

AN ECOVILLAGER'S "WIFE SWAP" ADVENTURE

# COMMUNITIES

Life in Cooperative Culture

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE



**From Eco-Kooks  
to Eco-Consultants**

**O.U.R. Ecovillage  
Introduces  
Sustainable Zoning**

**TLC Farm's Bold Move  
in Portland City Hall**

Winter 2007 • Issue #137

\$6.00 / \$8.00 Canada



[communities.ic.org](http://communities.ic.org)

## SENIOR COHOUSING

A Community Approach to Independent Living - The Handbook



"At last, here is a guidebook to a new way of aging for older Americans ..."

-Kathy Goss, Journalist, review for Amazon.com

# SENIOR COHOUSING

A Community Approach to Independent Living - The Handbook

"This book is the most comprehensive and up-to-date book currently available on the topic of senior cohousing ..."

... Durrett has done a superb job in thoroughly covering the psychological and social aspects of cohousing in addition to the logistics, operations, and design

elements. Although an architect by training, Durrett has an intuitive feel for what a reader needs to know about this fast growing new trend. The comprehensive nature of this book, demonstrates Durrett's knowledge of the topic from a holistic perspective way beyond the mere design facets of creating cohousing communities. He innately understands all the concerns, fears, misunderstandings, and objections people may have about cohousing – and logically and thoroughly addresses each one in an easy to follow logical style.

Not only is this book unique in its subject matter, but also the presentation of the content is the most comprehensive and "usable" of any book currently available on this subject. Durrett's book quite simply is the "gold standard" for anyone interested in this subject. Regardless if you are a layperson wanting basic information, a highly motivated individual wanting to create a cohousing community, or a professional working with seniors and/or the aging field, this book is a "must read."

Senior Cohousing is not only a pioneering book in its presentation and coverage of a fast growing social and lifestyle trend, but it is an insightful, comprehensive overview addressing every aspect of cohousing. This book is cohousing from A to Z – all presented in an engaging and easy to follow format. Durrett is clearly the US leader and expert in this field, and his book is guaranteed to have far-reaching impact as people become more aware of this practical, economical, creative, and resourceful way to live."

– Alice Jacobs Ed.D., MS;  
Senior education and learning specialist

"... and cohousing – perhaps the most creative housing options for seniors – is one that we can make happen for us NOW ... It is easy to read, highlights all the major issues one needs to anticipate, and gives clear how-to-do-it guidelines to a group wanting to take charge of their own housing future. It tackles problems that any group will undoubtedly face and gives helpful solutions, making the often daunting task of creating a cohousing community seem "do-able." It is a very inspiring testament to growing old "in community."

– Lisa Anthony,  
Second Journey  
secondjourney.org



Senior cohousing is an entirely new way for seniors to house themselves with dignity, independence, safety, mutual concern, and fun. Developed with the residents themselves, senior cohousing combines the autonomy of private dwellings with the advantages of shared facilities and community living. Senior cohousing residents live among people with whom they share a common bond of age, experience, and community – a community they themselves built to specifically meet their own needs.



Twenty years of working with, and living in, cohousing helped create this 249-page book by Charles Durrett, licensed and award-winning architect. After the first introduction of the cohousing concept

to the U.S. by husband-and-wife team Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett in 1988, almost 100 such communities have been built and more than 150 groups are currently in the process of creating a cohousing community.

Illustrated with photos and graphics, this book addresses in great depth the advantages and the why and how of senior cohousing. This book is also for younger people working with their parents to come up with alternatives to traditional retirement homes, in the same way they now plan their finances, to also consider the need to address their social and emotional well-being. The book is divided into four parts: Introducing Senior Cohousing, Senior Cohousing in Denmark, Creating Senior Cohousing, and Pioneering Senior Cohousing in America. The book offers detailed steps, so anyone can create a senior cohousing community.

To order the book 'Senior Cohousing', send check payable to:

McCamant & Durrett  
Architects  
1250 Addison Street #113  
Berkeley, CA 94702.  
ph. 510.549.9980

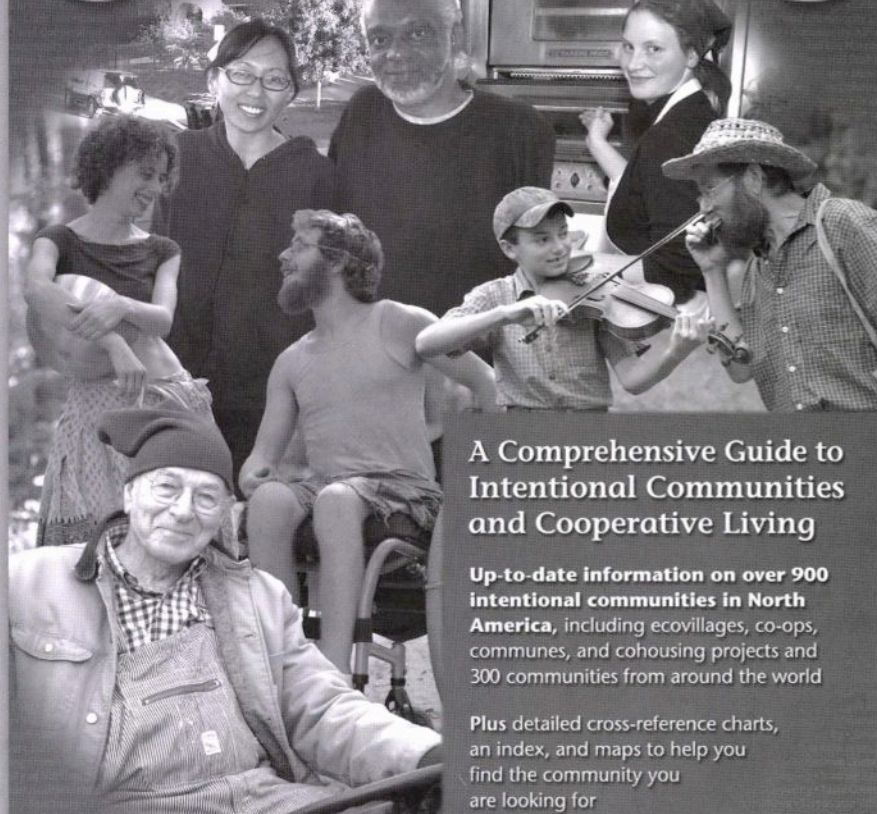
or

Online at  
[www.cohousingco.com](http://www.cohousingco.com)

\$34.55 (USA), \$38.00 (Canada & Mexico), \$40.95 (other locations in the world). Prices include shipping & handling.

NEW EDITION – UPDATED FOR 2007

# COMMUNITIES



A Comprehensive Guide to Intentional Communities and Cooperative Living

Up-to-date information on over 900 intentional communities in North America, including ecovillages, co-ops, communes, and cohousing projects and 300 communities from around the world

Plus detailed cross-reference charts, an index, and maps to help you find the community you are looking for

# DIRECTORY

## COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY

Over 900 North American communities, plus 325 from around the world, provide contact information and describe themselves—their structure, beliefs, mission, and visions of the future.

Includes articles on the basics of intentional communities and tips on finding the one that's right for you. You'll also find information on how to be a good community visitor.

## MAPS

For the first time we've included maps showing locations of communities throughout the world. See at a glance what's happening in your area or plan your community-visiting adventure.

## CROSS-REFERENCE CHARTS

These charts allow you to quickly scan for the communities that fulfill your criteria, including size, location, spiritual beliefs, food choices, decision making, and more.

All data is based on the Online Communities Directory at [directory.ic.org](http://directory.ic.org) (see below).



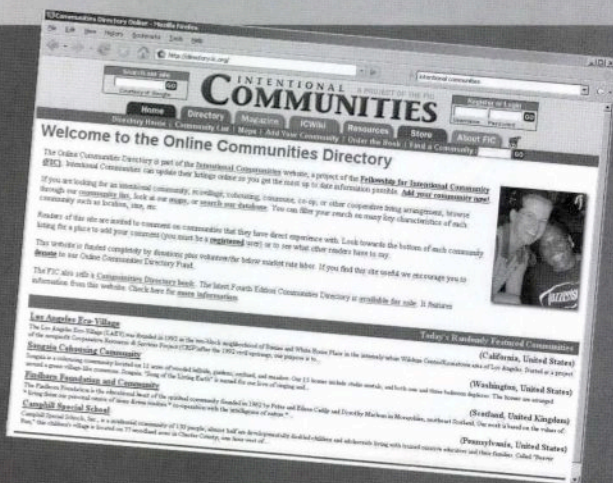
**Available NOW! Order it online!**

\$28 Postpaid (book rate in US, call or visit [store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org) for other shipping destinations and options) [store.ic.org/directory](http://store.ic.org/directory) • 1-800-462-8240

## ONLINE COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY

Don't miss the latest community listing information, available at [directory.ic.org](http://directory.ic.org). All the data in our book and more. Browse our alphabetical list or search on a variety of characteristics to find the community of your dreams.

**Hey Communities!** You can update your listing online at [directory.ic.org](http://directory.ic.org). Our interface allows you to update all aspects of your community listing so seekers will get the most up-to-date information possible. Update your information today!





## SPECIAL FEATURE

# Making a Difference

### 34 Can We Make a Difference?

Mark Lakeman and fellow Portland City Repair activists approached city officials with good will and an inclusive, “we’re in it together” attitude—with amazing and beautiful results for Portland, culturally and ecologically. *Diana Leafe Christian.*

### 39 When “No” is Just an Uneducated “Yes”

By not seeing “them” but rather “us,” O.U.R. Ecovillage on Vancouver Island and local officials co-created a whole new regulation for sustainable zoning—and set a precedent for all of Canada. *Brandy Gallagher.*

### 44 Let’s Do Graywater First!

*Laura Dvorak and j. brush* and other activists at Tryon Life Community Farm/Cedar Moon community in Portland are working with officials to create progressive new building codes, zoning regulations, and health codes—essentially making sustainability legal. Could Portland become the first real-life Ecotopia?

### 48 From Eco-Kooks to Eco-Consultants

Ecovillages are increasingly being sought for their expertise, notes GEN President *Jonathan Dawson*—in wastewater treatment, environmental education, renewable energy, organic agriculture, leadership skills, communication training, and more.

### 52 Turning People on to Community

Members of Songaia Cohousing share community living with mainstream folks in myriad ways, from intriguing people in local grocery stores to hosting large public gatherings onsite to helping set up a new community next door. *Fred and Nancy Lanphear.*

### 56 A “Wife Swapping” Adventure

Can an ecovillage gal live for a week in a mainstream household—with a microwave oven, processed food on paper plates, five SUVs, and six tiny pedigreed show dogs—and make a difference? *Melanie Rios* tries to find out.

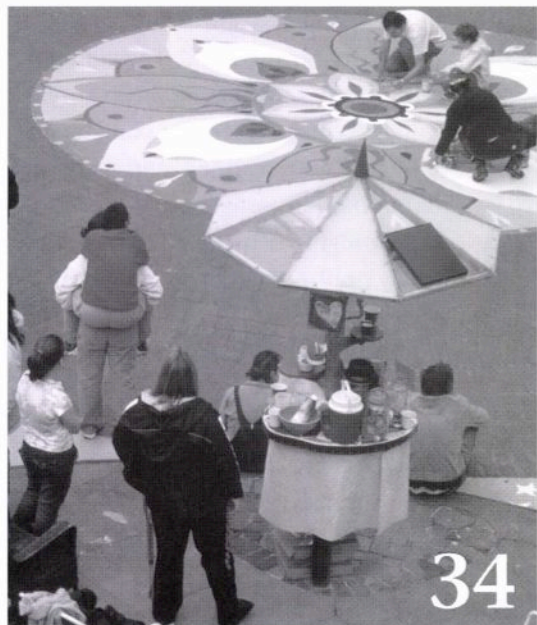
## ARTICLES

### 23 GOOD MEETINGS

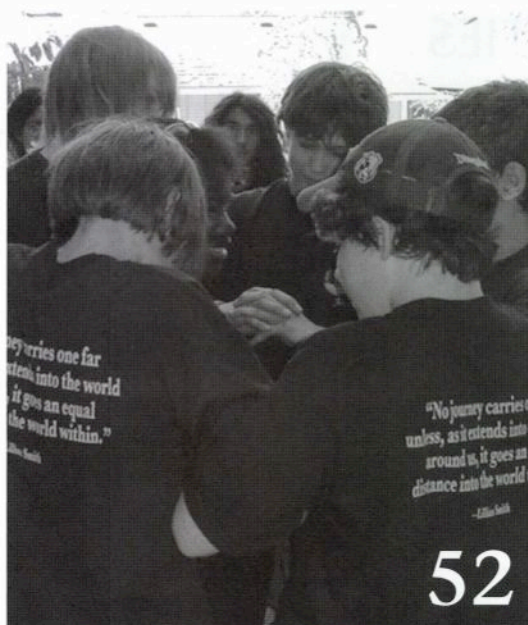
#### Preventing “Tyranny of the Minority”

Our consensus trainers and communication and process experts—*Bea Briggs, Laird Schaub, and Tree Bressen*—advise what to do about inadvertent “minority rule” in community.

DANCING RABBIT



MARK LAEMAN



STAN CROW

## ARTICLES

### 26 SEEKING COMMUNITY

#### On the Road with Zephyr, Part Three

Previously in this series, community-seeker *Zephyr Twombly* checked out communities in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. Now we find him in Missouri, visiting Sandhill Farm, with side trips to nearby Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage and Red Earth Farms.

### 30 COMMUNITY WHERE YOU ARE

#### Good Neighbors

Sometimes you just want community in the form of great neighbors right where you live. Is this possible? *Ellie Sommer* says Yes.

## VOICES

### 4 LETTERS

### 6 PUBLISHER'S NOTE

**Laird Schaub**

Taking Time for Transitions

## VOICES

### 10 FELLOWSHIP NEWS

**Tony Sirna**

Long-time Voice of Communities,  
Diana Leafe Christian: Fare Thee Well!

### 13 COMMUNITY LIVING WORLDWIDE

**Bill Metcalf**

International Communal Studies  
Association Conference at Damanhur

### 17 FELLOWSHIP NEWS

**Laird Schaub**

Geoph Kozeny—Dead at 57  
The Road Trip Ends

### 60 ECOVILLAGE LIVING

**Matthieu Lietaert**

Challenges for Ecovillages in the 21st  
Century

### 65 REVIEWS

*Touching the World; Passion Big as a  
Planet.*

### 76 PERIPATETIC COMMUNITARIAN

**Geoph Kozeny**

The Craziest Among Us: Balancing  
Compassion with Capacity

## CONNECTING

### 68 REACH

#### FRONT COVER

Painting the petals on "Freda's Tree", The Portland City Repair project helps people to transform intersections into "village squares" for all neighbors to enjoy, like these residents of Portland's neighborhood at NE 56th and Stanton.

Photo: Clarence Eckerson Jr.

To view more of Clarence's photographs and videos, please visit [www.streetfilms.org](http://www.streetfilms.org).

# COMMUNITIES

Life in Cooperative Culture

## MANAGING EDITOR

Parke Burgess

## EDITOR

Diana Leafe Christian (*Earthaven*)

## LAYOUT

Cynthia Lee Rose (*Earthaven*)

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Billie Miracle (*WomanShare*)

Elke Cole

City Repair

## PHOTOS

Albert Bates (*The Farm*); Peter Bloch; Rob Bolman (*Maitreya Ecovillage*); Scot Buckley; Stan Crow; Clarence Eckerson, Jr.; Marylyn & Chuck Hannah-Myrick; Bonsai Matt James (*Cedar Moon*); Mark Lakeman (*Portland City Repair*); Jenny Leis (*Cedar Moon*); Craig Ragland; Kim Scheidt (*Red Earth Farms*); Tony Sirna (*Dancing Rabbit*); Ellie Sommer; Gigi Wahba (*Sandhill Farm*).

## COPYEDITING

Marie Marcella

## PROOFREADING

Marie Marcella

## ADVERTISING MANAGER

Patricia Greene

## OFFICE MANAGER

Tony Sirna (*Dancing Rabbit*)

## CIRCULATION MANAGER

McCune Porter (*Twin Oaks*)

## EDITORIAL REVIEW BOARD

Deborah Altus

Laird Schaub (*Sandhill Farm*)

Tony Sirna (*Dancing Rabbit*)

**COMMUNITIES** (ISSN 0199-9346) is published quarterly by the Fellowship for Intentional Community at Route 1, Box 156, Rutledge, MO 63563. Periodicals postage paid at Rutledge, MO, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Communities*, 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093. Indexed in the *Alternative Press Index*.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** \$20 US, \$24 Canada, \$26 outside US/Canada for four issues via periodical/surface mail. Single copies are \$6 US, \$7 Canada, \$8 outside US/Canada. All payments in US dollars. Available from *Communities*, 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093; order@ic.org, or order online at store.ic.org.

**BACK ISSUES:** Rt. 1, Box 156, Rutledge, MO 63563; 800-995-8342.

**EDITORIAL OFFICE:** *Communities*, 7 Smith Rd., Rutledge, MO 63563, 660-883-5330; editor@ic.org.

© 2007 by Fellowship for Intentional Community. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA. Opinions expressed by authors and correspondents are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.

**FELLOWSHIP FOR INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY:** Rt. 1, Box 156, Rutledge, MO 63563; 660-883-5545.

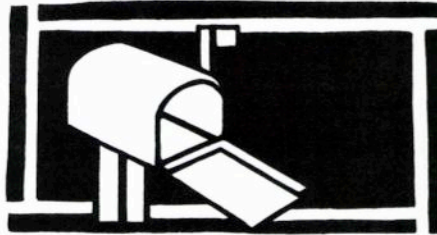
**REPRINT PERMISSION:** Community groups may reprint with permission. Please contact *Communities*, 7 Smith Rd., Rutledge, MO 63563, 660-883-5330; editor@ic.org.

**ADVERTISING:** Patricia Greene, Advertising Manager, patricia@ic.org; 315-386-2609; POB 62, Canton, NY 13617.

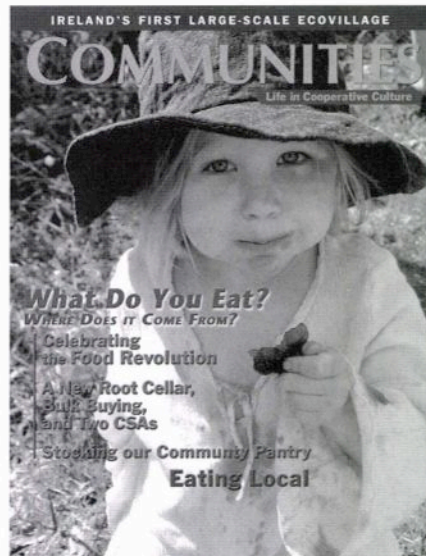
**WEB SITE:** www.ic.org.

This magazine printed on recycled paper, using soy-based inks, at Allen Press in Lawrence, Kansas, USA.

# LETTERS



Send your comments to editor@ic.org or *Communities*, 7 Smith Rd., Rutledge, MO 63563. Your letters may be edited or shortened. Thank you!



## Summer '07 Cover Photo

Dear Editor,

As one of the people who didn't like the 1994 cover photo, I was struck by Harvey Baker's comparison of it to the cover of the Summer '07 issue. (See "Letters" section of the Fall '07 issue, #136.) I didn't even make the connection until I read Harvey's letter. I had to ask myself, "Why?"

The most important reason is the girls' faces. The girl in the 1994 cover photo looks sad to me, and her face is covered in dirt. It's easy for me to read poverty and neglect into that. In the summer '07 photo the child seems content, and is clearly enjoying that strawberry I imagine she just picked. Though she is far from clean, she is not smeared in filth.

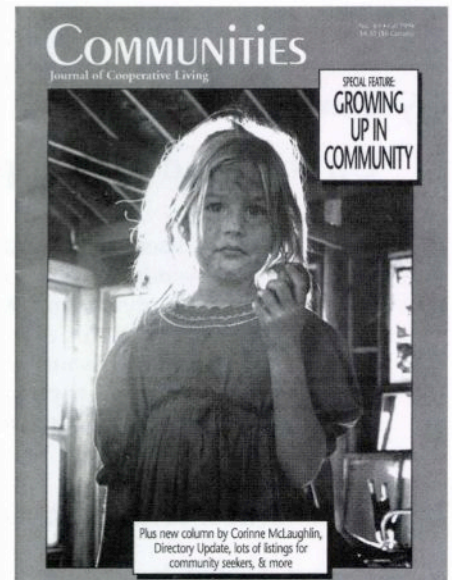
The second reason is the setting. In the first cover the child is in an apparently dingy building with no interior walls or ceiling. The other child appears to be in a sunny garden, and my imagination has her romping and playing.

Although the two pictures are superficially similar, they convey very different emotions to me.

I like the strawberry girl photo very much; I find it much more positive. Perhaps this is reflective of the ongoing improvement of this magazine over the past many years.

As ever, I thank you for this excellent publication.

Elke Lerman  
Elmhurst, NY



## Oneness University

Dear *Communities*:

From the early 1970s to the late 1980s, as a part of the network of communities known as The Emissaries of Divine Light, I enjoyed the remarkable privilege of trekking around the world akin to Johnny Appleseed, sowing seeds of spiritual/intentional community and spiritual awakening. I loved with a passion introducing brothers and sisters and their communities, projects, insights, and vision to one another. I worked closely with Laird Schaub of the FIC and a great group of friends on the first

*Communities Directory*, then moved away from The Emissaries and the FIC in 1990.

Last year I attended a course at Oneness University just north of Chennai, India. Students of the course receive an energy called "oneness blessing" or "oneness *Deeksha*" (a Sanskrit word meaning transfer of energy, or initiation), by a laying on of hands lightly on the head for two to three minutes. Amazingly it acts somehow like mind/ego solvent. Somehow, I felt myself present beyond my subtle, habituated patterns; I became declutched from the mind and able to observe formerly hidden, unconscious processes going on, dating back to childhood, to familial, or ancient patterning. I'm Present like never before! What a gift! And this new experience lingers and deepens into waves of Peace and well-being.

This is leading me to become a deeper, more present, more compassionate human being. I'm discovering layers of defensive, fear-based habits, hiding remarkable idiocy in the very foundations of my perceptions of life. They are extremely difficult to see, much less to eradicate. My compassion deepens as I see the pain I've caused to others in my blindness.

I want to share this information with others! You can learn more by going to [www.onenessuniversity.org](http://www.onenessuniversity.org) and [www.onenessmovement.org](http://www.onenessmovement.org). See also Arjuna Ardagh's book, *Awakening to Oneness*.

**David Thatcher**  
Salt Spring Island  
British Columbia

### Farewell to Sol Etzioni

Dear *Communities*,

I was saddened to hear about the death of Sol Etzioni, who worked with the International Communes Desk. I never met him in person, but we had corresponded for years, and I felt like we were linked through our mutual love of communalism. He was an incorrigible (and respectful) flirt, full of community news

and wanting the same from this side of the community ocean. I will miss him.

Here's what I posted on the ICWiki, under "Notable Communitarians," sent to me by Sol's housing-cluster-mate, ex-Twin Oaks visitor Gideon, from Kibbutz Tzora:

"A member of Kibbutz Tzora since 1954, Sol (Shlomo) Etzioni was born in Australia in 1929, where he was active in the Zionist youth movement, *Habonim*. At Kibbutz Tzora he worked in the orchards and as a part-time shepherd, but mainly worked as a high school chemistry teacher. He was married to former South African Rene Etzioni with whom he had three children; he and Rene had eight grandchildren. Sol's main interests were history, science, stamp-collecting, and communes, not necessarily in that order."

**Valerie Renwick-Porter**  
Twin Oaks Community  
Louisa, Virginia

### Farewell to Steve Habib Rose

Dear *Communities*,

It is with sorrow that I share the passing of Steve (Habib) Rose. Habib was a Seattle-area community networker who recently left us at the age of 50. He was highly involved in creating community where he was ... and he was many places in and around Seattle. He was passionate about helping people connect and build community for positive social change. Part of his good work was support for Northwest intentional communities, as a board member for NICA (Northwest Intentional Community Association). He is memorialized more fully on the WiserEarth.org Group, which you can view at [www.wiserearth.org/group/habibsgarden](http://www.wiserearth.org/group/habibsgarden). His memorial service was glorious, as we learned about his many contributions and how many others of us loved and cared about this gentle, generous spirit.

Thank you Habib,

**Craig Ragland**  
Songaia Cohousing  
New Earth Song Cohousing  
Bothell, Washington

Learn and  
Experience  
with us at  
*Hummingbird*

### Hospitality

Nourish your soul and enjoy the relaxing and healing energy at Hummingbird Ranch in rural New Mexico for retreat, vacation, or family gatherings.

### Facility Available

Beautiful, ecological solar-powered, year-round facility with indoor space for up to twenty people. Warm weather outdoor space includes new kitchen, dining tent and large yurt for meetings, yoga, and dance. We can customize services to meet your family, group or business needs.

### The Co-Creator's Handbook

An Experiential Guide for  
Discovering Your Life's Purpose and  
Building a Co-creative Society

Available through  
[www.globalfamily.net](http://www.globalfamily.net)

*Beautiful lush Hummingbird Ranch, a co-creative community, is nestled at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in northern New Mexico.*

[www.HummingbirdLivingSchool.org](http://www.HummingbirdLivingSchool.org)  
[www.HummingbirdCommunity.org](http://www.HummingbirdCommunity.org)  
[www.GlobalFamily.net](http://www.GlobalFamily.net)  
505-387-5877



*Hummingbird Community*  
and  
*Global Family*

### 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**, 7 Smith Rd., Rutledge, MO 63563; 660-883-5330; editor@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.

Patricia Greene, Advertising Manager, patricia@ic.org; 315-386-2609; POB 62, Canton, NY 13617.

### 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.

# Taking Time for Transitions

## Reflections on Marriage, Death, Birth, and Community

This past spring and summer was a potent time for me.

It started auspiciously in April, when Ma'ikwe and I got married. With the help of 175 of our closest friends we crafted a four-day celebration of love and community, culminating in a wonderfully wild day of sunshine and wind, rings and promises—punctuated by showers of gifts and snow amidst the quixotic spring weather of the Sandia Mountains overlooking Albuquerque. In short, we succeeded gloriously in manifesting the wedding of our dreams. It took more than a year to plan the nuptials and carve out a big enough hole in our busy schedules to protect the lead-up to

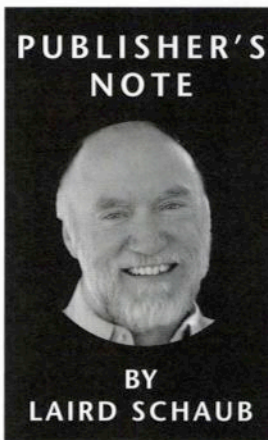
the wedding, the event itself, and the once-in-a-lifetime European honeymoon that followed. Determined to make that time special, I cleared out my calendar, completed writing assignments ahead, handed over administrative tasks to others, and left my laptop in Chicago. My

bride and I walked, talked, enthusiastically explored the regional gastronomic pleasures of Spain and Italy, read more than either of us had in years, and regularly found reasons other than books to linger in bed. For a period of five weeks I didn't check email once (which, in case you don't know me, is something akin to Madonna taking a vow of celibacy).

*I took time to appreciate that Ma'ikwe had become my community wife.*

Refreshed from two months devoted to the fullness of getting thoroughly married, I was looking forward to the normal rhythms of summer on the farm at my home community in Missouri, where the focus would be growing vegetables and getting to know

this year's batch of interns. I wasn't two weeks into that however, before my world took a somber turn. In late June my longtime friend and networking peer Geoph Kozeny (*Communities'* Peripatetic Communitarian) went into the hospital to have a biopsy done on a suspicious, painful



*Laird Schaub is executive secretary of the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC), publisher of this magazine, and cofounder of Sandhill Farm community in Missouri, where he lives.*



mass in his abdomen. The diagnosis came back snake-eyes: inoperable pancreatic cancer. Within 10 days of learning the hard news, I was on a train to the Bay Area, hoping I'd arrive in time for some solid time with my dear friend.

While the doctors were skittish about predicting how long Geoph had to live, we were told it would most likely be a matter of a few months at best. And if the pain were bad, the medication used to afford him reasonable comfort might significantly compromise his mental acuity. So every day was precious. I spent 18 days near him on that visit: time enough to enjoy long hours with a friend, to help organize his affairs, and to be a

joy of friendship was inextricably linked with grief. Our times together stretched out. While there were business details to attend to, it was only a small fraction of our visits, which were a free flow of reminiscences, laughter, and catching up on mutual friends—lightly seasoned with the occasional card game.

*I took time to appreciate that Geoph has been my community brother, and I may lose him.*

As I drove back to Missouri from visiting Geoph, it occurred to me what a powerful support role my community had played in all this. Though Sandhill misses me when I'm not home, we are committed to relationships as a top priority

---

### *For a period of five weeks I didn't check email once.*

---

conduit for fresh information for the myriad people in Geoph's life who were eager for news.

While it took him a while to recover from the surgery and he'd lost considerable weight, July and August were good months for Geoph. Good because he had not been in much pain (and therefore was able to keep the pain killers in the vial), and good because he'd been fully present to participate in the outpouring of love and support that was being directed his way. We don't know how long he'll have [I'm writing this Sept 1], yet I admire his optimism and openness. Wasting no time in denial, he's been enjoying life fully, hoping for the best, and making prudent preparations for death—which, after all, will surely be needed, whether it's next week or next decade.

My time with Geoph brought out the oddest mixture of feelings: heartfelt warmth and spacious connection steeped in an atmosphere of profound sadness, tinged with urgency. Just as the cancer was inseparable from his vital organs, my

and my community was solidly behind me as I took a couple months away to fully experience these major transitions. What a blessing to have a life with this kind of flexibility!

*I took time to appreciate the support of my community, whose compassion and sensitivity was a necessary underpinning for my having the possibility to enjoy a long honeymoon and to walk away from the unceasing demands of a working farm in summer to attend a sick friend.*

Two days after I arrived on the West Coast to be with Geoph, Nancy Shrader died. She was the mother of Ann, with whom I started Sandhill Farm 33 years ago. Nancy was 87 and had been in failing health for some time. Though she had not been stricken in the bloom of life, as had Geoph, it was still a loss. I had known Nancy for 38 years. Two years ago, when she moved into assisted living, her home in East Cleveland had been the place in my life that had been continuously occupied the longest by someone close to me. Having lived at Sandhill for

## Sunrise Credit Union

# Integrity in Money Matters!

One of the things that distinguishes Sunrise Credit Union from other financial institutions is our mission. Integrity in money matters is why we're here! At the core of our work is the desire to provide a demonstration of responsible and compassionate handling of money and the relationships that go with that.

Sunrise Credit Union is community-based and member-owned.

### We offer:

- Online Banking
- Free Checking
- Low Fees
- Visa Card & Debit Card
- Savings, CDs, IRAs, and Money Market
- Loans—Personal and Project
- Excellent Rates
- Federally Insured

Find out more!  
scu@ic.org  
www.sunrisecreditunion.org  
888-871-3482 or 970-679-4311



# OCCIDENTAL ARTS & ECOLOGY CENTER

## Permaculture Design Course

March 15–28

September 20– October 3

## Starting and Sustaining Intentional Communities Course

May 16–18

November 7–9

15290 COLEMAN VALLEY RD, OCCIDENTAL  
(707) 874-1557x201 • WWW.OAEC.ORG

*Occidental is located in western Sonoma County, 20 minutes west of Santa Rosa*

more than 33 years, place has become an important touchstone for me. In this increasingly transient world, I mourn Nancy's passing all the more because of her commitment to place.

In August, the Shrader family held a memorial service for Nancy and spread her ashes at the family cottage on the shores of Lake Chautauqua in western New York. I visited Ann there in mid-August, on my way to this summer's Twin Oaks Communities Conference. It was a combination of paying my respects to Nancy and being with my old partner and close friend at her time of loss and remembrance.

*I took time to appreciate that Nancy was my community partner's mother, and to be with Ann during her grieving.*

## Wasting no time in denial, Geoph's been enjoying life fully.

Right as I was visiting Ann at Lake Chautauqua, Jane Morgan died peacefully at home in Yellow Springs OH. She was 89 and had lived a life dedicated to pacifism, wholesomeness, and community.

I first met Jane in 1991, when FIC had its spring board meeting at her community, The Vale, outside Yellow Springs. I can still recall walking into the living room of fellow community members Dick and Billie Eastman and meeting Jane's daughter Faith for the first time. Here I was a community veteran of 17 years and meeting someone my age who was *third* generation community—and the granddaughter of the legendary Arthur Morgan to boot. Looking through the other end of the telescope, I suddenly understood that my accomplishment in community longevity was somewhat humble after all.

## AdminService

human centered administration support

- ◆ Waldorf schools
- ◆ Independent schools
- ◆ Small business
- ◆ Health food stores
- ◆ Small non-profits
- ◆ Human service organizations

administrative support  
-in your office  
-an objective viewpoint

mentoring & training  
-individual  
-group workshops

financial management  
-fiscal analysis  
-organizational review

Specializing in working alongside of you, in all areas from short term projects to long term strategic planning, the underlying approach we bring to each engagement is the recognition of the human essence in each unique organization.



info@admins-service.com  
(Phone) 610.917.9101

www.adminservice.com

Though confined to a wheelchair or leg braces by polio contracted in her 30s, Jane had an indomitable spirit and found time and energy to raise two children, help start The Vale in 1960, and serve for 25 years as Executive Director for Community Service (a nonprofit in Yellow Springs promoting the philosophy of Arthur Morgan and the benefits of small community as a fundamental building block of a just and peaceful world).

Over the years I worked or visited with Jane perhaps half a dozen times

While in Berkeley, my son Ceilee—born to Ann and me at Sandhill 26 years ago—flew in briefly so the three of us could be together once more, honoring a connection Ceilee has had with Geoph since he was four years old. The night he arrived, Ceilee was bubbling with the joyous news that he and his partner are pregnant. I am to be a grandfather for the first time next spring! Amazingly, the due date is April 18: exactly one year to the day that Ceilee went up into the Sandia Mountains with Ma'ikwe and me

---

*I always appreciated Jane's curiosity, grace, and humility.*

---

and always appreciated her curiosity, grace, and humility—qualities we seldom see in abundance.

*I took time to celebrate her influence on my life in community and to appreciate the inspiration she was to untold others as well. In many ways, Jane had been a mother of community.*

I was delayed in finishing work on this column by a consulting job in California, where Ma'ikwe and I were helping a community wrestle with debilitating dynamics and figure out how best to get back on the path toward a joyous life together. While delivering that work I received details about Jane's life, and had set aside time immediately following the consultation to complete this writing. First though, I went back to the Bay Area for another visit with Geoph.

in the dead of night to build the fire for the dawn sweat lodge that ritually signaled the start of our wedding.

*I am taking time to contemplate the generation that will come from the children of community. Ceilee is my community son, and the spiral of life continues.*

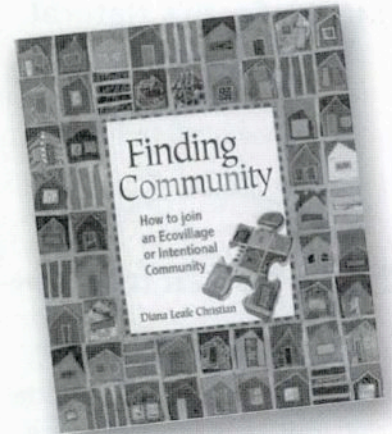
I am touched that it was Ceilee who fitted the last piece into the puzzle of my season of transitions, simultaneously providing the key that weaves them all into a complete circle of connection, and reminding me that endings are somehow always paired with beginnings.✿



**COMING IN FUTURE ISSUES:**

**Women in Community, Spring 2008**

Are women better off living in community than in mainstream culture? Are we physically safer, more emotionally supported? Do we have more access to nontraditional roles and jobs? Learn more about the gifts women bring to community living—and the benefits that community can bring to women—in our upcoming Spring issue. Look for Communities issue #138 at your favorite bookstore in March 2008, and if you don't see it, ask them to carry it!



**Finding Community:**

**How to Join an Ecovillage or Intentional Community**

By Diana Leafe Christian  
Foreword by Richard Heinberg

Diana Leafe Christian has done it again! Thoughtful, thorough, and engaging, and enlivened by stories from the trenches of real community life, *Finding Community* is a must-read for anyone seriously seeking community.

—Liz Walker, author, EcoVillage at Ithaca

Encyclopedic knowledge plus wry humor plus a realistic assessment of what the future holds for all of us.

—Albert Bates, cofounder, GEN; director, Ecovillage Training Center at The Farm

Through long experience and sheer social honesty, Diana Leafe Christian catalogs the pitfalls and delights of visiting and joining a community.

*Finding Community* is like having an explorer's compass and a roll of charts under your arm as you embark upon unknown waters.

—Richard Register, author, Ecocities



• newsociety.com •

NEW SOCIETY PUBLISHERS

\$24.95 • Bookstores • store.ic.org  
www.DianaLeafeChristian.org

Planet Earth's Natural  
Window Fashions™

Wholesale/ Retail  
8 Operating styles



Insulating                      Solar Shade  
Non-toxic                        Fair Trade  
Earth Friendly                 Economical



www.earthshade.com  
866.528.5443

Home.Office.Contract  
Ask us about Hemp!

Find  
treehuggers  
and others  
who share  
your values

free to browse  
free to join

GreenSingles.com

# Long-time Voice of *Communities*, Diana Leafe Christian: Fare Thee Well!

**P**aying public tribute to a friend and colleague who is moving on to new work is always so bitter-sweet. Sweetness in recalling and reminiscing over all that has been, how far we've come, and how much has been accomplished, and sadness as we transition to new endeavors.

Thus it is with sadness that I report that Diana Leafe Christian is stepping down as editor of *Communities* magazine after 14 years of dedicated service. Yet it is with pleasure that I share with you all that she has given to *Communities*, the FIC, and the communities movement.

In 1992, the FIC agreed to take over the then-moribund *Communities* magazine and soon began searching for an editor who could get the 21-year old magazine back on track. Diana was then publishing a community-oriented newsletter called *Growing Community* out of her home in Fort Collins, Colorado. We all agreed to have Diana take over as editor—which at the time meant doing pretty much everything but the layout, all on a shoestring budget.

Diana was truly phenomenal in her work as editor. For years, she dreamed up the engaging themes, beat the bushes of the movement for writers, photographers, and advertisers, molded and shaped those articles into print-worthy condition, and shared it all with you in a never-tiring desire to promote community in all its forms.

But Diana, and the FIC, didn't want *Communities* to be just a puff piece. Diana dove boldly into issues on diversity or cults or religion or sex—the kind of topics they tell you not to bring up at dinner. She embraced articles that were critical of communities or the movement. She went straight to the heart of what

challenges us in community (and probably all humans) most—how to engage well when conflict arises, and how to discern peaceful and healthy solutions. Though we're sure a few feathers got ruffled over the years, we know that *Communities* was far better for it.

It is clear that one of Diana's great talents lies in taking rough drafts from a diversity of amateur writers and polishing them into the magazine you see



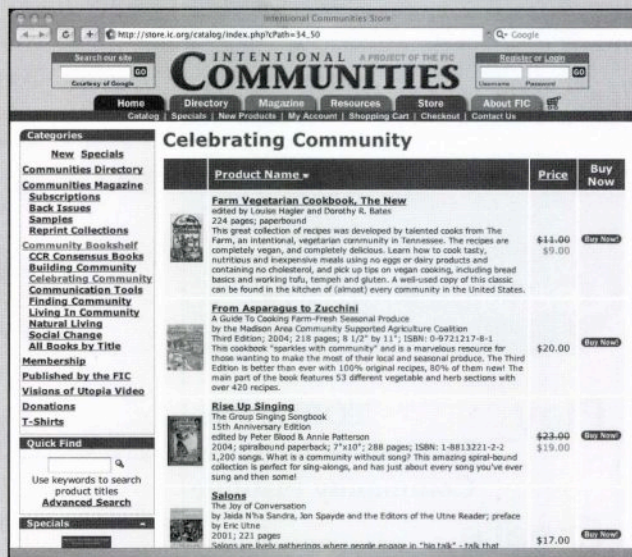
*Tony Sirna has served on the FIC board for 10 years and has worked closely with Diana as the Communities Managing Editor and as the board liaison for Communities. He lives at Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage in northeast Missouri.*

Looking for the best books on community? Check out...

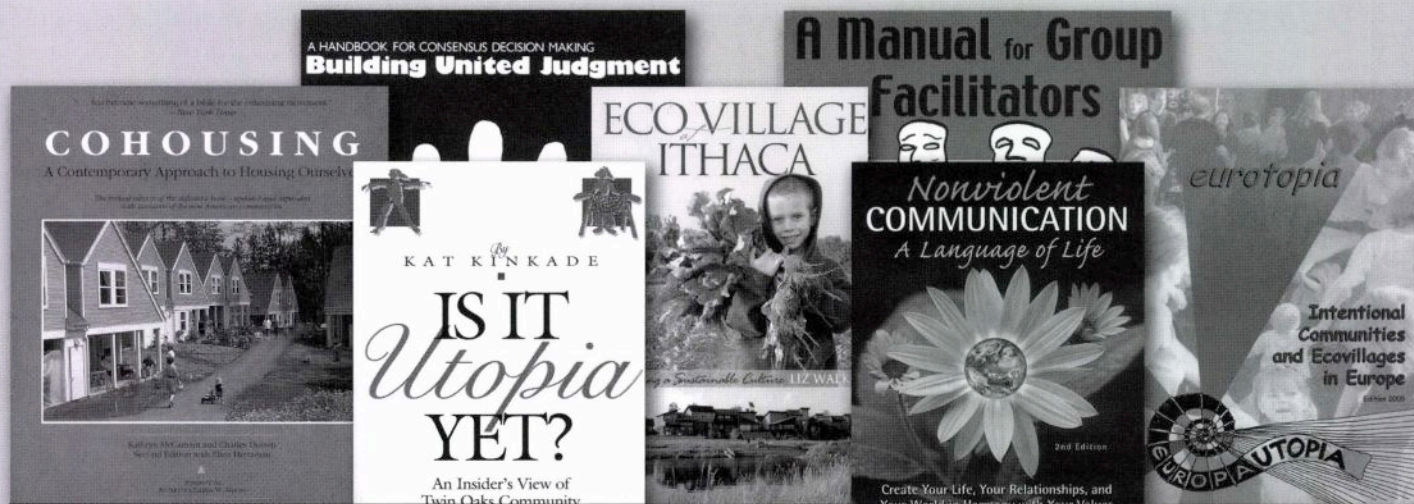
# Community Bookshelf

At Community Bookshelf we know what it takes to create and sustain community and we want to provide you with the skills and information you need to make it happen for you. We hand-pick only the best books about community and community skills. Topics include:

- **community building** – how to start an intentional community or find the one of your dreams
- **community stories** – inspiration and insight directly from the source
- **group process** – how to run successful meetings, where everyone feels good about the decisions that were made
- **communication skills** – learn how to meet conflict head-on and resolve it successfully
- **participatory democracy** – options and tools for making decisions together



Browse our store online at [store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org) or look for us at upcoming community-related gatherings and events, including NASCO Institutes, Twin Oaks Communities Conferences, and all FIC Art of Community events and organizational meetings.



Community Bookshelf • RR 1 Box 156 • Rutledge, MO 63563 • USA  
[bookshelf@ic.org](mailto:bookshelf@ic.org) • [store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org) • 660-883-5545 • 800-995-8342

# O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE



Practice  
Learn

Play

**TOPIA: The Sustainable Learning Community Institute**

Create

We are inviting an exciting team of international teachers for the season.

Join

Summer programs offered at O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE, Shawnigan Lake:

Celebrate

**Permaculture Skillbuilder**

Diversity

**Natural Building Skillbuilder**



stay tuned: dates for our **Mud and Art Workshops** and info on other educational opportunities are coming soon!

Contact us to book a tour!

our@pacificcoast.net  
250-743-3067

Stay with us at O.U.R. Eco B & B!

www.ourecoovillage.org

before you. Sometimes her job was described as hacking her way through a jungle of half-formed thoughts and rambling prose, helping the writer find a clear path to convey their thoughts, drawing out their best ideas, and never losing their voice. In this daunting task Diana excelled, filling 80 pages, issue after issue, with insightful material from across the community spectrum.

Diana's drive for community went far beyond *Communities* magazine. In the

nationally renowned and dynamic speaker on the topic of community as well as a consultant for forming groups or those struggling with their community vision. Her workshops are a hit at every event, with participants mobbing Diana with questions at the end of each session and at every meal.

So while Diana will be leaving *Communities* magazine, her work in the movement will no doubt continue to flower and bear fruit. It is with our full

---

*She went straight to the heart of what challenges us most—how to engage well when conflict arises, and how to discern peaceful and healthy solutions.*

---

early 2000's, Diana moved to Earthaven Ecovillage near Asheville, North Carolina. She took her lessons-learned and shared them with the world in her 2003 book, *Creating a Life Together*, combining her personal experience with the wisdom of all those she worked with as *Communities* editor. Diana succeeded in creating a must-read book for anyone wishing to start an intentional community. Diana recently published her second

support and admiration that we wish her well in all her work.

At this point, who can say how many communities owe their success in part to Diana? Or how many individuals have found the community home of their dreams through her work? Or even how many people know that community is an option for them and have a robust and favorable notion of community living through her unflinching activism

---

*Who can say how many communities owe their success in part to Diana?*

---

book, *Finding Community*, to help all those seeking to join an intentional community to evaluate the best one for them. These two books are such needed and valuable tools for the movement that we are all indebted to Diana for sharing them with us.

Diana's skill does not stop with the written word. She has also become a

on the simple notion that people can live cooperatively together?

We can never measure the impact of one person, nor did Diana work alone in all these efforts. But we can never doubt that the communities movement, and the world, is a better place because of her.

Thank you, Diana!☀

# International Communal Studies Association Conference at Damanhur

This June I met with 120 communarians and academic researchers from more than a dozen countries at the 2007 International Communal Studies Association (ICSA) Conference. We met at Damanhur Federation, a 32-year-old spiritual community near Turin, Italy. Every three years ICSA members meet and share research findings at an intentional community or university: in 2004 it was the Amana Colonies in Amana, Iowa; in 2001, ZEGG community in Germany; in 1998 at University of Amsterdam, and in 1995 at Yad Tabenkin Research Centre, Israel.

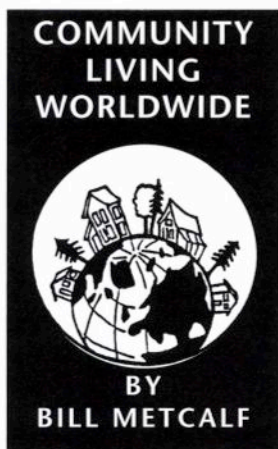
One of the most interesting and dynamic intentional communities in the world, Damanhur started with a small group in 1975 and has grown to about 600 members, or "citizens," as well as several hundred affiliated members living in Damanhurian centers throughout Europe.

Damanhur members own and operate numerous businesses: making silk scarves, jewelry, specialty cheeses, and

high-quality handmade goods. The community is involved in the government in the Valchiusella Valley: a Damanhurian is mayor of the local town, and 22 Damanhurians sit on other town councils in the valley.

Damanhur citizens live in small communal households, called "nucleos," of 12-30 adults, plus children. Nucleo residents eat and socialise together, sharing expenses and responsibilities for children and work. Some nucleos comprise more than one house, and all 20 nucleos constitute the Damanhur Federation. Each nucleo appoints a member to sit on the

Damanhur Federation Council, and this council selects two senior members, their "King and Queen Guides," for a six-month period to co-serve in the executive director role for the Federation. These officers can be re-elected or replaced, offering the community both continuity and change. Damanhur has a sophisticated range of governance facilities to make and implement decisions and resolve



*Bill Metcalf, PhD., a semi-retired professor of environmental science at Griffith University in Brisbane, is author of nine books on community, including The Findhorn Book of Community Living. He is a Fellow of the Findhorn Foundation in Scotland, and a past president of ICSA. Note: We preserve the spelling of our Commonwealth country authors. ICSA: [ic.org/icsa](http://ic.org/icsa). Damanhur: [damanhur.info/en/html/home.asp](http://damanhur.info/en/html/home.asp). Torri Superiore: [torri-superiore.org](http://torri-superiore.org).*

**ECO VILLAGE  
of  
ITHACA**

*Pioneering a Sustainable Culture* LIZ WALKER

“...a great contribution...  
to the sustainability movement. Her personal, engaging account of the process of creating one of the most successful alternative communities is invaluable.”  
*Starhawk, author of The Fifth Sacred Thing*

Available online from  
[www.ecovillage.ithaca.ny.us](http://www.ecovillage.ithaca.ny.us)

or send a \$22 check (postage & handling incl.) to  
**EcoVillage/CRESP,**  
115 Rachel Carson Way,  
Ithaca, NY 14850

**rethink  
solar**

**RENT A SOLAR  
ELECTRIC SYSTEM  
FOR YOUR HOME**

- NO System Purchase
- NO Installation Cost
- NO Maintenance Fees
- NO Permit Hassles
- NO Performance Worries
- NO Rate Increases
- Grid-tied Homes Only

[www.jointhesolution.com/jc](http://www.jointhesolution.com/jc)  
Contact: John Charamella  
email: [gettsolar@earthlink.net](mailto:gettsolar@earthlink.net)  
315-386-3120

## Unique Heart-centered Job Opportunity

### The Lukas Community

based on the Steiner Philosophy, located in beautiful southern New Hampshire, is seeking warm-hearted people who are interested in doing meaningful work with developmentally disabled adults.

**Responsibilities** include living with and providing leadership and instruction with a focus on the arts, including music, singing, weaving, woodworking, painting, ceramics, candle-making, hiking, organic gardening, outings and more.

Care-giving experience preferred.



#### Benefits include:

- 5-day work week
- private living quarters
- salary & benefits
- 8 weeks of paid vacation

Apprentice positions also available; great opportunities for young people who want to gain valuable work experience.

If interested, please call:

David Spears,

Executive Director, at: 603-878-4796

e-mail: [lukas@monad.net](mailto:lukas@monad.net)

[www.lukascommunity.org](http://www.lukascommunity.org)

conflicts. The community is famous for "The Temple of Humankind," their complex of seven linked underground temples characterized by beautiful stained glass domes, mosaics, carvings, and tiles.

The ICSA conference was formally opened on June 29th by Professor Dennis Hardy of the UK, ICSA's retiring President. We were then welcomed by Damanhur's King and Queen Guides, Uria Sedano and Testuggine Cacao. Our first formal address was by Albert Bates, director of Ecovillage Training Center at The Farm in Tennessee, whose talk, "Communal Economics in a Post-Petroleum World," emphasised the importance

The talks about historic intentional communities included "An Owenite Community in Flotey-lès-Vesoul, Haute-Saône," by Megali Fleurot (France); "Visions of Peace: The Shakers, the Bruderhof, and the World," by Etta Madden (US); and my own presentation, "Ethnically-Based Utopian Intentional Communities: The Example of New Italy, Australia."

Philosophical and theoretical presentations included "Intentional Community, Modernity, Post-Modernity, and Globalization," by Michael Livni (Israel); "All Things Common: Comparing Christian Interpretations of Biblical Communism," by Deborah Altus (US); "Integrated Eco-

## *Damanhur is famous for "The Temple of Humankind," their complex of seven linked underground temples.*

of sustainability to the intentional communities movement—a theme which ran through the rest of the conference.

Over the next three days about 40 speakers covered topics about current and historical intentional communities, community networking, and a wide range of philosophical and theoretical issues. Simultaneous translation facilities were provided by Damanhur members so that a presentation in Italian, for example, could be simultaneously heard in English or German simply by listening through earphones tuned to the proper channel. As far as I know, this is the first intentional communities conference ever to offer this service!

Presentations about contemporary intentional communities included: "The Utopianism of Longo Mai Co-operatives," by Saskia Poldervaart (Holland); "Camphill: A Spiritual Community," by Jan Martin Bang (Norway); and "Shri Ram: a Modern Path to Enlightenment," by Tatiana Ginzberg (Russia).

village Design: A New Tool for Physical Planning," by Hildur Jackson (Denmark); "We Have Nothing to Hide: Public Nudity in North American Communes," by Tim Miller (US); and "The Sound of Communal Living" by Chris Coates (UK).

Talks about networking to promote and sustain intentional community included: "RIVE: Network of Italian Ecovillages," by Mimmo Tringale (Italy); "Ecovillages," by Jonathon Dawson (UK); and "Experimental Fields for Sustainable Lifestyle Models" by Iris Kunze (Germany).

In our final, plenary session, which I chaired, Ross Jackson (Denmark) presented "A Gaian Utopia," about how environmental imperatives must dictate the ways that not only intentional communities but all societies develop. ICSA's co-founder, Professor Yaacov Oved (Israel), then presented "Changes in Modern Communes: from Utopian Propensity to Pragmatic Approach," based upon his half-century of research. We then collectively thanked the members of Damanhur



Federation for opening up their lives, hearts, and nucleos to us. We also thanked the workers, many of whom were volunteers, who had looked after the technical and practical aspects, and ensured that we were all fed, housed, entertained, supported, and made to feel at home.

As well as these fascinating, albeit heady topics of ICSA's formal presentations, we were entertained on the first evening with a concert of esoteric music and interpretive modern dance by Damanhur members at their Open Temple. On the final evening, we held an ICSA formal dinner, followed by a Laser Light Show, with accompanying dance, also put on by Damanhur members. On the intervening evening, we each had the chance to dine with different small groups of Damanhur members in the privacy of their nucleos. For many of us, this was a highlight, as we were able to visit informally with ordinary Damanhurians, and ask all those questions which we wouldn't feel comfortable asking in a larger meeting. I was fortunate to dine

ties in the world. Thirteen resident adults and six children operate a Guest House and permaculture demonstration site, and offer various training programs. They live in a restored stone village dating from the thirteenth century but abandoned after the Second World War. The 160 rooms of this complicated and convoluted complex with eight levels are built against a steep hillside, with most rooms having vaulted stone ceilings. It reminds me what it would be like to live in an M.C. Escher print. ICSA conference members were welcomed with a tour, drinks, and a three-course dinner, on Torri Superiore's balcony, which overlooks their olive, grape, and vegetable terraces, stepped down to the Bevera River. Most of us slept that night at Torri Superiore.

On the final day, our tour buses took us from Torri Superiore to visit two nearby medieval architectural gems, the strikingly beautiful villages of Dolceacqua and Apricale. At the latter, we were welcomed by the mayor and given lunch at

---

*The Arboricoli folk are experimenting  
to see how viable it is to live in trees  
20 feet above the ground.*

---

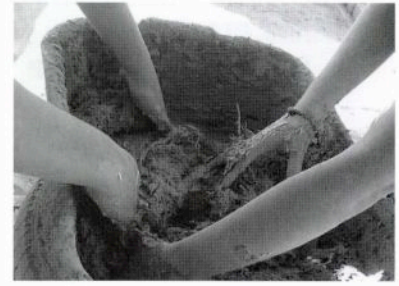
and enjoy superb local wines with the dozen members of a small, three-year-old nucleo, "Arboricoli," built 20 feet off the ground in trees growing on the mountain above their underground temple complex. The Arboricoli folk are experimenting to see how viable it is to live in trees. Fortunately, I did not drink too much wine, so at the end of the evening I was able to return safely to Earth.

After the conference many of us took a bus tour to Torri Superiore Ecovillage near the Italian Riviera. Without a doubt, Torri Superiore is one of the most charming and welcoming intentional communi-

ties in the world. Thirteen resident adults and six children operate a Guest House and permaculture demonstration site, and offer various training programs. They live in a restored stone village dating from the thirteenth century but abandoned after the Second World War. The 160 rooms of this complicated and convoluted complex with eight levels are built against a steep hillside, with most rooms having vaulted stone ceilings. It reminds me what it would be like to live in an M.C. Escher print. ICSA conference members were welcomed with a tour, drinks, and a three-course dinner, on Torri Superiore's balcony, which overlooks their olive, grape, and vegetable terraces, stepped down to the Bevera River. Most of us slept that night at Torri Superiore.

Our buses then headed home, taking delegates to catch trains, buses or planes back to our homes around the globe.

During the conference, the ICSA Board decided that our next President will be Professor Michal Palgi, a long term member of Kibbutz Nir-David ("The field of David") between Haifa and Jerusalem, Israel. Michal is a sociologist who has been involved for years in studying organisational and gender issues within intentional communities, particularly within the broad range of Israeli kib-



## NEW Online Newsletter

# ECOVILLAGES AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

- Practical, nuts-and-bolts articles by ecovillage activists worldwide
- No charge to readers • Bi-monthly

• *Edited by*  
**Diana Leafe Christian**

*Begins January 2008:*

- **How Yarrow Ecovillage Got "Ecovillage Zoning"**
- **Robert Gilman: Do Small Towns Make Ideal Ecovillages?**
- **H.E.R.O. Financing: Can Ecovillages Benefit from this New Financial Invention?**
- **Urban Ecovillage Conference, Chicago, November, 2007**

Diana is author of *Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages and Intentional Communities*, and *Finding Community: How to Join an Ecovillage or Intentional Community*. Former editor of *Communities* magazine (1994-2007), she is a frequent speaker and workshop trainer on ecovillages, starting new ecovillages, and reducing "structural conflict" in existing communities. She lives at Earthaven Ecovillage in North Carolina.

[www.DianaLeafeChristian.org](http://www.DianaLeafeChristian.org)

To register: [Diana@ic.org](mailto:Diana@ic.org)

**We can edit your manuscript,  
article, grant, resume,  
website, dissertation  
or book**

in social science,  
humanities,  
science or  
mathematics

using your own formatting  
style or APA, Chicago,  
MLA or AP  
formatting

from you handwritten,  
typed or electronically  
generated document.

We provide three levels of editing:

- proofreading
- copyediting and
- full edit (including  
organizational suggestions)

*Editors Sue and John Morris  
have more than 47  
years of combined  
editing and  
graphic  
design experience*

**WE WORK IN WORD,**

**PAGEMAKER,**

**QUARK XPRESS, ADOBE**

**ILLUSTRATOR,**

**LATEX AND**

**ADOBE**

**PHOTOSHOP**

**EDIT  
IDIT**

We charge \$28 per hour  
for all our services

Please visit our website at  
<http://www.editide.us> or  
contact us through  
[info@editide.us](mailto:info@editide.us)

butzim. She has been an ICSA member for many years.

The ICSA Board unanimously decided that our next conference, in 2010, will be held in northern Israel, under the auspices of the Institute for Research of the Kibbutz and the Cooperative Idea at the University of Haifa, and will focus on both the history of the traditional,

pate in our conference in 2010. We resolved that ICSA2010 should have the issue of peace as a key element. We need to explore what intentional communities can contribute to promoting ethnic accord and peaceful communities.

Personally, the best part of ICSA2007 was to meet with colleagues whom I have known and worked with for many

*Torri Superiore, one of the most charming  
and welcoming communities in the world,  
reminds me what it would be like  
to live in an M.C. Escher print.*

rural Israeli kibbutzim (which began in 1910) and on the recent establishment of numerous urban kibbutzim in that country. These latter intentional communities appear to be modifying the kibbutz form of communal living, which suited the 20th century, into a new form of communal living which might be more appropriate to the 21st century.

Among the associated issues discussed by the Board were questions of security and justice in the Middle East, since we recognised that such issues will be in the minds of people who will partici-

years, as well as to meet several brilliant young graduate students from whom we will no doubt hear much in the future. The worst part of ICSA2007, for me, was when any presenter would read a dry paper rather than actually talking with us about their subject.

And will I be at ICSA in 2010 in Israel? Absolutely! ICSA gatherings are a wonderful opportunity to learn, contribute, and enjoy a wonderful few days of fellowship with a wide range of good people, all of whom are involved in intentional community in one way or another.☼



At the ICSA conference (left to right): Achim Ecker, ZEGG; Ina Meyer-Stoll, ZEGG; Lucilla Borio, Torri Superiore; (standing) Mimmo Tringale, Italian Ecovillage Network; ; author Bill Metcalf; Tim Miller, University of Kansas.

ALBERT BATES

# Geoph Kozeny—Dead at 57

## The Road Trip Ends

I am typing this on the westbound California Zephyr, rumbling across the Great Plains in the rain and fog of mid-October. I am on my way to the Bay Area—to see Geoph one last time.

I started writing this piece last June, the night I learned that Geoph had inoperable cancer. Writing as pain management. It helped me to grieve over a keyboard, remembering and honoring a great life. Now it's time to finish it.

While trains are not good for covering distances in a hurry, they are great for reflection. These two days of lumbering toward Geoph are, in fact, the perfect time to complete this tribute to my friend.

•••

I first met Geoph in 1985 when I was pouring a sidewalk for our neighbors. Just as I was about to start forming up, Geoph showed up to visit a fellow community member. It turned out he had experience with concrete and was a whiz at laying out forms. We had fun and it was the first of my many joint efforts with the peripatetic communitarian.

Although he was on the road visiting Sandhill that first occasion, it was before he was On the Road—his two-decade journey promoting community that continued until pancreatic cancer stopped him this fall. His odyssey had gone full circle: it began New Year's Day, 1988 when he drove away from Stardance (the San Francisco community he helped found in 1978), and ended in

the apartment of his dear friend and ex-partner, Eraca Cleary and her adult daughter Mindy (whom Geoph helped raise), just blocks away from the address in the Haight where Stardance continues as Purple Rose.

We were born within two months of each other, both Midwesterners, both diehard communitarians, and both inveterate punsters. We even looked alike, with our shiny pates and close-cropped beards (though in recent years I got thicker while Geoph got thinner). Our last carefree time together was at my wedding last April, when Geoph captured 10 hours of the festivities on video. It's a precious memory.



*Laird Schaub is executive secretary of the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC), publisher of this magazine, and cofounder of Sandhill Farm community in Missouri, where he lives.*

**ecological solutions**  
consultancy & education

**Ecovillage Intensive**  
**4 Month Residential**  
With Max O Lindegger & guests  
**Crystal Waters Ecovillage,**  
**Queensland, Australia**  
**15th March - 15th July 2008**

A unique programme offering a once in a lifetime opportunity to fully experience Ecovillage living and learning—limited to 8 participants to ensure personalised learning and mentoring.

Full EDE curriculum endorsed by GAIA Education plus intensive, hands-on experience. Learn about design, implementation, food growing, water, waste-water, food processing, small business and much, much more!

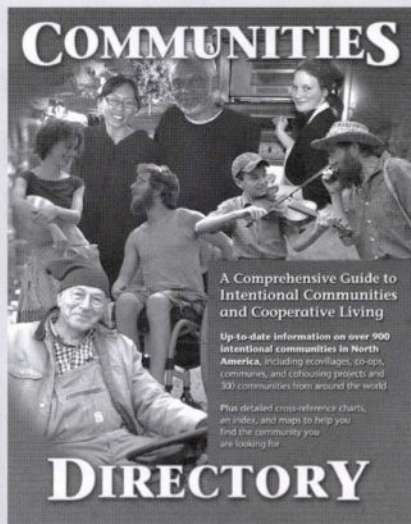
[www.ecologicalsolutions.com.au](http://www.ecologicalsolutions.com.au)  
[study@ecologicalsolutions.com.au](mailto:study@ecologicalsolutions.com.au)  
Phone + 61 7 5494 4741

**Support  
the FIC**  
Become a  
member today!

When you join the Fellowship for Intentional Community, your contribution supports projects like the **Communities Directory**, **Communities** magazine, and the **Intentional Communities Website** ([www.ic.org](http://www.ic.org)).

Plus you'll enjoy a 10% discount on all of our products and services and be eligible to join the Sunrise Credit Union.





### COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY

Over 900 North American communities, plus 325 from around the world, provide contact information and describe themselves—their structure, beliefs, mission, and visions of the future.

Includes articles on the basics of intentional communities and tips on finding the one that's right for you. You'll also find information on how to be a good community visitor.

### MAPS

For the first time we've included maps showing locations of communities throughout the world. See at a glance what's happening in your area or plan your community-visiting adventure.

### CROSS-REFERENCE CHARTS

These charts allow you to quickly scan for the communities that fulfill your criteria, including size, location, spiritual beliefs, food choices, decision making, and more.

All data is based on the Online Communities Directory at [directory.ic.org](http://directory.ic.org).

### Order it NOW online!

\$28 Postpaid (book rate in US, call or visit [store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org) for other shipping destinations and options)

[store.ic.org/directory](http://store.ic.org/directory)

1-800-462-8240

• • •

It didn't take us long to discover our mutual passion for community networking. Back in the mid-80s I was deeply involved with the Federation of Egalitarian Communities and I recall the Assembly where Geoph volunteered to take minutes on his computer. Each evening he'd produce a printout of that day's proceedings that we could proof-read on the spot. We never went back to stencils again.

Geoph was the one who unstopped the electron genie at my agrarian community. When he got his spiffy Mac Plus (one of the first portable desktop computers) in the late 1980s he graciously shipped his old lunker computer to Sandhill so we could test drive the Information Age. My community was furious that I'd let the thing be shipped without permission and refused to let me open the box—fearing Geoph's middle name may have been Pandora. After much gnashing of teeth, we eventually passed it along to

have to wait for an open machine), and it was Geoph who first gently poked a hole in our dike against the Internet.

Geoph had an impish streak. Though never malicious, he liked to shake things up. Our first major networking project together was the FIC's first edition of *Communities Directory*, which took us more than two years to assemble. Dan Questenberry was the Articles Editor, Geoph was doing layout, and I was the overall project manager. Late in the process Geoph got together with Dan (who has impressive imp credentials of his own) and cooked up a scheme to organize the community listings from Z-to-A, breaking away from the tyranny of the standard alphabetic order. While I was willing to award them full credit for creativity, I made it clear that that particular impediment to user-friendliness was never going to happen on my watch.

Though thwarted there, Geoph managed to find a highly original way to obtain his first copy of the finished Direc-

---

*We were born within two months of each other,  
both Midwesterners, both diehard  
communitarians, and both inveterate punsters*

---

another community with the packing seals unbroken. A few years later however—after Geoph had established a personal connection with the whole community—we welcomed his staying at Sandhill for six months while he toiled away on the first *Communities Directory*, Mac Plus and all, giving us all a less threatening taste of the brave new future.

Geoph eventually switched to a laptop and when he traded up for a new one in 1995, I got the old one and Sandhill entered the computer world through the front door. We've come a long way in 20 years (there are four computers at Sandhill today and sometimes you

tory—this baby that took 32 months to gestate from conception to delivery. He was, naturally, on the road when the book came back from the printer and Don Pitzer (head of the Center for Communal Studies at the University of Southern Indiana, where FIC was headquartered at the time) insisted on giving him his personal copy when he serendipitously bumped into Geoph in a rest area men's room off I-64. Now *that* was creative.

• • •

Geoph had an enduring passion for group dynamics and did a fair amount of facilitating. In 1995 he moderated the most powerful panel on consensus I've

ever witnessed: Caroline Estes, CT Butler, Stephan H. Brown, and myself at the Community Quest conference in Winter Park, Colorado. While the 100+ participants had a choice of three different options every workshop slot, almost everyone at the event was jammed into the room for that panel.

He'd stop at Sandhill every year between Christmas and New Year's to celebrate his birthday and share his latest game or puzzle. He'd invariably show up with a grocery bag full of fruits and vegetables, and his van full of tools. He would happily take his turn in the cooking rotation,

Kind of like getting a shot from a doctor who is so skilled with a needle that you never feel the prick.

A music lover, he had a fine voice and was often seen playing his vintage Martin guitar and leading singalongs late into the evening. One of his most requested tunes was *Junk Food Junkie*, popularized by Arlo Guthrie. Geoph enjoyed lampooning hypocrisy and the irony of celebrating habits he didn't have (Geoph was scrupulously careful about what he ate and drank).

He was a marathon driver, once making it from eastern Missouri to western

---

***Our last carefree time together was at my wedding last April, when Geoph captured 10 hours of the festivities on video.***

---

tackle a home improvement project, or facilitate a meeting—whatever was needed.

Terrible at deadlines, Geoph was the eternal optimist. With him, you were never so far down that you couldn't pull it out in the bottom of the ninth (sorry Geoph—at my wedding he said *during the ceremony* that my writing had improved since I'd given sports metaphors an unconditional release).

Geoph typically set up the boiler room at board meetings and FIC events, and, if we needed any, he did the signage and flip chart graphics (his architectural schooling manifested in exceptionally legible marker work). He was always the last one to bed unless you counted his naps, which were taken wherever the mood struck him—in the middle of a workshop, under a coffee table, or even while licking stamps for a bulk mailing! And he didn't do mornings.

Geoph was kind and positive to a fault. While he didn't duck hard topics, he could be so gentle that you might miss that he was giving you critical feedback.

Oregon in the same time it took Amtrak to get there. He left one hour after I boarded the train, and, driving alone, arrived one hour after me, even though the train was on time. I couldn't believe it—both that Geoph was so quick and that Amtrak was on schedule.

In the early years of the Road Trip, Geoph took countless pictures and gradually stitched together an incredible slide show of contemporary communities, which he offered up for an evening's entertainment wherever he went. While he used his slide show to introduce thousands of people to the wonderful world of cooperative living, by the mid-90s Geoph could see that video was going to be a much more potent medium, and he committed himself in 1997 to his most ambitious project: *Visions of Utopia*, a television-quality documentary that offered a balanced overview of the Intentional Communities Movement.

He completed the first 90-minute volume in 2002, and had virtually all of the raw footage shot for the second and

# Keeping *the* Dream Alive

Since 1967, members of Twin Oaks have been creating a vibrant rural community based on our values of income-sharing, egalitarianism, and nonviolence. Today, over 100 of us live

**"You'll never know how deep you can go 'til you jump in and find out..."**

and work together in a cooperative culture.

We grow much of our own food, and the money we need comes from our collectively-owned hammock, tofu, and book indexing businesses.

Each summer we host a Women's Gathering and a Communities Conference. We invite you to visit or tour Twin Oaks. Scheduled visitors are welcome throughout the year.



138-D Twin Oaks Rd, Louisa, Virginia 23093  
twinoaks@ic.org · www.twinoaks.org  
540-894-5126

PLEASE CHECK OUR LISTING IN COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY  
FOR A FULL DESCRIPTION OF TWIN OAKS COMMUNITY



# THE LAST STRAW

*The International Journal  
of Straw Bale and  
Natural Building*



**“Excellent newsletter,  
both technical and entertaining.  
Essential for any  
straw-bale enthusiast.”  
—Environmental Building News**

1-year subscription \$28 (\$33US Canada)  
Online Electronic Copy (check the website)

**The Last Straw Journal**  
PO Box 22706  
Lincoln NE 68542-2706  
402.483.5135 / fax 402.483.5161  
<thelaststraw@thelaststraw.org>  
[www.thelaststraw.org](http://www.thelaststraw.org)

final volume before the cancer claimed him. Working from his film and notes, I’ve agreed to pick up where he left off and oversee the completion of his magnum opus. We’re in the process of raising \$32,000 to accomplish this and have already gathered half the money in checks and pledges. (If you are inspired to help us with the other half, tax deductible donations can be made out to “FIC” and sent to: Visions of Utopia, Rt 1, Box 156, Rutledge MO 63653.)

• • •

As near as I know, Geoph wasted none of his precious last months in denial. While he was hopeful of beating the long odds of a bleak prognosis, he was nonetheless able to talk matter-of-factly about the disposition of his modest assets, and how to carry on his work. Part of what was special about Geoph was that there were never any topics off-limits.

His last 100 days were amazing. While he was weak and had lost a lot of weight,

In the end, he grieved more for his unfinished work and the connections he didn’t yet have time to make, than for his unlived years. If you look up “networker” in the dictionary, you’ll find a picture of Geoph.

It is amazing to reflect on the number of connections that Geoph’s passing affected. Even as his voice grew weak and his speech became slow and thick, his mind remained lucid and his spirit was strong—he was drawing people into connection with one another right up until the end.

It was an honor to be an information conduit for news about Geoph during his illness. As his health deteriorated over the final weeks there was also great poignancy in helping decide who would get into his room, knowing that the visits both sustained him and exhausted him, as well as placing an extra burden on his heroic caregivers (Eraca, Mindy, and Geoph’s sister Penny), who had given

---

***He took naps wherever the mood struck him  
—in the middle of a workshop,  
under a coffee table, or even while  
licking stamps for a bulk mailing.***

---

he was seldom in pain and he saw as many of his friends and relations as he could. He was perfectly willing to have work in the queue for how he’d spend his time; he just wasn’t willing to do much of it when there was an interesting conversation to be had, or a card game that could bring everyone together.

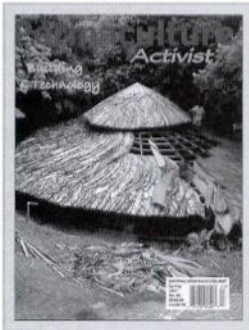
His last outing was to attend a reunion picnic for Co-op Camp Sierra—camp being a two-week event every summer that was an anchor in his annual peregrinations. It was dear to his heart and he’d been one of the main organizers for as long as I’d known him.

over their house and lives to hospice work and a steady flow of strangers who wanted to pay homage to their friend.

Through me, people sent poems, songs, well wishes, healing food, alternative therapies... and love. I was blessed to witness the breadth and strength of that outpouring, to bask in the reflected glory of the web of Geoph’s life.

For a networker, it’s all about the connections. So it made perfect sense that celebrating and reinforcing that life work was how he prioritized his final days. One of the most powerful things about his ending was a connec-

The  
**Permaculture Activist**  
Magazine



1 year  
subscription  
(4 issues) \$23.

- permaculture design • edible landscaping • bioregionalism • ecovillage design • cooperative action • aquaculture • natural building • earthworks • forestry • energy • soils • agriculture • urban sustainability • botanical regeneration • plant nurseries • seed sources • and more

POB 5516, Bloomington, IN 47407  
812.335.0383  
[www.permacultureactivist.net](http://www.permacultureactivist.net)

tion he experienced with his family—his mother Ginny, and sisters Penny and Kim. Drawn to his bedside, they met many of the people Geoph had built a life with and learned what Geoph had meant to them. As a result, Geoph found something precious that had previously eluded him—acceptance and appreciation from his family for his peripatetic life, and this late reconciliation of disparate parts gave him great peace.

I was privileged to be one of the last to visit Geoph, seeing him for the final time only two days before he passed away in his sleep. When I approached his bed to say farewell, he rallied to look

---

***He was drawing people  
into connection  
with one another  
right up until the end.***

---

me in the eye and squeeze my hand. His parting words were, “I could see you in three months, or next week. Who knows? It’s all a mystery. Give my deep love to everyone.” And now I have.

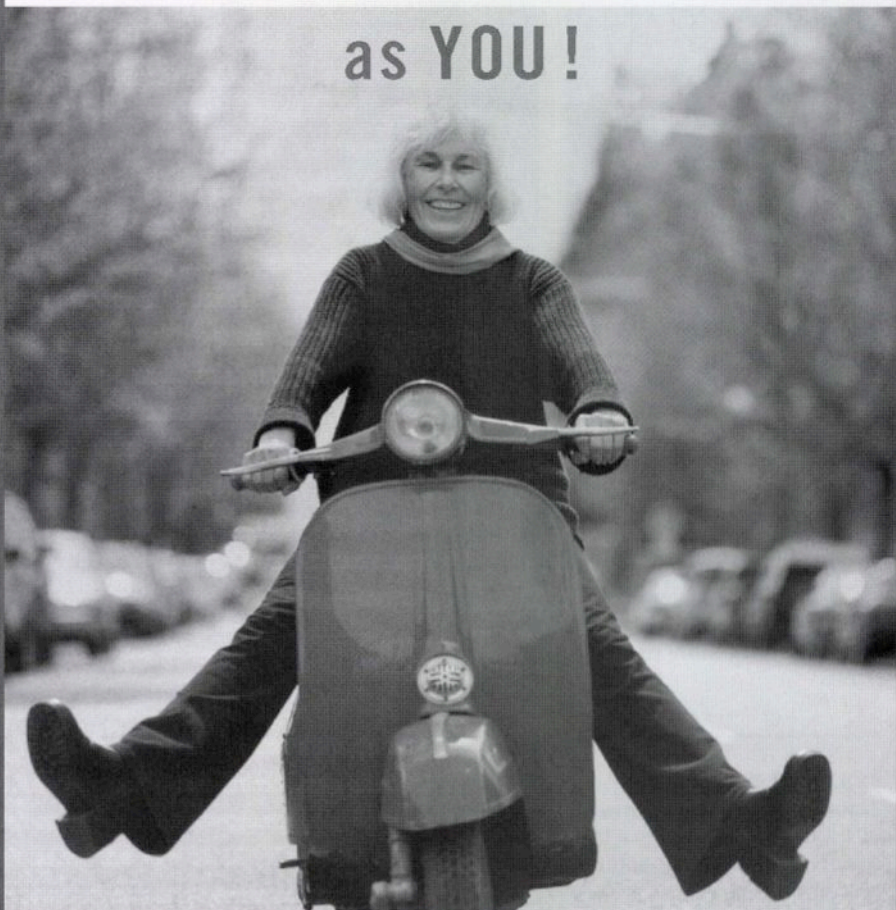
I learned of his death the night I arrived in Austin for the fall FIC organizational meetings. Most of his FIC family had just gathered and we were thankful that Geoph’s passing had been as peaceful as it was, thankful that Geoph had been in all of our lives, and thankful for the chance to circle together in our time of grief.

Goodbye, my friend. I’ll miss you, yet won’t forget how you’ve touched me and countless others with the light of your dreams and the hope in your heart.

This Kansan rode with  
The Light of Community  
Into the Darkness



**IMAGINE...living in a  
community as VIBRANT  
as YOU!**



### **Move in THIS FALL!**

Thoughtfully designed Built-Green homes with main floor master suites, elevator access, luxurious common facilities, close to North Boulder's transportation, shops, restaurants and Open Space!

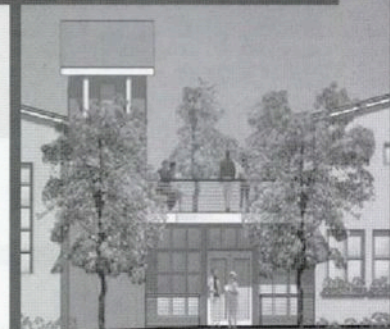
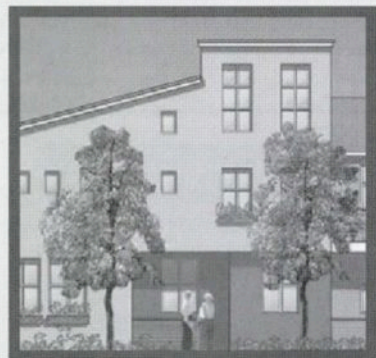
To learn more about Colorado's first senior cohousing community, call 303-449-3232 x203.

[www.SilverSageVillage.com](http://www.SilverSageVillage.com)



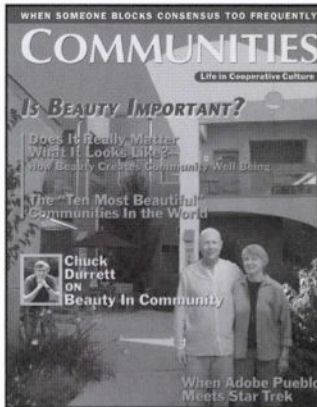
**Silver Sage  
VILLAGE**

ANOTHER WONDERLAND COMMUNITY

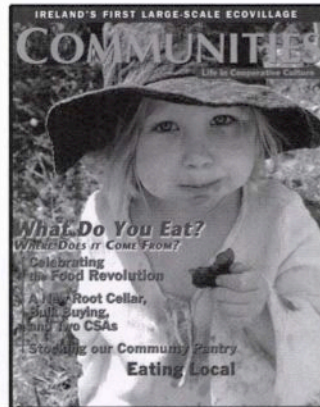


# COMMUNITIES

All back issues are \$4 each.



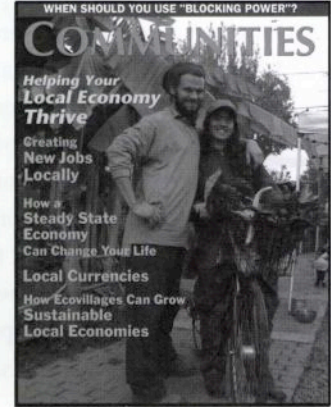
**#136: Is Beauty Important?**  
Notes on Beauty in Community; Does it Really Matter What it Looks Like?; "Ten Most Beautiful" Communities in the World; When Adobe Pueblo Meets Star Trek; The Meandering Pathes of Arcadia; When a Dollar is Worth More than 100 Cents. (Fall '07)



**#135: What Do You Eat? Where Does it Come From?**  
Celebrating the Food Revolution; Making New Choices, Planting New Seeds; A New Root Cellar, Bulk Buying, and Two CSAs; Eating Local; Gardening in the Alentejo; Stocking our Community Pantry. (Sum '07)



**#134 Temporary Community: What Do We Learn?**  
What Work Exchangers Say... About Us; Is Hosting Work Exchangers Worth It?; Hello, Goodbye; Lessons from a Community Internship; How I Learned to Hug a Windmill. (Spr '07)



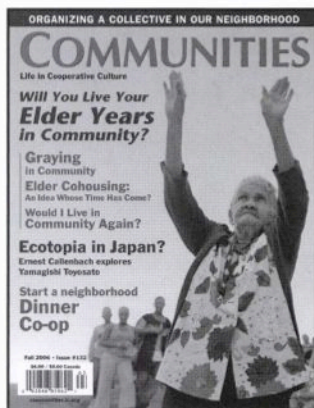
**#133 Helping Your Local Economy Thrive**  
How a Steady State Economy Can Change Our Lives; Recipe for Healthy Local Economies; How Ecovillages Can Grow Sustainable Local Economies; When We Should Use "Blocking Power"; Dilettante's Journey, Part II. (Win. '06)

**#132 Will You Live Your Elder Years in Community?**  
Ernest Callenbach: "Ecotopia in Japan?"; Elder Cohousing—An Idea Whose Time Has Come?; Graying in Community; Rhizome Collective: Starting an Activist Urban Community; The Dilettante's Journey, Part I (Fall '06)

**#131 Good Works in Community**  
Seven Months in the Gulf; Communities That Serve Others; Heirloom Gardens, Clean Water, and No GMOs; Prescott's "Eco-Hood"; The Overly Powerful Community Member; When Oprah or Geraldo Call . . . (Sum. '06)

**#130 Peak Oil & Sustainability**  
Community Survival During the Coming Energy Decline; Peak Oil and Community Food Security; Preparing For A Post-Carbon World; Living the (Almost) Petrol-Free Life; ZEGG Forum. (Spr. '05)

**#129 Urban Community**  
The Village Can Save the City; Living the Good Life Downtown; Our Sustainable Acre in the City; An Urban Ecovillage of the Near Future; An Urban Ecovillage on Our Street. (Win. '05)



**Purchase online at  
store.ic.org**

## COMMUNITIES BACK ISSUES ORDER FORM

Please send me issue #s \_\_\_\_\_ for a total of \_\_\_\_\_ magazines. \$4 each, shipping \$4 for first 3, \$1 for each additional 3 by book rate US, call or visit store.ic.org for other shipping destinations and options.

Charge Visa/MC/Dscvr# \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed (US funds to *Communities*)

Total Amount - \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Check Enclosed  Charged

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/TOWN \_\_\_\_\_ STATE/PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP/POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

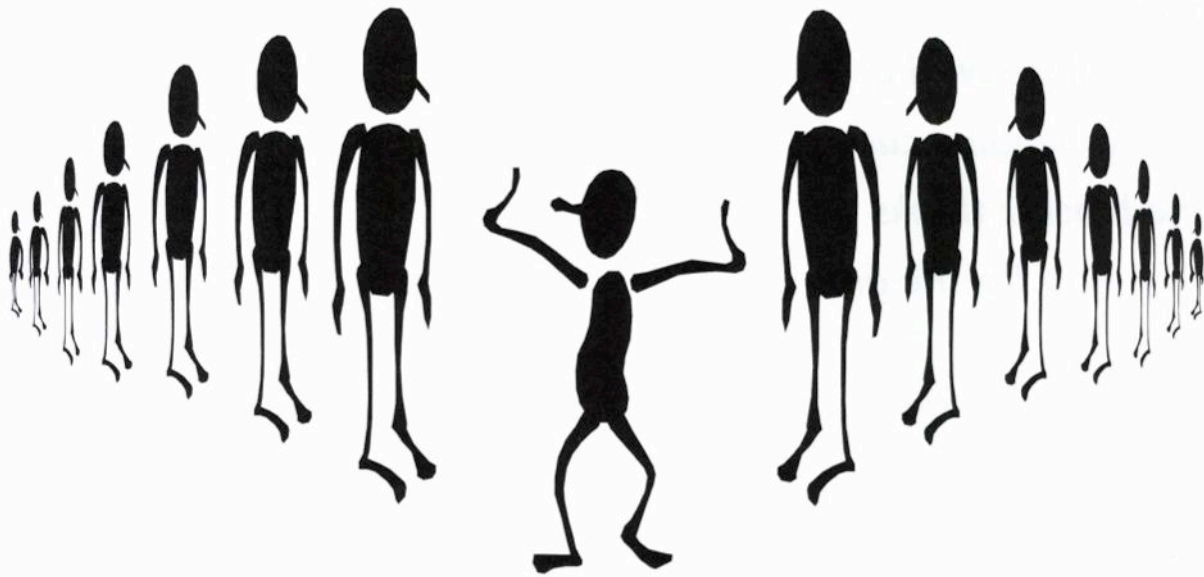
Photocopy and mail to:

FIC, RR 1 Box 156-CM, Rutledge MO 63563 • Ph 800-995-8342

#137



# Preventing “Tyranny of the Minority”



# Q.

*How do we prevent “Tyranny of the Minority?”*



*Laird Schaub responds:*

Consensus certainly gives minorities power that they don't have in voting—in the extreme, one person alone can stop a decision from going forward. When people talk about “tyranny,” it's shorthand for abusing power, where the fear is that an individual (or small group) will use their power to block for the purpose of protecting a personal agenda without regard for the rest of the group.

Does this happen? You bet! Can it be prevented? Not with certainty, yet there is a lot a group can do to safeguard against the improper use (or threatened use) of blocks. The key is developing a group culture in which both consensus and power are well understood and respected. Let's take them one at a time.

Abuse, or “tyranny,” is far less likely if the group defines a legitimate block as something that must be tied to a sense that the proposed agreement will violate a common value or existing group agree-

ment—that is, a sense that the proposal is a mistake for the group—as opposed to objections based on personal preferences, however strongly held. Coupled with that, the group needs to develop a culture in which its members are trained in consensus (it’s hard to use a system well if you don’t fully understand it). Further, they need to be able to examine a block with grace, exhibiting genuine curiosity about why the blocker thinks the proposal is bad for the group, as well as compassion for the feeling of isolation that often accompanies standing alone. By extending caring consideration to the blocker, the group will go a long way toward diffusing the possibility of reactive (or even vindictive) responses from the blocker when asked to explain their position.

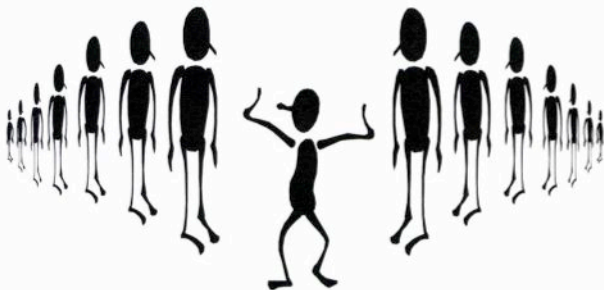
---

***They need to be able to examine  
a block with grace,  
exhibiting genuine curiosity about  
why the blocker thinks the proposal  
is bad for the group.***

---

Power can be abused in any decision-making system, and consensus is no exception. In a healthy group, blocks are quite rare—because healthy groups rarely develop proposals that haven’t already addressed blocking concerns. If you’re seeing a pattern of certain people blocking frequently, there is probably an underlying problem, and it might be symptomatic of power abuse. There are innocent possibilities also, so you have to be careful.

On the one hand, the blocker may be having consistent trouble understanding or working constructively with the process, or perhaps it’s time to revisit the common values—the blocker and the group may no longer belong together. On the other hand, the blocker may be inappropriately looking for attention, or pushing a hidden agenda. There is



a big difference between tyranny and confusion. Try not to mix them up.

*Laird Schaub, a member of Sandhill Farm community in Missouri, has been doing consulting work on group process since 1987. A longtime activist in community networking, he has lived in community since 1974 and been involved with the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) since 1986; he is currently its Executive Secretary. laird@ic.org; 660-883-5545.*



*Beatrice Briggs responds:*

No, it means sharing power. To effectively use consensus process, I must recognize that there is always more than one solution to every problem and that my preferred solution is not necessarily the best—even if a comforting number of others share my point of view.

For those of us who are used to being in charge, to getting our way, or to belonging to the power elite, it is frustrating—sometimes infuriating—to “lose” because someone blocks a decision we support. If the block is truly invalid, challenge it. If the person blocking is a “chronic blocker,” educate her—and the rest of the group—in the principles and practice of blocks. But if the block is legitimate, i.e., firmly rooted in the ethics of the group, then humbly accept the possibility that the “minority” is seeing something that the rest do not.

---

***If the block is truly invalid,  
challenge it.***

---

Practice saying, “You may be right,” and let go of the need to always be right yourself. Learn to trust that, if the group truly has a heart and a purpose, things will work out in the long run. Know that this single decision is not the end of the world. Commit yourself to supporting the decision of the “tyrannical minority.” After all, one day you could be the person blocking.

*Beatrice Briggs is the director of the International Institute for Facilitation and Consensus, a professional team of consultants and trainers with affiliates in 12 countries, and author of Introduction to Consensus. Beatrice lives in Ecovillage Huehucoyotl, near Tepoztlán, Mexico, and travels extensively giving workshops and facilitating participatory processes in English and Spanish. bbriggs@iifac.org; www.iifac.org.*



*Tree Bressen responds:*

Yes, it is possible for consensus to lend itself to the “tyranny of the minority,” and frankly I think that does happen far too often. However, it’s *not* inherent to the method, and your group doesn’t ever have to operate that way!

I think the core of avoiding or fixing this problem is to focus on the *spirit* underlying consensus. Ask questions like: “What approach to this situation would be most life-serving?” “How can we maintain a sense of vitality and forward move-

A tyranny of the minority can only happen when others allow it, so those others need to step up and take responsibility. For example, someone who wants to change a policy can start by conducting some form of survey of the membership to see how much support there is for the change. If three-fourths of the group want to make the change, the supposed tyrants (often hard-working community members who may themselves feel oppressed by group members in other ways) will usually come along, even if a bit grudgingly. Even better is if you can enlist them as your allies in making the change, requesting their support and advice.✿

## *A tyranny of the minority can only happen when others allow it*

ment in our group?” “What is most important here?” “How can we resolve this issue in a way that most fully reflects our values as a community?”

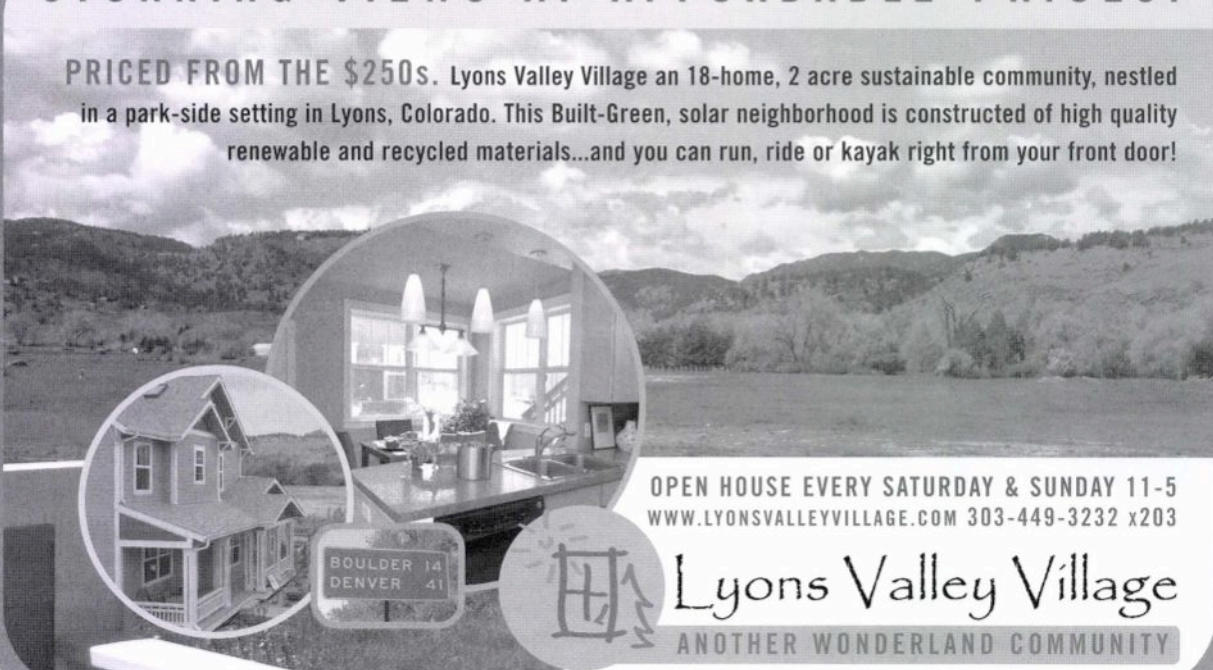
I think the groups that are most likely to fall into a tyranny of the minority usually have one or both of the following tendencies: (a) over-emphasis on technical correctness of procedures, such as quorums or notice periods before decisions; and/or (b) avoidance of difficult conversations among group members (for example, people are afraid to confront or seriously disagree with founding or important members).

*Tree Bressen is a group process consultant who works with intentional communities and other nonprofits on how to have meetings that are lively, productive, and connecting. After living in community from 1994 to 2007, she presently lives in a smaller neighborhood household in Eugene, Oregon. Her website, [www.treegroup.info](http://www.treegroup.info), offers free tools and resources. [tree@ic.org](mailto:tree@ic.org). (Tree uses lower-case “i” in her articles “as an expression of egalitarian values.”)*

What burning questions about conflict in community would you ask experienced process and communications consultants? Send questions to [editor@ic.org](mailto:editor@ic.org). Thank you!

STUNNING VIEWS AT AFFORDABLE PRICES!

PRICED FROM THE \$250s. Lyons Valley Village an 18-home, 2 acre sustainable community, nestled in a park-side setting in Lyons, Colorado. This Built-Green, solar neighborhood is constructed of high quality renewable and recycled materials...and you can run, ride or kayak right from your front door!



OPEN HOUSE EVERY SATURDAY & SUNDAY 11-5  
[WWW.LYONSVALLEYVILLAGE.COM](http://WWW.LYONSVALLEYVILLAGE.COM) 303-449-3232 x203

Lyons Valley Village

ANOTHER WONDERLAND COMMUNITY



Sandhill members Greg and Steph build an earthbag foundation for the new community greenhouse.

# ON THE ROAD WITH ZEPHYR:

## PART THREE



Author Zephyr Twombly

greeted me upon arrival; and because Sandhill's membership was low at the time, I was able to stay in a room in Karma, one of the community residences. Whereas Twin Oaks has 70-80 members, Sandhill Farm has only six: five adults and one 10-

**L**ast April, after leaving Earthaven and Twin Oaks, I spent two weeks at Sandhill Farm in rural northeastern Missouri, and toured Dancing Rabbit and Red Earth Farms, two adjacent communities three miles down the road.

Sandhill Farm is an income-sharing community, like Twin Oaks. Kathe

year-old. (Sandhill may have grown since my visit as they were considering another family for membership.) Since Sandhill is small enough to operate as an extended family, there are few formalized work or governing systems.

But as I discovered the next day, everyone has his/her area of expertise and knows what needs to be done when. Gigi, one of the managers of the vegetable gardens, instructed Katie, another visitor, and me to mulch 45-foot-long garden beds with "pummies," dried sorghum stalks. During the following rainy days, Stan showed Katie, Andy, Emmett (an intern from East Wind), and me how plant sorghum seeds in styrofoam trays. Stan manages all the field work: sowing and harvesting sorghum, wheat, oats, soybeans, pinto beans, mustard plants, popping corn, and echinacea. Sorghum is Sandhill's main cash crop, and I was completely enthralled by its sprouting method. Once all the trays were seeded, we placed them in a shallow, human-

made swimming-pool-sized pond and covered them with thick Reemay, a plastic spun-fiber sheeting, which created a greenhouse effect. (It reminded me of the Aztec's *chiampas*, rafts on which food was grown in a shallow layer of soil, the roots seeking moisture from the lake.) During my visit the sorghum seeds grew an inch, but the seedlings had to grow five to six inches long before they could be transplanted into various fields totaling five acres.

The more I got into the rhythm of work and play, the more I savored and reveled in the feel of the extended family. Early on I asked Gigi to clarify Sandhill's work expectations for visitors: which were five to six hours of work a day, though Sandhill members would work longer. So three hours in the morning and three in the afternoon became my routine, whether I was stacking wood, mowing lawns, mulching fruit trees or veggie beds, weeding horseradish or

---

*I was completely enthralled by the sorghum sprouting method.*

---

strawberry beds, sorting out defective soybeans or mustard seeds, or transplanting lettuce or spinach. At night we would hang out and talk on the porch and/or drift off to our rooms to read. Or I'd play music with Emmett or cribbage with Renay, a 10-year-old going on 20. One evening she and I brainstormed slogans for her election campaign as vice-president of the



SANDHILL FARM

*A serious working farm, Sandhill members grow about 85 percent of their own food every year.*



GIGI WAHBA

*Work exchanger Heather stokes the steam boiler during Sandhill's annual sorghum harvest.*



DANCING RABBIT



TONY SIRNA



DANCING RABBIT

tary school. At the end of the first week Andy and Katie left, and Theron, a summer intern, arrived. Michael, the other garden manager, and his wife Kathe, the main administrator of Sandhill, went on a week's vacation. So I assumed Michael's sprouting duties; he grows sprouts whenever there are no greens from the garden.

I came to appreciate the fluidity of everyone's work flow and their high level of trust with each other. Though everybody was responsible for his or her area of expertise, they all covered for one another, doing what was needed and allowing free time for those who needed it. During their occasional meetings they worked through issues and made decisions by consensus. They trust each other well enough to share a common checking account. There is an understanding that if anyone wants to spend more than \$100 on a non-routine item, he or she gets approval from the others before writing the check.

I was really impressed with Sandhill's food self-sufficiency. On three of their 135 acres they grow and preserve 80-85 percent of their food. Besides sorghum syrup, they make and sell mustard spread, horseradish, a variety of salsas and chutneys, as well as honey from their 18 hives, and

---

***I came to appreciate their high level of trust with each other.***

---

tempeh from their soybeans. They mill their own wheat and oats into flour for baking bread, and every fall pack their root cellar full of potatoes, tomatoes, pickles, carrots, beets, relishes, chutneys, and jams.

Due to their small numbers, Sandhill may seem to have a limited social scene. But for a month in the fall, it becomes a tent city when friends from various other communities arrive to help with the annual sorghum harvest. There are also two nearby intentional communities which expand the social network: Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage, ten years old, and Red Earth Farms, two years old. At 33, Sandhill has been like a "mother ship" to these newer communities, helping both new communities in numerous ways, and some of Dancing Rabbit and Red Earth Farms' members started out as interns or residents of Sandhill.

On my second day, Sandhill hosted a post-wedding reception for Laird, one of Sandhill's founders, and his wife

*(top) Dancing Rabbit members installing solar panels on the roof of the Skyhouse residence. (middle) Rabbits Tamar and Ted help build the strawbale and cob kitchen for the Ironwood Coop. (bottom) The construction crew of Dancing Rabbit's Common House.*

Ma'ikwe. Twenty of us feasted on potluck goodies, while the newlyweds showed photos and recounted the highlights of

the other side of the hill. The highlight of the tour was “the dog show,” in which Chad’s two border collies hopped into

*Some of their land is in the federal Conservation Reserve Program, which pays the community to keep certain acres in a “resting” mode: crop-ready but fallow.*

their wedding. The next night we went to Dancing Rabbit for the regular weekly potluck between Sandhill Farm, Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage and Red Earth Farms communities. I also visited Dancing Rabbit another time to watch a video and participate in a variety show. But most informative was the tour that Tony B. gave Theron, Emmett, and me. I learned that Dancing Rabbit operates as a 501c(3) educational nonprofit to promote sustainable living, and owns its 280 acres through a land trust. Some of their land is in the federal Conservation Reserve Program, which pays the community to keep certain acres in a “resting” mode: crop-ready but fallow. Dancing Rabbit also has subcommunities—communities within the larger community—such as Skyhouse, a five-person income-sharing group; different neighborhoods; and different dining co-ops.

Dancing Rabbit’s neighborhoods reminded me of Earthaven, with a similar emphasis on alternative energy and natural built homes/alternative construction methods. (See “On the Road with Zephyr, Part II, Fall ‘07 issue.”) The Skyhouse residence, Dancing Rabbit’s community center building, and most of their homes were constructed with cob and/or strawbale, though there was one tent with a small wood stove. Wood was the main source of heat; photovoltaic panels the main source of power, though one neighborhood had erected and enjoys the benefits of a wind generator. And like Earthaven, they don’t seem to be growing much of their own food yet, though some members were developing a small CSA (community-supported agriculture) farm.

I also had a tour of Red Earth Farms, the 76-acre land-trust community adjacent to Dancing Rabbit. Two of its founders, Chad and Alyson, gave Andy, Katie, and me the tour. Like Dancing Rabbit, Red Earth has different neighborhoods and different dining co-ops. They consciously decided to have as few covenants as possible. They want to give people greater freedom to homestead as a small community. Chad and his partner had built a barn that currently functions as their home, planted a garden, and built visitor cabins near the pond. They have planted a lot of fruit trees in their neighborhood. Alyson and her partner Mark, who were living in a large tent in the woods, were founding an adjacent neighborhood on

the pond and herded ducks as best they could. All in all I thoroughly enjoyed my visits to the Missouri communities and thank them for their hospitality.☼

*Zephyr Twombly is a former high school history teacher who is fascinated by all forms of spirituality and creative expression. He enjoys writing and playing music and hopes that artists worldwide can inspire and transform our consumerist culture into a more sustainable one.*



*Red Earth Farms member Chad Knepp with Boo the border collie and ducks.*

KIM SCHEIDT



ELLIE SOMMER

Author Ellie Sommer, her husband Paul, and their dog Max.

# GOOD NEIGHBORS

**W**hen we began forming a new intentional community here in the Gainesville, Florida, area ten years ago, we went through various thoughts and discussions about intentionality with the fledgling members of our group. One day my husband summed it up splendidly, when he said what he wanted was “good neighbors.” That continues to be his idea of the perfect community.

The area in which we bought property has for a long time been home to a loosely formed group of friends, some who have known each other since college days, more than 30 years in some cases. Some moved to the area at various times, but one group bought 100 acres together, dividing their land into individual lots and retaining some areas as common land. Some of their members bought even more adjacent land. Our group

followed a similar plan, buying 120 acres just north of their 100-acre parcel, dividing our property into 10 five-acre lots and leaving wetlands and some sensitive areas at the edge of the wetlands as our common land.

About the time my husband and I were ready to begin thinking about house plans, I became interested in a parcel of land north of and adjacent to our newly formed community. It had more varied ecosystems, especially the sand-bottom creek, which inspired me with its magic and beauty. I wanted to buy it and merge it with our community and build our house there.

My husband was not so convinced about merging the land we wanted to buy with the community, and he reminded me of his original intention: “good neighbors.” He likes the



concept of independence and privacy, while I am enamored of shared meals and group projects. We decided that as neighbors but not fellow property owners, we could have both, so we ended up selling our acreage in the shared community that we helped to create and

munity as well as in the extended community of the neighborhood at large. Some have been serious and some minor. Some of these disputes have required informal “councils,” where members of each community and others in the neighborhood get together to sort out differences and help arguing parties find common ground. Some of these efforts have been successful and some have not. Some have caused rifts in friendships and some have brought people closer together.

---

*My husband likes the concept of independence and privacy, while I am enamored of shared meals and group projects.*

---

buying the property to the north that suited our lifestyle better.

Over the years, the good-neighbors concept has proved more difficult to manifest than I imagined. I understand that intentional communities have the same issues that families do, but it never occurred to me that an amalgamation of neighbors could produce a similar circumstance: the dysfunctionality of proximity and duration.

There was emotional volatility even at the beginning when we needed to secure an easement through the existing 100-acre community to the group’s new 120-acre parcel. Even though many of the people in our group knew people in the older group, the concept of carving a road in their backyards did not garner everyone’s favor, even though a dirt trail already existed. With the promise of generous buffer plantings on their property and rules for the new access road, an agreement was finally reached.

Ever since, various ideological and personality issues have ebbed and flowed between the two communities and among members within each com-

Of course, there are the positive experiences as well as the challenging ones. We all joined together to protest a proposed highway that would have cut through our rural enclave (although there were stridently opposing ideas on how that issue should be approached); and we worked for a neighbor’s political campaign, stuffing envelopes, making signs, organizing rallies and parties, and standing on street corners with signs. We have worked in concert to rid the neighborhood of a “bad” citizen, who has been the antithesis of our goals and visions. His destruction of the land through the operation of clandestine (and illegal) dump has



Paul and neighbor Mark clear brush in the woods.

threatened the local watershed and his careless outdoor bonfires have gotten out of hand and jumped from his property to adjacent properties, severely damaging acreage on several of his neighbors' properties, including ours. As of this writing, the property is being purchased by friends, and everyone in the neighborhood and extended community has pitched in to help clean up the land.

In and around this area of about a square mile or more, we are friends and acquaintances who join together in var-

The people who I consider "the community" consist of friends who do not necessarily own land adjacent to each other, but are near enough to participate easily in activities and get-togethers. We have, I observe, created a nonlinear network of relationships that may be convoluted and complicated, but they form a strong, albeit non-formal community. And it keeps growing. Whenever a nearby property becomes available, we tell our friends, or friends of friends. So the connections grow and become stronger.

---

*The people who I consider "the community" consist of friends who do not necessarily own land adjacent to each other, but are near enough to participate easily in activities and get-togethers.*

---

ious configurations to support each other in many ways—everything from emergency clean-ups after storms or dealing with invasive plant species to watching each other's houses or making meals when someone is ill. Some put up their neighbors' relatives when there's not enough room for guests in a house. There can be all sorts of events from holiday meals and lively parties to shiitake inoculations and swapping of gardening plants and seeds.

Our square mile of neighbors may not be a community in the traditional *or* intentional community sense, but it acts as one—both functionally and dysfunctionally! In my opinion, it has been a remarkable exercise in self-governance and human relationships. It is constantly a trade-off between self-determination and commitment to ideals and ideas that surpass individual needs.

And as I stand on my land watching my crazy yellow Lab run circles around a pair of pileated woodpeckers hammering on a tree, I hear the sandhill cranes circle high above me gathering to head north, their distinctive honking audible although they are only tiny specks. As I watch them, I think that for all the complications and challenges associated with community, the end result is worth the effort. What binds us together is the strong commitment to protect and nurture some magnificent land that includes a real Florida swamp. The relationships and experiences that have coalesced around this land nourish it as well as us, and by and large, we have, as my husband hoped, become *good neighbors*.✿



*Neighbors in approximately a square-mile area get together to support each other in various ways.*

ELLIE SOMMER

*Ellie Sommer is a writer and editor who lives with her husband and 18-month super puppy Max on ten acres of land in north central Florida. She writes children's stories and is currently at work on a sci fi novel and a book about herbs; that is, when she is not working at her day job as the editorial director at the Center for Applications of Psychological Type.*

# SUBSCRIBE TO COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE

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

Each issue is focused around a theme: Conflict & Connection; Ecovillages; Growing Older in Community; Love, Romance, & Sex; Christian Communities; Cohousing ...

Reach listings—helping communities looking for people and people looking for communities find each other.

***"Offers fascinating insights into the joys and challenges of communities... by their foremost pioneers."***

Corinne McLaughlin, co-author, *Spiritual Politics*,  
cofounder, Sirius Community



## COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE

**Communities magazine** (Outside US prices in parentheses)

- 1 year, quarterly - \$20 (\$24 Canada, \$26 other)  2 yr \$34 (\$42 Canada, \$46 other)  3 yr \$45 (\$57 Canada, \$63 other)  
 Sample of current issue: \$6 (\$7 Canada, \$8 other)

Rates are for periodical/surface mail class. Please call or visit [store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org) for other shipping destinations and options.

### Communities Directory

- \$24 US, includes shipping. Please call for quantity discounts!  Enclosed is my check payable to FIC in US funds.  
 Charge Visa/MC/Dscvr # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount - \$** \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL OR CONTACT PERSON \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP NAME OR AFFILIATION (IF APPROPRIATE) \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/TOWN \_\_\_\_\_

STATE/PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP/POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

#137

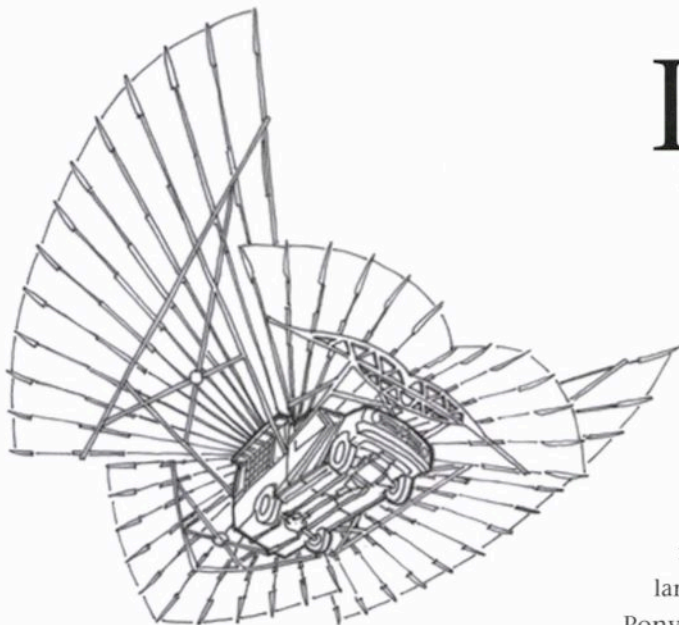
**or subscribe online at [store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org)**



# CAN WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

*With paint and imagination, neighbors at 57th and Stanton have transformed their intersection into a neighborhood common space.*

MARK LAKEMAN



*The Tea Horse*

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF CITY REPAIR

In most big cities in the US you can't stop traffic to throw a party or cultural event in the middle of an intersection—with a permit, no less, and covered by insurance. But in Portland, Oregon, you can even hold a big wedding in an intersection. Just ask Mark Lakeman and Lydia Doleman, who got hitched last August in Share-It Square, an intersection a bunch of local neighborhood residents have painted, transformed, named, and made their own village square over the years in Portland's Sellwood neighborhood.

And in many cities you can't drive a van into a public park and park it on the lawn for months at a time, serving tea and snacks to park residents—much less a van with gigantic bamboo-and-fabric "wings" swooping off the van's roof to shade city residents sipping tea. But you can in Portland. The Tea Horse, a quarter-ton modified step van and the Tea Pony, a smaller pickup-truck-sized version, are mobile teahouses that provide people in parks and other public areas tea, snacks, pil-

lows, and shade and rain protection from their curved and artsy-looking “wings,” inspired from the wings of insects.

And, in most cities, residual spaces—the triangles formed by intersections when three streets come together, traffic islands, and narrow spaces between downtown buildings—are just boring, empty no-man’s-lands of asphalt, collectors of trash or graffiti. But Portland encourages its

in a pedestal out of which you can pull a neighborhood book of favorite poems, and add your own.

And in most cities neighborhood associations and grassroots efforts are at the bottom of a hierarchy, with city bureaucrats on top, calling the shots. But in the City of Roses, city officials *respond* to citizens; they help implement projects initiated by people on the street.

---

***What these city administrators want—what we all want—  
is more community in their lives.***

---

citizens to use these spaces as community gardens or neighborhood social hubs.

And . . . all throughout Portland you’ll find cob benches, small cob kiosks with glass-covered bulletin boards, small cob kiosk lending libraries where neighbors drop off and pick up books from other neighbors. And even a poetry corner, where you’ll see poem fragments in rocks emerging from a neighbor’s yard, a cob bench, and a mailbox embedded

What’s going on here? Is City Hall staffed by a bunch of hippies? Or by aliens beamed down from an exceptionally savvy culture, or by fictional characters out of the novel *Ecotopia*? Not at all. What they are is regular city administrators going about the business of regulating the traffic laws or administering the park system. And, as Mark Lakeman and the volunteers and staff of the City Repair project know, they’re people who—like the citizens they serve, like us all—



MARK LAKEMAN

*In August, 2007, City Repair activists Mark Lakeman and Lydia Doleman got married in Share-It Square, a re-inhabited neighborhood intersection.*

would like a revival of the commons too. They'd like places to visit, hang out, socialize, meet their neighbors, like most Portlanders do. They, too, want their kids to have safe, friendly places to play where other adults know them and would look out for them. What these city administrators want,

staff of the Portland City Repair project, a nonprofit founded by architect and visionary Mark Lakeman in 1996, has worked to recreate the commons in Portland. They started by seeking and eventually getting permission to close specific intersections in various residential

---

*"We knew that if people felt more empowered, their physical landscape would reflect it."*

---

folks—just like what most Portland residents want; what we all want—is more community in their lives.

Can a small group, an intentional community or an educational nonprofit, change people's attitudes, change local government officials' attitudes, change a whole city's attitudes? You bet. For ten years now volunteers and

neighborhoods so people could design and create their own local commons. You'll find these intersections in Portland not only brightly painted, but with one or more of their four corners sporting shaded gathering spaces, cob benches, cob-kiosk bulletin boards, and a dazzling variety of other kinds of interactive features. City Repair sought and



MARK LAKEMAN

*The Lighthouse Gathering Place is one of the most successful and popular cob gathering places in all of Portland, out of more than 100 such projects as of 2007.*

eventually got permission to set up the Tea Horse, and later the Tea Pony in various public spaces, at first for an afternoon, then for a few days, and nowadays, for months at a time. Organizing and helping empower people in neighborhoods, and engaging the hopes and dreams of public officials at the same time, beginning slowly and with increasing momentum over the last decade, has made a huge difference in Portland.

“We intended to accelerate the process of recovery or of the social evolutionary process in the city,” says Mark. “We knew a few things at the outset that were helpful in this process. We understood that our human nature was frustrated and that ordinary human culture was being suppressed by law and by ordinance, which helps make people numb and complicit in their own isolation. By visiting other cultures, we knew that people being able to organize themselves and celebrate their common culture are physically expressed by a whole different set of physical messages than in cities in industrialized culture, which are about working, producing, and consuming but not relating, creating, or celebrating; in which streets are conduits for movement but not a continuum of cultural interaction. The village, on the other hand, with public squares and natural gathering places, better reflects human



*City Repair activists built the cob dragon bench at the DaVinci School, perhaps the largest such bench in North America.*

tap into a rich vein of potential that people could relate to directly, wherever they lived in the city, whether they were citizens or officials, whether self-described as liberals or as conservatives. One of our goals was to change the way we use streets in Portland and broaden and diversify the functions that streets accommodate.

“We’ve done this by not engaging a win/lose mentality, but a win-win approach, a behavioral strategy in how we

---

***“Our unwillingness to fight, to be ‘against,’ to ‘win,’  
has been a real key.”***

---

nature and human scale in its physical arrangement. A city reflects the priorities of its so-called leaders; a village reflects the priorities of its people, who usually enjoy a truer form of leadership.

“We knew that if people felt more empowered their physical landscape would reflect it. They’d have gathering places. They’d have places to express their culture. Knowing this enabled us to create a strategy for cracking open the system and creating systemic change.

“The plight of the commons was right under our eyes but hadn’t reached popular awareness yet. So we were able to

could beneficially engage officials: ‘the bureaucracy.’ And to not only engage them beneficially, but show them how they could in turn beneficially affect others they interact with. It’s a process of activating them in their own self-interest, on their own behalf. It’s one of the few ways we have to wake people up, to activate them.

“Our unwillingness to fight, to be ‘against,’ to ‘win,’ has been a real key. I can’t emphasize this strongly enough. We related to city officials in a way that helped them understand that they need to have this happen in their own lives too. We’ve been unabashed in saying ‘We care about you,



MARK LAKEEMAN

Neighborhood activists/cob artists created a beehive-shaped newspaper dispenser for a local paper, *The Bee*.



MARK LAKEEMAN

Share-It Square was Portland's first intersection to be transformed into a public gathering place by neighborhood activists.

too. Everyone needs a public square where they live, including you.' It's no secret that bureaucrats have been perceived as people who only stamp forms and shuffle papers around. We say, 'These projects offer you a set of creative tools to help you creatively engage your work and enjoy your job.' As we've been advancing the theater of common cause, people get excited, helping them experience that they're actually enacting solutions. We've engaged real human beings across the bureaucracy in projects that have gotten them deeply in touch."

In this issue we celebrate how we influence the wider culture. You'll learn how O.U.R. Ecovillage in British Columbia empowered and encouraged their local regional officials to create ecologically sustainable zoning regulations—and influenced zoning officials all across Canada. How right now Portland officials are considering "legalizing sustainability" through progressive changes in building codes, zoning regulations, and health codes proposed by Tryon Life Community Farm/Cedar Moon Community. And how in both cases, as with the City Repair Project, people are working collaboratively with local officials. You'll see how Songaia Cohousing benefits neighbors in the Seattle area, and how Findhorn Foundation impacts the economy, the arts, and sustainable technology in northern Scotland. And lastly, how two urban ecovillagers agreed to let a reality TV show into their homes to educate viewers about environmental issues and suggest more sustainable household practices.

So the question is not, "Can we make a difference?" We certainly can. The question is, "Where do you and I plug in?" ❁

---

*Diana Leafé Christian has been editor of Communities magazine from 1993 until 2007. She is author of Finding Community: How to Join an Ecovillage or Intentional Community (New Society Publishers, 2007), and Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages and Intentional Communities (New Society Publishers, 2003). She leads workshops about community and speaks at events internationally, and lives at Earhaven Ecovillage in North Carolina. To receive her free e-newsletter on ecovillages: [diana@ic.org](mailto:diana@ic.org). Portland City Repair: [www.cityrepair.org](http://www.cityrepair.org).*



# WHEN



NO

# IS JUST AN UNEDUCATED



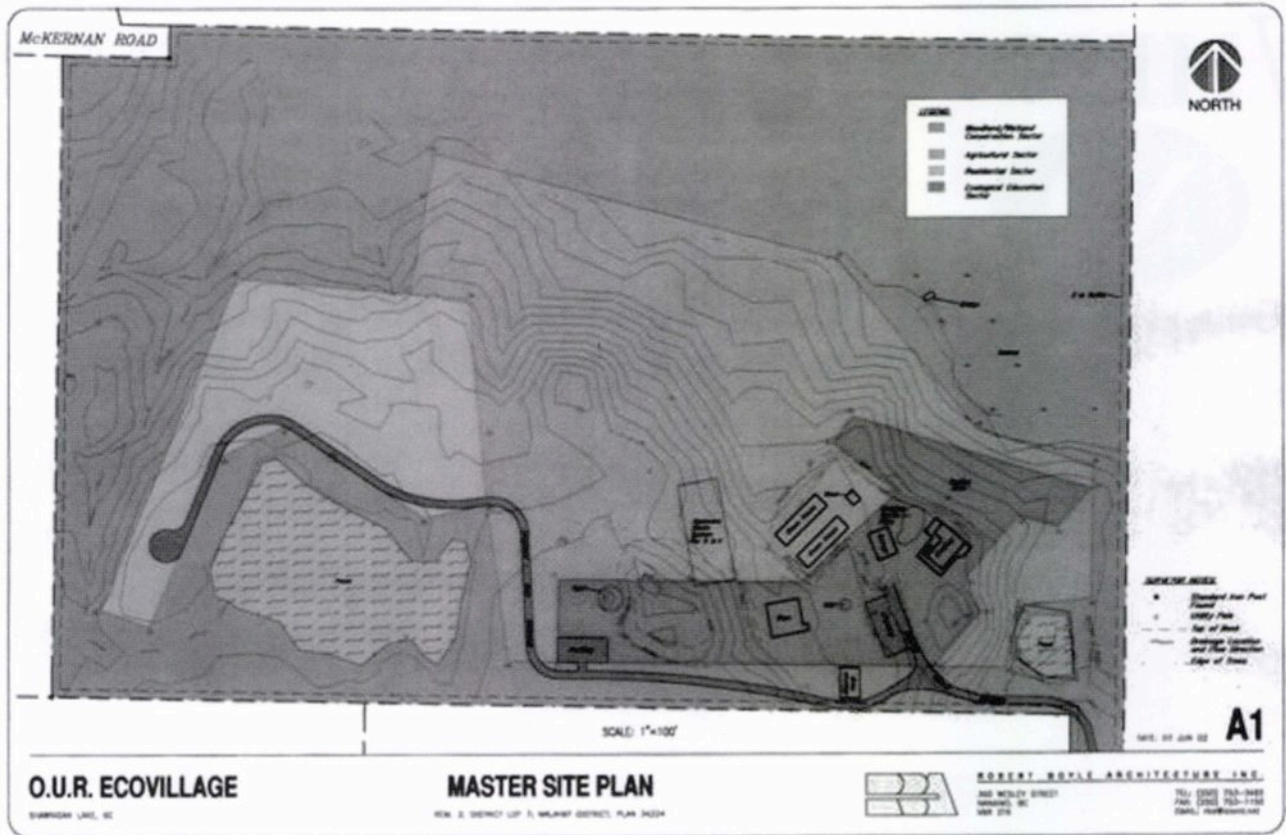
YES

The founders of O.U.R. Ecovillage on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, never doubted “that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens could change the world.” We just never expected our *own* small group of thoughtful, committed citizens could actually make major changes. But we created a 25-acre model demonstration site of natural building and community leadership skills, and in the process managed to involve—and influence—many people in the wider culture.

We began in the late 1990s as a small circle of diverse and rather naïve folks who wanted to manifest a few basic ideals. We knew that we wanted to grow food, create a sustainable lifestyle for ourselves, and demonstrate/teach the process as we learned it. We agreed we would live in a rural setting yet we didn’t wish to be too far from a downtown core. We wanted

an easy connection to an international airport and public transportation, universities/colleges to link with the academic world (both for our own individual educational pursuits and to offer learning for others partnered with their degree programs), to provide refuge for friends in the city who did important work but needed a healing space to retreat to, and to have a ready market for the community’s retail products and services through a major city. In short, we decided to create, as our mission statement says, “a living classroom and demonstration site for a holistically designed sustainable village.”

None of us had any background in land development. Though some of us were builders/architects, business folks, and food producers, it was our idealistic social worker/therapist types who focused on developing the planning and design process. Not one of us fancied ourselves as land developers—



those were the “bad guys” historically, for environmental activists like us. So what happens when “we” become “them”?

We started by introducing ourselves to local government officials, explaining what we thought we wanted to create, and asking whether they felt we could actually serve in the wider community. Their response, they will tell you now, is that they saw us as “a quite apple-pie group of do-gooders!”

and investment specialists, green designers, organizational development trainers, engineers—everybody. If we wanted to really walk our talk we would have to become completely inclusive. We would need to look at transforming the manner in which we perceived each other. Rather than being intimidated by or feeling an us/them energy with bank managers or officials who regulate highways, we could put aside our

---

***We walked into the local government regulatory office and laid down layers and layers of documents and design work.***

---

One of our founding principles was that the entire place would be created “by community, for community, through community.” (O.U.R. stands for “One United Resource.”) This means we wanted a demonstration site where our activities were a focus for learning (teaming up together to develop working models) and which could be shared into the indefinite future (a self-sustaining demonstration). We wanted to include not only ourselves and our future students but all of our “themes”—local regulatory authorities, neighbours, kids from local schools, environmental activists, local bureaucrats, other NGOs, finance

preconceived ideas about these people and truly create a relationship on a different level.

We bought our 25 acres in 1999 and then spent an entire year mapping the property with local biologists and The Cowichan Community Land Trust. After spending two and a half more years applying what we learned in permaculture design courses to the site (mapping solar aspects throughout all four seasons, wind directions, soil strata, and frost pockets; taking inventories of animal and plant species; creating and documenting neighbour alliances across

fences, and so on) and surveying and mapping soil analysis tests of the site, we had an incredible inventory and base map of all its biophysical features.

We spent another year and a half learning what people in the area might want for the site. This involved holding public meetings, giving weekly site tours, and meeting with legal officials. What people in the area wanted us to do was focus the design on four areas of interest: (1) land conservation, (2) organic agriculture, (3) residential space for long-term onsite stewardship of the land, and (4) educational programs. By this time we had done an incredible amount of homework: we had base maps with transparent overlays detailing every imaginable physical aspect of the land, and a community vision from the feedback of literally hundreds of people to bring to local government and show them our plan.

What an extraordinary day it was when we walked into the local government regulatory office in 2002 and laid down layers and layers of documents and design work. We still remember the look on their faces, the rolling of eyes, the knowing smiles, as they explained that our design was quite wonderful but it had nothing to do with being *legal*. In retrospect we realize it must have been totally outlandish when we replied, "Well, if it is not legal . . . could we help *make* it legal?" As totally unaware social-worker types we had no clue this was an inappropriate thing to request from government officials. They gently explained that our plan would require permission from 11 different departments of the local regulatory authority in land use and land development, and essentially that we were really playing out of our league. Developers with years of experience and lots of money were the folks who could propose such innovative change within the regulatory process, not the likes of us.

What we were describing did not exist in Canada, wasn't legal because of its complexity, and no investors or foundations would realistically wish to finance such a multi-stakeholder design. However, before walking into that office we had decided to

adhere to one main principle: that a "No" is just an uneducated "Yes." That every time we ran into a "No," or could not find a legal method to work with our design, we would each go out into the wider community and find some legal precedent which allowed for the component of our design, and if possible obtain the policy, bylaws, or other legal documents which legitimized this example.



OUR ECOVILLAGE

*Students at one of OUR Ecovillage's summer programs learning how to work together.*



OUR ECOVILLAGE

*Summer students in one of the greenhouses at OUR Ecovillage.*

We did just that, eventually persuading our local government to work with us on exploring the idea of developing something new. Thirteen departments of regulatory authorities and five team members from O.U.R. Ecovillage worked for two and a half years on a legal and political process until together we proposed brand new zoning for the Cowichan Valley region, "Rural Residential Comprehensive Development Zoning," which passed in 2005 and set a precedent in Canada. Through

The *Ecological Education and Infrastructure* sector allows us, among other things, to create a central gathering area for educational activities, convert an existing residence into a Bed & Breakfast, expand out-buildings to include a workshop and studio, and create a campground area for a maximum number of overnight workshop participants.

Now we are able to do what we originally had in mind: to create a park, a school, an organic production farm, and a residential eco-housing cluster of ten homes; offer accommodations (a Bed & Breakfast, camping space, and dorm space), food services, and retail agricultural products; and operate one main domestic business onsite. We can also build funky natural buildings with the full approval of engineers and building inspectors, with taxation and insurance models to support all of these innovative examples.

---

*"Well, if it is not legal . . . could we help make it legal?"*

---

this new zoning category, our site plan, now called a "Sustainable Land Management Design," passed the regulatory process—now completely legal.

Through this new zoning category we are allowed four sectors on our property:

The *Woodlands/Wetlands Conservation* sector provides for, among other requirements, "sensitive ecosystem" conservation covenants to protect swamp areas and wetlands; managing the woodlot with selective harvesting and reforestation; and increasing diversity of woodlot species, including mushrooms, medicinal herbs, and craft materials.

The *Agricultural* sector allows us to raise poultry and small livestock for food and agricultural revenue, enlarge our orchards, expand our gardens, further develop our greenhouse and nursery operation, and produce value-added agricultural products such as seeds, dried flowers and herbs, and processed foods.

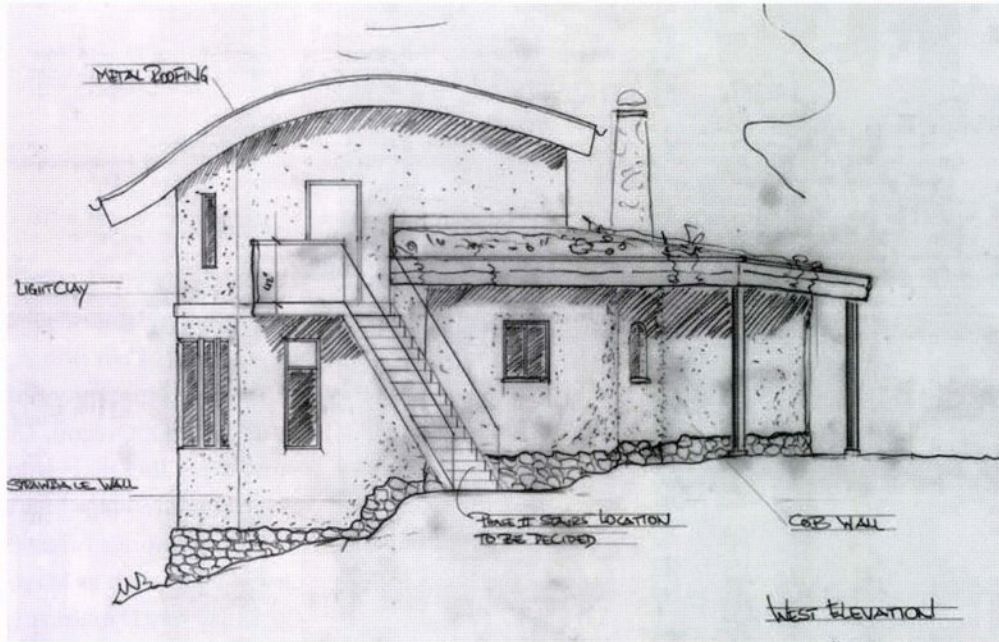
The *Residential* sector allows us to, among other things, build structures that are energy- and space-efficient, with density and building footprints comparable to the existing property zoning, integrate conventional and innovative sustainable building methods and renewable energy technologies, and create a pedestrian focus that still allows road access for emergency vehicles.

We've also developed new ownership models through our F.O.G. (Finance, Ownership, and Governance) Landshare Project. Currently there are no holistic models for multi-stakeholder and multi-activity ownership situations such as people wishing to buy a rural farm or an apartment building in downtown Vancouver. With real estate prices climbing more quickly here than in many parts of North America, it becomes impossible for young people to buy a home independently. Folks are needing to team up together in order to create models for affordable housing, to share resources, and to steward land projects. After completing our re-zoning project we had to return to government authorities and explain that there was no single legal structure which would allow us to own land that would function simultaneously in seven different ways: as a housing co-op, producer co-op (for agriculture), consumer co-op, carshare co-op, community association (nonprofit organization), a structure through



OUR ECOVILLAGE

*Summer students build innovative natural buildings the local government actually approves of.*



West elevation of one OUR Ecovillage's natural buildings.

which many small businesses would be owned by folks who will be living and working onsite, and a structure through which we'd manage the one main domestic industry allowed through the re-zoning. Seven different legal entities operating and trying to share the land together would drive us all crazy! Finally we got grants for two consecutive years of funding for the F.O.G. Landshare Research. This will allow us to hire a legal team and

country! But we knew that to debunk the notion that a holistically-designed, full-featured human settlement is not a hippie commune, a cult, or as is often the case in British Columbia, a "marijuana grow-op," we really had to foster an environment where the "us vs. them" mentality couldn't be part of the process. What magic it was to create a team of regulatory authorities who actually begin to do research, look at other green design examples from each others' jurisdictions, and create community together and with us grassroots folks! The fuller picture of community where we each need to rely on the other, each need to be accountable, and we create more by working together, is not just the wondrous vision of intentional communarians or ecovillagers—it's work we can all do . . . together.\*

***We had to foster an environment where the "us vs. them" mentality couldn't be part of the process.***

research ways to do all this, not only for ourselves but also for all other Canadian groups in similar multi-stakeholder, multi-activity situations.

In 2007 we incorporated as a hybrid co-op legal entity, developed through the F.O.G. Project. The co-op is taking over ownership of the land from the original purchasers/founders who bought the land to take it out of the real estate boom in 1999. Also, local development permits and code officials just fully approved our proposed "eco-housing cluster" for homes on our site—quite a relief for us after eight long years of work.

Since our re-zoning project we have worked with over 30 other groups and projects in Canada who are dealing with their own regulatory issues. In our consulting capacity, we use all of the innovative new policies we've helped develop to assist the approval process for each new group.

At first we didn't see ourselves as folks who wanted to—or knew how to—take on the regulatory reform needed in order to legally establish ecovillages and holistically-designed intentional communities across a whole

*Brandy Gallagher BSW, MA is the principal of Sustainable Community Solutions Consulting, executive director of O.U.R. Community Association, writer/director of the documentary film "Journey to Creating TOPIA: The Sustainable Learning Community Institute," and a founder of O.U.R. Ecovillage.*



Author Brandy Gallagher.



*Natural building is important to residents and students at Tryon Life Community Farm/Cedar Moon community.*

JENNY LEIS

Last May, Brenna Bell, president of the board of our nonprofit project, Tryon Life Community Farm (TLC Farm), ran into Portland, Oregon, City Commissioner Sam Adams after his evening keynote address at the annual Village Building Convergence.

Commissioner Adams, as well as other city officials such as Mayor Tom Potter and Commissioner Dan Saltzman, knew all about our project because our “Save the Farm” campaign had recently been on the news so much. The story began four years ago, when an informal network of residents and friends recognized that the seven-acre rented property inside Portland city limits was in dire threat of development. We formed an intentional community (now called Cedar Moon, with 18 adult and five child members) and launched a sustainability education center (TLC Farm) to co-manage the land. (See “A Farm Grows in Portland, #129, Winter, 2005.”) We have hosted thousands of visitors every year, who learn about everything

# LET'S DO GREYWATER FIRST!

COULD THE  
CITY OF PORTLAND  
BECOME . . .  
**ECOTOPIA?**



JENNY LEIS

*The community hopes that the city of Portland will cover alternative, low-tech utilities like this outdoor shower in their regulations.*

from earthen plasters to food fermentation and spiritual ecology. We were already playing an important role in Portland's emerging Earth culture as an accessible venue for dialogue and change, and as a place to experiment with stacking diverse land uses to create a more ecologically dense network of creativity. TLC Farm gives people a taste

In our year-long "Save the Farm" campaign we succeeded, but just barely in the nick of time. After solid months of outreach and relationship-building, the last 10 days—during which we had to get approval for \$400,000 in uncertain government funding, finalize \$600,000 in unapproved bank loans, and raise \$150,000 more in general donations from

---

## *We're going for "sustainability reform" across Portland's building codes, health codes, and zoning regulations.*

---

of how a new world is possible, arising from the compost of the industrial and capitalist structures. Surrounded by the 650 forested acres of Tryon Creek State Park, we've been creating a new urban ecological paradigm of city-as-forest.

But we weren't going to be able to continue doing this unless we purchased these beautiful woods and meadows—for \$1.6 million! If we didn't buy the property by the owner's deadline of January 10, 2006, it was to be sold to a developer who planned to subdivide and build twenty-three luxury mini-mansions!

thousands of supporters—made for an astonishing sprint that captured the attention and imagination of all the major local newspapers, TV stations, politicians, neighbors, and even right-wing shock-jocks. It was a miraculous story—one that transformed the standard image of an inexorable juggernaut of "development" that ravishes all that is healthy in the world, and instead gave us all the opportunity to see ourselves as collaboratively choosing a different future.

But what Commissioner Adams didn't know about when he talked with Brenna was our idea for ReCode Portland, a



BONSAI MATTT JAMES



BONSAI MATTT JAMES

*Tryon Life Community Farm/Cedar Moon wants alternatives like this earthen building (left) and rocket stove-warmed cob bench (right) to also be covered by local regulations.*

campaign to introduce sustainability-oriented regulatory reform across the spectrum of Portland's building codes, health codes, and zoning regulations. So Brenna told him about it. She explained that because our land is zoned residential we would need to get a conditional use permit to continue conducting public programs and educational activities onsite. This is designed to assure the city that our programs wouldn't disrupt the neighborhood or overtax city services—but it would be hugely expensive and take a tremendous amount of time and energy, and might not succeed, given bureau-

also promised both the Park and our neighbors that we won't create parking problems for them.

From our perspective, these challenges simply represent an opportunity to demonstrate the value and effectiveness of alternative approaches to human waste, transportation, and privacy. But the approaches we know can work—site-built composting toilets, greywater management, systematic car-sharing and bicycling, and so on—are either not covered by Portland's current accepted guidelines or might be outright illegal. ReCode Portland is an opportunity for TLC

---

## *Clustered and common-wall buildings would be encouraged to preserve open space.*

---

cratic obstacles to the sustainable practices we advocate. For example, our site currently uses pre-existing septic tanks and leach fields. Securing a conditional use permit or starting major new construction the conventional way would require connecting to the city sewer system, which in our case would cost hundreds of thousands more. Moreover, we anticipate bringing many more people to the land to live and to visit as a model of sustainable urban density, and we've

Farm to support the sustainability movement as a place to educate ourselves and each other, to experience a new world as accessible and desirable, and to emerge as empowered agents of change. We don't want to change codes and regulations just for ourselves, but for all sustainable projects in Portland. Many intentional communities choose to "fly under the radar" and build their natural buildings, composting toilets, constructed wetlands, and other sustainable

systems in secret, without benefit of local government permission (and be vulnerable to possible fines and shut-downs). We not only didn't want to do that, we *couldn't* do that—our project is far too public. We see this as a timely opportunity to galvanize other people and organizations in the movement to, well . . . legalize sustainability.

To this end, we interviewed a variety of activists and professionals in the natural building movement and developed a list of changes that will not only allow but encourage Earth-cultured human living. These changes encourage structural integrity and reduced toxicity in buildings, local foodshed security, clean water, and deep, mutually beneficial interactions between human and non-human inhabitants.

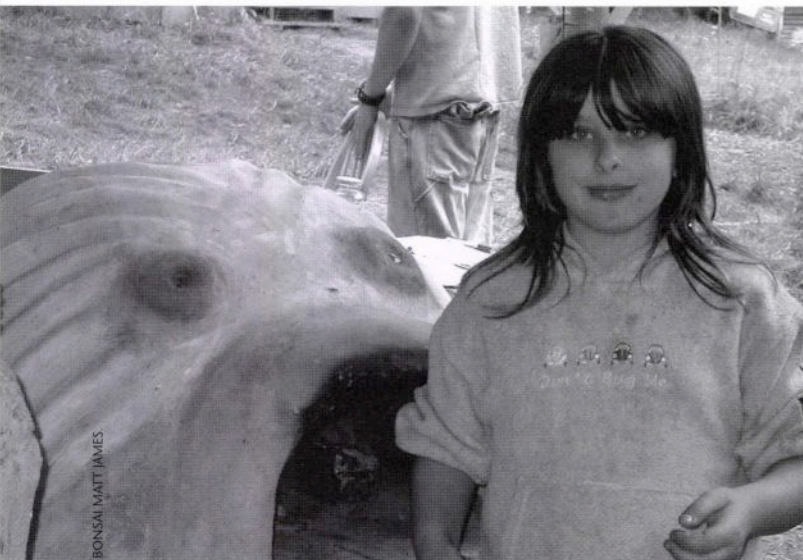
The new land-use regulations would specifically encourage over-



BONSAI MATT JAMES

*Residents and students building a light clay-straw composting toilet.*





Volunteers of all ages help with building projects, including this cob sauna and light clay-straw composting toilet.

lapping uses. Residential, commercial, light industrial, educational, agricultural, ecological, and other functions could share the same or adjacent places and built environments, which would save resources, stimulate beneficial relationships, and reduce travel distances and social isolation. New zoning regulations would reduce or eliminate dependency on private vehicles and encourage alternative transportation. Clustered and common-wall buildings would be encouraged to preserve open space. Legal structures would promote

Our next steps will be to convene design charrettes with diverse stakeholders to write well-defined guidelines, codes, and regulations. We will also be pursuing the site-specific conditional use Master Plan required by the City, in which we detail how TLC Farm and Cedar Moon will handle human waste and make the property accessible without driving. We think ReCode Portland has a good chance of succeeding, given the increasing awareness of environmental issues in Portland (even a new "Sustainability Coordinator" position

---

## ***Legal structures would promote shared property-use among small neighborhood clusters.***

---

shared property-use among small neighborhood clusters. Wholly new zoning designations could be created: for example, "ecovillage zones." (See "When 'No' is Just an Undeclared 'Yes'," pg. 39.)

New building codes would provide simple, usable guidelines for experimental-class and owner-builder-class structures, and for many different kinds of natural buildings and alternative construction: strawbale, woodchip-clay, light straw-clay, earth-bermed homes, temporary structures, non-poured foundations, passive ventilation systems, semi-permeable pavement. New regulations would encourage builders to incorporate thermal mass in their buildings and promote the relatively higher seismic safety of earthen walls. New codes for appropriate technologies would support greywater systems, onsite blackwater treatment, site-built composting toilets, onsite biogas production, as well as masonry stoves and rocket stoves.

has just been created in the Bureau of Development Services). The atmosphere is ripe for continued change.

So, when Brenna told Commissioner Adams our hopes and dreams for ReCode Portland, it was an amazing moment. For most people, in most cities, it's rather intimidating to tell a city official that you're, um, out to change all the rules he or she represents! How would he react?

"You're right," Sam Adams said. "Let's do greywater first!"✿

---

*Laura Dvorak, a recent graduate of Portland International Initiative for Leadership in Ecology, Culture, and Learning program at Portland State University, completed a Master's project on the spiritual aspects of Ecological Sanitation. She has been a core volunteer at TLC Farm for over two years. j. brush is a facilitator, organizer, speaker, financial consultant, and point person for the social ecology working group at TLC Farm. Tryon Life Community Farm: [www.tryon-farm.org/share](http://www.tryon-farm.org/share).*



FINDHORN FOUNDATION

**A**fter decades of being more or less off the radar—dismissed as kooks and freaks—ecovillage initiatives around the world are now increasingly affecting mainstream culture, and in fact, ecovillages are being sought out as partners by conventional, mainstream organisations. A few examples:

- The United Nations, through its UNDP Global Environment Facility, is now funding 30-some ecovillages in Senegal—which comprise Global Ecovillage Network/Senegal (GEN Senegal).

- La Caravana (“The Rainbow Caravan of Peace”) is a “mobile ecovillage,” a bus caravan of artists and ecological activists who have toured Latin America for 10 years teaching sustainability and ecovillage skills to towns and villages where they stop with music and theatre. The legendary Brazilian singer, Gilberto Gill, who is now Brazil’s Minister of Culture, describes La Caravana as “the most original socio-cultural experiment in Latin America.” Brazil’s Ministry of Culture is funding La Caravana to help develop 50 community-based cultural centres in Brazilian towns and villages,

---

*Ecovillages are being sought out as partners by mainstream organisations.*

---

- A local government authority in Germany recently gave a prestigious award to ZEGG, an ecovillage in Belzig, Germany, for its work promoting bioregional development.

- The German legislature recently changed its planning regulations to allow strawbale buildings without going through the lengthy and expensive process of seeking planning permission, thanks to the advocacy work by another German ecovillage, Sieben Linden in Poppau, Germany.

“Living Culture Points,” in which Brazilians will learn how to use the arts to help teach sustainability and permaculture to others throughout Brazil.

- Regional planners in Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, created a brand-new zoning classification, “Rural Residential Comprehensive Development Zoning,” allowing new kinds of sustainable land uses and have set a precedent for progressive zoning across Canada,

as a result of advocacy by O.U.R. Ecovillage in the Shawnigan Lake area. (See "When 'No' is Just an Uneducated 'Yes'," pg. 39.) These examples represent the tip of a much larger iceberg.

Yet it is easy to forget just how little—and just how recently—mainstream society has paid attention to the sustainability agenda. In this context, many activists from the 1960s onward who understood the deeply destructive nature of the dominant industrial paradigm felt they had little choice but to opt out and attempt to model the new, Gaian paradigm from outside the mainstream.

is driving a growing trend, especially among the young, towards downsizing and simplifying one's lifestyle. The failures of modern agriculture and health systems have stimulated renewed interest in organic, locally-based food and holistic therapies.

In short, we are witnessing the beginnings of what may prove to be a seismic socio-cultural revolution.

Findhorn Foundation in northern Scotland, the 45-year-old, 500-member community where I live, is a fine illustration of how a local ecovillage can affect its regional culture. While we certainly have contact with and initiate numerous

---

***We are witnessing the beginnings of what may prove to be  
a seismic socio-cultural revolution.***

---

Working "outside the system" was a key impulse in the evolution of the modern ecovillage movement. And until recently, the mainstream and alternative paradigms have run along parallel tracks, with precious few contacts between them. Few in the mainstream had either an understanding of or an interest in what ecovillages were up to.

Now, things are changing very quickly. Societies are rapidly waking up to the uncomfortable reality of being caught between the rock of Peak Oil and the hard place of global climate change. Widespread alienation from rampant consumerism

kinds of outreach to neighbouring Scottish communities in Moray County, local officials had little interest in what we were up to, until five years or so ago.

Two research studies have helped turn that around. The first was commissioned in 2002 by a local organisation to promote local enterprise, now called Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE Moray), to study how Findhorn might be affecting the local economy. They concluded that the presence of our ecovillage has created 400 jobs and injects about £5 million into the Scottish economy every year.



*Strawbale house in ecovillage section of Findhorn.*



*One of Findhorn's harvest festivals.*

The second study, co-financed by HIE Moray and overseen by the locally-based Sustainable Development Research Centre, found that our community had the lowest ecological footprint score ever measured in the industrialised world—at 2.71 hectares—a fraction over half the national average in the UK.

Clearly, results like these suggested that there was something happening down on the Findhorn peninsula. Mainstream people began to sit up and take notice, and links with a wide variety of organisations started to develop. For example:

- Local organizations, including Moray Against Poverty, began hiring a member-owned community-based business, Find-

horn Foundation Consultancy, which teaches social technologies such as leadership skills, group-building, conflict facilitation and the like.

- The Soil Association (Britain's premier organic farming organisation) and, more recently, the Highlands and Islands Food Network, used Findhorn's EarthShare Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project as a training and demonstration centre for CSA programs of their own. EarthShare was the UK's first and largest organic CSA program.

- A local energy company, Highlands and Islands Community Energy Company (HICEC), provided expertise and a grant to help pay the costs of our environmental impact assessment for the three wind turbines we erected in early



FINDHORN FOUNDATION

Visitors to Findhorn planting trees.



FINDHORN FOUNDATION

The coldframes in the community's Cullerne Garden.

---

## *Mainstream people began to sit up and take notice.*

---

2006. (The four turbines we now have in place generate a 40 percent surplus relative to electricity use at the community's main campus, enabling us to export electric power to the national grid and providing us with a handsome income.)

- Links with HICEC remain active. Three Findhorn members were recently employed on a consultancy basis to design a "carbon-neutral island" for Scotland—an initiative that we hope may soon move beyond the concept stage into implementation.

- UNITAR ("United Nations Institute for Training and Research") has a program, CIFAL, to enhance the public services in cities and towns and help them become more sustainable. CIFAL (an acronym in French for "International Training Centre for Local Authorities/Actors") coordinates the efforts of and sharing knowledge among local and regional authorities, national governments, international organisations, the private sector, and civil society. So far the program has established 12 CIFAL Centres worldwide, and in 2006 Findhorn became one of them. This was made possible by substantial moral and financial support from the Moray Council and HIE (Highlands and Islands Enterprise) as well as from our local Member of Parliament and the Scottish Executive. The function of CIFAL-Findhorn is to provide sustainability training for local government officials and elected representatives, and it has provided a most important bridge between the ecovillage and that sector.

- July 2007, with substantial moral and financial support from the Moray Council and HIE, the local Moray Arts Centre was born, originated by Findhorn member and artist Randy Klinger.

- The neighbouring Royal Air Force base at Kinloss has been helped by Findhorn engineers who provided technical expertise in installing biological wetland wastewater treatment systems.

- Nearby Cairngorm National Park and Findhorn are also exploring a programme of environmental education activities.

- HIE is now funding Daniel Wahl, a community member with a PhD in sustainable design, to explore the potential for developing undergraduate and postgraduate courses in education for sustainability with Scottish universities.

- Living Routes, a study-abroad college program based in Massachusetts, is working with one of our community organizations, Findhorn College, to teach undergraduate programmes to students from US universities.

It can be easy for us, caught up as we are in the day-to-day business of running a community, to lose sight of just how rapid and dramatic has been the development of working partnerships with local organizations in the wider culture. However, I would say that it is premature to suggest that we are exercising any significant influence among local decision-makers at the policy level or in facilitating a paradigm-shift in worldviews except perhaps very slowly. What *is* in demand at present is



FINDHORN FOUNDATION

Preparing compost at Findhorn's Cluny Hill College.

This coming March 22-28, I am hosting a conference at Findhorn called *Positive Energy: Creative Community Responses to Peak Oil and Climate Change*. It will bring together many of the world's leading exponents on the need for community-based, Gaian values to help us navigate the rough water ahead: Richard Heinberg, Joanna Macy, Rob Hopkins of the Transition Towns movement in the UK, Megan Quinn of The Community Solution organisation, and more.

---

## *What ecovillages have to share is less about technical solutions and more about transformation in consciousness and values.*

---

our expertise in wastewater treatment, environmental education, renewable energy generation, organic agriculture, leadership skills, conflict-related training, and so on.

Yet, at heart, what ecovillages have to share with the world is less about technical solutions to specific problems, important though those are, than about transformation in consciousness and values. Our roots and our power lie less in the machines and techniques that we have developed, than in the vision of a simpler, more just and caring society, organised along community lines and built on holistic values of spiritual, emotional, and ecological literacy. This is a much harder sell to the mainstream than wind turbines and eco-architecture.

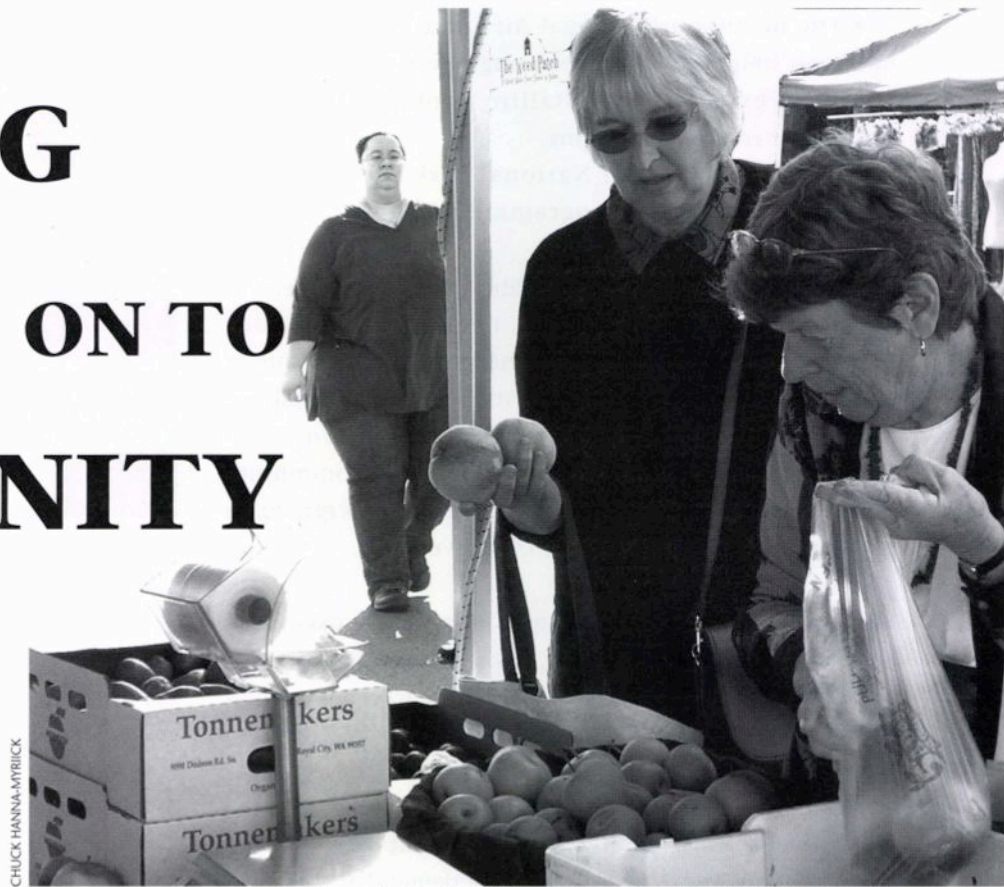
And yet, we are moving into an age that will be defined by energy descent. As fossil fuel prices continue their inexorable rise, strong communities together with Gaian values and consciousness will lie at the heart of all sane transition strategies.

My hope is that this event may provide further exposure to new ways of seeing and understanding the world to more mainstream decision-makers in our own backyard, as well as to those of us who are already engaged. There is great creativity within both the activist and local government communities, but too rarely do they cross-fertilise. My deep hope is that this conference will facilitate this process for the enrichment of all.✿

---

*Jonathan Dawson is President of Global Ecovillage Network (GEN), Executive Secretary of GEN-Europe, and author of Ecovillages: New Frontiers for Sustainability (Chelsea Green, 2006). He has worked in community economic development in Africa over the last 21 years as a project manager, researcher, and consultant. He lives at Findhorn Foundation in Scotland where he teaches courses on applied sustainability up to graduate level. Note: We preserve the spelling of our Commonwealth country authors. March 22-28, 2008 Positive Energy conference at Findhorn: [www.findhorn.org/positiveenergy](http://www.findhorn.org/positiveenergy).*

# TURNING PEOPLE ON TO COMMUNITY



CHUCK HANNA-MYRICK

Marilyn Hannah-Myrick (left) and Nancy Lanphear (right) are weekly shoppers for Songaia's Food Program.

**A**t Songaia, a 13-household cohousing community in Bothell, Washington, we influence the Seattle-area culture in many ways—from community organizing to singing!

One of our values is “Community Outreach,” which has guided us ever since our forming in 1991. Because of this we specifically chose the cohousing model—combining privately owned homes with shared ownership of common land—so we could impact the wider society more effectively than we

logical footprint and saves our food costs. Taking advantage of the economies of scale, we make volume purchases and buy in bulk, which not only provides ingredients for our common meals five times a week, but also stocks our community pantry. (See “Simple Gifts and Good Food,” *Communities #116, Fall 2002.*) We affect people in our local area when our food buyers simply follow their weekly shopping itinerary and tell people they meet about cohousing and our food program. When we walk into the local Cash and Carry store,

---

***Our unique food program helps us have a lighter ecological footprint and saves our food costs.***

---

might have done with a traditional intentional community. We wanted more mainstream people to be able to relate to us, and to consider our values and practices—if not community living—as options they might choose for themselves someday.

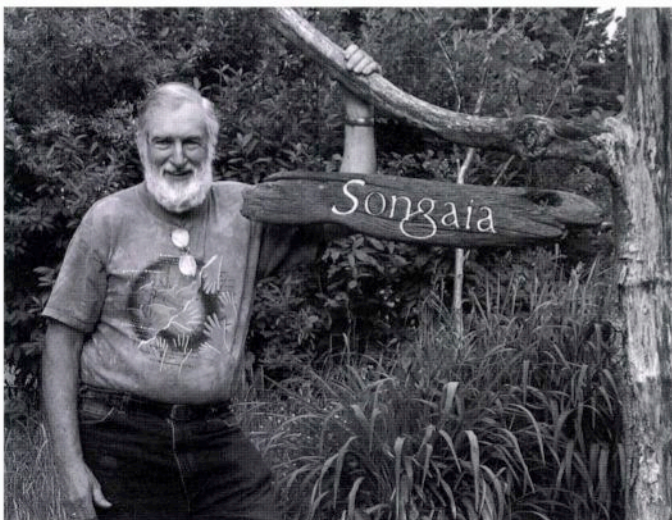
An aspect of community living we are especially proud of is our unique food program, as it helps us have a lighter eco-

for example, we’re welcomed over the intercom by the manager, Todd: “Here come Marilyn and Nancy. All hands on board: they are now on aisle 5. Check them out!” Or at Trader Joe’s, where other customers might comment, “Wow, you certainly buy a lot of milk—you must feed lots of folks!” We often reply, “We live in a cohousing community with 38

people and eat 5 meals together each week.” Our member Chuck is always ready to tell our story if the checkout clerks seem even the least bit curious about our shopping practices.

We also welcome tours and group visits: in the past year we have hosted three cohousing bus tours. We offer lunch in our common house, which gives participants the opportunity to learn about our food program, and after lunch, we introduce them to another aspect of the program, our garden, with both community and household plots. We show them how our “chicken tractor” is designed to use live hens in a lightweight moveable pen to both fertilize and cultivate each plot prior to planting. We show them our multipurpose building with our food pantry, arts and crafts studio, indoor recreation space, woodshop, private storage units, and storage space for garden equipment and bicycles. People tell us they enjoy the tours—and we certainly feel their interest in what for them seems like an unusual—and we hope appealing—way of life!

We chose our name, Songaia, “Song of the Living Earth,” partly because we love singing. So another way we impact others is by offering the wonderful community-building experience of singing together, and by encouraging other communities and groups to sing at every opportunity. Some of us lead songs at gatherings of NICA (Northwest Intentional Communities Association) and other organizational



Co-founder Fred Lanphear is active in community gardening and landscaping.



Songaians share five meals a week: dinner Monday through Thursday and Saturday morning breakfast

events. Occasionally we go as a group and sing to others, for example a nursing home, another intentional community, or at a public event. We also take every opportunity to share stories with others about our food program.

We also continue to promote community living through public and academic media. In the 1990s, Songaia and the Love Israel Family community were featured on a local TV show as contemporary local examples of the historical “utopian” communities. Since we became a cohousing community in 2000, we’ve been featured periodically in local newspapers, including when we moved into our new homes, or when recent national articles on senior cohousing catalyzed local media to report on similar activities in this area.

We’ve been scrutinized from an academic perspective as well. In 2001 a Dartmouth College student, Adam Wilson, spent the summer with us. He accomplished a huge amount of helpful volunteer labor and wrote his thesis on our lifestyle here. A few years earlier we were honored by a week-long visit by Graham Meltzer, an architectural photographer from Australia who was comparing the sustainability of the design and practices of 12 different cohousing communities in the West Coast of the US and Canada, as well as Japan. Graham interviewed us collectively, and his impressions of Songaia were included in his book, *Sustainable Community: Learning from the Cohousing Model*, published in 2005. Currently we’re



CRAIG RAGLAND

*Songaiaans support an active social life, and the activist projects of their members, such as Journey, a wilderness program for youth (right).*

working with the University of Washington to host 30 Japanese students and introduce them to community living and the consensus process. Rebecca Rivera, the UW liaison, is working on her PhD thesis and will interview us in order to quantitatively evaluate our sustainability practices.

We support our individual members in their own projects too, which promotes our way of life to others. One of our founders, Stan Crow, has hosted a children's rite of passage wilderness program since 1987. A section of our property on



STAN CROW

house where they're exposed to our kitchen and dining area as well as our community logistics and posted "Decision Board." Visitors frequently ask questions and the member serving as host has another opportunity to tell the story.

In conjunction with NICA, we've made our common house available as a venue for a variety of public events. Some events, such as a presentation by Michael Dowd on "The Great Story," and an "Awakening the Dreamer" Symposium, have attracted 30 to 40 or more participants, and include Songaia residents as well. Another well-attended NICA event at Songaia was a presentation by Alan Seid on the Acorn model of leadership. When Duane Elgin, author of *Voluntary Simplicity* and *Awakening Earth* came to Seattle to do a public event, we hosted him and held a reception in his honor. Each of these public events attracts a different audience that increases our exposure.

We are strongly committed to supporting the intentional community and cohousing movements. Over the past year we have hosted board meetings of both the Fellowship for

---

## *Hundreds of children and their parents have been impacted by their connection with our community.*

---

the edge of the woods serves as the program's base camp, where children are checked in before embarking on their one- to three-week wilderness treks, sometimes spending their first night on the property. Over the last 20 years hundreds of children and their parents have been impacted by the program and by their connection with our community.

Individual Songaia members invite organizations they're affiliated with to meet here for special events, including musical groups, spiritual retreats, and planning meetings—all of which provide numerous opportunities to introduce our community to others. These groups usually meet in our common

Intentional Community (FIC) and the Cohousing Association of the US. The FIC board meeting was immediately followed by The Art of Community Gathering in the Pacific Northwest, co-sponsored by the FIC and NICA, and the event attracted more folks than usual. While hosting the large FIC group was challenging in some ways, we also experienced it as an opportunity to meet and learn from other communitarians.

Some of our community celebrations are just for us, while others, such as the Festival of the Earth, are designed to include friends of Songaia. Our most recent Festival of the Earth included our traditional Maypole celebration, in



which we danced to the music of the local Squirrel Butter bluegrass band, who continued to play for dancing after the celebration of a great potluck dinner. At the festival we dedicated the "Potager," our community's new ornamental vegetable garden, and officially honored Rose Lee, a local nursery owner who contributed an extensive rose and ornamental plant collection to Songaia this year.

Sometimes our interaction with the wider world falls in the category of political, rather than cultural activism. For example, in 1993 when we submitted our rezoning proposal to the county, we were located in a Suburban Agriculture Zone. But three months later the Growth Management Act took effect and we found ourselves zoned as an Urban

---

***We strive to show by example that living in an intentional community is a prototype for a socially and ecologically sustainable lifestyle.***

---

Growth Area, which has impacted our neighborhood in the past few years with massive development: over 500 large new homes. This enormous influx of housing presents our community with both challenges and opportunities. Some of our members have worked with others in the wider neighborhood to organize public meetings, often held in our common house, with developers and county officials to consider how to reduce the negative impacts and add amenities to the neighborhood such as sidewalks, improved traffic controls, and hopefully, a local park.

Similarly, we were instrumental in helping organize a new forming community group that intends to build a new cohousing project on adjacent undeveloped land. Members of this group say they wouldn't be considering developing the site if it weren't for their future affiliation with us right next door. We're proud to be helping stimulate more intentional community living right here in the neighborhood!

Our life together is our message . . . and our challenge. We strive to show by example that living in an intentional community is a prototype for a socially and ecologically sustainable lifestyle. At the heart of this message is our recognition that social and ecological sustainability are interdependent, and many of these practices require common intent and cooperation to succeed. Creating a context that bonds us as a group, and moving collectively towards expressing this value, requires many sharing circles, hosting

and participating in inspiring programs, and taking the opportunity to share our story with others when we lead tours or answer visitors' questions.

To measure how much we may influence the wider culture is a difficult task. Yet we know we are recognized locally as having chosen a lifestyle that requires work, and requires letting go of the desire for total autonomy and solely individual choices. And . . . we hope others recognize, too, that we experience many joys of community beyond measure.\*

---

*Fred and Nancy Lanphear, two of the cofounders of Songaia Cohousing, are passionate about increasing Songaia's consumption of local and organically grown food. Fred is on the Board of Directors of the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) and is a co-founder and current president of NICA (Northwest Intentional Communities Association). You'll often find him working in Songaia's garden and landscaping projects. Nancy's immediate passion is working on Songaia's food committee which oversees their unique food program.*



SCOT BUCKLEY

*Songaia's 12 children participate in the celebrations involving members, neighbors, and visitors.*



Author Melanie Rios (left), Rob Bolman, and Skye Rios.

# A "WIFE- SWAPPING" ADVENTURE

*There's more than one way  
an ecovillager can influence  
the wider culture . . .*

A few months ago, I received an email telling me that ABC television was looking for an eco-village family for an episode of a reality TV program called "Wife Swap." I had never heard of the show, wasn't married to my partner, and had only one 15-year-old son left at home. But I thought to myself, "Here's an opportunity to sing to a new audience—and how many ecovillage families are there, anyway? We might have a shot at being chosen." I was growing bored with discussing Peak Oil, imminent economic collapse, militaristic government, and global warming with the same already-aware people in my town, and wanted to reach out to folks who don't share my views. I wondered if I would be able to connect with them and influence their ideas and behavior through the mass medium of prime-time TV.

So last April, I found myself on board an airplane heading to a home in North

---

*I was greeted by six  
well-dressed tiny dogs.*

---

Carolina to trade places for a week with a woman who was heading to my home at Maitreya Ecovillage, an urban community of 30 people in Eugene, Oregon. My intention was to intrigue some of the millions of viewers of this TV show with the idea that one can live a more ecologically sustainable life while becoming happier. I also hoped that if I could get the word out about "the runaway greenhouse effect," where the

greenhouse effect can become self-accelerating, people would be motivated to do something about reducing their carbon emissions.

I did feel some concern about how our family might be portrayed on TV (as film editors can affect how viewers perceive what was filmed), but we figured our reputations were

I had thought I was pretty familiar with mainstream America and wouldn't be likely to experience culture shock in my new home. I was wrong. Upon arriving, I cautiously negotiated through several concentric circles of fences surrounding the home with signs posted declaring "Don't worry about the dogs; beware of the owner." Stepping over the

---

*Tyler broke out into hives as he yelled,  
"I don't want to be forced to play football!"*

---

worth sacrificing for the opportunity to potentially help shift the consciousness of so many people. I also comforted myself with the thought that our family and friends would still love us no matter how the show turned out.



*Preparing freshly harvested plums at Maitreya Ecovillage.  
Melanie Rios, center.*

ROB BOLMAN

threshold, I was hit with the stench of dog poop and greeted by six well-dressed tiny dogs.

The family members were not yet there, so I had time to read the manual describing the life I was to lead for half my weeklong visit, before I would change the rules of the household to be more compatible with my own values and lifestyle. The manual described a situation that seemed too bizarre to be true. "I am top dog in this family," wrote Sheila. "Next come my six babies [referring to the dogs], then comes my son, and then my husband. I spend \$100,000 per year pampering my babies with clothes, filet mignon for every meal eaten off of china plates, trips to the beauty salon for their manicures, and cameras for taking their portraits. My babies sleep with me in the master bedroom, while my husband sleeps downstairs. My son and husband eat fast food off of disposable plates every evening, so don't worry about preparing meals for them. Tell my husband to pick up the dog poop from the living room when he's home, which is rarely, as he works two jobs to support the family. You will have to do it when he's not here. Tyler is required to play football to turn him into a man, and he's not allowed to play guitar because that's a sissy thing to do."

Soon I met Sheila's husband Ray and 15-year-old son Tyler, both of whom confirmed with downcast eyes and hunched shoulders that the manual I had read was a largely true description of their lives. They were resigned to this setup, convinced there was nothing they could do to improve the balance of power or increase the amount of love expressed in their household. They said they believed their situation was normal.

For the duration of my stay with this family, I felt like I was juggling multiple concerns. The cameras were on us all day, so I was monitoring how I might be coming across to viewers. At the same time, I was focused on creating personal connections with Ray and Tyler, so that they would trust me enough to participate in healing work for themselves and for the planet once it became my turn to organize our time together.

During the first half of my week there, I was thinking ahead to what rule changes I wanted to offer to the family, and during the second half I negotiated with the director how to frame the messages I wanted to communicate. I was also conscious of using emotion to highlight the issues most important to me, as I figured emotional scenes were most likely to make it into the show. Through all of this, I was concerned about staying healthy, which was especially challenging during the first half when the only food available was the greasy, processed, sugary fare the family normally ate. By the time I was done and had returned home, it took about a week of eating a normal healthy diet again to recover my usual level of energy.

An example of the healing work I did with the family was helping them express their resentments



ROB BOLLMAN

*Melanie and Rob working in Maitreya's community garden.*

out loud, so that they could later negotiate with Sheila for what they wanted with more calmness. They took turns holding onto my clasped hands and shaking me, shouting what they were angry about. "I don't want to pick up any more dog poop!" Ray shouted. Tyler broke out into hives as he yelled, "I don't want to be forced to play football!" Then it was my turn to vent, and I shook Ray's fists, shouting out my pain over the destruction of our planet. At the end we all felt exhausted and emotionally released, collapsing into the



ROB BOLLMAN

*Skye Rios, 16, dressed like this when Sheila, their North Carolina guest, attended her first ecovillage potluck.*

---

***Sheila complained about eating  
"food that comes from dirt"  
(vegetables grown in our garden).***

---

grass to rest. Several weeks after returning home, I learned that Sheila agreed to let Tyler quit football and take up guitar lessons. That alone made the whole week feel worth the effort.

In the meantime, of course, Sheila was learning about ecovillage life back at Maitreya Ecovillage in Oregon with my partner Rob and my son Skye. During the first half of her stay, Sheila complained about eating "food that comes from dirt" (meaning vegetables grown in our garden), riding a bicycle to the local health food store, and our Maitreya community, which she referred to as a "cult." She would get up and walk away if someone approached her to say hello at a potluck. Most of the people here met her well-defended personality with grace, especially my son Skye, who connected with her well enough that she invited him to visit her in North Carolina. Rob bore the brunt of her anger, but he managed to keep calm for her entire stay.

When Sheila changed the rules, she rented a Hummer, brought three puppies into the home, installed an intercom system to keep visitors at bay, forbade Rob to meditate, and brought into our home a microwave oven, processed foods, and disposable plates. Though she continued to present her "tough girl" image to the cameras, by the end of her stay her demeanor softened when the film crew went home for the day. Before leaving, she wrote a note to one of my housemates thanking him for opening her mind to new ideas, increasing my hope that an attitude of friendliness, if not unconditional love, can create healing beyond the folks in our small sustainable-living subculture.

So how did the show turn out? Better than I had feared, and worse than I had hoped. I had hoped that our ecological ideas such as the concept of "closed loops" would be

We've received dozens of emails from folks thanking us for inspiring them to make further ecological changes in their lives. Strangers are stopping us in the streets to give us hugs and thank us for representing Eugene in a good light.

More opportunities are brewing. The Science Channel, for instance, is considering filming us making solar food dehydrators. We received front-page coverage in the local daily paper, giving us local name recognition that is likely to be helpful for whatever we do next, such as bringing in an audience for the musical we've been writing about global warming. I gained confidence in my ability to connect on a heart level with people with whom I disagree. I enjoyed befriending the film crew and learning how a TV show is made.

For example, I wanted to teach them that our planet's atmospheric carbon is kept in balance by algae in the ocean

---

## *"Wife Swap" reaches a much larger TV audience than a PBS program would, and likely has much more impact.*

---

eloquently expressed, the idea that we can provide for our needs where we live without importing resources or exporting pollution by using "waste" products to produce food and other necessities of life. The show focused on the toilet and the trash, however, without putting them in the context of our larger vision. The fact that we use a bidet to clean our bottoms at Maitreya instead of toilet paper received a lot of air play, without mentioning that we do it to save paper, which saves trees, or mentioning the important role trees play in sequestering atmospheric carbon. The program included the idea that we add our pee to compost piles at Maitreya without including our explanation that we do so because urine contains nitrogen and other important nutrients, replacing the need for fossil-fuel-based fertilizers. The program's narrator said that we Maitreya residents get 80 percent of our food from dumpster-diving. However, this isn't true. While we do collect old organic vegetables from the local health food store for our compost piles, and occasionally eat a vegetable from that source if it still has vitality, this accounts for only a fraction of our diet.

On the other hand, good things have come out of our family's participating in the Wife Swap show. It was fun laughing with friends when we viewed the episode.

that absorb carbon from the air to make shells, and the algae then sink to the ocean floor when they die. The more atmospheric carbon, the more these algae populations grow to absorb more carbon, stabilizing the atmospheric carbon. But once the oceans warm up to a certain level as a result of human-influenced global warming, these algae die, and are no longer available to pull carbon from the air, exacerbating the problem. Ray and Tyler understood all of this and more  
*(continued on p. 73)*



*Rob and Skye often work together in Rob's woodshop.*

# MOVING?

To ensure uninterrupted service, send us your change-of-address information as far in advance as possible, and we'll get your subscription to where you are, when you should get it. Be sure to send your old address information (copied off your mailing label), as well as your new address.

OLD ADDRESS:

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/TOWN

STATE/PROV ZIP/POSTAL CODE

NEW ADDRESS:

NAME

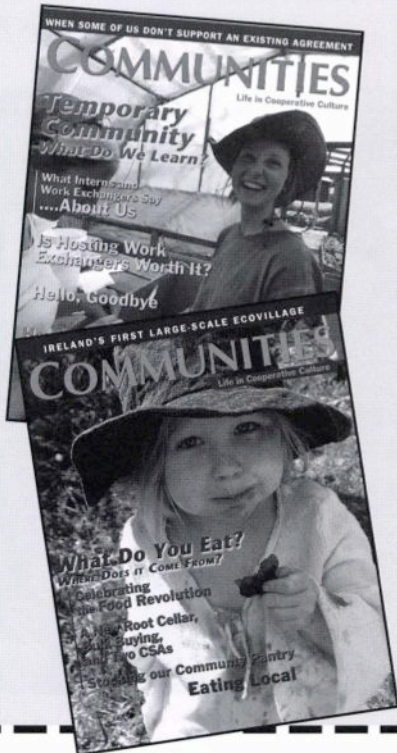
ADDRESS

CITY/TOWN

STATE/PROV ZIP/POSTAL CODE

Please return to:  
Communities, 138 Twin Oaks Rd, Louisa, VA 23093  
or email:  
order@ic.org

Please include your 5-digit customer number from the mailing label. (The 5 numbers to the left of the letters "ADB" on the second line of your label.)



## Challenges for Ecovillages in the 21st Century

One of the paradoxes that the ecovillage movement faces is that while interest in ecovillages is growing, very few new ecovillages have been formed in the last decade. Why is this? At the ICSA (International Communal Studies Association) conference held last summer in Damanhur, I asked long-time community activists and researchers about the main obstacles ecovillages are facing and how they are approaching the challenges.

On Friday, the first day of the conference, while taking a walk around Damanhur I met Albert Bates from The Ecovillage Training Center at The Farm in Tennessee. We talked about his new book, *The Post-Petroleum Survival Guide and Cookbook*. Albert believes we urgently need to find ways to develop a post-industrial sustainable culture, and compared the problems of a growing world population and its increasing consumption needs to the exponential multiplication

of bacteria. While the Peak Oil crisis still appears distant, he points out that it is actually already at our doorstep: "We certainly don't have twenty years left," he said.

Albert also believes that the communities movement proposes practical

solutions which can be gradually developed on a larger scale. "These are holistic ideas that go much beyond today's dominant linear thinking," he said. "Ecovillages have based their knowledge on daily experimentation in the last three decades. In that sense, they know what works and what doesn't."

We met Tim Miller from the University of Kansas and joined him on a bench.

"Ecovillages are just like

laboratories," he said. "They will never be the solution for all. But they are demonstrating that it is possible to live with less energy and to care for the environment." Indeed, as Tim pointed out, today one can see the tremendous impact ecovillages have already had on society:

### ECOVILLAGE LIVING



BY  
MATTHIEU  
LIETAERT

Matthieu Lietaert is a researcher at the European University Institute in Italy. His video documentary on life in cohousing, a prize winner at the 34th Ekotopfilm Festival, is available at <http://notsocrazy.net>.

organic farming, solar energy, green education, development of cohousing in cities, and sustainable ways of consumption. I really got a sense of how passionate Tim and Albert are about the subject, both believing that ecovillages have contributed to developing practical ways to live in harmony with nature.

On Saturday, after the morning presentations, I went for a walk around the conference venue with Saskia Poldevaart from the University of Amsterdam, and Anton Marks, chief editor of the C.A.L.L. newsletter (Communes at Large Letter) based in Israel. For Saskia, one of the main challenges for the ecovillages movement is to develop its political involvement with other groups in society, such as the alter-globalization movement for instance. She stresses how important it is to focus on the environment and spirituality, "however, the ecovillage movement should not forget issues related to the exclusion of refugees, precarious workers, and poor people in our society. These issues are very little discussed and many from the outside regard ecovillages as niches for rich white people."

Anton agreed, and emphasized that many communities tend to isolate themselves, and he noted how hard it is to live in a capitalist society with the huge tensions this system creates. "These tensions should not be avoided, as they often are," Anton added. "Instead, we have to take our own responsibilities and build bridges with poor neighbourhoods so that our communities can be solid platforms from which we can work together with the rest of society."

Bill Metcalf, a past ICSA president and intentional communities researcher from Griffith University in Australia, was passing by. He joined our discussion, observing that the ecovillage movement has generally tended to snub the "mainstream." As a result, many have labeled ecovillage communities as elite groups. The problem, says Bill, is that "when the Peak Oil crisis happens, sooner or later, there's a risk that urban riots will spread to the countryside." Therefore, ecovillages should be aware of the danger in being considered as elite

*Accredited college programs in Ecovillages  
Scotland, India, Australia, Senegal, Brazil, Mexico, USA*

**Living  
Routes**

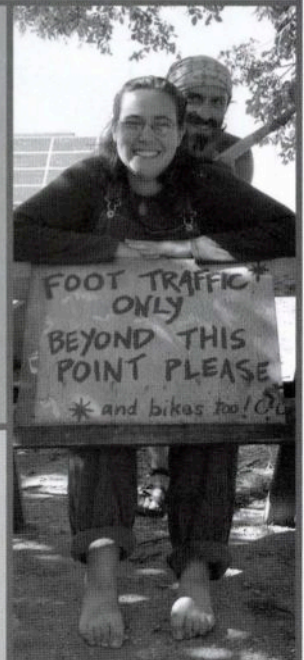
STUDY ABROAD FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



**Striving to live sustainably?**

Be part of a community where you:

- Reduce your ecological footprint by using renewable energy
- Help the environment by eating local and organic food
- Use fewer resources easily by car sharing, and much more!



*Dancing Rabbit is a growing ecovillage whose members are dedicated to sustainability and social change. We're especially seeking natural builders and people with leadership skills.*

**Go to [join.dancingrabbit.org](http://join.dancingrabbit.org) to arrange a visit.**

1 Dancing Rabbit Lane • Rutledge, MO 63563 • 660-883-5511

## Online Communities Directory

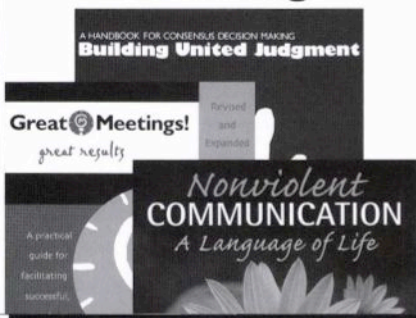
Search our online database for new communities and the latest updates from communities listed.

[directory.ic.org](http://directory.ic.org)

### Trying to run a meeting?

FIC has some tools you need—the best books around on consensus facilitation.

[store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org)



## Support the FIC Become a member today!

When you join the Fellowship for Intentional Community, your contribution supports projects like the **Communities Directory**, **Communities** magazine, and the **Intentional Communities Website** ([www.ic.org](http://www.ic.org)).

Plus you'll enjoy a 10% discount on all of our products and services and be eligible to join the Sunrise Credit Union.



in times of crisis: "I think ecovillages should not be separated from society, but instead be involved in developing new partnerships. They should be a model on the edge, but still part of the larger society." (For evidence that ecovillages are doing this now, see "*From Eco-Kooks to Eco-Consultants*," by J. Dawson, pg. 48.)

In the late afternoon after the second day of the conference, as the heat was slowly diminishing, several of us sitting beside a tree in Damanhur's wonderful garden began a discussion about an issue that is still too often taboo: sexuality and gender relationships. Two

lages. Back in the 1980s and the 1990s ecovillage activists had a spirit of hopefulness, deeply convinced that the movement would grow tremendously. However, twenty years later, most have become more pessimistic or at least less optimistic about this.

While drinking a tasty fair-trade Italian espresso during a break, I spoke with Lucilla Borio of Torri Superiore and the Italian Ecovillage Network. She pointed out that the ecovillage movement had not foreseen how hard it was for people to start an ecovillage. "We thought that advertising a successful formula would be enough to build a wider movement.

---

*"We certainly don't have twenty years left,"  
Albert said.*

---

people in particular, Ina Meyer-Stoll from ZEGG community in Germany, and Bill Metcalf, underlined how important it is to challenge the notions of diverse sexualities and nuclear families at a time when the family has entered a deep crisis all around the western world. "What really moves people is love," Ina said. "However, as the family unit is in crisis today, and more and more women are raising their children as single mothers, the issue of gender relationships has to be taken into consideration much more by communities. The focus on new technologies for the environment is crucial, but it should not be done at the expense of a deep reflection on human and gender interactions."

"That's right!" agreed Bill. "Many ecovillages have become more conservative in that respect than mainstream culture three decades ago. They have stopped exploring what it is to be a man or woman in a community. Reality tells us everyday that there exist tensions due to the contradiction of nuclear families inside communities. This should not be hidden anymore but openly discussed."

During the three days of the conference, participants often talked about the difficulty of starting up a new ecovil-

Most of us were so motivated to change something that we forgot to assess how much courage, time, and work are required to build an ecovillage." For Lucilla, "the key point is that sustainability requires more effort! And it is hard to convey this message in today's society where the dominant message is that consumption makes people happy."

Jonathan Dawson, president of GEN (Global Ecovillage Network) and member of Findhorn in Scotland, gave a similar analysis during his presentation right after our conversation. As Lucilla and I pushed our way into the overcrowded room where Jonathan was presenting, we were surprised to hear him begin by saying, "Very few ecovillages of 100 or more persons have been created since the mid-90s! And when we talk of ecovillages we name the same old names again and again . . ." He noted that, first of all, the tremendous increases in land and property prices in recent years have become a major obstacle for many. Second, recent legislations, regulations, and planning regimes are much tighter than they used to be. As a result, it is extremely difficult and expensive to start even a small food business today unless you have millions to invest. Last



Sunrise Credit Union

## Expanding your Community?

Sunrise Credit Union has provided funding for a variety of community projects

Our board and staff have over 75 years of combined intentional community living experience. We understand your needs and will provide you with the personal attention you deserve.

Sunrise Credit Union is a full service financial center for FIC members.

We offer:

- Online Banking
- Free Checking
- Low Fees
- Visa Card & Debit Card
- Savings, CDs, IRAs, and Money Market
- Loans—Personal and Project
- Excellent Rates
- Federally Insured

Find out more!  
[scu@ic.org](mailto:scu@ic.org)  
[www.sunrisecreditunion.org](http://www.sunrisecreditunion.org)  
 888-871-3482 or 970-679-4311



but not least, he stressed that we also live in a much more individualistic society where community values are not a priority anymore, compared to individual comfort and freedom. As he laughingly puts it: "In most cases, the days are definitely gone when, in the first years of their ecovillage, people lived six to a caravan!" (Note: "caravan" is the British term for travel trailer.)

As the conference slowly drew to a close, it struck me that most activists and researchers I talked to stressed how important it was for ecovillages to improve their communications with the wider society. But isn't it ironic? We live in a high-tech society of increasingly rapid modes of communication, and the Internet in particular played a crucial role in developing ecovillages in the 1980s. Yet, progress in the *technology* of communication belies the deficiencies in progress on its *content*. While ecovillages have successfully achieved

these professionals more than ever, and we must show them that we have developed some answers to the growing problems which they must increasingly take into consideration. But for this, we must shift from saying 'we know what to do!' to asking 'how should we do it together?' "

The first results of this new language are already visible; that is, a shift to the "mainstream." This is taking place at two levels.

First, one can note an active increase in partnership between ecovillage communities and other aspects of society. "This is a pivotal moment," says Jonathan Dawson. "Ecovillages should develop their strategy towards eco-literacy education rather than trying to build ecovillages all around the world." As a matter of fact, many ecovillages are now working in partnership with local, national, and global authorities through educational activities such as teaching

---

***"I think ecovillages should be a model on the edge, but still part of the larger society."***

---

some of their communication goals, such as helping promote permaculture design, it's not enough. Clearly, more communication is needed about why we all must live more sustainably.

For Bill Metcalf, one problem is that the global context has changed tremendously since the early days of ecovillages, and they need to adapt. "The stereotypical image of the community of the 1970s is naïve and not even possible anymore. In today's communities new skills are needed: financial, commercial, strategic, managerial, etc. A good example of good planning like this is Currumbin in Australia."

This point was underlined by Jan Bang of Camphill Solborg in Norway, and author of *Ecovillages: A Practical Guide to Sustainable Communities*. "We need to learn a new language, the one that planners and politicians speak," Jan said. "Today we need to have access to

solar cooking, watermills, permaculture, organic farming, ecobuilding, and Non-violent Communication. As Jonathan points out, "Ten years ago, it would have been political suicide for local government agencies or businesses to work with ecovillages! There is now a much more open context to develop partnerships with politicians, housing developers, and ecovillage entrepreneurs."

Second, even though the rate of forming new ecovillages has slowed down, there is nevertheless a boom in what some have called "mainstream ecovillages" or ecologically-oriented cohousing communities. The cohousing movement is now booming in Europe, North America, and Australia because it is seen as an interesting alternative for more mainstream people. Chris Coates, a researcher and editor for *Diggers and Dreamers* in the UK, explains: "Cohousing not only addresses the rising

cost of buying property and building houses, but also offers community in urban areas. Cohousing goes beyond the mere market-based solution

as it creates urban community, which the market has never been interested in until recently."

and this will increasingly be so in time of crisis. Imagine when the effects of Peak Oil are more apparent: small-scale local food producers will

***"Most of us were so motivated to change something that we forgot to assess how much courage, time, and work are required to build an ecovillage."***

**Learn skills,  
make friends,  
experience  
community**

Check out our online events calendar for upcoming community gatherings and events. Join with others in sharing the experience and knowledge of community.

**events.ic.org**

By the same token, Ross Jackson, longtime ecovillage activist in Denmark and founder of Gaia Trust, also thinks cohousing should be considered a serious mainstream alternative to ecovillages. "Look at Munkeoegaard in Denmark, for instance—an award-winning ecovillage composed of five clustered co-housing neighbourhoods. Munkeoegaard clearly shows that an intentional community can be a successful model for society. Communities do provide a higher quality of life in many aspects,

be needed close to the cities, and cohousing communities will play an important role."

My personal conclusion after speaking with these activists at the ICSA conference is that the relationship between communities and mainstream culture is crucial. As society changes, this relationship needs to be continually re-examined if ecovillages are to successfully make their invaluable contribution not only to the communities movement but also to the broader society.✿

# Beyond Energy Alternatives

Are there solutions to the triple threats of:

- world oil production peak
- devastating climate change
- growing inequity?

Fossil fuel prices are steadily increasing. Al Gore's movie about climate change, *An Inconvenient Truth*, suggests our very survival could be at stake.

Per capita, people in the U.S. use eight times the fossil fuels used in the Third World. Half of this is for our homes, food and cars. Trying to maintain this could be disastrous.

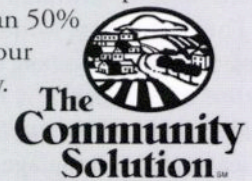
We have developed solutions in our fall issue of *New Solutions*, "Plan C: Curtailment and Community."



For more than 60 years we have been advocating for locally based, community solutions. The term "Intentional Community" came out of our work in the 1940s. During that time, we began The Fellowship for Intentional Community.

Today we are continuing this work as we see the relevance of community to alleviating a potentially devastating world situation.

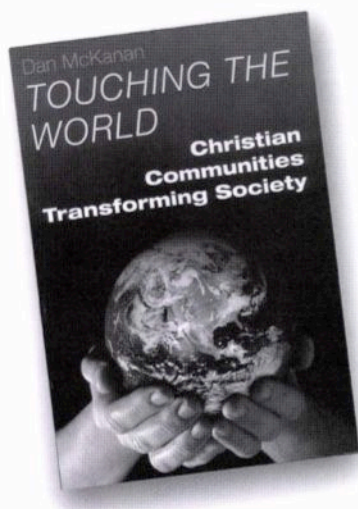
**Please join us in this work!** Become a member or purchase our film on Cuba's creative response to losing more than 50% of its oil. Visit our website at [www.communitysolution.org](http://www.communitysolution.org).



A program of Community Service, Inc.

**Free Offer! Call 937-767-2161 for your copy of *New Solutions* #10 on "Plan C."**

# REVIEWS



## ***Touching the World: Christian Communities Transforming Society***

By **Dan McKanan**

Liturgical Press, 2007  
Pb, 162 pp., \$14.95

*Reviewed by Tim Miller*

The Catholic Worker and the Camphill movement are two of the largest networks of intentional communities in North America today. Although the two have different spiritual underpinnings, they are both deeply committed to serving people in need, and in both cases community members live with the people they serve.

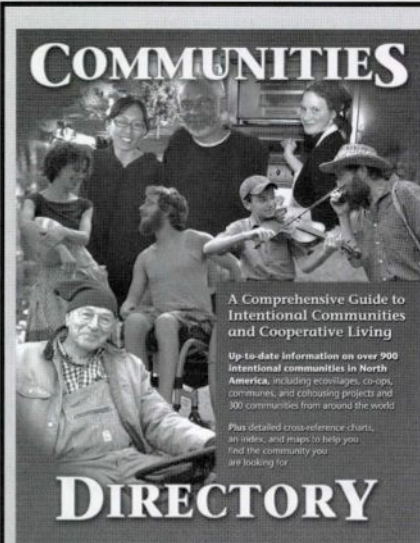
The Catholic Worker has been observed and studied at length ever since its founding in the 1930s; a collection of books and articles about it would fill a good-sized bookshelf. Camphill has had far less attention, however, and richly

deserves the empathetic treatment that Dan McKanan gives it.

McKanan begins by introducing the Catholic Worker, showing the considerable diversity it has exhibited (it has no overall headquarters; local Worker houses and farms are self-identified, not certified by some general authority; members need not be Catholics) since its founding by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in the depths of the Depression of the 1930s. He then similarly describes the Camphill movement, whose spiritual roots are in Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophical Society, an offshoot of Theosophy, emphasizing Steiner's concept of "curative education" that guides both Camphill and the Steiner-inspired Waldorf schools. Catholic Worker houses are, among other things, social service centers that provide direct assistance (food, shelter) to people in need. The Camphill communities, the first of which was founded by Karl König in Scotland in 1940, serve developmentally disabled children and adults.

The book's second chapter is a collection of stories describing the many paths that have led members to community. The third examines the ways in which families can live in the two types of community—a real challenge especially for Catholic Workers, whose houses tend to lack privacy and to serve a steady flow of visitors.

Chapter four outlines the faith commitments found in the two communal movements, both of which must be regarded as spiritually based but neither of which is a church or denomination. A final chapter looks at the closing of local communal houses, especially some of those of the Catholic Worker. Camphill, as it turns out, has never closed a North American community, but some have had what might be called "near-death" experiences. A section at the end of the last chapter shows the influence that both the Catholic Worker and Camphill have had in inspiring other communities to carry out similar programs and commitments to service, and in inspiring individuals to carry on missions of service while living outside organized communal enclaves.



## **COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY**

Over 900 North American communities, plus 325 from around the world, provide contact information and describe themselves—their structure, beliefs, mission, and visions of the future.

Includes articles on the basics of intentional communities and tips on finding the one that's right for you. You'll also find information on how to be a good community visitor.

### **MAPS**

For the first time we've included maps showing locations of communities throughout the world. See at a glance what's happening in your area or plan your community-visiting adventure.

### **CROSS-REFERENCE CHARTS**

These charts allow you to quickly scan for the communities that fulfill your criteria, including size, location, spiritual beliefs, food choices, decision making, and more.

All data is based on the Online Communities Directory at [directory.ic.org](http://directory.ic.org).

## **Order it NOW online!**

\$28 Postpaid (book rate in US, call or visit [store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org) for other shipping destinations and options)

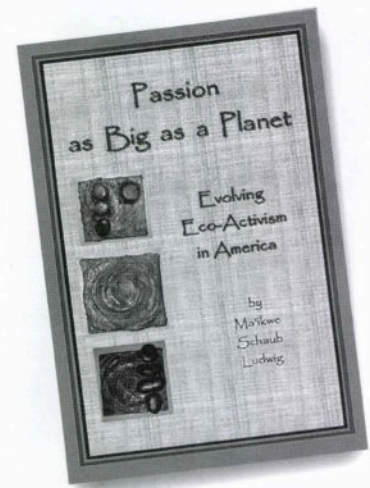
**[store.ic.org/directory](http://store.ic.org/directory)**  
**1-800-462-8240**

Most communitarians, it is safe to venture, live with the ideal of serving others. Relatively few, however, it is also safe to venture, do quite such a job of integrating direct human service into their daily lives. McKanan shows how that integration is done, enlivening

accessible to a wide audience. Occasionally it is slightly repetitive, as when it keeps reminding the reader of the religious diversity of members, or of the fact that the credo of the Catholic Worker, as enunciated by founder Dorothy Day, was the Sermon on the Mount.

munity Supported Agriculture was founded at the Copake Camphill village in New York state). In the most direct of ways these two communal movements are indeed touching the world. Communitarians would do well to know of them—and emulate them.

*Tim Miller teaches at the University of Kansas and is the author of The 60s Communes and other books about the history of intentional communities.*



***Passion as Big as a Planet***  
***Evolving Eco-Activism in America***

**By Ma'ikwe Schaub Ludwig**

**Ma'ikwe Schaub Ludwig, 2007**

**Pb 219 pp. Print: \$16.95**

**Download: \$7.50:**

**stores.lulu.com/maikwe**

*Reviewed by Tami Brunk*

*Well it's about damn time—was my gut response to Ma'ikwe Ludwig's new book on sustainability, spirituality, and activism. Just days before picking it up, I'd been griping to a friend about our generation—"Gen X." "Why aren't we telling our stories, or taking a leadership role?" I asked. "Why are there so few of us," I wondered aloud, "who see ourselves as having something valuable to contribute to the national, or global dialogue?"*

***Camphill and Catholic Worker communities are both deeply committed to serving people in need, and in both cases community members live with the people they serve.***

his book with many personal stories showing how different individuals came to their communities and how they lived their lives there.

McKanan's is a scholarly book in that it is well documented and conceived, but it is engagingly written and fully

The Catholic Worker and the Camphill communities have touched the lives of thousands upon thousands of persons, both givers and receivers of human service. They have also influenced many other communities and the larger society (McKanan notes, for example, that Com-

**What are you planning to do with your one wild and precious life?**



**EASTON MOUNTAIN**

**A SPIRITUALLY ORIENTED COMMUNITY OF GAY MEN DEDICATED TO:**

- ♦ promoting social justice
- ♦ living lightly on the earth
- ♦ celebrating our lives together
- ♦ transforming and healing the human soul
- ♦ encouraging creativity
- ♦ respecting the wisdom of the body
- ♦ practicing a radical hospitality
- ♦ resolving conflict non-violently



**518-692-8023**

**800-553-8235**

**www.eastonmountain.com**

For info on our community, retreat center and work-study options

**EASTON MOUNTAIN RETREAT 391 HERRINGTON HILL RD GREENWICH, NEW YORK 12834**

It was an epiphany moment—I had a feeling that many 30- and 40-some-things are at a stage of readiness where our life experiences and insights can be shared and we can begin to step into positions of authority in the culture. Contrary to the media’s portrayal of us as “slackers,” we have in fact, been quietly pioneering new lifestyles that balance the personal with the communal and political—and demonstrating the possibility of creating right livelihood for ourselves.

As Ma’ikwe shares in *Passion*, we’re trying to be the change we want to see in the world—and put as much emphasis on personal growth and integrity as on efforts to effect change in the larger world, or achieve monetary or career success through traditional means.

*Passion* is seeded with poignant, illuminating, and inspiring stories culled from Ma’ikwe’s experience as daughter, mother, lover, community activist, and sustainability advocate, her compelling voice reflecting two decades of work with nonprofits and intentional communities. To start, the introduction contains a loving tribute to her ecologist dad: an “articulate, focused, hard-working and creative ‘Doomsayer’”—whose legacy she believes we’re outgrowing as we “leap away from limitations thinking and toward creative possibility.”

As a holistic-minded person is prone to do, Ma’ikwe covers a lot of ground—from macro to micro and back again. One chapter suggests that consensus is the next evolutionary step toward true democracy; another suggests that environmental toxins mirror the toxins in our own human psyches and communities. In her “Earth as Playground” chapter, she creates a fun, Sark-ish list of “101 Cool Things About Having a Body.”

She emphasizes the need for activists to stop making enemies of The Other: corporations, the System, the mainstream culture—and instead begin by honestly looking at the places where each of us falls short of our values, and gradually (with compassion for ourselves) begin integrating change there. By coming more into alignment with our own values and caring for our own

needs, she feels, we acquire a strong core of personal power and compassion, so that we can meet those “in power” as collaborating equals instead of demonizing and alienating them.

The book is geared largely toward all of us with an activist bent, with chapter 9 listing “six traps activists fall into,” i.e.: “My chosen focus is *the issue*, and *I use activism work to build my own ego*. *Passion* is by turns a conversation with a friend who has been actively engaged in social change yet hasn’t succumbed to burnout or apathy; a prescription for healthy and ethical activism; an exploration of what it means to take responsibility for every aspect of our lives—our happiness, internal “crap,” physical and monetary needs, impact on the earth; and ever increasing alignment—and expansion—of our personal ethics.

Ma’ikwe talks a lot about things like ethics, and responsibility—two words we Gen Xer’s aren’t known to use a lot. Her definition of responsibility, however—“*a long-term, energy-producing activity that is linked to your own ethical structure*”—goes down easily, as the focus is not on *shoulds*, but rather, internal motiva-

tion. Above all, it’s clear that Ma’ikwe is advocating for a lifestyle that is meaningful, creative, liberating, and ultimately a great deal of *fun*. As her title suggests, by acting from passion, integrity and optimism, we will most effectively face and creatively engage the personal, communal, and planetary issues of our time.✻

*Tami Brunk is a writer, eco-consultant, and astrologer who lives, works, and plays in Albuquerque, New Mexico, just down the road a piece from Zialua, Ma’ikwe Ludwig’s eco-hood.*



**Volunteer in Africa or Brazil**

The Institute for International Cooperation and Development offers a variety of volunteer placements in primary schools, training teachers, HIV/AIDS education, organizing orphan programs and youth clubs, among many other projects. 6-20 month programs include training period in an international community. No experience necessary. Visit our website or contact us for more information!

[www.iicd-volunteer.org](http://www.iicd-volunteer.org)  
[info@iicd-volunteer.org](mailto:info@iicd-volunteer.org)  
 413-441-5126



This is a beautiful setting for community. Four separate dwelling spaces. The Main farm house has a bright sunroom and a large deck for gatherings. There is plenty of room for gardening and animals and a wonderful forest at the end of the land. The hilltop setting makes for an open spacious feeling and 9+ acres gives everyone room to roam.

**Freeland, WA 98249**  
**\$895,000.00**

**TOM WHITE, 360-221-0148**



# 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 below to place an ad. **THE REACH DEADLINE FOR THE SPRING 2008 ISSUE (OUT IN MARCH) IS JANUARY 15.**

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, POB 62, Canton, NY 13617, 315-386-2609 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.)

Intentional communities listing in the Reach section are invited to also visit our online Communities Directory at [directory.ic.org](http://directory.ic.org). Listing on our web site is free and data from the site is used to produce our print version of the Communities Directory, with a new edition coming out annually. Contact: [directory@ic.org](http://directory@ic.org) or 540-894-5798 for more information on being listed in the Communities Directory.

## COMMUNITIES WITH OPENINGS

**AQUARIAN CONCEPTS** (See Global Community Communications Alliance)

**BREITENBUSH HOT SPRINGS, Detroit, Oregon.** We are a worker-owned cooperative whose mission it is to care for the hot springs, the land and the Breitenbush Hot Springs Retreat and Conference Center. We all live in this rugged and beautiful mountain setting of 154 acres and serve thousands of guests year round. Our emphasis is one of service—to our guests, to each other and to the greater global and universal community. Please visit our website at [www.breitenbush.com](http://www.breitenbush.com). 503-854-3320.

**DANCING RABBIT, Rutledge, Missouri.** We are a growing ecovillage of more than 30 individuals and are actively seeking new members to join us in creating a vibrant community on our 280 beautiful acres in rural Missouri. Our goals are to live ecologically sustainable and socially rewarding lives, and to share the skills and ideas behind this lifestyle. We use solar and wind energy, earth-friendly building materials and biofuels. We are especially interested in welcoming natural builders and people with leadership skills into our community. Help make our ecovillage grow! 660-883-5511; [dancingrabbit@ic.org](mailto:dancingrabbit@ic.org); [www.dancingrabbit.org](http://www.dancingrabbit.org).

**EARTHAVEN, Blue Ridge Mountains, North Carolina.** A multi-generational ecovillage on 320 forested acres near Asheville. Dedicated to caring for people and the Earth, we come together to create, and to sustain beyond our lifetimes, a vital, diversified learning community. Our 60 members use permaculture design, build with clay and timber from the land, draw power from off-grid systems, drink and bathe in gravity-fed spring water and use constructed wetlands for waste treatment. We raise children in Earthaven's nurturing village environment and many of us work on the land in commu-

nity-based businesses. We make medicines from wild plants, use consensus for decision-making, and nourish our families with organic local foods grown at Earthaven and in our bioregion. Our diets range from omnivore to vegetarian. We enjoy an abundant social and cultural life, and practice diverse spiritual paths. We offer workshops on permaculture design, natural building, herbal medicine and other subjects. We're seeking new members of all ages and family situations, especially organic growers, people with homesteading or management skills and skills in the trades. [www.earthaven.org](http://www.earthaven.org); [information@earthaven.org](mailto:information@earthaven.org); 1025 Camp Elliott Road, Black Mountain, NC 28711; 828-669-3937.

**ELDER FAMILY, near Cherokee, North Carolina and Smokey Mountain Park.** For retirees. Two new furnished group homes in private cove with private bedroom suites, private bathrooms and large common kitchen. More group homes planned. We are a "family" of loving friends committed to spiritual growth through relationships. Looking for mid-50's and 60's, non-smokers, healthy, financially secure. Must be experienced with harmonious, cooperative, consensus groups. After a six-month guest membership, members will buy a share of ownership if they choose to stay. We are part of a larger mixed-age eclectic community with community building, swimming pool, organic garden, trails and adjoining 46-acre spiritual retreat center. Contact Anthony or Ann, 828-497-7102; or email: [annariel@dnet.net](mailto:annariel@dnet.net).

**GLOBAL COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS ALLIANCE, Tubac, Arizona.** Founded by Gabriel of Urantia and Niann Emerson Chase in 1989. Currently 110 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 Urantia. Organic gardens. Global Community Communications Schools, landscaping, Soulistic Medical Institute. Serious spiritual commitment required. POB

## COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE REACH ADVERTISING ORDER FORM

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

- Communities with Openings
- Communities Forming     People Looking
- Internships     Resources

Cost: 25¢/wd. to 100 words, 50¢/wd. thereafter. 23¢/wd.-2 inserts, 20¢/wd.-4 inserts. FIC members get 5% discount. Please include payment with submission. Abbrev. & phone # = 1 wd., PO Box = 2 wd.

\_\_\_\_ Word Count at 25¢/word = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Word Count at 50¢/word = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL PAYMENT ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please type or print text of ad on separate sheet of paper. Make check out to Communities magazine.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form with payment (by January 15 for the Spring 2008 issue) to:

Patricia Greene, POB 62, Canton, NY 13617; 315-386-2609; [patricia@ic.org](mailto:patricia@ic.org)

4910, Tubac, AZ 85646; 520-603-9932; info@gccalliance.org; www.gccalliance.org; www.globalchangemusic.org; www.musiciansnet.org.

**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](http://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.

**HEARTWOOD COHOUSING, Bayfield, Colorado.** Located in southwest Colorado, with easy access to the high peaks of the San Juan Mountains and the red rock canyons of Utah, we are a cohousing neighborhood with a deep sense of community. Built in 2000, we support a population of approximately 40 adults and 20 children in a cozy cluster of 24 homes nestled within 250 acres of pine forest and pastureland. We make decisions by consensus and value open and honest communication to accommodate the diverse needs, back-

grounds and perspectives of our members. Find out more about Heartwood and available property: [www.heartwoodcohousing.com](http://www.heartwoodcohousing.com); info@heartwoodcohousing.com; 970-884-4055.

**LA'AKEA COMMUNITY, Pahoia, Big Island, Hawaii.** Come swim in the ocean and drink coconuts with us on our 23 acre tropical farm, practicing permaculture principles. We grow much of our food and host workshops and events. We are part of an island-wide movement to make the Big Island food self-sufficient. We use solar power and filtered rain water. We make decisions by consensus and practice non-violent communication. Seeking member-owners of all ages and family configurations to share our slice of paradise. [www.permaculture-hawaii.com](http://www.permaculture-hawaii.com) 808-443-4076 or write POB 1071, Pahoia, HI 96778.

**SANDHILL FARM, Rutledge, Missouri.** We are a small family of friends living together on an income-sharing organic farm. We value cooperation, initiative, living simply, caring for our land, growing most of our own food, working through our differences, making good ecological choices, and having fun with our friends. We've been at this for 33 years and continue to grow in our visions and our capability to realize them. Sound like home? POB 155, Rutledge, MO 63563; visitorscm@sandhillfarm.org; 660-883-5543; [www.sandhillfarm.org](http://www.sandhillfarm.org)

**TWIN OAKS, Louisa, Virginia.** "Not the revolution, but you can see it from here." We are an income-sharing, non-violent, egalitarian community that's been living this lifestyle for 39 years. We would love to have you visit and right now, we're especially looking for more women members, as well as people in their 30s, 40s and 50s. We can offer you: work in our

community businesses, an abundance of home-grown organic food, a thriving social scene, and an established culture of non-violence, 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](mailto:twinoaks@ic.org); [www.twinoaks.org](http://www.twinoaks.org)

**WHITE HAWK ECOVILLAGE, near Ithaca, New York.** Intentional Community now building and seeking members. Individual homesites still available. You design and build your dream house using our green and sustainable guidelines. White Hawk sits on 120 gentle acres of farm, field and forest. Roughly 10 acres will house our 30 homesites, Common House and recreation areas. The remaining 110 acres will be used for organic farming, orchards and natural spaces. We offer: pedestrian only village area and beautiful views. Call 607-273-5879, or visit [www.whitehawk.org](http://www.whitehawk.org) for more information.



## REACH THE PEOPLE MOST INTERESTED IN COMMUNITY



with **COMMUNITIES**  
Display or Classified  
Advertising

**Deadline for the  
Spring 2008 Issue  
January 15th**

Contact Patricia Greene  
at [patricia@ic.org](mailto:patricia@ic.org) or call 315-386-2609





home • community • planet

*Specializing*  
in cohousing and  
community design,  
offering a full range of  
architectural services.

*We live there!*



**Kraus-Fitch**  
*Architects*

110 Pulpit Hill Rd.  
Amherst, MA 01002  
413-549-5799

[www.krausfitch.com](http://www.krausfitch.com)

20 communities ...  
and counting!

Named among Top 10 Green Architects for 2005 by Natural Home & Garden

## CAMPHILL SCHOOL OF CURATIVE EDUCATION



Practice integrated studies in  
education for special needs

Foundation studies  
Professional certification  
BA options



For more information, contact:

Mr. Jan Goeschel  
Director of Camphill School of Curative Education  
c/o Camphill Special School  
1784 Fairview Road, Glenmoore, PA 19343  
610.469.9236 [schoolofce@beaverrun.org](mailto:schoolofce@beaverrun.org) [www.BeaverRun.org](http://www.BeaverRun.org)

## COMMUNITIES FORMING

**BROKENFOOT RANCH, Carroll County, Georgia.** Seeking farm partners/investors to form small agrarian community on organic farm. Sixty-six acres part forest, part open fields. Year-round creek, deep well, also county water connection. Good developing sustainable ag connections locally, plus close enough to a university town to find broader cultural and employment opportunities. For more information, please call *Myra Bailes* at 770-258-3344 or 404-895-7057, or email at [verdolagas@toast.net](mailto:verdolagas@toast.net)

**ECO-FARM, Nr. Plant City, Florida.** We are an agricultural-based intentional community focused on sustainable living, farming, alternative energies (with an emphasis on solar), music, environmental issues, social justice and having fun. Community products include organic vegetables and eggs, ornamental trees, cane syrup, Tilapia and native plants. We also have mechanic and wood-working shops. Community outreach activities include a sustainable living program ([www.wmnf.org](http://www.wmnf.org)), farmers' markets and support of global community efforts. Carpentry, mechanical or agricultural experience a plus. Upcoming projects include construction of an additional 1,500 sf of living space. If interested, check out our web site at [www.ecofarmfl.org](http://www.ecofarmfl.org) 813-754-7374, or email [ecofarmfl@yahoo.com](mailto:ecofarmfl@yahoo.com).

**FARM-BASED SMALL COMMUNITY, Outside Kansas City.** Yes, Dorothy, even in Kansas! Seeking a couple to assist with homesteading. Reduced rent on old three BR house for help with grounds/gardens/share of organic egg and produce sales. Have small Unity retreat center in rehabbed barn. Seeking sustainability. 785-255-4583; [www.lightcenter.info](http://www.lightcenter.info).

**MELE NAHIKU, Maui, Hawaii.** We are a homesteading family looking for physically, mentally and financially capable singles and couples to share our remote paradise. Off-grid and rustic. Gardening, landscaping, animal care and handyman skills needed. In person trial visit to see if it works. Contact Zeoc 808-248-8023 or go to [www.melenahiku.com](http://www.melenahiku.com).

**NANJEMOY COMMUNITY, Nanjemoy, Maryland.** Community forming in southern Maryland on 50 acres of forested land on the beautiful Nanjemoy Creek. We seek to provide a healthy prosperous home for members to be at peace with nature and provide service to the greater community in which we live. We practice democratic decision-making, economic sharing, non-violence, simple living and cooperation. Seeking housemates/members who are inspired by healthy, low-impact lifestyles, community service and group living. Children, families, single folks, pets...all are welcome at this time. If interested contact: *Robyn or Danielle*, 301-246-4883; [dadarolli@yahoo.com](mailto:dadarolli@yahoo.com).



**NEW BUFFALO, Nr. Taos, New Mexico.** Coinvestors wanted to create right livelihood at northern New Mexico cultural icon. The New Buffalo commune main adobe is now available as a healing, retreat, teaching center. Two additional adobes of the original compound await renovation and a newly built spacious shop/apartment invites committed stewardship. Two acres of farmland are being transformed into biointensive gardens and orchards. This gorgeous land and vibrant Hispanic, Pueblo and Anglo cultures attracted the "hippies" of the 1960s and 70s and now nurtures a small group dedicated to simplicity, creating beauty and living our spiritual values. If you would like to join us in cocreating this oasis, please contact [bobfies@taosnet.com](mailto:bobfies@taosnet.com) or phone 505-776-2015.

**POPE VALLEY COMMUNITY, Pope Valley, California.** Small developing community on 37 acres in the wilderness in Napa Country. Two miles up a dirt road. Looking for new members who are spiritually minded. We are off the grid and have organic gardens. Our land is mainly forest. Visitors welcome. Contact *Rory Skuce, 707-965-3994.*

**TERRASANTE DESERT COMMUNITY, Tucson, Arizona.** Looking for resourceful people who want to build community on 160 acres of vegetated Sonoran desert surrounded by State land trust. Explorations in alternative building, solar energy, permaculture, natural healing, quiet living, artistic endeavors. Abundant well water, good neighbors, mountain vistas, awesome sunsets. Contact *Bruce at 520-403-8430 or email: scher@ancientimages.com.*

### Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

*Communities*, publication #0199-9346, is published 4 times a year with an annual subscription of \$20. Contact Tony Sirna at 660-883-5545. The publisher's address, the office of publication and the publisher's headquarters is Fellowship for Intentional Community, Rt. 1, Box 156, Rutledge, MO 63563. Alyson Ewald is editor. The owner is Fellowship for Intentional Community, a nonprofit, nonstock corporation. There are no security holders. The tax status has not changed in the preceding 12 months.

Extent & Nature of Circulation	Average No of Copies Each Issue during Preceding 12 Months	Actual No of Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
A. Total No Copies (Net Press Run)	3733	3773
B. Paid &/or Requested Circulation		
(1) Outside County Mail Subscriptions	1505	1462
(2) Paid In County Subscriptions	2	2
(3) Sales Through Dealers and other non-USPS paid distribution	1851	1902
(4) Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
C. Total Paid &/or Requested Circulation	3358	3366
D. Free Distribution		
(1) Outside County	0	0
(2) In County	0	0
(3) Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
E. Free Distribution Outside the Mail	0	0
F. Total Free Distribution	0	0
G. Total Distribution	3358	3366
H. Copies Not Distributed	375	407
I. Total	3733	3773
J. Percent Paid &/or Requested Circulation	100%	100%

## Support the FIC Become a member today!

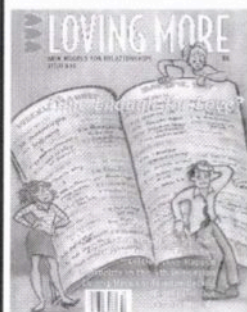
**Support the FIC** When you join the Fellowship for Intentional Community, your contribution supports projects like the *Communities Directory*, *Communities* magazine, and the *Intentional Communities Website* ([www.ic.org](http://www.ic.org)).

Plus you'll enjoy a 10% discount on all of our products and services and be eligible to join the Sunrise Credit Union.

**Join online at [www.ic.org](http://www.ic.org).**

## COMMUNITY HOUSES AND PROPERTY

**GREAT OAK COHOUSING, Ann Arbor, Michigan.** Lovely two-bedroom townhouse bordering meadow in very family friendly community. Light-filled with excellent natural ventilation, low energy costs and full basement (unfinished) with egress window. Upgrades include: air conditioning, Trex deck, attic fan, oak floors in bedrooms, bamboo and slate floors on first floor, custom window shades, maple cabinetry, Corian sink and countertops, Energy Star appliances. Asking \$244,000 with



**Loving More**® is the only magazine on polyamory—open couples, triads & moresomes, sharing a lover, expanded family, sexual healing, jealousy, sacred sex, co-parenting, community, and other topics of interest to those who are open to more than one love. Plus regional groups, events, and personal contacts.

**Send** \$6 for sample issue or write for info on subscriptions, books, tapes, and East & West **summer conferences**.

**Loving More, Box 4358C, Boulder, CO 80306**  
[LMM@lovemore.com](mailto:LMM@lovemore.com) / [www.lovemore.com](http://www.lovemore.com) / 1-800-424-9561

Looking for more information about community?

### Community Bookshelf

A handpicked collection of books on building, finding and sustaining community as well as group process, communication, and social change.

[store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org)



built-out one-car garage; \$231,500 w/o garage. See more at [www.gocoho.org](http://www.gocoho.org) or call Melissa Maurer at 734-276-1438 or email: [Melissa@gocoho.org](mailto:Melissa@gocoho.org).

**GREENWOOD FOREST, Mountain View, Missouri.** 5-acre parcel with small house and storage shed in 1000 acre land trust community in beautiful Ozark mountains. Borders National scenic riverway. Ecological covenant to protect the forest, 15-20 families. House is wood frame, well insulated, wired for solar, finished outside and partially finished inside. Has bathroom and full stand-up loft. \$41,500. [willowm@cybermesa.com](http://willowm@cybermesa.com).

**NESS COMMUNITY, Russell, New York.** Two cabins for sale. One a well-insulated, sunny, 550sf post and beam 1.5 story saltbox. New windows, south view over meadow, Adirondack siding, wood-paneled, tile kitchen/bath, sawdust toilet, gravity feed water system carried from well. \$15,000; Second cabin 360 sf on woods site, has woodstove, small kitchen, sawdust toilet, carry water from nearby well, second floor bedroom/study, \$3,000. Simple living, off-grid homesteading community on 100 acres forest and field on river. Walk in from parking lot on road (can drive when necessary). Canton-Potsdam area has strong alternative and Amish communities, four universities, close to Ottawa, Lake Ontario and Adirondack Park. [Patricia 315-386-2609](mailto:Patricia315-386-2609); [peagreen@earthlink.net](mailto:peagreen@earthlink.net).

**UNION ACRES, Whittier, North Carolina.** 2.1 acre wooded lot for sale, \$26,000. Near Smokey Mountain National Park. Underground power, small creek frontage, southeast exposure and views. Enjoy seven acres of common land, community center and pool. Environmentally aware neighbors and covenants. [www.unionacres.org](http://www.unionacres.org); [Caroline 828-497-4964](tel:828-497-4964).

**VILLAGE OF HARMONY, New Mexico.** Mini homesteads, 1-10 acres, high desert, private, no zoning, owner financing. See more at [villageofharmony.blogspot.com/](http://villageofharmony.blogspot.com/) 505-307-0005, 505-379-6208.

## 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](mailto:Tree Bressen), 541-343-3855; [tree@ic.org](mailto:tree@ic.org); [www.treegroup.info](http://www.treegroup.info).

**SACRED ARCHITECTURE'S HARMONIZING INFLUENCES.** Buildings can generate vibrant, life supporting influences. Visit: [www.vastu-design.com](http://www.vastu-design.com).

## INTERNS, RESIDENCIES

**SANDHILL FARM, Rutledge, Missouri.** Internships in Sustainable Community Living. April 1 to November 1, 2008. If you love gardening and would like to gain experience in organic farming, food processing, temp production, homestead maintenance and construction skills, consensus decision-making, group and interpersonal process. Learning is informal and hands-on. Come for ten weeks or longer. More information about the Sandhill Farm Intentional Community and applying for an internship: 660-883-5543; [interns@sandhillfarm.org](mailto:interns@sandhillfarm.org); [www.sandhillfarm.org](http://www.sandhillfarm.org).

## PEOPLE LOOKING

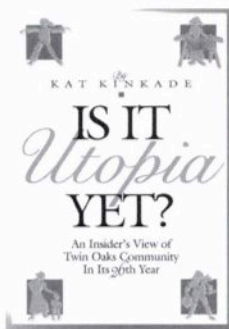
**HERMIT IN HOLLYWOOD, CA** with over 20 years living in Catholic Worker communities with the homeless and people with AIDS, seeks people on a deeply spiritual journey interested in community. [Dave 323-460-4071](tel:323-460-4071).

## PUBLICATIONS, BOOKS, WEB SITES

**WANT TO LIVE RENT FREE** - anywhere in the world? There are empty homes in every state and country, and property owners are looking for trustworthy people to live in them as caretakers and house-sitters! The *Caretaker Gazette* contains these property caretaking/house-sitting openings in all 50 states and foreign countries. Published since 1983, subscribers receive 1,000 property caretaking opportunities each year, worldwide. Some of these openings also offer compensation in addition to free housing. Short, medium and long-term assignments in every issue. Subscriptions: \$29/yr. *The Caretaker Gazette*, 3 Estancia Lane, Boerne, TX 78006; 830-755-2300; [www.caretaker.org](http://www.caretaker.org).

## RESOURCES

**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](http://www.thefec.org); [fec@ic.org](mailto:fec@ic.org); 417-679-4682; or send \$3 to FEC, HC-3, Box 3370-CM00, Tecumseh, MO 65760.



### An Insider's View of Twin Oaks Community in its 26th Year by Kat Kinkade

*Is it Utopia Yet?* is a lively, first-hand account of the unique struggles and triumphs of the first 25 years of Twin Oaks Community, one of America's most

prominent and successful communes. This thoughtful and entertaining 320 page book from the author of *A Walden Two Experiment* is illustrated with 16 photographs and 60 cartoons.

**Twin Oaks Publishing**  
\$18.00 each includes S/H (US delivery)

Twin Oaks Publishing  
138-CM Twin Oaks Rd Louisa, VA 23093  
540-894-5126  
[www.twinoaks.org](http://www.twinoaks.org) [publish@twinoaks.org](mailto:publish@twinoaks.org)

## "WIFE-SWAPPING" ADVENTURE

(continued from p. 59)

at the end of their lesson, and repeated what I told them about this in their own words. They also agreed that what I was teaching was likely to be true, but they were not convinced enough by this knowledge to change their habits.

When I asked them why they weren't willing to trade one of their family's five SUVs for a car that gets high gas mileage, they replied they liked their comfort and the big sound of their engines. I asked Ray if his comfort and enjoyment of big engine sounds were more important to him than Tyler's children having a healthy planet to live on, and he replied, "Yes." So much for my idea that all reasonable people will be willing to change if they only understand the problem! My current interpretation of his answer is that folks are not going to modify their behavior on behalf of others until their basic needs are met. My guess is that Ray's SUV is where he turns to experience joy in the absence of a satisfying relationship with his wife and larger community. His only human

bond in the world appears to be with his son, and it would help him so to open his heart to caring about people and other creatures of the Earth.

My conclusion is that my life's work is as much about helping people learn to be happier as it is to encourage them to reduce their ecological footprint. The work we in the communities movement and beyond are doing to help people love and cooperate with each other better are essential steps in helping our planet survive.

Would I participate in the "Wife Swap" TV program again? Yes. Would I recommend that others do it? That depends on who they are. It's way more work than one would imagine. But if you are passionate about sharing your ideas with others, and you believe you can stay calm under stressful conditions, I'd say go ahead. Participating in this show allows one to reach a much broader audience than normal because the producers make the shows entertaining, while including people from a wide variety of lifestyles. Their target audience are viewers who aren't even aware of some of these choices, and

the producers don't try to be comprehensive in their approach, like a PBS program would. But "Wife Swap" reaches a much larger audience than a PBS program would, and likely has much more impact. If you do decide to go for this approach to sharing ideas, welcome the adventure without attachment to the results, and see what happens. And let me know how it turns out!✿

*Melanie Rios communicates her ideas using theater, music, and interactive workshops, addressing topics such as climate change and permaculture for the inner landscape. She lives at Maitreya Ecovillage in Eugene, Oregon, where she's also a mom and an urban farmer. mel@rios.org.*

## Seeking Community?

Let others find you by posting your ad on our free online Reach Book.

[reach.ic.org](http://reach.ic.org)



# The Federation of Egalitarian Communities

A better world is not only possible,  
it's already happening.

[www.thefec.org](http://www.thefec.org)

The Federation of Egalitarian Communities is a network of communal groups spread across North America. We range in size and emphasis from small agricultural homesteads to village-like communities to urban group houses.

Our aim is not only to help each other; we want to help more people discover the advantages of a communal alternative, and to promote the evolution of a more egalitarian world.



# FIC MEMBERSHIP, COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE, & DIRECTORY ORDER

## COMMUNITIES Magazine—Subscribe Today!

Your source for the latest information, issues, and ideas about intentional communities and cooperative living! Supplements the *Communities Directory* with updated listings about communities in North America—including those now forming.

## Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) Memberships!

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

- publishes *Communities* magazine and the best-selling *Communities Directory*.
- built and maintains the *Intentional Communities* site on the World Wide Web [www.ic.org](http://www.ic.org).
- hosts gatherings and events about community.
- builds bridges between communities and the wider culture.
- serves as an information clearinghouse for all aspects of community—for individuals, groups, and the media.

**FIC membership supports these efforts and offers the following benefits:**

- our quarterly newsletter.
- discounts on selected products and services including all books and magazines available at [store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org).
- advertising discounts in our publications including online ads.
- invitations to board meetings and other activities.
- first notice on whatever we're doing, and the opportunity to get in early!

**Join the  
Fellowship team  
today!**

## FIC MEMBERSHIP, COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE, & DIRECTORY ORDER

### Fellowship for Intentional Community Membership

Yes, I'll join the Fellowship for Intentional Community! (Check appropriate membership category)

New member     Renewal

\$30 Individual     \$15 Low Income

Community:  \$40 for under 10 members,  \$75 for 10-40 members,  \$100 for over 40

Organization \$50

Donor:  Supporting, \$100 & up,  Sustaining, \$250 & up,  Sponsoring, \$500 & up.

*Amounts greater than basic membership are tax deductible.*

Please send me more info on FIC services

### COMMUNITIES magazine (Outside US prices in parentheses)

1 year, quarterly - \$20 (\$24 Canada, \$26 other),  2 yr \$34 (\$42 Canada, \$46 other),  3 yr \$45 (\$57 Canada, \$63 other),  Single issue \$6 (\$7 Canada, \$8 other)

### Communities Directory

\$24 US, postpaid book rate. Call or visit [store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org) for other destinations and options. Please call for quantity discounts!

Enclosed is my check payable to FIC in US funds.

Charge Visa/MC/Dscvr # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount: \$** \_\_\_\_\_  Check Enclosed     Charged

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL OR CONTACT PERSON \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP NAME OR AFFILIATION (IF APPROPRIATE) \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/TOWN \_\_\_\_\_

STATE/PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP/POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

## PERIPATETIC COMMUNITARIAN

(continued from p. 76)

vailing system." At the other extreme the pragmatic-protectionist says "It's hard enough to make decisions and work together towards our common goals without needing to deal with uncooperative or unstable personalities; we need to set a high standard of membership to keep out the individuals who would likely disrupt our processes and our lives."

Both extremes embody important considerations, and the most admirable and workable solutions take both into account and aspire to find a good balance. Additionally, that balance is likely to shift within any given community depending on many variables including group size, pending projects and priorities, the skill level of the group's members, and the ratio of solid/dependable members compared to the number of challenging members who require special support ... among other things. It's an ever-changing dynamic that defies setting hard and fast guidelines, and the clearer a group is about the issue and their intentions for managing it, the more likely they are to identify the changing needs and find ways to keep the priorities and energies in balance.

In spite of the variables, I do have a couple of guidelines to recommend. In general (unless it is specifically part of a group's primary mission), a *new* group is better off if it can identify and weed out the challenged/challenging applicants during the first phases of community building, as their issues and antics tend to eat into group energy and focus. It can be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to do start-up planning and get new tasks implemented when constantly faced with that sort of dividing or distracting energy.

For established groups, however, I strongly recommend that the community's circle be drawn wide enough to include a challenging member or two. The broader communities movement needs to somehow address ways to integrate and nurture society's mentally or socially challenged individuals, and if we collectively share the load, then fewer folks will fall through the cracks.

As noted above, it's critically important to keep a high ratio of emotionally solid members to the ones needing special attention and support. That ratio can go a bit lower if a community has at least a few core members who have solid skills and focused energy to work effectively with the special needs members. Being mindful of the need and staying tuned into the day-to-day variations are keys to doing that successfully and sustainably.

The big bottom-line question is how to find and maintain a healthy balance between our visionary selves and our pragmatic selves. It's an ongoing dance of awareness, intention, and priorities that requires experience, wisdom, compassion, and eternal vigilance. If we're serious about creating viable models for how a better world might look and work, we need to develop tools to support and integrate folks who lack the skills to get there on their own.

\* I know of no statistical documentation to verify this particular demographic, so my assertion is an educated guess based on numerous conversations with community veterans, plus my own sense of things after having visited hundreds of communities.✿

*Geoph Kozeny lived in various kinds of communities for 34 years. He was on the road for 20 years visiting communities—asking about their visions and realities, taking photos, and exploring what makes them tick. Until his recent death, he was editing part two of a video documentary on intentional communities. See page 17 this issue for The Road Trip Ends, a column by Laird Schaub honoring Geoph and celebrating his life.*

### Trying to run a meeting?

FIC has some tools you need  
—the best books around on  
consensus facilitation.

[store.ic.org](http://store.ic.org)



## Visions of Utopia: Experiments in Sustainable Culture

Geoph Kozeny, a core staff member of the first two editions of the *Communities Directory* and a featured columnist in *Communities* magazine, spent 4 years creating this documentary about intentional communities. Now you can actually see how some communities look "up close" while you listen to community members tell their stories in their own words. Featuring:

- A brief history of 2500 yrs of shared living
- Profiles of 7 very diverse communities  
Camphill Special School ('61, PA), Twin Oaks ('67, VA), Ananda Village ('69, CA), Breitenbush Hot Springs ('77, OR), Purple Rose Collective ('78, CA) Earthaven ('92, NC)
- Insights about what works and what doesn't
- 90 minutes of information & inspiration!

### "Outstanding Project of the Year Award"

—Communal Studies Association, Oct 2003

\$33 Postpaid: FIC Video • 138-V Twin Oaks Rd, Louisa VA 23093 • (800)995-8342 • Online info & orders: <http://store.ic.org/products/visions-of-utopia-video.html>

**Ordinary People doing extraordinary things.**

*The Final Installment*

# The Crazies Among Us: Balancing Compassion with Capacity

I'm often asked "Does it seem to you that intentional communities get more than their share of crazy people?" My standard answer is "Yes—and understandably so."\*

To be clear, I'm not referring to the everyday crazy person such as me or you or most of my friends—those of us considered to be a bit "off kilter" by many mainstream folks because we're always looking for alternatives to the accepted status quo, convinced there are better ways to live on this big, interdependent planet that we share. I'm talking about the unfortunate folks who are mentally or socially challenged enough that they have great difficulty connecting with others or plugging into community life in any meaningful, ongoing way.

I don't mean to suggest that living in community is a crazy idea—far from it. Rather, the disproportionately high number of mentally or socially challenged souls living amongst us reflects the fact that communities often conceive themselves as a sane alternative to some of the various insane options offered up by the surrounding mainstream culture. It's predictable, then, that society's marginally stable citizens—some of the first to be chewed up and spit out by "the system"—naturally turn to communities as beacons of hope for finding a place they can fit in and make a contribution. The good news is that I've seen numerous examples where that sort of integration has actually happened and has proved sustainable.

Unfortunately there is often a considerable gap between a community's idealized vision of the humane nurturing environment it aspires to create and its current reality. The most common point of overwhelm turns up when a community's members lack the adequate understanding and skill needed for working with and integrating people who are socially challenged. And this is not a shortcoming unique to communities—society's norm seems to be to relegate the problem to mental health and social workers, keeping the challenging (marginal) people as much "out of sight, out of mind" as possible. A look at today's exponential growth in prison and homeless populations testifies to the ineffectiveness of that approach; it's a tribute to the vision and compassion of intentional communities and other groups that aspire, often with some success, to create something better. Clearly, if we're wanting to create viable new social models, we're going to need to include effective strategies for including those who have trouble fitting in.

Yet even with that awareness and intention, various communities, and often their individual members, have widely differing beliefs about what causes crazy behavior, as well as diverse ideas about how to deal with it. On the compassionate-visionary extreme, I hear people say "We're

trying to build an alternative to the mainstream, and our model needs to integrate and deal with the people who fall through the cracks, the ones who can't make it in the pre-

*(continued on p. 75)*

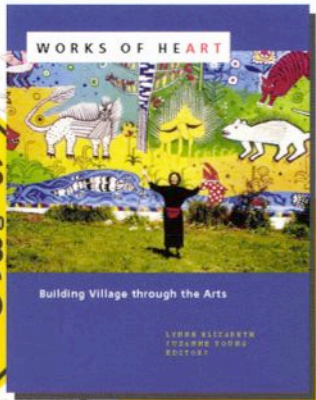
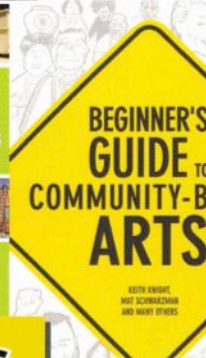
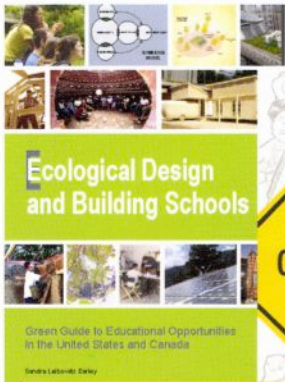


BY GEOPH KOZENY

---

***Communities need ways to integrate  
and nurture society's mentally or socially  
challenged individuals.***

---



**books to build vibrant community**

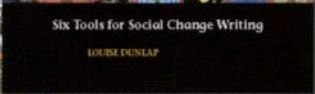
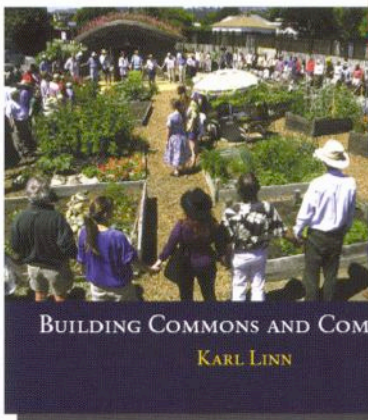
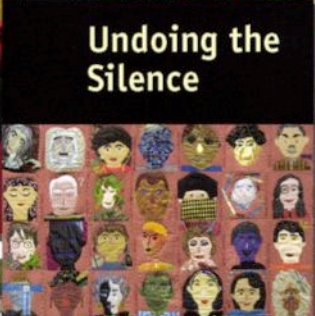
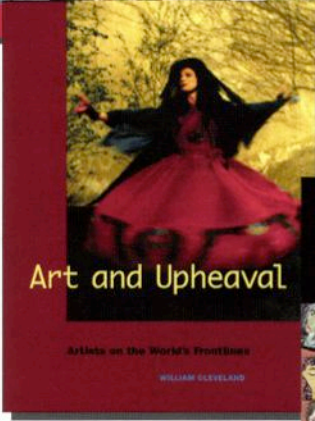
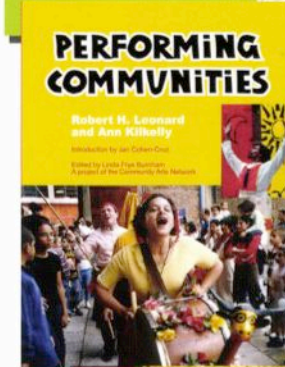
Meet **New Village Press**, the first publisher to serve the emerging field of community building. Our authors and the people they write about are breaking new ground in neighborhood revitalization, restorative justice, ecological education, civic engagement and community-based art.

Communities are the cauldron of social change, and the healthiest, most sustainable changes spring up from the grassroots. New Village Press focuses on works about creative, citizen-initiated efforts — “the good news” of social transformation. Our non-fiction books profile solutions to cultural, environmental and economic challenges.

New Village Press is a national publishing project of Architects / Designers / Planners for Social Responsibility (ADPSR), an educational non-profit organization that works for peace, environmental protection, social justice and the development of healthy communities. [www.adpsr.org](http://www.adpsr.org).

Our color hardbacks are sewn with library-quality binding, and our paperbacks are printed on acid-free paper made of 100% post-consumer waste.

Learn about our titles and authors. Purchase books on our website:



**newvillagePRESS**

[newvillagepress.net](http://newvillagepress.net)

# Free Spirits

The incredible story of the Renaissance Community, one of the largest, most controversial intentional communities of the 60s, 70s & 80s, and its flamboyant founder, Michael Metelica Rapunzel.



*"I was totally unprepared for the amazing impact "Free Spirits" had on me. It makes history come alive in a very immediate, very emotional way. It's brilliantly edited. You have to see this film!"*

*--David Lenson, Editor  
"The Massachusetts Review"*

*"Free Spirits is a labor of love, but also a work of high craftsmanship & engrossing story-telling. We are the inheritors of Renaissance, and we owe them a huge debt of thanks."*

*--Stephen Morris, Publisher  
"The Green Living Journal"*



*"Michael Metelica is a fascinating figure, part heavy metal biker, part backwoods mystic. The film is honest and compelling, definitely worth the price."*

*--Andrew Varnon  
"The Valley Advocate"*



**Free Spirits is available on DVD (99 min) for home use for \$19.50 + \$3.50 S & H. You can order it on-line at [www.acornproductions.net](http://www.acornproductions.net) or by calling 413 527-7381. Or send a check or money order to: Acorn Productions LLC, 170 Laurel Hill Rd., Westhampton, MA 01027 [acornproductions@comcast.net](mailto:acornproductions@comcast.net)**



**Communities, Life in Cooperative Culture  
RR 1 Box 156  
Rutledge MO 63563**

**Subscriptions - 4 issues: \$20; \$24 Canada; \$26 outside U.S./Canada; US dollars**