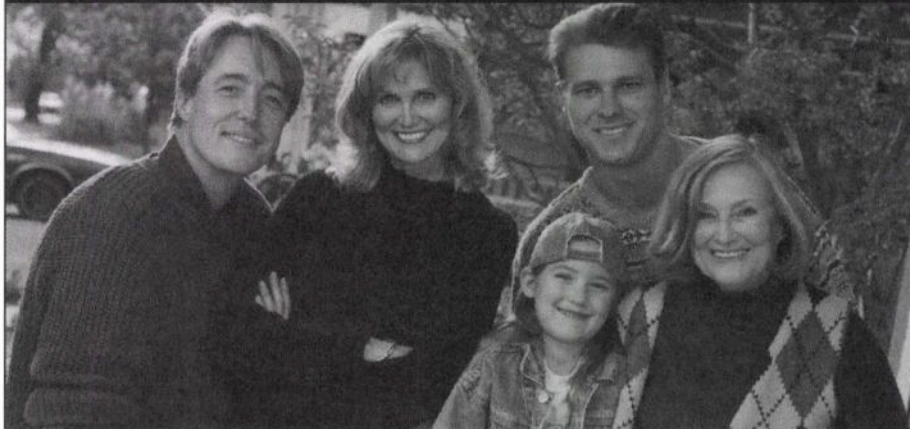
A great place to live! We are creating an environmental village that will be composed of several cohousing communities integrated with a working farm and education center. As an experiment in sustainable living, we already inspire visitors from around the world. EVI actively seeks new members for its expanding community. 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 and visit our 9.5 acre organic farm. Stop by the construction site of our second neighborhood group (SoNG). EcoVillage welcomes you! Check out our web site at: www.ecovillage.ithaca.ny.us and contact: Liz Walker, 607-255-8276; ecovillage@cornell.edu; EcoVillage, Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell Univ., Ithaca, NY 14853.

FELLOWSHIP COMMUNITY, Spring Valley, New York. We seek co-workers. 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 elderly, co-workers and children, we grow our own fruit and vegetables bio-dynamically. All ages work together in our practical work activities. They include a candle shop, metal shop, wood shop, weavery/handwork group, greenhouse, publishing press, bakery, outlet store and medical practice. The spiritual science (anthroposophy) of Rudolf Steiner is the basis for our work. There is a Waldorf School and several other anthroposophical initiatives nearby. Our lifestyle is an intense social/cultural commitment to the future of mankind. Check out our web site at www.FellowshipCommunity.org If you are interested in co-working or need additional info, please contact our office at 845-356-8494; or write to: Ann Scharff, c/o The Executive Circle at 241 Hungry Hollow Rd., Spring Valley, NY 10977; rsffoffice@fellowshipcommunity.org

MULVEY CREEK LAND COOP, Slocan, British Columbia. Small community with eight resident members on 230 acre wilderness property is open to new members. Self-sufficient, ecological focus. Members can purchase a four-acre site for \$30,000 Canadian. Also sites available with cabins and rentals. POB 286, Slocan, B.C., VOG 2CO, Canada; 250-226-7850; sandy@netidea.com

PINON ECOVILLAGE, Santa Fe, New Mexico. A small community (15-25 people) dedicated to environmental and social sustainability, that welcomes diversity. Our land is in a fertile mountain valley 20 minutes north of town with mature fruit trees and majestic cottonwoods. We grow some of our own food in organic gardens, and are renovating our adobe houses using green building methods. Pinon Ecovillage offers four membership options: Aspenwood (shared labor, income and housing); Ponderosa (rent individual houses); Intern (work exchange for room, board and learning); and Juniper (non-resident supporter). We welcome visitors! POB 911, Santa Fe, NM 87504; 505-690-4828; pinon@ic.org; www.swicc.org/pinon/home.html

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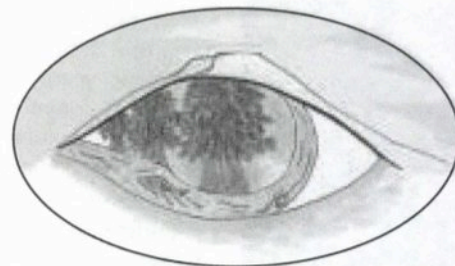


Call 719.471.6611 or visit us on the Web at www.ColoSpringsCohousing.com

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We offer retreats for individuals and groups, with healthy, home-cooked meals and an experience of relaxation, reflection and reconnection to the natural world.

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For more information, call the Goodenough Community office (206) 323-4653 or visit our web site at www.goodenough.org.

THREE SPRINGS COMMUNITY, North Forks, California. Our 160 acres, including annual creek, pond, rolling hills and CSA organic garden, is held in a non-profit land trust. After six+ years, we have grown to eight adults and two children. We are now seeking new members who share our values of consensus decision-making, simple living and inter-personal growth. Send letter of intent. 59820 Italian Bar Rd., North Fork, CA 93643; farm@sierratel.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 home-grown 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

UNAHWI RIDGE, Western North Carolina. Our community offers home sites, amenities, gardens and miles of trails on 600 acre eco-development in North Carolina mountains. Prices from \$38,000, with owner financing. www.unahwidge.com

UNION ACRES COMMUNITY, Whittier, North Carolina. Established community seeks responsible and fun-loving people to purchase lots and join us on 80 acres in the Smokey Mountains. Children welcome. Contact: Union Acres, 654 Heartwood Way, Whittier, NC 28789; swasapp@earthlink.net; www.home.earthlink.net/~lachristie

WALNUT STREET CO-OP, Eugene, Oregon. Occasional openings for new members at urban cooperative household. We share a big, sunny house with 9 bedrooms and plenty of common space, and dinners five nights a week. Our values include good communication, social change, and sustainability. 541-484-1156; walnut@ic.org; www.efn.org/~bressen/walnut.

COMMUNITY HOUSES AND PROPERTY FOR SALE

Run a one inch high picture of your home for sale with your copy for only \$20 more! Photo must be high contrast and horizontal and must arrive by the stated deadline.

CABIN, Thorne Bay, Alaska. Live a simple life close to nature in beautiful SE Alaska. Wildlife abounds near this waterfront home off the grid with modern amenities. Call 423-543-1962; www.rit.edu/~mcm5276/cabin/mattioli.htm

COMMON GROUND COMMUNITY, Lexington, Virginia. Two-story home tucked into mountainous Virginia with five other homes on 80 acre cooperative land trust. Two bedrooms, large open kitchen, dining, living area with beamed ceilings and stone chimney. Passive solar wood heated with spring water, wood floors, large side porch with connecting deck to glassed in sunroom. Separate three-bay storage building. Access to organic gardens, ponds and community buildings. Rental available during membership process. \$82,000. Steve or Jo Ellen Parent, 40 Sunflower Lane, Lexington, VA 24450; 540-463-9451.

GREENWOOD FOREST ASSOCIATION, Mountain View, Missouri. Beautiful Ozark property for sale in 1000-acre land cooperative with ecological covenants. Oak and hickory forest bordering Ozarks Scenic Riverways. Lots of dogwoods, redbuds, wildflowers, wildlife. Access by well-maintained dirt roads, electricity available. 10-acre parcels - \$20,000. 417-932-5345; t.lroehl@train.missouri.org

HEARTWOOD COHOUSING, Durango, Colorado. For sale two passive solar straw bale town homes, 1,600 sf on two floors, open layout, three bedrooms, natural clay plasters. \$248,000, which includes lot, common house, 250 acres with 70 acres of irrigated pasture, workshop, greenhouse and more. Werner Heiber, 970-884-9045, whsb@frontier.net



This wooded 3.5-acre compound includes a one-story 4BR/4BA house, an efficiency guest house, 2-Car garage, inground pool, hot tub, water well, storage/greenhouse bldg. Space for garden, orchard, horses. Ideal for cooperative living, business retreat, or a family. Price \$399,900. Carolyn Jeter 512-415-5275

VASHON COHOUSING, VASHON ISLAND, WASHINGTON. Cottage for sale. Two bedrooms, 1.5 baths, oak floors, high ceilings, gas stoves, insulated attic, etc. Great for one or two persons. Asking \$190's. Contact: www.vashoncohousing.org; Rose: inou98070@yahoo.com or 206-463-1992.

EXISTING COMMUNITY SITE FOR SALE, Central New Mexico. Ideal for start-up community. We outgrew this site and moved to a larger area. Fenced four acres and five alternative homes with lots of neat stuff. 55 miles from Albuquerque. Asking \$35,000 OBO. Can finance with large down payment. We also have a few vacant lots for \$1400 each. Call Mike 505-610-5753; village-offharmony@juno.com

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community accepting and inclusive of diverse levels of health. Let's exchange ideas. Contact *Serana Kassamali*. 510-237-1630; 1108 Brookside Ave, San Pablo, CA 94805; bonecity@myabmp.com

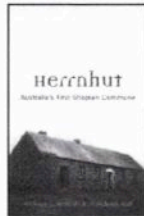
EASTON MOUNTAIN RETREAT COMMUNITY, Greenwich, New York. Community forming at the Easton Mountain Retreat. Seeking creative, psychologically mature individuals interested in deepening spiritual life, meditation, non-violence, social justice and celebration. Currently four gay men running a retreat and conference center on 175 acres in upstate NY. We are engaged in healing work, body work, acupuncture, holistic medicine, education and spiritual retreats. There are many opportunities for cottage industries on the property. Developing an ecovillage that will include couples, singles, a monastery and retirement community. Contact: john@eastonmountainretreat.com; 518-692-8023; www.eastonmountainretreat.com

EDEN RANCH, Paonia, Colorado. Seeking members desiring rural, organic living environment. Share labor, community meals, and an undivided share of 65 acres. Future crops and community businesses planned. Outstanding views and clean air on a Western Colorado mesa. Build your own environmentally responsible home; ultimate self-sustainability is our goal. Local alternative school. Diversity in thought and age; mutual respect and trust creates consensus decisions. Approximately \$15,000 landshare (flexible terms), plus membership fee. Other residential categories available. Visits, tours, camping and guest accommodations by reservation. Visit our web site at www.edenranch.com *Eden Ranch Community, POB 520, Paonia, CO 81428; 970-835-8905; woodwetz@aol.com*

EDEN VILLAGE, Mendocino County, Northern California. Become who you deserve to be in a self-sustaining ecovillage community large enough to reach that critical mass necessary for true sustainability. Self-financing five acre, passive solar homesties on over 2,000 acres commonly held lands. Farmland, forest, lake and wild land extending up into Mendocino National Forest. Multigenerational, child-centered, natural learning and healing environment, permaculture demonstration project, egalitarian village. Get the Eden Journal. Four issues for only \$7. Payable to: *T. McClure, POB 571, Kenwood, CA 95452.*

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY, meeting now in Michigan, possible home in Missouri. Play a role in the communities movement! Spiritually-oriented members with the secular goal of serving the intentional communities movement (and the planet) by creating an Institute and Resource Center for IC's. Community featuring ecology, resource-sharing, consensus, shared meals and a sense of humor. Kids welcome, with their responsible, committed-to-community adults. Early stages of project. *Ma'ikwe at 517-522-4771; avatar@ic.org*

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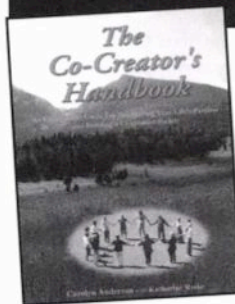
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NAMASTE GREENFIRE COHOUSING, Center Barnstead, New Hampshire. Intentional Cohousing Community, nature sanctuary, permaculture, activism. Loving more relationships. Real investments. *NGC, POB 31, Center Barnstead, NH 03225; 603-776-7776; nhnamaste@yahoo.com*

NOAH'S ARK 2, Texas. Eleven rural acres one hour east of Austin, two hours northwest of Houston. Open-hearted, job-sharing, progressive sufi/yoga/unitarian folks co-creating short-term weekender nature retreat community and long-term, earth-sheltered, "Liberal" survival center since 1995. Part-time silence/solitude acceptable. \$1 brochure. *4001 Oakridge, Houston, TX 77090-5230; 713-863-0433; sharingfutures@aol.com*

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OAK CREEK COMMONS COHOUSING, Paso Robles, California. Our 36-home cohousing community and 4,000 square foot Common House will be built on a beautiful 14-acre wooded site in Paso Robles on the Central Coast of California. The property includes a flowing stream, hiking trail, play areas for children, and 10 acres of open space including a large oak tree grove. We make decisions by consensus and are creating a nurturing place for children and the envi-

ronment. Free orientations in the Bay Area and Paso Robles are offered regularly. For more information, please call us at 800-489-8715; email us at *info@oakcreekcommons.org* or visit our website, *www.OakCreekCommons.org*

ROCKY HILL COHOUSING, Northampton, Massachusetts. We're building a community of friends on 27 forested acres in Northampton (#1 U.S. Small Arts Town). 28 homes, mostly three and four bedrooms still available in this green community. We have a sledding hill! Call Sharon and Glenn at 413-584-9987; email: *rockyhillcohousing@mail.com; www.rockyhillcohousing.org*

SEVEN GENERATIONS LAND COOPERATIVE, Minnesota. Developing business plan for rural sustainable community on 120 waterfront acres in northern U.S. To minimize debt, we will not purchase property until we have enough start-up capital. Several membership/investment levels from timesharing ecovillage home to full-time residency with retirement dividends from community businesses. We anticipate funding our community with a wellness center, artists and spiritual retreat centers, interspecies communication program, ecotravel, publications, home-grown hydroelectric power, CSA and cottage industries. For brochure and response to questions, send \$5 to *Trisha McKenney, 9560 Timberwood Rd., Chaska, MN 55318.* Business plan/membership packet available in December 2002.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY, Northern California. Starting gender balanced cooperative household working toward visionary ecovillage community. Mostly artists, musicians, unencumbered singles 25-35. \$300/month plus utilities. *www.SustainableCommunity.homestead.com; Temeluch@yahoo.com*

challenges? Save frustration and wasted effort while deepening your experience as a community. Utilize a community coach to move forward your process of visioning, acquisition, formation of community and/or conflict resolution. Drawing from an eclectic background of coaching, Hakomi, mediation, law, real estate, energy work and intuition, Creation in Motion offers a unique mixture of intellectual, emotional and spiritually based consulting and coaching. See *www.SpiritualCommunities.com*, email *Bonita-Joy@SpiritualCommunities.com* or call (785) 842 2268.

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HEATHCOTE COMMUNITY, Baltimore County, Maryland. IS SIMPLE LIVING FOR YOU? Curio Coast Eco-Life Resident Internship, 7-12 month commitment. Simplicity is hard work, but Heathcoters have been refining it for 35 years. The internship blends zen of work and play with science and spirituality of nature and community. Integrate art and wellness into life while lowering negative impact. Live/work lightly on Earth at Heathcote Community, demonstration site for Permaculture and planet-gentle strategies for

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gardening, domestic arts and human culture. Intern will reside in rustic dwelling with food/lodging paid, plus gas allowance and spending stipend. 40-hour work week—20 hours eco-friendly house cleaning company, ten hours Permaculture, ten hours assistant to social justice filmmaker. Daily yoga practice. Located on 110 wooded acres, large gardens, goats, bee hives, hiking trails. Residents maintain historic mill, cabin, farmhouse, etc. Vegetarian. Call Dana 410-458-2310; curiocoast@comcast.net; www.healthcote.org

SANDHILL FARM, Rutledge, Missouri. Internships in Sustainable Community Living. April 15 to November 1, 2002. Gain experience in organic farming, construction, communication, and rural and community living. Learning is informal and hands-on. Come for six weeks or longer. More information about the Sandhill Farm Community and applying for an internship at www.thefec.org/sandhill or by contacting us at Sandhill Farm, RR1, Box 155-C, Rutledge, MO 63563; 660-883-5543; sandhill@ic.org;

SPRING FIRE, Glenmont, Ohio. Young community seeks interns who want to learn hands-on gardening, wild edibles, simple living, childcare, construction and community living. We live in a beautiful Ohio Valley near Mohican State Forest, and would love to talk with you. Write or call for more info: SpringFire, Attn. Molly Ewing, 21935 Jericho Rd., Glenmont, OH 44628; 740-599-1574.

MISCELLANEOUS

SEEKING PHILANTHROPIST/PRIVATE INVESTOR. Single parent with chronic fatigue syndrome, family of three needs assistance in becoming established in an intentional community in northeast USA. Seeks financial help with down payment and/or security deposit, moving expenses, etc. Serious responses only. M.K., POB 240, Blairstown, NJ 07825.

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PUBLICATIONS, BOOKS, WEB SITES

COMMUNITY JOURNAL. A magazine devoted to the life and experience of living in community as told through words and pictures. Published quarterly by Community Service, supporting and fostering healthy small, local and intentional communities for 60 years. Write for a complementary copy. Yearly subscription is \$25. POB 243, Yellow Springs, OH 45387; info@community-service.net

INTRODUCTION TO CONSENSUS. Useful information about participatory group process and sustainable decision-making. Includes 28-page Guide For Facilitators. Also available in Spanish. \$15 check or money order to Beatrice Briggs, POB 25, Black Earth, WI 53515. Briggsbea@aol.com

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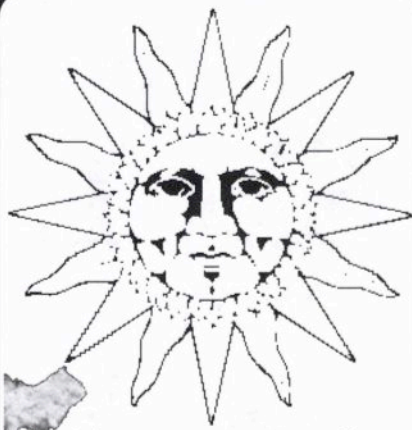
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Boulder, CO 80304
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HARMONY HABITAT, Bloomfield, Kentucky. Houseparents/farmers needed as nonprofit opens group home for mentally retarded adults on large farm in central Kentucky. Help us build fences, greenhouses and active, healthy lives. Seeking singles or couples. If you have farming experience and/or have worked with people with special needs, here's a place where you can really make a difference. Send letter and resume to: *Harmony Habitat, Box 327, Bloomfield, KY 40008; email: Habitat321@aol.com*

JOB OPENINGS at We'Moon! Live/work in spirited lesbian land community. Help produce We'Moon: Gaia Rhythms and connect with international women's culture. Part-time or seasonal job openings (office co-chief position), internships available (six weeks with stipend and work exchange in community), with possibility of training for longer term jobs in business management ("We'Moonager"), graphic design ("Pro-Queen") and financial planning/consultant ("Biz Whiz") Computer and community skills required. 503-630-7848; POB 1395, Estacada, OR 97023; *matrix@wemoon.ws.*

MUSICIANS, Sedona, Arizona. Lead Guitarist, Bass Player, Mandolin, Cello, and other professional/semi wanted for Global Change Music record label bands. CHOIR DIRECTOR wanted for Gabriel of Sedona's Bright and Morning Star

Choir. Young, vivacious female for forty-voice choir and eight-piece orchestra. All original CosmoWorship compositions. Must be willing to become a committed community member. Send picture and resume. See Aquarian Concepts Community listing under Communities With Openings above.

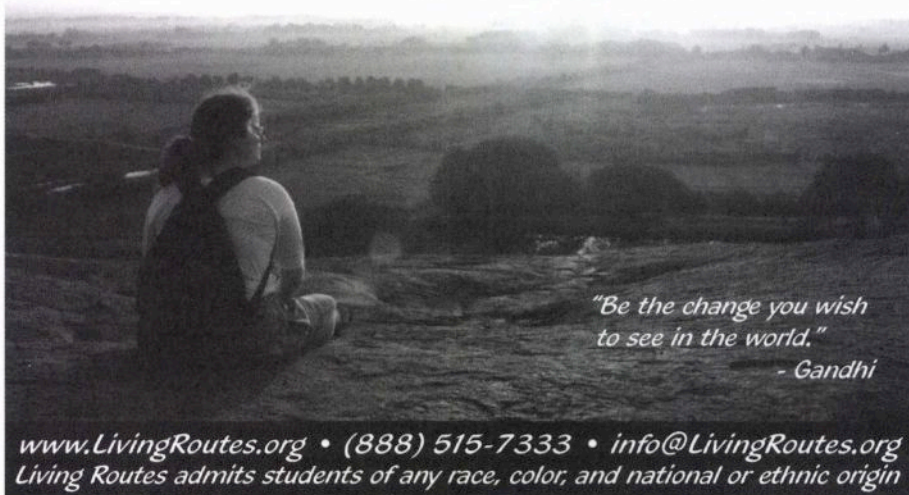
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Your source for the latest information, issues, and ideas about intentional communities and cooperative living!

Supplements the *Communities Directory* (see *Directory* ad on inside front cover) with update listings about communities in North America—including those now forming.

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The FIC is a network of communitarians promoting communication and understanding about and among intentional communities across North America. The Fellowship:

- publishes *Communities* magazine and the best-selling *Communities Directory*.
- 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.
- serves as an information clearinghouse for all aspects of community—for individuals, groups, and the media.

FIC membership supports these efforts and offers the following benefits:

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- discounts on selected products and services.
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- first notice on whatever we're doing, and the opportunity to get in early! Join the Fellowship team today!

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PERIPATETIC COMMUNITARIAN

(continued from p. 80)

cellations from nearly 300 pre-orders. I don't know when Tape #2 will be completed. I've learned not to promise tentative completion dates when so many of the variables are unpredictable. All I can promise is "eventually—and it'll definitely be worth the wait!"

A second important lesson: there's always more to learn. I had no realistic understanding of how much time I'd spend learning new software, acquiring computer troubleshooting skills, learning web page creation, doing advance promotion, customer relations, audio manipulations, permissions gathering, photo acquiring, photo touch up, camera repairs, budget adjustments, and so on.

I made what I now consider a major mistake in promising each community that all of the dialogue would be in their own words and not in a narrative overdub. Probably many community members would have let me off the hook, but changing the agreement with hundreds of interviewees, some in very hard-to-reach places, was too intimidating to tackle. Most people tell their stories in rambling and often disjointed phrases, and patching them together into a coherent and flowing narrative can range from incredibly challenging to downright impossible. Restating their ideas in a narrative voice-over would at times have been ever-so-much easier and would have saved abundant hours at the audio editing console.

The interest and support and hospitality from the various communities was awesome. The FIC agreed to endorse the project and be its primary promoter and distributor. Numerous friends volunteered their time to help with indexing and such, and the people I've worked most closely with have been very supportive, helpful, and encouraging. (Thanks Doug, Phil, Lotus Allen, Amy Nesbitt, Elph Morgan, McCune Renwick-Porter, Velma Kahn, Tim Miller, Albert Bates, Cathy Chow, and many others!)

I've also had to moderate my perfectionist streak. My biggest disappointment is with the variation in the audio quality, and it still grates on my sensibilities whenever I hear some of the background hums or major changes in sound quality ... live and learn!

Would I be willing to do it again, now knowing the amount of work, frustration, and stress involved? Absolutely! Even with the video's imperfections, I'm very pleased with the overall result and am confident that it will contribute to spreading and strengthening the quest for community. Ω

Geoph Kozeny has lived in various kinds of communities for 29 years, and has been on the road for 15 years visiting communities. Email him at geoph@ic.org if you'd like to bring his show to your town.

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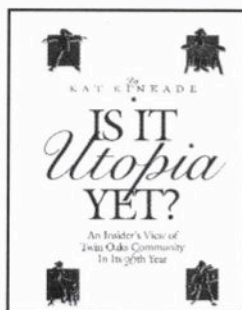
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Perseverance Pays: It's A Video!

When I started my tour of intentional communities on the first day of 1988, I imagined I'd be on the road for a year or so, and would settle down in one of them. One year grew into two, two stretched into three, and about then I realized that I'd likely continue wandering for quite a while longer. Fifteen years later I'm still at it ...

During my early community visits I started taking slides and giving informal slide shows. Eventually this evolved into giving public presentations, and it wasn't long until I started getting requests for video copies of the slide show.

In the fall of '96 when the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) gathered for an organizational meeting at The Farm in Tennessee I met Doug Stevenson, a Farm-based entrepreneur running a video business then called Total Video Productions. We struck up a friendship based on our mutual interest in intentional communities and using video as a tool for social change, and I lobbied him and his partner Phil Schweitzer to take me on as an apprentice for a few months. The following spring I tagged along on various shoots and helped out around the studio. As I was about to wrap up my apprenticeship, the Farm School asked me to make a 10-minute mini-documentary of the school to show, resulting in a fun and informative 11-minute video.

Back on the road, I started showing that Farm School segment everywhere I went, and it was amazingly well received. I began telling my audiences that I intended to get my fundraising act together to raise enough money for the equipment I'd need to make a video about communities. And—lo and behold!—one of my community friends in Seattle, Bert Bradley of Orca Landing, came up to me after a viewing and offered to fund the project after selling a house he had for sale.

Wow ... talk about Right Livelihood and the Laws of Manifestation! It took us several months to work out the details, and nearly a year before the house sold, but Bert eventually floated me a generous interest-free, unsecured loan to buy a high-quality camera, microphones, lighting,

and all the other accessories I'd need to record interviews at communities. In a fairly unconventional arrangement, he agreed to get repaid \$5 per tape sold, probably for several years, until the start-up loan is retired.

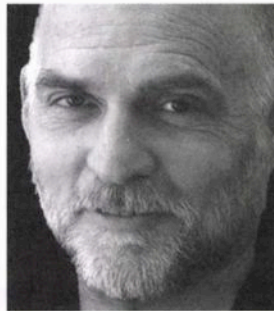
I also needed to come up with a way to finance the editing, since high-quality video editing equipment is hugely expensive, and renting studio time at a minimum of \$75

per hour would quickly add up to astronomical sums. I approached Phil and Doug at the Farm with a proposal, and another unusual deal was struck: I'd buy an extra hard drive for their computer system so as not to tie up their storage capacity (video requires a lot of gigabytes!) and I'd use their studio during the off hours (fortunately I'm a night owl by nature). They, too, would get \$5 per tape sold until the studio time was fairly compensated. As an extra bonus, they've offered coaching, technical support, and friendship that made it a pleasure working with them.

The project was originally conceived as a two-hour tape profiling 18 diverse communities. However it soon became clear that five-minute segments were not adequate for telling a community's story in any depth, and it eventually became a two-tape, three-hour opus. What's now completed is Tape #1, featuring a brief history of shared living, insights about what does and doesn't work, and profiles of seven contemporary communities. My community networking cohorts have convinced me to defer editing Tape #2 and instead get out on the road to promote both the first video and the communities movement in general. This summer and fall I'm doing a whirlwind promotional tour west of the Rockies, and won't start editing the second tape until mid-winter. Next spring and summer I'll get back on the road, covering the country east of the Rockies in another promotional marathon.

Tape #1 overran its announced release date many times, resulting in much frustration to people who pre-ordered the tape, and much frustration and embarrassment to me. Fortunately people believed in the project: I had only 12 can-

(continued on p. 79)



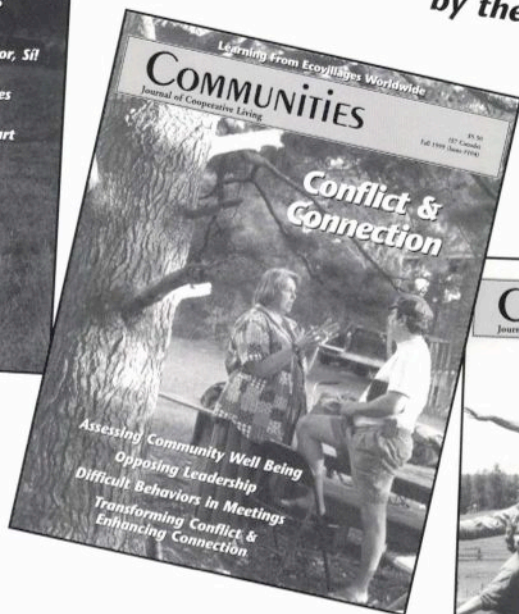
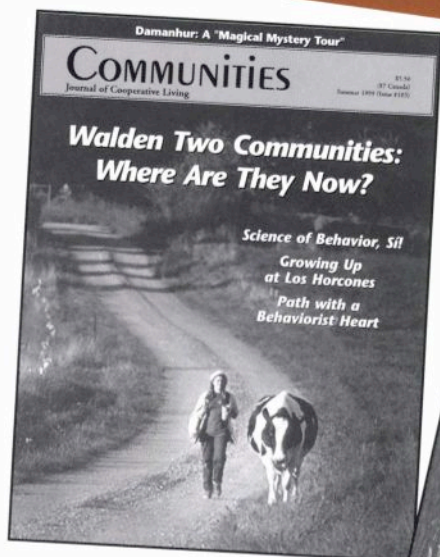
BY GEOPH KOZENY

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willing to do it
again?
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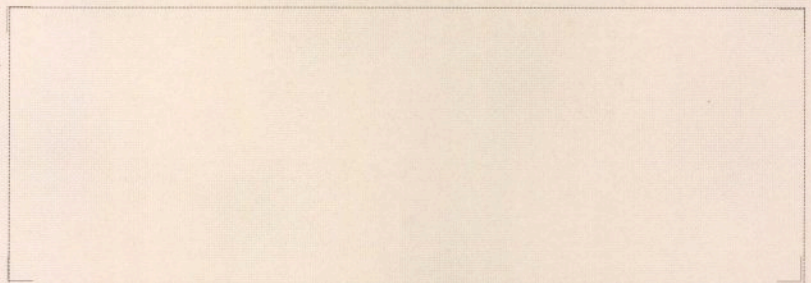
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