How to Really Support Ecovillages (Not Just Hugs and Theories)

COMMUNITIES

Journal of Cooperative Living

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Summer 2004 (Issue #123)

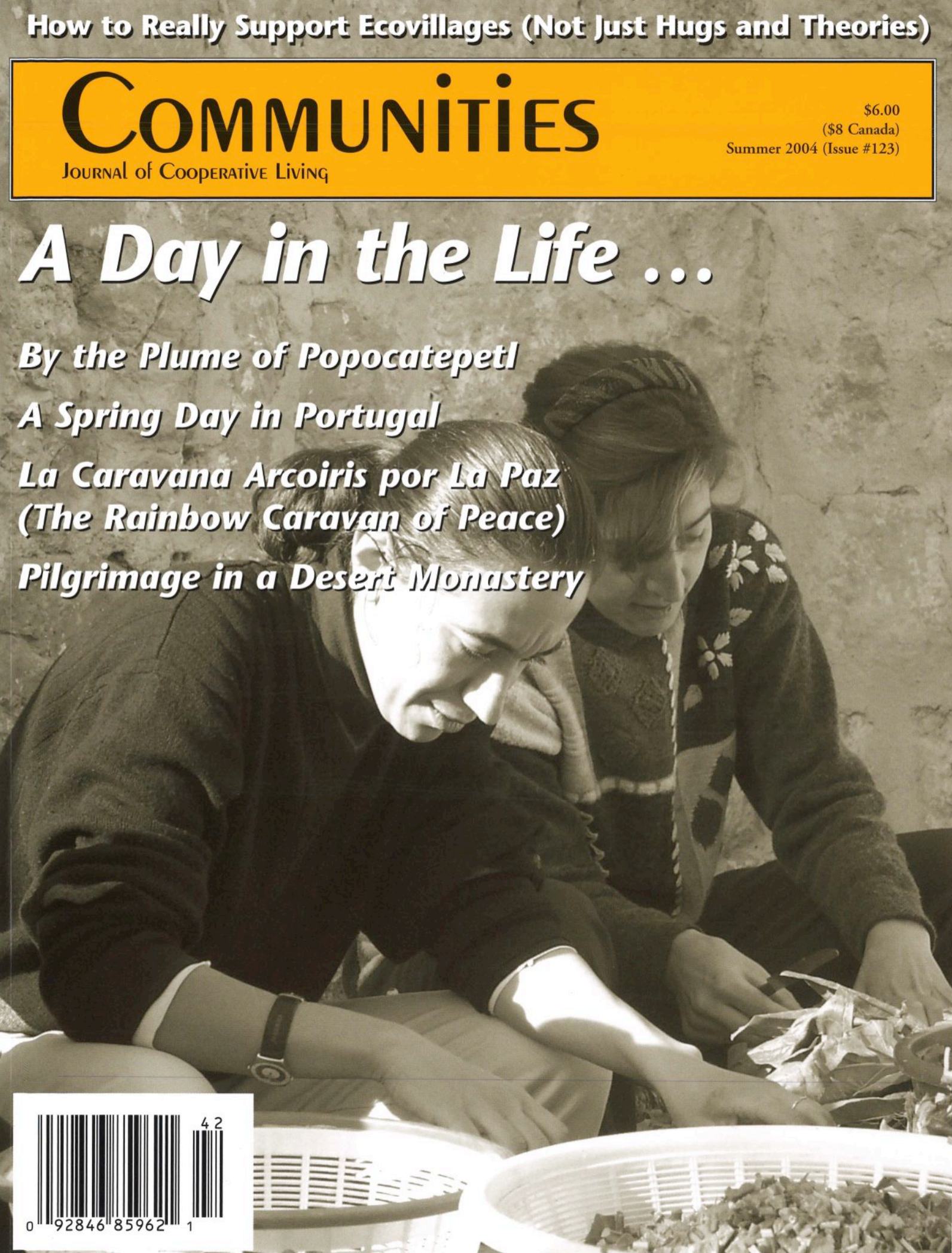
A Day in the Life ...

By the Plume of Popocatepetl

A Spring Day in Portugal

La Caravana Arcoiris por La Paz (The Rainbow Caravan of Peace)

Pilgrimage in a Desert Monastery



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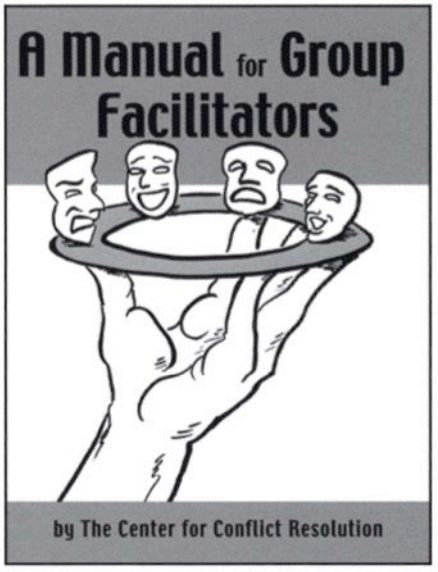

by Center for Conflict Resolution
Reprinted with a new cover, December 2003
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The staff of the Center for Conflict Resolution put their experience in working with groups into *A Manual for Group Facilitators*. This is an informal outline detailing useful and effective techniques to help groups work well. More than a simple "how to," the manual contains a discussion of the values, dynamics, and common sense behind group process that have been verified by our own experience. It includes information on such topics as:

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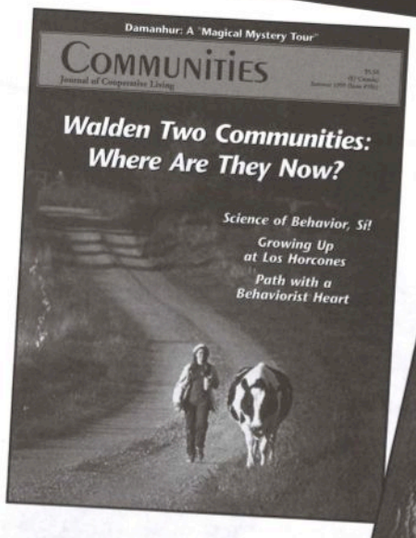

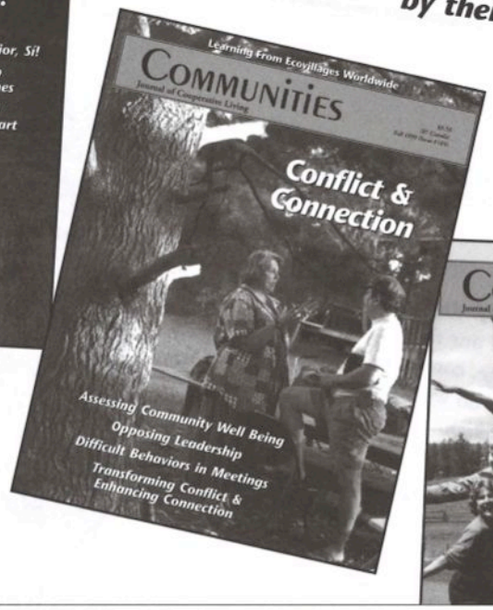

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COMMUNITIES

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FRONT COVER

At Deir Mar Musa in the mountains of Syria.

Photo: Dianne Brause

BACK COVER

Cacique Neron *(left,* chief of the Panare Nation in Venezuela, and Jose Huidobro of the nomadic La Caravana Arcoiris por La Paz.

Photo: Subcoyote Alberto Ruz

FOCUS

A Day in the Life ...

#123
Summer 2004

FEATURE

COLUMNS

DEPARTMENTS

COMMUNITIES
Journal of Cooperative Living

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Wordsworth (*Meadowdance*)

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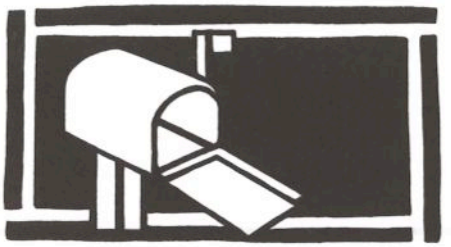
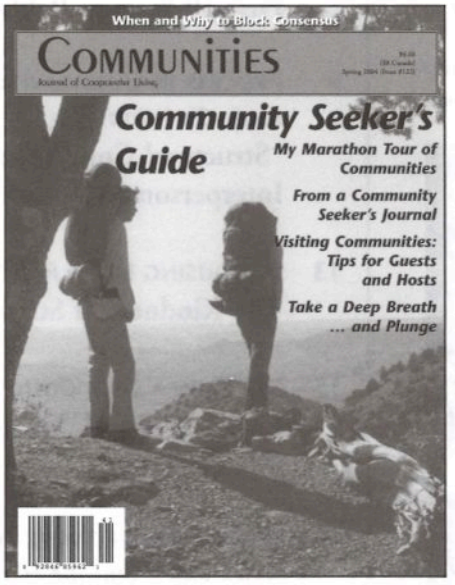
LETTERS



Send letters to Communities *magazine, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711, or communities@ic.org. Your letter may be edited or shortened. Thank you!*



Kudos

Dear *Communities*:

Thanks so much for your incredible magazine. I have worked for a few years for a small weekly publication (*Comic News)*, and have good reason to appreciate *Communities* magazine on many levels. The articles are well researched, well written, and often evoke a myriad of emotions in me. The layout is easy to read, uses liberal placement of photos and drawings, and has a professional cohesiveness. The message of community is furthered by seeing the many communities and businesses that support your magazine through their advertising. And most importantly, *Communities* is a conversation about humans loving each other and their environs. Can you name a more profound conversation?

Rees Maxwell
Eugene, Oregon

(And P.S.: Diana, your book is godsend. What a personal achievement; what a gift to the world!)

Available from the FIC's Community Bookshelf mailorder service: store.ic.org.

Are Hierarchical Communities Really "Intentional Communities"?

Dear *Communities*:

I have recently been involved in an intense debate within a newly forming intentional community as to whether a group with an authoritarian form of government could even be called an intentional community. It seems to me that this form of government violates the principle of intent—and thus the basic definition of intentional community. I was very disconcerted to read the following passage on your Fellowship for Intentional Community website:

The most common form of governance is democratic, with decisions made by some form of consensus or voting. Of the hundreds of communities we have information about, 64 percent are democratic, 9 percent have a hierarchical or authoritarian structure, 11 percent are a combination of democratic and hierarchical, and 16 percent don't specify. Many communities which formerly followed one leader or a small group of leaders have changed in recent years to a more democratic form of governance.

This statement seems to support the claims of authoritarian groups to the title "intentional community," despite the fact that they seem to violate the principle of intent. How can anything be intentional that is coerced?

I also note that almost certainly the actions of some of these authoritarian groups are very detrimental to the acceptance of the movement as a whole by a mainstream that has been known to turn hostile mercurially.

But most importantly, the inclusion of these groups blurs the definition of intentional community so far that it almost negates the existence of a discrete movement. This does a great disservice

to new people learning about and experimenting with intentional community. They are attracted to it primarily by the actions and reputations of the vast majority who act democratically (or by consensus), but the blurring of definition gives some of them the impression that they can achieve similar things without taking into account the will of members.

In light of the definitional discord, the unreasonable burden, and the negative effect on new community development, I am surprised to see that you keep that authoritarian 9 percent on your roster, that you don't make persistent inquiries as to the makeup of the mystery 16 percent, and don't take an activist role in encouraging the 11 percent of hybrids to adopt reforms to enact more enlightened forms of government.

Or are some of these things being done?

This is very relevant to me because I am being forced out of an emerging group—the first one in town, so it's going to be representing intentional community here—because of my insistence on a democratic form of government.

John
(No last name or location given)

Longtime FIC activist and "Peripatetic Communitarian" columnist Geoph Kozeny responds:

John, I believe you are mistaken to assign the definition of an intentional community as excluding any with an authoritarian form of government because this form of government "violates the principle of intent—and thus the basic definition of intentional community." The communities movement is a very broad and inclusive collection of social experiments and no one person or group owns the concept. I think that your definition applies much more aptly (and accurately) to communities which specifically consider themselves "egalitarian intentional communities" or "democratic intentional communities." The working definition used by the Fellowship for Intentional Community (which our committee labored over on and off for at least a year) appears in each issue in the shaded box on page 7.

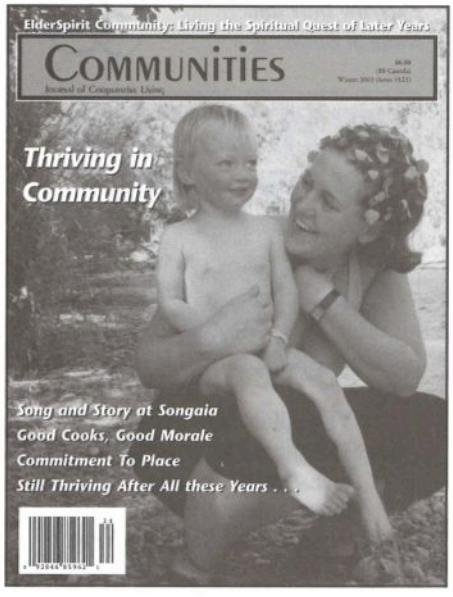
"A group of people who have chosen to live or work together in pursuit of a common ideal or vision. Most, though not all, share land or housing. Intentional communities come in all shapes and sizes, and display an amazing diversity in their common values, which may be social, economic, spiritual, political, 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 experience with others."

This very generalized definition does not specify tightly defined values or practices. And note that, within this definition, it is perfectly acceptable for a group to come together with the intention to have a wise and inspiring charismatic leader or some other form of nonegalitarian structure. Naturally many community activists aspire to invite them to consider more democratic forms, yet the idea is likely doomed to failure unless all the players align with the vision and get behind it with their full enthusiasm and participation. Otherwise it's trying to force someone, against their will, to live a certain way.

I am sorry to hear that you've had a bad experience and felt coerced by whatever power structure emerged within your group. Personally, I feel that, in general, egalitarian groups are working towards a democratic structure that is "more enlightened" than most hierarchical ones. However, most intentional communities are models of how things could be, and I have yet to find a group that has manifested 100 percent of its stated visions and values.

In having visited over 350 groups that call themselves "intentional communities," I've found some hierarchic groups that seem more humane and empowering than some so-called egalitarian groups that got caught up in unexpected power struggles based on the egos and bad habits that the members brought along (undoubtedly an unfortunate residue from their upbringing). In your case, it sounds like the group didn't start out being clear in its intention, and when you pushed for democracy, you (or the others) discovered that everyone's intentions weren't aligned. The good news is that you got out early—before you invested a lot of time and resources in a group that didn't fit your values very well.

Hopefully the sour experience has helped you get clearer about what you want in a community, and in your next attempt you'll be able to come at it from the start with a much clearer and persuasive foundation.



Sustainable Logging? (Winter '03 issue)

Dear *Communities*:

I enjoyed the article on the Earthaven Forestry Co-op in the Winter 2003 issue. However, I think I see a glaring error in one of the basic concepts of sustainable forestry as described in the article.

The article says the forestry co-op philosophy is "taking the smallest and least healthy trees first and leaving the best genetic stock to propagate." The article says this is superior to what logging companies do, "taking the biggest and therefore genetically healthiest trees."

There is no reason to think that a larger tree is genetically healthier than a smaller tree. The larger tree could be larger because it is older, or because it grew in a spot that got more sun or more water or had better soil. These factors are much more likely to explain larger size than any genetic superiority.

I have visited Earthaven several times. I attended a Forestry Co-op workshop where I first heard the idea of leaving the larger trees because they were genetically superior, but it didn't make any sense to me. I asked several Forestry Co-op members about it just before I left, and none of them were able to explain why this concept is not an error.

I am not a professional biologist, just a guy who majored in biology 30 years ago and has maintained an amateur's interest in the field. If I am mistaken, I would appreciate it if someone could explain my error to me.

Thanks for the great work you are doing.

Tom Carr

Thanks, Tom. Shawn Swartz, Forestry Division Manager of Earthaven Forestry Cooperative, responds:

It is true that microclimatic variations and other site-specific situations will result in significant variations in timber quality and size coming from the same genetic stock. In other words, seeds containing the same genetic material will be dispersed across the landscape and will result in varying quality according to the conditions of the ground where they land. As a result, high-grading, while pulling out the highest quality of timber from a site, is not necessarily pulling out the best genetics from a site. However, these are mitigating factors that apply to single generations. Successive high-grades over many generations will indeed become a more dominant selective force than microclimatic variations. It is a simple matter of genetics and statistics. This point isn't in dispute; what is disputed is how many generations it would take to see such results.

That being said, the real reason to low-grade is not, in my mind, an ecological one but rather an economic one. Once a site has been low-graded, the growth of the remaining stand increases exponentially. Through low-grading, you release your highest value timber to maximize growth and value. High-grading a site is getting a large cash value now but losing a much larger value from the future. It is like selling stock you have seen doubled in value since you owned it, only to find that had you waited another 15 years it would have increased its value by 20 times.

The point here is that low-grading combined with single-tree and small group selection of mature specimens in the stand not only results in a stand that truly functions and looks like a healthy forest, but also increases its biological value as well as its economic value.

See Part II of this article on page 23.

About Photos

Dear Editor:

I've enjoyed reading *Communities* for years now, but have never seen a photo of you, Diana. What do you look like?

Scott Thomas
Lama Foundation
Taos, New Mexico

That's me on the back cover of the Spring '04 issue, back row.

Dear *Communities*:

I love your magazine, but would like to see you start putting names and locations with photos.

B.L. Robertson
Pigeon City
Fort Hancock, Texas

Dear *Communities*:

Photographer Daniel Bianchetta should have been given photo credit for the photos accompanying my article on Esalen, "Rugged Cliffs, Redwoods, and Mineral Baths." *(Fall '03 issue).* Thanks.

Rick Cannon
Esalen Institute
Big Sur, California

Our apologies, Rick and Daniel.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Good Field, No Hit:

The Scouting Report After Our First 10 Years as Publisher

As is our habit, we are devoting this space in our summer issue to the annual scouting report on the magazine's financial prospects, based on our 2003 performance. The four-word synopsis: good field, no hit.

We are reporting an operating loss for the eighth time in the last ten years—the length of time during which FIC has been fielding a team for the whole season (translation: we've just completed our first decade of cranking out four issues/year). Conclusion: it's hard to win the pennant when your Expenses consistently outscore your Income.

While we've established a reputation as a slick fielding publication (as opposed to a slick publication in the field), not afraid to handle the bad hop grounders (tackle the tough stories), you can't expect to make it to the majors (high circulation and mainstream notoriety) when you're hitting safely only two times in 10.

Our most notable falloff in income production last season was in advertising revenues. One of our regular ad pitchers—ace Diana Christian—was effectively on the injured reserve list much of 2003 (actually it was more like the distracted and overwhelmed list as she was swamped promoting her new book *Creating a Life Together*, and building & moving into her new home at Earthaven). The good news is that deferred income from last year's ads will wipe out two-thirds of this year's deficit and we expect to have Diana hale and hearty for the whole season in 2004.

Roster Changes

Throughout the years, we've fielded a team that's a careful blend of veterans and rookies, and 2003 was a typical season, with a few new faces cracking the lineup. Playing catcher and batting second, John Morris replaced Tristan Masat as layout specialist. Both are equally adept at laying down a good font or a good bunt, and moving the stories up a base whenever they're at the plate. Long-time database clean-up hitter,

COMING IN FUTURE ISSUES

Spiritual Communities, Fall '04.

What are spiritual communities and why do people start them? What do people hope to get out of them? Are spiritual communities easier to live in, or more difficult, than secular communities? What are the unique joys and challenges of spiritual communities? What makes a community "spiritual"?

To send article ideas, communities@ic.org. 828-669-9702.

Student Co-ops, Win. '04.

• Life after student co-ops: Are co-opers moving on to other forms of community? Moving to the suburbs? Keeping ties with their student co-ops? How else do co-ops influence their members later in life? • Current debates in the student co-op movement: student vs. nonstudents, diversity, "community co-ops." • Why a student co-op handbook is so necessary for this type of community; tips for writing one.

Julie Pennington, Editor. julieepennington@hotmail.com.

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 interfere 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 the Writer's Guidelines: ***Communities, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711, 828-669-9702; communities@ic.org.***

Advertising Policy

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

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

Communities Advertising, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711, 828-669-9702; communities@ic.org.

What is an "Intentional Community"?

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

COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE 2003 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Income	
Subscriptions	$26,174
Single Issues	1,357
Back Issues	2,631
Distributor Sales	19,697
Advertising	8,125*
Royalties	394
Donations	28
Total Income	$58,406
Expenses	
Printing	22,316
Office Overhead	5,491
Labor	23,140
Office Expenses	2,667
Promotion	100
Fulfillment	13,427
Bad Debt	0
Total Expenses	$67,141
Net Profit (Loss)	($8,734)

* there is $5,817 in accounts receivable for ads placed in 2003

Velma Kahn, hung 'em up this past February, and understudy McCune Porter will be handling those chores from now on. We expect steady production from him.

Aware of our income shortcomings overall, we're pleased to report that we've been spending more time in the practice cage, batting about marketing ideas. In consequence, prospects for improving the team in 2004 look good.

We're putting together a multi-play deal right now which will include an initiative for better cover photos, a continuous display ad in *Utne Reader*, fan promotions for both the cohousing and student co-op markets, tighter management of distributor accounts, and increased ticket prices for advertisers. We think this package will add up to a bump in both circulation and net revenues, and we've already lined up an investor willing to bankroll us.

Web Gems

We're also aiming to renovate the website, providing better sight lines to the current issue and what you can get from selected back issues—all of which are available either in print or as photocopies. Come visit our stadium at fic.ic.org/cmag.

Say what you want about our hitting a profit. If you're looking for a ball club that can smoothly field a question about cooperative living, just send one our way.

Laird Schaub

Laird Schaub is Executive Secretary of the Fellowship for Intentional Community (publisher of this magazine), and a cofounder of Sandhill Farm community in Missouri.

"Structural Conflict" and Interpersonal Conflict

Conflict in community is to be expected. However, we can reduce some of the worst of it by making sure certain structures are in place from the beginning. For example, after years of interviewing founders of failed communities and hearing their stories of community break-up, heartbreak, and even lawsuits, I began to see a pattern in their conflict. Most new-community failures seemed to result from what I call "structural" conflict—problems that arise when founders didn't explicitly put certain processes in place or make certain important decisions at the outset, creating one or more omissions in their organizational structure. These built-in structural problems seem to function like time bombs. Several weeks, months, or even years into the community-forming process, the group erupts in major conflict that could have been largely prevented if they had handled these issues early on. Naturally, this triggers a great deal of interpersonal conflict at the same time (*see below*), making the initial structural conflict much worse.

While interpersonal conflict is normal and expected, I believe that much of the structural conflict in failed communities could have been prevented, or at least greatly reduced, if the founders had paid attention to at least six crucial elements in the beginning. Each of these issues, if *not* addressed in the early stages of a forming community, can generate structural conflict "time bombs" later on.

Six Antidotes for "Structural Conflict"

1. Identify your community vision and create vision documents. There's likely no more devastating source of structural conflict in community than various members having different visions for why you're there in the first place. This will erupt into all kinds of arguments about what seem like ordinary topics—how much money you spend on a particular project, or how much or how often you work on a task. It's really a matter of underlying differences (perhaps not always conscious) about what the community is *for.* All your community members need to be on the same

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Excerpted with permission from New Society Publishers, from Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages and Intentional Communities *(2003) by Diana Leafe Christian. www.newsociety.com; 899-567-6772.*
Diana is editor of Communities *magazine.*

page from the beginning, and must know what your shared community vision is, and know you all support it. Your shared vision should be thoroughly discussed, agreed upon, and written down at the get-go.

2. Choose a fair, participatory decision-making process appropriate for your group. And if you choose consensus, get trained in it. Unless you're forming a spiritual, religious or therapeutic community with a spiritual leader who'll make all decisions—and you all agree to this in advance—your members will resent any power imbalances. Resentment over power issues can become an enormous source of conflict in community. Decision making is the most obvious point of power, and the more it is shared and participatory, the less this particular kind of conflict will come up. This means everyone in the group has a voice in decisions that will affect their lives in community, with a decision-making method that is fair and even-handed. How it works—the procedure for your decision-making method—has to be well-understood by everyone in the group.

A more specific source of community conflict is using the consensus decision-making process without thoroughly understanding it. What often passes for consensus in many groups is merely "pseudo-consensus"—which exhausts people, drains their energy and good will, generates a great deal of resentment all by itself, and causes people to despise the process they call "consensus." So if your group plans to use consensus, you'll prevent a great deal of structural conflict by getting trained in it first.

Habitual "old paradigm" or "dominator culture" behaviors and attitudes still occur in community—until we heal ourselves of them.

3. Make clear agreements—in writing (including choosing an appropriate legal entity for owning land together). People remember things differently. Your agreements—from the most mundane to the most legally and financially significant—should absolutely be written down. Then, if later you all remember things differently, you can always look it up. The alternative—"we're right but you folks are wrong (and maybe you're even trying to cheat us)"—can break up a community faster than you can say, "You'll be hearing from our lawyer."

4. Learn good communication and group process skills; make clear communication and resolving conflicts a priority. Being able to talk with one another about sensitive subjects and still feel connected is my definition of good communication skills. This includes methods for holding each other accountable for agreements. I consider it a set-up for structural conflict down the road if you *don't* address communication and group process skills and conflict resolution methods early on. Then, you'll have procedures in place later on when things get tense—like practicing fire drill procedures now, when there's no fire.

5. In choosing cofounders and new members, select for emotional maturity. An often-overwhelming source of conflict is allowing someone to enter your forming community group—or later, enter your community—who is not aligned to your vision and values, or someone whose emotional pain—surfacing weeks or months later as disruptive attitudes or behaviors—can end up costing you untold hours of meeting time and draining your group of energy and well-being. A well-designed process for selecting and integrating new people into your group, and screening out those who don't resonate with your values, vision, or behavioral norms, can save repeated rounds of stress and conflict in the weeks and years ahead.

6. Learn the head skills and heart skills you need to know. Forming a new community is like simultaneously trying to start a new business and begin a marriage—and is every bit as serious as doing either. It requires many of the same planning and financial skills as launching a successful business enterprise, and the same capacities for trust, good will, and honest, kind interpersonal communica-

tion as marrying your sweetheart. Founders of successful new communities seem to know this. Yet those that get mired in severe problems have usually leapt in without a clue. These well-meaning folks didn't *know* what they didn't know. So the sixth major way to reduce structural conflict is to take the time to learn what you'll need to know.

Many well-established North American communities never included most or all of these six structural ingredients at their origin, and don't see why they should have. "Hey, we're here now, aren't we?" In the '60s, '70s, or early '80s, people usually just bought land and moved on. Some of these communities are still with us today, and proud of it. Nonetheless, for communities starting up today, I recommend addressing all six of these issues early on.

Interpersonal Conflict: Seven "Mainstream" Behaviors We Wish We'd Left Behind

Of course even communities who put most or all of the above structures in place at the outset still experience interpersonal conflict—plain ol' anger and ill will between people. Habitual "old paradigm" or "dominator culture" behaviors and attitudes still occur in community—until we heal ourselves of them. Here's how seven destructive old-paradigm behaviors are often expressed when transplanted to intentional community.

1. **"Founder's Syndrome," I.** Unconsciously assigning parent and authority figure roles to founders and acting out adolescent rebellion and self-identity issues by resenting, undermining, and/or challenging the community founders' wisdom or experience, and/or the validity or relevance of the community's values, vision, or purpose.

2. **"Founder's Syndrome," II.** Founders' clinging to an unconscious self-image as parents or authority figures; assuming a wiser, superior, or more privileged status than other members; and resenting, undermining, or challenging any efforts to question the founders' authority or otherwise offer the community innovation, new perspectives, or change.

3. **Visionary Abuse.** When dynamic, energetic, visionary founders, burning with a spiritual, environmental, or social-justice mission, work grueling hours in primitive, cramped, uncomfortable, or health-risking conditions, and happily expect all members, interns, and apprentices to do the same. Related to *eco-macho*, *sustainabler than thou*, and *campground macho* ("We all lived in tents for three years with no heat, electricity, or running water, and you should, too"), and *community macho* ("Community is not for wimps: *we* can take it, can you?").

4. **Violating community agreements.** The resentment and erosion of community trust that occurs when a few people don't follow community agreements and policies consistently, while others follow and uphold them.

5. **Letting people get away with violating community agreements.** The further resentment, erosion of trust, and breakdown of community well-being that results when a member isn't called on disregarding agreements and so continues disregarding them. By default, the person becomes a kind of community aristocrat with the privilege of living outside the normal rules. Often perpetuated by #6, *interpersonal power imbalances,* below.

6. Interpersonal (as compared to "structural") Power Imbalances. Conflict, resentment, and the breakdown of trust in community when some members have more power than others because of behaviors that others are reluctant to or afraid to deal with. These can include:

Intimidation Power. Habitually emanating anger, suppressed rage, "panic-anger," and burning intensity; speaking sharply or harshly, bossing people around, criticizing people frequently, and sometimes name-calling and shouting people down. The person with intimidation power wields power over other members because it's difficult to muster the courage or energy to disagree with their opinions or ask them to change their demeanor. People may have tried many times to ask for change and have given up, or the person is now less aggressive as a result of past feedback and others are too worn down to ask for further change, or the person also offers such beneficial qualities that others resign themselves to having a mixed blessing and let it go.

Undermining Power. Bad-mouthing, discrediting, and undermining another person's behavior and/or character to other community members; assuming the worst about the targeted person's motives and then criticizing those motives to others ("He's just trying to rip us off," "She's just trying to control everyone"); not distinguishing between one's own fears about the person and objective reality; not talking about these concerns with the targeted person or setting up a third-party mediation. The undermining person wields power over others in the community because s/he operates behind people's backs, and others are reluctant to voice concerns about this behavior for fear they'll be targeted next.

Hypersensitive power. Reacting to even mildly-worded feedback or requests for change as though it were an intolerable personal attack; becoming visibly upset when others disagree with one's views or beliefs; responding with such defensiveness and self-justification that people give up: "You can't tell Reginald *anything.*" This wields power over other community members because no one has the energy or patience to deal with this person's high level of fear and drama. People with hypersensitive power, like those with intimidating or undermining power, maintain their power over others because they rarely receive feedback.

7. Assuming the worst about other people's motives. Resenting and criticizing someone not only for what they may have done, but also for the assumed "worst-case scenario" motives for their actions ("He's trying to cheat us," "She just wants to bully everyone," "He's always trying to show off") and using these assumptions as proof of the person's malfeasance or character flaws without (1) first, realizing these are assumptions, not facts, and (2) second, asking the person if the assumptions are true.

We can reduce "structural conflict" through our group agreements early on. We can reduce interpersonal conflict not only with group process and conflict resolution skills, but also by finding ways to heal our own individual destructive patterns. If we want to live more sustainably and harmoniously in community than we did in mainstream culture, we've got to change ourselves too! Ω

The Kindness of Strangers . . .

Last December, on the 10th, I missed work on account of snow. It started early in the morning and didn't stop until about 4 o'clock. It was that kind of killer, wet-glop snow, the kind that bends and breaks trees. We lost power about 9 am and it didn't come back on 'til dinnertime.

The area around Sharingwood Cohousing community in coastal Washington has a mixture of upscale houses with young professional types, retired folks, and some small, low-income houses. As the snow got thicker, our house, now without power, got colder, so my family and I went to the house of another community member who has a wood stove. As we were drinking coffee and shooting the breeze, an elderly neighbor from down the road came looking for a chainsaw.

"A tree fell on my neighbor Joanie's house," he said. This gent was about 90 and looked like he weighed no more than 100 pounds, so I doubted that he could even start a chainsaw, much less wield it effectively. Bob, a community member who is a contractor, and his son Dave and I put on our coats, grabbed the chainsaw and went to check out the situation.

When we arrived, a circle of neighborhood kids was admiring the destruction of Joanie's house. The top one-third of a Douglas fir tree had snapped and literally speared itself into the roof. It had pierced the ceiling sheet rock and hung like an upside-down Christmas tree at the edge of her living room. Plaster and tree debris were everywhere.

We fired up the saw and made short work of the tree, but a two-foot hole remained in her roof. Bob reassured her that he would be able to fix it so the snow, now falling heavily, wouldn't get in and do further damage. Joanie, a working single mom, was obviously upset, especially by the cost of fixing the roof at Christmastime. Again Bob reassured her that we could take care of the problem and not to worry. As we walked back home Bob began telling us where around our community we could find the tools, materials, and such to fix the roof.

We spent about 20 minutes loading Dave's truck up with all the spare roofing materials we could find. During this process we ended up recruiting several more community members. We were able, through donations from neighbors, to put together a pallet of shingles that

Rob Sandelin, a frequent contributor to Communities *magazine and a consensus facilitation and process consultant, is an environmental educator. He lives with his family in Sharingwood Cohousing in Snohomish, Washington.*

were all the same color. We arrived, tools and materials in hand, and began to tear off about ten courses of shingles from Joanie's roof. As we removed the roof boards under the shingles it became apparent that there was no insulation at all in her ceiling. A couple of folks took the truck back to the shop and returned with three rolls of R-36 insulation. A couple conversations with other neighbors resulted in enough insulation to fill her whole attic space above the living room and most of the kitchen. By this time there were more than a dozen neighbors working on Joanie's house; about half were from our community and the other half from up and down the road. A crew was up on the roof tearing off the old shingles and putting on the new ones. Dave was repairing the sheet rock in the living room. Tina was cutting the tree up into firewood-sized chunks and stacking in under the eves while Marsha led some of the neighbors raking the branches and needles into a burn pile. As I sat back from the roof project and surveyed the activity, I marveled at how this group of mostly strangers, led by these "community people," had coalesced into a cohesive force less than 20 minutes after the tree had fallen.

We finished up in about three hours, and most of the neighbors drifted off into the snow, while a few of us took up Joanie on her offer of coffee. As we stood around the wood stove, dripping wet from being out in the wet snow, Joanie came back from a bedroom with four $10 bills and offered them to Bob. She mumbled something about paying back as she got the money. We all knew that $40 was no doubt her Christmas money. As the rest of us awkwardly put our hands in our pockets, Bob rescued us from our embarrassment. He reached down into a box of Joanie's Christmas ornaments and ribbons laying on the kitchen table, pulled out a stick-on bow, pealed off the backing, and reached up and stuck it on the newly repaired ceiling. "Merry Christmas," he said. "Merry Christmas!" the five of us echoed, leaving Joanie holding her ten dollar bills, crying.

When we arrived, a circle of neighborhood kids was admiring the destruction of Joanie's house.

The next morning, there was a knock on my door. There stood Joanie holding a basket full of warm, freshly made breakfast scones. For the next 14 days up to Christmas, each morning Bob, Dave, the other roof-crew neighbors and I enjoyed freshly baked scones, muffins, or coffee cake with our morning coffee. At regular intervals since then Joanie and her children have delivered flowers in the spring, fresh berry pie in the summer, and on the anniversary of the great tree calamity, she gave us two of the most beautiful handmade Christmas ornaments I have ever had the pleasure of putting on my tree.

Community is not always intentional; sometimes it happens by accident. Ω

Living "Lord of the Flies" at Strange Farm

This disturbing account illustrates some of the worst of the excesses of idealistic communes of the early '70s. "It's based on unreliable memories from childhood," says the author, "and so may be as much a work of fiction as autobiography." —Ed.

My mother and I arrived at Strange Farm, an anarchist collective in Virginia, in the summer of 1973. I was six.

The community was founded in reaction to nearby Twin Oaks, which was based on the principles set out by behavioral psychologist B. F. Skinner in his novel *Walden II*. Skinner believed that if one could create an ideal external environment, one could bring up happy, well-balanced children. He even built a "Skinner Box"—a kind of sensory-stimulating "ideal environment" in a crib—for his own small daughter. In 1973 the earnest Twin Oakers, wanting to raise happy children, began to build Skinner boxes for them. Their conflict over whether children who hadn't been raised in Skinner boxes from an early age should be allowed to live there led a small group of parents to leave Twin Oaks and create the boxless Strange Farm.

Strange Farm's property had been a small farmstead in decline since the Civil War. A dusty drive lined by chestnut trees—their tired leaves already brown in the summer heat—lead to a large white plantation-style house with columns at the front and a large verandah across the back. The property included a few old barns, long-abandoned fields, scrawny chickens and scruffy sheep, overgrown woods of birches and sycamores, and a muddy man-made lake. Fireflies danced around the house at night, relentless mosquitoes made their way inside through broken windows, and bullfrogs sang by the lake. We were ten adults and six children, all boys. I was the second youngest child.

Strange Farm had already established three rules: (1) all members must change their last name to Strange, (2) no monogamous relationships were permitted, and (3) no parenting children was permitted. The day my mom and I arrived the group met on the verandah and decided additional rules. The various tasks of the community—cooking, cleaning, building maintenance, taking care of the animals, maintaining the cars—would be rotated every week by members picking tasks out of a hat. All the doors in the house would be removed and burned in the back yard so there'd be no secrets. All clothes would be placed in a communal room for anyone to choose. There would be no private property or personal possessions. No one had a room of their own. Where you slept each night was determined by whom you slept with that night. You couldn't sleep

Sean Gaston, 30, now lives in Oxford, England. Parts of this story first appeared in Daniel Greenberg's interview with Sean, "Chaos & Community: Memories of a 'Wild Child'" in our Fall 1994 issue.

with the same person two nights in a row. I found a small cupboard under the stairs full of empty fruit boxes where I could crawl in each night.

We children were to take care of ourselves. No trips were to be laid on us by adults. We were to clothe, wash, feed and educate ourselves. Nature, that old fantasy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, was to be our teacher. We had no choice but to be free.

There were problems from the start. After a disastrous month of bad meals, broken-down cars, and dying animals, the group stopped working by random weekly rota. Work areas were chosen each month and ratified by a majority vote. As the weather got colder, a front door and back door were installed. No monogamous relationships and no parenting remained.

Drew started up the tractor and drove it towards me on my bike, with me pedaling as fast as I could to escape.

For the first two months of that hot summer I wore no clothes at all. I spent my days playing around the lake, covered in mud and baking in the hot summer sun or running through the woods and sleeping on the verandah. With the first touch of frost, I found a man's shirt that covered most of my body, and a red towel I wore around my shoulders, both to keep warm and for my secret ambition to be like Superman and fly away. Keeping my feet warm was a problem, but eventually I acquired a pair of adult boots; wearing them with three pairs of socks, I could just about walk around. I learnt how to make French toast for myself and ate almost nothing else that year. I was always hungry. I had no toothbrush, no comb, no shampoo, no underwear, no books, no television, no school. I soon had lice.

Within a few weeks of realizing we were completely on our own, we boys left Rousseau and moved on to Golding's *Lord*

of the Flies. Drew, who was 10, became the tribal chief and local deity. Finster, who was five, and I, who was six, first became the slaves, and then the hunted. Most of the battles were about ownership of the few toys we had.

One day, when a group of adults and children visited Twin Oaks, I was given a yellow bike. Back at Strange Farm I tried to hide the bike under some straw behind the barn. But the next day, I couldn't resist pulling it out and taking a ride. Drew started up the farm tractor and drove it towards me on my bike, with me pedaling as fast as I could to escape. He chased me into the fields and I only just managed to jump off as he gleefully crushed the bike with the tractor.

Still somehow believing in the authority of the adults, I ran crying to the house hoping for justice. I walked into a room full of entwined naked bodies. I stood and waited, not knowing what else to do. Finally, one of the adults, Luke, rose from his amours and listened to my story of near death and the loss of my precious yellow bike. Without saying a word, he gave me two joints and some matches and told me to go and smoke these with Drew. "Everything will be OK," he said.

We boys always looked forward to visiting Twin Oaks. We would walk by the kids inside their Skinner Boxes and feel almost sorry for them. But at least each kid had his own box. Our favorite activity was to pile as many children as possible into a large hammock slung between two trees in the center of the courtyard. Not far was a shed full of records we could play, with four speakers hanging in the surrounding trees. We'd swing back and forth as high as we could and sing along with the Beatles, "Hey Bungalow Bill, Who Did You Kill? … Bungalow Bill." The ropes holding the hammock up would often break and we'd all tumble to the ground. While someone put the hammock back up I'd run to the shed and turn the record over to my favorite song, "Why Don't We Do It in The Road?" And we would start swinging again on the hammock, higher and higher, harder and harder, until we came crashing down to earth again.

One visit to Twin Oaks in late autumn really stands out. Swinging on the big hammock, we leapt over and over again into the thick carpet of gold and scarlet leaves beneath us, listening to a Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young song over the loudspeakers. We then joined some of the Twin Oaks men—as we often did, searching for scraps of something like fatherly attention—and rode in the back of a pickup truck into one of the cow pastures. We jumped out of the truck and began to walk

"Everything will be OK," he said.

around the field, stepping over the cow pies. Suddenly one of the men took out a gun and shot one of the cows in the head. We all helped push the dead cow onto the back of the truck and spent the rest of the day butchering the cow into smaller and smaller parts, until by evening we were grinding the meat into hamburger.

Another time that stands out was a few days later, when I decided to stay at home when most of the collective went to Twin Oaks. I was sitting on the verandah whittling a dead branch with a large kitchen knife when I heard Penny, one of the women, screaming in the barn. I ran to the barn and found her crying and covered in blood, trying to push the white and brown organs of a sheep back into its body. The sheep had given birth and a dead lamb lay on the straw. Penny shouted at me to help. I just stood there stunned, until she got up and ran to the house. She came back with a gun and a box of bullets. Her hands were so sticky with blood that she was having trouble putting the bullets in and gave me the gun. I slid in all six bullets. Penny's hands were shaking and she asked me to hold the gun with her. We aimed at the head of the sheep and fired.

Sometimes it seemed like things were getting better. My mother had just learned to drive and was appointed to run the garage for a month. Since most of the cars

were not running, in a few days Luke stepped in to help her. They spent most of that month together. I liked Luke. He played guitar on the back porch in the evenings and gave us boys hash brownies when we were sad or scared. One day, he and my mother drove into the farm in an old yellow school bus that they'd bought for almost nothing. The bus didn't really work, but it became another room, and in the spring I began to sleep on the seats at the back of the bus. Later that spring, Luke went to visit his brother in New Orleans, where he was stabbed to death in a bar.

The rules of the collective didn't hold up. Sexual jealousy and private property threatened the prohibitions against monogamy and personal ownership. There were ever more drugs. Perhaps it was hash, perhaps it was LSD, but one day in the early summer of 1974 as I was walking down the chestnut-lined drive to the main road, the trees became orange and the sky a light purple. It took about three days to get to the road and then I flew across the valley, gliding through the air just above the trees like Superman.

One day we kids staged a revolt against our absolute freedom. It was a hot afternoon, so hot that even the muddy lake seemed to boil in the sun. The adults were away somewhere. Drew led us into the cool basement of the house and we carried outside, with infinite care, the hundreds of cardboard trays of eggs. Standing in a row, we threw every egg, every last egg, against the side of the house, until the white wood was yellow with yoke. We threw about three thousand eggs. When the adults returned, they were stunned; they couldn't understand such destruction.

A few days later, as my mother was walking through the woods she found a pit covered across the top with leaves, with sharpened sticks sticking upward from the ground at the bottom. Emulating *The Lord of the Flies*, the other boys had set a deadly trap to kill me. I had become Piggy. The next day, we left Strange Farm. The following week the police arrived and arrested the adults for drug offenses. The dream of an anarchist collective came to an end. Ω

How to Really Support Ecovillages

(Not Just Hugs and Theories)

Our three-year-old El Poncho Eco Center and Quilla Tunari Ecovillage project is located in Marquina, an indigenous village at the foot of the Cochabamba Valley in central Bolivia. No loans of any kind are funding this special economic, socio-cultural, spiritual, and ecological venture.

To jump into the abyss and start a lifelong ecovillage project like this without any financial security can be a dangerous affair, and I personally wouldn't advise it for anyone with family responsibilities. You could endanger your health, your job opportunities, your future, and your personal relationships. On the other hand, all this could be endangered even working and living in mainstream culture, especially for those who don't know how to survive if the system failed. Any urban dweller with a mortgage and other debts may be living in a fragile and unsustainable manner anyway.

But if you're brave enough to start a community or ecovillage because you want to change the world, be aware that all the wheels have to turn in order for the coach to run. Building community is a serious and expensive affair.

My partner, Oyunn, and I have two children. To feed our family of four, we need better soil than we have here, so we cannot produce much food as yet. The children need schooling as well, and many other financial needs must be met.

So our financial strategy for El Poncho Eco Center offers four programs and draws on our work experience—I've been a permaculture teacher for some years and Oyunn is a teacher of Spanish. In our Volunteer Program, volunteers pay for their food and lodging here. They are not coming only to help, but to learn and interact with the community in a unique experience. Our Student Program offers courses in permaculture, ecovillage design, and the Spanish language, with lots of practical work. Our Responsible Tourism program invites students, volunteers, and tourists to make traveling a learning experience as well. We also started working with some people in Marquina to produce handicrafts we could export to countries where they are sold at a good price.

ECOVILLAGE NETWORK OF THE AMERICAS

BY ENRIQUE HIDALGO

All of these programs have made it possible for our project to become a relative success. So far, we have offered five permaculture courses in the three years we have been building the center and many Spanish courses to the 180 volunteers who have visited the center for longer or shorter stays. We have created seven workplaces for seven Marquinan villagers with families, and they have been getting training in ecological building while earning their livelihoods. It has been a wonderful experience so far and we expect to create a lot more jobs in the future. Our next venture is to start a bio-construction firm in order to guar-

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antee jobs to villagers who have dedicated their lives to the service of ecological building techniques.

The center is the place where we all meet to work, but it is not the ecovillage itself. The working families form the ecovillage. We all have our own homes and land, but a special "community glue" binds us together—the feeling that we are all creating beautiful architecture and a better world for our families and coming generations. In fact, one can already see the changes in the landscape—all the alternative energy, the newly planted trees, and the food already growing.

The Volunteer Program has been the most successful program of all to start with. Now, more and more volunteers want to come because the center is more built up than it was before. These are usually kind people from developed countries who want to give back a little of what their countries take from countries like Bolivia. Their room and board payments help us to ensure the jobs of the villagers. Usually they stay longer than agreed because they enjoy the lovely energy of the landscape. However, we've run into a problem with some of the volunteers who stay extra days, then leave in the middle of the night without saying good-bye or paying for the extra days of their stay. I believe this pattern doesn't only affect our program, but others in the ecological movement of developing countries.

To start a lifelong ecovillage project like this without any financial security can be a dangerous affair.

I want to talk about these "midnight leavers," because their leave-without-paying behavior may be one of the reasons why the planet is in such a devastated state.

While not intrinsically destructive, these are people who constantly deny the

wealth in their own lives. They usually believe that being a "conscious" person means traveling from one alternative project to another in developing nations, assuming everything should be free and the world is all messed up because everyone is just seeking money and money is something they personally don't want to deal with. They believe (as do I) that the world is increasingly owned by corporations, and corporations are destructive because their only aim is to make money to achieve power to make war and own the resources of all countries—even wanting to patent life so they can own it too. I agree that if getting more money is a goal (as it is for many) because money means power, then it is a poor life goal. This has shown to be very destructive for the planet and all life on it.

Some of the volunteers stay extra days, then leave in the middle of the night without paying for the extra days.

At the same time, money represents energy which helps these people travel and visit ecological learning projects such as ecovillages. Ecovillages tend to become more economically sustainable over time and depend less upon outside resources and the money economy, but still we need funds to buy the land and develop sustainable infrastructure. We are in this process at El Poncho Eco Center. It saddens me to meet people with wonderful dreams and ideas, who are willing to not support corporations, who want to change the world, but who aren't willing to contribute financially to the building of a new world, and so at midnight sneak out of a small project like ours without paying our (for them) relatively inexpensive fees. This is irresponsible and it hurts the dream for a better world. How can we make a difference when we don't realize that building an alternative strategy might provide an alternative to the corporate economy and thus a real opportunity for a better world? It takes a great deal of economic resources, as well as cultural, social, environmental, and spiritual resources to build an ecovillage.

In *Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages and Intentional Communities,* Diana Christian observes that only about 10 percent of community projects that were started in North America during the 1990s succeeded. It seems true in Latin America as well. This figure indicates that community building is really a failure, because 10 out of 100 new community start-ups may not be enough to counter the well-paid corporate professionals working day and night to ensure that their companies grow even bigger and more powerful.

It's about time people in the alternative/ecological movement realize that dreams and changes can only be achieved by creating solidarity among us. I want people in this movement to realize that simply giving hugs and kisses and saying

"I love you" without taking a real part in the process, only hurts the movement that feeds them ideologically.

Having our heads in high vision doesn't mean we can't have our feet planted in practical realities. If we want our dreams to come true, we have to fund them, and we have to start taking responsibility for the love we profess for Mother Earth; otherwise our own hypocrisy will make us silent partners of the corporations and we will become anything but community.

In my humble experience, community is built upon trust, upon letting go of ego and attempting to work for goals further in the future than simply in one's own lifetime. As I visited the sacred pre-Inca temple of Tiwanaku in Bolivia a few weeks ago, I saw the work of thousands of people with such high goals in mind through generations of stone carving, building temples that would live beyond time. They must have loved their ideals so deeply that they were willing to carve for decades before they saw any results; maybe they didn't see any results in their lifetimes but kept on carving because they knew that their descendants would enjoy the results. However, they were a part of the wonder of this building process just as we are a part of the process of creating the change we hope will benefit future generations.

Building communities and ecovillages today is like carving stone for sacred temples; we aren't seeing more than 10 percent of the results yet, but we know deep inside there must be a better way that does not harm the environment like we do today. I believe that more and more people are going to become real builders of a new future and take real part in the game—not as leeches or hangers-on, but as people capable of creating strategies that will create all the funds needed to go everywhere, learn a lot, and help new sustainable settlements be built. Money need not be an end in itself, or a means to achieve power over others; it can be a means for really achieving our community goals. The more wealth the alternative movement acquires, the better our builders will be paid, and the better chance ecovillages will succeed and not disintegrate from financial stress, and the faster we'll see the change in the world. Ω

Seeing the Forest *and* the Trees

Can sustainable loggers and natural builders in community honor their values and still make a living?

Here's how Earthaven's Forestry Co-op almost succeeded—and what we can learn from their experience.

BY DIANA LEAFE CHRISTIAN

In April, 2004, the Earthaven Forestry and Building Company, a worker-owned logging, milling, and home-building co-op at Earthaven Ecovillage in North Carolina, made the hard decision to go out of business. They stopped operating; began selling off their lumber, trucks, and equipment; distributed their power tools among themselves; and started looking for other work.

I had no idea this would happen when I began this series on the challenges of community-based businesses. *(See Part I, "Seeing the Forest* and *the Trees," Winter '03 issue.)* The Co-op had faced economic difficulties during its six-year history, but it looked like they were about to start making a profit. In fact, I chose the Forestry Co-op not only to illustrate the typical problems facing community-based businesses, but also to show how such businesses can become healthy and profitable.

Yet, the Forestry Co-op's story still demonstrates important aspects of visionary businesses in community. We can learn a lot from them.

Earthaven intends to create a village-scale, food-growing community of about 150 on their forested mountain land. This means clearing trees for homesites on gentle south-facing slopes and for future agriculture on flatter, arable land. Their forest is young, only 70 years old, and most trees are small-dimension poplar, one of the pioneer species in their region.

So in 1998 the five founders of the Forestry Co-op asked some questions:

It was a tremendous learning curve, and an expensive investment, yet they were excited and inspired.

How will Earthaven clear enough land for agriculture? Who'll clear the trees, and how will they be compensated? How will we use this small-dimension poplar? Other questions were up for Earthaven as a community—how would they build their homes and who would build them; how would they their keep their biomass on the land; how would they encourage community-based businesses so members wouldn't have to drive somewhere else for work?

In 1998 the Forestry Co-op's young founders (at that time most were in their early to mid-20s) decided to meet all these needs in a vertically integrated, three-part business: (1) sustainably logging to fell trees on an as-needed basis; (2) milling logs into lumber on-site; (3) designing and building passive-solar, natural-built timber-framed structures for Earthaven members while using small-dimension poplar in an innovative wall-truss system. *(See Part I, Winter '03 issue.)*

They borrowed money and bought chainsaws and learned the tasks of sustainable logging. They bought a portable band saw and taught themselves how to mill logs into dimensional lumber. They bought power tools and taught themselves construction and timber-frame design and joinery. It was a tremendous learning curve, and an expensive investment, yet they were excited and inspired. What better way to spend time—making a living while serving one's community in multiple ways and doing it with a highly motivated band of brothers?

From 1998 through 2003, the Forestry Co-op built nine timber-framed structures, including Bellavia, a three-story

neighborhood community building; Village Terraces, a 4,000 sq. ft. six-unit multi-family residence; and the two-story White Owl Lodge, a combination village café and social center. At first the Co-op offered only timber-frame models, because they believed timber frames could utilize their lumber better, and because stud frame homes usually require plywood for shear strength, and plywood is usually unsustainable in its milling and manufacture.

The Forestry Co-op offered logging services to Earthaven that community members would otherwise have had to accomplish through community work days or by paying commercial loggers. They offered design and construction services which people would otherwise have had to do themselves or pay outsiders to do. And the Co-op followed Earthaven's agreements to build only passive-solar, Earth-friendly buildings, and whenever possible, of lumber, clay, and other materials derived from the land.

Motivated by the long-term vision of an ecovillage raising most of its own food on its own cleared land, the Co-op was inspired by the values of regenerative forestry, beautiful natural buildings of local materials, and right livelihood. And 10 to 12 community members—approximately one-fifth of the village—didn't have to drive to off-site jobs. The Forestry Co-op helped fulfill Earthaven's ecological and economic vision. It modeled and demonstrated several of the community's primary values. It contributed to the community's financial and social well-being.

As noted in Part I of this article, if there was ever an example of right livelihood in community, this was it.

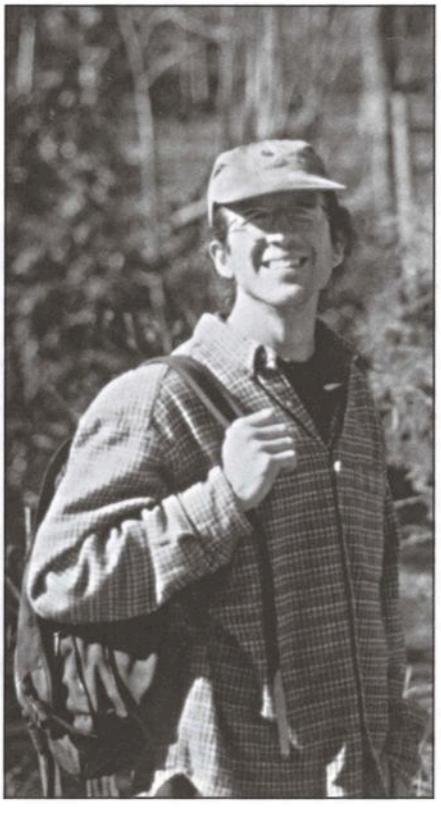
But could the Co-op become economically sustainable as well?

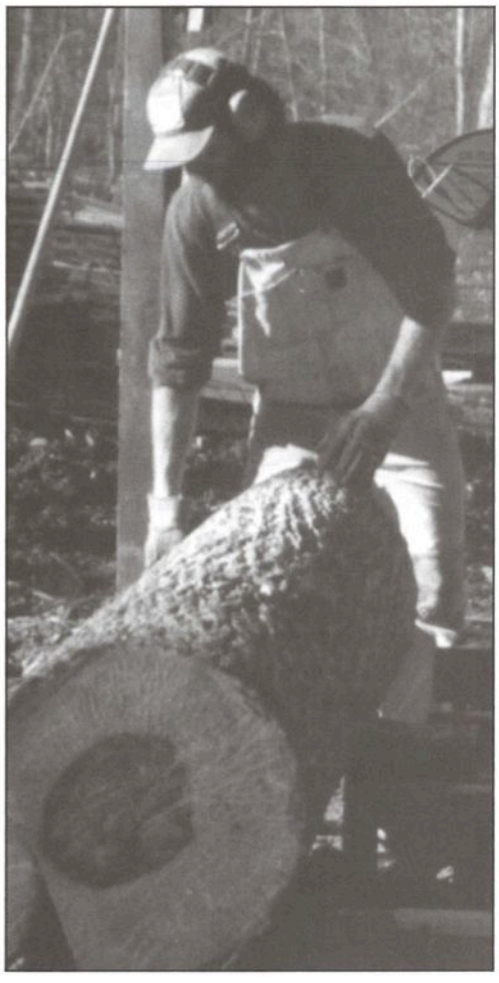
While they got several friendly-interest loans from other Earthaven members to buy equipment, they also faced the kinds of financial challenges common to visionary community-based businesses.

1. First—and difficult to perceive at first—they were "under-specialized." Their ecological mission to fill the community's agricultural, forestry, and building needs meant they were far broader and more ambitious in their scope than any mainstream business. Unlike every local provider they competed with, they did not specialize in just one discipline. The local loggers had specialized, better equipment and only felled trees. The local sawmills had far better and more specialized milling equipment and only milled logs. Same with the local architects, structural engineers, construction crews, and finish carpenters whose specialties they offered. As with most businesses which under-specialize, this cost them cash flow.

Few knew about budgets, business plans, cash flow projections, or customer relations.

2. Second, they absorbed the inherent expense of a steep learning curve. Few had ever worked in construction. None had ever done logging, which is especially hard, dirty, and dangerous work; or sawmilling, which also requires specialized skills.





3. And as a result of both these factors, their logging and sawmill operation ran in the red, primarily because they couldn't compete with better-capitalized local mills with more efficient equipment, and they certainly couldn't compete with Home Depot. To offer lumber at competitive prices and also make their forest products division profitable, they would have needed from $100,000 to $250,000 in upgraded milling equipment, including a better sawmill, a front-end loader, and other necessary tools.

Thus felling trees on homesites became mostly a service for other community members, and barely broke even. Because the Co-op was helping absorb the cost of clearing Earthaven's land, they didn't price their lumber as high as certified sustainably harvested lumber from commercial sources. Community members didn't pay the usual premium prices for such lumber,

and the Forestry Co-op lost money selling it to them, unless—and this is what their profit hinged on—they were also building the member's home. Thus the Co-op and community members shared the expense of creating future food-growing land—and the Co-op's building division had to subsidize its logging and sawmill operation.

4. However, for the building division to make a profit, the Co-op needed a steady stream of building jobs from other community members. But Earthaven members had other options for building a home—they could choose stud-frame construction, buy commercial lumber, build with materials other than wood, hire other Earthaven members to build their home, or build it themselves. *(See "Building Homes Sustainably," pg. 36, Part I, Winter '03.)* Many Earthaven people bought lumber from the Co-op and a few hired the Co-op to clear their homesites, but a number of them didn't also didn't hire the Co-op to build their homes—which is where the company's real profit lay.
5. Further, the timber-frame model was beyond the means of most Earthaven members. Timber-frames require a complex design and milling process and time-consuming hand-crafted joinery. Raising the heavy posts and beams is labor intensive. So only the most affluent community members (or those of average means who were determined to help the Co-op succeed), hired them to build these structures.

Paradoxically they needed to work more hours, rather than less, to meet payroll.

6. Unfortunately, some Earthaven members wouldn't hire the Co-op because they had unrealistic expectations about its capability, or only partially understood its vision, goals, and structure. Some expected the Co-op to be as well-stocked, responsive, or price-competitive as a commercial lumberyard, or as skilled or efficient as commercial builders. Others didn't understand the complexities of a vertically integrated business and didn't know why they had to wait weeks or months for their lumber order if they hadn't also hired the Co-op to build their building. Co-op members were too overwhelmed with all the work they were already doing to explain it all over again to each new community member. Thus the Co-op did not add "customer education" to their already exhausting schedules.
7. Because the Co-op's vision included keeping its lumber and buildings affordable to community members, it didn't make sufficient profit to raise wages to match the increasing experience and responsibility of its longer-term members, or to upgrade

its sawmill equipment sufficiently. As a result, it kept using less productive milling equipment, and all the Co-op's worker/owners continued laboring for six years for little more than $10 an hour.

The Forestry Co-op had the typical internal challenges of a visionary community-based business as well. Its founders began with high goals, strong values, and limited business experience. Few knew much about budgets, business plans, cash flow projections, or customer relations. So they made the usual start-up mistakes, such as estimating jobs inaccurately or making communication mistakes with customers.

Even more challenging, some Co-op members envisioned an efficient, productive work crew, but others rejected such normal business practices as starting work early, keeping to a schedule, all working on the same days during the same hours, or reporting to a job supervisor. The group used consensus decision-making, and for the first several years those who advocated more productive work habits couldn't convince the others. So Co-op members sometimes worked together and sometimes did not, at all different hours, and with no lead carpenter or supervisor. This stretched out the time it took to finish a job, sometimes for weeks or months, which stretched out their payments from clients as well. But since loan repayments and other overhead expenses were nevertheless due every month, extending the duration of a construction job affected their cash-flow adversely. Sometimes they couldn't pay themselves, sometimes for weeks at a time. Besides lowering morale this drove away some Co-op members, leaving the business with even fewer worker-owners to mill logs or finish a construction job. So during the times they couldn't pay their own wages, paradoxically they needed to work more hours, rather than less, to meet payroll.

But by 2003 things began looking up. The Forestry Co-op began offering more affordable stud-frame homes (with diagonal bracing instead of plywood), and immediately got two home-building jobs from community members. They had known for some time they should grade their lumber—sort it by quality and sell the higher quality at higher prices—and in 2003 Shawn Swartz, a Co-op founder who managed their forest products division, began to learn to grade lumber.

They created a management team and two construction crews, each working a 30–35-hour week.

In 2003 Shawn also took a business management course, and was finally able to demonstrate that working a fixed number of hours within a certain time-frame was how viable businesses operated. The group identified the amount of income their sawmilling and construction operations would require over the next few years, and the quarterly number of hours required to earn this income, and set up a system to track each member's weekly hours. They made other improvements as well. They created a management team and two construction crews, each working a 30–35-hour week and led by a supervisor. They created a business plan, and began to seek loans to upgrade their sawmill equipment so they could put their sawmilling operation in the black. They created an individual skills assessment chart, with points for the various skills the Co-op needed—logging, milling, carpentry, bookkeeping, customer service, etc.—and made a differential pay scale, based on each member's number of points. They instituted systems for helping each other stay account-

able to the group, including a graduated series of consequences for any breaches.

However, they were still affected by a deeper, more pervasive financial challenge—which they only gradually came to understand. The Forestry Co-op was honor-bound to follow Earthaven's guidelines about sustainable logging and home building. Doing so was especially labor-intensive, and labor-intensive tasks eat into a business's income. Forestry Co-op members supported these guidelines, yet lost money by adhering to them. For true economic fairness, and to really support one of their community-based businesses, shouldn't Earthaven have at least encouraged its members to hire the Co-op to build their homes?

"What rights and responsibilities does a community business have in relation to the whole community?" asks Shawn Swartz. "And what rights and responsibilities does the community have in relation to the business?"

"And why, if we care about right livelihood and developing a village economy at Earthaven, are so few of us even asking this question?"

The Forestry Co-op and the community were caught in a classic Catch 22. The Co-op took on some of the responsibilities that Earthaven might otherwise have had collectively or individually. However, there was no corresponding requirement that Earthaven members buy their products or hire them for anything. The Co-op struggled financially, partly because of market forces, partly because of their own internal challenges, and partly because the community had no agreements to support them.

They were subject to an even more subtle and disempowering aspect of the Catch 22—not uncommon in rural communities, but almost impossible to convey to others because it involved class issues. Living in a still-developing off-grid rural community can be difficult and time-consuming. Infrastructure at Earthaven was minimal for years—there was only one shower and bathtub; pipes often froze in the winter and water was scarce; after too many overcast days electricity was scarce; and many people sharing a common kitchen meant waiting for time and space at the stove at breakfast. Despite the community's homes and multi-family dwellings, housing for many, especially young people with few assets, often ranged from cramped camper shells to moldy canvas yurts—with much time spent chopping firewood and hauling water. Thus, for quite a few community members, the simple acts of keeping clean, well fed, and warmly housed often took much more time than it would have in more physically developed environments. Without anyone intending it, the community fell into the "haves"—usually older members with enough money or time to live in relative comfort—and "have-nots"—usually younger members living in more primitive circumstances who of necessity worked full time. The mostly young Forestry Co-op members were without exception in the latter category. Those who hired them were almost always in the former.

A community-based business can only function without security for so long.

I hope you can appreciate the paradox here. *Because* these young people made a living based on their values; *because* they hadn't, like older members, worked for decades in mainstream jobs to generate assets before joining an ecovillage, but joined soon after college; *because* they put their bodies and hearts on the line for their values—doing difficult, dangerous work at little more than $10 an hour—they could barely afford to live in the place that theoretically supported this kind of values-based livelihood.

By early 2004 Co-op members decided to call it quits. After six years, they were burnt out. Their ongoing financial and physical challenges had taken too high a toll, and they still weren't getting enough home-building jobs. They'd needed far more efficient milling equipment—and their hard-won knowledge—far earlier in the process. Ending their business was a heart-breaking decision.

The Forestry Co-op's story tells me this: A community-based business can only function without security for so long. Sooner or later, even visionaries who've learned good management skills and productive work habits can become exhausted from trying to effect social and ecological change without at least a modicum of physical comfort, community-wide support, and a decent living wage.

How do Forestry Co-op members view it now?

"We should have been better capitalized much sooner," observes Chris Farmer, a

Co-op founder and head of its building division. "But we now know the real problem was how we used our trees. We primarily worked with small-dimension poplar, the most common species that grows here. Poplar isn't particularly good for construction, but it's ideal for furniture-making. Pine is much better for construction. We didn't realize soon enough that we should have had a drying shed. We could have sold air-dried poplar at high-dollar to fine woodworkers. We could have brought in pine logs from off-site to mill into construction lumber. We were turning the wrong timber into the wrong lumber, and losing money doing it."

"We've learned almost everything we need for a business like this," says Shawn Swartz. "But it's too little, too late. It's frustrating knowing this now, seeing how we could have succeeded. But it's also a relief to let it go. The Forestry Co-op came to dominate my entire existence. It's good to feel my life is my own again."

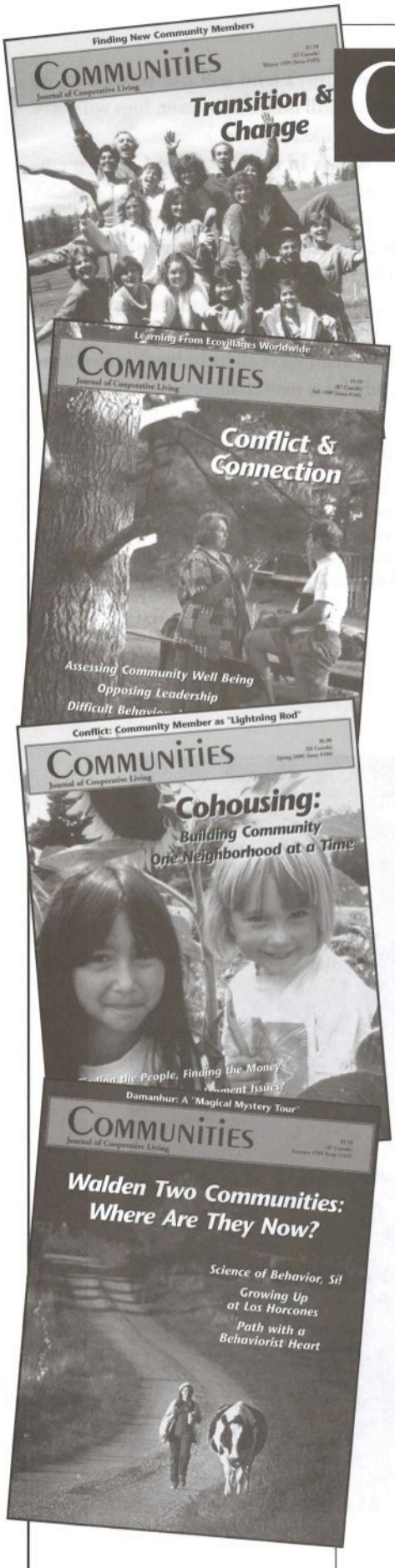
"Maybe, after a few years we'll start again with all we've learned. Who knows?"

Fortunately for Earthaven, these folks are now skilled loggers, building designers, and construction workers. The community's land will still be cleared; its houses still built. (However, logs will have to be milled off-site.)

What's in the future for Co-op members?

"I feel like I've gotten a five-year degree in sustainable forestry, timber processing, construction, and business management," says Shawn. "I'm prepared to apply this in any way I chose now. Maybe, after a few years when we've all had a break, when we're ready for a new challenge, and when we're a little more financially stable, we'll start again with all we've learned. Who knows?"

Diana Leafe Christian, editor of Communities *magazine, is author of* Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages and Intentional Communities *(New Society Publishers, 2003). She lives at Earthaven Ecovillage.*



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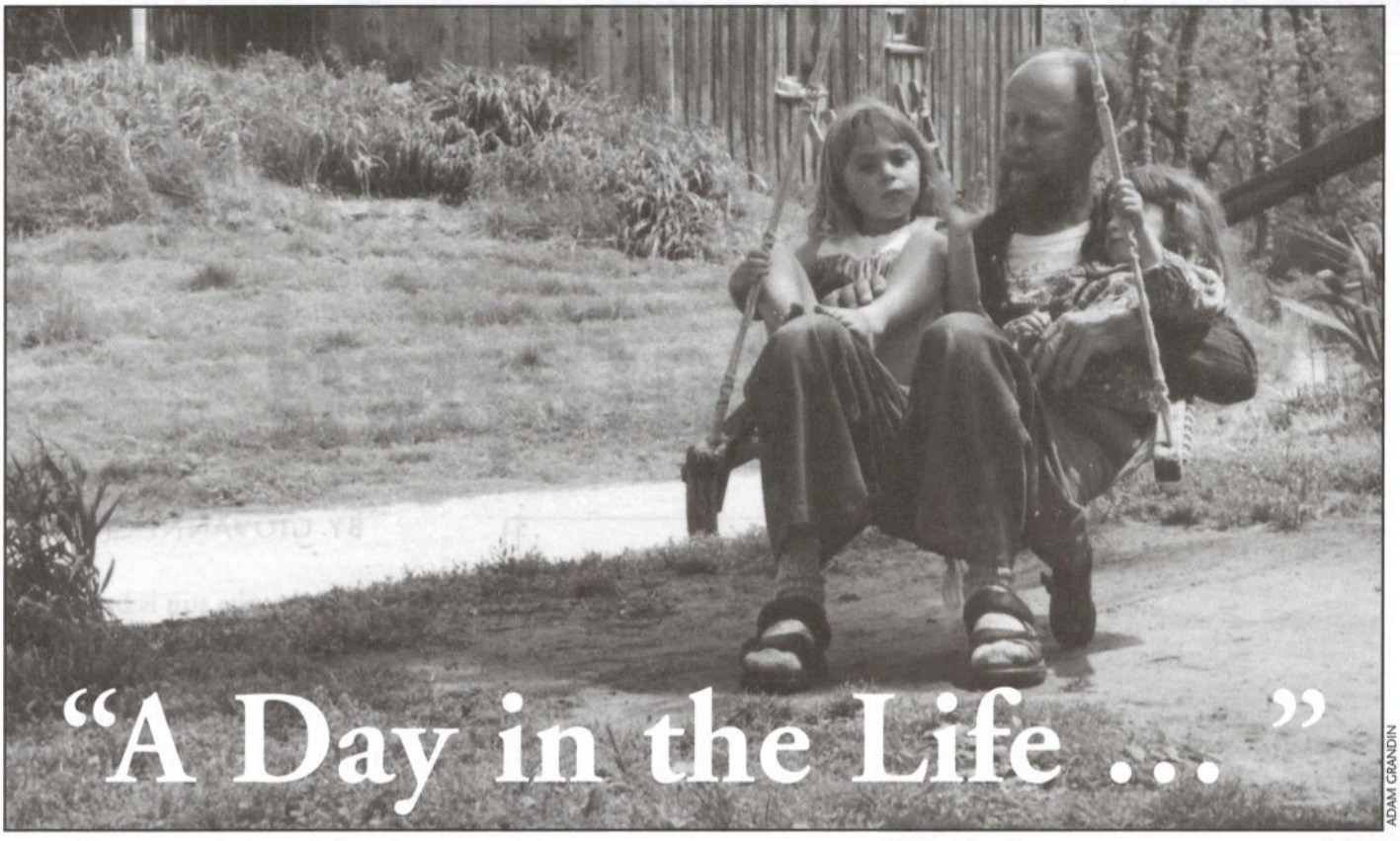


"A Day in the Life ..."

ADAM GRANDIN

What's it like to live in an intentional community?

If you lived in a cohousing neighborhood, an income-sharing commune, or an aspiring ecovillage, how would you spend your time? What work tasks would you take on; what leisure activities would you enjoy? Who would you hang out with and what would you talk about?

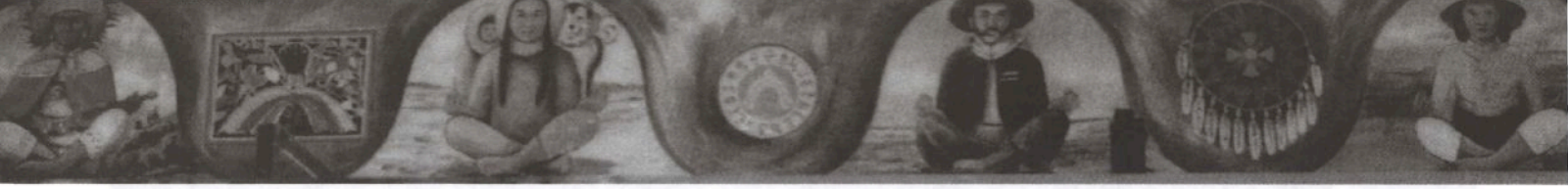
We asked communitarian friends and readers around the world what they do all day, and got an enthusiastic response. Here are seven different day-long slices of life from widely different communities worldwide:

- **Huehuecoyotyl**, an art, music, and theater-based ecovillage in Mexico.
- **EcoVillage at Ithaca**, two clustered cohousing neighborhoods and a CSA farm in upstate New York.
- **Tamera**, a "love without jealousy," peace and nonviolence-inspired community of German-speaking and other European social activists in southern Portugal.
- **East Wind**, a classic income-sharing commune in Missouri.
- **La Caravana Arcoiris por La Paz**, a traveling bus caravan of South and North American ecological activists teaching permaculture and sustainability in Latin America.
- **Lost Valley Educational Center**, an Oregon conference center offering courses in ecological and social sustainability.
- **Deir Mar Musa**, a 1000-year-old Christian monastery for contemplatives and Middle East peace activists in the desert north of Damascus, Syria.

(And check out our "Children in Community" column, pg. 61, where we get a toddler's "day in the life" at a rural homesteading community.) Notice that the purpose of all these communities is to benefit others—whether as a demonstration site for visitors or to actively teach useful skills to the public.

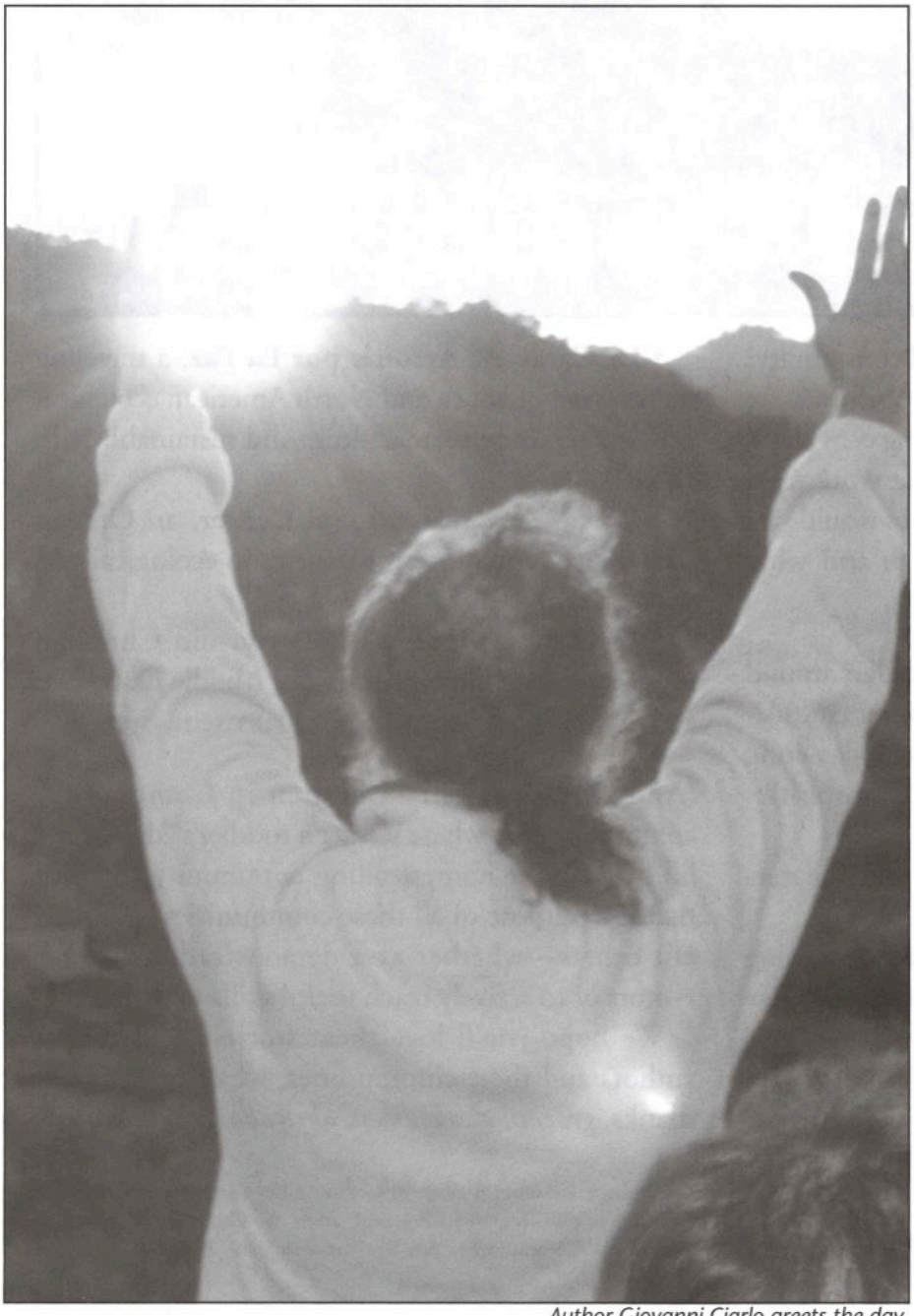
We hope you'll love these stories. And to our authors and these communities, we offer our great thanks, *grácias, dankeshoen, obrigado,* and *salaam.*

Diana Leafe Christian is editor of Communities *magazine and author of* Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages and Intentional Communities. *She lives at Earthaven Ecovillage in North Carolina.*



By the Plume of Popocatepetl

BY GIOVANNI CIARLO



Author Giovanni Ciarlo greets the day.

As I awake, the sun is beginning to rise in the east. Towards the east I also see the snow-covered peak of the mighty volcano Popocatepetl, active on any given day, its plume of smoke rising in the air. One can assess the air quality in the bioregion by the visibility surrounding the old warrior: on a day like today it's like looking at a postcard. The seemingly hand-carved mountains of the biological corridor Chichinautzin form a black silhouette against the scarlet horizon.

Mornings in our village are usually chilly, hovering around 50 degrees F for most of the year. During the day it will rise to a comfortable 80 degrees. Winters are notoriously dry and summer brings torrential rains that fill our 400,000-liter communal cistern in just a few hours. The rains stop at the end of November and only fall sporadically, if at all, during January and February. Not a drop falls until the end of May or beginning of June. Hypersensitive to our water use during winter and spring, we try to catch all our dish washing and shower water in tubs to water our gardens until the rain comes again. Our composting toilets also save each household an average of 30 gallons of water a day.

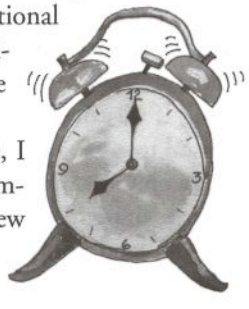
Today, like most mornings, I wake to the sounds of numerous birds, and the crowing of a rooster. Huehuecoyotl is right in the path of many migrating birds, and thanks to our water management and permaculture design practices, our lush vegetation has become an oasis for traveling birds. At different times of the year several varieties of hummingbird, sparrow, wren, siskin, dove, pewee, warbler, oriole, mockingbird, solitaire, flycatcher, grosbeak, cuckoo, towhee, tanager, gnatcatcher, trogon, robin, and many others hop merrily around our bouganvillea, blackberries, citrus, cherries, figs, coffee, sapotes, peaches, bamboo and the numerous other food and nesting sites on the property. An ornithologist friend has identified 60 different varieties of birds in the forested areas behind Huehuecoyotl adjacent to 80,000-acre Tepozteco National Park, a United Nations-declared protected natural forest which also serves as the bioregion's watershed and primary source of natural habitat.

According to native Mexican tradition, when one turns 52 one automatically joins the circle of grandfathers and grandmothers.

Huehue member and shaman Andres King Cobos teaches traditional Mexican spirituality.

My partner Kathleen and I usually have breakfast with one of our fellow community members, often Bea Briggs, alternating between her house and ours. Today we make breakfast in our kitchen, and Kathleen, Bea, and I talk about communal business and common projects, check each other's schedules, and catch up on news. After breakfast I pay a visit to Odin, one of the grown children of our community, now 33. I give him a book and computer files on natural building for his design project at Rancho Organico Nierika, another aspiring ecovillage two hours drive from Huehue. He gives me tapes of Afro-Cuban and Peruvian music, knowing how much I love this music, and hoping I'll learn some of it for our occasional jam sessions.

Back at my house I spend about an hour on email. This is when I usually correspond with friends, family, colleagues, and inquirers from all over the world interested in Huehuecoyotyl and projects of mutual interest. I send the minutes of our last community meeting to all Huehue members. I also listen to NPR's Internet broadcasting services to catch up on the news. I'm usually in the process of writing several magazine articles; today I write one on "TepozEco," a project in Tepoztlán that brings sustainability training to the people of this traditional yet progressive small city of 30,000. Perhaps Tepoztlán will be one of the few traditional Mexican cities that takes up the challenge of becoming an ecovillage. Time will tell.



This morning, like most mornings, I take our household compost to the communal compost pile. I check out the new bamboo fence we built around the composting center to keep out the

About Huehuecoyotl Ecovillage

Huehuecoyotyl ("old coyote") is an aspiring ecovillage of 20 people in the mountains of central Mexico, about 20 minutes from Tepoztlán and 40 minutes from Cuernavaca in the state of Morelos. Known for its beautiful, artistic buildings and support of music, theater, and the visual arts, Huehuecoyotyl was founded in 1982 by a band of European, Mexican, and North American performers, artists, activists, and educators who had traveled and performed together since 1979. —*Ed.*

Huehuecoyotyl artist-members create beauty wherever they can, as with this painted trim in their Common House.

foraging dogs from town. Along the way I delight in tasting fruit throughout the gardens: blackberries from our numerous blackberry bushes, and peaches and tangerines just ripening in the trees we planted five years ago. On my way back I stop to listen to the enchanting live music of Danish musicians Ko Ke Regt and Henrick Jaspersen playing the Ethiopian *obucano* and saxophone. They are currently staying in our community while their group, Duo Resonante, tours festivals and other musical venues in Mexico.

After comida I play my guitar for a while just as the birds start their sunset serenade.

As I cross the open field in the middle of the community I momentarily join a soccer game with the handful of Huehue teenagers who've invited their school friends over to play. Some are getting quite good and are stars in their school team. I stop at the communal house and open the doors to the theater and the kitchen for a rehearsal that of our Huehue musical groups has scheduled today in preparation for performing at the Tajin Festival of Traditions in the state of Veracruz next month.

Back at the house I play with one-year-old Azul, my daughter Carmen's godchild and the newest member of our community. Carmen was the first baby born in Huehuecoyotl 19 years ago. She now goes to school in California, so Kathleen and I fill-in as god/grandparents when Carmen is away from Azul.

After returning the compost pail to the house, I walk up the hill to the communal water cistern to measure it for a lining material we may need to install soon. The cistern walls have sprung a leak in the past couple of years, and we loose half our stored rainwater by February. Having still three months of drought to go, this becomes a survival issue that must be dealt with before the torrential rains of summer will drop more than 21 inches throughout the season. If we can store enough rainwater in the communal cistern and the many other cisterns throughout the village, it will be enough to last us during the six or seven months of drought. I call the lining company to get an estimate of the costs, and then prepare a report for our next community meeting.

With a half-year drought, the community collects its summer rain in community cisterns.

Today is a special day. Andres, our resident shaman, is making preparations to welcome three of us who have recently turned 52 into an Elders Circle this evening, with a sunset ceremony in the Ceremonial Center under the *amáte* tree. According to native Mexican tradition, when one turns 52 one automatically joins the circle of grandfathers and grandmothers. The ceremony requires a lot of preparation. I join the other men to hike up the mountain behind our ecovillage to retrieve dead wood for the *temazcal* (sweat lodge) which will take place afterwards. Others gather flowers and assorted materials to create a mandala for the event.

Because of this special occasion, we have also organized a communal meal today, a group event that doesn't happen as often as it used to in our village. About 16 of us, including children and adults, eat together at the customary Mexican hour of *comida* (mid afternoon). This is especially wonderful as people prepare a single dish of their most delicious food to share with others. Today's common meal is accompanied by laughter, stories, relaxing together, and catching up on news and projects.

After *comida* I play my guitar for a while just as the birds start their sunset serenade. Before the last light of the day fades away I manage to install a piece of glass in the window of my composting toilet building. I also instruct Tito, one of our community's hired helpers, how to treat the wood of our home to protect it from insects, termites, and the weather. I realize that I didn't need to leave the community all day, a pattern that I rather enjoy most of the time here in our emerging ecovillage.

The day ends with a beautiful elders' ceremony and sweat lodge. The three of us receive gifts from other elders. We pass the peace pipe around the circle, praying for the healing of the Earth and ourselves. About 12 of us then crawl into the sweat lodge for a cleansing ceremony which we adopted from the many native teachers we've met over the years.

As the day turns to night, I sit under the stars watching Orion move beyond the mountains, its loyal dog Sirius following closely behind.

Giovanni Ciarlo cofounded Huehuecoyotl Ecovillage in Tepoztlán, Mexico in 1982. He is a Board member of Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) and is active in ecovillage design and education. Giovanni performs Latin American folk music in the United States and Mexico with his group Sirius Coyote. giovanni@ecovillage.org; siriuscoyote.org; huehuecoyote.org.

Summertime . . . and the Livin's Busy

BY LIZ WALKER

About EcoVillage at Ithaca

"EcoVillage at Ithcca (EVI) is an experiment in sustainable living meant to appeal to mainstream Americans," says Liz Walker. Their 175-acre site one and a half miles from downtown Ithaca, New York, currently includes two densely clustered cohousing neighborhoods, a 10-acre organic CSA farm, and a 55-acre permanent conservation easement. EVI is affiliated with Cornell University and Ithaca College. The community hosts about 1,000 visitors a year and have been featured on CNN, PBS, NPR, and in the *New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Mother Earth News, Utne Reader,* and other publications. —*Ed.*

I wake up early and stretch, looking out our bedroom window at the pink sunrise illuminating blue hills across the valley. From the second-story window of our passive solar home at EcoVillage at Ithaca I can see the buildings of Ithaca College campus four miles away, but in front of me there are acres of open fields bordered by tall pines. We're in a great location—just two miles from downtown Ithaca, New York, a bustling college town, yet enfolded in the quiet beauty of 176 acres of farmland, woods, and meadows.

LAURA BECK

FROG (First Neighborhood Group) was the first cohousing cluster built at Ecovillage at Ithaca.

My partner Jared is already up, doing yoga. My teenage son Daniel will sleep as late as he can before biking to his summer job downtown. Our French housemate Florian is not yet up. In a couple of hours he will take the bus to work at Ithaca College, where he does research on the environmental movement in France. When I come downstairs, Jared is already packing his panniers for his three-mile bike ride to work at the county health department. He is a nurse who works with special-needs children and he's starting a small computer ergonomics business on the side. With a big hug and kiss, I send him on his way. I sip a cup of coffee (Fair Trade, of course) made from freshly ground beans from our local natural foods cooperative, and toast some delicious whole-grain bread from a local bakery. The jam I've made myself, from wild blackberries on our land.

My friend, Rachael, and I plan to meet at 7:30 for a short bike ride before our work days start. We live in adjacent cohousing communities. Rachael's is called "SONG," our nickname for the second neighborhood group. Mine is called "FROG," short for first resident's group. Although I was initially very sad when Rachael and her husband Elan moved from FROG to SONG, we've timed the walk between our houses, and it is a mere four minutes, door to door.

Rachael wheels her bike up the pedestrian path and I go out to greet her. We head out for a vigorous 35-minute ride. The main road is busy with cars and we are relieved to soon be on side roads—biking past horses, barns, open farm fields and white clapboard houses. It's hilly here, and we work up a sweat, while riding side by side, and catching up on our lives.

When I get home I hang my bike in the bike shed. It is filled with 15 bikes of all sorts: mountain bikes, road bikes, neon-colored kids' bikes, and a three-wheel stroller for running with a baby. There is also a community lawn mower, community garden tools, and a community chest freezer, filled with frozen berries and vegetables grown on the farm.

Grabbing my water bottle and a sunhat, I look at my watch—it's 8:15. I'll be a few minutes late for my shift at West Haven Farm, a community supported agriculture farm (CSA). I walk down a small dirt road, past the chicken coop, the four sheep, and the new, winterized greenhouse. The chickens run up, clucking eagerly for a handout. I cut across another field on a grassy, mown path. On one side are tall grasses, milkweed plants, and black raspberry bushes; on the other side is an acre of potatoes, the plants covered in purple-starred flowers. I walk along the hedgerow checking to see if the wild cherries are ripe. I eat one, but it is still tart. In another week, I'll go out with Daniel to pick enough cherries for a wild cherry pie.

We head out for a vigorous 35-minute bike ride.

LIZ WALKER

Cornell graduate students tour West Haven Farm, the community's CSA farm.

Now, an eight-minute walk from home, I'm at West Haven Farm. This thriving 10-acre organic CSA farm feeds about 1,000 people a week during the growing season. It is a small business, run by my next-door neighbors, John and Jen Bokaer-Smith. In March each year Jen and John collect cash subscription "shares" from 170 participating families. From late May through early November shareholders get a generous portion of freshly picked organic veggies, herbs, and flowers. Jen and John have a guaranteed market for their veggies, and consumers enjoy delicious, highly nutritious produce, as well as feeling connected to the land. Jen and John also sell some of their produce to the public at the Ithaca Farmer's Market, and some to the EVI community for our four meals a week in the Common House.

Every Tuesday morning, I help harvest veggies in exchange for my family's CSA share. Although the exchange rate works out to be only about $6/hour, I love the work, as it's a wonderful, relaxing part of my week. I'm outside in the sun chatting with my fellow workers who are mostly Cornell graduate students, harvesting nature's abundance. In three hours we pick and wash two kinds of peas, green beans, long yellow wax beans, zuchinni, crooked neck squash, romaine, basil, dill and the first cherry tomatoes. My hands smell of herbs for the rest of the day. I walk home, dirty and happy.

My hands smell of herbs for the rest of the day.

I decide to check on my emails before washing off with a dip in the pond. Once I sit down at my computer, though, it's hard to stop. Perhaps 5 to 10 of my 55 new emails since yesterday are informational requests from students or potential visitors outside EVI. The rest are from community members. With about 100 adults and 60 kids, our community is wired together with Internet cable, and we have continuous, unlimited access to high-speed Internet connections for just $15/month. Even though we see each other in person frequently, we also use email constantly—almost, I think, like a group brain, muttering to itself.

The EVI business in my in-box includes committee meeting minutes, requests from researchers, and nonprofit business items. There's an agenda for our twice-monthly FROG meeting this Sunday, from 2 to 5 pm. One issue involves accessibility. (We're currently embroiled in controversy about accessibility issues—are we ready to make a major community investment to spend $50,000 to pave our gently winding pedestrian paths? It's a lot of money, but as our Aging and Accessibility committee points out, our current gravel paths have very poor drainage and are icy and hazardous in the winter, and too often muddy in the spring and fall. Walking on gravel is hard for our elderly and disabled

MARGERY WILKEN

Author Liz Walker (center), *with partner Jared* (left) *and sons Daniel and Jason.*

members, let alone pushing a wheelchair or walker. I print out on recycled paper the 10-pages of material to read before the meeting: minutes, agenda, three proposals, and a mini-survey.

I scan the village-wide announcements and discussion. Another hot topic raging on email right now: SONG is busily designing its own Common House, but in the meantime is using FROG's. Do we really need two complete kitchens and dining areas—one in each Common House for two adjacent cohousing neighborhoods? If SONG continued to share FROG's space, would meals be too crowded? Or could we be more creative about using the existing space? What could the SONG Common House provide to FROG residents? Heated emails advocate each side of the issue, interspersed with thoughtful, creative ideas. This is a tough issue that won't go away soon.

I've had enough emails after an hour. I'm still sweaty so I change into a swimsuit and walk down to the pond, halfway down the neighborhood.

Our clustered housing in FROG takes up just three acres, with the Common House at one end and a one-acre pond on the south side. Now. at 12:30, it's about 85 degrees, with a slight breeze. The pond is cheerfully crowded with kids and adults—talking, playing, and swimming. The older kids are playing a lively game involving throwing each other off a rubber raft. Toddlers play in the shallows, catching minnows and creating little dams. I greet friends, then plunge into the cool water, swimming the length of the pond several times. It feels so refreshing. No need for air conditioning when your body tingles with cool water. I climb out dripping, wrap a towel around my middle and join five other people, including Rachael's husband Elan, at the awning-shaded picnic table. I eat the sandwich I've brought, and someone offers me chips and salsa. Someone else passes around a jug of cold lemonade. I get into a discussion with a visitor from Spain who is doing her graduate work on intentional communities.

I plunge into the cool water, swimming the length of the pond several times.

At 1:00 it's time for Elan's and my meeting on EVI education programs. We've had an educational mission from the beginning: to provide a model of a more sustainable way of living that would be easily accessible to students, visitors, and academics. Recently. in partnership with the Ithaca College Environmental Studies Program, we received a three-year, $149,000 National Science Foundation grant. Now, in addition to hosting regular visitors and tour groups, and working with interns, we are also teaching semester-long courses on "Sustainable Communities," "Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy," and others. Elan and I are paid a small amount to coordinate the EVI portion of the grant—a never-ending stream of student projects, course evaluations, and mentoring a team of EVI educators. It's exciting and sometimes overwhelming. Elan and I have just an hour to meet and talk about our new grant proposal with Ithaca College. After another quick dip in the pond, where we swim side by side and talk, we move our meeting to towels on the grass far enough away from the crowd at the pond that we won't get distracted. It feels great to work outside with a friend. This is not unusual here. Out of 100 adults, many are stay-at-home parents or retired. About 80 percent of the remaining 66 wage-earners work at least part-time on site—as farmers, builders, therapists, software engineers, graphic artists, environmental writers, health pro-

fessionals and more. It's satisfying to have work, play, food production, and nature in such close proximity.

I say goodbye to Elan and hurry home to change into a summer dress and sandals. At 2:30 I meet a group of architecture students at the Common House to give them a tour. Thirty students from Rhode Island have arrived in three vans, with the assignment to design a third neighborhood for EVI. This is their first visit, and they have done extensive preparation by reading our website and a variety of articles. I spend a couple hours showing them around, touring the Common House and sample homes in FROG and SONG. They are full of questions. "What green building features do you use?" "How are the two neighborhoods different?" "What would you do differently if you designed them again?" I point out several environmental features that may not be so immediately obvious:

I tell them we chose land close to the city to cut commuting distance yet still have a farm. We're building on just 10 percent of our 176 acres, and preserving 90 percent of our land as open space for organic agriculture, meadows, woods and wetlands. We plan to eventually build a third neighborhood and an education center.

I tell them all homes are passive solar, super-insulated, densely clustered duplexes. Back-up space heating and hot water are provided by boilers for each two to eight homes. We use about 40 percent less natural gas and electricity than other homes in the northeast. About half of the homes in SONG generate their electricity from solar panels. Buildings use local lumber when possible, and environmentally friendly building materials.

As we tour the Common House, I show them our dining room, our sitting room (which functions as a comfortable meeting or hang-out space), the sound-proof toddler playroom, community laundry, eight private offices, guest room, and multi-purpose room.

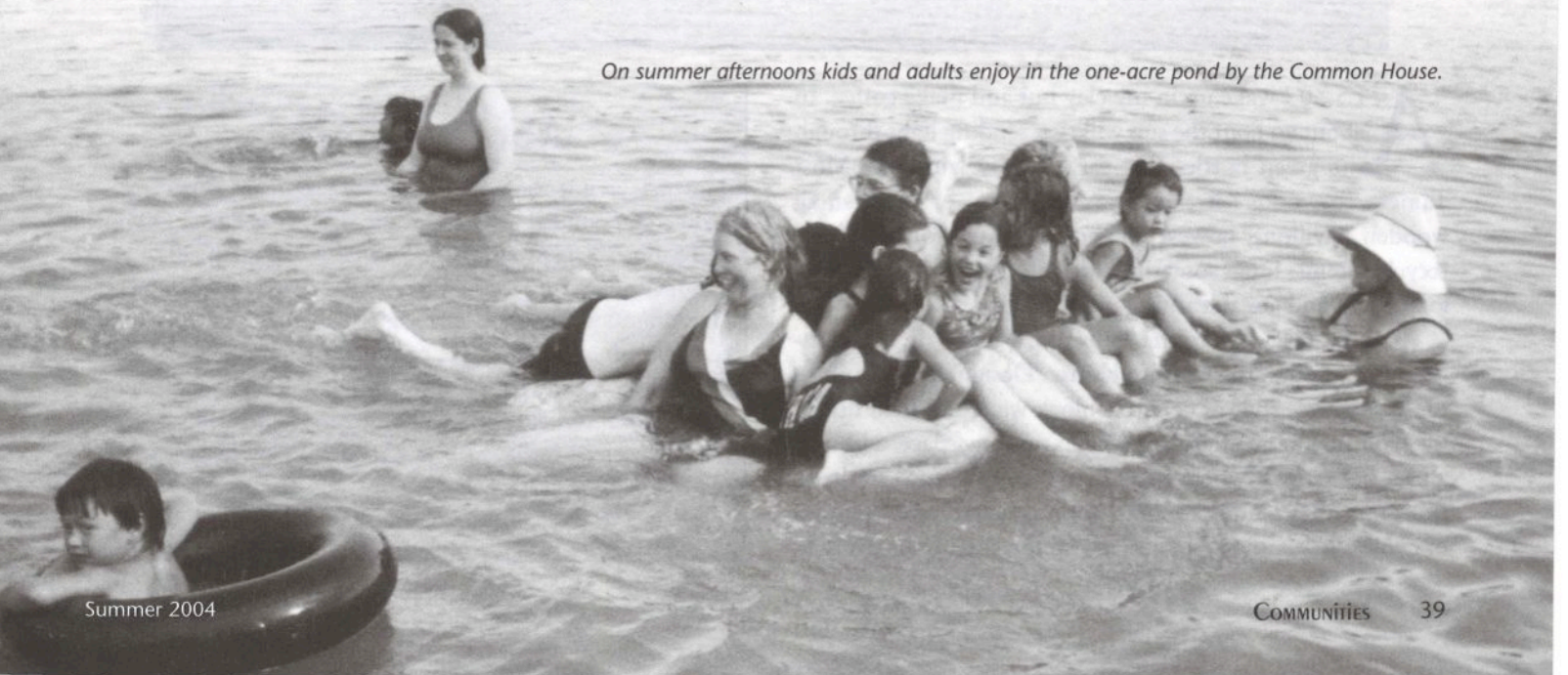
I use three large woks to create a stir-fry for 80.

After the tour it's time for me to help cook tonight's community meal. I meet my two main assistants from the cooking team in the Common House kitchen. Each adult in the community is expected to put in at least two hours a week on a work team. Several children, from four to ten years old, offer to help out. We spend the next two hours chopping veggies from the CSA farm, cooking rice, and cutting locally made tofu into bite-size pieces. I use three large woks to create a stir-fry of broccoli, red peppers, and yellow squash with a spicy Indonesian peanut sauce for 80. We prepare cheese and apple slices to add to the children's table. At 6 the dinner is ready, and one of the kids rings the gong outside the Common House. Soon people drift in, chatting with their friends and giving hugs. We hold hands in a large circle for a moment of silence, then several visitors are introduced, and we have quick announcements. Time to eat! Jared and Daniel arrive a little late, sweaty from their bike rides up the hill, and I save them a place at the table. Sometime during the meal there is a thunderous sound as people bang on the tables and shout out "Yay, cooks!" I grin, feeling very appreciated for my efforts, and introduce my fellow cooks. There is special applause for the three children who helped. As the dish team is cleaning up dinner, I buy a quart of leftovers for a dollar, for lunch tomorrow. After dinner we celebrate a member's 60th birthday with cake and ice cream. Later, a group of kids gather with two adults in the sitting room for storytelling. A parent's group meets downstairs to discuss some recent behavior issues among the pre-teens. A men's support group meets in the guest room. Jared holds a short meeting with the maintenance team committee.

I go home to spend the rest of the evening with my family. I check in with Jared and Daniel about their days, and we make plans for a family hike over the weekend. After such a social day it is nice to have some quiet time. Another two hours working on the grant proposal, and it's time for bed.

And I look forward to the next summer day.

Liz Walker, cofounder and director of EcoVillage at Ithaca, is currently writing a book about her experiences in helping create EVI over the last 12 years.

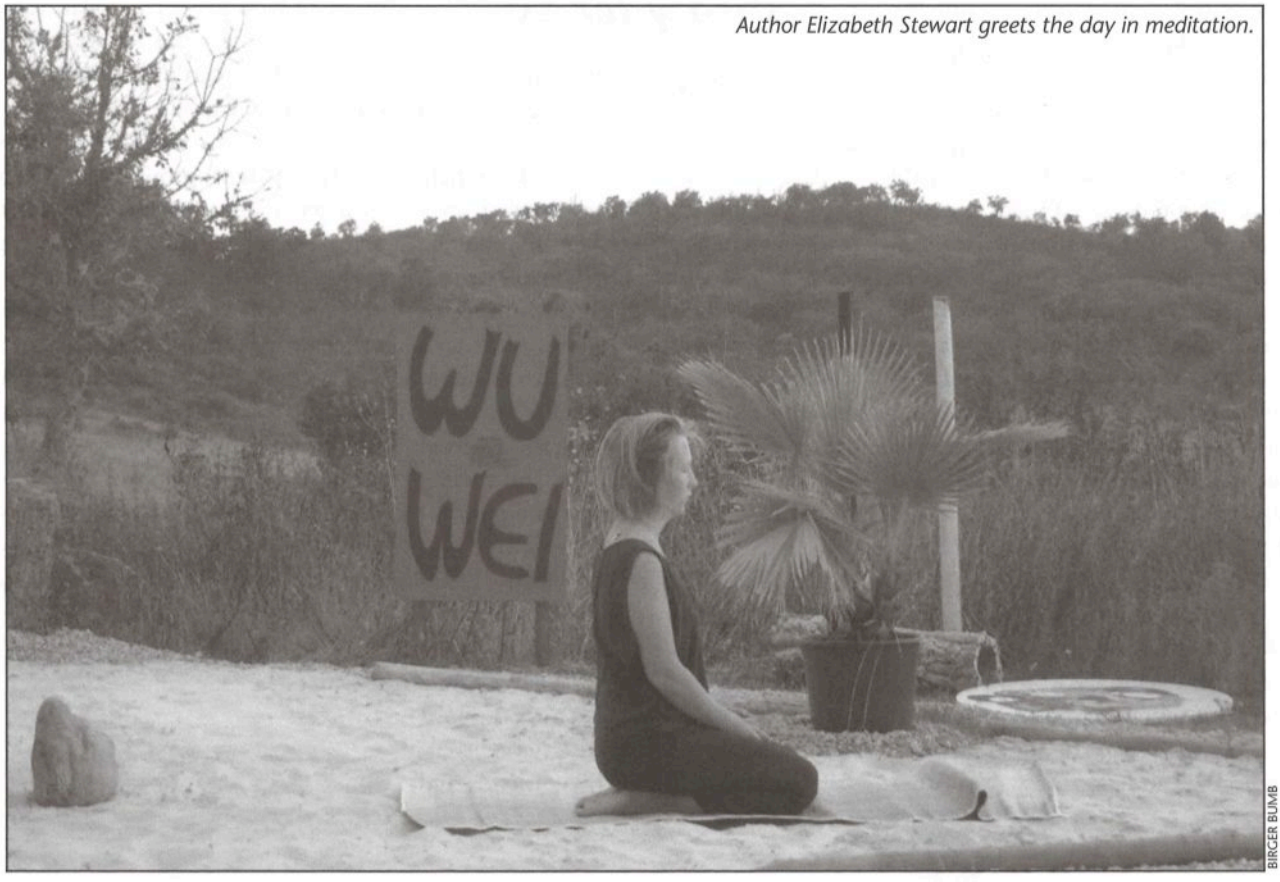


On summer afternoons kids and adults enjoy in the one-acre pond by the Common House.

Colos, Portugal

BY ELIZABETH STEWART

A Spring Day at Tamera



Author Elizabeth Stewart greets the day in meditation.

BIRGER BUMB

At 5.30 I wake up in my clay hut and make coffee. In about an hour the sun will rise, sending light through the green bottles that serve as my windows. Most Tamera co-workers live in caravans, tents, or share small wooden pavilions; however, I built my hut from clay and recycled items. It has sometimes been hard work, but mostly lots of fun and a real learning process.

At about 6:15 I go to the "morning ashram" in our community building, the Culture House. Designed and built in the Portuguese style of concrete block walls and tiled floors, the Culture House offers large group meeting space, a library, and a bar; and is where most community events are held, from morning ashram to talks, choir practice, and evenings of games. The Culture House is also the site of our planned

About Tamera

Tamera is an intentional community in southern Portugal on 331 acres. Founded by German social activists Dieter Duhm and Sabine Lichtenfels in 1995, its approximately 90 international members ("co-workers") are engaged in creating a "Healing Biotope" or peace village—intended as a social and ecological model of peace, nonviolence, and ecological sustainability. Tamera values "love without jealousy, sexuality without fear," art and culture, healing, and spirituality. Community projects include a Youth School, a Children's School, the Horse Project, the Mirja School for Peace, and the Palestine/Israeli Peace Village Project. *—Ed.*

solar-powered village, which will bring us closer to our goals of energy sustainability. We gather here daily in silence and contemplation, to write down our dreams, read, and bring ourselves into the day. I choose a motto for today: "Power through calmness."

At 7:15 our great gong sounds three times, signalling that the daily morning attunement will begin in 15 minutes. I finish my writing and take the five-minute walk up to the "political ashram," a traditional slate-walled low-roof building, where the morning attunement takes place. On the paths converging to the political ashram I hear people talking quietly, children laughing, and someone playing the clarinet to welcome the sun.

We begin with dancing. Ah! To move the body, to be conscious of rhythm—such an important element in life. And then we all settle down to hear Monika talk about one of our five principles, *Taking Active Responsibility for the World.* Our other principles are *Truth*, *Mutual Support*, *Active Responsibility for the Community*, and *Support for all Beings*. I think about what it really means to take active responsibility for the world and all its inhabitants. My perspective becomes wider and I see how all of my actions have a deeper significance.

We finish with a song and go off to various locations for breakfast: the children to the children's place, the youth to the youth place, some to the mountain village, and the rest to the Culture House. Students of the Peace School will eat here at the political ashram.

Breakfast looks great: vegetables and herbs freshly picked in the garden this morning, bread, *muesli,* fruit, and plenty of spreads. Some of us sit together and discuss Monika's talk and the world news.

Each day after breakfast a group of us come together for a seminar. Julienne presents "What is Community?" and asks for our feedback, as she will later present this talk to the youth group. Inspired, I write in my notebook, "Community arises to the extent that a group of people are capable of creating a common relationship to something objective: to a common aim, to an objective task, to a spiritual basis or to the sacred."

At 10:00 we begin our work for the day: the ecology team returns to the garden, the craft people leave for the workshop, and others head off to the media office, guest centre, or stables. I walk to the Institute for Global Peacework, the political networking office that promotes Tamera's ideas and brings together peace workers worldwide.

In the last couple of years our Palestine/Israeli Peace Village Project has supported the development of a peace network in those countries; our longer-term goal is to create a Peace Village in that region. I'm the fundraiser for the project. As the only native English speaker at Tamera, I also help translate our various articles and promotional materials. We also have Portuguese translators, so now we send out everything in German, English, and Portuguese.

Several riders are engaged in a blindfolded riding meditation so I pass quietly so as not to disturb them.

Hanka, who runs the Guest Centre, calls and asks me to check the English version of Centre's 2004 programme. The Guest Centre has been closed for the winter, but will re-open in May, hosting about a hundred or so guests before it closes again in October. I take the ten-minute walk to the Guest Centre, on the way passing our six horses. Several riders are engaged in a blindfolded riding meditation so I pass quietly so as not to disturb them.

After checking the programme at the Guest Centre, I walk back to my office and finish a funding proposal for the Middle East camp we're organising for the summer. I'm also involved with our annual Summer University program, "Is Peace Possible? The Experiement Monte Cerro," our three-year social and ecological experiment on peace research, planned for 2006. Then lunch.

Springtime in Portugal is beautifully warm, with lush green grass and flowers bouncing up each day. I sit on the lawn with a few friends eating potatoes and herb salad with soya mayonnaise.

Usually after lunch I go to the café where most of the young people get together for a volleyball game or to make music. The

number of young people who've moved here has increased dramatically over the last year or so, contributing their great new energy. But I don't go to the café today because it's my day to teach school. Tamera's 12 children range in age from four to sixteen, with school every day. Their many subjects include English and Portuguese. I teach English to the four teenagers (14 to 16): Ludwig, Svantja, Mark, and Paul. I try always to infuse lessons with ideas and current events. The students are always eager to know, to understand, and they have many questions. Every week one chooses a discussion topic; this week it's Israel/Palestine.

After an hour with the young people, I take a quick swim in one of our five lakes. It's brisk but invigorating. Then I'm off to Forum.

Forum is our opportunity to gather to create personal transformation through mutual trust and honest, transparent communication. It is about art as opposed to therapy. For community to truly develop, to truly remain sustainable and progressive, each member has the opportunity to learn to resolve conflict, both inner and outer, and reach a higher level of consciousness.

The first co-worker to stand in the center of the circle is Daniel, who finds simple but moving words to describe the love he feels for two women. I feel touched that a man can express his love in such a soft way. And while, of course, it is not always an easy situation, he shows his commitment to finding peaceful solutions for the jealousy that arises. Next Susan offers an artistic performance about how so many things didn't go exactly as she planned today, but she could still see it from a humorous perspective.

I feel touched that a man can express his love in such a soft way.

The Forum ends an hour before dinner. Most of us use this time for silent contemplation; for example, of what we have learned in Forum that we can apply in our own situations.

The sun is beginning to set and I use the time to do a little gardening around my house; it's a magical time to connect a little with the Earth.

I take the five-minute walk back to the Culture House for dinner. Many of us are still thinking about the Forum and there is a stillness in the room while we eat.

Tonight is choir practice. Music, singing, and theatre are important elements in our community life. Tonight we begin with some drumming and dancing, and then warm up our voices. Most of us are not "natural" singers, but when we come together the power of community pulls us through and we begin to sound pretty good. And Robert, our choir leader, manages to hold us together, no easy task with over 50 people. It's a great way to end a very full day.

For more information contact: www.tamera.org; tamera@mail.telepac.pt; 00351-283-6353-06; Tamera, Monte do Cerro, P-7630 Colos, Portugal. Elizabeth Stewart, 28, has been a member of Tamera community for three years and works for its Institute for Global Peacework.

BIRGER BUMB

Tamera hosts many guests over the warm months. The midday meal offers vegan fare and produce from community gardens.

ADAM GRANDIN

East Winders gathered by Rock Bottom, the community kitchen/dining room.

Living the Good Life

BY AVIVA BEZILLA

I wake up around 6:30 and look out the wide window along my bed at East Wind. The view is pretty spectacular this spring morning, with the sun rising over budding trees and a green field. Birds are chirping. I feel as if I'm living in a tree house.

About East Wind

Founded in 1970 in southeast Missouri, East Wind is literally a commune—its 70 members work for one of two community-owned businesses (making nut butters and hammocks) and receive room, board, and a stipend in return. East Winders grow much of their own organic food and raise their own livestock. They live in one of five group residences or several small individual huts. East Wind is a member of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities. —*Ed.*

Actually I live in a loft of a tiny room in Fanshen, a group house named after a commune in China. Three of our five group houses are named after fictional utopias—Lilliput, Annares, Grayhaven. The fifth, Sunnyside, is named for the Boston street where East Wind's founders lived while saving money to start our community. We also have a few "personal shelters"—individual huts built by members. Each car in our 15-car fleet also has a name. Pearl is our white van; Chicory our blue van; and so forth. Members are known only by first names. If we already have someone by a particular name, a new member with the same name will need to name themselves anew. Some just add a letter to their name (becoming JohnS); others name themselves "Panther," "Lake," or whatever they fancy.

At 7:00 I step off the wooden porch, and walk towards Fillmore South, one of our outhouses (named after Millard Fillmore, the last president using outdoor facilities at the White House, circa 1850-1853). In the dual-seater I read one of the many *National Geographic* magazines lying around. I could enter the one-seater at the corner, but I figure that the dual one will be more available, since some members like more privacy and so line up to use the one-seater. Human waste goes into buckets below a regular-looking toilet seat. A different person empties the buckets each day. The human waste slowly molders into compost after about a year, and then we fertilize our orchard with it.

East Wind is located on 855 acres—all paid for. We also lease another 190 acres from the government adjacent to Lick Creek. We love our land. Our community is diverse, but there is one thing we have in common—we all think East Wind is located on a beautiful spot. Next to a creek, in the middle of an oak forest, no pavement at all; we walk to work, walk to eat, and walk to play.

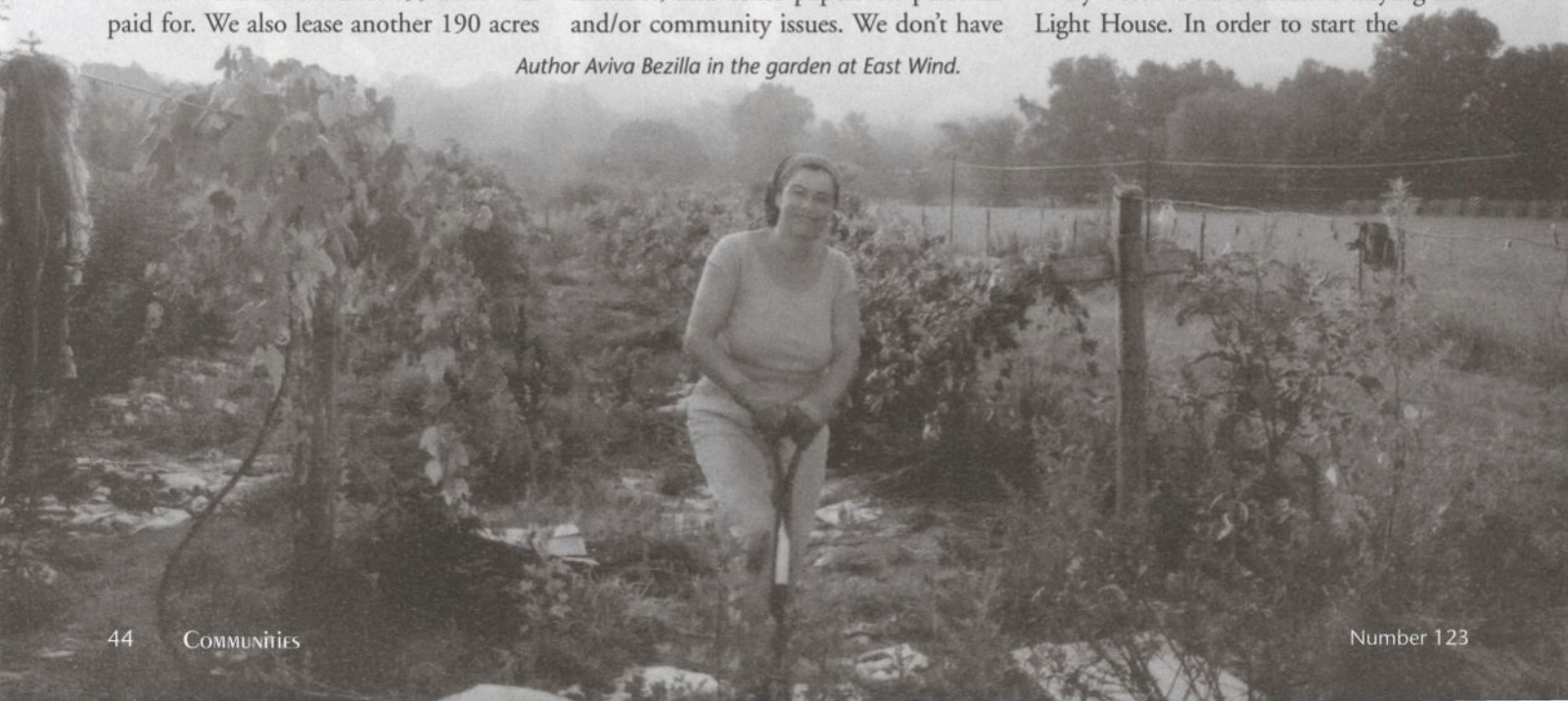
My next stop is Rock Bottom (called "RB"), our kitchen and dining building named for the original farmland here. This is where I hang my toothbrush, since Fanshen doesn't have running water. While brushing my teeth, I look over the "Day Board" to see if my work is needed somewhere in particular. On the same board I also read what other people think might be important to the whole community—upcoming guests, the work schedule for the Nut-House, lost items, work tasks needed in the garden, people who have gone off-site and need their tasks covered, farewell notes by visitors who've just left, venting by someone who is upset about something—you get the picture. Notes too long for the Day Board hang on the Back Board, which is on the back wall of our dining room. There you will read proposals in varying stages of discussion and action, the personal labor balance of each member, and other papers on personal and/or community issues. We don't have many meetings at East Wind. We used to have meetings on Saturday at three in the hammock shop. Since meeting turnout was poor, we recently switched to Sunday at 11:00 at Rock Bottom, hoping for better attendance. Many of our members don't like going to meetings.

Giving a massage will be part of my 40-hour weekly labor quota.

While brushing my teeth I read a note that Carla has gone to Florida on vacation and needs someone to cover her laundry shift. I sign my name and go to fix myself some breakfast. By now it is 7:30. I greet several members I meet at Rock Bottom, but know not to greet certain others who haven't had their coffee yet. In the kitchen I exchange hugs with friends. Once I have my hot oatmeal cereal with raisins, orange juice, and a slice of homemade whole-wheat bread in hand, I step out onto the porch to chat with others and eat a leisurely breakfast.

It is about 8:30. I have scheduled a massage with Abe at 9:30, so I use this hour to clean around RB. I give Abe his massage in the Light House, a charming cabin with many windows built by one of our members. East Wind has four body workers, and giving a massage will be part of my 40-hour weekly labor quota. Each member is responsible for doing their work and reporting it to the labor accountant. Whether you cook, weave a hammock, take care of a child, write an article for *Communities* magazine—all earn credit in the labor system. Once a member is 49 years old the labor quota is reduced by one hour each subsequent year.

By 11:00 I have finished tidying the Light House. In order to start the

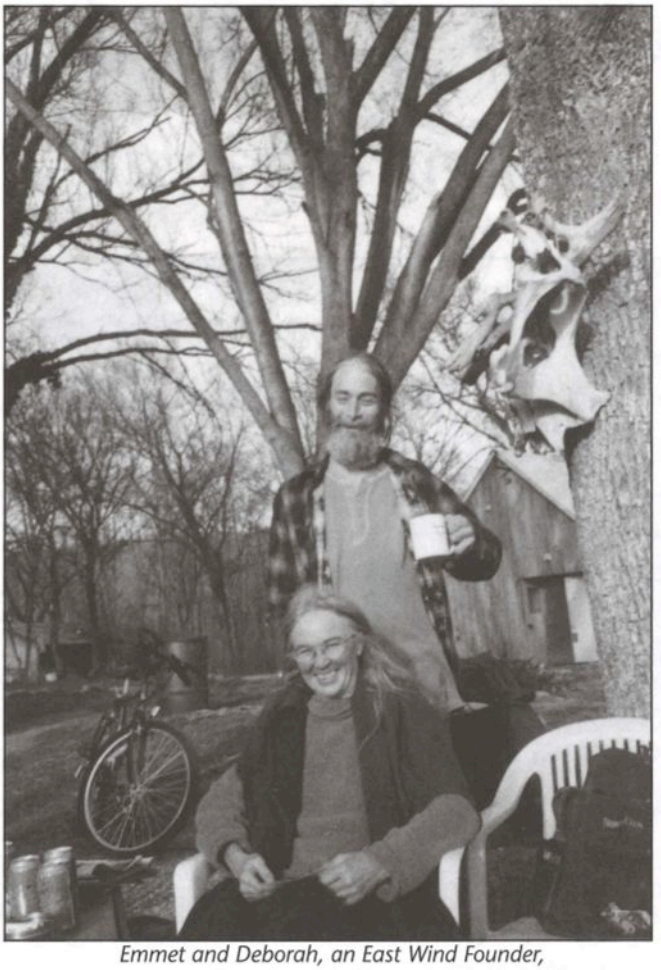


Author Aviva Bezilla in the garden at East Wind.

laundry shift, I get out the laundry cart and collect dirty rags from all over community. My first stops are the shop and Fillmore North, the outhouse next to the industry area. Then I pass Annares, which houses about 20 members, and Lilliput, the house where parents live with their children, stopping to check their outhouse, Lillipoop. I amble past Sunnyside, appreciating our large, diverse organic garden and the just-bloomed peach orchard. Finally, after a 15-minute walk collecting dirty rags, I reach my destination. The laundry room contains three washers and two dryers. On a sunny day like today I could use the dryers or the clothesline outside. It's a dilemma: use the clothesline and save propane, or use the dryer and save time—no easy solutions here. I go to Commie Clothes (short for "Community Clothes") near the laundry room to pick up the dirty laundry that my fellow communards have thrown into bins. Commie Clothes is attached to the communal shower with three shower heads. The ideas is for members to throw their dirty laundry inside the bins, step into the shower, then pass into Commie and pick something fresh to wear. Members also have their own clothes, and may do their own laundry once the laundry shift is over. Having the option of wearing Commie clothes helps one's own clothes stay clean longer. Right now we are in the midst of building a new shower house, with a sewing room, a massage room, a sauna, a double bath, and a huge new Commie Clothes space. A large hot-tub will be located on the deck. Beautiful ceramic tiles will decorate the public shower. There will still be a private bath, just as there is now in the older facility.

The person who did laundry yesterday finished up quite late in the day, so there isn't much for me to do. I clean the shower, put the clothes in order, return the clean rags to all the buildings. I'm ready for lunch.

I get back to RB at 1:30, though lunch was served at noon. The food is still tasty —the spinach is fresh from the garden, the beef is home-grown, and the cook did a magnificent job with yesterday's lasagna. During lunch I catch up on what is happening by reading *The Ozark County Times* or the *East Wind Newspaper,* published by our kids every other Sunday. RB also has many magazines.



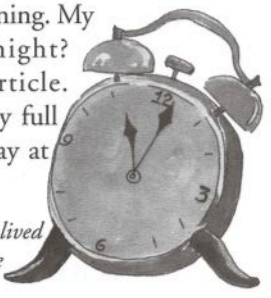
Emmet and Deborah, an East Wind Founder, enjoy a break in the workday.

Today I learn to distinguish between bee balm and chickweed.

After lunch I go to help Anne weed in the herb garden. I like working with Anne. She is so skillful about herbs and gardening; I always learn from her. Today I learn to distinguish between bee balm and the chickweed that was taking over the bed. We also talk about a man in the community who used to court her, and now he is courting me. I asked her why she didn't choose him as a partner. Since Anne and I are good friends, she discloses that inside story, and I am better informed now. At 3:00 Anne leaves to go and meet Marc, who offered to help her figure out how to create charts on her computer. Before Anne leaves she sets me up with other projects in the garden. I work until 5:00, and then join a tentative Nut Butter production meeting on the porch of RB.

Our Nut-Butter Management Team thought it a good idea for people who work in the nut-butter industry to meet once a week to discuss procedures and get feedback about work. Today the meeting isn't happening, partly because some of the Management Team is on a four-day canoe trip on the Buffalo River. Those who do assemble socialize instead while waiting for dinner.

Dinner is at 6:00 and is our main meal. Many people are present tonight—not everyone though. At East Wind it seems like there's never a time when everybody is present for something. People have different schedules; some are up at night and sleep in the day; others rotate from a night to a day schedule according to their own metabolism. Some prefer to spend most of their time alone. Others are more socially oriented. During dinner some friends and I make plans for the evening. My plans for tonight? Writing this article. And this was my full and satisfying day at East Wind.



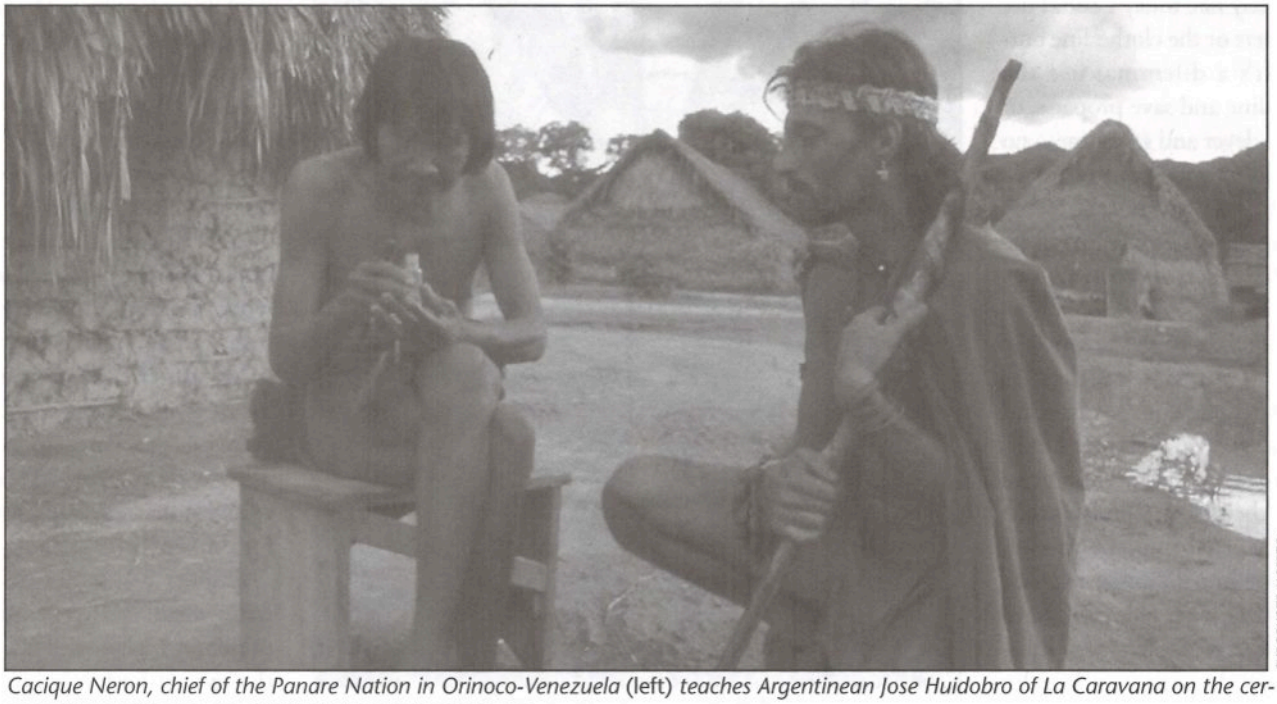
Aviva Bezilla has lived at East Wind since 1997.

Iquique, Chile

BY SUBCOYOTE ALBERTO RUZ

La Caravana Arcoíris por La Paz

(The Rainbow Caravan of Peace)



SUBCOYOTE ALBERTO

Cacique Neron, chief of the Panare Nation in Orinoco-Venezuela (left) *teaches Argentinean Jose Huidobro of La Caravana on the ceremonial use of* yopo, *an plant ally that induces visions.*

First gong. It is still dark. Soon I'll need to leave the warmth of bed and get to the shower before rush time. Right now we're in Iquique, on the northern desert coast of Chile, staying in a comfortable house a block away from the beach. We're here rent-free because this is a foreclosed house—but the bank could sell it at any time. Usually we camp on beaches, in deserts, in luxurious tropical forests, on the banks of local rivers, high in the Andes, in mountain valleys, or outside small rural towns. We also spend time in big cities, more that we would like, because in cities we can get paid work to fund our basic needs and maintain our old buses and trucks.

When we know we will stay longer at one spot, we raise the big Circus tent. It provides shade, camping space, our performing stage, and meeting space to teach arts, host cultural

About La Caravana

La Caravana is an international mobile ecovillage. For the past eight years they have traveled in buses and trucks through Central and South America sharing grassroots ecological awareness and education through music, theater, and art. Now in Iquique, Chile, La Caravana is currently home to 20 people of all ages and backgrounds, and eight different nationalities, from South America, North America, and Europe. Founded in 1996 by longtime Huehuecoyotyl members Liora Adler and Alberto Ruz, La Caravana members have taught and performed in 14 countries, including Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador for more than a year each. In 2003, La Caravana was the primary host/organizer for the international Call of the Condor ecovillage and bioregional gathering in Peru. *—Ed.*

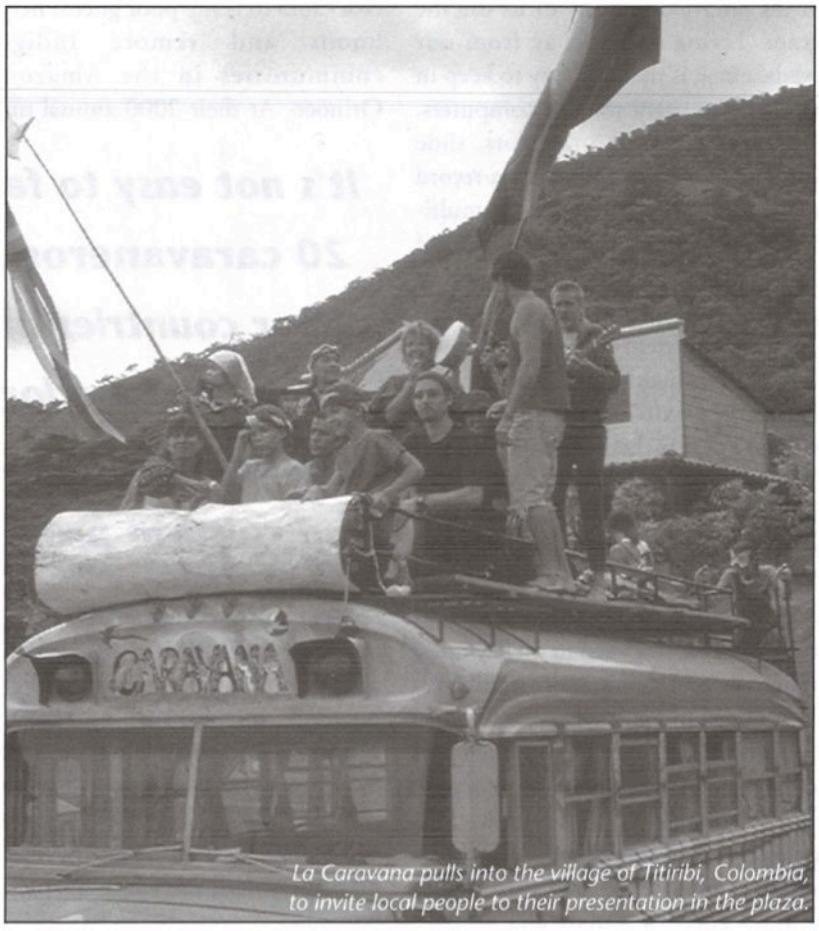
events, offer workshops, and hold community meetings. Life in our mobile village changes every two or three months as we move to a new location, receive and train new aspiring members, create links with the native people, make ourselves known to the local authorities, and connect with groups or local organizations with similar aims and values.

This morning a few people first walk out to the beach to do yoga, tai chi, or meditate before sunrise. Others stay in bed as long as possible, through second gong. But by third gong we're all up, forming a circle to thank the Pachamama for all her warmth, the father sun for the light, our rotating cooks who prepare the meals, the peasants who grow the food. We chant, and sometimes do a circle dance before sitting down to breakfast and talking about the day's work.

After breakfast our different "departments" do their daily work. One group leaves for the Municipal Theater to rehearse "Maya," our new play. Our kids do their schoolwork with their home-schooling teacher. Other community members may go shopping for supplies, or stage a retake—dressing up as clowns and stilt walkers to play music, juggle, and entertain at the big farmer's market in exchange for boxes of carrots, tomatoes, apples, lettuce, cabbages, potatoes, or corn.

Another group's task is public relations—connecting with local cultural institutions, selling workshops or performances, visiting a local newspaper or a radio or TV station for an interview. We use local media to invite people to our programs and to talk about ecology, civil rights, defense of native cultures, or just about the life in our community. We've adopted the ancient rainbow emblem from the Andes, the wifala, as our community flag, and we try to act as messengers of goodwill among nations and across borders.

By noon or so, we've all returned to our base camp for lunch and to take a break. Iquique is a very warm place, so an afternoon siesta is necessary for some of us. In cooler climates like Peru, with cold short days and even colder nights, we took advantage of as much daylight as possible and worked throughout the whole day.



La Caravana pulls into the village of Titiribi, Colombia, to invite local people to their presentation in the plaza. SUBCOYOTE ALBERTO

This afternoon, we may take classes from local people. Or we may offer workshops for groups of young cabros—local teenagers—on dance improv, body painting for theater, clowning, trapeze, or lately, Capoeira, the Afro-Brazilian martial art/dance that some of our older kids really like. Most weekends we offer two-day intensive workshops on more "serious" subjects, such as an introduction to permaculture, consensus decision-making, appropriate technology for desert regions, ecovillage living and ecovillage design, or an introduction to the Mayan calendar of 13 moons. In the coming two weeks, we'll also offer a workshop on natural healing and preparing medicinal herbs and one for women on gender and femininity.

We face a variety of experiences at every turn, from guerrilla warfare and military blockades to remote indigenous communities in the Amazon.

In each place we stop, a circle of close friends always develops after one or two weeks. So on weekends we also take trips to local places to participate in activities organized by our new allies and friends. We share meals and activities and invite them to act in our performances. They help connect us with other local people, helping us open doors for the Caravana in town. They also invite us to parties and festivals. Often we join them in an equinox celebration, or in holding a vigil for peace in Baghdad, or in the action focalized by the Otomi people in Mexico, "Eight thousand drums for Mother Earth." Romance and love stories are often also born from the interaction between caravaneros and native people.

In the afternoons many of us use the Internet. Living so far away from our beloveds, email is the only way to keep in touch. We also carry with us computers, digital cameras, video projectors, slide projectors—tools we use to keep a record of our adventures, to animate our multicultural presentations for workshops and talks, and to illustrate articles we send to magazines worldwide. We have been trying for more than a year to set up a mobile audiovisual vehicle and archive office, to keep safe our delicate instruments and not mix them with our kitchen and theater equipment and personal belongings. Each caravanero wears at least three or four hats: I personally am part of the documentary team, the vehicle maintenance crew, international PR, and funding. And we still need to fill key roles: good drivers, mechanics, more musicians, and a really good grant writer.

In almost eight years we have lived in 14 countries, in some more than a year, such as Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador. You can imagine the variety of experiences we face at each turn of the road, from guerrilla warfare and military blockades to really poor ghetto neighborhoods and remote indigenous communities in the Amazon and Orinoco. At their 2000 annual meeting, representatives of Ecovillage Network of the Americas (ENA), recognized our Caravan as a mobile ecovillage, acting as an outreach and networking arm for the ecovillage and intentional communities movements internationally. It was not an easy decision for ENA, since ecovillagers and bioregionalists, being land-based and place-oriented, are often suspicious of nomadics.

It's not easy to feed 20 caravaneros in poor countries like Peru or Ecuador, working only in social and cultural projects.

Daily life in the Caravan is not always exciting, especially when we stay months working in a city, for instance. Tension grows, people start feeling restless, especially those who come for a short time and expected to be traveling more. We have other frustrations as well. Every time we come to a new home base we have to start the process all over again. And our turnover is high enough that our crew changes every three to six months. As soon as we train one group, we have to do it again with the newcomers. It's like in any school: when the kids finally get it, they're gone!

The economics can also be difficult. It's not easy to feed 20 *caravaneros* in poor countries like Peru or Ecuador, working only in social and cultural projects. We have to depend on the good will and trust of the local municipal institutions, schools, and universities. Sometimes, though not often, we'll get a grant for a specific event, such as the one we held in Ecuador to bring together 140 women community leaders for a week-long "Peace Village," to share strategies, strengthen links, and create alliances. Or last year,

In Paricatuba, a small village in the Amazon, La Caravana celebrates Spring Equinox with local children

SUBCOYOTE ALBERTO

Siesta time in the rainforest of Brazil. Russ Stark from Montana takes a break after fixing the bus.

SUBCOYOTE ALBERTO

when we got a grant to help organize the week-long gathering in Peru, "The Call of the Condor," which brought together more than 700 people from 34 countries, representing ENA and ecovillage activists, the Bioregional Congress, traditional healers, spiritual leaders, social activists, artists, rainbow travelers, and children. We worked nonstop, from sunrise to almost the next sunrise, for 15 days before the event and a week after everyone's departure.

Evenings we stay long in the communal space—talking, socializing, reading, making music, and sometimes, like this evening, watching a video. Some do crafts, others write in their journals, and others visit with friends and plan for future events. When we're preparing for a new performance, we rehearse at least four hours a day and a couple more hours in the evening.

In our community meetings, we use the consensus process as practiced in bioregional gatherings, with a facilitator, agenda, timekeeper, and vibeswatcher. Our meetings last usually from an hour and a half to sometimes two and a half or three hours when we face hot issues. One of our difficult issues, especially in the past, has been whether to allow "sacred" though usually illegal plant substances. On the road, as strangers in foreign lands, we must adhere to zero use, zero carrying, zero buying. It's too risky—we could face deportation and lose our vehicles for a couple of joints. So we don't use these substances, even though we wish it could be different.

We also argue about how long to stay in one place. Or if we should stay more in small rural communities instead of cities. Most times this decision doesn't depend only on our desires. We also face immigration laws and local officials who allocate or deny permits to work, to get paid, and to keep the buses longer than six months in the country. Not to mention delicate political situations such as countries plagued by civil wars or ruled by authoritarian governments. And the local climate, which may be too wet, too dry, too cold, or too hot. Moving helps, but sometimes we end up moving to the wrong place at the wrong moment. "Going with the flow" is not always as easy as it seems.

After rehearsing, socializing, or meeting, we usually go to bed late: our single people to the communal rooms, couples to their tents, and some to the buses, for security or privacy. Tonight I turn in late. As I relax into sleep, I contemplate our life in the Caravan.

Our future is uncertain. Our schedule and route are also uncertain. We must learn, over and over, to become unattached to things, ideas, beliefs, people, and places. Everything changes in this lifestyle; only a few factors keep the circle together—our meals, our ceremonies, our meetings, our parties, our presentations. We have a communal economy, but we cannot afford to give a salary to anyone, as we have no insurance and no medical help. We are able to sustain the project by living very, very simply, but we are not able to save for accidents, sickness, or major repairs of the buses. Last year we lost our biggest rig in the Andes, and almost lost 10 of our people too, when we totaled the bus and most of its contents. Still, we were able to pull our trip together and host the Call of the Condor event. We even managed to leave Peru just in time, the night our visas and permits expired. Now in Chile we plan to get all the way to Tierra del Fuego, visit Argentina and Uruguay, and hold another major international event in Brazil next year.

How will we do all this? Who knows. Miracles happen every day. I consider the Caravan a living miracle. Other caravans for peace are starting to appear here and there, inspired by our example. For three decades I've preached that "No-Mad Living" is a sane alternative. I strongly recommend this way of life for community veterans to take a break away from home and get some fresh perspective, sharing what they know. And for the youth of intentional communities and ecovillages to find themselves, meet other social mutants like themselves, have fun, and serve the Mother everywhere they go.

Life in community is not always romantic or idealistic, nor is being a gypsy on the road. I have been a member of and a founder of various intentional communities since 1968, and I carry the scars to prove it. Still, I haven't found any better solution or a more satisfying alternative than tribal living. I cannot foresee the future of our species without seeing some kind of collective and cooperative organization. Caravans were here thousands of years ago, before agriculture, private property, borders, and nations. Six billion people cannot become nomadic, but I still think it is a sane alternative for some. I salute the coming Caravans, running on biodiesel, powered by solar systems, using appropriate technologies, teaching others how to live with the minimal impact on the Mother, walking softly on her skin, healing and serving communities along their path. That's my message tonight to community activists, from the far desert lands of South America.

Mexican community activist Subcoyote Alberto Ruz founded Hathi Babas and Illuminated Elephants, an international traveling theater community in the 1970s, co-founded Huehuecoyotl ecovillage in Mexico, and has coordinated La Caravana since 1996. He is author of Rainbow Nation without Borders *(Bear & Co. New Mexico, 1989), and more recently, editor of* Hay Tantos Caminos *("So Many Roads," Colofon, Mexico, 2004) www.lacaravana.org; subcoyotealberto@yahoo.com.*

In Deep Forest and Meadow

BY CHRIS ROTH

I awake early, around 5:15 am. Dawn is breaking through the windows and skylight of my combination yurt-cabin home here at Lost Valley Educational Center in western Oregon. I drift back into a doze for the next hour or so. By the time I wake up fully again, I can see through the far window that sunlight hasn't yet hit the treetops beyond our meadow.

Without leaving my futon, I switch on the DC-to-AC adapter which hooks my laptop computer to my photovoltaic system. I lie on my stomach and swivel my computer so it's facing me. I'm finally ready to email a friend whose message yesterday afternoon provoked strong responses in me. I almost answered her immediately, but decided to wait, partly because once I started writing, my message might have become quite long. Now, however, I'm too preoccupied by all the things I want to do today to answer fully. So I suggest we talk in person, hopefully later this week.

About Lost Valley Educational Center

Currently home to 20 members, Lost Valley is an educational and conference center and intentional community on 87 acres in western Oregon, about 18 miles from Eugene. Founded in 1989, Lost Valley offers courses and residential educational opportunities in organic gardening, permaculture and ecovillage design, natural building, the Naka-Ima process for emotional healing and personal growth, and other courses. They also publish *Talking Leaves* magazine. —Ed.

GILLES MINGASSON

Living and working in an intentional community presents an ongoing opportunity to practice balancing personal needs with work-related needs and with the needs of the larger group. I've learned that in most cases, by making conscious choices, I can find ways to meet all three to my satisfaction—perhaps not instantly, but relatively rapidly and painlessly. In fact, a little appreciation of delayed gratification seems to go a long way in helping create a culture based on "living in the Now" rather than "wanting it all *Now*!"

One nonnegotiable personal daily need is for exercise. I dress, step outside into the crisp morning air, and climb onto my bicycle. My customary early-morning ride takes me past the meadow, across Anthony Creek, past our main garden and young nut orchard, and up the gravel road which defines the far edge of our 87-acre property. I lift my bike over a gate and climb the gentle slope paralleling the creek for a while until I reach a dozen old-growth trees spread out over a quarter-mile stretch. I visit the largest of these trees almost every day. Along this road I've also encountered cougar, bear, fox, elk, countless deer and rabbit, as well as owls and numerous other birds.

After riding back and stopping by my yurt to pick up a few items, I cycle up to the main lodge and kitchen for breakfast. Oatmeal with frozen blueberries is my current favorite. We generally fend for ourselves at breakfast time, eating weekday lunches and dinners together (each taking turns cooking and/or cleaning, generally in teams of two or three). Today, we have a visiting conference group, which means a special breakfast has been prepared, and I am able to get some leftover oatmeal before it finds its way into the refrigerator or chicken-food bucket.

I cycle on down to the office of *Talking Leaves.* I'm the editor of this journal (subtitled *A Journal of Our Evolving Ecological Culture*), which Lost Valley publishes roughly three times a year. My mission is to choose from among 200 low-resolution photo images sent by a photographer from the French edition of *Rolling Stone*. He and his journalist colleague visited us in October for an article in their December 2003 issue. The article is a mixed bag of understanding and appreciation of the choices we've made to live communally, along with some exaggeration, stereotyping, and just plain inaccuracy, much of it comical. In addition to marrying off one of our members to the community's founder, the author described us as a "free love" commune, characterizing another member as engaging in polyamory "furiously." ("Yeah, I wish," was her response.)

Along this road I've also encountered cougar, bear, fox, elk, and countless deer.

Despite the French reporter's impression, we are not what most would call a "free love" community. Monogamy, celibacy, and polyamory are all accepted and practiced here. While physical affection is expressed openly, privacy is also highly valued in intimate relationships. Nevertheless, we do share love "freely" in a more spiritual sense, as we value openness, honesty, sharing, connection, and the loving energy that arises as a result. Perhaps the reporter confused this love and emotional intimacy with sexual intimacy.

Author Chris Roth bicycles through the woods almost every morning.

GILLES MINGASSON

I select 30 or so images and request higher-resolution versions by email. Then I switch into my other job—coordinating our organic gardens. We grow a significant portion of our own vegetables, supplying a large amounts of our salad and cooking greens, garlic, squash, and other crops that grow especially well here.

I meet our two garden interns in the main garden across the creek. Tangela arrived a week ago, and Sam arrived just yesterday. I feel very good about both, although we're still just getting to know one another. Interns come to help the community with various areas of our work, usually on a work-exchange basis, with previous experience and a willingness to take on

Chris coordinates Lost Valley's organic gardens.

GILLES MINGASSON

some degree of responsibility as prerequisites. People wanting to learn in a more formal "student" role apply for our apprenticeships, which involve fees.

While still in their early twenties, both garden interns strike me as emotionally mature and empowered. Tangela seems as if she has already taken all the personal growth workshops we offer (though she's taken none yet), as she's fluent in the communication skills and self-awareness that help define the community's interpersonal atmosphere. Sam also seems fluent in communication skills and emotional self-awareness. Tangela has spent much of her life helping the ill and alter-abled, and perhaps as a result, generally embraces diversity in lifestyle choices. She has what I experience as a "soft" energy. Sam has put more of his focus into a more harder-edged kind of activism than Tangela has. A strong disbeliever in the petroleum-fueled economy, he has stayed out of private vehicles for the past four months, choosing only to walk, bicycle, or use public transportation.

One of our conversations this morning involves the politics of lifestyle. As we weed around our over-wintered garlic and kale, prepare some areas for peas, appreciate the pleasant spring weather, and listen to the birds, I mention how, after boycotting computers until I was 30, I've grown to appreciate what amazing tools they are. Sam says that no amount of small-scale positive impact they might have could possibly offset all the damage done by their manufacture. He believes our civilization needs to crumble and we need to start over from scratch.

We weed around our over-wintered garlic and kale, appreciate the pleasant spring weather, and listen to the birds.

I used to see things the same way, I tell him, but something has changed for me; I'm not sure that life on the planet, let alone the human race, could recover easily from the kind of apocalyptic process he recommends. I no longer see things in such black and white terms. Tangela lends her perspective, especially when the discussion turns to the appropriate or inappropriate use of cars. (Sam has stated that no one, no matter what his or her economic circumstance, truly "doesn't have a choice" whether or not to use a car.)

The discussion goes in several additional directions, with us weeding all the while. Increasingly, we discuss the conversation itself—what we've each felt during various parts of it, what we've heard one another say, and what that has brought up in each of us. This self-reflection and emotional openness, in fact, has

GILLES MINGASSON

been happening throughout most of the conversation—which is what distinguishes this kind of discussion from a political debate in which each person is anxious to be "right." Sam reports that the adrenaline-rush he was experiencing earlier has subsided; we are all hearing one another better now, respecting divergent viewpoints, and finding that we agree on many fundamental things.

The first lunch bell rings and we wrap up work for the morning. We walk to the main lodge and join the approximately 20 community members and interns and 45 mostly teenage conference participants for lunch. Since this particular conference group has requested a menu heavy on refined starch and cheese, some of us have prepared leftovers of a more whole-foods variety. In both cases the food is organic, but for many of us, "organic" is only a start. There's a fairly high consciousness about food here, and we accommodate a variety of different approaches, from meat-eating (prepared by those who eat it in a separate kitchen) to vegan and raw-food diets.

Many of us Lost Valley members eat on an outside porch, both to enjoy the sunshine and to get away from the hubbub inside. Sam talks to some friends about the morning's garden discussion—how he'd been able to work through his reactivity at hearing two people older than him offering a "mellower" viewpoint, how he'd been able to hear past the phrase "I used to be that way, too," and understand what we were actually saying. He appreciates that Tangela and I are both sympathetic toward his point of view and his feelings, but have both made just slightly different choices.

My second clean-up of the day is not the easiest.

I am on lunch cleanup today—a process facilitated by some '60s folk music on the kitchen stereo. It's a lengthy shift, due to the conference group, but it goes smoothly. After the shift, I cycle back to the office to quickly check the mail, then to my yurt to check email.

Then I'm back in the garden for the rest of the afternoon. Tangela, Sam, and I continue our work on the garden beds, and also wheelbarrow the greens we've cut and the weeds we've pulled into the compost area, ready to be layered next week into a full-fledged compost pile. We talk some, sing some, listen to birds some, and before we know it, the afternoon is gone. Before dinner, I take a walk through our 45-acre new forest—up along the creek, then following the paths weaving up and down near our top boundary, then back down past the basketball court and the pond.

At dinner, I sit outside at a picnic table with two of the coordinators of the visiting conference and one community member. I find out a little more about the visitors, and we trade stories of what the winter weather has been like in Idaho and here in Oregon. I have met one coordinator from the conference group many times before, and he (like most of the group) seems to sincerely appreciate the kind of environment we make available for the teen personal-growth workshop he helps facilitate. They also like the food this week (better than we do, but we don't say that).

GILLES MINGASSON

Many Lost Valley members live in forest cabins like this one.

My two meal cleanup shifts for the week are both on Tuesday, to reduce potential schedule conflicts on other days. My second clean-up of the day is not the easiest, since it's a large dinner and the two of us on this regular shift are expecting a third person to come, but he never arrives. Several people come late to take out food we've already put away. Then the wife of the "missing helper" arrives in the kitchen. "Are you here to help?" I ask hopefully. "No, I'm here to eat—and could you turn the stereo down while I'm getting food? It's too loud for me."

As someone who often prefers music softer, I understand her request, but I'd feel a lot better about granting it if she were here to help clean dishes rather than to inadvertently undo some of the cleanup we've just done. I turn down the stereo and do my best to communicate my mixture of surprise, disappointment, and reluctant amusement. We talk about it a little more, but I still feel this way—largely because cleanup is still not finished, and so I'll be late to our community meeting this evening. (Tomorrow, we will discuss this incident more, clear the residual "hurt" associated with it—which, even on this very minor scale, seems worth dealing with—and feel able to laugh about it. It will turn out that the "missing helper" aspect was a misunderstanding—he hadn't volunteered to be on this shift after all.)

I arrive late at our Community Purpose Circle, which we hold every two weeks to discuss and decide community business matters. I've missed announcements and committee reports, but am present for appreciations and the main agenda items. Someone appreciates my work on the magazine—which helps dispel some of my kitchen-cleanup/lateness angst. We agree to support a new conference center plan, in which we'll facilitate more individuals, groups, and events that we are excited about inviting. This is in contrast to what we have sometimes done in the past—hosting random conference guests with whom we may feel significantly less connection. Already, our main personal growth workshop, Naka-Ima, has provided a model for how events we put on can reinforce the sense of connection we feel as a community. Now, we are excited about expanding that spirit further into other areas and increasing our own opportunities for on-site education and growth. The Ecovillage and Permaculture Certificate Program planned for this summer is one model for the kinds of programs we would like to foster, and will bring many outside speakers to share their knowledge and life experiences with us.

I do my best to communicate my mixture of surprise, disappointment, and reluctant amusement.

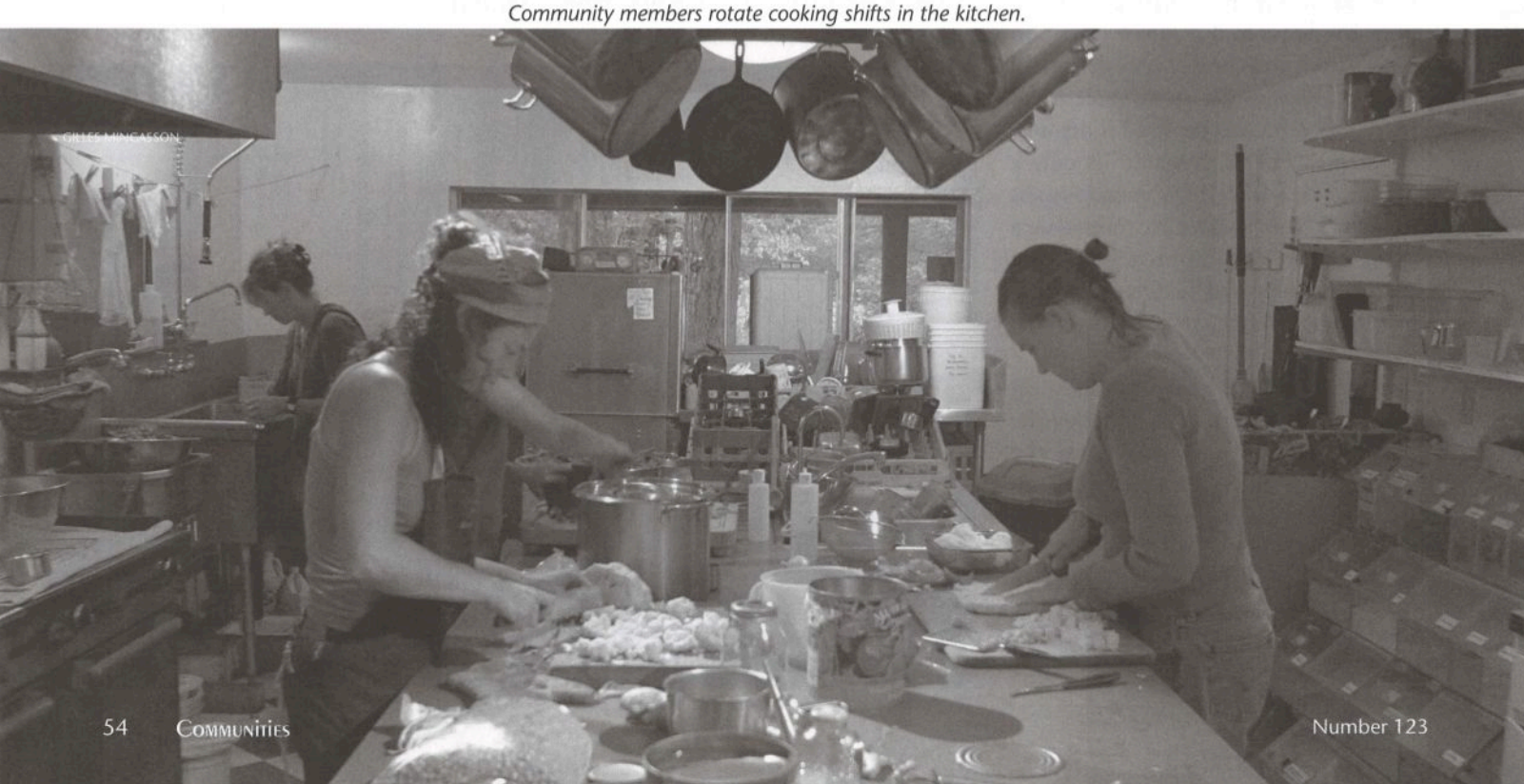
After the meeting, I return to my yurt. I check my email again, and am happy to find that my friend and I can meet on Friday.

I contemplate writing this article about "a day in the life" at Lost Valley. There is no absolutely typical day here. There are just unique days, like today, one after the other. I don't know what each one will bring, but they are inevitably full. I live and work in a beautiful natural environment, interact closely with many people, and also have time for self-reflection and self-expression. The mix of these aspects of my life varies continuously.

For now, I am content to shut down my computer, curl up in bed, and read before I go to sleep. After turning off the light I drift off to the sound of western screech owls hooting in the distance.

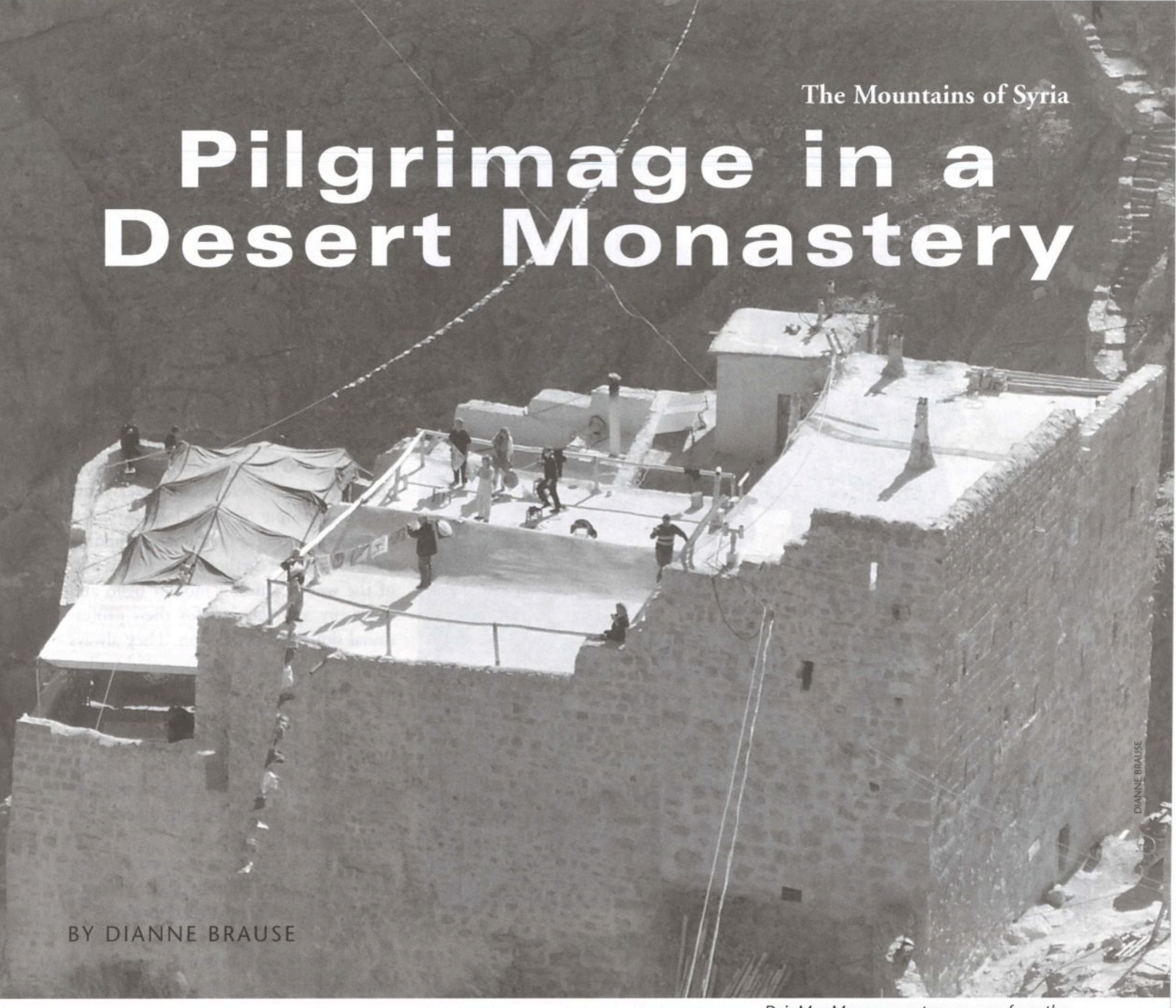
Chris Roth has lived, gardened, and edited Talking Leaves *at Lost Valley since 1997. chris@talkingleaves.org; www.lostvalley.org; www.talkingleaves.org.*

Community members rotate cooking shifts in the kitchen.



The Mountains of Syria

Pilgrimage in a Desert Monastery



BY DIANNE BRAUSE

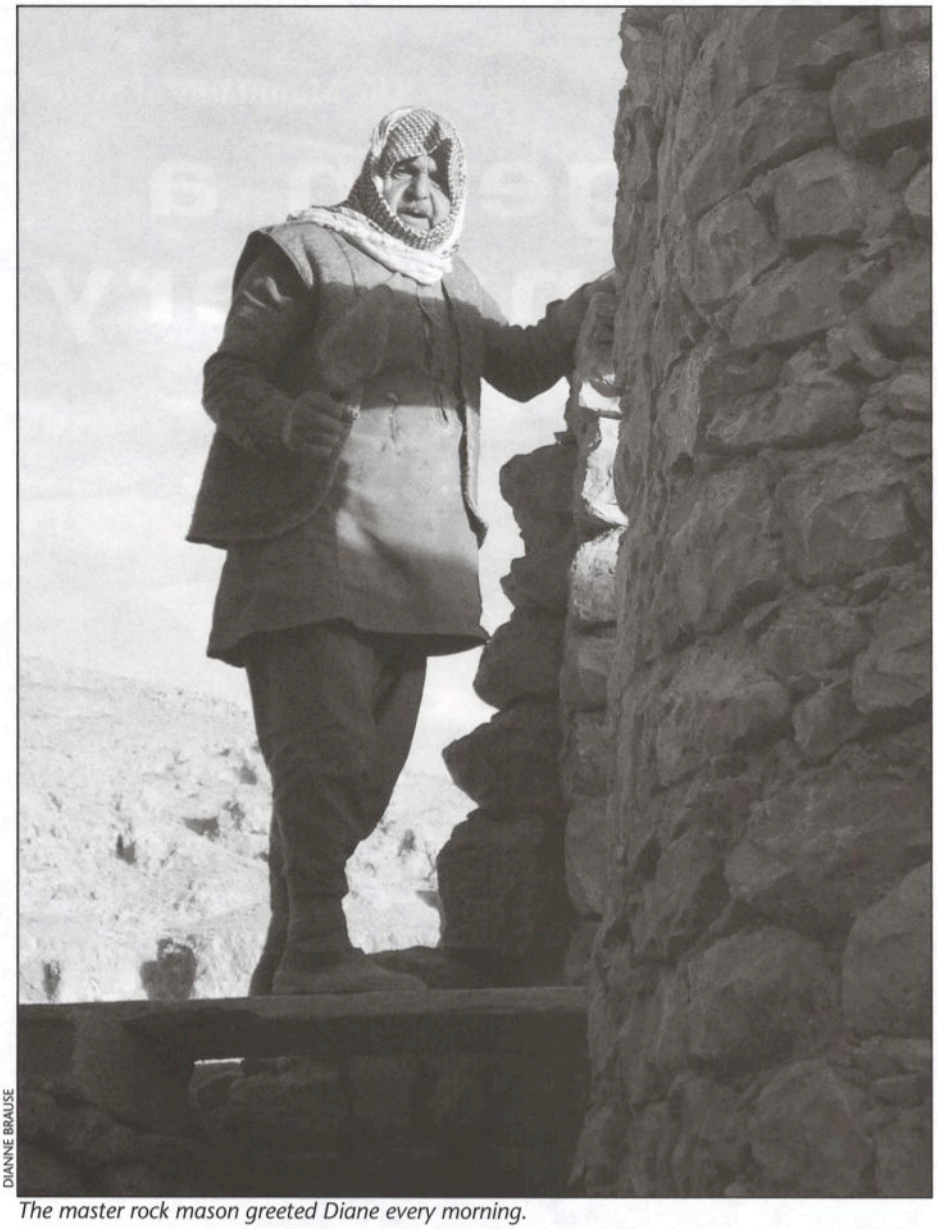
Deir Mar Musa monastery as seen from the mountain across the canyon.

My travel alarm goes off at 4:45 a.m. in my little cave. If I eat or drink anything in the next 12 hours, I've got to do it now. Although I'm visiting Deir Mar Musa, a vibrant Catholic monastery in the mountains of Syria, I am fasting for Ramadan in solidarity with the Muslim culture in this area. I rub my eyes and look out my "window," a ragged opening in rock overlooking the vast desert sky, and below, the ancient caravan route from Istanbul to Damascus.

I light a beeswax candle I've placed on one of the natural rock crevices. The bird with whom I share this cave rustles in its nesting spot. I'm told this cave was the home of the original monk of Deir Mar Musa, an Ethiopian prince who refused the throne, converted to Christianity, and was known in these parts as St. Moses the Abyssinian.

About Deir Mar Musa

Deir Mar Musa is an 11th-century Catholic monastery in the mountainous desert above the caravan route that leads to Damascus, Syria. Headed by Middle East peace activist Father Paolo, this progressive monastery offers mass and other services in Arabic, English, and other European languages. Its dedicated monks and nuns welcome travelers internationally for group and individual pilgrimage. *—Ed.*



DIANNE BRAUSE

The master rock mason greeted Diane every morning.

I eat my simple bread, tomatoes, hard-boiled egg, cheese, and two small, juicy tangerines and drink water from my plastic bottle. I notice the twinkling lights on the desert floor below and somehow feel connected to the devout Muslim villagers and shepherds also eating their morning meal before the first round of prayers for the day and the beginning of the Ramadan fast. I too, pray for peace and a happy life for these people, who my country is once again threatening with increased sanctions due to their country's alleged support for anti-Israeli and pro-Iraqi "terrorists."

It is the morning of my 59th birthday, and I am happy. As a co-founder of Lost Valley Educational Center in Oregon, I've been fascinated and delighted to spend about two weeks in this Syrian intentional community. First was a five-day visit to Deir Mar Musa with a group of Europeans and Americans on an Interfaith Peace Pilgrimage to learn about the lives, views, and aspirations of the monks and nuns here. This second visit is for 10 days on an individual pilgrimage. I go back to sleep in my amazing private abode—a small, comfortable cave, which I have furnished with a foam mattress, four blankets, two pillows, my books and journal, several candles, matches, and a plastic container and lid I use as a pee jar.

I look out my "window," a ragged opening in rock overlooking the vast desert sky.

I reawaken as dawn approaches. The pinks and blues of sunrise are spectacular and changing dramatically. I light my candles, write in my dream journal, and lay under my woolen blankets until I get up to go down the spiral steps to the still-being-constructed multi-story stone building clinging to the mountainside below.

Each day this castle-like building with its arches and narrow windows is being constructed as I watch. An elder stone mason, a couple of other local workers, and several young apprentices are building with the ancient methods used in this part of the world. I nod a modest hello and smile my appreciation for their professional skills and dedication. They always treat me with respect and guarded smiles. Clearly, I am not a woman like their Muslim wives, mothers, and daughters; they don't really know what to make of me. Do they mention me to their families when they go home to their nearby villages in the afternoon to break the Ramadan fast?

I climb up the stone stairs to the path that clings to the mountainside. It winds down to the metal swinging bridge over the dry *wadi* (streambed) below. As I cross the slightly swaying bridge I pause several times to breathe in the clean fresh air. I can hardly believe I'm here! The main monastery building is an ancient-looking multi-storied stone structure nestled into the mountain wall across the canyon. Parts of it were built in the 3rd, 11th and 13th centuries—first by Romans and later by early Christians.

I push open the heavy solid metal door. Just inside to my right are rustic bathrooms and a laundry room with big metal basins of water boiling over propane burners. On sunny days, the wash is hung on the rooftop above, where solar water heaters also collect the warmth of the sun. It's winter now, so many days aren't always sunny and the light comes and goes very quickly on this north-facing mountainside. I climb up the inner staircase of what

I like to call "the castle keep." At the top of the stairs, I pass through an arch onto the rooftop patio where most community activities take place on good-weather days.

I cross this roof area with its Bedouin tent of woven goat hair where meals are sometimes served, and hurry over to the ancient church, where I take off my shoes at the bench by the entrance. The doorway is covered with a rough-woven tapestry that I lift to push open the wooden door inside. The church is dimly illuminated by several candles, with most people on the floor, sitting on pillows on the several layers of carpet that insulate against the cold stone. A few older people prefer the small square stools or wooden benches along the walls. Gradually people filter in, take a Bible translated into Arabic, English, or various European languages, and sit in silent reading, prayer, or contemplation. Soon three monks and nuns enter and cross to the closet to cover their working clothes with white robes. They light more candles on the altar and begin to read the Bible in Arabic, and today also in English, since it is a commonly understood language among a number of the European guests. The monks offer prayers, sometimes in song, and individual prayers are said by anyone who wants to contribute. This service is very informal, especially since Father Paolo is absent, having gone down the mountain earlier in the morning for a meeting with one of the many groups he is active in.

Perhaps today Father Paolo is trying to convince Syrian environmentalists to support his idea of dedicating the Golan Heights as an International Peace and Nature Sanctuary, if and when Israel deeds it back to Syria. Or maybe he's making a social call to one of the nearby Christian villages where people still speak Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke so many centuries ago. Or maybe he is leading a service in a sister church in a nearby village. Or, perhaps he is meeting with a variety of Muslim clerics who are learning to work together towards cooperation and dialogue about the global situation and possible solutions for a peaceful Middle East.

As I cross the slightly swaying bridge, I pause several times to breathe in the clean fresh air.

Father Paolo is definitely one of my heroes on this trip. I like to think of him as a 21st-century Francis, as he is taking on the Catholic Church—challenging that institution to become more open, welcoming, and collaborative with Islam and the Arabic peoples who are the majority population in the region. And, of all the Christian religious leaders I've ever met, he is most willing to actually confront the writings of the Bible with his own feelings and emotions and equally to encourage other Christians to struggle openly with what their faith means in their real lives. Partly because of this openness, I believe, visitors from all over the world trudge up the 250 steps to be in his presence and drink in the truth and justice represented here. It's quite magical to see people come up into this peaceful place and begin to let go of some of the caution

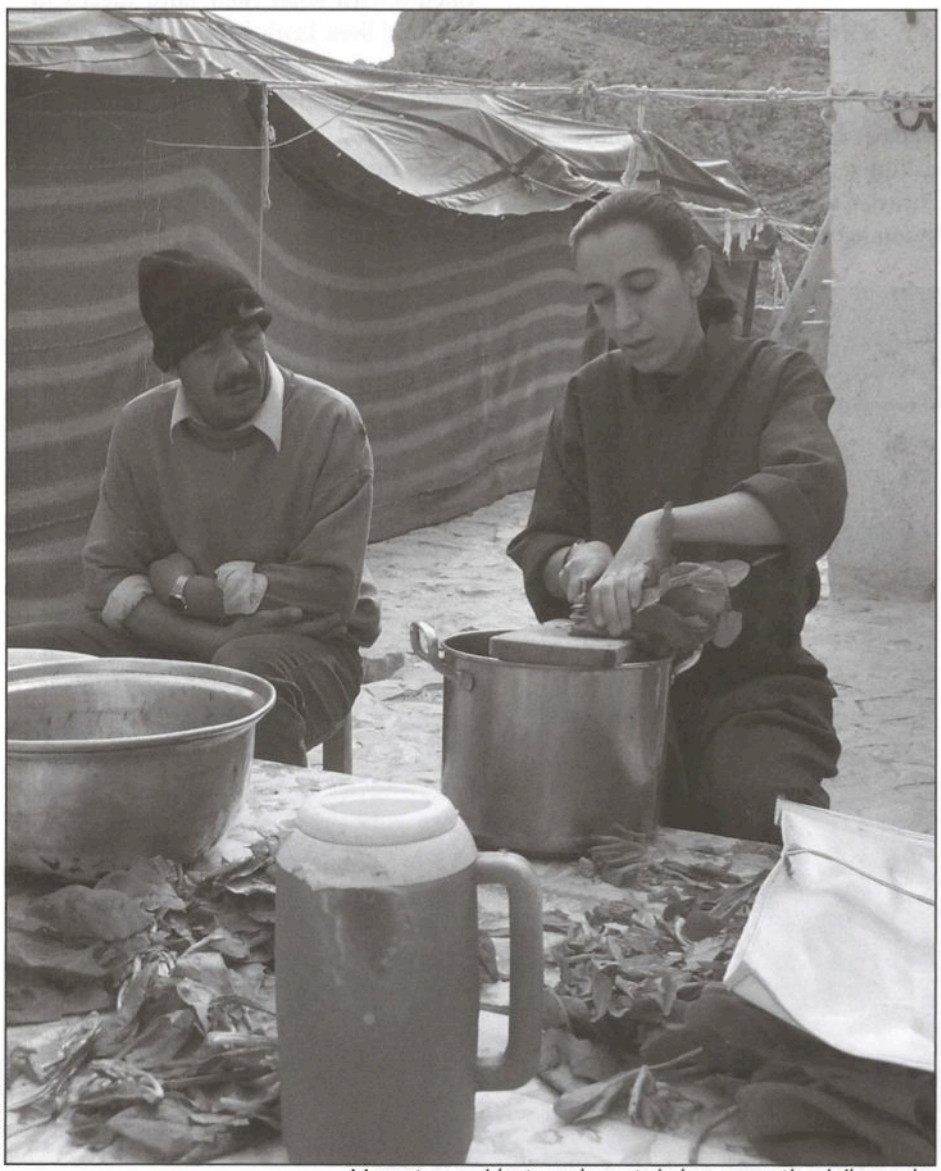
Pilgrims and monks dine together at morning mealtime. Brother Frederick at right.

and fear about sharing real thoughts and feelings that pervade everyday life in this country and abroad.

After the prayer time has ended those who aren't fasting go out into the bright sunshine to sit at low tables and eat breakfast. I'm not eating but I've learned the serving routine, so I go into the little pantry room and pull out the many small dishes filled with homemade cheese, yogurt, spices, herbs, tomatoes, olives, cucumbers, sugar, salt, olive oil, jam, and fruits, which I pass out to the people at the tables. Brother Frederic, who has cooked omelets in the kitchen brings them out and everyone serves themselves with the round flat bread used to scoop up the various contents of the numerous dishes. Some have cups of water, but most have tea with large amounts of sugar.

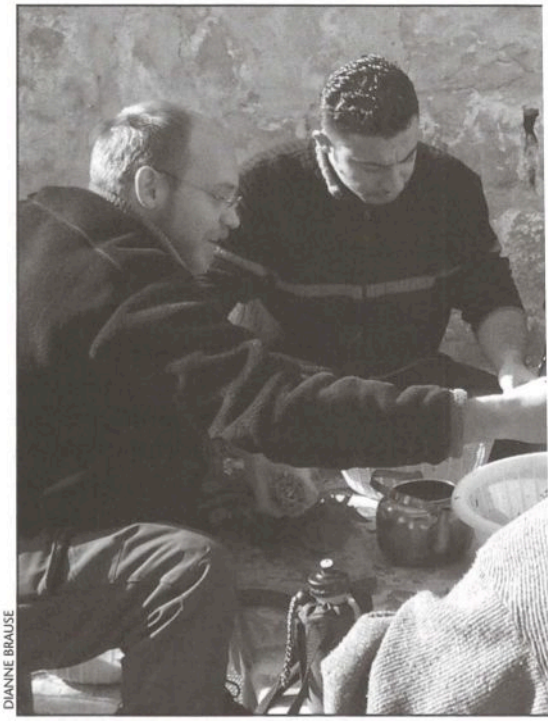
Since it is my birthday, I decide not to wash last night's dinner dishes and those from breakfast, as I usually do. Hot water is heated by a gas flame under a big tank and clean dishes are rinsed with cold water in a gigantic copper container. Someone else—a resident, nun, monk, or guest—will volunteer as they always do. Other guests will chip in with the various jobs related to preparing lunch and dinner. While no one is expected to pay for room and board during their stay, most choose to contribute in the daily rhythms of the work. They often make a financial contribution to the monastery as well.

I unlock the heavy door and step inside.



DIANNE BRAUSE

Monastery residents and guests help prepare the daily meals.



DIANNE BRAUSE

Sometimes people come up for a solitary retreat, often with spiritual guidance from Father Paolo. They either stay within the monastery walls in a private room or in one of the furnished caves. These usually have a wooden front wall with a door and window, a rustic bed, writing space, and altar of some kind. I long to experience each of these retreat spaces, but do not have many more days here, so I request to be allowed to go up on the flat top of the mountain and spend the day in the hermitage.

I get the key and ask for directions. One of the handsome stonecutters helps me up the rock cliffs above my cave. Soon I am on the top, able to see even further into the vast desert than ever before. I walk for a mile or so on the plateau and then see something green in the distance. It turns out to be a row of windbreak trees, along with other smaller trees, bushes, and herbs. I even find a luxurious lavender plant in bloom. I pick some sprigs to carry the smell with me as I walk around the small, but beautiful adobe house known as the hermitage. I unlock the heavy door and step inside.

First it is quite dark, as all the windows are doubly closed and shuttered to keep out vandals, animals, and the desert dust. I work hard to pry open the latches and let the sunlight and fresh air into this little piece of paradise. I am delighted with the two small bedrooms separated by a tiny

Monastery guests arrive from Europe as well as other Middle Eastern countries.

kitchen and bathroom. Off of one of the rooms is a small chapel, simply but artfully decorated. Although it is sunny and warm outside, it is still chilly inside and I am tired from my many days of fasting, so I choose a room and decide to climb into bed and have an afternoon nap. I almost never nap in my "real life" and it seems like such a birthday luxury, but what better place to bathe in spiritual energy?

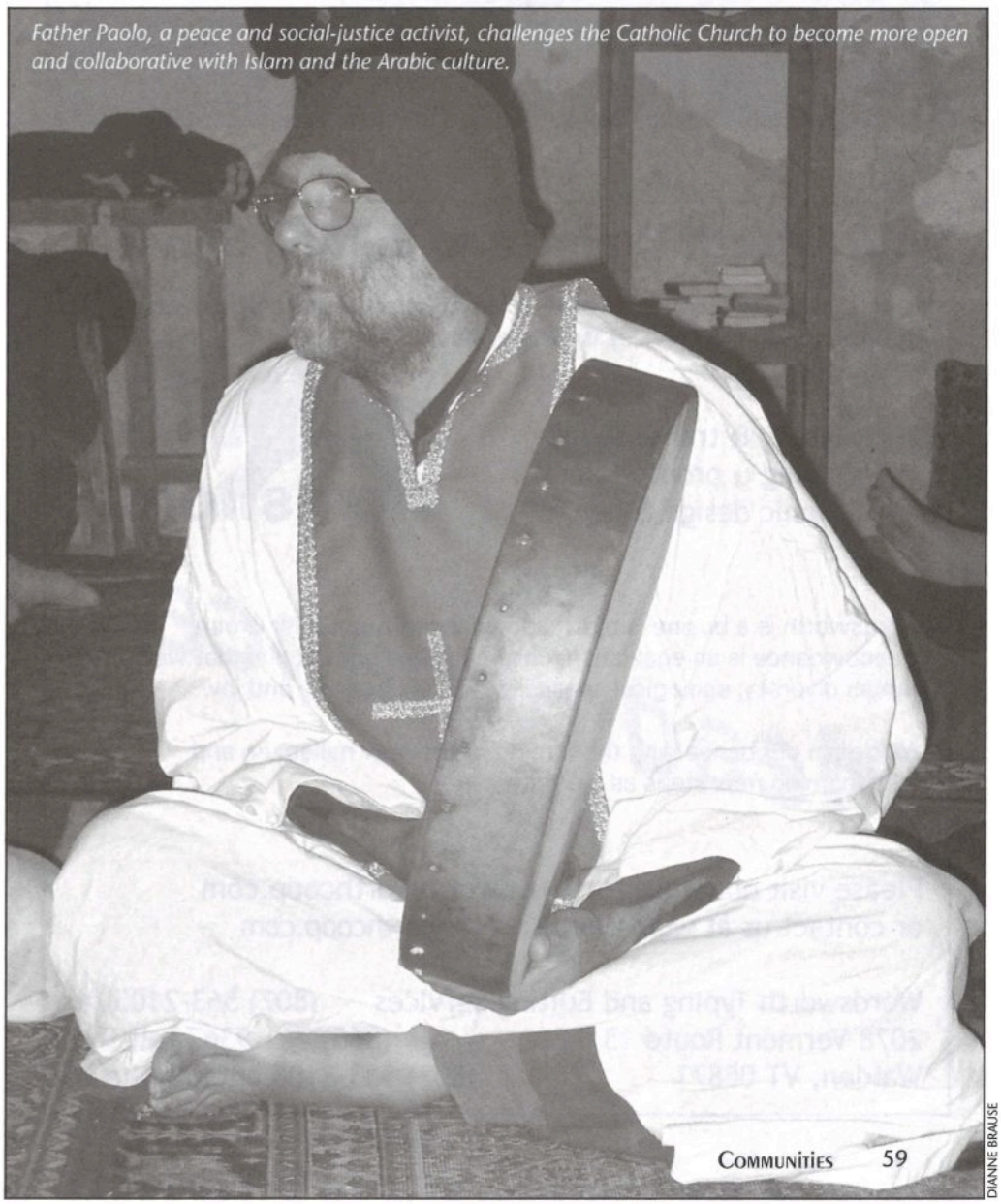
After a few hours of delicious sleep, I awaken and see that the sun is getting low. I need to think of returning to the monastery if I'm going to get back much before dusk. I reluctantly close everything up again, say farewell to this peaceful place, and begin to make my way in the direction of the *wadi* which should lead me back. Since I haven't come this way before, I'm not quite sure of my bearings, but I have a sense of the appropriate direction. I leave the trees (the only green I have seen since coming to the monastery in this period of drought) and head down the other side from the way I came, eventually getting to the *wadi* and following it down.

The earth colors of the desert and clear blue sky are quickly changing as the sun begins to go down below the mountains. I imagine that I can almost see to the shores of the Mediterranean beyond. I hurry home to my *iftar* meal (the meal that officially breaks the fast after prayers) as the sun goes down. I eat with several others also observing Ramadan, and then go into the ancient church for an hour of silent prayers and meditation before the celebration of Catholic Mass.

Within the church, partially restored frescoes painted by 11th and 13th century monks cover the walls and pillars, gleaming in the candlelight. I ponder at my great fortune to have this amazing experience on the night of my birthday. Monks, nuns, and pilgrims sit on the floor in relative comfort, surrounded by the great personages of the Bible on the walls.

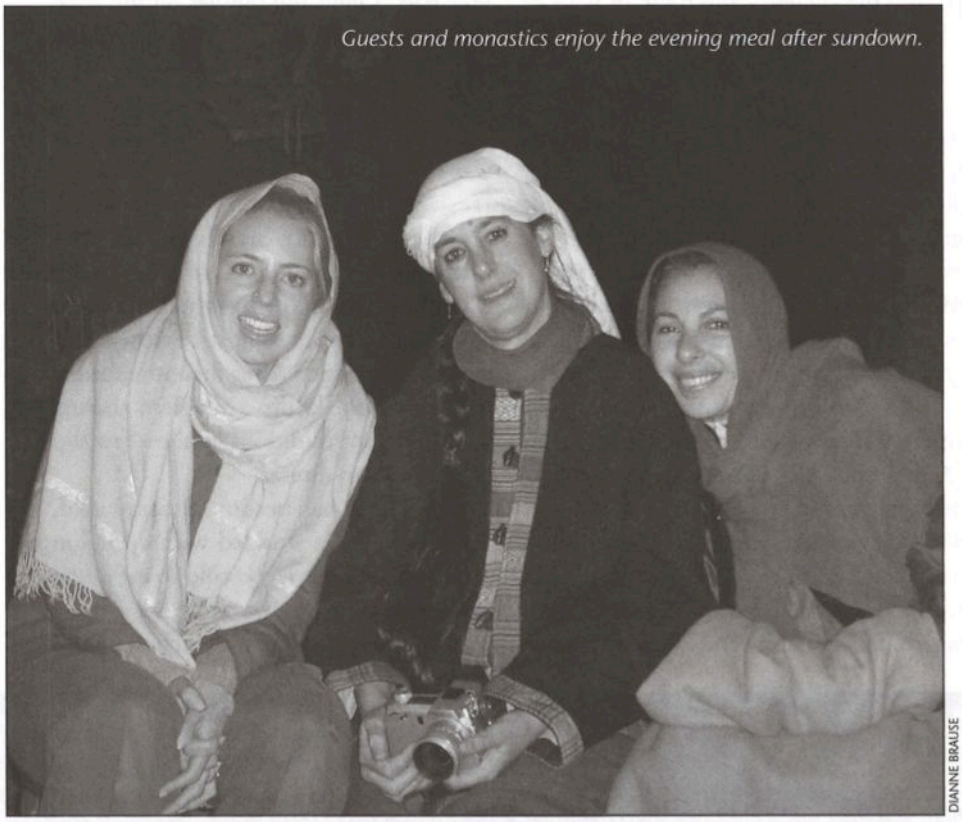
The door opens and a large man enters—Father Paolo. His spirit seems to fill the room. He and several monks and nuns put on their robes for the celebration of Mass, which is primarily said and sung in Arabic. Somehow, hearing the "Our Father" as *Allah* narrows the differences between Christianity and Islam. Everyone is invited to participate and many of us take part. I light the candles on the altar; others offer prayers in several languages or read the scriptures in English and Arabic. Special prayers are said for me for my safe journey, as I will soon leave for war-torn Israel and Palestine. We serve fresh-baked bread and wine to one another with our blessings, whether Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox Christian; Shiite or Sunni Muslim; Sufi, Buddhist, Baha'i, Agnostic, Atheist, or just plain "seeker." After the more formal service, we break into a songfest, sharing from different traditions, while a few slip out to heat up dinner.

Tonight it has become quickly cold. The black sky is studded with a million stars. We decide it is too cold to eat in the Bedouin tent, so we squeeze into a smallish dining room on benches around



Father Paolo, a peace and social-justice activist, challenges the Catholic Church to become more open and collaborative with Islam and the Arabic culture.

DIANNE BRAUSE



Guests and monastics enjoy the evening meal after sundown.

DIANNE BRAUSE

two tables. We are hungry, and enjoy the vegetable soup, bread, and the multiple regular fixings. Father Paolo sits next to the oil stove and uses the hot sides and stovetop to toast the flat bread. In honor of my birthday, we break out two bottles of wine, shared by the 25 or so people

The black sky is studded with a million stars.

who are there. Deena, the Syrian nun, has made a special sweet treat along with cookies she made over the gas burner. We eat, talk, laugh, sing, and tell stories. Soon, people are ready to disperse to their various sleeping quarters and climb under their warm covers.

I go back down the stairs and through the heavy front door, cross the bridge and head up the path to my cave on the opposite canyon wall. I turn around and look back at the amazing sky and the flicker of lights beginning to go out in the various narrow monastery windows.

I climb up my spiral stairs and take in the vastness of the universe before wriggling under my covers to write of the perfection of this day, my 59th birthday. I think fondly of my home at Lost Valley, almost halfway around the world. I feel so blessed to be as welcomed, honored, and respected here in a totally foreign and unknown place as I am on my own home turf. I love it that Deir Mar Musa and Lost Valley are probably more similar to each other in values, aspirations, and even lifestyles than either of us are to the dominant cultures of our two countries. For me this is one of the reasons I travel—to grok how similar life can be for people who are attempting to work towards sustainability and transformation of the world and the human race.

Dianne Brause is a cofounder of Lost Valley Educational Center in Dexter, Oregon, where she has lived since 1999, and travels as a peace and ecotourism activist. Various articles and pictures from her recent trip to the Middle East are available on the Internet. For more information: diannebr@lostvalley.org. For more information about Deir Mar Musa: www.deirmarmusa.org.

A Day in the Life of a Free-Range Toddler

CHILDREN IN COMMUNITY

BY ALEXANDRA GEDDES

This morning Canto is groggy and blinking as he slides off the bed and out into the living room. His parents are already up.

"There's a lizard in my diaper," he whines sleepily. Eric, his papa, takes off the diaper. The day has begun, a Tuesday as normal as any could be in the life of an active, free-range toddler.

Canto stands and sways in the middle of the floor awhile longer, waking up. He eats bites of toast, sings, and spins in circles. He moves all the firewood from its box by the door onto the shelf for the pots and pans. Eric, who is French, heads out to find a trowel he had misplaced a few days ago, and his mama, Kellie, an American, decides to take down the window-screen racks of nettle that have been drying overhead in the living room.

Canto is excited about the nettles project. Kellie washes his hands so he can help. She gathers the dark green leaves, filling three grocery bags with the nettles that have finished drying. Mostly, Canto continues to jump, twirl, hoot, and dance around. At one point he sits down right down onto the corner of the screen. R-r-r-rip.

"Oh, Cantito, be careful. Mama uses this, we have to be gentle with it." Peeved, she lifts him and sets him up on his feet. He looks down at the screen with one finger in the corner of his mouth, his head cocked a little to the left.

"It'll still work, but let's try to be gentle with it, OK little guy?" Canto crouches down, takes the finger out of his mouth and touches it lightly to the frame.

A few minutes later he points out the front door whispering,

"Chickens."

"You want to go see the chickens, little guy?"

"Yes!!" He squeals and twirls and hops.

"Well, you'll need some clothes on, it's cold out still."

After getting help with pants and a shirt, he tears across the garden. He passes the play area's swings and trampoline, and comes upon adults Brent, Liz, and Michael by the raspberry bushes. They are headed off to finish the platform for Brent and Liz's dome. Canto is already tempted to join the expedition, but then Big Dog comes barreling down the path to come along, too, and that's the clincher.

Brent calls back, "We've got Canto," and off they go—out the gate, across the footbridge, up the path, and through the fence into the bigger "sunny side garden." There he abandons the party, because his

About Emerald Earth

Emerald Earth is currently twelve adults and three children living on nearly 200 acres in rural Mendocino County, California. The community values ecological sustainability and offers visitor work parties as well as formal workshops on natural building. *—Ed.*

Alexandra Geddes lives at Emerald Earth in California. For more information about Emerald Earth: lorax@ap.net; alex@paul13.com.

papa is over at the far side of the garden. He runs off across the still-wet morning grass.

Eric is clearing beds and building a compost pile. Canto joins in—throwing dirt, climbing on the growing mound, inspecting worms, and telling a long and serious story about a lizard and a gecko to

He eats bites of toast, sings, and spins in circles.

an attentive clump of motherwort. Eric spreads a layer of manure and goes off for another wheelbarrow-full of cover crop. As he heads back, he finds Canto at the top of the pile with his pants down, pointing down to his own small deposit excitedly.

"Canto's poopy and cow's poopies!"

Eric laughs. *"Fais comme chez toi."* ("Make yourself at home.") Canto's contribution to the compost pile later leads the adults to a heated debate about the community's human manure policy.

Next Canto hitches along for a wheelbarrow ride with Sara and Mitch, who are headed up to plant trees by the road. Halfway there they realize Canto is barefoot. Sara and Canto continue on while Mitch goes back to get a pair of shoes. Tree planting is fun for a while, but eventually it gets dull and hot and so our small protagonist is off again. Another wheelbarrow ride back to the garden and then a run with his papa back across the creek to the village area brings Canto to his first bath of the day, to wash off the morning mud and enact a watery adventure starring the two-headed plastic dragon and several seashells.

The lunch bells ring. Canto stands on the bench at the picnic table and eats his miso soup with gusto. After lunch a visitor from Oregon pushes him in the tire swing. (Emerald Earth gets lots of visitors: friends and family, community seekers, and people interested in natural building.) The afternoon takes shape—earth-moving projects in the sandbox with one-year-old Marina; trying to water

the ducks with a watering can; beating the bushes below the scaffolding where Eric is plastering; then another bath, this time with Marina.

Canto is seriously sleepy by this time, so Eric carries him back to their cabin and they lay down on the bed to read *The Lion and the Mouse.* But it turns out Eric is the sleepier of the two, and he reads himself to sleep first. Canto keeps turning the pages quietly, occasionally poking his snoring father, then curls up beside him and finally takes a nap.

He sleeps two and a half hours. Kellie is gardening out front when he wakes, and after sitting awhile together and nursing, they come out to gather up the tools. Canto is totally milk drunk—happy and affectionate and mellow. An airplane passes overhead.

"I want to go on the plane."

"It's too far away, little guy. Look, it's way up in the sky."

"I need a ladder."

So off they go to put away tools and look for a very big ladder. Aria, who's eight now, got home from school while Canto was sleeping, and she passes by heading up to the common house for dinner. She lets him hold one end of the badminton racket she is carrying and they run up the hill together. They hold it between them during the circle before dinner, too.

Dinner includes some of Canto's favorite foods—kale, quinoa, and pickled radish pods. But to no avail—before long he's down out of his highchair and running amuck. Aria lasts at dinner a little longer, but soon they are chasing each other around and around the sofa screaming, "Broom!" Someone suggests they go up to the kids loft. Deleh, one of the adults, goes up a little later with baby Marina and they all get dressed up and play a game involving rolling dolls across the floor. We're having an evening community meeting, though, so soon after dinner Kellie takes Canto back home to put him to bed a little early, so she can catch the second half of the meeting.

And that was Canto's day. I suppose now he's snuggled in bed beside his mama and his papa, kicking whichever one is closer. Ω

Directory Update

The Fellowship for Intentional Community wants to provide the most up-to-date contact information we can find for intentional communities. We do this primarily through our Communities Directory.

Since we cannot create an updated Communities Directory *every few months, we regularly publish the late-breaking information here in* Communities *magazine. All of the information in this "Directory Update" section has come in since the 2000 Directory was released.*

The information here is condensed and abbreviated. It will be more thoroughly presented in future editions of the Communities Directory. *For example, these communities will be listed in the cross-reference chart (population statistics, number of acres, leadership and decision-making structures, diet, schooling, spiritual practices, and so on), and on the regional maps of North America showing approximate community locations. For a copy of the* 2000 Communities Directory, *see store.ic.org or contact your local library.*

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. Email or mail to Directory Update, 138 Twin Oaks Rd, Louisa VA 23093; order@ic.org; 540-894-5798. Thank you!

New

7th Millennium Community Philippines
S. V. Mercado sm7thmil@yahoo.com
www.geocities.com/sm7thmil
Planned for location in the Phillipines. 4/2003.

Adahy Wakiza Eco-Village Project
1627B Mermaid Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11224
adahywakiza@childrenofthemillennium.org
www.childrenofthemillennium.org/adahywakiza
Planned for location in Belize. 4/2003.

ARC Retreat Center
1680 373rd Ave NE
Stanchfield, MN 55080
612-689-3540
11/2003.

Big Cedar Co-op
633 Aylmer St N
Peterborough, ON K9H 3X2
derekpinto@bigcedar.org
1/2003.

Chrysalis
930 N Arlington Mill Dr
Arlington, VA 22205-1330
703-536-9190
Michael Rios, michael@rios.org
2/2003.

Freestone Hill Community
Warwick, Queensland, Australia
www.freestonehill.org
5/2004.

Ishayas
254 Burke Dr
Stanwood, WA 98282-8637
www.ishaya .org
10/2003.

Miami Urban Cohousing
Miami, FL 33127
www.activistnation.org/cohousing.htm
10/2003.

Philacoho
Philadelphia, PA 19147
groups.yahoo.com/group/philacoho/
10/2003.

Turtle Bend Farm
Attn: Linda Derrickson
3192 Highway JG North
Mount Horeb, WI 53572
608-437-4141
thecreek@mhtc.net
2/2003.

Western Cultural Heritage Institute
Corvallis, MT
5/2004.

Yarrow Ecovillage (Forming)
42312 Yarrow Central Road
Chilliwack, BC V2R 5E2, Canada
604-824-0800
sunfolk@shaw.ca
www.yarrowecovillage.ca
3/2004.

Changes

Alpha Omega Christian Communities for the Chemically Injured
aocommunities@yahoo.com
www.aocommunities.org/
New web site and email. 1/2004.

Altair Cohousing
altaircohousing1@verizon.net
www.altaircohousing.com
New email and web site for this group that was first listed in *Communities* magazine #116. 5/2004.

Anahata Community Village
This community was first listed in Annual Update 2001. Updated text:
"Anahata is still a viable, functioning community. About 30 people are living here now, and the community is open to visitors and actively seeking new members." 10/2003.

Blue Heron Farm
61 Blue Heron Farm Rd
Pittsboro, NC 27312
bruce@bhfarm.org
www.bhfarm.org/
New postal address, email and web site. 5/2004.

Canon Frome Court
0870 765 0711
membership@canonfromecourt.org.uk
New phone and email address for this community first listed in *Communities* magazine #117. 3/2004.

Cardiff Place Cohousing
www.cohousing.ca/cohsng4/cardiff/
New web site. 5/2004.

Community and Retreat for Mindful Living
Correspondent reports email and phone out of service. 5/2004.

Cooper Street Household
5003 E Cooper St
Tucson, AZ 85711
Updated mailing address. 5/2004.

Doe Branch Community
[Formerly EarthLight Foundation]
Name change and update status to not disbanded. First listed in *Communities* magazine #116. 12/2003.

Homestead Ridge Cohousing
[Formerly Austin Rural Cohousing]
Name change. This community first listed in *Communities* magazine #115. 5/2004.

Maison Emmanuel
contact@maisonemmanuel.org
Updated email. 1/2004.

The Mariposa Group
Ericatn@pngusa.net
www.MariposaGroup.org
New email and web site. 5/2004.

Meadowdance Community
2078 Vermont Route 15
Walden, VT 05873
(802) 563-3099
New mailing address and phone. 4/2004

Nature's Pace Sanctuary
[Formerly Locust Grove Community]
Hartshorn, MO 65479
573-858-3559
573-858-3245
herm.naturespace@earthlink.net
New mailing address, phone numbers and email. 6/2003.

Pagan Intentional Community
Apdo. # 122
Bocas de Nosara
Nicoya, Guanacaste
Costa Rica
New address since last update. 10/2003.

Portland Eastside Cohousing (Forming)
503-948-8968
www.eastportlandcohousing.org
New phone and web site. This community was first listed in *Communities* magazine #117. 12/2003.

Trillium Community
[Formerly Trillium Community Land Trust]
trillium@deepwild.org
Changed community name. New email address. 5/2004.

Tullstugan kollektivhus
Dorjgrand 4 & 6
S-116 68 Stockholm
dickurba@chello.se
www.tullstugan.org/
New mailing address, email and web site. 5/2004.

The VOL Community
[Formerly Valley of Light]
info@volcommunity.org
New email and name change. 9/2003.

Zephyr Valley Community Co-op
smithgjo@hbci.com
www.hbci.com/~zephyr/zephyr.html
New email and web site 5/2004.

Lost/Disbanded

Commons on the Alameda
New Mexico
Lost Address. 5/2004.

Phoenix Community
Colorado
Disbanded. 11/2003.

Community Calendar

Through Sep 17 • Practical Leadership and Natural Building School

O.U.R. Ecovillage, Vancouver Island, Canada. Dates can be negotiated. Learn all aspects of natural building (straw bale, straw-clay, cob, willow, living roofs, earthen floors, radiant heat hybrid system, etc.) working on our Healing Sanctuary and Art Studio, plus community-building, goal-setting, scheduling, and personal growth. Also work in garden, greenhouses, w/animals. Buildings are constructed to code; engineers and building inspectors will be on-site sometimes. Eckhardt Beuchel, Tina Farmilo Alastair Heseltine, Craig Lawrence, Ianto Evans, and others. Fee incl. camping, meals. $3000 (12 weeks); $1200 (6 weeks)—dates can be negotiated. *www.ourecovillage.org; our@pacificcoast.net.*

Jun 17–20 • Sustainable Village Design

Ecovillage Training Center at The Farm, Summertown, TN. Part one: site selection, master planning and pattern design for ecovillage; consensus and conflict resolution, financial aspects, work issues, best practices. Join final part of our permaculture course for ecology, energy and resource conservation, social and community skills, and the economics of sustainability. Greg Ramsey, Albert Bates, Gwynelle Dismukes, Scott Horton, Dayfd Rawlings, Bernice Davidson, Yolanda Hunter, Kiyokazu Shidara, Jan Bang, Murad Al Khufash, Francesco Casini, and others. $400. *Ecovillage Training Center, PO Box 90, Summertown, TN 38483-0090; ecovillage@thefarm.org; 931-964-4324; www.thefarm.org. (See Jun 21–25, below.)*

Jun 17–25 • Permaculture Design Practicum

Ecovillage Training Center at The Farm, Summertown, TN. Second module of full permaculture design course, site team design work, is requirement for certificate. (See May 15–22 for Permaculture Fundamentals.) $800, incl. food, lodging, materials. *Ecovillage Training Center, PO Box 90, Summertown, TN 38483-0090; ecovillage@thefarm.org; 931-964-4324; www.thefarm.org.*

Jun 18–20 • Reclaiming Economics: Local Strategies For Promoting Community, Ecology, and Self-Reliance

Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain, NC. Conference, networking, and barter fair. Speakers, workshops on local currencies, buying local; progressive credit institutions and micro-credit; alternative economic indicators; sovereignty of communities over corporations; and partnerships between producers, consumers, and local businesses. Barter Fair Friday night. $30/day, incl. camping, before May 1st; $35 day afterwards. Meals, $20/day. *www.reclaimingeconomics.org; rodkimry@earthlink.net; 828-669-7552.*

Jun 19 • Fertility Awareness for Natural Birth Control or Pregnancy Achievement

Red Moon Herbs of Earthaven Ecovillage to be held at New Dawn Midwifery Center, Asheville, NC. Learn this effective and empowering form of natural birth control and achieving pregnancy—by observing and recording waking body temperature and cervical fluid. $75–95 sl. sc. Partners are encouraged to attend at no extra charge. *Red Moon Herbs, redmoonherbs.com; 828-669-1310.*

Jun 21–Aug 13 • Sustainability Education Program at Lost Valley

Lost Valley Educational Center, Dexter, OR. Holistic introduction to creating ecovillages and sustainable communities, two-month residential course, incl. permaculture design certificate course w/hands-on projects in organic gardening, eco-building, eco-forestry, appropriate technology, and community site design. Interpersonal communication in community, organizational and financial issues in community, opportunities to participate in Lost Valley's Naka-Ima personal growth workshops. Guest instructors incl. Lois Arkin, Rob Bolman, Tree Bressen, Diana Leafe Christian, Toby Hemenway, Mark Lakeman. College credit available through University of Oregon. *Marc Tobin, 541-937-3351, #104; sustainability@lostvalley.org; www.lostvalley.org.*

Jun 21–25 • Village Design Practicum

Ecovillage Training Center at The Farm, Summertown, TN. Second half of complete village design course. Participants will design a full-scale conservation community under supervision of master planners and architects, incl. Greg Ramsey. College credit available. $400. *Ecovillage Training Center, PO Box 90, Summertown, TN 38483-0090; ecovillage@thefarm.org; 931-964-4324; www.thefarm.org. (See Jun 17–20, above.)*

Jun 25–27 • Landscape Painting

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center (OAEC), Occidental, CA. Basic oil technique, outdoor painting methods, color theory, and composition; slide-lecture on visual theory and landscape painting issues. Adam Wolpert. All levels welcome; participants must supply their own materials. $425 incl. meals, lodging ($375 if registered two weeks in advance. *OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 85465; 707-874-1557, #201; oaec@oaec.org; www.oaec.org.*

Jun 26–27; Jul 24–25 • Wise Woman Ways of Herbal Medicine

Red Moon Herbs at Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain (Asheville), NC. Third weekend of four-weekend women's program to help women connect deeply with the Earth and themselves through observing plants developing from spring to summer, harvesting and making medicines together. Plant identification; wild crafting; practical botany; making herbal tinctures, infusions, poultices, oils, salves, and vinegars; wild food harvesting & preparation; the Wise Woman tradition; herbs for every cycle of a woman's life; herbal first aid; nutrition & traditional diets; pagan roots of healing; communication with plant spirits. Meals, camping (indoor accommodations also available). *Red Moon Herbs, redmoonherbs.com; 828-669-1310.*

Jun 28–30 • "The Communitarian Vision"- 8th International Communal Studies Assn. (ICSA) Conference

Amana Colonies, Iowa. Biennial conference of communitarians, scholars, and visionaries worldwide, seeking to understand and promote communal living through presenting papers, networking, and socializing. *www.ic.org/icsa.*

Jul 2–4 • Introduction to Natural Building

Culture's Edge at Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain, NC. Cob, strawbale, slip-straw, earthen plasters, timber framing, and their use in Earthaven's innovative natural buildings. Mollie Curry, Paul Caron. $225, including meals, camping. *Culture's Edge Workshops, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 828-669-3937; culturesedge@earthaven.org; www.earthaven.org.*

Jul 2–4 • Sirius Community Experience Weekend

Sirius Community, Shutesbury, MA. Two-day immersion in Sirius community life: shared meals, work parties, meditation, community meetings, and more. *sirius@siriuscommunity.org.*

Jul 2–5 • Naka-Ima 1: The Basics

Lost Valley Educational Center, Dexter, OR. Part one of experiential workshop 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 supportive and loving community, we will explore how to be alive, in the moment, and deeply connected with others. Donation, incl. lodging, meals. Childcare available. *541-937-3351, #109; naka-ima@lostvalley.org; www.lostvalley.org.*

Jul 2–8 • Facilitation and Consensus

Ecovillage Torri Superiore, northern Italy. Co-sponsored by International Institute for Facilitation and Consensus. Bea Briggs and Lucia Borio, instructors. Euro 500, incl. meals, shared rooms. *Ecovillage Torri Superiore, Via Torri Superiore 5, 18039 Ventimiglia (Imperia) Italy; www.torri-superiore.org; info@torri-superiore.org; +39 0184 215504.*

Jul 2–11 • Natural Building Intensive at Earthaven

Culture's Edge at Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain (Asheville), NC. Three sections: (1) July 2–4: Introduction to Natural Building—cob, strawbale, slip-straw, earthen plasters, timber framing, and their use in Earthaven's innovative natural buildings. Mollie Curry. $225. (2) July 5–9: Building w/Earth & Straw. Mollie Curry. $375. (3) July 10–11: Earth Plasters—Preparing, tinting, and applying interior and exterior earth plasters. Mollie Curry, Chuck Marsh. $150. Parts 1–3 $675 (save $55). All prices incl. meals, camping. *Culture's Edge Workshops, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 828-669-3937; culturesedge@earthaven.org; www.earthaven.org.*

Jul 5–Aug 7 • Ecovillage Apprenticeships at The Farm

Ecovillage Training Center at The Farm, Summertown, TN. Apprenticeship program in organic gardening, natural buildings, and fundamentals

of permaculture and ecovillage design. Constructed wetlands; cob, strawbale, earthbag construction; compost toilets. Learn ecology, energy and resource conservation, social and community skills, and the economics of sustainability. Field trips may include canoe trips on the Buffalo River, spelunking in a saltpeter cave, and visits to a bamboo nursery and local permaculture sites. College credit available. Instructors: Matt & Jennifer English; Adam & Sue Turtle; Murad Al Kufash from Marda Permaculture Center, Palestine; UN Architect of the Year Greg Ramsey; Scott Horton; Jan Bang; Kiyokazu Shidara; Sizwe Herring; Ed Eaton of Solar Energy International; Patrica Allison and Goodheart Brown from Earthaven, and natural builders Howard Switzer and Katey Culver. $1,200 incl. tuition, lodging, vegetarian meals, participation in all courses. *Ecovillage Training Center, PO Box 90, Summertown, TN 38483-0090; ecovillage@thefarm.org; 931-964-4324; www.thefarm.org.*

Jul 9–11 • Earthaven Experience Weekend

Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain, NC. Tour Earthaven's natural Earth-friendly buildings, off-grid power systems, water catchment systems, constructed wetlands. Ask questions at Q&A panel of Earthaven members; sit in on monthly Council meeting; participate in community work project; share community meals. Learn more about ecovillages w/Diana Leafe Christian, author of *Creating a Life Together;* take medicinal plant walk w/Kimchi Rylander of Red Moon Herbs. Enjoy Coffeehouse evening of games and homegrown entertainment with Earthaven members. $100 per person (ask us about child and family rates) incl. all meals, but not camping ($7/night) or indoor accommodations at additional cost. *info@earthaven.org; www.Earthaven.org; 828-669-3937.*

Jul 9–11; Aug 20–22; Sep 10–12 • Fundamentals of Permaculture

Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain, NC. Third through fifth weeks of Part I of Permaculture Design Course. Individual weekends can be taken separately. Cultural and social aspects of permaculture, hands-on garden and orchard work, pond making, natural building, graywater systems, erosion control, rock work, dances, circles, campfires. More hands-on and interpersonal activities than most permaculture courses. Patricia Allison, guest instructors. $400 incl. vegetarian meals ($100/weekend if paid separately). Plus camping $7/night; indoor lodging, $11–$25/night. *ehpa@direcway.com; 828-664-0067.*

Jul 9–12 • Starting and Sustaining Community Watershed Groups

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center (OAEC), Occidental, CA. Training to help create northern California coastal community-based watershed groups. Watershed processes, salmonid ecology, water quality monitoring, in-stream restoration, biotechnical engineering, uplands erosion control, road restoration, native habitat restoration, sustainable forestry, community group process, and funding opportunities for watershed groups. Enrollment limited. Brock Dolman, with guest instructors. $200, meals, lodging. *OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 85465; 707-874-1557, #201; oaec@oaec.org; www.oaec.org.*

Jul 9–18 • Network for a New Culture Summer Camp East

Near Hancock, MD. Building sustainable, nonviolent culture through intimacy, personal growth, emotional transparency, radical honesty, equality, compassion, sexual freedom, and the power of community. Workshops on personal growth, honest communication, relationship skills, social change, and a day of sacred touch with Madrone. Also speakers Larry Kaplowitz, Teryani Riggs (ZEGG Forum). $495–$895 sl. sc., incl. camping, meals. Work exchange also avail. *www.nfnc.org/sc; sc04e@nfnc.org; 800-763-8136.*

Jul 10–18 • Natural Building Immersion

Ecovillage Training Center at The Farm, Summertown, TN. Wattle and daub, earthbags, earthships, traditional Mexican styles (reed thatch, zacatlanlolo, slipform claystraw, and adobe), timber frame, domes and arches, earthen floors, earth plasters and alis, passive solar, foundations and drainage, living roofs, pole frame, dry composting toilets. Energy and resource conservation, economics of sustainability. Field trips may include visits to bamboo nursery, local permaculture sites. College credit available. Instructors: Howard Switzer, Katey Culver, Albert Bates, Adam Turtle, Matt English, Dayfd Rawlings, Bernice Davidson, Yolanda Hunter, Kiyokazu Shidara, Francesco Casini. $800, or $100 per day or $175/day for couples, incl. meals, lodging. *Ecovillage Training Center, PO Box 90, Summertown, TN 38483-0090; ecovillage@thefarm.org; 931-964-4324; www.thefarm.org.*

Jul 10–31 • Permaculture Design Course

Bullock Farm, Orcas Island WA. Three-week certificate design course. Design methodologies, observation skills, whole-system design, annual and perennial foods, water/energy/waste techniques, appropriate construction, plant propagation and culture, herbs and fiber use, etc. Douglas Bullock, John Valenzuela, Samuel Bullock, Joseph Bullock, Toby Hemenway, Michael Pilarski and others. $1450 ($1350 by June 1) incl. mostly organic meals, camping space, materials, certificate. *Bullock Permaculture Course, P.O. Box 107 Deer Harbor, WA. 98243; 376-376-2773; bullock_Orcas@hotmail.com; www.permaculturereportal.com.*

Jul 16–18 • Women's Work: Designing Sustainable Futures

Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain, NC. Introduction to permaculture for women and girls. Hands-on projects, lectures, discussions, personal empowerment, circles of song, dance, sharing. Patricia Allison, guest instructors. $125 incl. vegetarian meals. Plus camping $7/night; indoor lodging, $11–$25/night. *ehpa@direcway.com; 828-664-0067.*

Jul 16–18 • Woodshop for Women

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center (OAEC), Occidental, CA. Essential tools and their proper use; safe and effective use of power tools; structural integrity; basic techniques such as cutting, nailing, drilling, driving, and leveling. Tour OAEC buildings w/different carpentry styles: standard professional, natural building, temporary, artistic, hippie funk. Kate Lundquist. $425, incl. meals, lodging; $375 if registered two weeks in advance. *OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 85465; 707-874-1557, #201; oaec@oaec.org; www.oaec.org.*

Jul 22–25 • Living In Actualization in an Interuniversal-soul Cultural Community

Aquarian Concepts Community, Sedona, AZ. Ascension Science and Planetary Divine Administration. Four-day seminar, 7:00 p.m. Thursday through Sunday. Speakers include community founders Gabriel of Sedona and Niánn Emerson Chase, $500 pre-registration, otherwise $700. *Aquarian Concepts Community, P.O. Box 3946, Sedona, AZ 86340; 928-204-1206; 928-204-1252; info@aquarianconceptscommunity.org; www.aquarianconceptscommunity.org.*

Jul 23–25 • NICA Summer Gathering

Sahale Retreat Center, Tahuya, Washington. Annual summer gathering of Northwest Intentional Communities Association (NICA), with networking and workshops for communitarians and community seekers in the Pacific Northwest, at Goodenough Community's rural retreat center. *www.goodenough.org www.ic.org/nica; rebecca@goodenough.org; 206-323-4653.*

Jul 23–31 • Permaculture Fundamentals

Culture's Edge workshops at Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain (Asheville), NC. Two-week design certificate course in two 8-day sessions: Permaculture Fundamentals and Design Practicum. Ethics and principles, observation, pattern, design; climate, forest, soils; cultivated ecology (garden, plants, animals); building design, energy, water, waste; developing settle-

ments (land use, appropriate technology, economics, finance, urban applications). Peter Bane, Keith Johnson, Chuck Marsh, Goodheart Brown. $675, incl. meals, camping. *Culture's Edge Workshops, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 828-669-3937; culturesedge@earthaven.org; www.earthaven.org.*

Jul 23–Aug 8 • ZEGG Summer Camp 2004

ZEGG Community (Centre for Experimental Culture Design), Belzig, Germany. Participants will work on personal and political visions and practical experience of cooperation and trust. Weekends: ZEGG speakers and invited guests present insights into ZEGG's community research. Weekdays: intensive groups to create temporary community, incl. morning attunement, men's and women's spaces, sharing circle/plenary, evening cultural activities (music, dance, theatre), and Children's Camp. *ZEGG, Rosa-Luxemburg-Straße 89, D-14806 Belzig, Germany; Tel: +49 33841-595-10; empfang@zegg.de; www.zegg.de.*

Jul 23–Aug 13 • Permaculture Design Certificate Course

Sirius Community, Shutesbury, MA. Sponsored by Living Routes Educational Consortium. *livingroutes.org; sirius@siriuscommunity.org.*

Jul 24–25 • Wise Woman Ways of Herbal Medicine

Red Moon Herbs at Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain (Asheville), NC. Last weekend of series. *(See Jun 26–27.)*

Jul 25 • Green Building Tour

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center (OAEC), Occidental, CA. Free community tour emphasizing natural buildings. *OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 85465; 707-874-1557, #201; oaec@oaec.org; www.oaec.org.*

Jul 29–Aug 2 • Naka-Ima 2: The Practice

Lost Valley Educational Center, Dexter, OR. Part two of experiential workshop 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 supportive and loving community, we will explore how to be alive, in the moment, and deeply connected with others. Donation, incl. lodging, meals. Childcare available. *541-937-3351, #109; naka-ima@lostvalley.org; www.lostvalley.org.*

Jul 30–Aug 1 • Sirius Community Experience Weekend

Sirius Community, Shutesbury, MA. (See Jul 2–4.)

Jul 31 • Wild Plants for Food & Medicine

Red Moon Herbs at Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain (Asheville), NC. Learn how to identify, harvest and prepare wild plants as food and medicine; make tinctures, poultices, vinegars, salves, and oils to treat many common ailments; incorporate free, abundant wild plants into your diet to support optimum health. "Weeds" will never look the same again! $55–75, sl. sc., incl. lunch. *Red Moon Herbs, redmoonherbs.com; 828-669-1310.*

Aug 3–8 • International Youth Leadership Gathering

Hummingbird Ranch, northern NM. Seeking innovative youth leaders, 18–25, to learn and share about conflict resolution, empowerment, mutual connection and community with other youth internationally. $385, incl. camping, meals. *www.globalfamily.net; 303-413-0510.*

Aug 5–8 • 11th Annual Southeast Summer Permaculture Gathering

Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain (Asheville), NC. Network with permaculturalists, organic growers, natural builders. Workshops (Food Fermentation, Herbal Elixirs), open space technology, projects, bonfires, music, great food. $100, incl. meals, camping. *Earthaven, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 828-669-3937; culturesedge@earthaven.org; www.earthaven.org.*

Aug 7 • Sustainable Forestry

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center (OAEC), Occidental, CA. Scale-appropriate timber harvesting, nontimber forest products, stand thinning, fuel load management, forest health, enhancing wildlife habitat, erosion control, watershed health, restoration forestry. Tim Metz, Brock Dolman, Carol Nieukirk. $110/$95, incl. lunch. *OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 85465; 707-874-1557, #201; oaec@oaec.org; www.oaec.org.*

Aug 7–21 • Network for a New Culture Summer Camp West

New Culture Institute/NFNC, southern OR. Building sustainable, nonviolent culture through intimacy, personal growth, emotional transparency, radical honesty, equality, compassion, sexual freedom, and the power of community. $495–$995 sl. sc., incl. camping, meals, 'til 6/10. Sells out fast. Work exchange also avail. *www.nfnc.org/sc; sc04e@nfnc.org; 800-624-0445.*

Aug 9–Sep 17 • It's All in the Finish: Natural Plaster and Color

O.U.R. Ecovillage, Vancouver Island, Canada. Finishing plasters of clay or lime, color washes, natural pigments and decorative work, bas relief sculpture, mosaic, fresco, and more. Possibly finish woodworking and floors. Elke Cole, Tina Farmilo, Alastair Heseltine, guests. Six weeks, $3,000 Canadian, incl. meals, lodging. *www.ourecovillage.org; our@pacificcoast.net.*

Aug 10–15 • Global Family Gathering

Hummingbird Ranch, northern NM. "A Call to Connection: Being Peace in Challenging Times." Experiential retreat designed to nurture, heal, inspire and restore the soul, and connect deeply w/ one another, Spirit, and the Earth. Lead by Carolyn Anderson and Katharine Roske, co-authors of *The Co-Creator's Handbook*. $495, incl. camping, meals. *www.globalfamily.net; 530-265-3180.*

Aug 13–14 • Chautauqua: Ten Years of OAEC

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center (OAEC), Occidental, CA. In our North Garden Stage, a magical evening of community celebration, surprising talents, and poignant insights, with a retrospective of the Center's first ten years, presented by local musicians, actors, and storytellers. Last year's Chautauqua sold out, so advance ticket purchase is strongly recommended. $20–$10 sl. sc, advance purchase; $20–$12 sl. sc. day of show. *OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 85465; 707-874-1557, #201; oaec@oaec.org; www.oaec.org.*

Aug 20–22, Sep 10–12 • Fundamentals of Permaculture

Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain, NC. (See Jul 9–11.)

Aug 20–23 • Naka-Ima 1: The Basics

Lost Valley Educational Center, Dexter, OR. (See Jul 2–5.)

Aug 27–29 • 21st Annual Twin Oaks Women's Gathering

Twin Oaks, Louisa, VA. Camping, music, workshops, drumming, performances, swimming, sweats, mud pit, great food, creative activities. Childcare provided. Wheelchair accessible. Sl. sc. $40–$140. *Women's Gathering, 138 Twin Oaks, Rd., Louisa, VA 23093; www.twinoaks.org/commu-*

nity/women/; gathering@twinoaks.org; 540-894-5126.

Aug 28–29 • Wild Plants, Wild Women

Red Moon Herbs at Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain (Asheville), NC. Practical, hands-on learning the ancient women's art of gathering wild plants for nourishment and healing. Make our own herbal medicines, soups, and salads from wild fall leaves, seeds, and roots. $160, incl. food, camping; indoor lodging also avail. *Red Moon Herbs, redmoonherbs.com; 828-669-1310.*

Sep 3–6 • Naka-Ima 1: The Basics

Lost Valley Educational Center, Dexter, OR. (See Jul 2–5.)

Sep 3–6 • Twin Oaks Communities Conference

Twin Oaks, Louisa, VA. Workshops, community building, and fun. Ecovillages, communes, co-ops, cohousing, intentional relationships, group decision-making, living sustainably. $85 sl. sc., incl. camping, meals. *Communities Conference, 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093; 540-894-5126; conference@twinoaks.org.*

Sep 8–12 • Starting a Successful Ecovillage or Intentional Community

Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain (Asheville), NC. With Diana Leafe Christian, author, *Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages and Intentional Communities,* and Valerie Naiman, Earthaven co-founder. Typical time-frames & costs; getting off to a good start, vision documents, decision-making, legal entities, finding & financing land; zoning; internal community finances; sustainable site plans; communication, process, dealing w/conflict. Tour of Earthaven. Q&A on ecovillage life w/Earthaven members. *(Optional)*—observe Earthaven Council meeting. $395 incl. meals & camping; indoor lodging also avail. *www.earthaven.org; culturesedge@earthaven.org; 828-669-3937 (lv. msg.)*

Sep 10–12 • Fundamentals of Permaculture

Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain, NC. (See Jul 9–11.)

Sep 11–12 • Papercrete Construction

Lost Valley Educational Center, Dexter, OR. Hands on learning steps of papercrete construction: mixing, casting, curing w/recycled paper, sand, and mineral binders. Material mixes for casting blocks, plastering or sculpting material; build your own mixer/blender. $250, incl. meals, lodging. *www.lostvalley.org; info@lostvalley.org; .541-937-3351, #109.*

Sep 17–19 • The Farm Experience Weekend

The Farm, Summertown, TN. Learn first-hand about life in community. Community dinner, Farm history slide show/Q & A; yoga; community tour; work party; rock and roll benefit boogie; and nature walk. Workshops available on vegetarian cooking, midwifery, strawbale homes (tour), home-based businesses, community & global sustainability, and more. Camping, all meals (other accommodations avail. at additional cost). $175 (one person); $150 2nd person; $85 (students); $55 (children); $400 (family rate). *Douglas@villagemedia.com; Vickie@thefarmcommunity.com; www.thefarm.org.*

Sep 17–19 • Love Your Body: An Initiation into Women's Mysteries

Red Moon Herbs at Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain (Asheville), NC. In safe, sacred context, embrace the power of our female bodies. Reclaiming love for our body which is essential for personal and planetary healing. Corinna Wood & Sheri Winston. $190, incl. meals, camping; indoor lodging also avail. *Red Moon Herbs, redmoonherbs.com; 828-669-1310.*

Sep 20–25 • "Ecovillages: Translation to the Mainstream" — Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) Conference

Hollyhock Center, Cortes Island, British Columbia. Speakers include Lois Arkin, Los Angeles Eco-Village; Albert Bates, Ecovillage Training Center at The Farm; Diana Leafe Christian, Earthaven Ecovillage, author of *Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages and Intentional Communities;* Robert Gilman, Context Institute, a "father of the ecovillage movement"; Max Lindegger, GEN-Oceania and Crystal Waters Ecovillage, Australia; Brandy MacPherson, O.U.R. Ecovillage, British Columbia; award-winning architect Greg Ramsey, Village Habitat Design; Liz Walker, EcoVillage at Ithaca, and others. *www.ecovillage.org/conference.*

Sep 23–26 • Living In Actualization in an Interuniversal-soul Cultural Community

Aquarian Concepts Community, Sedona, AZ. (See Jul 22–25.)

Sep 24–Oct 1 • Permaculture Practicum

Earthaven Ecovillage, Black Mountain (Asheville), NC. Part Two permaculture design curriculum; applying permaculture fundamentals to real-life projects, for Permaculture Design Certificate. Chuck Marsh, Peter Bane, Andrew Goodheart Brown, Keith Johnson $675 incl. meals, camping; indoor lodging also avail. *Culture's Edge Workshops, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 828-669-3937; culturesedge@earthaven.org; www.earthaven.org.*

Sep 24–27 • Naka-Ima 1: The Basics

Lost Valley Educational Center, Dexter, OR. (See Jul 2–5.)

Sep 25–26 • Reduce Your Urban Environmental Footprint

Lost Valley Educational Center, Dexter, OR. Lifestyle choices and environmental impacts of packaging, driving, clothing, appliances, heating, air conditioning; hands-on projects; Life Cycle Assessment; buying locally, environmental & financial priorities; indoor air quality. Peter Reppe, instructor. $185, incl. meals, lodging. *www.lostvalley.org; info@lostvalley.org; 541-937-3351, #109.*

Sep 25–Oct 8 • Permaculture Design

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center (OAEC), Occidental, CA. Permaculture principles and ethics, ponds, on-site water development, erosion control, forest farming, organic gardening, mulching, composting, plant guilds, alternative building materials, community economics, more. Certificate of Permaculture Design. Penny Livingston, Brock Dolman, guest instructors. $1350/$1250, incl. meals, lodging. *OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 85465; 707-874-1557, #201; oaec@oaec.org; www.oaec.org.*

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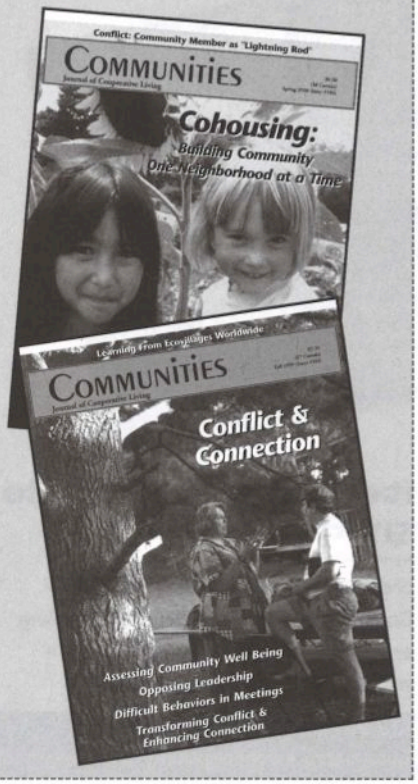

Reach

REACH is our column for all your Classified needs. In addition to ads intended to help match people looking for communities with communities looking for people, Reach has ads for workshops, goods, services, books, products and personals of interest to people interested in Communities.

You may use the form on the last page of Reach to place an ad. ***THE REACH DEADLINE FOR THE FALL 2004 ISSUE (OUT IN SEPTEMBER) IS JULY 1.***

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., Charlemont, 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.)*

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 three small pods/sub-communities. One (Tekiah) shares income. The others (Dayspring Circle and Earth Pod) do not. Most community members work primarily from home in pod or individual businesses. We are a stable, experienced group with a sense of humor. We like to sing and we eat together regularly. Our land includes a river, forests, pastures, barns, gardens, basic infrastructure, and fairly civilized temporary housing. We are committed to dealing thoughtfully with conflict and to considering carefully the impacts of our actions on the planet. We are looking for new members. We seek builders, organic gardeners, musicians, scientists, tinkerers, artists, business people, youth, wisdom, enthusiasm and community experience. We welcome individuals and families of diverse peaceful lifestyles. Please see our web site for more information: *www.abundantdawn.org POB 433, Floyd, VA 24091; 540-745-5853;* info@abundantdawn.org

AQUARIAN CONCEPTS COMMUNITY, Sedona, Arizona. Founded by Gabriel of Sedona and Niann Emerson Chase in 1989. Currently 100 adults and children. International members. Global change work for Destiny Reservists in Divine Administration. God-centered community based on teachings of *The URANTIA Book* and Continuing Fifth Epochal Revelation *The Cosmic Family* Volumes as received by Gabriel of Sedona. Organic gardens. Starseed Schools of Melchizedek, Global Change Music record label, CosmoArt, CosmoTheater, and audio and video productions. Light construction, stone masonry, landscaping, cleaning and maintenance. Serious spiritual commitment required. *POB 3946, Sedona, AZ 86340; 928-204-1206; info@aquarianconceptscommunity.org;* www.aquarianconceptscommunity.org/ *www.globalchangemusic.org*

AQUARIUS COMMUNITY, Vail, Arizona. Share picturesque mountain wilderness ranch blessed with ideal weather. $150/mo. includes utilities. SASE. *Box 69, Vail, AZ 85641-0069; jkubias@hotmail.com*

BREITENBUSH HOT SPRINGS, Detroit, Oregon. We are an intentional community set up as a worker-owned cooperative. We support ourselves by running a retreat and conference center. The work and business ethic is one of stewardship and service. We are located in the Oregon Cascade Mountains next to one of the last remaining old-growth rainforests. We have several hot tubs and natural hot spring pools and a steam sauna. We are on the Breitenbush River, which provides us with the means to generate our hydroelectric power, and all of our buildings are heated geothermally. Currently there are approximately 50 community members year round, with an additional 30 seasonal workers in the summer. We are looking for community-minded, hard working individuals in the areas of housekeeping, kitchen maintenance, construction, office, childcare, marketing and massage (Oregon LMT required). We provide modest housing and a wide variety of benefits to our staff. Our

mission is to provide a safe and potent environment for social and personal growth. Send inquiries to: Personnel, *Breitenbush Hot Springs, POB 578, Detroit, OR 97342; 503-854-3320-1, ext. 216.*

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 ECOVILLAGE. Blue Ridge Mountains, North Carolina. Aspiring ecovillage on 320 forested acres near Asheville. Multi-generational, 60 members. Omnivores; vegetarians; some raise livestock. Spiritually diverse. Natural-built homes, organic gardens, off-grid power, composting toilets, constructed wetlands. We value sustainable ecological systems, permaculture, consensus, and right livelihood. Businesses/services—Red Moon Herbs, *Permaculture Activist* magazine, *Communities* magazine, sustainable forestry, permaculture design, landscaping, tool rental, woodworking, carpentry/construction, solar design/installation. Workshops on permaculture, natural building, herbal medicine, starting an ecovillage. Seeking hardworking, visionary people, including organic growers, families with children, people with homesteading skills. *www.earthaven.org. Free Information Pack , or larger $15 pack (incl. video): info@earthven.org; 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., 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*

ECO-FARM, Plant City, Florida. We are a small, farm-based intentional community near Tampa, Florida looking for others seeking this type of community. Our core group has interests in achievable sustainable living, alternative energies, books, drumming, environmental issues, farming, social justice, etc. We farm vegetables and ornamental trees, and also have a small farm mechanic shop in which community members participate. If interested, check out our web site at *www.ecofarmfl.org and phone: 813-754-7374.*

ECOVILLAGE AT ITHACA, 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 175 acre site near a vibrant college town. Stay overnight in our lively community of two completed cohousing neighborhoods, share a meal in the Common House and visit our 10 acre organic farm. EVI welcomes you! Check out our web site at: www.ecovillage.ithaca.ny.us and contact: *Liz Walker, 607-255-8276; EcoVillage at Ithaca, 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*

SHIVALILA COMMUNITY, Pahoa, Hawaii. We are seeking new members. Established in 1992, we have three adults and three children on our 37 acres. Values: honesty, nonviolence, shared parenting, income and assets. Organic juice and sawmilling business, homeschooling, marimbas, sustainability nonprofit, exotic fruit orchards, animal husbandry. Contact: shivalila@aol.com; *or RR2 #3315, Pahoa, HI 9677; 808-965-9371.*

TRILLIUM FARM, Jacksonville, Oregon. We, (a couple of artists, educators, activists) are rebirthing our community in southwestern Oregon! Equity memberships in LLC owning Land and community buildings; private dwelling ownership, several available. Quiet, remote, scenic, yet less than an hour from several towns, regional city. Operate Birch Creek Arts and Ecology Center and university programs. River, creek, ponds, excellent soil, sunny dry climate, gravity flow sweetwater. No dogs; much wildlife! Vegetarian community spaces. *P.O. Box 1330 Jacksonville, OR 97530 (541)899-1696. www.deepwild.org*

TWIN OAKS, Louisa, Virginia. Twin Oaks has been crafting culture and sustainable community for over 35 years. We are currently looking for new members, and would love to have you visit. Right now we would especially like more woman members. We can offer you: work in our community businesses, an abundance of homegrown organic food, a thriving social scene, and an established culture of nonviolence, feminism and egalitarianism. You can offer us: your talents and skills (or your unskilled enthusiasm) and your desire to live an ecological and income-sharing lifestyle. For information: *Twin Oaks, 138-R Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093; 540-894-5126; twinoaks@ic.org; www.twinoaks.org*

COMMUNITY HOUSES AND PROPERTY FOR SALE OR RENT

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

AIRVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA. For Rent. Community-minded alternative homesteaders looking for kindred spirit(s) to rent mobile home, share organic garden space in rural southeastern Pennsylvania. Commuting distance to York and Lancaster, PA and Bel Air, MD. Beautiful hiking trails and Susquehanna River nearby. *717-862-1737; 657 E. Posey Rd., Airville, PA 17302.*

ROCK RIVER, Floyd, Virginia. Part or Partnership. 25 acres for sale of 65 acre community in the Blue Ridge Mountains in fabulous Floyd, Virginia, half hour to Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. Two homes, three cabins, outbuildings, stream, pond, 2000 feet of river frontage, open field, woods. Land one hundred percent usable. Structures are all ready and welcoming. $425,000. Owner financing available. Call *540-789-7897; rockriver@swva.net*

COMMUNITIES FORMING

BREAM LAKE COOPERATIVE, Hawthorne, Florida. Two acres with 3/2 house on a lake in sunny Florida, 30 minutes from Gainesville. Organic garden and orchard. We want to create an intentional community with like-minded, cooperative participants. See *www.everything-is-related.info or call us 352-481-0275.*

EASTON MOUNTAIN RETREAT COMMUNITY, Greenwich, New York. Community forming at the Easton Mountain Retreat. Seeking creative, psychologically mature individuals interested in deepening spiri-

tual life, meditation, nonviolence, 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*

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY, Burkesville, Kentucky. Community forming on an organic/biodynamic farm in rural KY. Secluded and private with frontage on the Cumberland River. Farm has been certified organic for 13 years. Four tracts available from 5-25 acres, ranging in price from $15,000 to $50,000. Long growing season with mild winters offers year-round food production. Call us at *270-864-4167, or email dogwoodspring@accessky.net*

LUNA HAVEN RANCH, Apalachicola, Florida. Ten acres, beautiful forest, grass marsh, navigable creek, fenced garden, large shed. Good fishing, sailing. Currently, there is a house, a cabin and sites for three more houses. Present residents: myself, 60, my mother 87 years young, and our four dogs. I want to live out my days here in company with openhearted people who desire to live and work in harmony with each other and this lovely place and help with expenses. Like gardening and/or bookkeeping? You would be especially welcome! Luna Moths live here. *Kristin Anderson, POB 386, Apalachicola, FL 32329-0386; 850-653-2249; Kristin@kristinworks.com*

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. East of Austin, northwest of Houston. Job sharing, progressive city-dwellers co-creating short-term rural weekender nature retreat and long-term earth-sheltered "Liberal Survival Center" since 1995. Part-time silence/solitude acceptable/recommended. Lovers welcome, not haters. Eight-page brochure $1. *1030 Voight, Houston, TX 77009-7317; 713-863-0433; sharingfutures@aol.com*

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space for woodworking and metal shop; another building for print shop, housing building. We see a central kitchen, extended family housing. Open relationships, close to school, children welcome. Consensus decisions. Bring your skills, ideas, single or family. No fees, share productivity. Come by (one block east of Exit 72 and Texas 110) or write: *Box 31, Ft. Hancock, TX 79839. Include phone for reply.*

CONSULTANTS

FACILITATION AND WORKSHOPS on consensus and other decision-making tools. Learn skills to make your meetings upbeat and productive, from planning agendas to dealing with "difficult" people. Save hours of time and frustration and deepen your sense of community. Contact: *Tree Bressen, 541-484-1156; tree@ic.org; www.treegroup.info*

SACRED ARCHITECTURE'S HARMONIZING INFLUENCES. Buildings can generate vibrant, life supporting influences. Visit: *www.vastu-design.com;*

INTERNS AND RESIDENCIES

MOUNTAIN HOME, Coquille, Oregon. Room, board and formal teaching in exchange for help on 2004 projects: eco-forestry, permaculture gardening, natural building design, water systems and more. *Call Clara 541-396-4764; chipnclara@aol.com*

SANDHILL FARM, Rutledge, Missouri. Internships in Sustainable Community Living. April 15 to November 1, 2004. 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: *Sandhill Farm, RR1, Box 155-C, Rutledge, MO 63563; 660-883-5543; interns@sandhill-farm.org; www.sandhillfarm.org*

WINDTREE RANCH, Douglas, Arizona. Land Stewardship Internships of 10-90 days. Living simply in the high desert on 600 acres, mild winters, tobacco/drug free, vegetarian, multi-generational. Physically demanding. Request application. *www.windtreeranch.org; 4200 E. Summerland Road, Douglas, AZ 85607-9779; 520-364-4611; windtreeranch@direcpc.com*

PEOPLE LOOKING

I AM LOOKING for a community that is Goddess/nature/pagan oriented. Email me at: *morgannamerlyn@yahoo.com*

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY, Central America or Caribbean. Looking for people to relocate. Live simply off the land, grow our own food. Spiritual evolvement is important, share meals together, play together, open to various sexual orientations. Most important is open communication whereby we share our lives and care about each other. Email *Steve at Steve@twinoaks.org*

PERSONALS

CONCERNED SINGLES links compatible, socially conscious singles who care about peace, social justice, race/gender equity, the environment, personal growth. Nationwide/international. All ages; straight/gay. Since 1984. Free sample. *Box 444-CO, Lennoxdale, MA 01242; 413-243-4350; www.concernedsingles.com*

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

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PUBLICATIONS, BOOKS, WEB SITES

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Patricia Greene, 13 West Branch Rd., Heath, MA 01339; 413-337-4037; patricia@ic.org

tures. 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@communityservice.net*

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

WHY PAY RENT OR MAKE MORTGAGE PAYMENTS, when you can live rent free? The Caretaker Gazette contains property caretaking/housesitting openings, advice and information for property caretakers, housesitters and landowners. Published since 1983. Subscribers receive 800+ property caretaking opportunities each year, worldwide. Some estate management positions start at $50,000/yr., plus benefits. Subscriptions: $29/yr. *The Caretaker Gazette, Box 540-I, River Falls, WI 54022; 715-426-5500; www.caretaker.org www.caretaker.org*

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RESOURCES

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FEDERATION OF EGALITARIAN COMMUNITIES (FEC). LIVE YOUR VALUES, LEARN NEW SKILLS. For 25 years, the FEC has welcomed new members to our groups based on cooperation, ecology, fairness, and nonviolence. No joining fees required, just a willingness to join in the work. We share income from a variety of cottage industries. For more information: *www.thefec.org; fec@ic.org; 417-679-4682; or send $3 to FEC, HC-3, Box 3370-CM00, Tecumseh, MO 65760.*

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Communities Magazine—Subscribe Today!

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

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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:

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- builds bridges between communities and the wider culture.
- serves as an information clearinghouse for all aspects of community—for individuals, groups, and the media.

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FIC MEMBERSHIP, COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE, & DIRECTORY ORDER

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GROUP NAME OR AFFILIATION (IF APPROPRIATE)

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

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PERIPATETIC COMMUNITARIAN

(continued from p. 80)

within a single community. For a while the norm may be that community members put in long hours doing community service or community projects, then the next season (or year, or decade) the pendulum swings and more focus is put into family, home improvements, hobbies, personal growth workshops, or launching new careers. However, once the election activity heats up, there's a tendency for the equilibrium to shift to include substantial (and frequently all-consuming) political involvement. For those of us for whom this applies, it's valuable to consider how our community-building experiences and social processes might constructively be applied to our political work—in terms of both our ends and our means.

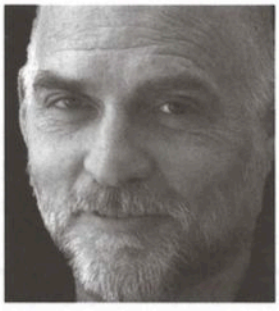
As with most utopian scenarios, it's easy to envision an inspiring future, yet it's tough to "walk our talk" as we work to bring our imagined perfect society into being. For example, we say we value good communication skills, yet often we're subject to frustrations or heartaches when we fail to speak clearly enough or listen carefully enough.

And the range of issues is so broad that it's daunting. Here's a long list of ideals being tested in intentional communities that are perfectly suited for the national agenda. Imagine a community, nation, or world where everyone has a say in the decisions that affect them, and the votes are counted accurately and fairly. Where the information needed to make those decisions is widely available and easily accessible. Where the decision-making of delegated representatives and committees is an open and fully documented process and, through independent monitoring, public servants are held to a standard of truthfulness, openness, and full accountability. Where diverse opinions are welcome in the dialogue, sought out, and considered when crafting laws and policies. Where basic civil rights include everything in the Bill of Rights plus a good education, universal health care, a fair wage for one's work, and an individual's freedom to choose how they'll live their own life—unless their choices infringe upon the rights, safety, or welfare of others. Where stewardship of the planet and its resources is a fundamental principle, and people, corporations, and governments that extract or process resources are held responsible for cleaning up their messes and covering the costs. Much more is possible, of course … just imagine.

With exciting visions like that to work for, it's no surprise that many of us are tempted to dive into the process to promote one cause or another … or the whole package. Hopefully we'll find ways to do it that don't stretch the other parts of our lives too thin. I might amend a famous Thomas Jefferson quote to read: "The price of freedom is eternal vigilance, open mindedness, frequent meetings, and an ongoing effort to bring things back into balance."

Geoph Kozeny has lived in various kinds of communities for 31 years, and has been on the road for 16 years visiting communities—asking about their visions and realities, taking photos, and giving multimedia shows about the diversity and vitality of the communities movement. Presently, he is working with a team of community activists to draft a pamphlet series of progressive "talking points" to help influence the upcoming elections, and in his nearly nonexistent spare time he is editing part two of his Visions of Utopia *video documentary about intentional communities.*

Building Community in an Election Year



BY GEOPH KOZENY

It's hard enough in the ordinary flow of life to keep things in balance: work, family, friends, finances, community commitments, neighborhood projects, favorite hobbies, inner work—the list is only as limited as one's imagination. Add in the possibilities and pressures of a presidential election year, and the demands rise exponentially. Even for those activists who stay perpetually involved in political organizing, the pace accelerates every fourth year as diverse groups seek to get their pet issue or comprehensive platform into the public spotlight, hoping to take advantage of the media frenzy that feeds on the hype of presidential campaigns.

A huge majority of people I've met in the communities movement are politically "progressive"—a logical correlation, given that the nature of intentional communities could be used to define the term: to live cooperatively in pursuit of creating a better, more fulfilling, more just world for all. However, that still leaves a lot of room for diverging opinions and affiliations. The more mainstream community members often identify as Democrats, and as philosophies get more radical, political identities range from Greens, to Libertarians, to Socialists, with a fair number left over to register as Independents. I've heard more than one community member, most commonly in cohousing groups, joke about having their "token Republican" members—emphasizing the baseline progressive value of being open-minded and supportive (or at least tolerant) of others' opinions and freedoms.

Imagine a nation or world where everyone has a say in the decisions that affect them, and votes are counted accurately and fairly.

The issues and causes embraced by the communities movement activists are also diverse, with the vast majority focusing on the environment or on civil rights/social justice campaigns. These two broad categories also intersect at numerous points, for example, efforts to develop a sustainable global economy simultaneously strive to reign in the pollution and resource depletion so rampant among national and multi-national corporations; press for fair wages, labor rights, and universal health care; and work to create laws and policies that foster equality, freedom, and peaceful coexistence.

Further, most political initiatives have implications about some very large questions: "How big should government be, and how should it set its priorities and allocate its resources?" In weighing all the parts of a democratic society, the public needs to somehow determine the appropriate balance points—how does the state fulfill its duty to improve social conditions and create a more equitable, sustainable society without growing a government so big that it bogs down the society with bureaucracy and red tape or intrudes on the private lives of its citizens? And once the basic thrust is determined, then how much of which resources are devoted to each program, who is responsible for oversight and management, and how are the managers and projects accountable to the citizenry?

Although these questions about democratic structures, balance, and priorities must be addressed by nations at the macro level, members of intentional communities find that these issues are also a recurring theme in their everyday lives—especially for groups that aspire to be models of "what's possible" in how an ideal society might function. Indeed, in the hundreds of communities I've visited, one of the most commonly occurring challenges I've noticed is how the group and individuals struggle to find a sustainable and satisfying balance between the members' personal lives and the time and energy they're expected to contribute to community life.

There's no fixed solution to the various balance questions, and, in fact, the emphasis seems to ebb and flow over time, even

(continued on p. 79)

Communities Directory

Community Descriptions

Over 600 North American and 100 international communities describe themselves—their structure, beliefs, mission—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.

SEE ORDER FORM ON PAGE 78.

We face a variety of experiences at every turn, from guerrilla warfare and military blockades to remote indigenous communities in the Amazon.

— Subcoyote Alberto Ruz

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