

COMMUNITIES

a journal of cooperative living

no. 21

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**Reflections
on
Kibbutzim**

Feature Community:

**Ananda
Co-op
Village**



**Communes
& Their
Neighbors**



COMMUNITIES

In this issue, we are departing from the theme format that has both unified and restricted our first 20 issues. We hope to diversify the content, while still being able to look at a given subject in depth by running series of articles.

Communes are often criticized for not paying sufficient attention to previous experience in creating new alternatives, thereby reliving old struggles, and repeating old failures. In this issue we focus on the Kibbutzim as a communal model, to begin to look at the implications of that movement for American communes. From quite another perspective, David draws on existing social theory to show us how we might take a new look at and come to grips with social problems within large communes.

Relations with the surrounding city or county can take quite diverse forms, ranging from virtually nil in the case of self-sufficient rural communities, to active struggle in the case of politically oriented groups, such as the "Christian Brothers" of Thomas Woodall's article. Twin Oaks, as Gerri's article points out, is somewhere in between; with a complex and evolving connection to its neighbors, and to the surrounding political and economic structures.

this is the first publications effort for those of us at Twin Oaks who edited and designed this issue. We know it reflects our inexperience; we hope that it also reflects our enthusiasm for continuing and improving *Communities* magazine. Let us know what you think. . . .

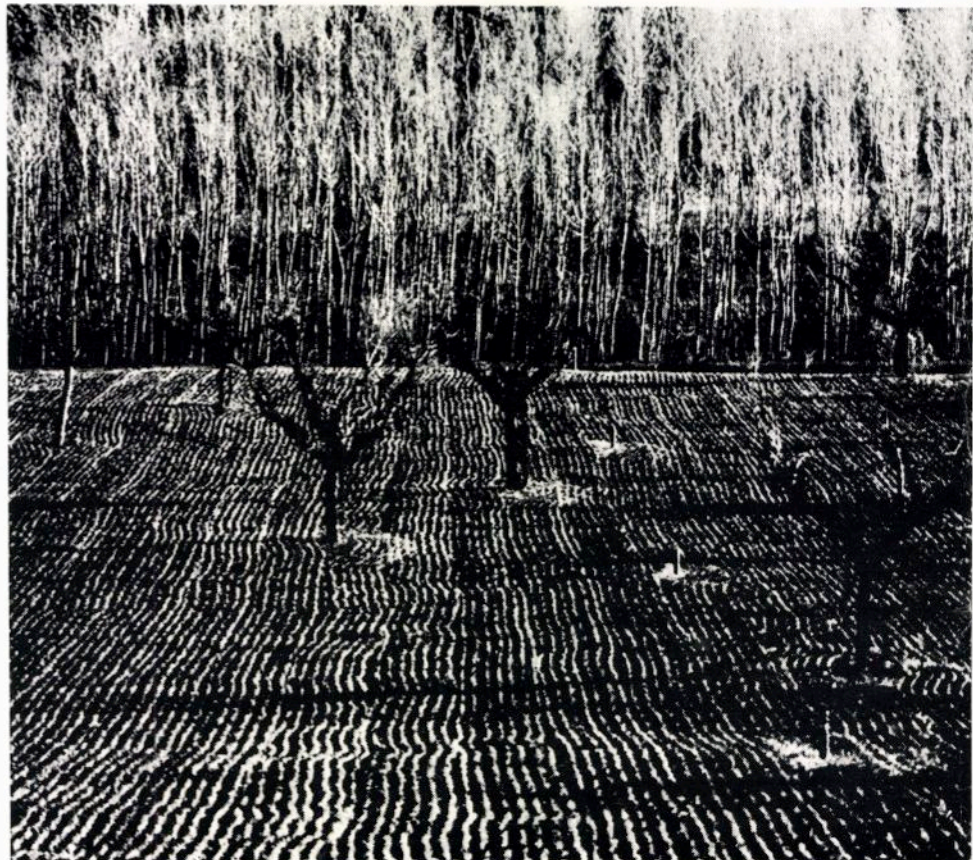
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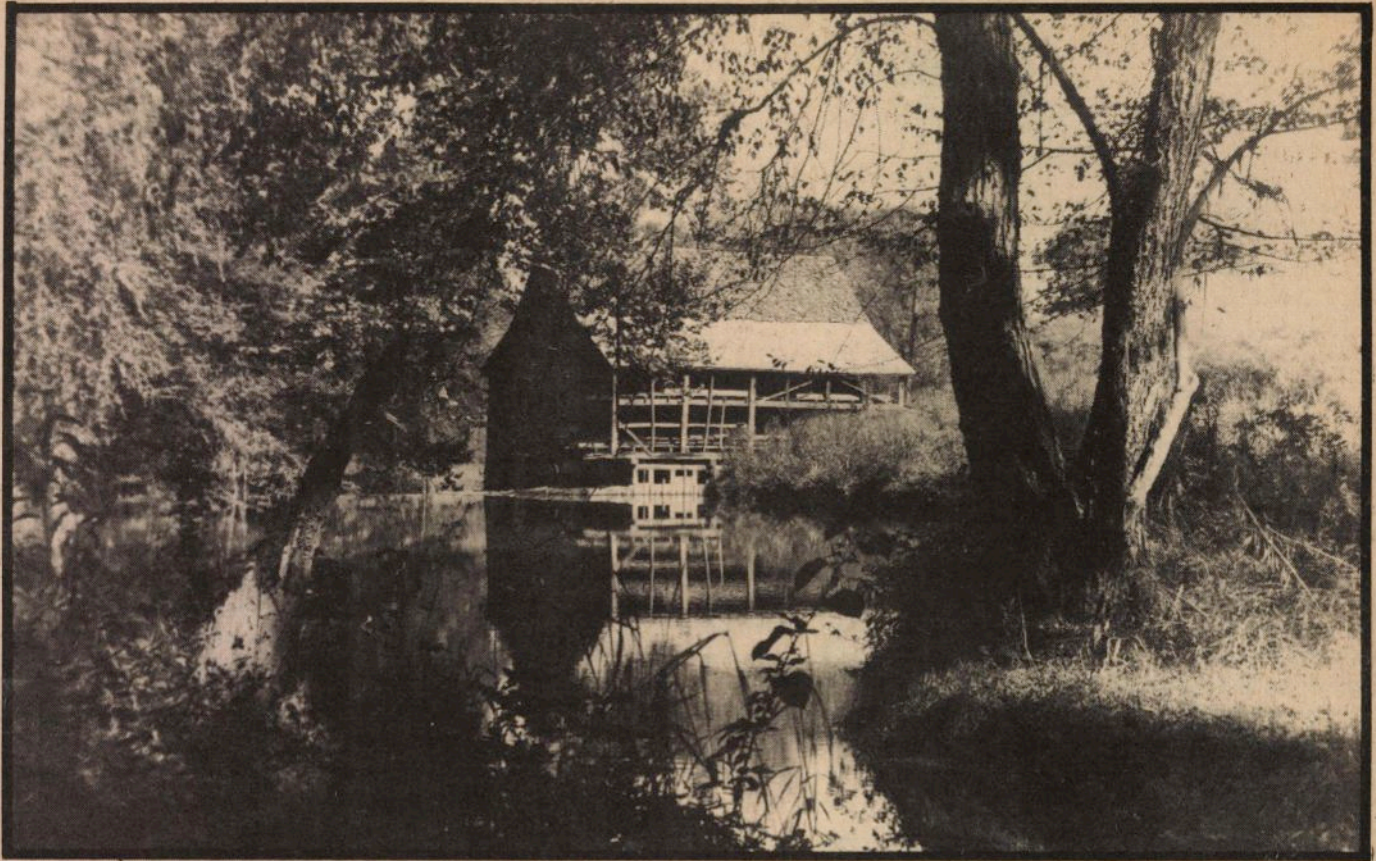
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WE FORGOT:

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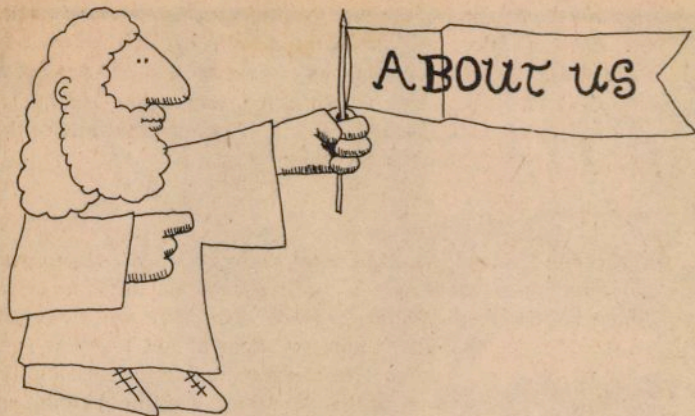
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Time brings many changes, large and small. At times the changes have been so fast and furious that we have been unable to keep track of our own heads, much less do a good job of letting you in on our process. I was somewhat taken aback when I realized that we haven't put out a "state of the magazine" address since issue number 12! I'd like to bring you up to date on some of the things that have happened since that time. We think it is important that you all realize and feel that there are real people behind the paper and ink. We often ask you for feedback on **Communities**, but we forget to let you know how we feel about **Communities**.

UTOPIAN VISIONS

Communities magazine first appeared in December of 1972. It was the child of a group of excited communitarians, utopians, and publishers who met at the Twin Oaks Conference in July of 1972. Three of the groups who participated in the conference decided to cease producing their own publications and join forces with other collectives. Thus the **Modern Utopian, Communitarian**, and **Communitas** all merged to form **Communities**. Six different groups hoped to work together to produce the magazine cooperatively, and publishing was their utopian vision. The people who started **Communities** hoped to provide a service to a wide readership. They envisioned a network involving city and country collectives, co-ops, communes and communities of all kinds.

At the same time, the groups formed an organization called Community Publications Cooperative (CPC). The organization (of which **Communities** was only one piece) had a list of long-range visions and plans which included establishing a publishing house for alternative literature, providing capital for other collectives to borrow on a no-interest or low-interest basis, and establishing a land-trust fund.

ONE YEAR LATER

The first year of publication was rough. It turned out to be a very difficult thing to produce a magazine in a decentralized fashion. Things were just too scattered when editing was done in one place, layout in another, and printing in still a different location. By issue #7 the group had decided that it would be best for a single group to handle most of the production for a single issue, though the same group wouldn't necessarily do it every time. Even though they found it necessary to centralize some functions, others stayed spread out. It seemed quite reasonable to have business and distribution separate from editorial offices, and any one of the functions seemed to be enough to keep a group busy. These original visions for CPC were not fully realized. There was a lot of difficulty in building a movement of groups. Many groups were unwilling to contribute time and

energy to networking activities.

On top of it all, **Communities** suffered the consequences of the transitoriness of the communities movement itself. Groups dropped out of the cooperative: individuals dropped out of the groups and/or decided that publications weren't their bag after all. The values of flexibility, decentralization, and personal experimentation are antithetical to the production of a consistent, high-quality product. Since there was a desire to hang on to both sets of values, the struggle for a balance was ever-present.

OLDER AND STILL WISER(?)

By the time Issue #12 appeared (Jan. 1975), Twin Oaks and Limesaddle were the only groups still working on the magazine. We had worked out a system whereby Limesaddle handled national distribution, typesetting, production, and one-half the editing. Twin Oaks took care of daily business mail, subscriptions, bookkeeping, promotion, and the other half of the editorial responsibilities. We had stopped worrying about being anti-profit, because we were barely making enough to keep ourselves going. Sometimes we made enough money to pay ourselves up to \$1 per hour for labor, but often we decided to put that money back into production or promotion.

At that time we realized that one of our major problems was our continuing effort to publish a magazine in a reactive vacuum. We hadn't succeeded in creating a network of communicating, active individuals and communities. Our readership was still low, and we received little feedback that helped us know whether or not our magazine was changing anything. We were growing tired of the continual search for good material, and it was becoming increasingly clear that our vision for using **Communities** as a vehicle for social change was far from realization. Hello, are you out there?

THE PAST 18 MONTHS

In spring-summer of 1975, changes came to a head at Limesaddle. First Vince, one of the founders and guiding spirits of **Communities**, left to travel the world. Then the rest of the **Communities** crew (Bruce and Geroe) split off from the Limesaddle community and moved to McMinnville, Oregon.

Last fall, David, who had been the primary person at Twin Oaks (**Communities**/East), began to divert his energy into other Twin Oaks projects. Susan, Chip, and Kevin began to take over his functions, with occasional help from several others. In some ways the transition was smooth, but we realized how much information was stored in David's brain. Many of us were unfamiliar with the history and process of **Communities**. Even though we had energy for working on the magazine, we lacked the expertise to make a lot of the necessary decisions and carry out necessary tasks. We struggled along, and David remained in the role of advisor and comforter-in-times-of-crisis.

Last fall, in the middle of the changeover here, we received a letter from Bruce and Geroe saying that they had some ideas for new directions. They were losing energy for **Communities** in its present form. Living in the Northwest, they were feeling excited about the possibilities for a regional publication inspired by the book **Ecotopia**. The following is an excerpt from Geroe's letter:

"Two points have been coming out in my recent thinking. One is that communities, however much it may be possible to deal with their internal growth, are not alone in society. They aren't the sole social unit of the future. They can have an influence on other living ar-

rangements and a place of their own in society, but they have to be related to other institutions. A corollary to this is that building a successful community may be at least as dependent on communication with, say, people who are doing work in alternative sources of energy or group dynamics outside of community, as on communications with others who are also building community. So "communards", when indicating everyone in the country engaged in some form of collective living, may be, at least at this juncture, a kind of granfalloon; a non-relevant classification like "hoosier" or "all blue-eyed males" which brings me to the second point. Regional consciousness has grown immensely since the formation of CPC in 1972. So has regional 'activity', meaning alternative cooperative activity of various kinds. We're beginning to think small, to recognize that social change on a national level is a literally overwhelming task, but that our energy can be pretty efficiently used within narrower spheres of influence. This means that ultimately one's self is the most reasonable thing to change, but also that collective effort can have a significant impact on a neighborhood, a locality, a region."

Needless to say, the letter generated a lot of discussion, confusion, and self-examination here. We agreed with a lot of Geroe's observations, but in the end, we weren't ready to give up **Communities** as a national magazine. Bruce came out to visit us, and we wrote many letters back and forth. The various communications brought us to our present state of agreement. The people at Com/West will be putting out their new magazine, **Seriatim**. In addition, they will be continuing to do production and distribution for **Communities**. This means that we here in the East have assumed all editorial responsibilities for **Communities**. A really big job; one we didn't think we could handle alone for very long. We sent out letters to groups to find out if anyone would be interested in sharing the responsibilities for the magazine.

To date, we have had 2 responses. East Wind, who guest edited issue 18, has expressed an interest in sharing the editorial responsibilities, and they are now working on Issue 22. Additionally, Paul Freundlich of the New Haven cooperative network Training For Urban Alternatives, has made a tentative, exciting proposal for a coalition of several groups. He would like to see the magazine return to its original idea—a decentralized journal focussing on cooperative living in many forms. In the last couple of years we have focused more on **communes**, particularly Walden II and spiritual groups, mostly because these are the people who have sent us material. We know that there are many forms of cooperation, and we want to try to incorporate more information about them in the magazine.

A letter recently went out to a number of urban groups asking if they would be interested in working on the magazine on a regular basis. It proposed:

"A decentralized model of editorial work-sites, with some continuity of paid staff coordination. 3-4 issues a year of communities devoted to the best thinking/practice/struggles of people committed to cooperative community in cities, by the people who are doing the work. What do we have to say to each other? How can we turn people on to what's possible in the USA, unless we clarify what is being done already?"

This idea has been floated to several of the contributors to Paul's excellent Urban Communities issue (number 19). This

includes the Austin Community Project, **Common Ground** magazine in Twin Cities, and the Institute for Local Self-Reliance in D.C. Should CPC expand to include these groups, **Communities** would become a broader, more exciting publication. Hopefully, we'd build on what was learned from 3 years ago to minimize the hassles of decentralization. We'll see.

TODAY

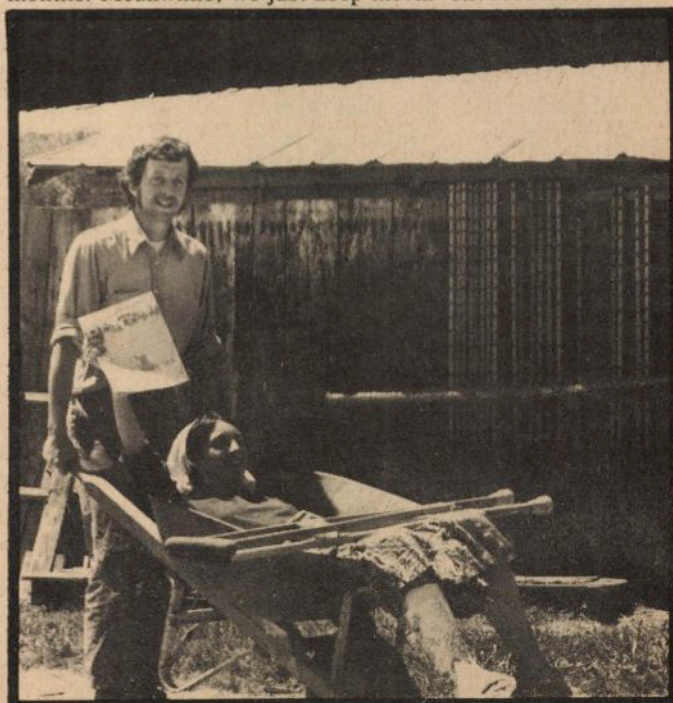
At this point in time, we don't really know what will happen with **Communities** after the next 6 months (of course, this may be no different from usual. We never **really** know, but now we aren't even pretending.). This summer we hope to get together with some of these other urban groups and examine the possibilities for ongoing cooperation. In the meantime, we'll be dividing responsibility for the next 3 issues among East Wind, Paul & T.U.A., and ourselves.

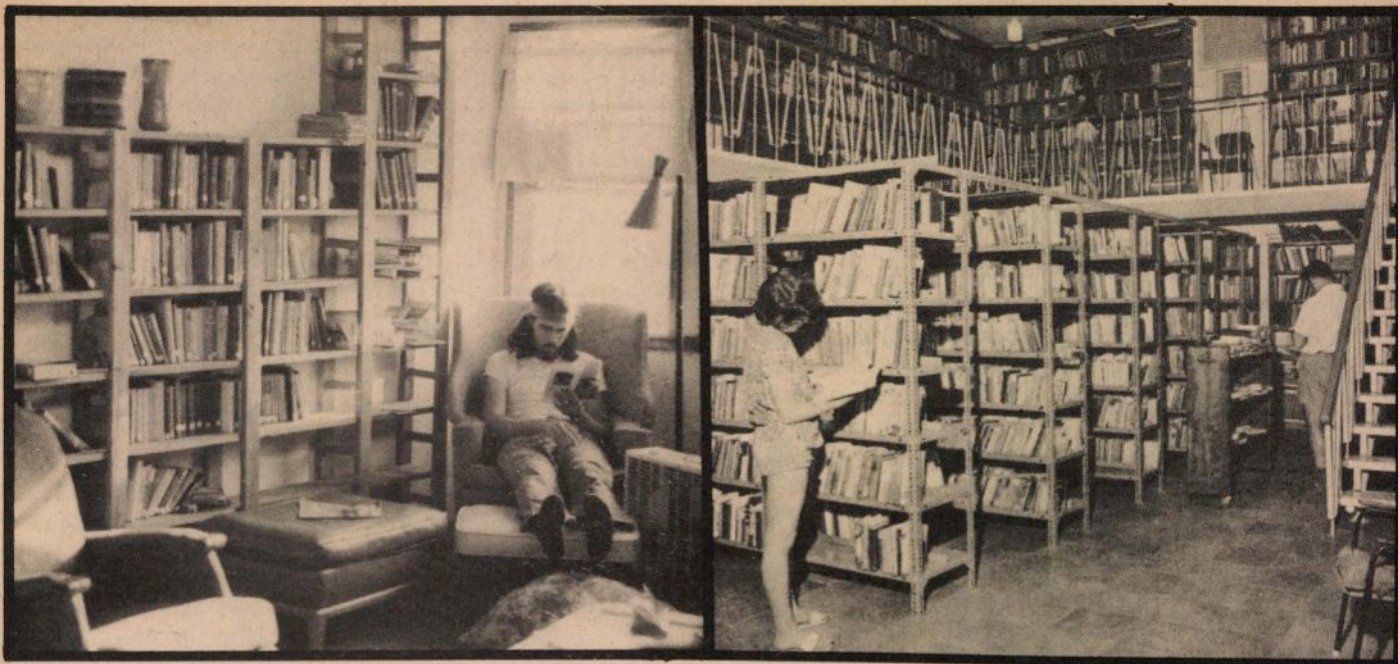
We'll be experimenting some with the magazine. We'll be changing to a non-thematic format, at least for awhile. In addition, we are adding a column on a featured community, and a series on non-communal Cooperative Alternatives. We'll be printing a series of articles by Kat Kincade, based on her recent travels in Israel. Other series possibilities include child care alternatives; regional networking; women in community—but we need contributions of material to make this happen! We **always** need graphics as well; good glossy photos and illustrations.

We also need more input to put out a good magazine. We need to know if our efforts make any difference. We need to hear from you what kinds of articles are useful and interesting to people. We need folks to **write articles**. We cannot publish in a vacuum.

Our financial situation is tight, at best. Circulation has not increased substantially in quite awhile. However, we are mounting another low-budget promotion campaign this summer. You all can help by trying to get your local bookstore, co-op, or whatever to sell **Communities**.

It's frustrating to feel that there **must** be more people out there who **Communities** can speak to. We don't know whether our appeal is really limited, or whether we simply aren't reaching the folks who should know about us. Perhaps we will make some progress on answering these questions in the next few months. Meanwhile, we just keep movin' on.





Kat Kincade is the author of "A Walden Two Experiment", a book about the first few years of Twin Oaks Community. Now a member of East Wind Community, she recently spent 6 weeks in Israel as the guest of a Kibbutz federation. In this article Kat examines the physical structure of the Kibbutz and explores the implications for large American communities.

When we formed Twin Oaks in 1967, we knew about the Israeli kibbutz, knew there was a strong ideological similarity between us. I personally had read the Spirol books and was both excited and impressed by the accomplishments of this gutsy people. From time to time over the years it has occurred to us to write them, especially to ask technical questions. They, if anyone, would know how many square feet of space it takes for this or that communal function at any given population. But we never got around to it, mostly because I feared that the kibbutz would be too busy to bother with us. After all, we aren't even Jewish. So we found our technical information elsewhere, and our knowledge of kibbutz remained scanty and 30 years out of date.

They didn't know much about us, either, which isn't surprising, considering our small numbers and short history. Their reading about American communes was all about the hippie crashpad. The Israelis labeled these "escapist" and responded by a continued effort to get American Jewish young people to form new kibbutzim in Israel, where government financial help and a supportive national culture made the survival of communal groups more likely than in this country.

What we didn't know was that within the kibbutz movement are a good number of people whose spirit and ambition transcend Israel, or even Judaism, who believe that the idea of sharing can be interpreted in different national and religious ways, and that, regardless of the precise communal form, such groups can be of help and

REFLECTIONS ON THE

"Within the kibbutz movement are a good number of people whose spirit and ambition transcend Israel, or even Judaism, who believe that the idea of sharing can be interpreted in different national and religious ways, and that, regardless of the precise communal form, such groups can be of help and support to one another.

support to one another. One such person is Mordechai Bentov, a signer of Israel's declaration of independence, for many years a cabinet minister, and a founder of Kibbutz Mishmar Haemek, one of the earliest of Israel's 280 kibbutzim. Bentov is supposedly "retired" but he is in fact extremely active, and spends a good deal of time at the kibbutz federation headquarters, where he happened to come across the book I wrote about the early years of Twin Oaks.² "I read Kat's book," Bentov explained later to Israeli audiences, "and I couldn't stop reading, not because it is brilliantly written, but because it read to me like the history of my own kibbutz. The same problems, the same ideas for solutions, even some of the same characters." On the strength of Bentov's enthusiasm, I was invited to spend six weeks in Israel. The kibbutz federation paid the way, and all I had to do was talk to kibbutzniks about Twin Oaks and East Wind. In the meantime, I kept my eyes and ears open, and I'm still digesting what I saw and heard.

In thinking what to write of my impressions, it was clear to me that I did not want the task of describing the kibbutz. This has been done many times, and the material is readily available. More firmly yet I know that I do not want to analyze or criticize the kibbutz. This has also been done, usually badly, by numerous outsiders who think they know what they're talking about and don't. Six weeks in Israel without a knowledge of Hebrew does not put one in a position to speak wisely about the meaning of a complex institution over 50 years old. What I really want to write about are the things the trip made me think about. I observed kibbutz institutions and thought about ours.

Some of my observations are bound to be wrong—misunderstandings on my part, partial communication, and the like. I don't think this matters a lot. For instance, I found a lot of locked doors on the kibbutzim, and I may have misunderstood the real reasons they are kept locked. I may have misjudged the kibbutz as I made my instant and horrified analysis. I'm counting on my kibbutz friends to be tolerant of this kind of error. The point is that it made me

ment in Israel, and probably, for a working class people, the most beautiful in the world. It is like living in the center of a botanical garden.

There is an old kibbutz story about an American tourist who commented "How lucky for the kibbutz that they were given the most beautiful spots in Israel." The opposite is true. The kibbutz settlers were given various spots of desert, rocks, mountainsides, and swamps. What they have today they created by high ideals and hard work. In many cases the gardens they planted were totally destroyed by shelling during one of their wars, and sometimes they had to fell their own trees to provide a road-block against invading armies. Then, when peace was restored, they patiently planted again.

I have read several different accounts of the early founding years of different kibbutzim, and most of them mention the planting of trees and flowers. What this tells me is that the kibbutz has never been without a consciousness of the importance of aesthetic values, even when they were still struggling for survival. (There was, however, a

ISRAELI KIBBUTZ AMERICAN COMMUNE

think about the **idea** of a locked door, the trade-offs between security and freedom, and this kind of thinking is probably of value to American communities.

At no point am I willing to say that I am sure the kibbutz is wrong. But I do feel some confidence in guessing that a practice they have found acceptable would be bad for us. So I'm going to use my travels as a springboard to talk about us. But maybe I'd better get started.

The first kibbutz I saw was beautiful Mishmar Haemek. My first impressions as I remember them went like this: "Hmmm, the entrance is through the industrial area, kind of drab. That huge building must be the dining hall—God, it's BIG. These little concrete buildings are the houses. Oh, oh, oh, what beautiful gardens!"

I saw 17 kibbutzim while I was in Israel. In most of them the entranceway goes through the farm or industrial area. After a little while this ceased to surprise me. The beauty of a kibbutz isn't out on the road to impress passersby. It is inside to be enjoyed by members. All the dining halls are indeed big and getting bigger. The little houses at Mishmar Haemek were in fact typical of those I saw everywhere. As to the gardens, I don't know that I ever saw any quite as lovely as Mishmar Haemek's, but it may be that I became accustomed to them and learned to accept that breathtaking beauty as normal. In the younger groups the cypress trees are shorter and the rose bushes less developed, but there is no kibbutz without gardens. The kibbutz is surely the most beautiful living environ-

"The kibbutz is surely the most beautiful living environment in Israel, and probably, for a working class people, the most beautiful in the world. It is like living in the center of a botanical garden."

period when certain flowers were out of favor. Roses, for instance, were once thought by some to be too bourgeois. They have evidently changed their minds. If nothing else, kibbutz **can** promise its members a rose garden.)

Where there are lots of big leafy trees, there will be birds to inhabit them. The most noticeable sound on kibbutz grounds is the calling of hundreds of birds. I was particularly struck by the doves, and I understood why they are a symbol of peace.

I took all this in, and I thought of home and became dissatisfied. What is our natural environment? A green and lovely place with creeks and ponds, oaks and cedars. Is our home then as pretty as a kibbutz? No where near it. To get the same sense of peace that the kibbutzniks breathe in every day of their lives, we at East Wind have to go for a walk in the woods. Why is it we're so far behind? Do we care less about beauty? Or is it that we didn't have to start with a desert in the first place so we didn't feel the acute need to make it bloom? As to flowers, our gardening is spotty and random. Where there might be roses there is more likely to be a pile of scrap lumber. 5



Ask any East Winder why we don't have beautiful gardens and you're likely to get the answer "labor shortage."

The labor shortage on the kibbutz is both acute and chronic, so this answer doesn't satisfy me. But I asked, while I was there, just how much labor it took to keep those gardens looking like that. The answer: About 1½ quotas. (A quota is the number of hours one communitarian works a week; 40-50 hours). They have a full time landscape gardener and a helper, but one or both of them is continually being taken off cos regular job in order to fill in for some more urgent labor need. But that isn't the whole story. Those two people take care of the big trees, the walks, and the grounds around the public buildings, but in front of every house is a garden spot, and the responsibility for its care rests on the householder. Far from being a tiresome responsibility, gardening is a major joy to many kibbutzniks, and the variety in the gardens is a direct result of the individuality of its members. Some people grow pansies, others grape arbors, others just lawn. All of it is lovely.

But it's clear to me that we aren't going to do it that way. We might get to the point where we can afford 1½ quotas, but individual gardens go along with individual apartments, private families, and other things we are not at this point interested in, and if I had to choose between looking at piles of scrap lumber and living in family units, I'd take the scrap lumber.

Just the same there's an idea in there somewhere, and I am reminded of the suggestion made in *Walden Two*.³ Skinner's fantasy community had a series of terraced flower gardens, each presumably postage-stamp sized, like those of the kibbutzniks, and each of them similarly cared for by individuals. But they were not attached to the private houses. I like it. All we need is a little central planning to tell us where we can put the terraces, and poof! Out with the pile of scraps, in with the roses.

Housing on the Kibbutz

6 Among the gardens, of course, are the kibbutz houses, long, rectangular in shape, white or pastel, all with roofs

of spanish tile. It is an exaggeration to say that they are all alike, but they give the feeling of being all alike, because they are built in rows, all facing the same direction, all of the same material and similar design, like a giant garden-apartment complex. Between the houses are comfortable paths of concrete or asphalt, wide enough for walking, bicycling, or occasional motorized carts. Small street lights of kibbutz manufacture illuminate the paths at night. The whole has a suburban feeling, minus the streets and cars.

The houses are really apartment buildings, with two to four families living in each building. In the bigger kibbutzim some two-story houses have been built, but kibbutzniks have a strong preference for ground-floor living (partly because the gardens are used as an extension of private family living quarters and therefore the family with a garden has more space.)

The amount of space given to each family is little enough compared with an American family apartment. In 360 square feet of floor space the kibbutzniks squeeze a tiny bedroom, modest living room, kitchenette, and bath. The interiors vary a great deal from building to building. Some families have larger kitchens, others larger bedrooms. Some use daybeds and make them up into couches during the day to give themselves more daytime space. Others have created a den or studio for their personal pursuits. Virtually all have couches, coffee-tables, lamps, pictures, rugs, curtains. Every apartment has a private toilet, sink, and shower.

By East Wind standards these apartments are enormous. At East Wind we live in small bedrooms of approximately 100 square feet, one person to a room rather than family style. This is roughly half the space per person that the kibbutz uses, but it is private, rather than being shared with a partner. All cooking facilities at East Wind are centrally located and so are showers.

In order to explain the feelings I got from these kibbutz apartments, it is necessary to remark on the rest of the public rooms in kibbutz. Before I visited, I imagined the physical plant of a kibbutz to resemble the fictional

Walden Two. I pictured numerous public rooms, reading rooms, craft and art studios open to members' use, carpentry and metal shops for personal pursuits, music practice rooms, small dance studios equipped with sturdy record players and appropriate records, small laboratories where scientists could carry on their work, etc. Not that East Wind has any of these things. East Wind cannot afford any of them, but they exist within our concept of what we want community to be like; they live for us in the future in our minds, and the only thing that stops us is a shortage of money and time. The kibbutz, however, clearly has the money in the quantities that would be necessary for these amenities. The fact that they do not have them made me stop and consider why not.

Private VS Public Space

What the kibbutz does have is an immense dining hall. This spacious building, with its matching chairs and tables and its decorated wall panels, is a grown-up version of the kibbutz dining room of its early years, when it was the central meeting and talking place for the whole membership. This was before the emergence of the dominant nuclear family, when most kibbutzniks were of one age group, and they wanted to spend a lot of time together as a group. All food was there, and all social life. But group living isn't always easy, and sometimes members wanted to be able to have a cup of tea and a conversation with a close friend or spouse without being surrounded by other people involved in business or discussing politics. They didn't have at that time the financial resources to consider building small tea rooms, or booths, or alcoves. The dining hall itself was probably a converted stable, and there were a thousand demands on the money more important than a pleasant place to hang out. What was cheap and would serve the purpose were a few electric teapots for people to take to their rooms. The rooms at this early period weren't very big, but they were big enough to house a teapot. The issue went before the General Assembly, and in spite of protests from die-hards who claimed that a private teapot was the end of the kibbutz, tea-in-the-rooms became a community norm.

With tea, of course, go cookies, and bread and margarine. If the children come to the private apartments for tea, then one needs space for a fairly big table. In hot weather tea changes to iced drinks, and one needs a refrigerator. That, and the oven to make the cookies, take up space, and the apartment has to be enlarged to hold them. So, through the years the apartment has become larger TO HOLD THE FUNCTIONS WHICH IT SERVES.

And as a consequence, the public rooms which might have served those same functions in a communal way never got built. Even now they do not exist, simply because the kibbutz does not need them. The private apartments are big enough to do most of the things average members want to do. Since the apartments are costly, there isn't enough money left to duplicate these spaces in a communal style. The kibbutz has chosen the family (and chosen it for **everybody**), and with that choice has elected all these other norms of private activity without neces-

sarily planning to do so. This is the "organic" growth the kibbutz literature talks of. (They use the word "organic" to mean unplanned.) The trouble with organic growth is that you don't always like what grows.

The kibbutz has a "clubroom" (a large lounge with refreshments available), but it is often dominated by temporary people who don't have private apartments. It is obvious that to serve all its members the kibbutz would need several such clubs. In addition there are sometimes rooms with television sets. These were popular for a while, but now that the kibbutz can afford private television sets, people don't meet for this semi-social purpose any more. Members live in neighborhoods made up of people of their own age group, and they socialize in each other's apartments.

There is a library, but it is open only a couple of nights a week. Members who want to borrow books go and check them out, and the librarian works on cos own time, because the kibbutz "cannot afford" to provide labor for this purpose. The rest of the time the library is locked, because if it were not, people (especially temporary people) would come in and take books and lose them or carry them away, or make a mess in the library, which the kibbutz "cannot afford" the labor to clean up. The clubroom is also locked during the day in most kibbutzim, because the furniture and art work are very nice, and unsupervised people might spoil them.

I saw craft shops and studios also, but they are not open to hobbyists. The carpentry and metal shops are likewise restricted to official kibbutz use only. Once an artist is established within cos kibbutz, the kibbutz will find the space and equipment for co to work. Thus, they have solved the problem for the ceramist or glass worker or painter, but nothing has been done for the part-time artist or hobbyist, except perhaps an organized class at the regional high school one night a week.

This is not meant as a criticism of the kibbutz. They share my standards and don't need the things that I notice the lack of. They are busy and, as far as I could tell, reasonably happy living in the warmth of the private family and using their facilities in their own way. The only discontent I encountered on this issue came from young Americans, who had joined kibbutzim within the last three years. "The trouble with kibbutz," they told me, "is that it isn't communal!" Americans are a small proportion of kibbutz membership, so maybe this isn't a problem for the kibbutz. If and when it becomes so, they will recognize it and deal with it in their own way and time without any advice from me.

Designing Our Communities

But we are Americans, and for us it is useful to look at the kibbutz institutions and ask ourselves "Do we want to go in this direction?" A great deal more may hinge on the size of the private room than appears on the surface, and we need to think about all these implications as we build. Would it be nice to have private showers? Perhaps. Some day we may be able to afford it. But before we build them, let's ask ourselves a few questions: How are we getting clean now? Does the public shower serve any functions



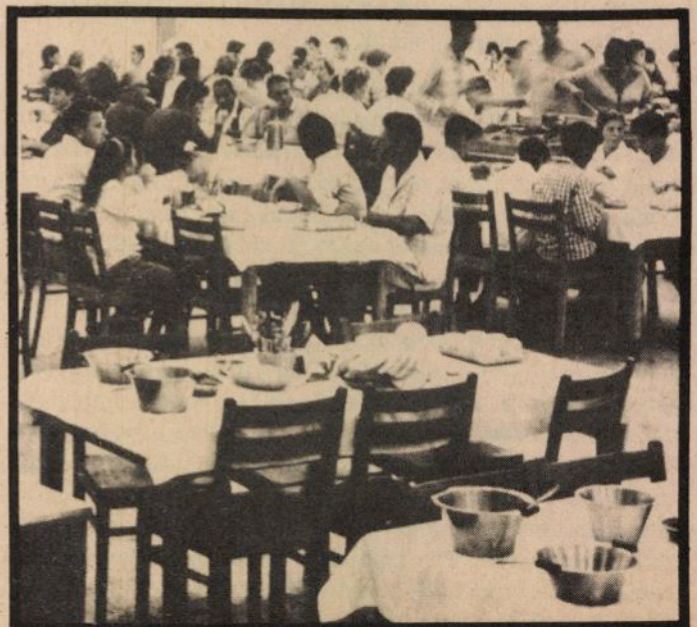
“Once an artist is established within cos kibbutz, the kibbutz will find the space and equipment for co to work. Thus, they have solved the problem for the ceramist or glass worker or painter, but nothing has been done for the part-time artist or hobbyist, except perhaps an organized class at the regional high school one night a week.”

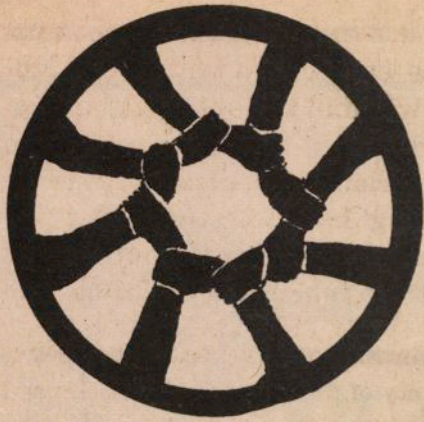
Part of the efficiency of possible use of facilities as I see it in East Wind's future stems from our flexible labor schedule. If we all worked the same hours and had the same hours free, we would all want the shower house at the same time and all crowd into the tea alcoves at the same hour. But as it is, the flexible schedule, whatever its other drawbacks, will continue to save us money.

Another thing that has to be said on this subject is that the kibbutz still has its public dining hall, and it is not locked. Nevertheless, it stands empty most of the time except for meals and scheduled functions. The fact is that it isn't a pleasant place to hang out. In spite of everything the kibbutzim have tried to do to make their dining hall pleasant (matching tables and chairs, displays of kibbutz members' art work, high standards of cleanliness, new, well-lighted buildings), these rooms do not have appeal for socializing. The reason is evidently size. The rooms are so big that it is difficult to hear conversation at one's own table because of a combination of poor acoustics and competing conversations. I found myself either raising my voice to be heard or else just nodding and smiling and attending to my meal. What this tells me is that if we don't want the teapot rebellion, our public rooms must be pleasant. We must give some kind of priority to the desire for quiet, as well as boisterous, gatherings. Otherwise, the private rooms stands there beckoning. Just plug in a teapot, and off we go!

besides keeping clean? If so, what are those functions, and do we want to keep them? Will anything take their place? If we have a refrigerator in every hallway, we will be making cold drinks in our rooms. What will follow that? Does making drinks at the communal snack bar have social functions? Do we want to do without them? What would take their place? If our rooms become big enough to entertain children, what are the effects on the social environment of those children? Are those effects desirable?

And then there is the question of waste. By the standards of American public institutions, the kibbutz use of interior space is not wasteful, but by East Wind standards—even ideal future standards—it is very wasteful indeed. Nearly every apartment stands empty all morning, holding individual belongings and nothing else. So do the rooms at East Wind during work hours, but since we dedicate only half as much space to individuals, we waste only half as much. If this same amount of money had been spent to build pleasant public spaces, as I believe East Wind will do, these spaces would be in almost constant use and therefore there would not need to be so many of them. At East Wind two shower heads adequately serve 50 people. Kibbutz uses 25 shower heads to get the same amount of cleanliness privately.





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Kibbutz

Joseph R. Blasi is Coordinator for the Harvard Research Project on the Kibbutz. He teaches the course: Kibbutz Society and Community.

The kibbutz of Israel is one of the most misunderstood community experiments. Parts of the misunderstanding are due to its distance, a tendency to connect the kibbutz with the military fate of Israel, and the scarcity of recent English literature on the subject. The kibbutz also suffers the criticism of us utopians who intimately criticize any utopian experiment older than 50 years, because its changes and alternations somehow threaten our own ideals. Nevertheless, **the kibbutz stands as the most successful utopian experiment of the last century**, the most lasting, and the most widespread. Let's examine some facts about the kibbutz and then survey the cycles of change it has gone through in its 65-year history.

The kibbutz is now a communal village. We call it a village because 100-500 people live together but in separate residences, and a commune because no one owns their house, land, or business. No one has outside income¹, and they eat, work, make all decisions, recreate, and educate their children as a closed communal unit. Unlike many utopian experiments, in the kibbutz systems of consumption and production are **both** communal. That means there is no money, and goods and services are equally distributed². . . There is no allowance for individual businesses, garden plots, or outside work; everyone must produce (work) in one of the community's branches. The attempt to communalize both these functions is a radical and ambitious endeavor. On the one hand, the kibbutz is continually revising and finding better ways of communalizing these functions. On the other hand, it is severely criticized for not living up to its goals by those of us who often do not appreciate the complexity of **democratically** (for a totalitarian could do this easily with force) holding this endeavor together over several generations.

The significance of the kibbutz rests at least partially in the size of the movement. Of 240 kibbutzim, most (225 or more) are secular³ communities with a great variety among the members, (who are Jews from many different lands). The 240 communities have the same basic structure, but each has a special uniqueness to each. They were developed freely by young settlers, not only without "pushy" government intervention, but usually receiving the same deals on loans and grants as other sectors of the regular Israeli population⁴.



Today 90,000 people live on kibbutzim. The male/female proportion is roughly equal. The kibbutz members comprise 3% of Israel's population, yet they produce 33% of the agricultural produce of Israel, and 11% of its industrial production. In the last 20 years the kibbutzim have had more efficient farms and factories, (in almost every area) 5 than private enterprises or partially cooperative farms in Israel. This is quite different from the usual utopian movement which is long on ideology and short on efficiency.

Almost any area of the kibbutz provides fascinating material for meditation and practical knowledge. Here, though, I'd like to focus on the cycles, the large scale changes of the kibbutz communities in the last 65 years, and the more cosmic perspective of the experiment that "did not fail".

Early History

The first kibbutz, Degania Aleph, was founded in 1910 by a handful of members whose life was very much like a rural commune in America today. These people had an often confusing mixture of radical views of the person and the world, and they experimented with different aspects of their community (work, education, sex, power, and decisions). The kibbutz form took shape slowly. Degania Aleph didn't decide to pool all money until after 1920, just about when they decided on communal child-rearing. In the late 20s, when others started kibbutzim around them, they had their first conference to exchange notes.

In the beginning (meaning before 1930 and in the beginning of almost every new kibbutz that started since then) the kibbutz was an intimate commune. The emphasis was on primary relationships between people (often with sexual experimentation and radical views of equality). In the political and social organization rules and decisions flowed from the "togetherness" people create, day to day, and little is written down, recorded, or formalized. Life had a surprising pioneer flavor. The early kibbutzniks and initial members of all kibbutzim were always burning with idealism. They would stay up all night discussing their ideas and talk of making a "new person". Since there was little materially, common production simply meant work. Communal consumption usually meant tolerance of poverty in the context of one large family, and many material desires were put aside. It was not possible to fulfill them all, and besides, much else was more important. Education of the children was neglected until the commune finally realized it **had** children, and then it developed in a very organic and spontaneous fashion. In fact, in those days, they did not have regular meetings in some kibbutzim. Since everyone was together so often, issues could always have a quorum and a floor. The kibbutzniks dreamed of making all of Israel a kibbutz, an example of a just nation to the world, and the Movement was quite important to individual members.

This is the picture of the early kibbutzim one gets from a close reading of the members who were there, their

archives and their diaries. The larger kibbutz on which my research is based went through this period when it was founded in 1936, but this phase lasted only a few years. Most members say it was three years until their community began to take on more structure and form clearly identifiable groups within the group.

The original founders of the kibbutz came from a background similar to those in the community movement today. They were part of the *Jugendvogel*, (wandering youth), the counterculture which seeded in Germany and partially spread throughout Europe. They emphasized a return to the land, the freer relationships between people, a basic questioning of society. Young Jews, who felt the pain more deeply both because of persecutions and because of their revulsion with the conservative, tradition-bound, establishment values of their parents, organized youth groups whose eventual goal was a re-making of the Jewish people in a new society in Israel. They developed these small intimate communes, but their structure did not remain static.

Maturation

The spontaneous, intimate, small kibbutzim were not practical for many reasons. Once revolutionary fervor changed to radical day-to-day commitment, the need to sustain such an experimental and spontaneous social structure on a consistent basis was less important. The emergence of families and the failure of sexual experimentation to create any serious stable alternative introduced generations which immediately challenged the "one family" notion of kibbutz. Once the almost total intimacy of the beginning had changed, the need to have a definite economic future and expand the material needs of the community made it necessary to set hours for work and organize and plan production and consumption more closely. Finally, the organization of decision-making functions and supervisory functions was introduced to insure that the "general assembly" of all members would continue in a real way even after the constituents had undergone changes in their ages, final responsibilities, viewpoints, and relationships with each other.

Current Forms

The kibbutz today is 240 unique communities, but "kibbutz" denotes a **structure of being a community**. The kibbutzim are organized in three federations which help their members continue to realize their ideals.

The typical kibbutz usually has several hundred members and a series of 15-20 work branches with a branch manager. The manager coordinates and plans the work and makes quick decisions when necessary. There are several generations of individuals and many different families, and these groups often prefer each other and their friends to the whole community for more intimate closeness. Within these groups the "new personality" of the kibbutz social environment becomes most noticeable: the family is much less sexist and authoritarian, there is a high degree of mutual aid between groups, children's groups are deeply cooperative.

The kibbutz today is concerned with planning its large economic enterprise, and deciding how to divide equally and justly the many resources for housing, health, recreation, education, and various luxury items. It is also concerned with investing and developing its many resources for new branches, communal services, and cultural facilities. While the ideals and social norms of work, cooperative living, participatory democracy, and the effort to harmonize the individual in community are very real, they have all become identified with very specific community structures, very complex community problems, and very individual, personal definitions. The kibbutz is no longer a young fiery community that has everyone caught up in its life. It is an established community where each person tries to work out his or her happiness in the context of what is possible and what is probably changable.

The Communion-Oriented

What meaning does all this history have? In its beginning, the kibbutz was oriented to the following qualities: smallness, intimacy, spontaneity, organic process, experimentation. It revolved around the creation of a dream and an ideology and a movement, expansive definitions of reality, reaction against a rigid and non-communal past. It was unquestionably right for the kibbutz to build and strengthen itself along these lines by developing a radical communal organization of the feeling it had inspired in its members and an open intuitive development of a new society.

The Action-Oriented

Like any life which tends to complete itself and remains open to change towards wholeness, the kibbutz moved into a cycle emphasizing a different set of qualities **without abandoning the first**. It is now large, (vs. small), social (vs. intimate), planned (vs. spontaneous), and an organic process that is goal-oriented and bent on maintaining the community (vs. an organic process creating something where nothing previously existed). It is now involved in the normalization and stabilization of a dream, an ideology, and a movement. It is emphasizing growth (vs. the fiery radical birth), and a narrower definition of reality which struggles to discover what the nature of the community is, and to achieve that goal. Today it is reacting and revolting as an established political force in Israeli society (vs. revolting and reacting against the past, your parents, of the establishment, or persecution).

Today, the kibbutz is more rationalistic, and more oriented to thinking than spontaneous feeling. This is even though intuitive and spontaneous changes in its social form have been the reason for its long stable existence. The orientation is more to stable action than radical communion.

The Growth Cycle

Many feel that this new emphasis on stability represents a loss of ideal for the kibbutz. If we stand back further than a short space, it becomes clear that this is the

cycle by which the human experiment moves forward: new growth, new feeling, new development, and expansion alternate **with** an attempt to stabilize and organize that growth, think through the feeling, follow the developments through, and contract for a while to create what has been found. And so the cycle continues. . . .

Many sociologists and gurus have written about such a cycle. Carl Jung spoke of it as the tension between the unconscious and the consciousness.

Sociologists have long looked at the fascinating interplay and tension in societies between tendencies towards *Gemeinschaft* or Communal Familial Organizations and *Gesellschaft* of Goal-oriented Associative Organizations (Ferdinand Tonnies). The cycle or interplay of the chaotic and the organizing spirit is a theme in many religious systems. Taoism, for example, speaks of Yin (the expansive, receptive force) and Yang (the contracting, creative force). Karl Marx saw the interaction between the established social-economic system and the inner tensions moving it to expand and submit to a greater organic re-organization by its members as the basic dialectic of history. With this perspective we see the kibbutz has not gone backwards but has progressed along a natural cycle. It is, however, fair to ask "Where shall the kibbutz go from here?" In-depth interviews with many kibbutz members and a wide-ranging involvement in kibbutz affairs during 15 months of research in Israel have given me

the impression that the kibbutz is beginning to experience dilemmas and problems which will be solved through a continuance of stabilizing and normalizing community life (the Action-Orientation). In addition, the problems point to a need for new perspectives on the ideal of the members, the types of relationships they want as a result of their growth, their actual commitment to each other and to a creation of a better society, (the Communion Orientation). After a period of accomplishment and establishment, the kibbutz—like all of us—must return and look again to basic ideals and values to seek where the fire burns! This is not the first time this is happening in the kibbutz, for its importance as a utopian phenomena is that in 65 years it has already come through such a dilemma with respect to specific, isolated issues. Now, however, the kibbutz is facing new decisions in connection with **many** areas of its life, with a new generation in control, and a long time after its youthful beginnings. It seems to me that the cycle of Communion Orientation and Action Orientation is a basic tool to understanding the development of community because it is a fundamental process of life and community. In further articles and research I hope to look into many specific areas of one kibbutz to explain in detail the quality of life, its organization, people's experiences there, and its relationship to the larger cycles of change in the whole community.

□



¹ Gifts from the outside and small sums of savings are exceptions to this except for some few glaring examples of bank accounts. The acceptability of external money in some kibbutzim parallels a general trend towards cooperative vs collective and radical ways of organizing economic consumption. This trend is not pronounced yet, nor widespread and has not influenced any basic changes in the kibbutz yet.

² See *Kibbutz: Venture In Utopia* by Medford Spiro, and *The Kibbutz Economy* (unpublished pamphlet) by Joseph Blasi.

³ There are about 14 religious kibbutzim that observe orthodox Judaism and are Federated. Most, however, are atheistic and celebrate various Jewish holidays for their cultural and secular significance, e.g. Passover as a Liberation festival, Sukot as a Harvest Festival...

⁴ It is a myth that the kibbutzim live off of government monies. True, they could not have been started without many private and public loans

but these have been repaid (in older settlements) and are being repaid in the younger kibbutzim. Presently, kibbutzim receive Development and Industrial loans as does any businessperson or developer in Israel. The kibbutzim often must pay high interest rates for loans, but often poorer settlements receive help from larger settlements. The very real sharing within Federations both of money and technical and administrative resources is one reason for the kibbutz's resiliency. See *The Economy Of The Israeli Kibbutz* by E. Kanovsky.

⁵ Documented by Kanovsky (above) and Seymlur Melman in his research, *Managerial vs Cooperative Decisionmaking In Israel*. Kibbutz factories and plants have proven to be more democratic and healthy environments and less hierarchical in research comparing them to plants in Italy, U.S., Austria, and worker controlled plants in Yugoslavia, in *Hierarchy In Organizations* by A. Tannenbaum (ed.). The research was done by a kibbutznik sociologist Menachem Rosner, a co-author of the book.

The Kibbutz as a Social Alternative—119 pgs.

This is an exhaustive review of daily life and the problems and issues of all aspects of kibbutz cooperative community. Emphasis is placed on the clear description of the realities of kibbutz life—its advantages and disadvantages. The implications of the kibbutz experiment as a model for small cooperative communities and towns is considered—the viability of social units that are smaller, more integrated, more personally supportive, and more efficient and self-sufficient is explored. All english literature on the kibbutz is reviewed, along with preliminary findings from the Harvard Univ. Research Project on the Kibbutz—a complete english bibliography is included—price: \$2.50. Send inquiries and orders to:

Institute for Cooperative Communities
P.O. Box 298
Harvard Square Station
Cambridge, MA 02138

Research Project on the Kibbutz, Harvard University

Address: Longfellow Hall, Applan Way, Cambridge, Mass. 02138 Telephone 617-495-3441

The project started in 1974 with one and a half years of extensive research in Israel on a young and an old kibbutz. The purpose of the project then was to conduct wide-ranging conversations, observations, questionnaires, to collect slides and photos and publications on the kibbutz in order to describe the kibbutz concretely and realistically for people around the world. In addition, the research tried to consult with a wide variety of kibbutz members in two communities to understand the problems of the communities, their participation and commitment in community life, their attitudes towards community dilemmas, their philosophy of life, personality and mental health characteristics, and their attitude towards the development of community life and good social and economic and political relations.

Both then and now, kibbutz members who are sociologists have been involved with the project, especially, Dr. Joseph Shepher of Kibbutz Kfar Ha Coresch, Chairman, Dept. of Sociology, University of Haifa, and Dr. Menachem Rosner, Director, Institute for Kibbutz Studies and Center For Social Research On The Kibbutz at Givat Chaviva. The Project is affiliated with the Institute for Kibbutz Studies at the University of Haifa by cooperative arrangement.

In recent years the project in coordination with the Dept. of Learning and Community taught by Joseph Blasi. Professor Donald W. Oliver whose forthcoming book on communities, **Education and Community** (McCutchen Press, Palo Alto, Calif, 1976) was recently published is the sponsor of the project at Harvard. The coordinator is Joseph Blasi.

The project is trying to conclude research on the various parts of kibbutz life and the quality of life in the kibbutz, along with the promise of cooperative communities like the kibbutz as an alternative in this country. It is supported by the Dept. of HEW, Center For The Studies of Metropolitan Problems for its research activities. The project has a wide variety of English and Hebrew materials on the kibbutz and serves as an informal clearinghouse on kibbutz research and publications, contacts with kibbutz scholars abroad (especially at the Institute for Kibbutz Studies). Persons who wish to learn about the kibbutz as a cooperative community model, either through visits to Israel, research, or arranging courses of instruction or seminars are welcome to consult with us. In addition to Menachem Rosner and Joseph Shepher, Yehudah Paz of Kibbutz Kishufim and the Van Leer Jerusalem Foundation is also an advisor to the project. This year, Dr. Avraham Yassour of the Institute for Kibbutz Studies will be spending the year working with members of the project in the US. Mr. Yassour is a kibbutz member and has studied cooperative communities throughout history extensively. In addition to these people several others are involved in translating and understanding the large amount of material we have on the kibbutz. One of the main concerns of this group is to use the kibbutz as a model which can provide people with a detailed view of a whole community, its history, functioning, problems, and diversity of members. It is felt that alternatives in communal education and small community living would be better tried and understood if a good deal of reflection on, and involvement with the experiences of functioning communities was considered. Publications of the project are available from the Institute For Cooperative Community, P.O. Box 298, Harvard Square Station, Cambridge, Mass. 02138. The Institute is a group of persons concerned with informing people about cooperative communities and encouraging them.

ACT OF CONSCIENCE

By Thomas E. Woodall

Thomas E. Woodall is a Program Specialist in Aging, West Virginia Commission on Aging, State Capitol, Charleston, W.Va.

This article is based upon first hand observations and interviews with those involved. All names of individuals, groups and locations are fictitious in order to allow further time for a healing process to continue between the community of "Benton" and the "Christian Brothers."

On a warm spring evening in 1970 three young men, members of the Christian Brothers movement, a newly formed religious commune in the Appalachian County of Greenville, scheduled a public meeting in the county seat town of Benton, for the purpose of involving local people in a dialogue concerning the Viet Nam war and other important issues. When the meeting was held, it was disrupted by mob action. This account, based upon first hand observation, provides an opportunity for an examination of the disparities between our societal ideals and actual practices.

Background of the Meeting

The three commune members, Bill Allen, John Schultz and Aaron Carter, formerly anti-poverty agency workers, had purchased 100 acres of farmland in a remote part of Greenville County with money saved from their work with OEO. Here they began an experiment in communal Christian living. Their existence was to have its foundation in the land. They were to live on what the farm could produce. The basis for the commune's operation was to be the doctrine of the common good. They hoped to gradually draw others into their alternative to "the exploitation by big business and the lethargy and futility of welfare subsistence."

The Christian Brothers venture excluded drugs and other forms of artificial escapes. It offered hard work, inspiration and fellowship within the context of worship, conversation and hospitality that forms the basis of its life style.

One of the basic articles of faith of the Christian Brothers is that members should bear witness to the moral rightness of their convictions and attempt to influence others toward non-violence, rejection of the corruption and exploitation of the "system", the elimination of racism and discrimination against the poor, and other social evils. So, only a few short months after settling on the commune, Allen, Schultz and Carter began to distribute a newspaper which they wrote and duplicated on a small hand operated press. The paper set forth their views on strip mining, inadequate welfare benefits, political corruption and other issues previously discussed. They also began a series of picketing activities, directed against the local draft board, and the town's telephone company office, where they urged phone users not to pay the portion of their telephone tax used for war financing.

Reactions of Townspeople

As commune members stepped up their picketing, editorializing and pamphleteering, an undercurrent of hostility and suppressed aggression began to form among some county and town residents, particularly among business, governmental and political leaders.

At the height of their activities, the Christian Brothers decided to hold a public meeting so that they could present their views to county people first hand and answer any questions that might exist. They decided to hold the meeting at Benton's picnic area beside the local athletic field, an area open for use for meetings and gatherings of all types by both public and private groups. They gave notice of the meeting in their own newspaper and posted signs on trees, telephone poles and vacant buildings.

Throughout the week prior to the scheduled meeting, feelings of hostility mounted among "establishment" leaders in Benton. Several prominent businessmen let it be quietly known to a few of the town's more notorious "red necks" and tavern brawlers that anything that could be done at the time of the meeting to convince commune members of the error of their ways would be generously rewarded. Local law enforcement officials also communicated through the proper channels of the town's social structure, that they would, in all probability, be occupied elsewhere at the time of the meeting.

Despite the many rumors of impending violence circulating on Benton street corners, taverns, stores and churches, local church and civic leaders remained conspicuously silent. A few responsible citizens, concerned with civil liberties and constitutional rights were disturbed, but attempted to attribute the rumors of violence to exaggeration and the overwrought imagination of a few zealots.

The Meeting

The meeting was held as scheduled at about 6:00 P.M. The crowd was small at first, but grew rapidly, swelling to approximately 150 people at its maximum. The commune members passed out some literature, began to answer questions, and a rational, responsible dialogue got underway.

After about thirty minutes, with the discussion still peaceful, three local hoodlums, among the better known "tough guys" of the Benton scene, ranging in age from 20 to 32, stepped to the front of the crowd and began to direct

insulting, derogatory remarks toward the three young pacifists. Each remark grew increasingly strident and irrelevant. The Christian Brothers were accused of using and peddling drugs, of having sex orgies at their farm and of being communist agents. Allen, Carter and Schultz attempted to respond, but could not speak over the vicious remarks. Finally, one of the hoodlums ripped a braided rope cross from Allen's neck and threw it to the ground.

Jim Anderson, a local teacher, and life long resident of Benton, was present at the meeting, primarily because of concern for his young son who had wanted attend to hear the views of the Christian Brothers. Anderson, becoming increasingly disturbed because of the abuse being suffered by the young pacifists, stepped between them and their tormentors.

"These people are only exercising their right to assemble and speak their views," he spoke to the threatening hoodlums, "there won't be any trouble unless you start it."

Immediately, Anderson became the target of additional verbal abuse, being accused of being in league with the Christian Brothers, and of being an athiest, communist and drug addict.

By this time the crowd had begun to become increasingly restless and aggressive, pushing forward toward Anderson and the three communalists. It was rapidly assuming something of the characteristics of a lynch mob, as it was being whipped into a frenzy by the three "toughs."

Finally, the Christian Brothers decided nothing more of a constructive nature could be done at the meeting, and started to leave. But as they did so, the three hoodlums, aided by new entries into the hostilities, jumped them and dragged them across the road to the river.

Aaron Carter recalled later, "They threw me down toward the water. I went down halfway to my knees. They were pushing John and Bill around, trying to get them to fight."

Drunks began hitting people at random in the crowd. They hit women and children, including a local student who was only a spectator. He was bleeding as two men tried to throw him in the river.

Jim Anderson, brushed aside as the three young men were dragged to the river, ran to the river bank, and began to speak to the crowd once again, calling for calm. Looking about him, he saw numerous influential local residents, some of his own friends included. No one moved to help him, or to speak out in his support. However, his intervention, miraculously, seemed to divert the crowd long enough to enable the Christian Brothers to make their way down the road to their van and drive away. Perhaps the fact that many in the crowd had known Anderson since boyhood kindled some slight spark of conscience or shame in their souls. Although it was not strong enough to bring them to take positive action, it seemed to inhibit their destructive rampage for a few life-saving moments.

Aftermath

While slight disapproval of the mob action could be heard on Benton streets in the days following the incident, the primary blame was placed on the Christian Brothers for having ever held the meeting in the first place, and daring to disturb the community's tranquility and complacency. The local newspaper supported the actions of the mob calling it a "patriotic defense of the American way of life against the communist menace." A local law enforcement officer said "none of this would have happened if the hippies had just stayed away."

Effects on Jim Anderson and His Family

Following the incident, Jim Anderson and his family experienced a period of direct harrassment and threats of violence. Local adults would stop their cars on the streets of town and attempt to incite his teen-age sons to fight. While walking home from a school event one night, his older son was physically attacked by an assailant who leaped from a passing car, struck him, and returned to the car, speeding away. Passers-by cursed the children as they played in the yard. Some friends since boyhood refused to speak to the family for months. Local church and civic leaders refused to support a meeting for reconciliation between townspeople and commune members that





Anderson sought to arrange. Privately, a number of Anderson's friends told him that they believed he had done the right thing. But they could not see their way clear to supporting him openly. Merchants feared the ruin of their business, young aspiring politicians saw the death of promising careers in public office, many feared reprisals and ostracism similar to that suffered by Anderson and his family.

But the passing of time heals many wounds. Anderson and his family visited with the commune members, who had returned to their farm, ate with them, joined in their bible and prayer groups, and listened to their plans for the future. And, Anderson persevered in his belief in the rightness of his actions. It had opened up new dimensions for him, as he pondered man's responsibility to act in defense of justice even in the face of hostility, rejection, and physical danger. Eventually, as the months went by, more and more of his old friends began to speak on the street and to tell him they thought he had done the right thing in aiding the Christian Brothers.

The Commune Today

The three young leaders of the commune returned to their farm, where they waited out the tense, uncertain days following the mob incident. No one came to burn them out, to shoot them, or to kill the three goats they kept for milk. They began to establish personal relationships with their nearest neighbors, many of them welfare recipients, subsistence farmers, and laborers. In a widening circle, the commune members continue this process of making friends by being good neighbors. Today, one can ask any of these neighbors what he thinks of the Brothers, and he will reply "they are our friends, they help us in our work, and we help them."

Frequent visitors, sometimes staying for months, often raise the commune's population to ten or fifteen. New cabins are being built, hewn from logs felled in the forests in order to accommodate the growing number who are deciding to stay on. The newspaper continues to be published and distributed, crops are beginning to provide sufficient food to sustain the commune's population. Some hostility, particularly in the town of Benton, remains, but many residents have grown ashamed of the mob attack and have gone out of their way to attempt to compensate for it by paying friendly visits to the commune.

Postscript

The Christian Brother incident illustrates a disillusioning gap between American ideology and practice. It also demonstrates the way in which irresponsible individuals, encouraged by influential elements in a community, can fill the vacuum of leadership abdicated by those same influential elements, and weld a heterogeneous crowd into a "mob", an instrument for unleashing some of the worst human qualities. The Benton incident is part of a pattern of violation of our Country's ideals that needs to concern each of us.

Today, when it is legitimate and even fashionable to speak out against the war in Viet Nam, we might well remember that it was small groups of individuals like the Greenville County Christian Brothers who took the initiative to risk insult, injury, perhaps death to quicken our consciences, and to remind each of us of the urgent and incessant need to examine and re-examine our own values and assumptions.

LOCAL RELATIONS

TWIN OAKS IN LOUISA COUNTY

Driving northwest out of Richmond, one quickly leaves urban and suburban areas and finds oneself in rolling red Virginia farmland. Towns along the main roads are ten miles apart and small; side roads are often unpaved, and if one travels down them, one might pass neatly plowed fields and split level brick houses or 50-100 year old clapboard farmhouses, or one might pass a little cleared area with a trailer on blocks or a tarpaper shack surrounded by clotheslines, digs, kids, and parts of old automobiles.

After about an hour of driving from Richmond, one comes to the town of Louisa, seat of a county by the same name. The first landmark to catch the eye is the new shopping centers, followed by a Golden Skillet and a Tastee-Freeze. Just a block beyond is the older part of town, the big houses, the Baptist and Methodist churches and the older hardware, drug, and general merchandise stores. At the center of the four blocks of Main Street that constitute downtown Louisa is the only traffic light in town and the big brick courthouse. If the light isn't red and there isn't too much traffic, one can pass through downtown Louisa in less than five minutes.

The county is old and attention is paid to the many historical landmarks of the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. The county is also poorer than many and a number of people are under- or unemployed and living in substandard housing. Of those people who are employed, most are involved in services, lumbering, mining, light industry or agriculture. There's a prevailing anti-Welfare sentiment among those people. They seem to have a strong leaning toward individual rights and self-determination. The American Dream still seems alive in Louisa.

A little south of the center of the county, back on a partially paved road, is Twin Oaks Community. The architecture and placement of buildings is out of place in the county; a village of two-story barn-like and garden apartment-like buildings huddled together with two acres of garden in front. And the residents don't look much like most of the Louisa citizens—long hair and outdated clothes. We're somewhat of an anomaly here, not just because of physical differences, but our philosophical differences too.

Twin Oaks started nine years ago as the Walden Two dream of eight people. Their dream community would be equalitarian and would provide a safe, happy, fulfilled life to its members equally, and it would try to share that Utopia with as many people who wanted it as possible. It would be designed for cooperation rather than competition, equality rather than exploitation, careful conscientious use of technology rather than polluting and wasteful consumption. The Utopian dream and the American

dream might have similar goals, but have vastly different philosophies on how to get there.

With these differences, the potential for fear, distrust, and hostility is great. We have managed, however, to establish ourselves in this rural Southern county without experiencing the pains of being different. Our relationship with the county has both remained the same and changed over the time we've been here.

We have always had the attitude that our primary purpose was to build an alternative community rather than to change the community around us. We want to build a Utopia, both for the happiness of its members and as a model of a different, more human society. There has been necessarily a conservative sense of self-preservation following the formation of this experiment, in spite of that conservatism conflicting with more radical values that some of the members have held. We felt we could not both pose challenges and demands of American society and be given the space to nonthreateningly present an alternative highlighting cooperation and tolerance.

And so, in Louisa County, we have been building our community and establishing ourselves as neighbors and citizens.

Early History

In 1967, communes were fearful things to many people who did not share the ideology that created them. That fear was as much a fact in Louisa County as it was elsewhere. When Twin Oaks bought the Jones farm, Louisa County residents became a little uneasy; it was easy for them to imagine that with Twin Oaks would come drugs, illicit sex and revolutionaries to seduce their children. The eight members who started Twin Oaks realized the potential of their neighbors' fears and were consequently exceedingly cautious in their introduction into the local community. Members kept a low profile by trying to not look too different from locals, by not expounding to neighbors their unorthodox religious, political or social viewpoints, and by refraining from doing things that would be threatening. We made it clear to our neighbors that we didn't allow illegal drugs, that we would not accept runaways and that we had no intention of any radical political activity (those were the days when bank bombings were commonplace.)

One aspect of getting to know the neighbors was explaining why we chose to live the way we do. Kat Kincade, in her book about the first 5 years of Twin Oaks, tells how this was done:

"It was hard to explain ourselves, because the word 'commune' was not yet in common use in the press—we

“We’re somewhat of an anomaly here, not just because of physical differences, but our philosophical differences too.”

did not use the word ourselves until 1969. When questioned we explained, “We are a group of people that came from the city, but we don’t like city life. In the city you have to work for a boss, and we want to run our own lives and not be told what time to come to work and what time to take off for lunch. None of us had enough money to buy a farm by ourselves, so we pooled our resources. That’s the only way we can afford to live in the country.” Then we told them that our system was share-and-share-alike, that we ate together and shared expenses.”

Most of the interaction with locals at the time was on the level of buying from local businesses, and getting advice and help from our closest neighbor. Those people who dealt with us learned to think of us as nice, though somewhat strange people who worked hard, took care of our property and stayed off Welfare. A few people, one neighbor in particular, were very threatened about our being here and asked the sheriff to do something about us. But the sheriff and the rest of the community just waited and watched. During the early years, the sheriff came out fairly frequently to find out if local kids who had run away from home were here; they weren’t. He developed a trust of us and spoke well of us when people expressed their worries about our being in the county.

That early tentative trust helped us, for in 1970, a former member was arrested for growing marijuana in the county. Both he and Twin Oaks stated that the community was not involved and knew nothing about it. The Sheriff believed us and supported us. Had our reputation been other than what it was, I suspect that Twin Oaks might have felt more of the repressive pressure that other communes in other areas have received.

As it was, our reputation in the county grew more solid. One prominent local person gave us this recent assessment of how folks in Louisa County see Twin Oaks: “A lot of people were worried when Twin Oaks first settled here in ’67. They didn’t like having a commune in the county. But after you’d been here a year, I began to hear favorable reports. Farmers, businessmen, and law enforcement officers often said you were making a contribution to the county. I’d guess that 90% of our people now support you being here”.

The ten people who settled at the Merion Branch of Twin Oaks in the fall of 1972 began to get acquainted with their neighbors and found their presence welcomed in their rural neighborhood. Most of the nearby families were low-income blacks, and many were in their 70s and 80s. These older folks recounted fascinating stories of what the area had been like after the turn of the century, and happily passed on skills from that era: what type of hickory tree to select for making axehandles, how to clean a spring, which trees make the best firewood, how to make

dandelion wine. As we soaked up these Foxfire lessons, we also learned of the plight of old people with little income, and saw how some were weighed down with despair while others met each day with calm dignity.

We found that we had many things to offer these new friends. They began to ask our help patching a roof, plowing a garden, or repairing appliances. We began to take our pair of two-year-olds on visits, and several of the older neighbors welcomed them like grandchildren. At Christmas it’s now a tradition for Merion folks to go carolling through the neighborhood and stop in for cookies or cake and when two members got married last summer many of the neighbors were on hand for the celebration.

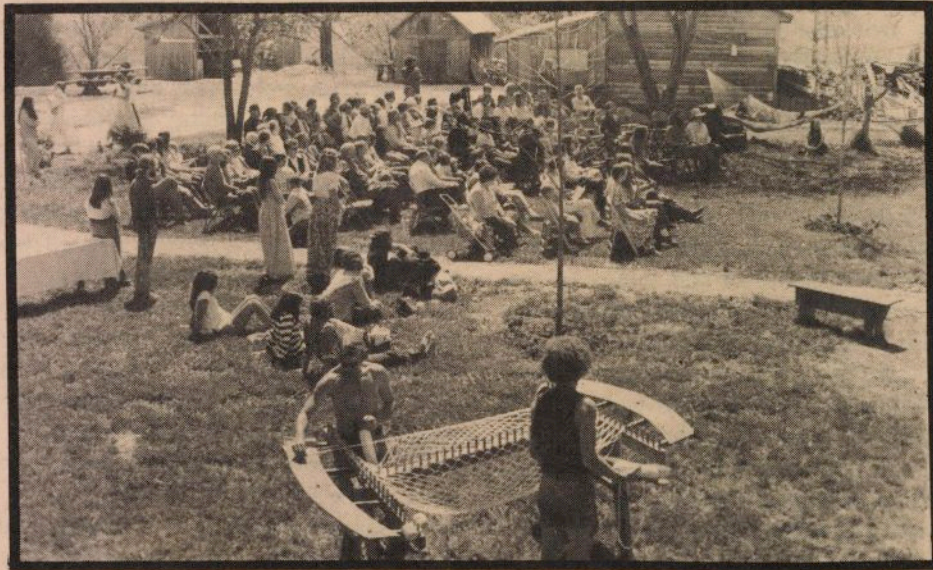
Work for Neighbors [Healing]

Economic activities have comprised the greatest percentage of our interactions with people in Louisa County. From buying locally we became acquainted with people and learned of some of the county’s needs that we could satisfy. We learned that several of our farmer neighbors needed help with farm work, and we started doing “Work For Neighbors,” which most often consisted of baling hay, putting up fences, doing yard work. The word spread and we would get phone calls, “I heard y’all did a real nice job on my sister-in-law’s fence; I have this fence, you see...”, And “You’re the only people in the county I could think of to call. I have this shed that’s leaning...”

An early attempt at starting a business here didn’t work out; we took over a little general/grocery store in 1970. We had hopes that we could find a means of supporting ourselves closer to home that would also bring us in closer contact with our neighbors, and some of us dreamt that perhaps someday we could convert it from a private store to a cooperative. It did provide a basis for getting to know more people around us, but it also provided a place to hang out for bored teenagers. Their presence eventually discouraged other people from coming in, and a great deal of shoplifting happened that we weren’t aware of until the end of the year when we went over the books. It was a business we didn’t understand very well, and we ended up earning nothing for the year’s labor we put in.

As years passed, we gained more skilled people, and so were able to provide more services to people in the county and in 1973, we started Glorious Mud, our construction company. Our plans were to be contractors and subcontractors, and to provide both less expensive housing, particularly for people who couldn’t afford much, and to supply ourselves with a reasonable wage that we could earn because of less overhead expenses. Our first house was a package deal from a building supply store for a speculative builder in town. It felt odd and exciting to be building a little suburban-type ranch home. Building it

“We felt we could not both pose challenges and demands of American society and be given the space to nonthreateningly present an alternative highlighting cooperation and tolerance.”



took longer than we expected (of course), but when we were done, another family had come along asking us to build them a house, and so we became established in the local construction industry.

The second house felt real good to build; the family was friendly and pleasant and it was easy to work for them. They gave us baby clothes and housewares they didn't need anymore, and we felt like friends. It's nice that the relationship was rewarding—because we found out after we were done, that because of our inexperience estimating, we had ended up charging next to nothing for our labor.

We've learned a lot more about the building industry and done many more jobs since then, and we've developed our reputation as reliable and honest builders who are a little different from most building crews. That women lay block and install electrical service on the Twin Oaks Construction crews has astonished a number of customers. But they usually learn pretty quickly that the Twin Oaks construction workers who happen to be women are skilled, hardworking, and deserve respect. On one job of remodeling, our electrician became friends with owners of the house by teaching the woman who owned it the basics of electricity and wiring. It was exciting for both women to be in that teaching/learning situation with a traditionally male skill, and it started a warm friendship between that whole family and people at Twin Oaks.

While construction and work for neighbors constitute most of the jobs we do for local people, several of our other industries bring us in contact with the surrounding community. Our backhoe, which we purchased when we were installing our sewage treatment plant and system, has provided us with an active industry digging drainfields and septic tank holes. One of our members, who learned artificial insemination for our cows, services dairy herds of other farmers in the area. Our printshop, which has served Twin Oaks almost exclusively, expanded to do more printing for local people; we started printing for the church that our nextdoor neighbor belonged to, and soon were doing programs and notices for other churches. When the only other printer in the county retired, we got a lot more business for our tired old offset press. We started printing for the Historic Society in Green Springs, and then last year kids from the local high school came to us to have us print their school newspaper. We've also gotten into an appliance repair service and driving for local taxi/ambulance service which mostly carries Medicare patients to doctor appointments.

We get calls to do anything imaginable; people know there's a lot of skill here and have no idea what the limits of it are, so sometimes they ask us to do things beyond our abilities, like paint portraits, pump septic tanks, fix televisions, restore plaster walls or have one of the resident psychologists help out with a spouse who's having a ner-

vous breakdown.

Working for wages brings up a lot of questions about the economics of living communally in a capitalist society. We've examined several times the question of how to determine a fair price for our labor, particularly when doing business with folks face-to-face. In determining what a fair return is for our work, we consider factors such as what the market can bear; how much the customer can afford to pay; our own economic needs; our policy of equal hourly wages for both skilled and unskilled workers.

Service in the County

Through these and through other kinds of contacts, like those Merion have with some of their neighbors, we've started learning about some of the needs in the county that we could respond to but that we couldn't get paid for. An 87 year old woman who lives alone and hauls her heating wood, but who can't chop some of the bigger pieces; a family of 9 burned out of their trailer need money, clothes, household goods; the fire ranger not having enough people to help fight fires during an especially dry season. Sometimes people come to us and ask for help, and sometimes we hear or read about it and take the initiative ourselves.

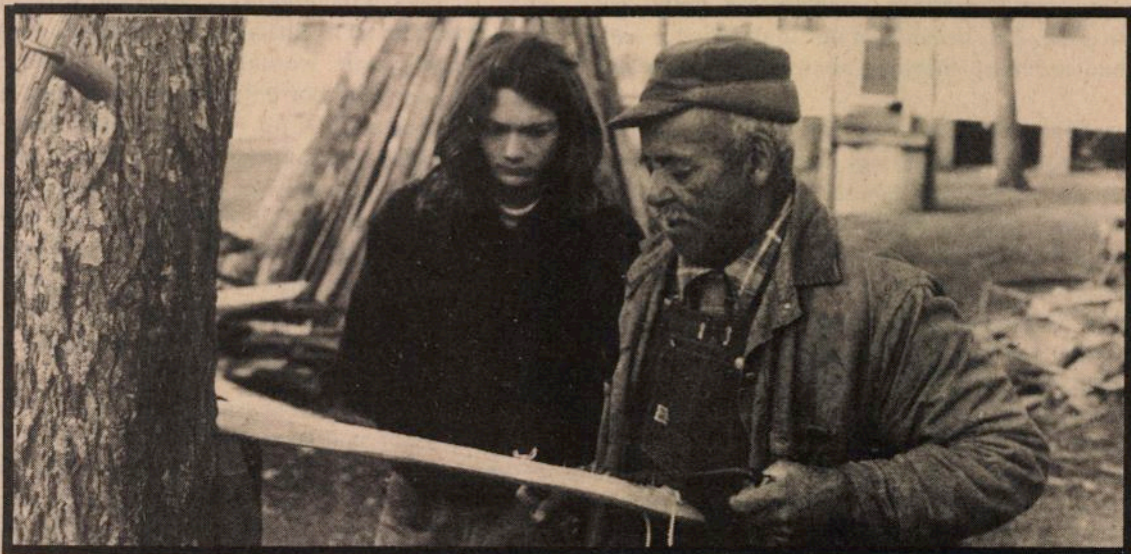
Those of us who value service and sharing with people outside our "immediate family" welcome these opportunities to share the energy we have as a benefit of living at Twin Oaks. The better we get to know our community and the people in it, the more ways we've learned that we can serve it.

Our biggest ongoing project has been involvement in a group called LOCUS (Louisa Organization of Citizens United for Service), that runs a center for distributing used clothing and household goods to people who need them. We read about it in the local paper and very shyly attended an organizational meeting. When we first walked in the meeting room, the eight other people there looked at us curiously, but with friendliness. We learned that the Welfare Department had initiated the idea of a citizen-run distribution center, as collecting and passing on clothes to

people who needed them was something the Welfare Department had been doing out of a very crowded, understaffed office. They had appealed to churches and local service organizations, and the black neighborhood center to encourage people to run LOCUS. We also learned that the response from most groups had been discouraging, that there were few people in the county interested in devoting time and energy to this sort of activity. Our participation was welcomed, and we started attending meetings regularly and taking our turn at keeping the Center open. We had started our involvement with the hopes that the Center would become a neighborhood supported activity, eventually aiding the development of more cooperative efforts. Our dreams drifted towards food coops, more daycare facilities, community businesses, and a center for the elderly, all developing out of people's seeing their needs being met through sharing within their community. The reality, however, has not met our dreams. Most of the people involved in policy-making are not part of the community for whom the Center was developed, and do not know the people who do use it on the level of friends and neighbors.

When people come in to use the center, their attitude is deferential and uneasy, and the circumstances seem to make overcoming that very difficult. At the organizational meetings, there is usually at least one agenda item about, "How to Keep People from Abusing LOCUS." While a person from the Welfare Department is telling the group, "Those people will take advantage of anything that's free. Why, I heard that one man took out three shopping bags full of clothes, and the next week had a yard sale to get money for liquor," Twin Oaks people at the meetings sigh and frown. We don't know the people who use the Center personally and we understand where the Welfare point of view comes from, but when the people become, "Those People . . .", our efforts become charity. We stay involved in LOCUS, even though for what we had hoped, we're frustrated, for we're learning about our county and getting to know people through it.

Through these levels of involvement and through some



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of the friendships we've developed, we've gotten in closer contact with some of the agencies in the county—The Welfare Department, the Health Department, The Board of Education. We've learned that, in spite of the bureaucratic limitations and the attitudes engendered by them, many of the people employed there have a sincere desire to serve the people in the county and to meet their needs, and they are getting a similar message from us. They have started considering us as a resource—the schools call us often to substitute teach, the Health Department asks us to help with projects like fund raising for the Lung Association and the Welfare Department calls on us to be short-term foster parents when there is an emergency, such as when they had a baby girl who had been born so prematurely, her intestines weren't completely formed and she

had to have a colostomy. She needed a temporary home until her family got glass in the windows and a wood stove installed for heat. Another time a gypsy clan came to town, allegedly stole several thousand dollars, and got arrested. We and two other local communes took care of the children until the legal mess got straightened out.

Political Involvement

Twin Oaks has no consistent, community position on political matters. We have not become strongly identified with any of the factions that exist within Louisa County on issues such as strip-mining of vermiculite; political elections; a land-use planning controversy; or on social problems such as unemployment or welfare.

On the other hand, Twin Oaks is no isolated utopian bubble; we are a group of 70 citizens of Louisa County. Our place and part in what goes on in the county is of interest to us on several levels.

It's important that our relationship with the county be a good one in order to maintain what we have and to do the things we want to do. That's **self interest**. Such things as zoning, laws about educating children, about water supplies, feeding large groups, and generally being self-sufficient can be affected by the respect we get from



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various people or groups in the county.

A lot of us have personal goals and see one of Twin Oaks’ goals as putting energy into more than improving the lives of the sixty or so of us who live here right now. Although some of us come from social action places, while others come from heavy political or spiritual or

self-protection (if someone else ruins the air, co is affecting the air we breathe) points of view, there are actions we can take as a group that can respond to all those things. Louisa County is what immediately surrounds us, and its problems are our problems, on whatever level one wishes to understand that. Twin Oaks can choose to have greater involvement in the county, and that statement is becoming more reality-based daily.

Over the past 2 years Twin Oaks has become more and more visible on political questions. Regular attendance at Board of Supervisors meetings has led us to publically stated positions on strip-mining (for close ecological controls), and land-use (for development of a master plan, rather than spot-zoning). Our contact through LOCUS, and work for our neighbors has also put us in touch with the political needs of low-income people in the county.

We have no model of social change that we are promoting politically in Louisa; but our very presence here as voters coupled with continued low-key input as concerned citizens, is exerting a positive influence on political patterns here.

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Concert For Neighbors

For over a year some of us talked from time to time about having an “open house” or some such event for our friends and neighbors in the county. We were getting to know a lot of local people and wanted to find some way of relating to them in our own home in a relaxed, social setting. Most of these new acquaintances had been made away from our farm: construction company customers, county officials, farmers for whom we had baled hay or mended fences, the doctor and the dentist. We wanted an event to draw these neighbors into our home, our culture, without them feeling uncomfortable and alien. So it seemed sensible to invite them all together.

For two years we had celebrated spring with a concert by our musicians. In 1975, inviting “outsiders” to the concert seemed like an excellent idea. We posted a sheet of paper on the bulletin board and nearly everyone of us had at least one person they wanted to invite. There was a slight panic when we realized that the list ran to over 200 people but fortified by our good experiences with hosting large conferences, we cheerfully forged ahead.

We printed up invitations and posters, borrowed folding chairs from local churches and a funeral home, put together an incredibly eclectic program of music (a woodwind trio, a Madrigal group, a couple who play guitar and

sing popular music, and our bluegrass band.) We baked cookies, bread and cake, and gave the entire community a thorough superficial cleaning.

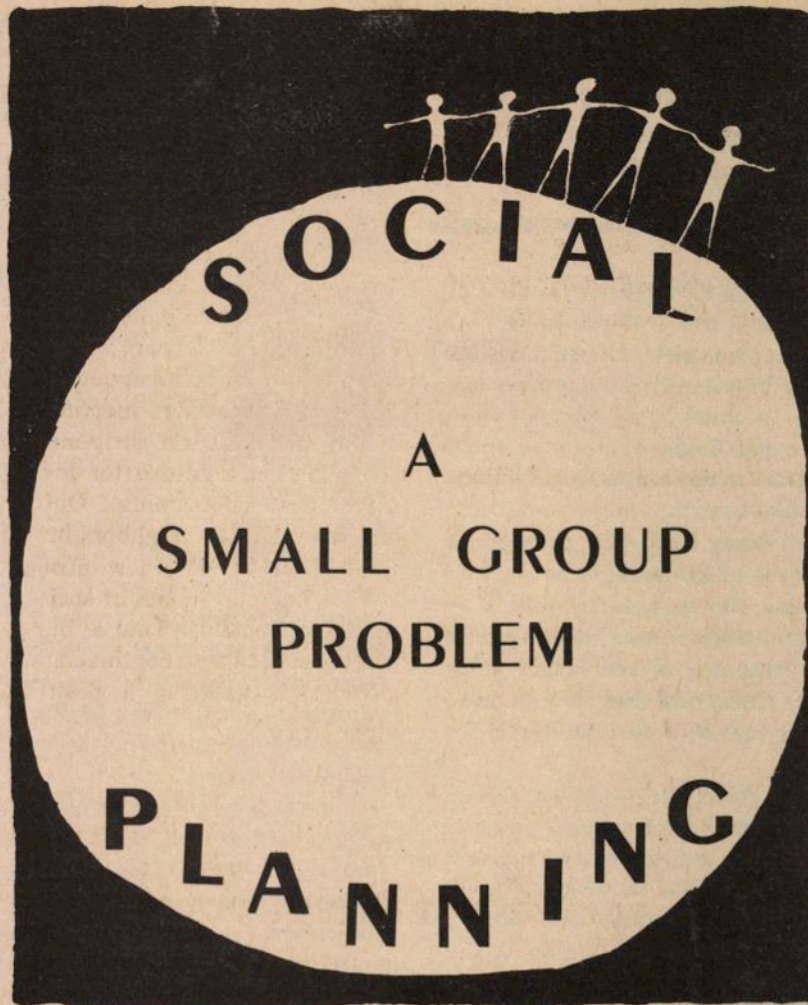
It was very exciting and somewhat scary. Will anyone show up? Will they feel comfortable? Do we have enough food? I can’t find a clean shirt anywhere! Should we segregate the bathrooms for men and women? just how much should we put on our company manners and how much should we relax and be ourselves.

Except for cleaning the place up and the search for clean shirts, we settled for being normal. The concert was only slightly more formal than the private ones we have had here. And about 150 people showed up. And it was a great success.

Actually, the bluegrass band and the food were the biggest success, but it seems that most everyone—Twin Oakers and guests—were relaxed, interested in each other, and very pleased to be there.

Our neighbors had an opportunity to interact with us (about 60 of us were at the concert) in our own, unique (to them) environment—to experience Twin Oaks in a much more comprehensive way than they ever had before. And we had the opportunity to express our friendly intentions in a language everyone understands: a party.

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SOCIAL

A
SMALL GROUP
PROBLEM

PLANNING

• *By David*

In early spring of 1975 I found myself doing the first serious reading about the history and sociology of community since graduate school, some three years before. I'd wanted to review Kanter's collection of sociological writings and Hostetler's new book on the Hutterites,¹ so I was giving them a fairly careful reading. Almost unwillingly I found that many of the ideas and descriptions in the two books were stimulating some grey matter that'd been happily dormant. An area that I found particularly fascinating revolved around the manner in which various communities handled what I'd begun to call "the small group problem," that is, the seemingly natural tendency of members to gravitate toward smaller groupings within the larger community. Since Twin Oaks was at that time engaged in deciding to grow larger within the next few years (membership was about 60 at that time & projections of growth to 900 were floating around), I was interested in how the experiences and thoughts of others could inform our decisions. My unspoken plan was to do some more reading and write a paper by early summer.

My plans were upset, however, by a well-attended Twin Oaks meeting at which a number of provocative things were said. My concern was that in the discussion

about our growth the issue of primary groupings was largely ignored, an issue which I'd begun to see as crucial. So, armed with half-formed ideas and spotty historical knowledge, I wrote a paper entitled "The Small Group Problem at Twin Oaks." The paper, despite its limitations, seemed to strike a nerve. Written originally for our bulletin board, it was picked up first by our own newsletter, **The Leaves of Twin Oaks**, then by the West Coast editors of **Communities**, and then by the Japanese Commune Movements's **Community**.²

Quite a few people felt inspired to write extensive responses, including some Twin Oaks members, two sociologists, three kibbutz members, and people from a number of U.S. communes. In the analysis that follows I'll be considering some of the issues raised in these responses, but first I want to continue with the chronology.

As we entered the summer I was content to let the matter rest since I felt that the paper had largely achieved its main purpose, to introduce the concept of the small group problem into our collective consciousness. Sometime in early July, Vince, one of the West Coast editors of **Communities**, visited and felt inspired to write a lengthy paper on the subject, but it wasn't until an August visit

“We were excited about the possibility that Twin Oaks could work on social planning with the same intentionality that it had already applied to economic and land-use planning.”

from community-psychologist Don Klein that a number of us began to think seriously about the problem again.

At the time of Don's visit two quite different issues involving small groups were becoming prominent in our collective awareness. First, a number of people were pushing quite hard for the establishment of a second small branch, raising in many of us all of our ambivalent feelings about the nine-member Merion branch; and second, there was growing concern among many about the developing specialization and cohesiveness of the group who work in the hammock shop. Some saw the hammock workers as developing into a support group which was insulating its members from the social pressures of the larger community; others noticed more the caring that they demonstrated for each other, seeing that as a positive model for the rest of us.

We talked with Don about these and other aspects of the community that we saw as problematic. Don, who had worked with other communal groups, expressed interest in helping us develop strategies for dealing with our 'social problems'. As the meeting progressed a number of us became quite enthusiastic. We were excited about the possibility that Twin Oaks could work on social planning with the same intentionality that it had already applied to economic and land-use planning. The next day we grandly announced the immanent formation of an ad hoc 'Social Planning Commission', inviting those who were interested to join us in figuring out how we could intentionally tackle our social problems. We assumed that we would quickly work out a consulting relationship with Don and then present our ideas to the whole community.

As it turned out, however, the Social Planning Commission was much grander in conception than in execution, and we floundered about for months trying to figure out what 'intentionally tackle our social problems' really meant. When we finally presented the community with a proposal, one that boiled down to our asking Don to come back and help us decide how to proceed, the community reacted coolly. We were told in essence to do some homework to figure out just what social planning is if anything, and then to start doing it. Somewhere there was a whole lot written about social problems and social planning and about the attempts of others to plan their social environments. Our job was to learn as much as we could about what others had thought and done, and then to devise our own strategies.

Over the past half year, then, two of us have been giving ourselves a crash course in social planning, using suggestions from Don and from some social planners from the University of Virginia. What we discovered was that Social Planning as a discipline of study was in a state of

theoretical turmoil. The tumultuous crises and counter-cultural revolts of the late 1960s had thoroughly shaken a profession which had barely established itself as separate from and complimentary to architectural/environmental planning. Critics from both within and outside the profession were suggesting revisions which attacked the heart of the planning process as currently practices.³

Social Planning, in its broadest conception, had been seen as the process of "... evaluating social goals and developing in broad outline the kinds of programs to achieve the goals chosen."⁴ It is concerned with the structured ways in which our daily interactions relate to our values, values such as equity, efficiency, social justice, intimacy, etc. Critics were suggesting that the planning profession's practice of applying rational expertise to the evaluation of goals and design of programs was flawed at its core. That core is the process of 'goal reduction', that is, the determination of some desired future state and then the rational construction of steps toward that state. Even in the case where planners design 'alternative scenarios', leaving the final choice of future states up to some political process external to the planning profession, the kinds of questions asked and designs proposed must reflect the values of the planners.

The fact is that the values of the planners are usually quite different from those whom they plan for—but more important, their values and the peoples' values change over time. The end-goals of the planning process are thus subject to two tensions, the disparity on the one hand between what the planners and the people see as right and good, and on the other hand the disparity between what any of us want now and what we'll want later. In seeking to ameliorate the effects of those two tensions, much has been written lately on planning as on-going participation process. Disillusioned planning theorists are trying to come up with a systematic design of a process that would actively engage most of the society in a constant re-evaluation of both its goals and its movement toward those goals.

The extreme of citizen participation is represented by John Friedmann's theory of transactive planning, a process of 'mutual learning'. Friedman, a former chairperson of the M.I.T. Planning Department, suggests that the planner follow the Tao. "The Tao says, 'Truly, a great cutter does not cut'... and 'Tao invariably does nothing, yet there is nothing that is not done.'" Friedmann understands that to mean that "Under conditions of mutual

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learning the planner appears to be doing nothing; he learns, and, learning, he imparts new knowledge.”⁵

It is in the spirit of Friedmann’s suggestion that we are currently trying to learn what planning might be by going to the roots of the planning process. We’re finding those roots in political science, in functionalist, dialectical, and critical sociology, in social psychology and in the Tao. We’re finding that the kinds of questions we ask about how Twin Oaks is functioning depend greatly on the theoretical stance that we take; and we’re getting different insights into what we as a community can do, insights which will be implemented to the extent that they help all of us make more sense of our lives in community. What I hope to do in the rest of this article is to give brief examples of a few of these insights and the questions these insights tell us to ask about our social systems by re-addressing the small group problem.

Re-consideration of the Small Group Problem

When I first wrote about the small group problem the impetus had come from observations of our 50 member branch, Juniper. Living arrangements at Juniper are such that nearly all the members have private rooms, dormitory style, each room being about 8’x10’, and each styled to the taste of the occupant (some quite elaborately furnished.) There are about seven small- and large-group public spaces, two of which are often used for formal meetings. In the evenings the public spaces not being used for meetings are often relatively deserted. (Occasional card games, music-making or snacking in the kitchen are exceptions.) People hang out alone or in groups of 2-7 people in private rooms.

Dining is cafeteria-style. Over the course of a meal the make-up of each table constantly changes as different people come and go, though couples often come in and leave together. Sporadic attempts to institute a regular table where a non-exclusive group would eat together family-style have never lasted much longer than a month, yet many say they yearn for the intimacy they associate with family-style dining.

Finally, I’d heard about dozens of conversations over the years among different people about the loneliness and anonymity it was possible to feel at Juniper. I’d also heard, however, the very real fears that people had about any proposal for us to break down into small groups. What I’d heard loudest were the fears of exclusion, often from the very people who already felt excluded from some of the private-room gatherings.

What I’d tried to say in the small group paper was that people’s need for primary groupings could only increase as we grew larger, and that we would be better off attacking the problem as a community rather than in the individualistic ways people were doing it at the time. The paper, however, provoked considerable opposition, and I was at a loss in trying to understand why. Later, I found a clue in a book called **Community Psychology and Social Systems** by Stanley Murrell.⁶ In my original paper I had referred to “a nearly universal tendency” for people “to spend that time which they spend with others in the presence of those others with whom they feel most comfortable.” Had Murrell read that he would have pointed out that the statement is based on an assumption about human nature. It was based on my belief that a need for intimate relatedness is a high priority need in most everyone. He rejects such an assumption and makes a strong case for replacing it with what he calls the ‘complex-man’ (and I’ll call the ‘complex human’) assumption. Murrell argues that theoretical approaches which assume a particular hierarchy of needs neglect the diversity among people in their psychological make-up. His complex humans are in contrast with, among others, economic humans (who act so as to maximize their utility functions), social humans (who act to please others, make friends, etc.), self-actualizing humans (who act in order to fulfill their creative potential), existential humans (who try to find meaning in life) and religious humans (who act so as to get closer to God.)

Murrell’s complex human is basically a problem solver who is in constant negotiation with the environment over the solving of problem areas. “For different individuals,” Murrell says, “different problem-areas are of paramount concern, some have been virtually solved while others are constantly requiring new efforts.” Some people spend their days wrestling with problems having to do with affiliation. Their lives revolve around fears and joys having to do with intimacy and relatedness. Others are struggling with concerns about achievement or spiritual growth.

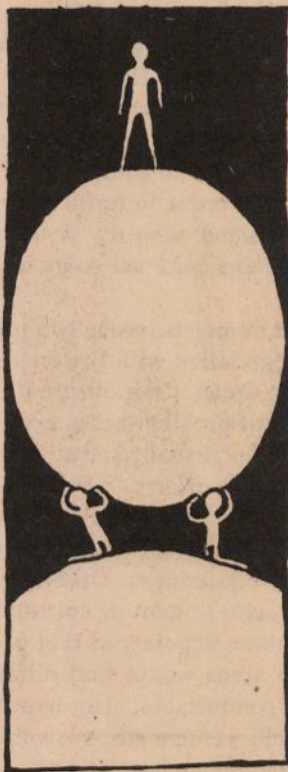
Murrell goes on, then, to point out that people working on different problem areas would find different types of environments most comfortable. He hypothesizes, for example, that high-achievement strivers would most likely thrive in large heterogeneous groups with active task-oriented leaders. People who are concentrating on their need for affiliation, on the other hand, would be happiest in a small, cohesive, homogeneous group. The actual situation is quite complex, of course, since we have to deal with work groups, social groups, and living groups, and since people work on more than one problem area, but Murrell’s perspective can help us avoid making simplistic assumptions about the needs of community members.

Had I been more sensitive, for example, to needs different from my own, I would have heard the ways in which many members were saying that the large-group atmosphere gave them the freedom they valued highly, freedom to accomplish what they wanted to do without the pressures to account for their actions that they would feel in a small group. In that case I would have made room in the 25

paper for a kind of 'community Central', a buzzing, stimulating, almost city-like center of activity where those who thrive on it could find the freedom they value. I would have been more careful than to be making implicit statements that all of us **should** be seeking self-actualization through intimate relatedness.

Now, what makes Murrell's contribution more than just a complicated way of saying 'different strokes for different folks' is that he suggests a number of ways in which we might systematically get a handle on the differences among us in our needs for such things as affiliation, achievement, control, and meaning. With those methods, together with knowledge of the research on the 'fit' between various need structures and different types of social systems, we should be in a better position to develop our own social systems to meet our diverse needs.

Leaving the social-psychological level now, I'd like to mention a few insights gained from a study of the sociological basis of planning theory.



One fear that has been expressed about our dividing ourselves into small groups is that it would result in divisiveness; that deviant support groups would result. Indeed, as I noted before, some believe that such a group was already developing in the hammock shop, and that we ought to take steps to counter the deviant behaviors the group was supporting. Those deviant behaviors included the use of sarcasm and ridicule in interpersonal interaction, public disparagement of our governmental and economic policies—disparagement as opposed to constructive criticism. How we look at the development of deviant small group cultures, however, depends on the theoretical perspective we take. As an example, I'd like to show how different our views would be if we take a functionalist perspective, as opposed to a dialectical perspective.

Most of us almost reflexively take a functionalist perspective. It's influence on our thinking about social problems has been so pervasive that it almost seems like 'common sense'. Functionalists tend to see society as an elaborate social system, a system within which people perform the various tasks that must be done in order for the society to survive. Crudely speaking, people are integrated into the society to the extent that they work together harmoniously to further that society. Within this view families, churches, and schools are seen as some of the socialization mechanisms that teach people how to be well-functioning members of the society. Within this view, also, people who do not function productively or who tend to upset the harmonious working of the community are seen as deviants; failures of the socialization mechanism. The appropriate way to treat such deviants is to try to rehabilitate them, or, failing that, to separate them from society. If we take this tack then the social planning process would be one of trying to help us define our norms

“How we look at the development of deviant small group cultures, however, depends on the theoretical perspective we take. As an example, I'd like to show how different our views would be if we take a functionalist perspective, as opposed to a dialectical perspective.”

more clearly, that is, to define as a community just what behaviors are and are not deviant. The next step would be to suggest mechanisms for identifying people who violate the norms and methods for rehabilitating those so identified. Finally, we would try to design processes for expelling the intransigent norm-violators, seeking to do this at least cost to the community.

On the other hand, liberals who work within a functionalist perspective tend to emphasize the need to reform the socialization mechanisms themselves, pointing out that the deviants are merely the hapless victims of inadequate families, schools, neighborhoods, etc. If we take this liberal functionalist perspective we might try to define our norms more clearly, but the primary goal would be to design ways to teach those norms to new members and to have old members re-affirm them periodically. We would

also be examining our social systems to see to what extent they are generating confusion. For example, to the extent that the labor credit system encourages us to think our work is 'working for credits' as opposed to working for the good of the community, it sets up conditions of confusion about what we're here for. Social planning would, in that case, suggest re-designs of the system that might cause it to impose itself less between the members and their work.

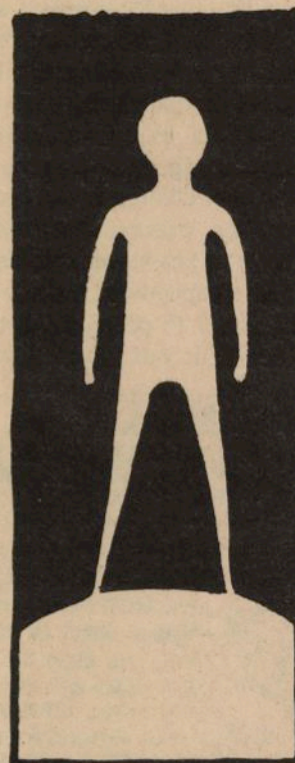
Another approach within the functionalist perspective is to see the problem of deviance as one of faulty communications. If only people had access to enough information they would be able to understand the ways in which all the parts of the social system fit together, and they would understand that most conflicts are merely misunderstandings. Such a perspective would emphasize the importance of institutionalizing a constant flow of information among the small groups. It would also cause us to notice that our extreme dependence on written communi-

"Whereas the functionalist focuses on the fact that the furthering of the whole society is really in every member's interest, the marxist notices that some members make the society's decisions and some don't, and furthermore, that the decisions made often reflect the interests of those who decide rather than the interests of the group as a whole."

cation and meeting attendance severely restricts the information available to those with little tolerance for long papers or complex meetings. We should then put more emphasis on designing alternative methods of information dissemination, perhaps through music or video-taped entertainment.

Opposing these functionalist views are the various marxist perspectives. A marxist would maintain that social problems are not problems which some deviants pose for society as a whole, but rather, that social problems are problems which one group poses for another. Within classical marxism these have been the problems that a rising class poses for a ruling class. Whether or not we look for rising and ruling classes, however, this perspective alerts us to ask the question, "For whom is a 'social problem' really a problem and for whom is it not?" It also alerts us

to look for the ways in which our social systems generate groupings of people with interests different from those of others. Whereas the functionalist focuses on the fact that the furthering of the whole society is really in every member's interest, the marxist notices that some members make the society's decisions and some don't, and furthermore, that the decisions made often reflect the interests of those who decide rather than the interests of the group as a whole. This second approach sees the socialization mechanisms as designed to teach an ideology, and the communication systems as designed to transmit information which reinforces that ideology. It is the acceptance of this ideology that makes it seem right and natural that those who are making the society's decisions should in fact decide things the way they do. (Marx emphasizes that this is not a conspiracy theory; those who rule believe in the ideology, that is, they think that they are acting in the interest of the society as a whole.)⁷



Deviants within this perspective are people who are beginning to question the ideology. They notice that some people can have an idea one day and see bulldozers moving in to implement the idea in a matter of weeks. Others would do just as well to never mention their ideas. The marxist sees deviants as consciously or unconsciously trying to supplant the dominant ideology. The real threat to a society's ruling class comes when deviants develop a consciousness of their group's status and begin organized action.

If we take a marxist perspective we will be especially sensitive to deviant behavior as a possible indication of inequalities in our political/economic systems.

We will examine closely the possibility that our labor system, for example, is generating a privileged class and

a lackey-class; and, if this is so, whether or not these class divisions are also reflected in political behavior and in deviant group membership. We would want to identify those aspects of our system that seem to be responsible for the class divisions and suggest changes to eliminate them.

Conclusion

When I first outlined this article I'd planned to present a much wider range of ideas about the small group problem. Besides Murrell's insights into the fit between personality and social systems, and besides the contributions of functionalist and dialectical sociology, I had planned to present 1) Friedmann's ideas about the small-group learning seminar as the key to transactive planning, 2) the role of small groups in anarchist theories of government, and finally, 3) David Gil's method of policy analysis as a way of looking for inegalitarianism in a proposal to divide into small groups. The article, however, is already longer and more demanding than I'd hoped it would be. I've tried to give you some indication though of the range and diversity of our thinking, some feeling for the diverse ways in which we are trying to make sense out of our attempts to build alternative social systems. We're hoping that with increased understanding will come some worthwhile ideas about how we should change as we grow.

As our planning proceeds we will be engaged in research designed to answer questions raised by the different theoretical perspectives. If there is sufficient reader response I'll continue to periodically report on any progress we are making in our social planning efforts.

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¹ See the review in the Social Science Column of *Communities* #14.

² The original paper appeared in the April, 1975 issue of the *Leaves of Twin Oaks*. Some responses were in the June, 1975 issue of the *Leaves* (rt. 4, Box 17, Louisa, VA 23093). A slightly edited version is in *Communities* #17. The original paper and responses were reprinted in the December, 1975 issue of *Communitarity: A Transnational Journal of the Communes Building Man's Future* (2083 Sakae-Cho, Imaichi-Shi, Tochigi-Ken, Japan 321-12). Two long responses to that reprint appear in the February, 1976 issue of *Communitarity*.

³ Among the books criticizing traditional planning theory, I found the following of most interest:

Bailey, Joe. *Social Theory for Planning*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975.

Gil, David. *Unraveling Social Policy: Theory, Analysis and Political Action Towards Social Equality*. Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1973.

Friedmann, John. *Retracking America: A Theory of Transactive Planning*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1973.

Lowry, Ritchie P. *Social Problems: A Critical Analysis of Theories and Public Policy*. Lexington, MA: Heath, 1974.

⁴ Gans, Herbert J. "Memorandum on Social Planning", in *People and Plans: Essays on Urban Problems and Solutions*. NY: Basic Books, 1968, p. 85.

⁵ Freidman, op. cit., p. 188

⁶ Murrell, Stanley A. *Community Psychology and Social Systems: A Conceptual Framework and Intervention Guide*. NY: Behavioral Publications, 1973.

⁷ A book which I've found most helpful in stimulating my thinking about marxist social theory is Alan Swingewood's *Marx and Modern Social Theory*. NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1975.

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THE MODERN UTOPIAN, America's first periodical devoted to the communal movement, began in 1966. In 1971 TMU became a semi-annual book. The following are the most recent editions:

• **COMMUNES, EUROPE**—A report on the travels of Richard Fairfield and Consuelo Sandoval in over 30 European communes: England, Denmark, France, Germany, and Switzerland. List of European commune contacts. 8 1/2 x 11 softbound book, 240 pages. \$3.95

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U & I CONFERENCE

Homesteading

& Communities

This is the first of what we hope will become a series of reports and impressions of the various communities conferences this summer.

The U&I Ranch, a 1000-acre cooperative community in the Missouri Ozarks, was the site of a unique gathering on May 15. Tribes—communities—individuals, principally from the Ozark region, all participated in an event that was part information exchange, part folk festival.

On the day it all began, Kitty U&I was tired, but had a terrific smile. "Whaddaya mean, 90 loaves?!", she asked in response to an inquiry about the amount of bread prepared. "We baked 200! Bob and Becky did just about all of it. They were a real team. I tried to help, and just got in the way."

There was an incredible, dynamic energy, and a sharing that reached beyond the realities of the rain and the physical hardship. The U&I Conference was a blend of hard work and hard play: of different lifestyles and a wide range of interests. Yet there was still a basic commonality, and a high-energy sharing of ideals. The conference served as a first meeting place for many of us living in these hills, as well as possibly the first instance of labor exchange between Ozark communities.

U&I's thousand acres is simply incredible; it stretches as far as the eye can see. The Ranch's lifestyle is quite different from that of many communities: the people there have individual incomes and personal possessions that would be considered communal property by the Walden II groups. It's a really exciting working alternative, though,—and one of the best land deals in the country (about \$200 for five acres for a year, plus \$37 per acre equity over 8 years). At latest report there were over 110 members of U&I, making it the largest community in the Ozarks. And it's all happened in just one short year.



On the Sunday afternoon preceding the conference, over 50 members of U&I assembled at the site of their proposed Community Building for an open meeting ("We wash all of our dirty linen in public", explained Jubal). At the meeting, they made progress on placing the community's name on the legal papers for ownership of the land. Jubal then asked for peoples' help to finish projects in preparation for the Conference. The request heralded an incredible 5-day burst of energy. U&I drew into a tighter community as the conference preparations progressed.

Gettin' Ready

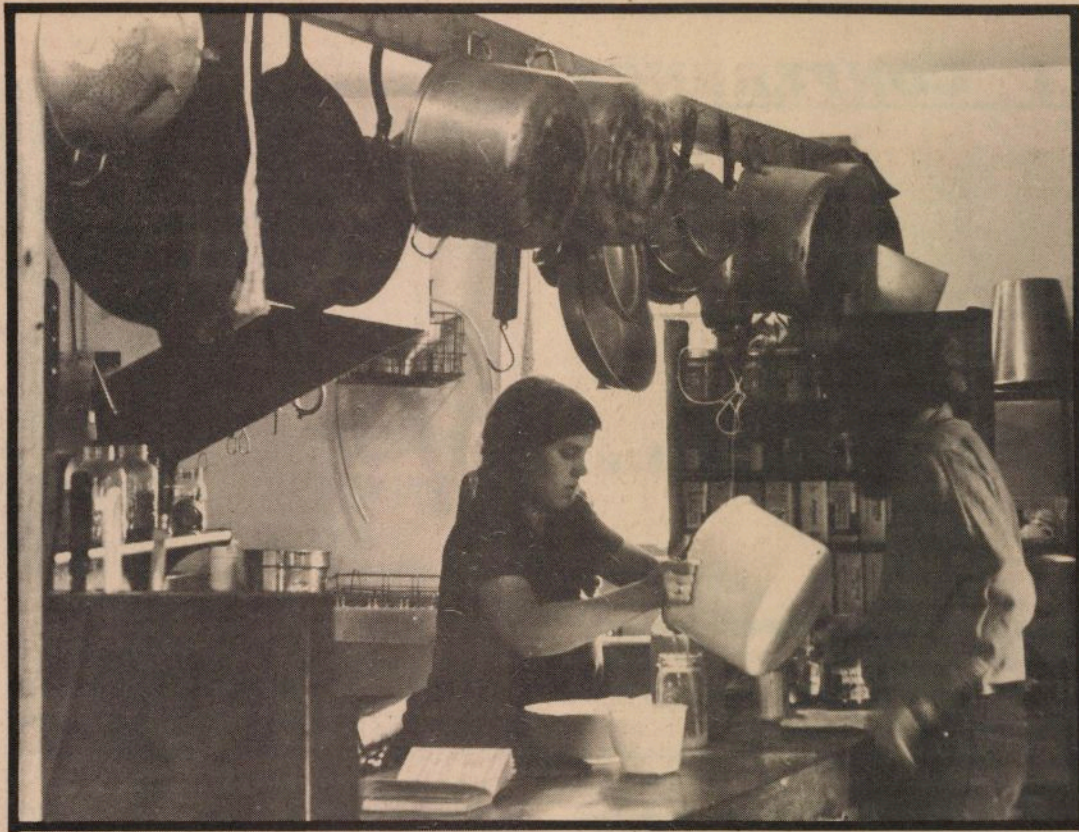
Saturday and Sunday were the beginnings of a hard week's work. A back porch was framed in to shelter the cooking stoves and food preparation tables. After one false start, the children's tent was raised. Jim Knoll and Kitty Kohl drew up maps for the conference brochure.

On Monday and Tuesday, the plumbing for the 3 outdoor showers was completed. Stoves were borrowed and brought to the kitchen area, which was covered with fiberglass sheets. General housekeeping and grounds clean-up happened.

On Tuesday, a huge order of food arrived from the warehouse in Fayetteville, Ark. It was dispersed in less than 4 hours, and the cooperation involved felt good. "We came out almost exactly even.", exclaimed Rich. Wednesday and Thursday were the days of the huge Bread Bake. Also, the brochure was written and stencils prepared. Barbara got registration together, while Edith typed the registration lists. The huge tent, loaned to U&I by Ralston Purina (a 35x72 checkerboard monster that provided crucial shelter for the conference workshops) was put up. A floor was added to the Child Care Tent; the bulletin board was made and the picnic tables finished. Gail set up the snack stand.

Day after day, Larry patiently answered the phone, arranging rides for people all over the country.

On Friday the signs were painted, and all is ready... for anything???



Group Work

Jubal had predicted that over 200 people would show. Over the conference weekend, that many and more would come to share the event.

Friday began with overcast skies, which later turned into a light rain. Barbara kept smiling and predicted that the rain would stop by Saturday. By 6 PM many people began to arrive. Spike and others shared bedding space with those unprepared for rain. Jan and Jay stayed up all night under a wet tarp, welcoming late-night arrivals. That night there was a sing-along, with guitars out in force. Venison was cooked over an open pit.

As it turned out, Barbara's prediction did not come true. The conference was set against the reality of 3 days of rain. Still incredible things happened. . . .

Conference participants represented a wide range of interests and lifestyles. There were folks belonging to established groups and networks from Virginia to California. Ozark resource people included—Elitta January from the Ozark Growers and Buyers Association; Joel Davidson of LION newsletter; Ronn Foss of **Your Times Express**; Stuart Leiderman, who is working on a National Seed Cooperative; and the Earthbooks Lending Library from the people at Sunrise Farm.

People looking for groups seemed less interested in making firm commitments than they were curious about the different possible alternatives which groups had to offer. Many of them were interested in finding a piece of land, either alone or with a group of friends, and in doing right by Mother Earth. If four words could describe those interests, they would be "self-sufficiency, low consumption, cooperation, ecology".

There were a number of workshops held at the Conference that came off really well. Some more knowledgeable people in certain fields (a number of facilitators who were signed up couldn't make it) would have been welcome, but in general people seemed to feel pretty good about the level of sharing.

The type of workshop that seemed to hold the most interest throughout the Conference dealt with sexuality and interpersonal relationships. "Living Gayly", facilitated by Corn and McKay of U&I, was one of the favorites. The high point of the whole conference was at the end of this workshop, when the participants let out a big cheer for human liberation.

There were 2 workshops on Acupuncture Massage, facilitated by Phil Steinberg, which was enjoyed by many. Glo Twin Oaks facilitated a workshop on Sexuality on Saturday. The Bisexuality workshop, done by Wilma U&I, was described as "a real sharing". A list of participants was compiled, and plans were made to keep this group in contact.

Ruth and Pete Smelser gave an excellent workshop on goats and small animals, complete with posters and other visual aids. The conference would have benefited from more informed presentations such as this, especially in technical areas.

"Herbal Medicine"; "Natural Healing"; "Healing—Color, Music, Magnetism" were excellent workshops on the body and healing. In addition, Joh Harman of U&I facilitated a group on psychic phenomenon. He demonstrated and explained the nature of auras and other ethereal bodies.



Other work sessions were arranged along the lines of information sharing. Jubal U&I held several sessions on obtaining land by buying versus leasing. Piper Twin Oaks led workshops on starting a community, and education in community. At the Communal Networks and Publications workshop we talked about different levels of information sharing and explored the types of information which are most useful at local, regional, and national levels.

The Ozark Federation session was of particular interest to local folks. There were over 50 people at this one, which dealt with ways in which we can cooperate on an economic level. Bob East Wind proposed that a Community Products network be established, which would use East Wind as a distribution center for products made by groups throughout the Ozarks. 35 people that were interested in marketing their goods, or starting cottage industries signed up for the first mailing list for Community Products **Editor's Note: The next issue of Communities will cover this proposal in detail**

Group Play

A description of the workshops, however, in no way gives a total picture of this event. There was a lot of shared high spirits: people hugging, laughing together in groups, chanting and holding hands. These hill people really know how to put on a good time! Ronn Foss, editor of our local Ozark newsletter, **Your Times Express**, described the appearance of Hot Mulch on Saturday night: "Hot Mulch (who else?) really livened up the first night and laid out about the best I've ever heard. . . . super-high good times under a full moon." Over 100 people, arm in arm, danced to the beat of "Up on Cripple Creek" . . . 100 bodies pressed into a small space for a group OM at midnight. Perhaps it seems hard to believe, but the rain and all the work was worth just that one night.

Kitty finally made it to sleep around 3 AM, underneath the table in Community House; destined to arise at 6 AM to fix breakfast. Yet she still had that smile on her face. . . .

The festivities continued on Sunday night. Foss described it: "Sunday night almost 100 gathered around the fire and sang for 3 hours, after which a dozen of us carried another 2, then finally 5 of us until daybreak, ably assisted by the guitars of "Spike" of North Carolina and U&I's own Joss".

The Results

After the intensity of preparing and carrying out the Conference, it is too soon to assess that happening as a whole. Of course, there was a real sharing at many different levels—sharing that will give many of us juice for quite a long time to come. There was the contact with so many people with energy, ideas, and warm smiles. There were a number of lists made during the conference which will bring people together in the future. Certainly something will come out of the Ozark Federation Workshop. No new groups were started as a result of the conference, but in many ways U&I became more of a community as a result of their shared efforts. The last report is that U&I is now the legal owner of the land, which is a big step forward for these fine people.

One can't help but feel good about the cooperation that took place at an intercommunity level. The conference served to establish a bond between U&I, East Wind, and other Ozark communities, which should prove to be a mutually beneficial one. For that 3-day period, we all formed a real community, working and playing together.

Oh, oh, Missouri I built my home
When the red bud trees were purple,
They were purple, can't ya see?
And right outside my door
Were the May apples,
Growing and lookin' like palm trees.

Oh, oh, Missouri you're my home,
And the Ozarks are my kind of place.
If you ever see me walkin' on my land,
You'll always see a smile upon my face

Now, Miami, you're too hot
And Vermont, you're too cold,
So I'll stay right here in the middle,
Where it's warm!

Cooperative Alternatives:

FOOD

This is the first of a series—and hopefully, a permanent, growing portion of the magazine—dealing with cooperative living options other than communes. By this we mean forms of sharing other than the income, labor, and child care sharing of, say, the rural communes like the Walden II and spiritual groups that Communities has focused on to date.

This has a couple of implications. First, it will tend to take us towards the urban scene, where the widest range of cooperative alternatives are being explored—in the food cooperative movement: in collectivization of business; in grassroots efforts to promote cooperative problem-solving through neighborhood organizations. Secondly, it will expand our definition of “community” to include forms of cooperative sharing which are a more active part of the larger society—that are of more immediate relevance to many people than the relatively isolated, closed utopian

experiments.

Many of us within the intentional communities movement are beginning to see that the ideal of cooperative living is going to be realized in a number of different ways. We are no longer presumptuous enough to think, for example, that the Twin Oaks/Walden II experiment is a model for the whole world—or at least, to think that everybody is going to make that leap from operating as an individual within a totally capitalist society, to a totally communal society.

An important point along the continuum of cooperative possibilities is buying and distributing food. Food cooperatives have political as well as economic meanings for many people. In the 2 articles that follow, we take a look at how individual food coops get started, and how they affect the lives of the folks that make them work.

Haight-Ashbury Food Conspiracy

By Nancy Grant

The Haight-Ashbury Food Conspiracy began in 1968, in the days of the flower children, when three communal households began buying food together in an effort to minimize the amount of money they spent on food. Their friends and friends of friends became interested in the idea and joined the collective work and benefits. By 1973, the conspiracy was handling \$2,000 worth of food each week for 150 member communes. Over the last two years, we've experienced a decline in membership as the idea of alternative food sources has led to the thriving existence of several food stores and other buying collectives in the area. We see this as a positive step—where the Haight-Ashbury Food Conspiracy was formerly the **only** alternative food source, now it is one of a dozen, each with its own particular orientation (spiritual, political, macrobiotic, etc.) or lack of it.

We are presently about 25 houses, covering roughly a 15 by 15 block square in the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood of San Francisco. Our membership is composed primarily of small communal families (three to eight members), of students, working people (both “straight” and counterculture jobs), ranging in age from 18 to 40, plus children. Politically we are open to anyone who will share the work equally (nonsexist, nonracist, etc.) and we tend to support local small, especially collectivized, farms and businesses. We operate on the basis of active participation, cooperation and shared leadership by all members.

The structure of the conspiracy is a collectives system: there are buying collectives, responsible for pricing, purchasing and delivering their particular type of food (Cheese, Fish, Bread, Produce, Coffee, etc.) and administrative collectives which

handle coordination and paperwork (Banking, Divide Coordinators, Ordering Coordinators). There's also a Communications group, responsible for a small, irregularly published newsletter for the conspiracy community. Whenever there's a demand, we create a new, temporary work group for special needs: dry goods, dog food, soaps, herbs and teas, or big jars. Each collective is administered by a coordinator whose job rotates among the members periodically. Someone does the job until co's had enough, then finds someone willing to take over and trains that person. The coordinator calls meetings, keeps track of the schedule and helps integrate new members into the conspiracy by making them familiar with the group, inviting them to meetings, etc.

All-conspiracy issues are handled at meetings which occur once every six weeks. We conduct meetings by electing a chairperson (usually someone volunteers), drawing up an agenda (anyone can suggest anything for discussion), and covering each item on the agenda. Issues are resolved by consensus (formally by two-thirds agreement of all present; usually we talk it out until everyone's satisfied). Meetings tend to go quickly and smoothly. Because we're a small number, everyone is pretty much aware of the issues; besides, we always have a potluck dinner and party after meetings—a very effective reinforcement for getting the meetings finished.

The conspiracy has been through several structural changes, precipitated mainly by a need for greater efficiency based on the quantity of food/money being handled. At our largest, we divided the membership into neighborhoods ("Cement Block" was always my favorite name), each of which had a coordinator and its own meeting, responsibilities, (parties), etc. Food was divided twice, first into neighborhood lots, then into household shares at a neighborhood divide. Ordering worked similarly—each household ordered and paid for food at a neighborhood house which would bring it to the conspiracy "Adding" house where the order would be totalled with the money and divided appropriately among the buyers. Now, ordering happens for the whole conspiracy at one place, the place rotating among member households.

The Food Conspiracy has functioned in fact, if not intention-

ally, as a strong community resource. Many interest groups have found their beginnings at food conspiracy meetings or potlucks. A group on Life Planning which ran for eight weeks ending with a self-designed 14 hour workshop; a childcare group, several study collectives, including such topics as Birth Control, Healing, Altered States of Consciousness are examples. The Community Store, a volunteer-operated food store, grew out of a collective within the conspiracy. Also, the more politically active and informed tend to keep the less politically aware members in touch with local political situations and active to the extent of supporting boycotts and pointing out different buying alternatives.

There are problems, of course, and much more that's possible for us to do in terms of community: holding joint meetings with other community groups and organizing film showings are among the suggestions. And there are always a few members who won't pull their share of the load. We never can seem to make a final decision about what to do with Big Red, our truck—sell it, buy a smaller one, form a mechanics collective or what. Extremely active members tend to take on too much responsibility and burn out from overwork. One might see in this that "power tends to destroy" yet the institution has survived a series of such people. The group as a whole has become aware of the problem and is dividing responsibility more evenly now. But the conspiracy does work, and work well as an alternative urban food source. After seven years and several turnovers in membership and structure, it's an ongoing institution in an urban community which is composed largely of transient, mobile people.

Perhaps the single most important function the conspiracy has performed has been to draw people together. A city can be a very difficult place to meet people. The conspiracy has united a group of active people with diverse interests, willing to participate. Working together and playing together (the reinforcement of food and parties, ping pong tournaments and volleyball **works**) provides a very positive setting for people to get to know and enjoy each other; and the fact that we all live in the same general area constitutes us a neighborhood community, out of which anything is possible.

How To Start A Community Food Store

by Becky Taber

Reprinted from **Workforce**, No. 49-50

Question: What was it that attracted you to this line of work?

Lois: The first time I went into a store like this I spent all day and got so turned on and excited at what was going on... I started learning.

Julie: I came in and thought 'I've got to work here'. So I came to a meeting and got a lot of ideas about the importance of such a thing...

Q: How do you see the importance of this work?

Julie: I find the importance of the food system in terms of advocating social change. An alternative food system is antithetical to the whole idea of capitalistic society. I see it as an important

force in trying to change the types of lives we are living.

Building an alternative food system throughout the nation will put stress on the system that exists, and will be a survival system if we are cut off by the system. We need to cooperate with other groups that are breaking down the capitalistic system.

Some people who do this kind of work do not agree with me. They see the food system as an alternative that can exist within the existing order.

To other people nutrition is all important, and the only importance to this work.

Other people see it as a consumer movement, a 'cheap store'.

Still others say merely 'we maintain ourselves, and that is a political act.'

I believe that, but we have to have an understanding of why it's political, and a sense of working beyond just working in food

in this local area. We have to go beyond that and develop links with other places and other types of systems.

Q: How did an alternative food system come into being?

Lois: In the beginning there were several individual stores, and as there came to be more and more stores, there came to be a need/desire to be more than a bunch of groups working separately, and people wanted to work together more, so what we have now are attempts to set about developing means of working together.

Now there are cheese, milk, herb, poultry, flour, vegetable, and printing collectives, and two bakeries and a yoghurt collective. Day-care is organized while people are working. The poultry collective is the first one that is actually at the source of the food: the chickens and eggs are raised by collective members.

The specialized collectives developed as certain people got more and more into a certain aspect of things, like, say, buying cheese, and ended up wanting to do only that and share knowledge with anyone interested.

Q: How did this store begin?

Lois: I had just gotten to this community, and I said "Where's the non-profit food store?" And there wasn't one. And everyone was going to the City to shop at the co-ops there, and several people started putting up signs at those stores asking for people to start a store in this community. So we got together through those notes and put up bigger signs and got more people, and so began.

In the first few months, hundreds of people drifted in and out of the project. Thirty-five people might turn up for one meeting, and we'd never see any of them again.

We wanted to call the store a community food store. We couldn't get together on our definition of community, community meaning different things to different people, but we agreed on the name.

And we agreed on the vision: we wanted there to be 'low cost, high quality food', but we wanted to create more than just a cheap food store, we wanted to take from our varied political backgrounds and create a new way of working.

We decided to structure our meetings around an **Issues in Radical Therapy** article: "Criticism, Self-Criticism". We start a meeting talking about feelings we bring to the meeting, and after a meeting we evaluate the meeting and ourselves in it. We reach decisions by consensus.

Q: What does it take to open a store?

Lois: We realized at the beginning that the most important things we needed were money and a storefront.

We needed a minimum of 1200 square feet for our store, with as low a rent as possible, and centrally located. We got a map of the community and divided it up into parts. We decided what sections were not good for the store we were planning (the wealthy hill section, and the industrial section), and each of us took one of the rest of the sections and searched in them, by car and by bicycle, for our future storefront.

We checked into every possible storefront in town. We learned to look up ownerships of empty properties in the city tax records.

Before signing a lease we had our future storefront checked out by local fire, building and health inspectors, to make sure that the place could pass inspection. (It's important not to start a business without a lease, because you can be evicted after

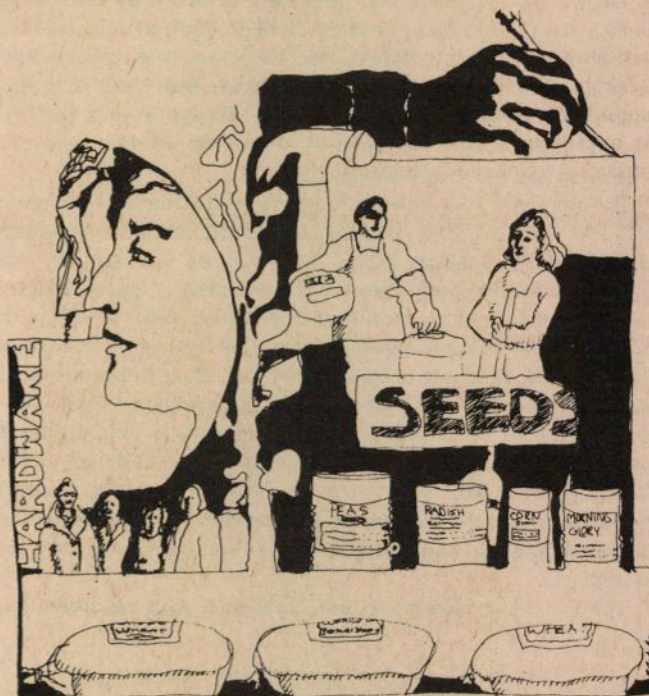
making improvements if you don't have a lease.)

Q: How did you learn to run a food store?

Lois: We spent time volunteering in existing non-profit stores that we liked in the near-by city, and we picked their brains.

Q: Where did the money come from?

Lois: We'd been working on the project for about two months when a fantastic man came along and lent us \$1,000. The rest of the money that we opened the store with came from two defunct community groups that had money left over from earlier projects. We were given \$800 by these groups after we had found our storefront and made commitments to open the store. Those groups needed proof that we were real and going to do the



project whether they gave the money or not.

At the beginning we had to keep doing it, assuming the money would come from somewhere.

Q: How did you work out who did what, and did anyone get paid?

Lois: Going on the experiences we were having at the stores we were looking at, we thought someone should have an over-view of what was going on, so we decided to take the money we had and pay someone to work fulltime and call that person a 'continuity spreader'. Only one of us felt a real desire to become a continuity spreader at the meeting we had about it, so everyone agreed that that person would be it, and we decided upon a \$250 per month salary based on need, and on what we had.

The first Saturday after we signed the lease on the store, a lot of people turned up and energy flowed, and a lot of work got done, and people were high. Then the energy dropped to zero. The store just sat there.

So Trudy and I sat down and made a list of all the tasks that had to be done to open the store. Then at a meeting, people took charge of each task. That meant that those people became

responsible for organizing to get those tasks done. Once that was done, things flowed, people began to take responsibility... people who had never taken responsibility before began to do things.

The problem with the continuity-spreader era was that we allowed him to take on all the shit of the store. The only thing that changed that was to start paying more people. After a few months we went to three paid people, and then just recently we've moved to seven paid staff.

Q: What happened after you opened the store?

Lois: After we opened the store we needed money to expand our stock and keep from going under. We couldn't even begin to keep up with the need... people kept coming in and we couldn't afford to buy enough food. So we sold food vouchers. Customers would front us an amount of money for a certain amount of time, and then redeem the vouchers in food at the end of that time. So we had the money to buy food with. It kept the store going. One beautiful woman bought a \$500 voucher.

We have talked about other money-raising schemes that some other food stores have used, but that we have not as yet. One approach that can work if the project is well-known in a community, is to sell bonds to the people in the neighborhood, which are, in effect, long term, interest free loans. You say:

"we'll pay you back your \$10 within a year", and collect money for your store that way. It's also possible to give volunteers a discount if they work a certain number of hours, or to sell memberships to customers and either only have members shop in the store or give them a special discount. These were possibilities we considered but didn't act upon.

Q: How do you make decisions collectively?

Lois: On the spot, day-to-day decisions are made between the day coordinator (the paid person for that day) and the shopkeepers (the volunteers), who between them should have a good idea of what's going on. We had to formalize this informal decision making so people wouldn't either hold everything until formal meetings, or make decisions without consulting anyone.

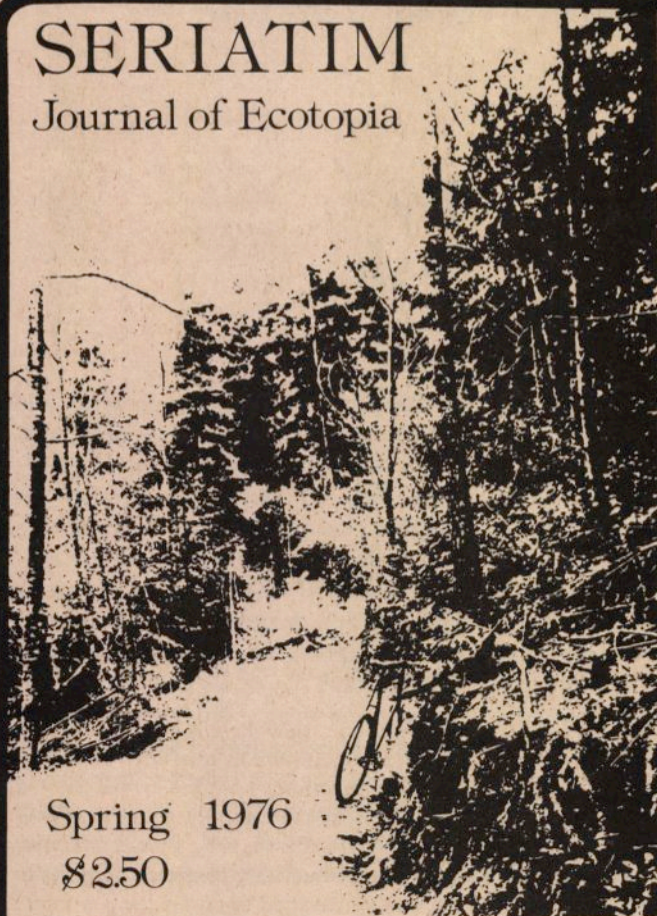
We have a useful warning up in the store: "If something's being done a certain way, find out why before you try to change it."

Major decisions are made at once-a-week meetings. We haven't had any trouble reaching consensus so far.

We have been having meetings once a week for a year and a half. We just decided to have every third meeting be a study group where we concentrate on learning more about our role as a non-profit store, both in the alternative food system, and as part of a larger movement for change.

SERIATIM

Journal of Ecotopia



Spring 1976
\$2.50

ABOUT SERIATIM

Seriatim is a journal about the Ecotopian region—the region located in the northwest corner of the American continent where an environmentally-attuned, stable-state society is emerging. *Seriatim* aims to document and foster the growth of that society.

This pre-issue is intended to introduce you to the topics *Seriatim* will be treating in its first issue, which will appear around July 1. Included here is an outline of the first issue, with abstracts of major articles.

We will focus to a large extent on reports of research and innovation of relevance to the Ecotopian enterprise. Our definition of research is loose, and our interests include software systems—trade networks, economic alternatives, strategies for personal and social change—as well as hardware systems—renewable energy applications, agri/aquaculture methods, recycling technologies.

Besides publishing abstracts of important research articles from other publications, we solicit reports of academic and institutional research projects being carried out by student as well as professional researchers—and reports from alternative groups of all kinds who are engaged in testing or developing new approaches to holistic living. We pay for articles used—please see inside back cover for details.

By way of encouraging reader participation, we will feature a series of reader-research projects based on the model established by *Organic Gardening and Farming* and the New Alchemy Institute several years ago. We also hope to provide funds for outstanding research and development projects designed and selected by our readers—see inside back cover for details.

ABOUT US

We're eight people who have formed ourselves into a loosely-structured collective. Most of us have lived in the Pacific Northwest for all of our lives, others have spent several years here. With a couple of exceptions we've all known each other for a long time, and we've often had an idea that someday we would all be doing something together. Sometimes in the past our respective interests have closely paralleled each other, and sometimes they've come together for brief periods and then split apart again. Until *Seriatim*, the opportunity has not presented itself for us all to channel our energies in the same direction.

What we all share is a holistic vision of our region. Each of us has special interests (solar energy, algae production, Tai Chi Ch'uan, preventive health practices, growing and relating to plants), but all of us share the vision of a self-reliant, small-scale, stable state series of systems, through all the facets of our lives. We would all like to help bring about the changes already started by others. We would like to live in Ecotopia, and in many senses we already do.

The novel *Ecotopia*, by our friend Ernest Callenbach, was influential in getting us started. We liked a number of his ideas and liked his optimistic approach to the future of the Northwest. (As another friend says, optimism is a more personally productive point of view than paranoia.) Calling our magazine a Journal of Ecotopia means that we are in love with the idea of Ecotopia; we are not necessarily in love with all the specifics as spelled out in the book. In other words, if anything good happens, we'll take part credit; if anything bad happens, don't blame us!

- \$50.00 (Charter sub.)
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FEATURE COMMUNITY



What is Ananda?

Ananda is a cooperative spiritual community of disciples of Paramahansa Yogananda. There are 100 adult members and 25 children. We live together on 650 acres of meadow and forest land, 3000 feet in the beautiful Sierra Nevada Mountains, 16 miles from Nevada City, California. Swami Kriyananda, a direct disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda, is the founder and resident spiritual director of Ananda.

The Spirit of Ananda

Ananda is a home for devotees of God. It is a village, a farm, and a dairy. It is a meditation retreat and a publications business. It is auto repair and bee keeping, macrame and carpentry. Ananda is family and friends. It is meditation and serving God. Ananda is "home, job, and church" in one place. It is all the details—mundane and transcendental—that make for a God-reminding way of life.

ANANDA

By
ASHA

The word "ananda" is Sanscrit for God as bliss. The name is well chosen because Ananda is much more than a place, it is a state of awareness, a quality of the heart, a constantly changing experience of inner joy.

A commitment to Ananda is symbolic of a deeper commitment to God and Guru. We do not consider ourselves merely a sociological or economic experiment. Life at Ananda is a divine romance—an eternal love affair between the devotees of God and the one true Beloved. The spirit of Ananda is epitomized in this prayer of our guru: "May Thy love shine forever on the sanctuary of our devotion, and may we be able to awaken Thy love in all whom we meet."

The Purpose of Ananda

In his soon-to-be published book, **The Path: Autobiography of an American Yogi**, Swami Kriyananda writes:

"What is needed today is for small concentrations of people to gather together, living and working in one place, creating vortices of spiritual energy. With such foci of power they will be able to fend off, and in time to influence positively the materialistic forces rampant in the world today.

will power.' He saw 'world brotherhood colonies' as environments that would aid the development of the spiritual attitudes: humility, trust, devotion, kindness, respect for others, quiet dignity, and friendly cooperation.

"Gather together, those of you who share high ideals,' Yogananda told his audiences. 'Pool your resources. Buy land in the country. A simple life will bring you inner freedom. Harmony with nature will bring you a happiness known to few city dwellers. In the company of other truth seekers it will be easier for you to meditate and to think of God'".

The purpose of living at Ananda is to perfect ourselves through a balanced life of service and meditation and to realize God as our true Self through the practice of the teachings of our Guru, Paramahansa Yogananda. This common understanding of why we are together makes a plethora of other regulations unnecessary.

Getting Along Together

"Don't make too many rules," Yogananda once told Swamiji, "it destroys the spirit." With remarkable success, we have been able to follow this simple precept.

There is a great deal of personal freedom at Ananda. People are highly self-motivated and, given the choice, consistently seem to opt to be selfless, generous, hard-working, and fair-minded. Disagreements among people are rare, and fights non-existent, despite the fact that almost all of us are out-spoken, hold definite opinions on virtually every subject, and show little hesitation in wholeheartedly pursuing our goals. But this energy is balanced by a willingness to find fault first with ourselves and not just blame others for our own failings. Our strong opinions and creative drive are tempered by a constant prayer to God: "I will reason, I will will, I will act, but guide Thou my reason, will and activity to the right path in every action."

Not that we are always noble and never make mistakes—would that it were so! But even failure is usually predicated upon good intentions. And we have found that the best way to help each other grow is not by constantly criticizing, but by offering kindness and respect. In this way we gradually gain the confidence to face ourselves honestly, and have the courage to change.



“The purpose of living at Ananda is to perfect ourselves through a balanced life of service and meditation and to realize God as our true Self through the practice of the teachings of our

Guru, Paramahansa Yogananda. This common understanding of why we are together makes a plethora of other regulations unnecessary.”

Daily meditation plays an indispensable role in making Ananda run smoothly. When one is at peace with himself, there is no reason to wage war on others.

Personal relationships per se are not emphasized at Ananda. We seek our happiness inside, through God-attuned meditation, and only secondarily from one another. Yet deep spiritual friendships come about naturally as a consequence of meditating together, working together, and sharing a common understanding of life's higher purpose. Because we don't have to depend exclusively on each other for emotional fulfillment, we are able to appreciate even more, it seems, the simple joys of friendship.

Membership

The population of Ananda is quite stable, increasing steadily each year. There is some turnover of course, but most people who join, stay. One reason is that we require potential members to live in the community for at least several months before our membership committee will accept them. Our specialized lifestyle acts as an automatic screening device. Also, we have a membership fee of \$1000 for an individual or \$1500 for married couples. This amount of money represents a high level of commitment. One can't just drop in and join Ananda because there is no better place to go.

Another reason is that Ananda is a uniquely beneficial environment for spiritual growth. The company of devotees, the supremely inspiring presence of Swami Kriyananda, and the opportunity to engage in right livelihood by working in Ananda cottage industries, is an unbeatable combination. The vortex of spiritual energy that our combined efforts create, also helps one to meditate more deeply.

The benefits of living here, instead of diminishing with familiarity, only seem to increase the longer one stays. Since the possibilities for spiritual growth are literally infinite, one can easily visualize spending the rest of one's life right here at Ananda. Or, if not precisely in this community, spending it serving in some way the work that Ananda has begun.

History and Master Plan

Ananda was founded in 1968 when Swamiji purchased the 68 acre parcel that is now our Meditation Retreat and home for 20 members. The Retreat and the community began simultaneously, in keeping with our dual purpose: to build a spiritual home for ourselves and to share with others the benefits of the life we evolve. Our original plan was to have the whole community on the Retreat land for at least 5 years. It was completely paid for and it seemed the wisest way to grow. But we soon realized that having a meditation retreat and small children in one place would never work successfully. By the Spring of 1969 it was clear that something had to be done. Then, 6 miles up the road,

a beautiful 285 acre farm came up for sale. Despite our reluctance to take on the large mortgage, we felt that this was the way that we had to go, so we bought the property.

This land, Ananda Farm, soon became the center for the outward activities of community life: businesses, gardening, schools, and families with children. The Retreat remained as the focus of our spiritual life.

The demands of a monthly mortgage accelerated the energy of the community. We began to develop businesses. Several of the members went back to the city for a time to earn money and make necessary business contacts. Swamiji left for several months to teach classes to support the community. It was a struggle to get going, but by the summer of 1970 we were economically stable enough for Swamiji and the other members to resume their full-time residence at Ananda.

Our Meditation Retreat continued to flourish, serving as a major source of income for the community, but land use agreements with our neighbors prohibited us from expanding the Retreat facilities. In fact, our neighbors wanted us to limit the Retreat's growth and even cut back. Economically we couldn't afford to do it, and idealistically, our desire was to serve more people, rather than fewer and fewer. It was obvious that we needed to move the Retreat.

Ananda Farm was the center of community life. We all felt it best to keep the community area separate from the Retreat. It just didn't seem feasible to build a new Retreat right on the Farm land. We were just beginning to look for other land in the neighborhood when the owner of the 326 acres adjacent to our Farm approached us with an excellent offer to sell his land to us, if we agreed to buy and use the whole piece. It was far more than we needed for our proposed Retreat, and it was really more than we could easily afford. But, naturally, it was the ideal property. So, in January 1974, we agreed, bringing our total land to 650 acres.

On our new property we propose to build not only a larger, more modern Meditation Retreat, but also an Institute of Cooperative Spiritual Living as a training center for those who wish to start communities of their own. We also plan to develop a Healing Center and Sanitarium where many forms of natural health care can be practiced. With 650 acres we estimate that we can grow comfortably to 200 members.

The development of the new land, however, has been held up because of county restrictions. Prior to 1974, we were classified as a "church camp" by the local officials, and we grew up under the sole auspices of the county health department. This gave us great freedom, within the boundaries of health and safety, to develop according to our own needs and preferences. But when we purchased the new land and went to the county to get approval for developing it, they were rather surprised to realize how

much we had grown in recent years.

Their response was a requirement to submit a Master Plan and Environmental Impact Report for our overall development. They placed a moratorium on building until the Plan was submitted and approved. Preparing a Master Plan and EIR turned out to be a much more complicated process than we had ever imagined, and it is only now—two years later—that we have managed to produce acceptable documents.

These papers are now wending their way through the long process of bureaucratic review, before public hearings will be scheduled on our Use Permit applications. We have fond hopes, however, that within a few months, at least the initial stages of the Plan will receive official approval. (See **Communities #16** for further information on Ananda's planning process).

The Master Plan has been a mixed blessing. Before this situation came up we had been quite satisfied to grow organically, letting Swamiji's vision for the community be the guide. Exactly where we were going didn't seem that vitally important. It was enough to carry on from day to day, expanding as necessary and desirable. The planning process made us examine more closely the overall possibilities of Ananda Community. Swamiji spent many hours talking about what he sees as Ananda's mission, as well as describing specific ways that it could be implemented—i.e. the Institute and the Healing Center. We have matured through this process, realizing on a deeper level how much Ananda means to us, and how helpful it can be to others as well.

On the negative side of the coin, the building moratorium that we have had to endure for the past two years has been extremely frustrating. We have been unable to expand or remodel existing structures. We have continued to grow during these years, and the resulting housing and building shortages has become acute. By now we feel that the positive lessons of the Master Plan have been learned, and we are impatient to resume the physical building of Ananda.

Homes

The style of living in our community is like a small village. Because meditation is the heart of our life, privacy and solitude are important. Private residences are scattered throughout our land. Each family has its own home, or, in some cases, a large trailer. Unmarried members of the community live alone in trailers, tipis, or small cabins. Individual members can design and build their own homes although the structures are actually owned by the community.

Money

In a community like ours, where we wish to minimize bureaucracy and maximize personal responsibility, we have found that the best economic system is also the one with which we are most familiar: people simply work for wages and in turn pay for what they receive. Residents are required to make a monthly contribution to Ananda for mortgage, utilities, and schools. This payment is pro-rated according to the number of wage earners in the family to

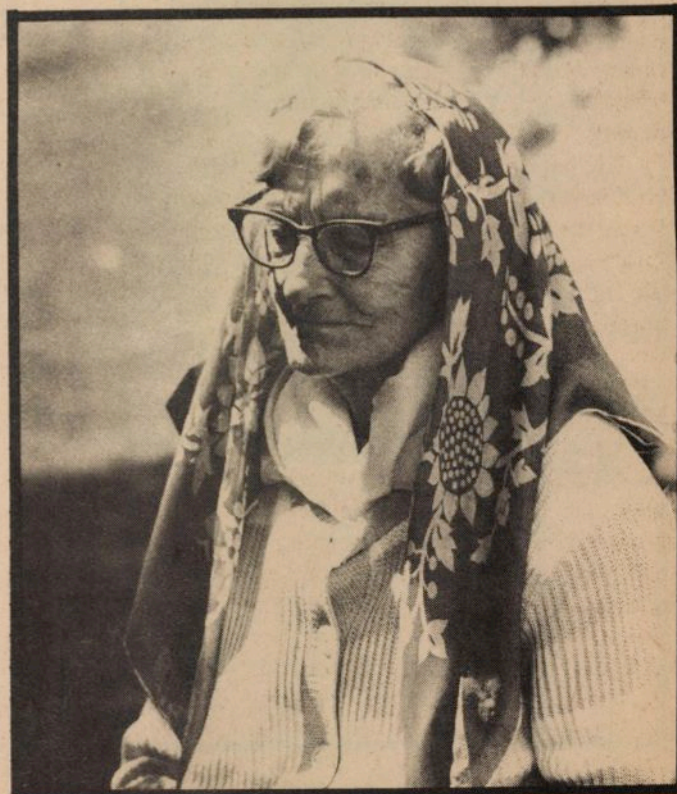
allow for a woman's full-time absorption with small children. Single people pay \$90, families with children \$115, and married couples with no children \$170.

Most people in the community hold full-time jobs. Only a few work outside of Ananda, and they do so as much from choice as necessity. Making money, however, is not the real incentive for working here. It is the joy of service itself, as well as the satisfaction of building Ananda. By making a success of our businesses we not only bring needed income into the community; we also generate more jobs, making it possible for other to come and live at Ananda.

Our products, too, are a form of service. This is especially clear in the work we do sharing our spiritual teachings through the Retreat and Ananda Publications. In less explicit ways we serve by imbuing each item we produce with a vibration of loving care. In this way we share with our customers, in a subtle way, the joy of our life.

Anyone who wants to (and can afford it) can start his own business. Naturally those with more experience are on hand to give advice to novices, but no worthwhile plan is discouraged. This "free enterprise" system has brought out the maximum creativity, giving people the fun and satisfaction of doing their own thing, rather than working for one enormous "Ananda Company." The businesses cooperate together, combining such services as bookkeeping, trucking, and shipping.

We now have a variety of cottage industries, producing macrame, honey, a medical instrument, flour mills, fruit syrups, candy bars, incense, and essential oils. The various existing out-buildings, including a large old barn and farmhouse on the Farm have been converted into workshops and offices for these industries.



Ananda Publications, too large to be called a 'cottage' industry, is also a major source of income and employment. Publications prints, publishes, and distributes the books, lessons, records, and tape recorded lectures of Swami Kriyananda. Sixteen people are employed in the office and print shop.

The Publications business is housed in a new building that sits on the hill above the central farm area. This hill is the designated area for Ananda's "industrial complex." When we can afford it, all the businesses will construct workshops in this area.

The Publications building is also the central office for all of Ananda—the community manager, secretary, treasurer, and correspondent all have their desks at Publications.

Ananda Meditation Retreat is another highly successful Ananda enterprise. Six to ten people (depending on the season of the year) serve on the Retreat Staff. Hundreds of visitors come every year to study yoga postures, philosophy, meditation, and to share in our way of life. In addition to providing jobs and income, the Retreat has been a focus for our outward service. Caring for guests has kept us ever mindful of the need not only to gather blessings, but also to give them away with an open heart.

Working on the Retreat Staff is a very demanding but highly rewarding job. One is sometimes on call 24 hours a day. By the end of our busy summer the staff members are

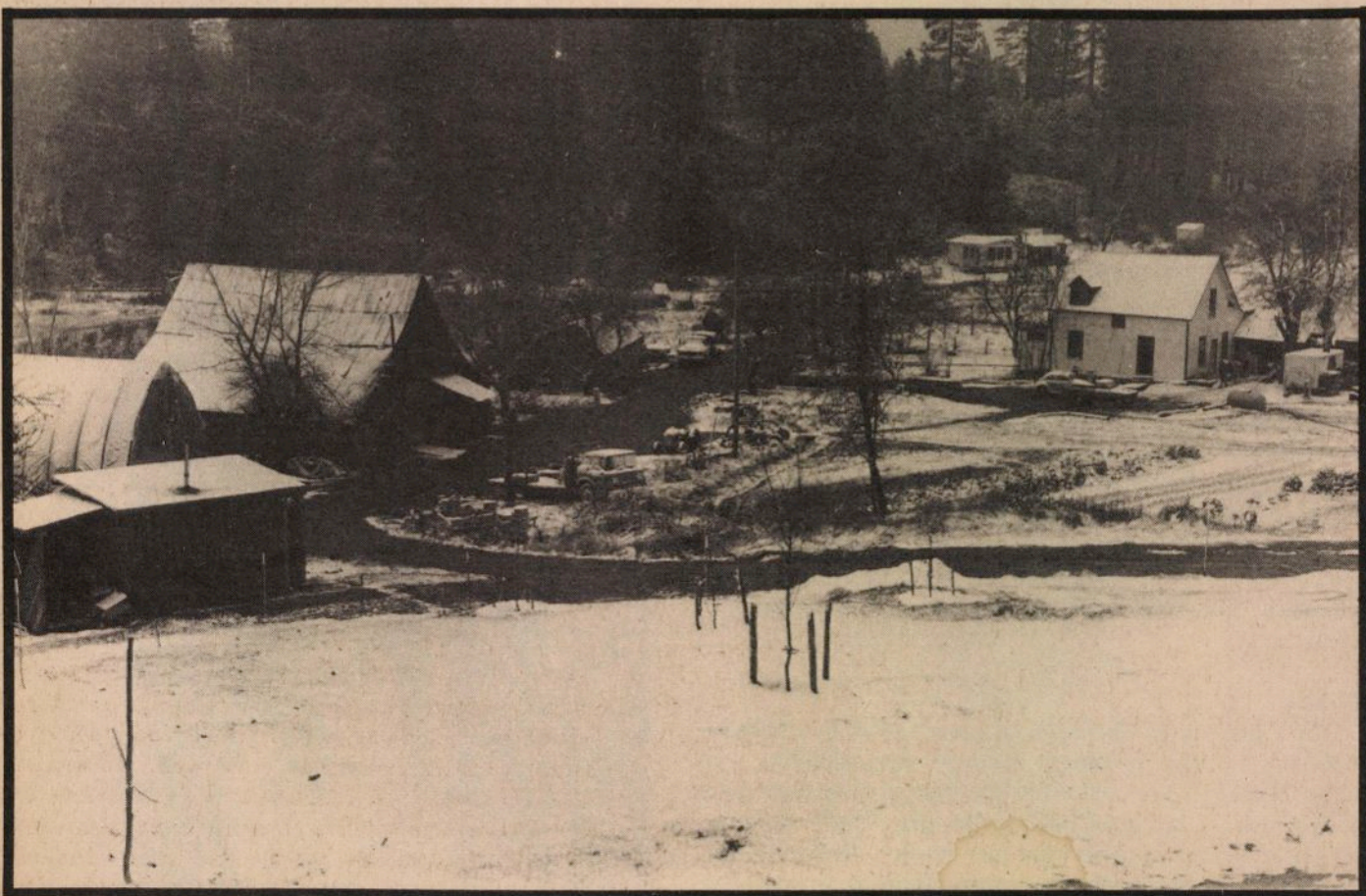
usually ready for a long period of seclusion. But just seeing the tension in a retreatant's face change to the warm glow of inner contentment, is enough to make all the effort worthwhile.

Both the Retreat and Publications were founded by Swamiji. The ownership has now been turned over to the Yoga Fellowship, Ananda's non-profit, tax-exempt, religious corporation. Swamiji still takes a nominal interest in managing the Retreat and a somewhat more active role in Publications, although the majority of the responsibility is handled by the members who work for these enterprises.

Ananda Forest Services has provided work for a large crew of men this year. By contracting with the Forestry Department for tree thinning, tree planting, and trail clearing jobs, AFS has kept crews of from 10-25 working most of the year. The major disadvantage of this business is that it requires the men to be away from Ananda for days, or even weeks at a time.

Our newest business is a labor pool to contract with outside industries for jobs such as electronics assembly, woodworking, etc., that can be done at Ananda with our present facilities. This project is just getting underway, however, so we cannot yet say how successful it will be.

In-community services that provide jobs for a few people include a market, an auto repair shop, and a soup kitchen which provides a hot lunch for those who work at





the Farm.

We have a large organic garden and dairy herd. The produce and milk are sold to members through the market. The farm and dairy are owned by the community as a whole. Workers are paid by receiving rent waivers and a small salary from the community budget.

We support ourselves through these industries, but there is seldom anything left over after the monthly bills are paid. On the personal level this is little more than a minor inconvenience, considering the great benefits of living at Ananda. But on a community scale, it hampers our development. We have so many plans, and, after a time, we get tired of saying, "We can't afford it!" We are concentrating now on developing better income-producing businesses, both to elevate the present standard of living within the community and to generate resources for future development. We have confidence that, one way or another, we will be able to bring into manifestation all our dreams for Ananda's future.

Decision-making and government

As much as possible we try to keep decision-making in the hands of those most directly involved. The gardeners decide where to plant the peas, the market decides if they need a new vegetable case, the school teachers decide whether they want to buy books or desks this year. But we have found that an overall coordinating body is still needed in a community as large as ours. Our

Village Council, with representatives elected from each residence area—the farm, the Retreat, and the Monastery—plus three at-large members, fills this need.

The Council's weekly meetings are open to the community, but, for the most part, we are content to let our representatives take care of the details of Ananda, so the meetings are sparsely attended. Only occasionally will an issue be interesting or controversial enough to get a large number of people involved. Once in a while we even have community-wide meetings to discuss an important decision. Once such issues are resolved, though, the Council goes back to its usual style of meeting.

Our willingness to let the Council function "unsupervised" is not due to indifference. It is based, rather, on our faith in their good judgement. They have proven themselves to be so well-qualified that it is merely a duplication of effort, (effort better used in other ways) to get involved on a regular basis in their decision-making process.

Swamiji himself, although the actual chairman of the council, seldom participates in their meetings because he has confidence in the Council's ability to handle the day-to-day running of Ananda quite well. He takes an active interest in their proceedings only when he feels that our over-all direction is being changed or that the welfare of an individual member is at stake and is not being fully considered. Sometimes he will sense a "danger" to Ananda long before any of the rest of us are fully aware of

the implications of a particular course of action. We have such respect for his judgement, however, that we willingly accept any suggestions or corrections he offers.

Swami Kriyananda

Swamiji is Ananda's spiritual director. His influence over the community is naturally very great. This influence is not something that Swamiji has arbitrarily insisted upon. It has been, rather, spontaneously accorded to him by Ananda members. We have found it to be in our own best interest to let his wise and loving counsel prevail.

As a senior disciple of our guru, and the only one among us who knew Yogananda and lived with him, Swamiji is eminently qualified to guide our spiritual lives. Having him as a friend and teacher is one of the unique and incomparably valuable benefits of living at Ananda.

Swamiji spends most of his time at Ananda in semi-seclusion, working on his writing. The first Sunday of each month he conducts the worship service at our Retreat. Most weeks he holds a satsang for members in his home. Holidays, occasional meetings, and other special events enable us to also see him with regular irregularity. Members have the opportunity to go to him for private counseling. On the whole, however, our external contact with Swamiji is limited. Yet through inner attunement his presence is felt everywhere at Ananda.

People sometimes ask whether Ananda could continue if Swamiji were not here. The answer is definitely yes, although there is no denying that Ananda would be different without him. A good teacher trains his students to rely on their own innate powers, rather than merely making them dependent on the teacher for strength. No one in our community now could replace Swamiji, but there are many who have taken Swamiji's vision of Ananda and made it their own. They have the wisdom and dedication to carry on the work, even if Swamiji were no longer here to guide it personally.

A monastic order: The Friends of God

An unusual influence on Ananda has been the Friends of God, a monastic order founded by Swamiji in 1971. Most of the eleven nuns and sixteen monks live at Ayodhya, a parcel of our land set aside as a monastery. The renunciates take an active role in community life.

Before Ananda was founded, Swamiji spent much time contemplating the problem of how to overcome the constricting definition of a family as "us four and no more." Without sacrificing the traditional family structure, Swamiji wanted families to be able to expand their sphere of concern to include a larger community. Renunciates naturally reflect this expanded identity.

Swamiji determined that if a community of householders could have within it an enclave of renunciates who could set the much-needed example of community spirit, their vibration would influence all the members in a positive way. This is, in fact, what has happened at Ananda.



At the beginning, however, some householders felt uncomfortable, almost threatened, by the energetic outward service of the renunciates. "How can we be expected to work like them when we have a family to care for too?" Gradually, however, the householders realized that no one was asking them to. That level of work—much needed by a fledgling community—was being done by the renunciates. Freed from the demands of family life, they naturally had more time and energy to build the community. It was the renunciates' attitude of willing service that the householders needed to emulate, rather than just matching their work quota. Misunderstanding gradually resolved itself into mutual respect.

One householder said, "The renunciates are only another aspect of ourselves. They are living a life we could never live, and we are raising the children they have chosen not to have." Each is merely fulfilling his own dharma, and dharma well done, always brings people together.

Spiritual marriage

Ananda is not intended, however, to be merely another monastic community. Yogananda's vision for "world brotherhood colonies" included people in all stages of life devoting themselves to living the divine life. Especially at this time in history, when divorce rages like an epidemic, a viable model for spiritual marriage is desperately needed.

“No one in our community could now replace Swamiji, but there are many who have taken Swamiji’s vision of Ananda and made it their own. They have the wisdom and dedication to carry on the work, even if Swamiji were no longer here to guide it personally.”

At Ananda we willingly accept the traditional teaching that men and women are different in their natures. Our past karma determines our present sex according to the lessons we need to learn in this life. We have found it most practical to simply accept what we are, and then work to overcome all the limitations our human nature places upon our true infinite consciousness.

A perfected soul reflects equally the qualities of male and female: reason and feeling, doing and being, wisdom and love. Through spiritual marriage each partner can learn to bring this soul balance into manifestation. The primary attraction of men and women is not really physical but an intuitive desire to balance their own natures.

But accepting the essential differences between men and women does not bind us to following traditional outer roles. Swamiji himself has often recommended that mutual respect, rather than feminine obedience, is a much more suitable model for marriage in the present age. In fact, we are conspicuously **not** concerned about “traditional” roles. People do what they are capable of, and interested in, doing. This gives a married couple the freedom to work out the dynamics of their particular relationship without the pressure of community-imposed role models.

Sex in a spiritual marriage is generally given far less emphasis than in a worldly match. This usually comes about gradually as a natural outcome of unselfish loving and meditation. Where there is a more conscious attempt at self-control it is due not so much to moral precept as to the discovery from actual experience that immoderation leads to a subtle sense of energy loss which may interfere with the attainment of other goals. For householders striving for moderation in sexual activity, the renunciates in the community stand as an encouraging example of how fulfilling a completely celibate life can be. Common sense, rather than dogma, is the rule of life in this, as in everything, at Ananda. As Mahatma Gandhi wrote, “Only give up a thing when you want some other condition so much that the thing no longer has any attraction for you.” Swamiji reinforces this precept of Gandhi’s by saying “I’ve seen so much unhappiness along the spiritual path in couples who were trying to be continent completely and weren’t able to be, and started becoming all twisted up because of this. . . . Don’t let it become a matter of suppression and frustration. Let it become rather a question that our love for each other on a physical level is of such a divine order that gradually you don’t need to express it on any other level except the Divine.”

Yet even a solid understanding of the transcendental purpose of marriage does not always insure an absence of conflict. One householder said that “Sometimes I just have to accept the fact that my husband seems more like my spiritual test than my ‘soulmate!’ But that is part of the reason we are together, to learn from one another.” Another went on to say, “You reach a point where you realize there is no sense in trying to escape your troubles by running to another person or place. Since the real problem is always within yourself, you’ll have to face it again in another form. If you fail your test this time, you’ll confront it again and again until you pass.”

Spiritual marriage, most couples agree, is quite different from worldly relationships. “It demands a constant awareness of what we are doing, adjusting and expanding our concept of marriage itself as we ourselves evolve. But the rewards are worth the effort. Marriage just gets better and better.”*

Occasionally couples in the community do separate, but for the most part they are working it out together. The more successful spiritual marriages we have at Ananda, the easier it will be for those coming after to understand the principles and apply them to their own lives. Already we have seen that the couples that meet and marry within the community are able to avoid many of the pitfalls that the first householders had to go through.

Schools and children

We have our own schools in the community staffed by Ananda members. We call them “how-to-live” schools. We stress not only the academic subjects, but also the importance of self-understanding. We offer the children the same tools we have found so helpful—meditation, introspection, selfless service, and love for God. Religion to us is a living experience, not a set of dogmas to be memorized.

As an example: one day after a huge snowstorm, the children worked together making a huge snowman during their recess periods. They also had a rather wild snowball fight. Later, in the quiet of the schoolhouse, the teachers discussed with the students their impressions of the two different events. Almost all the children agreed that the making of the snowman had been much more fun than the out-of-control snowball fight. In fact, even in the middle of the snowball fight they could see that it wasn’t any fun, but they didn’t know why it happened or what they could do about it.

The teachers helped the children to analyze why the snowman building had been so enjoyable—the children had worked together—and why the snowball fight had been so unpleasant—it was too violent and they had ganged up unfairly on one another. The children were able to understand that their own behavior had caused them to feel either good or bad. The secret of successful living is to realize that we are not the victim of our own experiences, **but the cause.**

*An article entitled “Spiritual Marriage”, written by an Ananda member, appeared in *Communities* issue #17.

Like their parents, however, Ananda children are not always perfectly well-behaved. They make mistakes and are sometimes rebellious and rude. On the whole, though, they are a fine group of children. There is no disputing the fact that they are receiving an unusual upbringing, especially those who have been born in the community and lived only at Ananda.

From birth they are surrounded by pictures of saints and sounds of devotional chanting. Practically every adult they know meditates. They are taught spiritual principles of living at home, at school, and by constant example. Most of our children are still too young for us to say for sure what the effects of this upbringing will be. We have only a handful over the age of eight and most of them came to Ananda at an older age. The side effects are sometimes quite amusing, as in this incident related by a woman in the community about her eight-year old son.

"I had been preoccupied for several days with problems of my own, and, unfortunately, was very impatient with my son. When my mood cleared I realized how unfairly I had been treating him, and apologized for my behavior. 'That's all right, Mom,' he told me, 'I knew God was just testing you through me.' "

Daily life

Because we are such a large community, it is difficult to describe a "typical" day. What is commonplace for one person may be the height of the unusual for another. On any one day there are usually a dozen different things of interest going on.

During the week most members come to the Farm for their jobs. From 9-5 "downtown" Ananda bustles with activity. We are never too busy, though, to greet one another or to stop and exchange a few words. People at Ananda smile easily, and laughter is heard wherever you go.

Most of our community activities have a spiritual focus, but we do have purely social events occasionally. Naturally we visit freely in each other's homes. Potluck dinners, movies on the farmhouse lawn on summer evenings, and music or dramatic presentations enliven community life. Trips to town to play basketball or tennis are common. Excursions for dinner, ice cream, and a movie happen sometimes. These trips are limited, as much as anything, by the scarcity of movies that we want to see.

Our community is too widely separated physically for all of us to gather daily for group sadhana (spiritual practice), so we have smaller groups within the larger community that meet on a regular basis. Either in small groups or in solitude, daily life at Ananda begins and ends with meditation. Silent communication with the Divine is the foundation of our life.

The whole community gathers on Sunday mornings for the worship service of chanting, meditation, and a spiritual discourse. The first Sunday of the month is special because Swamiji conducts the service. On the other days he has selected several others in the community who take turns presiding. Sunday lunch is an opportunity to relax

together in the warm afterglow of common worship.

Our weekly satsangs with Swamiji are also a vital part of community life. A loving informality pervades these gatherings in Swamiji's home. The sweet intimacy of our satsang with Swamiji epitomizes, in many ways, the joy of life at Ananda.

When there are no special events going on in the community, most members prefer to go quietly home and be alone with God. These hours of solitude are a cherished part of Ananda life.

The end

At Ananda we have one joke which invariably gets a laugh. When something or another of seemingly disastrous proportions has occurred, one answers the inquiry, "How did it go?" by simply saying, "It was a learning experience." Always being able to see life as a "learning experience" gives one a secret resiliency that nothing can defeat.

If we are determined to be unhappy, nothing in the world can ever make us happy, but once we resolve to be happy, then nothing in the world can ever make us unhappy. The joy we find outside ourselves is only a reflection of the infinite joy we have within. If we but change ourselves, we can change the whole world.

I recently asked a new member if he liked it here. "What a silly question!" he exclaimed. "Of course I like it here. But much more than that, I know that I belong here."

It is not that Ananda is a perfect place. No mere place, no matter how beautiful, could ever be. But for those of us who belong here, it is like a dream come true. Ananda is much more than a community, it is a joyous state of mind.

Come visit Ananda

You are always welcome to visit Ananda. Our Meditation Retreat has accommodations for guests and is always open. Reservations are encouraged, especially in the winter when space is limited, but feel free to drop in unannounced. We offer classes in yoga postures, meditation, philosophy and practical spiritual living. Retreatants also have the opportunity to meet Ananda members and to share in the community's life.

For those who would like to stay longer (2 months or more), and live and work in the community, we have, from May to September, an apprentice program. Apprenticeships are limited, so if you are interested you need to submit a special application form.

Ananda also welcomes potential new members who are attuned to our way of life. Potential members are required to live in the community for some months before joining, so that we can all be sure that Ananda is really the right place for you. We also want newmembers to take time to contemplate and embrace the full implications of joining our spiritual family.

Information about the Retreat, the Apprentice Program, membership, and Swami Kriyananda's teachings is available by writing **Ananda, 900 Alleghany Star Route, Nevada City, California 95959. Phone: [916] 265-5877**

REACH



CONFERENCES

Decentralism for Neo-Revolutionaries:

Exact time and locations to be announced.

Land Trust: Most of the material covered will be introductory. Working sessions will include update of/on Marl; the emerging Mid-Atlantic States Regional Land Trust. Location is Deep Run Farm, outside York Pa. Dates: eve of Aug. 6-8. \$25 for weekend. Please bring some food. **Shelter:** Do it yourself conference. Put together a dome, A frame. Some attention to tipis and other mobile & temporary shelters. Oct. 3-10. Bring warm clothes and bags, hand and electric tools. \$25 for week, \$25 for weekend, \$2 extra for the eve of the 3rd.

Soil Building: One-day seminar on how to build your soil. June 26—10 A.M.-3 P.M. \$5 fee.

Annual Homesteading Seminar: Weekend seminar examining all aspects of self-sufficiency, simple living on the land. June 4-6. Camping possible.

Weed Walks: Two tours, two hours each, for the wild edibles found growing on Lefevers land. Tentative dates May 12 at 12:30 A.M. and May 27 at 6 P.M. For details on above two events write Lefevers, Rt. 1 Box 457, Spring Grove Pa. (717) 225-3456

Feminist Pacifists camp conference at Heathcote June 27-July 1. For details write Ellen Witorsky, 130 Parker St., Cincinnati, OH 45219. For more information on events listed write to **School of Living, Freeland, MD 21053.**

India Week July 11-18 at Ananda Cooperative Village: Learn the amazing traditions of India. Steep yourself in its colorful Heritage. Daily classes include **Indian Cuisine, Indian Dress and Social Customs, The Art of Indian Story-Telling, Kirtan** (devotional singing), **Hatha Yoga and Meditation, Slides of India, Sunday Service by Swami Kriyananda, Evening Satsangs and Entertainment, including Music by Sachdev.** \$100 for singles, \$175 for married couples. Price includes meals, classes, and camp site. Childcare at extra cost. Register advance.

For more info and directions write **India Week, Ananda Cooperative Village, 900 Alleghany Star Route, Nevada City, CA 95959.**

GROUPS LOOKING FOR PEOPLE

We have a 100 acre farm and are looking for friends to join us in an adventure in southeastern Ohio. We intend to sell five acre homsites to several more individuals or families with about 50 acres for common use. The land has pasture, woods and a healthy stream. The people are Bruce 33, Pnina 30, and John 27, Debbie 26, with plans for small scale farming and alternate energy projects. We hope to grow towards a meaningful lifestyle without losing touch with the "outside world." If you're serious about community we'd like to hear from you. **Bruce Sabel, Rt. 1 Box 90, Amesville, OH 45711 [614] 448-2118**

Joyworks Farming Collective, Mendon Maine, has disbanded. Apologies to all who have tried to contact them.

A Change! The current membership of Nasalam Community (see Directory, issue 18) is 3 people. Apologies again to those who were looking for 12 more folks.

We are looking for people who are interested in: Cooperative land-buying, self-sufficiency homesteading, low-cash flow economy, smallness, rural quiet, low-technology organic gardening/farming, staying "unemployed", raising most of what we eat, producing needed power, keeping buying minimal, staying home a lot, tending chickens/ducks/geese/bees/worms/goats, hunting and gathering, eating "natural" foods, scrounging and recycling, and settling down to build a poly-fidelitous communal marriage of 6-8 adults that is stable, secure, and permanent. Some other words we use to describe what we are doing are: Interdependence, Commitment, Responsibility, Caring, Family, Considerateness, Continuity, Equality, Serenity, Fairness, and Fun.

We are now 3 ex-college dropouts (one woman, 2 men), ages 27-37, enjoying being peasants and landowners and maybe survivors. Our secluded 26-acre place is 2 miles from the ocean between 2 lakes north of Florence, Oregon. It has quiet woods, green meadows, plentiful water, and abundant wildlife. If anyone of any age likes the sound of this and isn't a smoker, dooper, sexist, or religious zealot, we'd like you to write to us. **Crabapple Homestead, Route one, Box 1254, Florence, Oregon 97439.**

Wanted: Family Community—Alive, Creative, Free and Growing People, to live and love with folks who desire to live simply, ecologically and therapeutically; homesteading in Central New Hampshire as **extended open families**. Must like children, cold winters and be willing and able to work this summer towards new facilities to house new people. We wish to share income, strive toward open marriage and seek to share the material plane. Presently, we are 4 adults, (three female and one male) and nine children. We are growing up amid our own hang-ups. We live on 80 acres, mostly wooded, a marsh, fields, 2 streams, running drinking water, 2 houses, garage and barn, a dog, 2 gardens, no domestic animals presently. We border an apple orchard, 3¼ miles from town on a dirt road, viewing the foothills of the White Mountains, 7 miles from Lake Winnepesaukee.

We are attempting to encourage family synergy, diversity of interest, open interpersonal communication, extended family, city connections and eventually foster care of unwanted children and old people. Immediately we need adults. Granted the energy—we have the ability to form our own Tradesmen's Co-op, start our own school and adult study center. We welcome families or individuals who desire to create a "group mind". We are not solidified as to diet, farming technique, or religious expression. We have a lot of **room to grow**. We are negative toward pre-occupation or dogmatics, "the only way" mentality. We have problems like: large mortgage, kids presently in Public School, too few adults, must commute 20 miles to work (Concord, N.H.), suspicious neighbor, and **black flies**. Community is spiritual by its very nature. It takes loads of love to work beyond conflicts. We feel that strong community encourages **diversity in unity**. We can build Common-unity" with the right people **anywhere**. We are: **Diakonia Trust, P.O. Box 239, Center Barnstead, NH 03225. [603] 776-5640 [no collect calls please]**

We are attempting to establish a bisexual alternative community in the country. There will be private and communal ownership of land, and we will be striving toward self-sufficiency. You may be straight or gay as long as you are bi-sexual in theory or practice. Write for more information. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. **Billy Sheers, P.O. Box 60023, Oklahoma City,**

Julian Woods is a rural income sharing community in the mountains of central PA. We began 6 years ago as a small town collective house, bought our 150 acres several years ago and moved onto our land in spring of 1975. Putting finishing touches on our two and a half story wood/auto shop/barn, and designing solar heated cluster housing, a community center, greenhouse, and pond.

We are building a society based on non-punishment, using positive reinforcement. We gather often to work out problems and further our growth in our interpersonal relationships.

Ecology, alternative energy, organic foods (although not necessarily vegetarian), communal child rearing, meditation, art, music, foraging, planner-manager type government—are all directions for some of us. A nearby university offers additional cultural activities. For income, we repair cars, refinish furniture, do garden tilling, make crafts, do metal shop work, and are about to buy a successful childrens' educational toy & book store, and one of us teaches in child development and runs an experimental preschool.

We are especially looking for folks, of all ages, who are skilled in construction, organic gardening, country living, small business experience, childrens' educational toys, or any of our various economic endeavors. For replies, please include self-addressed, stamped envelope. **Julian Woods Community, Julian, PA 16844**

Arcadian Community is now forming and negotiating the purchase of thousands of Ozark acres to establish the largest alternative self-sufficiency oriented community ever. By the time you read this, the final land selection and purchase arrangements should be completed. Parcels of ten to 640 acres will be available to the right people with prices beginning at \$175.00 per acre and with flexible terms including possible lease-options. Hundreds are already interested but more are needed. This is a chance for individuals, families, and land trust groups who are seriously looking for land to retain the degree of independence they desire while enjoying the advantage of **many** compatible neighbors. For full information send a SASE and describe your current situation and ideals. **Arcadian Community, c/o Robin Bellach, PO Box 2460, Escondido, CA 92025.**

Considering the state of communal affairs, and being over 50 myself, I have

determined to invite oldsters to establish a commune on my 187 acre farm in N.W. Jersey. There is a large, renovated farmhouse, formerly used as a small, private school, which can accommodate 7-8 of us, singly or coupley; with all facilities for living, learning, and teaching; including a small library, arts room (with ceramic kiln), laboratory, and darkroom.

The farm has been used only for large, organic vegetable garden, and a source of grass for pasture and hay for the two cows. It has a couple of brooks to dam for fish culture, swimming, and boating; wildlife as big as bears.

Please don't infer from the above that: we are Senior Snobs excluding everyone else from our little Hideaway. It would be folly to repeat historical mistakes. As soon as we are organized, we plan to invite all interested people who can contribute to our extended Family.

Nor will we withhold our learning from those who would learn with us. Many in our community have expressed great dissatisfaction with the quality of their lives, the education they've had. We will be sensitive to their needs, and fulfill them if we can. Please, if you've warmed to this idea, correspond with: **Ann Morris, Box 114, Stillwater, NJ 87875.**

"LICHEN—a community of organisms, living and growing together for mutual benefit." . . . brotherhood / consensus / cooperation / environmental sanctuary / idealism becoming practical / interdependence . . . more than a dream but still many opportunities for achievement enroute to an enduring community . . . crafts / electronics / gardening / postal contract / sawmill / 140 acres, mostly second-growth mixed forest . . . If these clues trigger some interest in possibly joining us, please send us a dollar (applicable to later visit expenses) to cover costs of our compatibility survey exchange sheets. Perhaps we can help each other innovate our hopes into realities by dovetailing our talents. Please arrange visits beforehand. **Lichen, 3050 Coyote Creek Road, Wolf Creek, OR 97497.**

Aliya is a group of people in the process of building a cooperative Farming Community with a home and school for teenagers who have been in trouble with the law. We have come together because we agree on some things that we feel are worth working for together. We have chosen a planner-manager system of government. We are currently supporting ourselves by building low cost, energy

efficient houses, and we hope to develop a cottage industry.

There is a lot to do, and we would like to see more people become members. We offer opportunities for people to get involved in cooperative living, social and environmental planning, alternative energy systems, architecture and design, building, organic farming and gardening, social service, and teaching. It's always nice if people have experience in these areas, but we are open to anyone who would like to help, to learn, and to get involved in the community. If you would like to visit please call or write in advance to Aliya Community; PO Box 2087; Bellingham, Wash. 98225 (206 733-4713).

PEOPLE LOOKING FOR PEOPLE

We are a family of four into T.M. We are looking for 2 or 3 other young families to settle on rural acreage. Would prefer to build separate homes, pay cash for land and settle in Western Oregon or Washington. If interested write us of your ambitions and circumstance. **Bert & Marietta Bergman, Star Route, Ilwaco, WA 98624**

I am searching for a community (commune). I need to write to people who are presently involved in communities. I am 23, 3 yrs. Univ. of Nebr., Journalism-business-ex-vista volunteer; social worker-pre-school teacher. My philosophy is centered in the organic and creative opposite of the mechanical, artificial and impersonal society we live in. I'm gentle, sincere and a person who wants to live in harmony with others who feel our present society is lost and dying. I feel the 'New Age' of communities offers an alternative. Always in Peace, **Daniel.**

Healthy family of six want to help build a stable, organic farm cooperative where family privacy is coupled with community spirit and resources to achieve simple self-sufficiency. Not adverse toward a city-rural combination. Can offer experiences in organic gardening, cooking, bee keeping, and nutritional living. Have many basic tools, optimism, and energy and adequate financial resources to pay full share. Background in education and environmental causes. Not interested in efforts that are based primarily on heavy groupism, organized spiritualism, or most other isms. **Bob and Shirley Coffin, 65 SW 93 Ave., Portland, OR 97225; 292-9338.**

We are two people looking for a community in Oregon. We have made ourselves a large tipee and prepared ourselves as best we can for country living. Work is something we enjoy but not in excess. We think the Indians have much to offer materially and socially. Drugs are presently not part of our lives. Living with other people is something we need very much. I am 26 and Sue is 18. For now we are bent on one belief: This present culture is wrong. Basically I am a christian and Sue is a naturalist. Leaving end of June. **R. Titus, 396 Goodwin St., East Hartford, CT 06108**

Need work. Leads and tips appreciated. Good worker. Learn quickly. Have experience. Built large modern house at 20. Am now 25. Good assistant. Easy to get along with. Live-in would be ideal. Have gardened. Can set up a low compost cycle. Need money to develop homestead. Orchard work ideal. Can travel anywhere. All responses answered. Inquire if more information is needed. **Bob Cambell, 34008 Caseville, Westland, MI 48185.**

I have the physical facility for an intentional community in Indiana located near a university and job market and I am interested in contacting an individual or group who has established, are trying to establish, or have considered establishing an intentional community. This community could be of a permanent continuous residence nature, or one with a retreat concept where participants come for a year or longer. The central doctrine of this community could be spiritualist, metaphysical, or religious (Christian or non-Christian), or of an open philosophy.

The group itself would be of like-minded people but not necessarily to the total exclusion of others, or this group might even constitute a minority in a larger community.

The group would want a reasonably high technology life style and the concept of developing self sufficiency by excluding the modern economy and technology would not be crucial to their central philosophy; i.e. they would not show a marked preference for the past.

This group would prefer to be suburban or ex-urban oriented rather than attempting to establish their community in the inner city or in a strictly rural environment.

The family unit of this group would observe what most people would consider a conventional lifestyle of husband, wife, children. If an "extended family" situa-

tion existed it would do so only insofar as one would occur in society at large.

The husband would probably be the primary wage earner and would probably work in the general economy, as opposed to having a cottage industry craft or follow an agricultural career. The family unit would prefer to live in its own single family home rather than a dormitory. The family unit would be responsible for its own income and expenses but would probably contribute something to help cover group expenses. The individuals, the family units, and the group as a whole would probably be more concerned with self development and understanding, consistent with a philosophy of concern for others, than with a rejection of modern social and economic development, disadvantages notwithstanding. If you have any information on such a group, please contact: **Richard Reyes, 10474 E. 37th Apt. B, Indianapolis, IN 46236 [317] 899-3749**

Got some neighbors, need some more. We want to sell 2 approximately 15-40 acre tracts (from 160 acre farm) to families with children. Our first need is a companion for our five year old, Oliver. Want to start with some autonomy, move toward community life. Homesteaders on adjoining land & many more in area. School starting. Other land buying possibilities in beautiful Greenbriar & Pocahontas counties. Into yoga, meditation, small scale farming (horse power), good times. **Jim & Patty Lollis, Box 208, Hillsboro, W.Va. 24946**

We are two people (age 25) looking for a beginning community in the Ozarks which needs more members and more help or else others like us who'd like to get together to look for land or other communities. At present we're living on a farm in northern Wisconsin, but by fall we must leave. Hopefully we can get our gardens in then spend some time travelling through Missouri and Arkansas visiting communities or else looking for land with which to start our own.

Although we're pretty much open on communal ideology, we're hoping to find folks who are seeking to live off the land with some degree of self-sufficiency that wouldn't require constant trips back to the city to work. And we also would like to join a smaller sized community, not much larger than 15-20 people; small enough to allow a closeness of the entire community

yet still allow individual freedom and growth.

If you need new members, new help, or are like ourselves looking for a new start... give us a write. **Alice and Jack, Box 84-A, Rt. 2, Mosinee, WI 54455**

Lonely prisoner would like to correspond with a lady. Age unimportant. **Howard Gibson, 75-02293, 8201 State Road, Philadelphia, PA 19136**

We are a conscientious vegetarian family of five, are financially stable, and are seeking one or two adoptable or foster children over the age of three. Teenagers are welcomed and should be willing to share the fun and chores of a large mountain ranch. Helpers and visitors are also welcomed. Those interested are asked to send a letter about themselves or the child, and please include a recent photo if possible. Write: **Black Mt. Ranch, Box 51 Sumpter Stage, Baker, OR 97814.**

I'm a 23 year old white male looking for a female partner. I'm mellow, into farming and leftist politics. She must be hip, of similar age, interested in farming and living on the land. Eventually I hope to start a rural commune. Send photo, age, height, weight and a few words about yourself to **Occupant, P.O. Box 1731, Winner, SD 57580**

We, Marge (26) and Don (37) would like to farm cooperatively with some folks in a relatively uncrowded, unpolluted area. We're interested in growing things organically and becoming as self-sufficient as possible by doing things as much for ourselves as we can. We want to "educate" our prospective children in the community, so we're interested in living among people with similar desires to live fairly and simply and with an identification with the natural world. We would like to communicate with existing communities or individuals inclined as we are, so please write to **Don Wertheimer and Margie Pease, c/o Peters, 1722 100th Place, Chicago, IL 60643**

I am planning to relocate and make a new home for myself in Oregon. I am quite excited about this prospective move and I would like access to any information about communes or communities established in the Portland or Eugene areas.

Having lived in an urban commune for one year, I have found the experience to be a rewarding one and a period of intense personal growth. I live with a

group of 5 people who have worked hard at establishing a warm, supportive & cooperative environment. A close family-like feeling seems to radiate throughout our household.

I am now interested in moving out of the big, dirty city to Oregon, where I can be close to the beauty of the natural surroundings. I however have never moved alone, to a place where I had no acquaintances or ties. I believe the move would be much easier if I could establish some degree of contact with people that have similar interests in community & cooperative living. Hopefully, I will be able to find a group that interests me, that is also looking for new members.

I am more interested in rural farming communities but would like to also know about any urban groups. Most importantly, I am looking for people who are interested in a friendly, supportive, cooperative and growth-oriented living situation. Would greatly appreciate any info that you could supply related to my interests. Thanks. **Steven Hymen, 4734 N. Kenmore Ave., Chicago, IL 60640**

I am living in West Philadelphia and would like to find people who are interested in using multi-media as a tool for building community. I attend Calvary United Methodist Church at 48th and Baltimore and find many of the people there actively concerned with the surrounding neighborhood. They house Neighborhood Resources West with legal and medical personnel and would readily consider a cultural task force as well. Such a group might reach out and begin to develop ways of sharing in a widely diverse community, through the arts. If participating in such a living and/or working group, contact me through **David Leachman, Calvary United Methodist, 48 and Baltimore Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143**

Lark, 30, and I, 32, are well-educated, resourceful, nature/outdoor oriented and dissatisfied with how we make our living. We are in the process of buying a mini-farm (1.6 acres) out towards St. Helens. Lark has worked the longest so will be the first to "drop out" and set up the homestead and start a business—possibly sewing or a plant nursery. Income ideas I'm kicking around include investing in and fixing up real estate, farming, writing, possibly developing a small business. The real goal is to obtain more free time to enjoy life, travel, self development, etc.

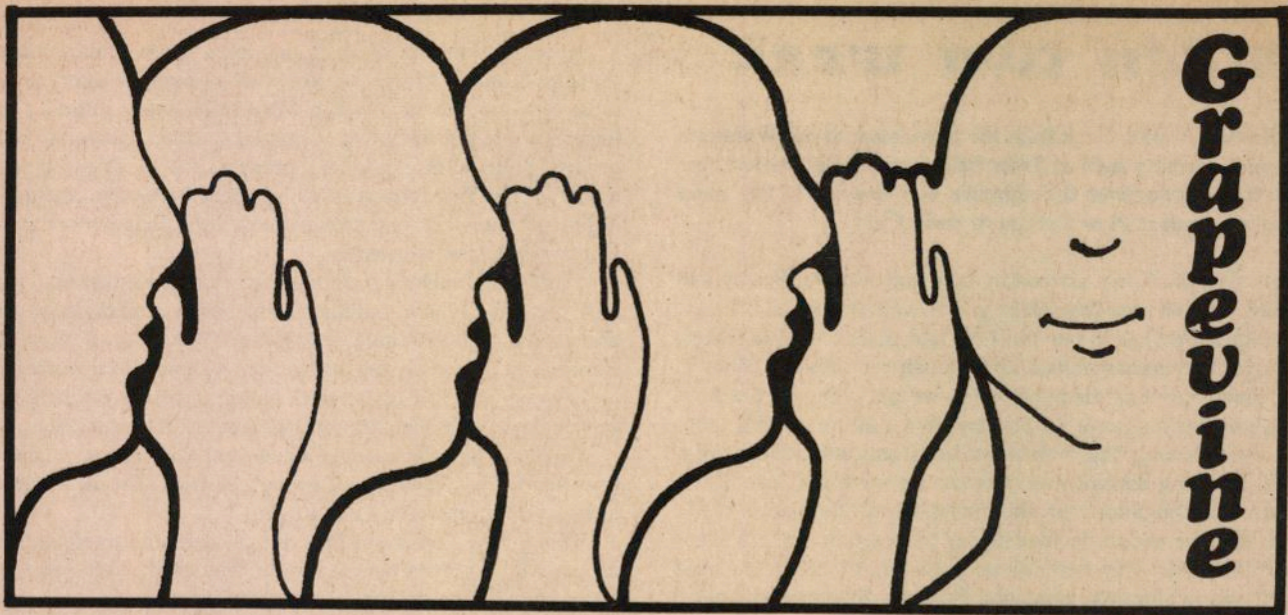
We are not into subsistence living. However, we'd rather have more time

than money and the hope is to live well on a moderate income by being food, energy and income independent. We are very much heading that way because we want to be close to nature, we want to be as self-sufficient as possible, and not insignificantly, because we're pessimistic as to where society is going.

Food self-sufficiency is a lot of work for one family, yet it is not that much more work to feed 2 or 3 households. It makes a lot of sense to do it cooperatively. We would like to be a part of a loose knit community of 2-5 households, with each of us having our own house and 'living space', yet with a strong cooperative spirit towards the growing and raising of the food supply.

Let's get together and exchange ideas & experiences. It's always a pleasure meeting others that are going the same general direction. **Ted & Larkelyn Keener, 9305 SW 12th Dr., Portland 97219 246-9659**

We are a family of five: Jenny-Viva, aged 1, Matthew, almost 4, Autumn, 6½, Judy, 28 and Philip, 32. We presently live just outside of Moscow, Idaho, where Philip is due to graduate from the University of Idaho College of Law in May, 1976. Additionally our family consists of a guernsey cow, her 2 heifer calves (one of whom will be bred soon), and a bunch of chickens. We garden organically (have a background in Bio-dynamics) and eat simply. Before moving to Moscow, we lived on a farm 18 miles outside of Sandpoint, Idaho, with about 8 other people. We are used to living and sharing with other people and wish to return to a piece of land which we can share with others. We want to work hard, both on the land and in a legal context. We don't wish to be **anywhere** near a big city, but neither would we want to be totally isolated. If there is anyone or any group with any good suggestions of a place for us, or any attorneys seeking an associate or partner, or any farmers with an extra house which we could rent in exchange for labor, or anyone with a fantasy needing any/all of our talents, please write **Gordon, Rt. 4, Box 358, Moscow, ID 83843** or call (208) 882-1968, and the sooner the better.



EAST WIND

East Wind is a Walden II community in the southern Missouri Ozarks, which is growing rapidly towards a 750 person group. They share all labor and money, a planner/manager system of government, and an egalitarian, noncompetitive culture.

So the changes keep coming at East Wind. The house manager has posted a note "Heidi is no longer Heidihouse, she's Heidisandalfactory!" Yes, the first floor of our kitchen-dining complex for a few days was converted into a shop for the manufacture of Utopian sandals, our newest industry.

Construction has started on our new shop, a 36x80 foot pole building with a slab floor, which will house the weaving and stretcher operation along with auto maintenance and new industries. Plans are also being drawn for a solar heated dormitory which will house 24 people and a 300 sq. ft. public space to be used as a library. The dorm will consist of 3 modules which will be stepped down the hillside.

We're putting in an acre of sorghum this spring, as a lady up the road gave us an old sorghum mill circa 1890, saying that a friend had left it with her twenty years ago and she didn't think he was coming back for it. The East Wind garden has an acre of vegetables planted—so far we haven't been inundated by bugs. The food processing kitchen is being built and the root cellar is stacked to the ceiling with canning jars.

Ralph, one of our cows, just had her calf, a Gurnsey heifer that answers to Natasha. We're milking both Ralph and Cleo now so for the first time in months East Wind has a milk surplus. People can now drink as much as they want, the milk processing people are making butter and sour cream and experimenting with cheese making.

The kitchen budget is still in the hole though the deficit is being made up quickly. Two-thirds of the community is still on "Alternative Foods," which offers no regular meals and a basic vegetarian diet that consists of fruits, vegetables, nuts and cheese.

Membership has risen at some points up to 65, but now is holding at between 55 and 60. Anyone seriously interested in finding community now should write **Stephie, Visitor Mgr., East Wind Community, RFD 6B2, Tecumseh, MO 65760**

NORTH MOUNTAIN

North Mountain Community is an intentional communal farm of 12 folks, two cows, three draft horses, a flock of chickens and 130 acres of hills, woods, gardens, crops, fields and streams in the southern part of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

Yesterday Eli, Glen and I went out to the back of the barn to work out a design and start work on a loft to store salvaged materials and other assorted goodies. Mostly we wanted to get the stuff out of the proposed birthing pen as one of our cows is due to calve within the next week. Just as we were finalizing the details for the loft I said that I really had some doubts about the wisdom of putting it in since it looked like the ideal place to store our threshing machine. Well we all agreed on that but thought that we'd still have space left over to do a smaller loft. So we took measurements, but alas! Lengthwise it would pretty much take up all but 5 or 6 feet of the back area of the barn. We then spent a few hours with everyone else reviewing any and all options that would a) get us a birthing pen and b) provide storage for the salvage materials, c) get the thresher and husker shreader out of the weather. What we settled on was a) to leave the salvage stuff where it was until we do our building (soon) rather than shuffle it around; b) convert the inside part of the corral into a calving pen with gates and c) to convert the back addition to the barn into a large pair of hinged doors, move the thresher inside and build storage racks or shelves in the space left over along the wall at the other end. The three of us set to work figuring out how to do the doors, clearing the area out and then actually converting the wall into doors. The only purchased materials we used on the project were nails and screws; all the lumber, hinges, and pipes we salvaged and scrounged in one place or another. It was a real rush to finally cut the boards along the top edge, after assembling the braces and hinges piece by piece, from the bottom up, and suddenly have two working five by twelve doors! Yesterday it was just a head trip; today it was a reality! And that's how the material plane gets together, one step at a time...Lois

walden two week

The following is an excerpt from the newsletter of the Walden II Conference recently held at Twin Oaks. Additional conferences will be held throughout the summer and early fall. For more information contact Pi or George at Twin Oaks.

Well, first of all, we arrived in ones and twos on Friday and Saturday, and we met Twin Oaks and Pi and George and Larry. We huddled together in our big tent and discussed our travels and budget and managerships and Danish rye bread. . . With Pi and Shannon handling the paper work, we got going on the Twin Oaks labor credit system on Sunday. We continued with labor credits the following day, with lots of questions still unanswered. Tuesday morning dissent was obvious: we were not sure of our goals or our obligations or the necessity of the labor credit system, and the group decided to try to function without labor credits for a while. That first day we did a lot of talking. Our first decision was to eliminate planners. Next we did away with our 9 managerships, and came up with 4 coordinators as well as labor coordinators for each task. By Wednesday we were all out working again, and by Thursday we had our new system in full gear with meetings over dinner and task elections over breakfast. Our people shuffled around a good deal: we lost Piper to Twin Oaks labor credit system at Juniper, and gained Kevin, our friend from Tupelo; Ruth decided to try to learn labor credits as a visitor at Tupelo; and we lost our first participant to the Richmond bus on Thursday night: bye, Kay! Some of our labor cleared land for the new Walden II site, helped design and build shelves as well as build fences at Tupelo, cleared a path to the creek bathing hole, chopped wood, completed some accounting work and we even fit in a lesson and some practice in body massage with Larry, and even a major shopping trip into Richmond to coincide with Pi's presentation. The only thing we didn't get to on Wednesday and Thursday was a volleyball game. Friday was laundry day (and a slim escape from a total washout in the big tent), with a big bash in the evening. We had dinner at Tupelo, and music was set up in the hammock tent. Our 4 gallons of wine were enjoyed at the bonfire, in our tent, and with the music. The somewhat inebriated members of WWIX, Tupelo, and Juniper were laughing talking singing into the night (our special thanks to center ring entertainer Henry). And additional thanks to Anne-Marie's car for not permitting her to leave. Saturday was another odd-jobs day, including guided tours of Juniper. The day was highlighted by Shannon and George's pecuniary delights: fish and hash browns for breakfast, and onion soup, salad, and custard pies for dessert, with lunch & fudge somewhere in between. A brief celebration with wine and beer Sat. night, and Sunday was devoted mostly to tent removal, packing, & this here newsletter. Even the sun couldn't melt the heaviness we felt as our parting began. Anne-Marie and Laura cooked up some home-made ravioli for an early afternoon supper, with Mike's green (tossed salad), for our Last Meal Together. It's been finer than fine, folks—good to know yall.

Robin

The Philadelphia Life Center is an intentional community of individuals concerned for non-violent social change and alternative, simple, mutually supportive lifestyles. It is located in West Philadelphia and has grown over the five years of its existence to include 20 cooperative houses, scattered through a ten-block area.

At Stone House in West Philadelphia, from Friday, March 12 through Sunday, March 14, about 40 women (!) aged 10 to 60, most of whom are involved in MNS collectives, shared a group experience which included workshops, films, personal sharing groups, political discussions, a presentation by gay women, and a party. The Philadelphia MNS Feminist Collective planned and organized the week end and decorated the living room at Stone House with feminist posters.

Workshops included poetry; art; self-assertiveness; sexism and sexuality; vision-building; and self-examination of breast and cervixes with the help of Freddie Willoughby, a nurse in our community. Personal sharing groups of about five women each met three times during the week end and were a valuable way to center down and evaluate feelings about the experience.

On Saturday afternoon a film on rape was shown, followed by time to express feelings in groups of two. We also showed a herstory film on women's struggle.

Though the Feminist Collective planned the week end, it ran as smoothly as it did because of the fine group participation and "anarchist"-type personal responsibility of everybody present. We represented a large percentage of MNS women in Philadelphia; it was energizing to be together.

Twin Oaks



Twin Oaks is a community in Virginia consisting of approximately 70 people ranging from new born to 68 years. It is a diverse group and approaches to designing its culture reflect that diversity. The following is an excerpt from the most recent issue of the Leaves, T.O.s newsletter.

By now Leaves readers are well adjusted to the alarums and excursions that charge back and forth seasonably across the stage at Twin Oaks. We seem to have periods of relative felicity followed by ones of confusion, disagreement or anguish over our life here, or some aspect of it. Readers of the Leaves are perhaps aware of some aspects of communitarian life without living in a commune and, indeed, I imagine some of our readership do live in communes.

Hence, many of you may be aware of a characteristic tendency in the communal movement for more men than women to be drawn towards communal life. At Twin Oaks many more men than women inquire about visiting, enough so that giving preference to women doesn't equalize the ration among visitors. Of these, more men wish to join and are eventually accepted. As a consequence, our membership now stands at a ratio of 30 men to 22 women.

Advertising has been proposed as a means to attract women to come here. Fear that such an appeal would sound sexist kept the idea from being accepted for a long time until it finally was—recently—and is now underway.

As far as reportage is concerned, that's about it folks. I've written to fifteen different radical papers that print free classifieds and asked them to run our ad which is worded as a general appeal rather than as a "Women—we want you" pitch. I

hope the planners will approve a small budget for me to extend this effort probably into a national publication. Everything moves slowly but something is being done and more will be.

ALIYA

Utopian Eyes

Utopian Eyes is published quarterly by Performing Arts Social Society, Inc., [PASS Inc.] an educational, nonprofit corporation operated by the Storefront Classroom Collective. All written material and artwork in this publication is produced by the members of the Storefront Classroom Collective.

Monday Night Rap—Since last June, we had been holding weekly rap meetings, open to the public & advertised via flyers, posters, ads in the Storefront Classroom & other papers, on Monday nights. We saw this as an "intake" session; a way to meet people for the first time and also to get to know people better that we had already met. It seemed an essential part of the scene, and a good way to meet people interested in our trip. But, by and by, we all began to notice that Monday Night was becoming more and more "work" in the drudgery sense, rather than a fun, light thing. We began to analyze this, and took weeks, off and on, to talk it out and figure out what to do... we had to do something because we have committed ourselves not to do anything if it's not fun, where there's a choice involved. We narrowed the un-fun factors down finally to the following points: 1) the strain of week after week having to run the same rap out to people who had very little idea of what we were actually about, or even a very mistaken impression of what we were about... sort of like being obligated to tell people the story, while being aware of the fact that they are really not interested anyway. This partly due to flyers & notices that didn't say much about the trip, giving an unintended impression of what people should expect to find. 2) the heavy cruise factor... people (often the same people as just mentioned in #1) who came only to "check out the scene", see if they could meet someone to pick-up (a more wholesome atmosphere than a bar, after all) and then split. 3) in addition to the strain of the constant turn-over of new faces there was a pressure coming from some of the regular participants... people who kept coming back, but never seemed to be getting any closer to us. They were using the scene partly to learn from us, partly to meet new people for their own trips... but eventually we discovered that they did not see themselves building community with us, nor had they decided they wanted lifetime friends. Consequently, the conversations became redundant and never seemed to be able to take off into creative areas... planning for things we could do together, or in-depth philosophy, or the other things that we so enjoy discussing. So, we have now changed the scene so that the raps are no longer advertised as a drop-in center. Instead, people can call us when they see any of our media or notices, and then if it's a good phone call be invited to come one time to the rap for one hour only. From there, it goes to Potluck Volleyball (twice a month) and individual talks, walks in the park, and another invitation if it all feels good to return on Monday to stay on after the first hour of meeting newcomers... then workshops, trips to the country, etc. The lightness & fun are back again even if fewer people are now coming. The law of personal energy conservation is very crucial to well-being.

Aliya was started in 1975 by a small group of people who had known each other for a number of years. Some of the people had worked on Kibbutzim in Israel, and all had been involved in, visited, or read about various rural collective and community efforts. They agreed on some basic ideas on community living, and decided to try to start a rural community with a strong spiritual and ecological basis and a participatory form of government.

The first house in our construction business is moving right along. Anita figured out the electrical, and Mark got the plumbing down. Neighbors, friends, and visitors have been very helpful, we've learned a lot, and it's been fun to build together.

It's been a nice spring so far in Northwest Washington. The snowy Cascades look beautiful on clear days. Working outside in the garden on sunny days reminds us why we are together.

We expect to have enough saved by June 1 to buy our land and start building community housing and the school. We're hoping more people get involved, because there's a lot to be done.

Family Synergy is a nationwide nonprofit all-volunteer group of people interested or involved in the caring alternative lifestyles of open relationships, expanded family, and communal living. Their monthly newsletter has articles on the problems and joys of these lifestyles; "how-to" information; and schedules of many workshops, conferences, and other events.

Conference/Convention: Those of you who were members of Family Synergy last summer will remember our first annual Conference/Convention. The "Convention" part of it ran for two weeks centered around an all-day Alternative Lifestyles Conference at Elysium Fields. The Convention brought members and others from many states, and was really felt to be a major success.

So was the conference—nearly 200 people, and 19 workshops on many aspects of alternative lifestyles. The only really major complaint was that we'd crammed so much into the one-day period that people were frustrated over the things they had to miss.

Our plans for this year should resolve that problem, too. What we've started to set up is a two-day Conference at Samagatuma, a nudist resort about 35 miles northeast of San Diego (a roughly two-hour drive from Los Angeles). There will be all the workshops and most of the amenities, plus about 150 acres of wilderness country to enjoy. There are ample full hook-ups for campers and trailers, tent camping facilities, and we're trying to make arrangements to book all of at least one nearby motel at reduced rates for the weekend. (Out-of-towners who stay more than that weekend will be accommodated at L.A., Orange County, or San Diego homes.)

The cost structure for this weekend isn't yet established, but our goal is to offer the two-day Conference for no more than last year's cost for one day. There's a fairly large and good, experienced committee started on all the workshops, lodging, babysitting during the Conference, food, registration and other planning.

The Conference dates are August 21 and 22. Set them aside now. And, if possible, set aside a good block of time the week before or after, for the Convention and its activities. And send us your reactions to and ideas for the items described above.

BOOK REVIEWS



COOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES, a review by Nalini

Living in the country with a group of friends has come to be more than just a matter for pleasant speculation. It may soon be a matter of outright **survival**. The prospect of city-life in the near future grows increasingly bleak, with predictions by economists and mystics alike of food shortages, depression or runaway inflation, social chaos and revolution. And if economic survival is not sufficient motivation, the usual dearth of emotional and spiritual nourishment in an impersonal urban vacuum is enough to make one seriously consider if a better way of life is at least possible. Of timely interest, then, especially to those who may want to join or start a cooperative community rather than just arm-chair-philosophize about it, is Swami Kriyananda's **Cooperative Communities: How to Start Them, and Why**.

This is not a "flashy" book. One may tend at first to underestimate its worth, until one realizes that in a few pages the author has quietly and concisely summarized basic points (eg. why some communities have succeeded, and others failed) which others take whole books to discuss.

Cooperative Communities will not appeal to those who expect external systems to change human nature or who think a community experiment must be radically different in structure from the existing society. ("A common failing of new communities has been the tendency to demand too radical a change of their members. In biology there is an axiom that nature never proceeds by sudden leaps." or "A community of like minds cannot be forged on the strength of a theory. People must grow naturally to a sense of unity.") Not surprisingly, Ananda calls itself an "intentional village" rather than a commune, with separate, as well as communal, housing and eating. Cottage industries are owned by individuals instead of the community: "The great problem with total communal ownership is that it increases the need for communal discipline. People who receive everything without paying for it must be induced somehow to work for what they get." In its beginnings at least, Ananda has followed the pattern to which most of us are accustomed—working for wages and paying for goods received. This is combined, however, with a strong sense of "joyful service", or work done for God, an attitude prevalent in most religious communities.

The approach of **Cooperative Communities** is refreshingly down-to-earth: "People who want to involve us in lengthy discussions on 'theories' of communal living usually find that our answers are circumscribed by the expression 'Well, this is what we have found works.'" The book is written from first-hand experience, not from that of a visiting observer. On the other hand, with its clear, straight-forward language and approach, **Cooperative Communities** is also unlike other recent books put out by contemporary communities with a "by hippies, for hippies" style of writing, which no doubt charms some people as much as it turns off others. Conspicuously missing is any startling proposal for sexual experimentation (that well-worn subject guaranteed to sell!) and drugs and alcohol are, he says, best prohibited if a sense of communal responsibility is to be maintained. Since

52 Ananda's economic struggle was and is apparently a difficult

one, requiring a great deal of hard work, it's easy to understand why drugs are not encouraged. Monogamy, however, is allowed! (Some writers have suggested that a community must practice either celibacy or free-love in order to survive.)

While this book is primarily intended as a practical guide, sociologists, too, may find in the example of Ananda much to interest them. For instance a recent **Psychology Today** (Dec. 1974) article, "Individualism Busts the Commune Boom," says that many communities are failing because the American "right" of individual choice is asserting itself more strongly than ever. Again, in **The Joyful Community**, Benjamin Zablocki, after studying the Bruderhof and other contemporary communes, sees an insoluble conflict between individual freedom and community stability. Yet Ananda's "intentional village" structure appears to offer its members the best of both, a kind of "individualism within community", with a relative absence of the guilt mechanisms used in other religious communities (such as the Bruderhof).

"Where people are expected to do everything in common, to be of one mind on every issue, to eat together, work always together, frictions can quickly mount... The obvious solution, if one does not favor a dictatorship, is simply not to demand from people a constant togetherness, and hence a measure of unanimity for which they are not prepared. The leadership of a community might then be strong, but not fussy. People would be given the freedom to grow, but would be given at the same time enough of a sense of common direction to help them grow together, not apart. Ananda learned from experience that "a fair measure of privacy is spiritually desirable, as well as conducive to communal harmony."

In a recent book on communes, **Commitment and Community**, Rosabeth Moss Kanter says that utopias make "person-to-person relations the core of their existence." Yet when asked the secret of Ananda's success, Kriyananda replies, "We find our peace inwardly first, in meditation, and only secondarily from one another." After reading **Cooperative Communities** one suspects that perhaps another reason for Ananda's success lies in the strength and good-natured wisdom of its founder, Swami Kriyananda. Yet Kriyananda hopes readers of his book will not rush to join Ananda, but instead be inspired to start a community of their own.

In this otherwise excellent book one section, "The Story of Ananda" seems a little weak. One is curious to know **more** about this joyful community—to see more photographs and to grasp a fuller, more up-to-date idea of its way of life. Perhaps this need will be met in **What is Ananda?**, a photographic essay of life at Ananda which is to be published shortly.

Although any account of a vital alternative to city-life is bound to stir interest and respect, **Cooperative Communities** deserves particular attention because Ananda's gradual, non-radical approach to cooperative living makes it a practical model, more accessible and attractive to the majority than the usual tight-knit commune.

READ- BACK

(Ed. Note—The following is part of an international commentary on the issue of subgroups within larger communities, first raised by David Ruth in Issue 17. See article "Social Planning", this issue, for further mention of this question)

Reprinted from the Japanese journal, *Community: A Transnational Journal of the Communes Building Man's Future*, Feb., 1976. 2083 Sakae-cho, Imaichi/shi, Tochigi-ken, Japan, 321-12.

I should like to express disagreement about what is said of the Israeli kibbutz in the interesting article "Community and the Small Group Problem," in your No. 17 issue. I shall not deal here with the actual problem at Twin Oaks itself, but only with what is stated in connection with the Israeli kibbutz.

It is mentioned that some (anonymous) commentators argue that sub-groups, such as especially the family, the work-team and political groups, have a negative influence on the collective interests of the kibbutz. There are, in fact, other sub-groups like hobby circles, the various kinds of committees and perhaps some political groupings indeed which I shall not take any stand on, for there are cases where they actually might split the kibbutz. But as reference was mostly made in the article to the family and work-team, I shall restrict myself mainly to them. My attitude is, if not precisely opposite, at any rate entirely different.

Let me make one overriding assertion at the outset: in my opinion, there is not in reality necessarily any all-out identity between the interests of the individual member and the general ones of the kibbutz as a whole. The kibbutz-member usually lives his life in a more limited sphere than the whole collective—probably in several circles such as have already been mentioned: to which I would add others like groups of friends from the same geographical region of origin, groups of neighbours in the kibbutz itself, or groups united by particular interests, artistic or otherwise.

It is obvious that happy couples (and most kibbutz families are like this), who can be parents and who may also have their own parents living in the kibbutz alongside them, are veritable pillars of the kibbutz. There is nothing terrible if here and there among them family-oriented tendencies manifest themselves, as may particularly occur among the admittedly clan-like groupings in the oldest kibbutzim where three- and four-generation families are prospering. Things like this are even likely on occasion, to come into conflict with basic principles and with the collective interest as a whole, but not on any account to threaten the existence of the kibbutz, as is implied in the article under discussion. All in all, taking a balanced view, such negative phenomena as these do not in the least contradict the overwhelmingly positive character of the family as the corner-stone of kibbutz life.

And now to the matter of the work-team. In my view, a kibbutz member who is absolutely devoted to his work-place, concerns himself deeply with its development and really fights for the seemingly "narrow" interests of his branch, is also a faithful member of his kibbutz and has full solidarity with the over-all kibbutz interests. It is indeed natural that members of a

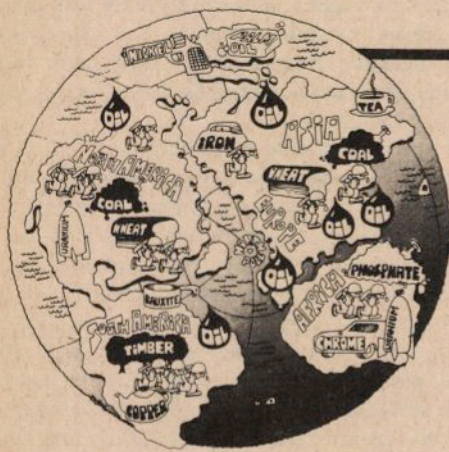
work-team worry particularly about their own branch. And it is precisely the strength of each branch comprising the kibbutz economy as a whole which ensures the satisfactory economic and financial state of the entire collective. And what is so bad in the branch manager and his team striving for a bigger share of the kibbutz investment-cake, for instance, at the annual budgetary meetings to discuss allocations? At any rate, it teaches them how to build up and present their case effectively! If they do not succeed in the economic committee, they can try their luck in the wider forum of the general meeting, bringing their case in the end to this finally deciding framework for full democratic handling, each branch afterwards abiding by the collective kibbutz decision thus fairly arrived at.

I should like to bring up a related point here, and that is in regard to the article's recommendation to rotate members from branch for fear they may become narrow-minded "nationalists" of their own branch exclusively. Here I would reiterate what I have said above about branch efficiency, etc., and would add that it does no good to shift a member around against his will during the years. For there is no happier member than the one who continues in his work which provides him with satisfaction in his profession and personal development in it too, so that he can reach maximum self-realisation. Indubitably, the contented person is also the good kibbutz member. But rotation does have its place. It is essential among those who hold "official posts" in the kibbutz (secretary, treasurer, committee chairmen, etc.) and must apply among branch-members so that they can step out of the work-team from time to time to become temporary managers. Rotation, too, is essential in regard to the various jobs in any one branch, which the members must all take in turn.

Furthermore in this context it is worth emphasising that the holding of branch meetings regularly in a properly arranged manner (similarly among members of committees) constitutes a most positive element indeed in the democratic life of the collective. It binds the members together around some important aspect of kibbutz life, so making them faithfully attached, through the part, to the whole of the framework of the kibbutz. So it will surely be seen that it is quite wrong to say that the sub-group known as the work-team or branch, any more than the family, is in the least likely to undermine the general interests of the kibbutz, as was the impression I got from the article in question.

This is my personal reaction to the article, and in order to complete my remarks I should like to draw attention to a few relevant lines in the book enthusiastically reviewed in your "Uni communi" No. 2, which bear out my position admirably. The reference is, of course to Israel Ring's "The Kibbutz and the Future" (in Hebrew and Japanese only), where items in Chapter 3 are very relevant—the end parts of Sections 24, 27 and 28. I shall correspondingly quote just a short sentence from the end of Section 32: "All the various small sub-groups will find in the kibbutz a wide open field for their activities." In these words and in the associated passages the author writes from the viewpoint of the individual member in the subsidiary frameworks within the whole which surrounds him. While it is true that this is the opposite angle to that taken by the writer of the American article, concerned as he was mostly about the future of his commune as an entity, I do not think this basically affects the issue. After all, the two factors, the member and the kibbutz, are so interrelated in mutual dependence and action that it makes no real difference which side one starts from, so I felt it appropriate to add Mr. Ring's words in support of my own.

Yaakou Arzi
Kibbutz Dan
Israel



RESOURCES

In the next issue of *Communities*, we are going to start a new type of Resource column. Each issue of the magazine will have a resource section devoted to a central theme. Topics like food, communal childcare, ecology, etc. will be resourced. "Resources" for Issue #22 will cover Shelter and Building. If you have some resources [a book, magazine, organization] you would like mentioned in our column, or if you have an idea for a column theme, please write: Kevin—Resources, *Communities*, Box 426, Louisa, VA 23093.

The Farm Trucking Company: The Tennessee Farm is using its semi tractors to establish "an economical, inexpensive and accessible beatnik trucking line for hauling food, equipment and materials between communities, co-ops, groups or folks in any part of the U.S. and Canada. For details, write: **The Farm Trucking Co. Rt. 1, Box 289, Summertown, TN 38483.**

Middle-Class Alternatives: The folks who put out the **Alternative Christmas Catalog** have put together a set of packets on alternative ways to celebrate various festive occasions. They also offer a quarterly newsletter, **Alternatives**, which is designed to facilitate middle-class lifestyle changes. Subscriptions are \$5/yr from **Alternatives, Box 20626, Greensboro, NC 27420.**

Stop Nuclear Power! From the **Ann Arbor Sun** we got this partial listing of groups who have information about the spreading of nuclear pollution:

The Atomic Energy Commission, Washington, DC 20545; Congress's Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515; Senator Mike Gravel, 4107 New Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510; Task Force Against Nuclear Pollution, 1936 Park Rd., NW, Washington DC 20010; National Intervenors, 153 E. St. SE, Washington DC 20003; Environmental Action Foundation, Suite 731, 1346 Con-

necticut Ave., Washington DC 20036; Citizens Energy Council, Allendale, NJ 07401; Coalition for Safe Energy, 72 Jane St., NY, NY 10014; Coalition for Fair Nuclear Insurance, 620 C St., SE, Washington DC 20003; Energy Policy Project, PO Box 23212, Washington DC 20024; Union of Concerned Scientists, PO Box 289, MIT Station, Cambridge, MA 02139; Committee for Nuclear Responsibility, PO Box 2329, Dublin, GA 94566; Sierra Club, 1050 Mills Tower, 220 Bush St., San Francisco, CA 94104; Environmental Action Reprint Service, 1100 14th St., Denver, CO 80202; Friends of the Earth, 529 Commercial St., San Francisco, CA 94111; Ralph Nader, 133 C St., SE, Washington DC 20003.

Save Energy: Save Money! is a really useful publication prepared by Gene & Sandy Eccli of **Alternative Sources of Energy** magazine. It gives dozens of ways to save energy in heating your dwelling. Free! Write: **The National Center for Community Action, 1711 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009**

Eco-Agriculture: **Acres USA** is a fascinating monthly newspaper with articles and news items relating to organic, large-scale agriculture. Research, legal news, energy use and nutrition are some of the topics covered. Subscriptions are \$5.50/yr (foreign subs add \$1). Single issues are \$0.60 from: **Acres USA, 10227 East 61st St., Raytown, MO 64133.**

Living Simply: Taking Charge, a process packet for simple living is a very useful set of questions, facts and resources designed to assist us in evaluating our lifestyles and the country's institutions in regard to the distribution and use of the world's resources. It should help us simplify our lives and effect change in the larger society. They suggest a \$1.00 donation. Write: **Simple Living Program**, AFSC, 2160 Lake St., San Francisco, CA 94121.

Healing in Community: Well-Being, a network for human community, wants to facilitate "building intentional groups for the healing of the whole person." Write for a sample copy of their periodical, **Communication**. PO Box 887, San Anselmo, CA 94960.

A New Vegan Cookbook: The folks at the Tennessee Farm have written a cookbook filled with recipes which use no animal products. What makes it most useful is that its tasty dishes require few esoteric or expensive ingredients. Soybeans, grains, gluten and vegetables and herbs are used to produce roasts, cheese, ice cream (soy ice cream), pizza, and Danish Pastry. Order it for \$1.95 from **The Book Publishing Co., The Farm, Summertown, TN 38483**.

Dollars & Sense: The Boston-area chapter of the Union of Radical Political Economists (URPE) puts out an extremely valuable "monthly bulletin of economic affairs". Subscriptions are \$5/yr (10 issues) from **324 Somerville Ave., Somerville, MA 02143**.

Activist Training: The Training Organizing Collective of the Movement for a New Society has put together two programs. The medium length (2 week sessions) and long term (2 year) training programs are designed to help participants acquire skills in organizing for nonviolent revolutionary change. For details write them at **4713 Windsor St., Philadelphia, PA 19143**.

Positive Images is a guide to non-sexist films for young people. It has critical descriptions of over 200 films covering working women, third world women, changing male roles, women in his-

tory, and much more. Video tapes, slide shows, and filmstrips are also examined. A valuable work, from **Positive Images/Book-logger**, 1305 Oxford Street, Berkeley, CA 94709.

National Association for the Legal Support of Alternative Schools is designed to research, coordinate and support legal actions involving non-public alternative schools. In its 4th year of operation, NALSAS has protected the rights of existing nonpublic alternatives in minor skirmishes with public educators across the country; helped people in several states start new schools, and instrumentally recommended legal educational alternatives for children whose parents refuse to send them to a public school. Annual membership fee of \$20 provides the primary source of support. Contact: **Ed Nagel, NALSAS, PO Box 2823 Santa Fe, NM 87501**.

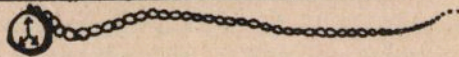
Ananda Apprentice Program is again being offered. The program is a chance for serious seekers to participate in the spiritual activities of the community and to work with Ananda members. Areas of apprenticeship include carpentry, organic gardening, organic dairy farming, publications work, maintenance, beekeeping, foodstore work, healing, and vegetarian cooking. May 1 through September 31. Minimum stay is 2 months. \$90 per month. Contact **Prakash, c/o Ananda, 900 Allegany Star Route, Nevada City, CA 95959**.

Access To Information: The Workbook is a fully indexed catalog of sources of information about environmental, social and consumer problems. It comes out 10 times a year. Subscriptions are \$10 (\$7 for students) from **Southwest Research and Information Center, PO Box 4524, Albuquerque, NM 87106**.

The Co-Evolution Quarterly: This magazine is one of the more exciting periodicals around. It is much more than an up-date of the **Whole Earth Epilog**. Each issue contains reviews of many new resources plus stimulating articles that have ranged from the cerebral ("Perspectives in Ecological Theory") to the folksy ("Homing Pigeons"). It's available for \$6/yr. from **Box 428, Sausalito, CA 94965**.



BOOKSHELF



Here are brief descriptions of five books related to the intentional community movement. Our free brochure contains a complete listing of some 35 books on living and working cooperatively. Write: Community BOOKSHELF, Box 426, Louisa, VA 23093.

Working Communally: Patterns and Possibilities. by David French and Elena French. Hdbk., 269 pp. \$10.50.

Communal workplaces, in the Frenches' vision, are industrial and agrarian enterprises run on a human scale by people who live and work together cooperatively. The Frenches make plausible the argument that such organizations can be the basis of a decentralized society. They describe three contemporary communities which they see as partial successes in carrying out this vision.

This is an important book, the first to pull together in a coherent way the rational arguments for a communal society.

Communes: Creating and Managing the Collective Life. by Rosabeth Moss Kanter (ed.). Pbk., 544 pp. \$6.50.

The Social Science Editor of **Communities** magazine wrote, "This is the best single introduction to the issues involved in living communally that I've seen. Rosabeth's book is valuable because it articulates many of the problems of living in community, provides a framework for understanding those problems, and gives examples of how other communities have dealt with them."

Beyond Marriage and the Nuclear Family. by Robert Thamm. Pbk., 231 pp. \$3.95.

Thamm takes a social-psychological perspective in looking at problems in contemporary society and sees at their root an inability in most of us to deal with dependency, jealousies and self-involvement. He builds a strong case for the commune as the environment which will facilitate our transcending those interpersonal difficulties. Within such an environment, he argues, we can learn to develop strong ties of intimacy with a number of others, allowing us to be free of excessive dependency on any one person.

Families of Eden: Communes and the New Anarchism. by Judson Jerome. Hdbk., 171 pp. \$7.95.

Pat Conover, a sociologist and member of Shalom Community, says in his communal bibliography, "this is the most valuable book on the contemporary commune movement. It is well ranging both in scope of direct research and in issues addressed."

The Social Science Editor of **Communities** magazine praises Jud's "...exceptional ability to capture the texture and meaning of communal life in well-chosen observations of actual communal events."

Neighborhood Power: The New Localism. by David Morris and Karl Hess Pbk. \$3.45.

Morris and Hess have provided the beginnings of a handbook, one detailing the methods which intentional communities and other cooperative groups can use to expand the boundaries of their sharing to include more than their own memberships. Drawing upon their experiences in the Adams-Morgan neighborhood of Washington, D.C., the authors explain how, through demonstration experiments cooperative groups can persuade their neighbors to regain economic and political control of their own lives.



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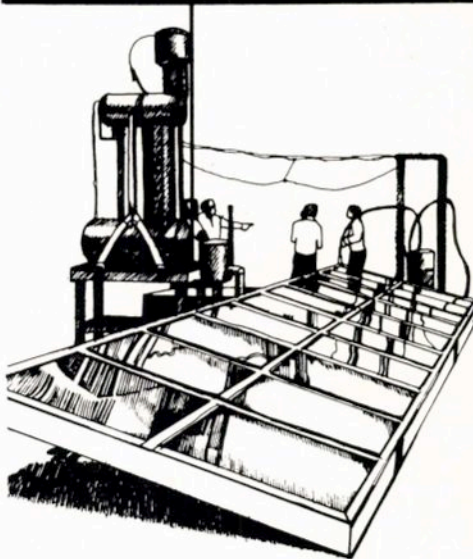
ABOUT OURSELVES:

Our vision of the job of editing this magazine is to function as a clearinghouse: to collect material, select what's most relevant for the folks who read **Communities**, and take charge of the production and distribution tasks. This means we don't want to be writing all the articles, taking all the photos, and preparing all the graphics for each issue. We hope this material will come from the people who see this publication as a tool or resource which is available to them, especially those living cooperatively. The following are suggestions for readers who have material to contribute:

NEWS FROM READERS: Three sections of each issue are set aside for short letters from our readers: Readback, Reach, and Grapevine. **READBACK** is "letters to the editors"—write and tell us your reactions to the magazine any time! **REACH** is our contact section—you can let others know you are organizing a new community, looking for a place to live, planning a conference, or offering a service. **GRAPEVINE** consists of letters or newsletter excerpts from existing communities—we like getting your up-to-date news, musings, analyses, and chatty letters.

GRAPHICS: We like to publish a magazine which is attractive as well as informative. We always need photographs (black & white prints), drawings, and cartoons.

RATES & DATES: The magazine's finances continue to hover near the break-even point, so the only pay we offer contributors is a free subscription. Occasional paid ads are accepted, but announcements in Reach are printed without charge. Due to editing, printing, and mailing schedules, there is usually a five-to-eight-week lag between our submission deadline and the distribution date, so send us your material as early as possible. Thanks for your help—we're counting on you to make this a better journal.



FUTURE FEATURES IN COOPERATIVE LIVING

OUR NEXT ISSUE will be handled by East Wind Community, the folks who brought you number 18 on government. Issue 22 will continue the Feature Community idea, along with the Cooperative Alternatives series, and Kat Kincade's series on the Kibbutzim. The Feature Community is undecided right now; the Cooperative Alternatives will look at food networks such as Fed-Up in Canada; Kat's article will focus on the family in the Kibbutz.

We'll also have a lot to say in 22 about what's happening in the Ozarks; communities and networking activities. Broader, economic networking will also be explored in 2 articles dealing with cooperative marketing of community products.

ARTICLES for future issues (deadline; September 1 for #23) should run between 1000 and 5000 words. We are particularly interested in material on **CHILDREN: MEMBERSHIP** (the process of gaining and losing members): **WOMEN IN COMMUNITY**. Please send articles, along with graphics, to **Communities/East, Box 426, Louisa, VA 23093**.

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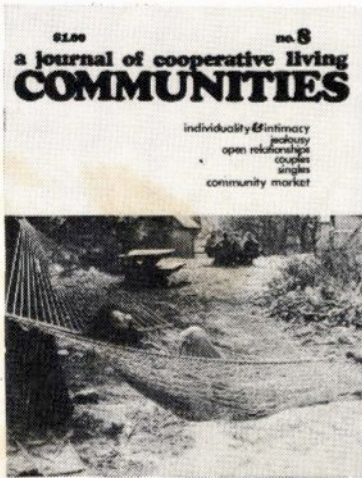
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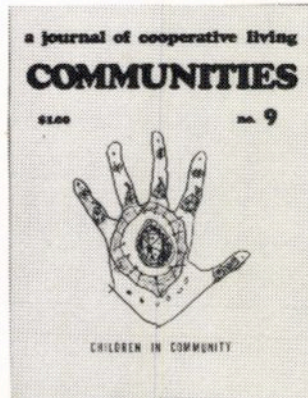


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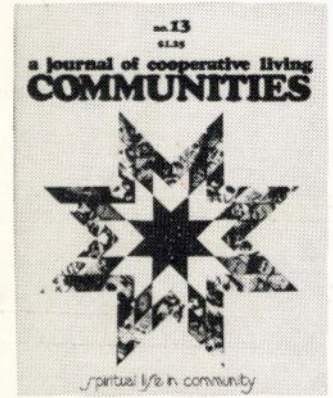
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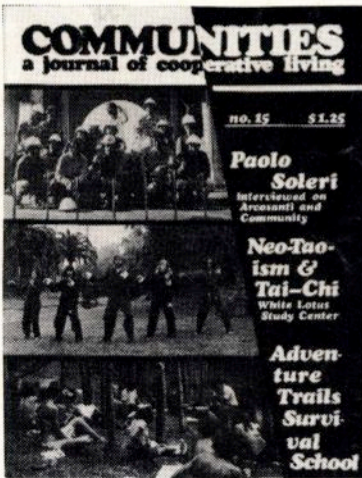
#8 Individuality & Intimacy



#9 Children in Community



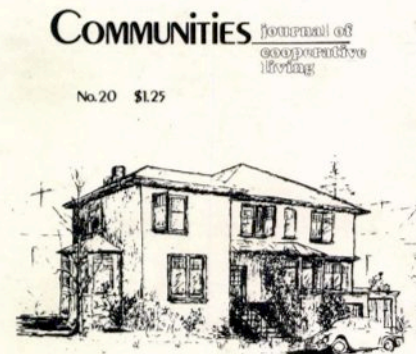
#13 Spirituality in Community



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#19 Urban Communities



#20 Middle Class Communes

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