

COMMUNITIES journal of cooperative living

no. 31

\$1.25



Introducing This Issue

COMMUNITY LEARNING

With its last issue, *Communities* completed five years of publishing. In that time we've seen the magazine become a major force in publishing... *uh well...* a solid financial venture... *really, now...* a powerful voice for the growing movement in America toward community and cooperation... *who?*

Our circulation remains small, our economics thin, the movement for which we provide a forum remains peripheral to the mainstream of American society. *And yet...*

Five years ago, writing in a regional journal, *The Northeaster*, on the development of alternative community in New Haven, I concluded: *Beyond all of this is a question: Why bother? The answer is simple - if we could accept the way things are, we wouldn't.*

So after five years, we continue. Hopefully you do, too. Not just writing about it or reading about it, but practicing the visions. With humor, with spirit, and for the simple reason that for some of us at least, *community* is necessary to the definition of personhood.

And In This Corner

What *Communities* has been for the past five years is the subject of a major retrospective by editor Chip Coffman. With Chip I've spent considerable time the past few months pouring over old issues, and *le plus que ca change, le plus que ca meme chose*: how much we relive; how similar the insights at each stage; how fumbling our ability to learn from our own encounters, much less other's. *And yet...*

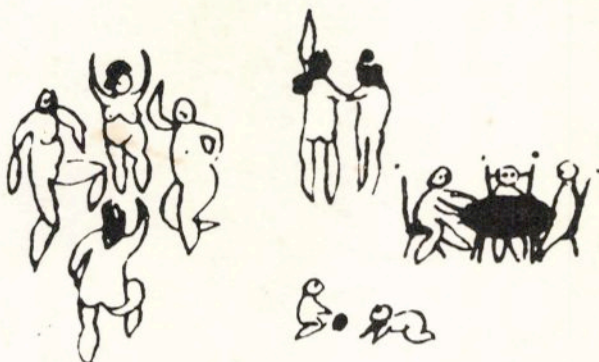
This is an issue on *community learning*. How does what we've learned in community environments make us different? If we can't tell by our choices and by our lives, what difference does it make?

Sydney begins with life and death; Steve Gottlieb looks at the kids and adults who were part of a day care community, now confronting public school; Christina Smith worked with Canta Libre friends to evoke the learning gained from a year in an alternative high school; Jay Stager brought a college classroom into community; four of us in New Haven share a conversation about the learning we've done through our community experience - *community as classroom*; David Ruth, our Social Science Editor, speculates as to how a Harvard trained social scientist was affected by five years at Twin Oaks.

Future of Community

Now that we've looked at our learning, the next issue addresses our future. The proposition is that our future is what we already know how to do, but lack the resources to put into wide-spread practice. We've asked some people and groups around the country who are doing solid work now, to explain that essence and extrapolate a future based on greater resources, plus some speculation on how that might be attained.

affectionately, Paul



Martin Bradley writes from Sonoma County, CA, where he and Larry Davis are working on issue #33:

*Work on the issue...is moving rapidly in both directions at the same time - if that makes any sense. Every lead that we follow up as a potential article, turns up three more. Every topic we feel we have covered comprehensively, we suddenly discover we've only scratched the surface. For example, Larry and I went to the California Coop Conference in Sacramento with the intention of making some contacts in northern California, and providing exposure for *Communities*. We ended up becoming involved in the issues and politics of the coop movement in California [the struggle for a Coop Federation]. I spent a lot of time with the people from the Cotati Coop and committed myself to editing our store's newsletter.*

*I guess what I'm saying is that it's ironic; in doing this work for *Communities* I'm becoming exposed to so many people, so many ideas, that I realize how little I know, and how much needs to be done on the local level.*

Journal of Cooperative Living

MARCH/APRIL, 1978

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Continuity

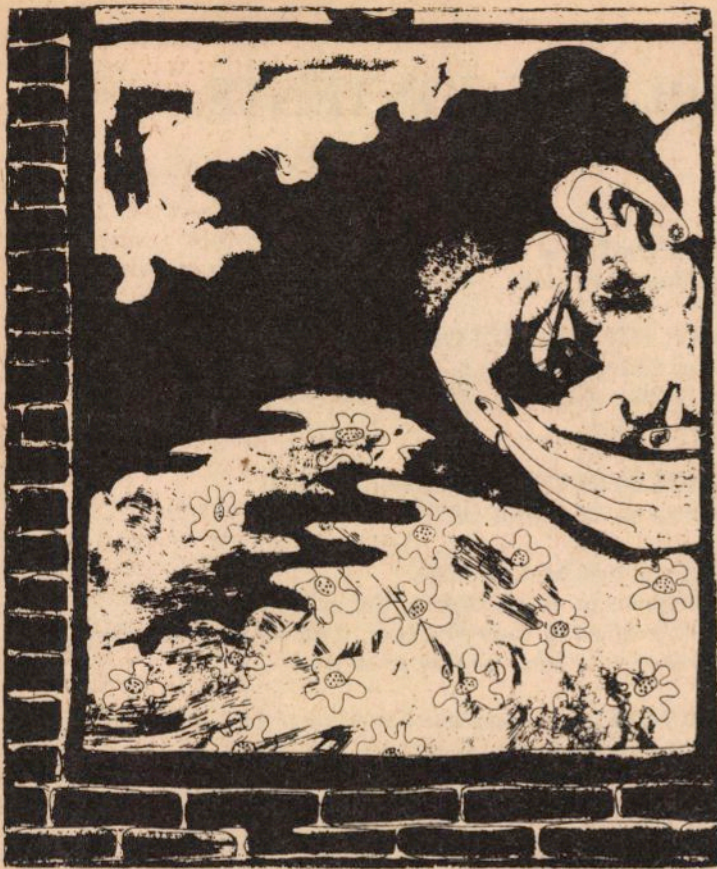
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SPIRITUAL ABORTION; a Tale of Two Trials, by Sydney <i>A matter of the choices we make, and how we live with them</i>	2
WHICH CAME FIRST, THE POLITICS OR THE KIDS? by Steve Gottlieb <i>A parent and long-time participant in coop child care looks back on the the oppositional politics of the '79's and speculates on public school intervention</i>	6
SARAH, WHO WILL BE 30 IN THE YEAR 20001, by Clay <i>A space odyssey into our socialization</i>	8
CANTA LIBRE; Sing Free, by Christina Smith <i>Some of the participants in an alternative high school/learning community assess the effect of their first year, with some remarkable photographs which offer another kind of assessment</i>	9
DOWNEAST COMMUNITY; an Educational Experiment, by Jay Stager <i>A college classroom becomes a community</i>	12
I REMEMBER A TIME WHEN A COLLECTIVE WORKER... <i>A conversation about the struggles and satisfactions of community organization</i>	17
IN RETROSPECT, by Chip Coffman <i>People, processes and ideas behing 5 years of Communities magazine</i>	30
WHAT MAKES A CIRCUS WORK?, by Geroe Roe <i>The chaos and irony of a magazine issue in process</i>	42
<h2>Departments</h2>	
INTERNATIONAL <i>Holmen Organic Farms - Norway, by Stein Jarving</i>	45
SOCIAL SCIENCE <i>The personal journey of the column's editor through 5 years at Twin Oaks</i>	48
GRAPEVINE	52
REACH	56
RESOURCES	62

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FROM OFFICES AT TWIN OAKS COMMUNITY, Rt 4, LOUISA, VA 23093. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT LOUISA, VA WITH ADDITIONAL ENTRY AT NEW HAVEN, CT 06511. SEND CONTRIBUTIONS OF EDITORIAL MATERIAL TO: CPC, Box 426, Louisa VA 23093. Communities is \$6 for one year \$10 INSTITUTIONAL RATE, SINGLE \$1.25, FOREIGN ADD \$1.50. PUBLICATION NUMBER 006570



Spiritual Abortion

A Tale Of Two Trials

This is the story of two abortions - mine - one at a women's clinic in a renovated mansion in a country town, the other in a hospital in the middle of a city. It is the story of my attempt to maintain consciousness, respect and love during abortion, and to carry this awareness through two very different environments.

I had an appointment at the women's clinic a week before the abortion, for an exam, tests and a counseling session. The exam was done by an older woman, very gentle, who answered all my questions in depth, helping me feel relaxed and confident. The counseling session was not such a success.

They rotate jobs at the clinic and today my counsellor's job was both receptionist and counsellor. She was flustered, unable to keep up with incessant phones, appointments and people walking in. She had forgotten

me twice and misdirected me several places by the time we got to the counseling room. There she adopted a composed voice, sympathetic manner and started smiling a lot. This is no place for soul searching, I thought, let's get it over with. "How do you feel about having an abortion?" she asked, smiling tensely.

...lying in my bed surrounded by pink and blue blankets; hands on my belly growing fuller I ask: are you there? And feel blue sparkling lights, glimmering, a gently moving ocean reaching out out and I whisper hello beloved, one unmanifest, all love to you, all life to you. In grace do we walk together for this time. I, holder of life,

do offer this love, and must move to let you go - all blessings to thy journey. What I do, I try to do in love and consciousness. Is there more to ask? Perhaps, perhaps that my destiny and my will come together to allow simplicity of action - that what happens from me and what happens to me are united. Simplicity of life, Lord, bring us peace...

"I feel sad" say I, "I expect I will for a while. After all the reasons, what comes out is a deep knowing that this is what I must do."

"How does your boyfriend feel?" she smiles.

The man is a good man, loving and respectful. He has a child of his own, who evidences a good upbringing and a deep and caring relationship. He's willing to live together or apart, in my community or his commune; a believer in community, he feels secure that each of our living places, and the greater community of this region can support a child through any arrangements he and I might make. But I am newly independent in my life, just finding that community can support a single person without having to depend on a primary relationship for all my love and attention. This has not been enough time on my own, not time to give up my newfound aloneness to a child. How can I bring to body a person I would resent for cutting off this phase of my life? The quality of life, the quality of relationships... it is a matter of quality...

I say, "He is supportive of my decision."

"And what helped you decide?" She glances at her watch, wincing as the phone rings outside.

"I did a lot of counseling and meditating, talked to parents, really tried to see where I am in my life."

I'm working, working as I've never worked, part of the founding energy of my community. Exhilarated by the growth of this, my first child, who demands all my skill and energy, who in turn serves thousands of people. It has become clear that the amount of time and love a baby requires, indeed that one's heart impels one to offer, will not allow for the level of work I now sustain. I wish this pregnancy was five years from now...

"So you are sure?" she leans forward intently.

"Yes," I say, and we discuss more dependable methods of birth control.

My counselor returns to the flurried front desk. I drive home through autumn splendor, hills and trees.



The night before the abortion I am gripped by terror, crying in the arms of my friends, I am afraid to die, afraid to kill, afraid of this unknown. Why are things the way they are? And cry myself out, blue ocean peaceful still inside of me.

Rain the next day, brilliant trees flash by, rail like tears, yellow, red, earth's awesome beauty before she sleeps. My friend Linda is with me, quiet, steady.

Sitting in the waiting room: surreptitious glances, nervous faces. The air is thick with cigarette smoke, and on the walls are patchwork quilted pictures made from lace and cotton and satin. A moment of stillness, and the air begins to drift down, slowly gently like silent snow, and there is peace. How very safe I feel here, knowing I

am surrounded by women, women who know and feel and understand; a woman will take care of me. We are given power of life and of death, sister, help me through this ancient ritual.



The front desk is quieter today. Francis comes in, a friend of Linda's who works here. Every four women are brought together as a support group, she explains. Four of us, two with our friends, go into the old mansion living room, with sofa and curtains, plastic models of a uterus, and samples of birth control devices in a wicker basket in the middle of the rug. My group has one older woman, dignified and withdrawn, one stiffly silent girl of 15 with her mother, and a nervous fidgeting woman of about 20 who left her friend in the waiting room.

Francis explains the entire procedure step by step, goes over follow up requirements - another medical and counseling appointment and a form to fill out - and explains the pros and cons of various birth control methods. I am gratified by her friendly ease amidst four uptight sisters. Her explanations are experiential: "the suction will feel weird". The nervous woman squirms and says the whole thing makes her sick. Linda asks a question. Nobody says anything else and we file up the balustraded stairs to the second waiting room. Here are curtained cubicles for changing clothes, a thick red rug, a full length mirror - I look pale - a low table with kleenex and hairbrush. There's brightly colored gowns to change into, and a long wait. A tall stylish woman comes in from the recovery room, changes clothes, and runs out the door, laughing "I can't wait to get out of here," over her shoulder. She looks healthy enough, but her voice is shakey, angry. Why are things the way they are? We four look at each other. Linda and I sing, everyone tells a few jokes, I meditate, hum, and hope for the best. Then it is my turn.

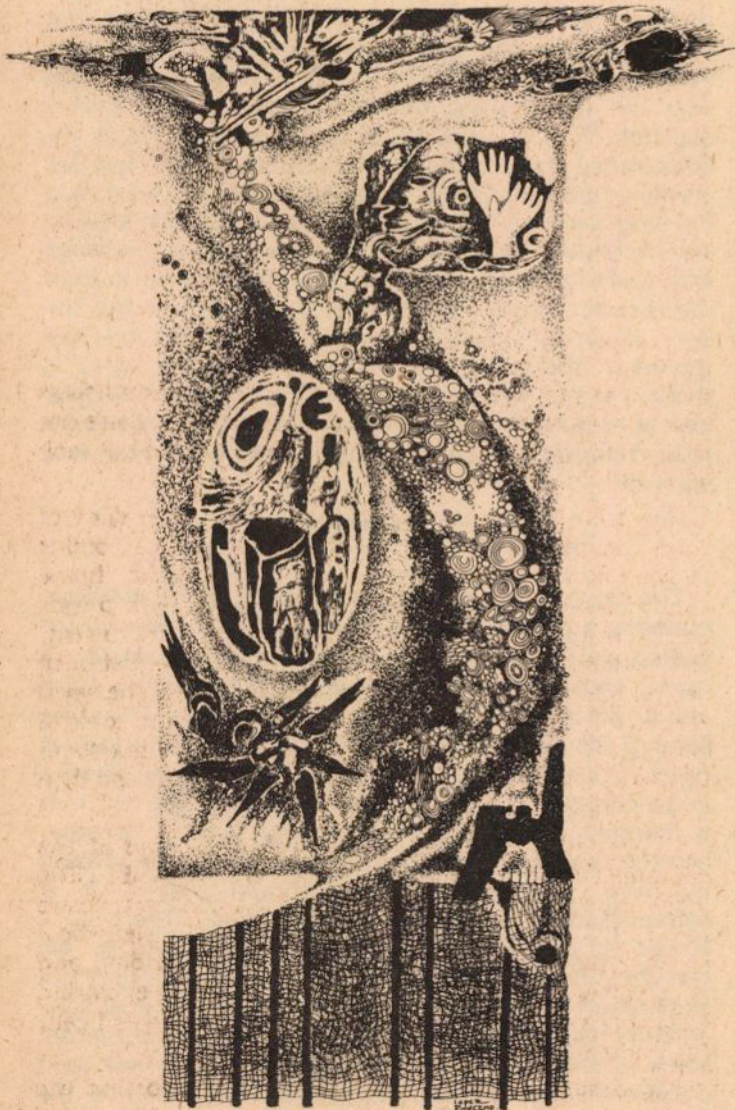


The room is just a room, with a table and a machine, curtains, a picture of sand dunes and the ocean on the ceiling above me as I lay down. There is a doctor, a nurse, and a woman whose sole job is to hold my hand and stroke my arm. They wear regular clothes. I hold the hand of the clinic woman, and turn my head to look at Linda. Our eyes meet, we lock consciousnesses, breathe in synchronicity. There is such stillness in the air, it is a moment of great import, a holy time. I breathe, breathe, squeeze the clinic woman's hand, she strokes my arm, I return to our common breath. It is extraordinarily deep, this concentration. There is a circuit of energy: pain in my uterus outlets in my clenching hand, soft strokes on my arms smooth it out and I return home to breath, the strongest and most soft, until the pain pushes up again. The doctor and nurse talk softly to one another, about wood stoves and land, and occasionally the doctor tells me the next step in the procedure. Breathing, breathing. It is all I have. Linda's eyes are ocean deep and there is breath, breathing Om, breathing I love you.

It ends, I sit up, walk down the corridor to the recovery room past the deep probing eyes of the woman heading

the other way. A soft thick blanket, and pain overwhelms me, takes me wholly and I must cry. Great sorrow fills me up and I am holding onto Linda, going up in pain and sorrow, going up with a silver bright figure who rises like an arrow, propelled by deep red bloodpain below it. I am sobbing, thrust upwards with a furious strength, the strongest force of motion I ever felt and have always known, rising upwards into eternity to merge with golden light, full, rich, beloved you are home, goodbye, and now I am sobbing in Linda's arms, a thick blue blanket around me, and it is over.

They cover me with more blankets, for I am very cold and all alone; they feed me with herb tea and homemade cookies, cheese. They have me wait an hour, eating, looking around the bright room where other women are eating too, and writing letters to their congressmen to stop the anti-abortion legislature. Warmth returns, and the edges of things are very clear and sharp. I rest. Linda drives me home through the dark and frosted night.



Gently now, we are halfway through the story. This transition is the hardest, bringing to you the shame and guilt I felt at being pregnant again a year later. What was

I to do, I thought over and over, with my community in a very difficult changeover, my work still paramount, the man a clearly defined summer affair? What have I not learned that I must do this again? Who can I turn to now, again, so soon? Angry at myself, ashamed, afraid, I could not return to the same clinic and I chose a hospital far away.

At the hospital I am alone, there are no friends allowed. I sit waiting in my bed in the huge day room. Some women have their rainbow colored curtains pulled for privacy, but most like me are sitting, tagged and green gowned, palely expectant. A sense of despairing familiarity settles in - it is the same anywhere, these waiting rooms. Mostly I'm hungry. Scared. No magazines. Just waiting, and a very busy nurse taking my blood pressure every hour.

I keep going on anger. I don't like to not eat - I'm already hypoglycemic, which they don't believe because they haven't any tests on their computerized sheets and I, of course, don't know my own body enough to be trusted. It's a precaution because of the anesthesia, which I am not having, but the rules remain. I go to the bathroom for some water.

Getting exempted from anesthesia required a special appointment with the head anesthesiologist of the hospital, which was possible only because my doctor was a friend of his. The anesthesiologist was young and sympathetic. I explained to him that to me this was a holy occasion of a soul passing from the earth plane back into other realms, and that the passing required my full reverence and attention, and I could not be unconscious. I also requested a nurse to keep me company. He agreed. Evidently no one had ever made these requests before, and it required a change of floors, to the day clinic, and the signatures of all involved. A day of red tape, and it was settled. This is not, somehow, a simple matter of my own needs. It is a pioneering, and I am being a political entity, struggling to create an environment which will allow, and perhaps support, spiritual perspectives. I feel tired.

Still, hungry, thirsty, the nurses are telling me I have to have intravenous sugar and water during the operation, a precaution against dehydration, because they are sure I will be anesthetized. Several discussions yield a No sugar/no valium/no anesthesia label on my folder, and then back to waiting.

It is all very frightening, the feeling of having to be constantly alert. I am in another land where I can get my way by constant awareness, verbalness, subdued anger. A doctor once asked me what my medical training was when I asked a question using one of his words.

"Nowhere," I responded, "I am only listening carefully, and speaking the language here."

He was surprised, accustomed to silent intimidation, the holiness of his language and perceptions. The woman across from me is in her second day of labor to abort at four months; her arms are swollen twice normal size from intravenous needles. She moans constantly; a harried doctor carries out bloody cloths every few hours. Waiting.

Finally I am wheeled to the elevator in a stretcher, not

allowed to sit up, watching white ceilings go by. People on the operating floor wear white paper shifts and bonnets, printed with big turquoise flowers. It is loud and busy here.

The head anesthesiologist comes to insist that I have an intravenous, though he will cut the amount of sugar and reduce the intake flow. He has found a nurse to accompany me through the operation, and I am wheeled into a corridor of rushing people to talk to her. I explain how the occasion looks to me, and request help breathing. She acquiesces until I say, "And I might have to cry afterwards." No, perhaps she's not the one. She says, "I know my limits." An aide is introduced as more appropriate. Her name is Mary, a bright eyed black haired woman who feels fine about my perspective, about breathing together, and even about crying. My doctor stops by. He's nervous, having never had a conscious patient before, but speaks gently and hopefully. We all agree we are ready.

The operating room is huge and full of instruments, dials, machinery, spot lights from every angle, and a shadowy balcony with nobody in it. There'll be no dying here, the grey room says. Your body is no longer your own. My feet go in stirrups, which immediately cut off the blood to my legs, and leave me feeling extraordinarily ungrounded. Mary cannot sit - no chairs - and I look at her masked face with a halo of glaring light behind her head. We breathe. The doctor explains every move he makes. He has no idea which things hurt more than others, so I tell him what I'm feeling, assuring him it's okay. And breathe. I need distraction, and Mary strokes my forehead. Under my paper bonnet I am hot. Lights glare, white mask, searching for breath, there are a few moments of stolen peace, oasis of calm amidst steel grey, how incredible to be so vulnerable to this woman I have just met. Yes, sister, I am pain, I am peace. And goodbye, goodbye, may God be with you. I feel it leave, suddenly, a flit of energy, gone from my body, from this dark room of grey and white, a redblue flash, and then nothing. It is the opening and closing of my uterus which hurts, I tell the doctor. The suction barely feels at all.

"Two minutes to go" he says, then: "How was it?"

I would like to cry, but he is asking how I am, and I want it to be okay. I am wheeled down the long corridor of faces into a room of women lying deathstill under blue plastic masks. The anesthesia requires oxygen to get you breathing again, Mary says. This is her job, and she hugs me while I cry a little, and then tends to the women. She throws the plastic masks and tubing away after they wake up. It is very cold in the room, a precaution against fire, and everything is stark white with clear blue tubes, hissing.

"I'll get you out of here as soon as I can" says my doctor, and I am wheeled down.

Why did you leave so soon? I ask the empty air. I was willing to go with you all the way, I was willing to go. Ah, but there is such concern to keep my heart beating, keep me alive and untouched, the scheme is to blunt the pain, keep realfelt experience at arms length. There'll be no dying here, no suffering that we cannot measure and explain, none that we cannot control. I am thinking of the silver being a year ago and the bloodthrob pain beneath



it. Pain as propellant, a great driving force which brings us closer, further, leads us on. I am thinking, there are reasons for pain and for suffering, and we need but look with faith for the veils to part.

There are five hours of required rest, with a slice of Kraft cheese between two pieces of white bread. Food is allowed now, and I eat everything I brought, home canned peaches from down the road, thick dark bread, carrots from the garden. Mary comes downstairs to visit, and to thank me for "teaching by example. I've just been avoiding the reason all these women are here," she says, "because I couldn't find any meaningful way to look at abortion." We exchange addresses and hug goodbye. Darkness comes; I check out: forms, tags, files, and then a long ride home.

I have felt great awe while writing this, awe at the complexity and mystery of my life, and of all life. The inspiration to write the story came from feeling a desire for truth - that though it became painfully clear how much further there is to go in my understanding and acceptance of these abortions, this is a step in exploring truthspace - being as fully with the experiences as I can, for the truth shall set you free.

I also saw the great task before us all: to find the reality we want to live in, and create it constantly around us, wherever we go, as a way to transform the world. It feels like pioneering, it feels hard, it feels like the only thing there is to do. □

sydney



which came first,

THE POLITICS OR THE KIDS?

by Steve Gottlieb

For over eight years, more than one hundred New Haveners have created and sustained parent-coop daycares, schools, and now an after-school program informally affiliated with a public K-5 school. Yet *Morning Sun* School closed down due to adult energy burnout and loss of the principal teachers in 1975; two years ago *State Street Child Care Center and School* closed its doors because of galloping parochialism of the left.

Some parents placed their children in Wightwood (a private school) because Wightwood enacted/coopted a *free* learning environment minus the hassles of a parent-run school. Of the parents who did not choose the private-school route, some wanted their kids, and themselves, to be normalized or face the *real* world---symbolized for the parents and actualized for the kids in the daily drumming of the repressive public-school system.

The demise of *State Street School* was a complex process that deserves analysis. As a parent and a person who has spoken to many of those involved at State Street, here is one view of the learning we can extract:

State Street had attempted to create a hothouse moral environment wherein orchestrated cooperative and/or revolutionary leanings and skills (depending upon which adults were with the kids that day) predetermined the precise learning of all other skills. But any *oppositional* model school is both right and wrong because the opposed models are both right and wrong and because human development is both schematic (Piagetian like) and haphazard---chance interfused with necessity.

As a group, we at State Street were unable to distinguish creating a school from the pygmalionesques of creating our children into models of solitary strength and cooperative conscience. Commentary on life replaced life. The children's ability to distinguish between oppressive adult behavior and models of cooperative sharing had been diminished by the thrust of those at State Street who, for want of a revolutionary context in America, tried to revolutionize children and parents at State Street to fight---ultimately---against each other. At a time when

there are no concrete revolutionary goals in America, critical education becomes the only revolution there is. To exchange one form of oppression for another served merely to fixate our reflections by attempting to transform the social reformers--us.

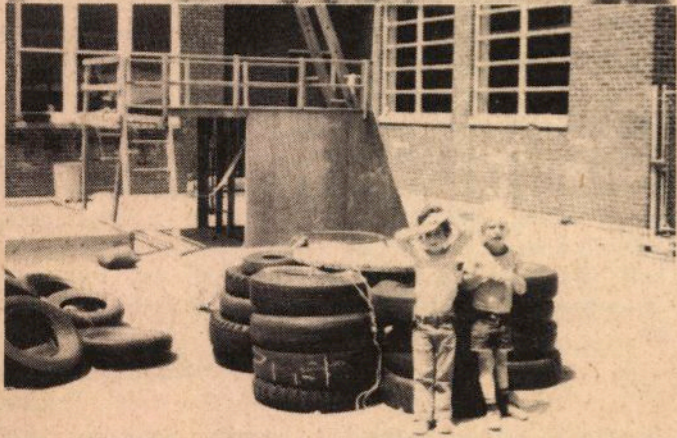
The result of such self-obsessive practice was a confusion between subject and object. We were trapped in the circular violence of a small group of self-divided leaders who were attempting to make history without critical inquiry by all the people involved---who, in brief, wanted to impose leadership.

In fact, the ultra-left, already factionalized within itself and having factioned their individual emotional responses to people proceeded to tear each other apart, while a dismayed alternative culture lost all of its patience. Thus isolated, the ultra-left energy imploded: maoist epithets hanging like tinsel, covert and derisive characterizations of other people-in-movement, cloistered children made to live icily, unfriendly and self-seeking behavior parading as austere revolutionary practice. This practice we cannot again allow to be laid on us. Movements must proceed from socially forbidden emotions, through the formation of conscious social relations that, little by little, foster economic and psychic survival because collectivity matters, alters, shapes and strengthens.

Yet much remains of the social relations we so minutely and painfully have built, and our interdependencies remain, as symbol and reality, manna and sustenance for adults and children---although allegiances are neither as exciting nor as clear as once they were. What is left, however, suits us for survival in public schools and non-movement private schools, a tattered suit providing partial warmth. Some institutions survive: a cooperative daycare; a cooperative after-school program which counters some of the socializing effects of the elementary school; a collocation of communal houses and independent though communal people (some retrenched in couples, marriages, education, vocations). Paradoxically, much has been gained from our collective *failures*; these gains bespeak our resilience and may be seen as variations of the theme of a communal/collective culture enfolded within mainline

U.S.A. Some of the dichotomies show the clearest in our work with children:

elementary or private school	communal life or after-school program
1. centralized authority rules	1. diverse adults who often do not agree -- <i>creative chaos</i>
2. kids individualized and socially alienated from each other	2. some stress on sharing or on collective decision-making
3. television: a norm for acceptable behavior	3. television: a violent (sexist/racist/elitist) and passive medium
4. children learn by imitating models and validating only a small fraction of their emotional lives	4. children form models by expressing the fullest range of their emotional lives under adult supervision
5. imposed social harmony (a la William Glasser) - insidious, covert social engineering	5. the asymmetrical emotional validation that proceeds from individual difference and disagreement. Stress on validating and expressing emotional difference



Right now, the alternative community (still insulated by each other's presence from having enough contact with more traditional parents to win their trust) contents itself with the frustrating and minor impact on school curriculum, teachers, principals and the New Haven Board of Education. We have led a court battle over local control of renting space, we have provided leadership in developing last year's parent-run after-school programs at Beecher School (separate from our after-school program) for 180 kids. Most teachers find our kids articulate, creative, assertive, linguistically volatile, and with *interesting* family backgrounds. And we adults have learned to listen more sensitively and to choose our engagements and our friendships more carefully.

Two years ago, about forty State Street and Morning Sun adults decided to center in the Beecher School district. This was a remarkable and momentous decision. The question arises: how do we continue to perform educational work together? There are three levels of our current work at Beecher:

1. The initial and continued group choice of Beecher School and the creation and support of alternative institutions.

- An after-school parent-coop program of 25 children which runs from 2:30-5:00 on weekdays and is open most holidays all day.
- a continuing parent-coop daycare of about 15 children, most of whom will go to Beecher.

2. Social and Political intervention in the public schools and local community

- hard work to establish working contact with principal, teachers, parent groups.
- providing lead energy in last year's Beecher after-school program on a parent-coop model
- work with other parents to create a parent-teacher resource center at Beecher
- asking critical questions about school curriculum out of our positions on Beecher Community Council
- giving *mini-courses* at Beecher during classroom hours including one on sexism; visiting classrooms frequently.
- lobbying within state and city educational politics.

3. Survival of alternative educational community - the personal level

- continued choice of cooperative styles
- living geographically close to each other -- visiting frequently.
- allowing our children some autonomy in their visiting each other frequently to develop their social ties.
- joint custody of children as the response to parental separation.

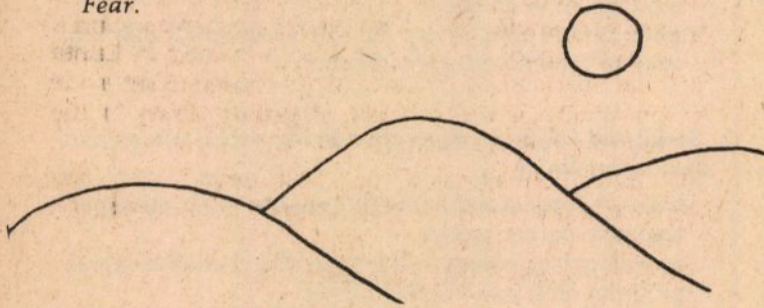
The alternative community can still meet and make decisions for joint action. Usually, however, many of us are at work on projects that do not often intersect. Our present challenge is twofold: in small groups to inject our energy and inquiry into *public*, nonalternative projects in less frustrating ways, and to identify alternative projects that are viable for the future. □

To Sarah: Who will be 30 in the year 2001

If you ever visit the back-woods country of Virginia where I lived as a child, you may see swirling across a dry dusty road in July or August what folks around here commonly call a *dust-devil* or *wind-devil*. Now folks, believed, and still do, that a wind-devil is mostly dirt, old newspapers, and junk food wrappers - which is true. But it is also true that in its center, in absolute stillness, there exists only gratitude.

In the center, there exists only gratitude. No one can discover that truth for you. Or explain it. Yet it is true. If you listen to others, you will only hear the words of an interpreter translating the language of an alien friend whose country he's never been to. *Ordinary mind cannot know the mind of gratitude until they are one, until there is at-one-ment. They are one already, but ordinary mind will not believe it. It sees a snake where the rope lies coiled in the shadows. It cannot see the rope until it lets go of itself as a snake, until it sacrifices the reality of the snake, held in its jaws of past experience and present perception. And why is the snake held so tightly?*

Fear.



So the first thing I would have you remember is simply this; understand fear. It will lead you to the truth. Not my fear, or the world's, or a loved one's, but yours. The beginning of its reality is the end of your illusion. Not because I say so, but because of your inner response to what you come to understand will supply its own authorization, its own credibility.

So all I can really explain to you about life is my fear. That is what I know most intimately. But it is a bore. It is manure for the garden of self-knowledge. Suffice it to say I ate the bread of the common lot and believed a wind-devil was what I saw. In quiet desperation, I sifted the dirt of my life through the five fingers of perception, and it was always dry, barren, and nothing close to being unlimited ice-cream, good grades, and Mercedes-Benz. My experiences, like everyone else's, came and went, piling up behind my eyes like old newspapers. I read and reread them as was the ritual of the times. And, of course, their ads did their number on me, and I bought all the usual junk food, and lived on the rush of the unique experience - a new car, a new sound, a new woman, a new me. Yes, I identified with all of that: the dirt, the newspapers and the wrappers, simply because I didn't understand my own fear. What can I say, oh voice of the interanalyzed-guilt-tripper?

I can say that somewhere, somehow, while the wind-devil swirled around me, the snake dance of death stopped for a brief moment, and there was simply and only gratitude.

And the voice that lives ever-unattended in the stillness of the center gave me these words, and I give them to you, as a condition and as manifestation of my continued presence here in the center, at one with the stillness and at one with all the brothers and sisters in New Haven who are my constant meditation.

And the voice said, *The world is an alien friend I shall not want. It maketh me to lie down in my own disappointment in each moment of expectation. It maketh me to vomit up my own desire, ignorance and aggression. Each moment, it prepareth me a death before me I shall not want. Verily, many will intervene and tell me what to do. But I cannot dwell in a book, or in a CR group, or in a counselor's office forever. Surely no remedy stands before me, and yet breath is only a grace away.*

So view easily, New Haven collage of faces and places, kaleidoscope past. And children ride on parents' backs like ponies on a merry-go-up and down with the clock. Cause we're clear now that we need no faces painted with blouse or tie, or butts covered with patched blue jeans as some kind of ticket for acceptance thru the life-plane political turnstile. No, we're gonna just over the darned thing and clasp hands with all the beautiful, motley, ugly people around us in this earthly subway of gatherings and potlucks and crises, who sit side-by-side as close as the air, sharing the pain of change, knowing that we're all one inside this collective of moving needs and sparkling eyes which leap out their colorful energy. So hook yourself to that daily fix of appreciation and hugs. Social security is not a number but healthy faces and good talks and warm bodies next to yours. Say goodbye to the dis-ease that there's no blanket big enough to get you all under. Be not proud that there's no barbed wire sharp enough to keep you all down. And relax - there's a sleeping bag somewhere called death that fits everybody.

So let there be the serendipity chaos of planned misery and unexpected joy; the worldly-wisdom-tooth is finally pulled. Incense the muses of the clogged sink and the erratic furnace. Let there be domestic daily crisis, for trouble and love are the only teaching.

And that is what the voice said. So you should know, dear Sarah, by then and by now, that there is and there isn't a red tape road to your own undoing. Simply walk completely erect. The tree of life blooms unendingly in your heart; the rainbow of your unadulterated attention waters the air unceasingly with its color. The soft death of egohood is, and will be, our only alma-mater as life has been our only church. Be it ever so.

with love and zest,
Clay

[originally printed in the CO Calendar, February, 1977]

CANTA LIBRE SCHOOL

sing free

by Christina Smith

In August of '75, in Newburyport, Massachusetts, a group of people frustrated with their powerlessness to effect their own or their children's education, began to share feelings. They came together with increasing seriousness to consider taking some positive action to start a learning community. Originally they had thought they would include adult education but this was lost in process.

During that first year (76-77) the group focused as an intermediate through secondary school, Canta Libre - "Sing Free". There were 30 students, 4 core staff (paid) approximately 20 involved parents and 25 volunteers who taught classes, attended meetings and kept the books. The school operated out of a room in the Newburyport Y, people's homes and whatever environments in the area seemed to provide the best learning. The education was

highly personal with a strong sense of community: students were exposed to a wide variety of traditional and non-traditional experiences (meditation and philosophy; history and new games; science and group process) while joining with parents and staff in making the decisions that made the year what it was.

This year some of the students have gone on to jobs or the service, others have transferred to Newburyport's public high school. And those who remained in Canta Libre find they are in a school that has chosen to set aside the community aspect in favor of getting down to the business of running a school.

We asked ourselves if our first year made any difference in our lives? Have we gained or lost? What did we learn?

These are some of the answers:

Going into Newburyport High School was a drastic change for me. My first and foremost problem with it was with the bad attitude I took toward the whole thing.

I find the apathy that the people around me seem to be into is difficult to deal with. All are interested in things that seem trivial to me - punctuality, the color of my socks, etc.

It was hard for me to become so structured all of a sudden. It was odd to have to walk in straight lines and sit silently in study halls.

I feel a bit like an outcast - I don't play their games. I try to ignore the games that go on and sit back and observe.

Canta Libre helped me to see through these games. I am aware of the way we are being manipulated. I am not so easily led, I am an individual.

- Judith



"I went into the National Guard after *Canta Libre* and found myself in basic training. The sergeant would pick you out of formation and make you do push ups. When you'd finish he'd ask you, "Do you know why?" If you tried to outguess him you'd always be wrong, so I'd just say, "Why not?" So I wasn't challenging his power to run it on me, but we both knew it was a game. I could recognize it was screwy and go along with it to the extent I had to. My purpose was to survive, not to learn their game so I could outguess them.

What I learned in *Canta Libre* was how to use my mind to survive: to think about why things were happening and what I could do about it; that I didn't have to be helpless. I also learned something about teamwork at *Canta Libre*; being part of a group and trying to get something done, working with each other, recognizing what each person had to offer. That wasn't that different than what they were trying to teach in the army, though it was for a different purpose.

- David



Canta Libre helped me to understand myself by making me realize it is important to listen to myself; my body, mind and soul. It helped me to hear from myself what I wanted, instead of just what other people wanted me to do. Before I went to *Canta Libre* I wouldn't have stopped to listen to myself, I would have run from it - found something to occupy my time.

- Dean



That first year of *Canta Libre* encouraged me to pursue my individual direction and try what appealed to me. (This year still in *Canta Libre*) it has been difficult to communicate to people who have different ideas of what a high school curriculum should consist. I don't get support from people who don't understand what I'm doing and therefore are suspicious or worried.

I've dealt with this by spending time alone, thinking and writing, planning my life. When I reach a point I have something to work with, I seek out someone to discuss it with. Often I get angry for I don't like my attempts at self-direction being thwarted. I put faith in myself foremost and depend on my own values.

- Harriet

After I graduated from Canta Libre, the problem was living and supporting myself: holding a job, paying bills on time and just getting it all together. Canta Libre aided me through what I'd learned and experienced of new ways to relate to people and taught me some organizational skills.

- Brian

I was 'coordinator' of Canta Libre in it's first year. I put in a great deal of myself and had a large influence on the direction of the school. As the second year came along I found myself no longer involved.

What I have been dealing with is my disconnection with Canta Libre - specifically that it wasn't totally voluntary. In that disconnection a lot of my beliefs, a lot of my directions for my life, a lot of understandings came in question. It led to my getting back into work/jobs and thinking about getting into therapy. My difficulty with the work issue was one of free flow vs. structure.

My difficulty was in dealing alone with my feelings of failure around the school: that what I had put out for a whole year was perceived by some as being detrimental to young people's minds.

I had problems with whether I would deal with that in full community or alone. I questioned whether I or the group were stable enough to deal with it in that way.

I dealt with all of this by getting depressed, angry - denying. I asked for help from some people - I panicked. I felt as though someone had taken my child away.

I think I did deal with this more creatively due to Canta Libre. I thought about what I would have asked the students to do had they been in such a situation and I finally asked some friends for help.

I then was able to realize that Canta Libre was now someone else's trip and I could go on and do something else.

What I finally did learn was that if I wanted something then I was going to have to go after it. I was going to have to make what I wanted happen and not depend on anyone else.

Canta Libre made it difficult to deal with because I felt an incredible amount of support last year and feeling loss of support, lose of love within that community made it very hard for me to deal with any of the members directly.

- Armand



I, Christina, have found myself still in Canta Libre. A Canta Libre that doesn't inspire my devotion or provide all I need to learn.

I have been trying to organize a curriculum for myself that I will be able to attack with enthusiasm. I want to do and learn a lot, and I will, but I would like it set up in such a way that in another year and a half I will have a high school diploma. More important to me has been enjoying it. This is what I feel has been the biggest singular learning I did during that first year - to enjoy what I am doing, get what I want for myself, and just hold important my own values. I seem to have gained a greater ability to trust myself and to believe that only I can do what is best for me.

Along with that I learned to share with other people my feelings and my real self.

- Christina □



DOWNEAST COMMUNITY: an educational experiment

by Jay Stager



September 1st a group of strangers (who happen to be students at the same college in Connecticut) came together as an **instant community** at an isolated farm in a valley in Maine. They knew that this community would **self-destruct** in three months, and that they would be earning a full semester's academic credit for experiencing this process of the birth, life, and death of a commune.

It was an experimental community with minimal design so that the members could experience the chaos, confusion, and frustration of a new beginning. There were minimal restraints and guidelines, so anything could be tried and tested and junked or adopted. A *real* community that is not terminal, as this one was, does not have the flexibility or energy to experiment so readily with the basic problems of any intentional community. These basic problems were conceived to be:

- 1) Why are we here? **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**
- 2) Who's running this thing? **POWER & AUTHORITY**
- 3) Who does this belong to? **OWNERSHIP & PROPERTY**
- 4) Who's going to do that? **WORK & SUSTENANCE**
- 5) Where do I sleep? **SEX, LOVE & FAMILY RELATIONS**
- 6) He doesn't agree with us. **DISSSENT & DEVIANCE**

Each historical and contemporary community has survived or collapsed, expanded or faded, depending upon how it dealt with and defined these six basic issues.

This terminal college community had the unique opportunity both to study the various communal movements past and present, and to simulate their organization. The program was **experimental, inductive, and experiential**.

The Manchester Community College in Connecticut sponsored the program for twenty of its students on two occasions...in the fall of 1975 and the fall of 1977. The term **Downeast** was the chosen name for the program as it is an acronym for:

Direct
Opportunity
With
New
Experiences
And
Societal
Themes

The **Downeast** Semester evolved out of my Introduction to Philosophy classes that spent a week studying and discussing Utopias and ideal societies each term. Instead of speculating and talking about communities, a group of students organized with me and developed the **Downeast** program for presentation to the administration and faculty. There was considerable reluctance on the part of the staff to approve this experiment for fear the group would become hedonistic, self-indulgent and degenerate. In actual fact, the opposite occurred during the three months together in Maine. The student participants acted out high ideals and altruistic values with a deep sense of sharing, giving, and loving.

The general objectives of the program were to **study** communities **and create** a community at the same time.

These two objectives kept feeding each other with data and experiences to build upon throughout the semester. Certainly both studying and building community is a process that evolves indefinitely and is not something we can achieve once and for all. Great leaps in both objectives were felt by all participants as the three months passed.

It is easy to study intentional communities. Considerable resources exist about the modern and the historical attempts at living alternatively in *mini-societies*. Much Utopian literature exists from Plato's **Republic**, Sir Thomas More's **Utopia**, to Skinner's **Walden II**. Reading widely and preparing individual reports on specific communities and general discussions occupied five to ten hours a week of the student's time. Field trips to living communities in Maine such as the Shaker settlement at Sabbathday Lake, films and audio tapes, visiting speakers and communalists and practitioners in alternative and collective lifestyles all added to the total knowledge or the cognitive element.

It is not so easy to create an intentional community. The facility was no problem. Hidden Valley is a camp with hundreds of acres, totally isolated in rural Maine, many buildings (unheated), horses, boats, and a sophisticated dininghall-kitchen. It was an idyllic environment. Financially, the program had to sustain itself with no subsidy from the college except my salary which was transferred from campus to this remote location three hundred miles to the north. The students taxed themselves some \$300 each for the three months and conducted several income-producing projects and tasks to support their living budget for food, utilities, books, fuel, etc. The program functioned on an average of \$30 per person per week. So the two major stumbling blocks to originating a community from scratch

were not problems for the **Downeast** students. They had a fine site and basic financial stability.

A GROUP BECOMES A COMMUNITY BECOMES A FAMILY

To *create a community* was the objective. It takes more than a place and a treasury. This is where the educational process caught fire and profound learning occurred far beyond a mere intellectual exercise.

Twenty strangers came together that first day, unpacked, explored the site, and waited for something to happen. But nothing was prearranged, so anxieties emerged rapidly. The students were free, perhaps for the first time in their lives. There were no mommies, no teachers, no institutions there to serve them. No one knew anyone, food had to be purchased and prepared, animals fed and somehow things had to get organized...**fast**.

There were problems, too. A dead battery in one car, electrical failure in some cabins, a defective stove. Pretty soon the group was talking as a group for the first time. Problems united the group initially as they sought solutions together. Communication was required, decisions had to be made, and responsibilities were divided among group members. It felt good...to have a common need and goal, to be talking about real things, and to be constructively meeting together, listening sincerely to all these neat people. It was the beginning of community. Shared problems, communication, and decision-making all helped mix the ingredients to define a group of people as a community. So Stage I was reached rather quickly.

But Stage I is akin to being on a committee of some sort in the outside world. It barely allows one to imply that a *community* exists. But what is a community? How many people must be involved for how long a time to be termed a *community*? How intensely must they relate to each other? There are no precise and final answers of course, but somehow as time passed the quality of our lives together was changing. Somehow, we were approximating a *community*.

I think that Stage II in the formation of community is achieved when the initial *romance* has worn off somewhat, when a reasonably high degree of order and structure is attained and accepted without resistance or subversion by any of the members, and when procedures for conflict resolution have been developed that allow a group to remain alive for each other. Stage II is present when one is reasonably able to express feelings without fear of rejection or ridicule; when the work gets done without too much hassle and when people somehow act as if their voice and their role are both needed and helpful to the group.

The **Downeast** students first practiced anarchy (which seems desirable when there is no trust in a group) with everyone having equal voice, equal power, and equal responsibility. But the meetings were exhausting and decisions usually occurred by default and frustration with no chairperson. Gradually the group felt the need for some kind of committees and leadership for the sake of efficiency, and some operational procedures or rules of order at meetings. Thus, a kind of representative government was formed and it survived for over a month until the frequent meetings and proliferation of committees caused enough irritation so that a *revolution* brewed. A strong leader

(dictator?) was elected and granted all power over everyone and everything. Suddenly peace pervaded the group and there was lots of free time for the members. There were no problems any more, or at least no one was involved enough to know about them since the *dictator* carried the entire burden. But gradually jealousy reared its ugly head as some began to question the leader's decisions and style. The relationship of the elected dictator with the other members of the group was now different. He used to be friendly and warm with others, but now the role somehow had changed him (or had the group been changed?) and he was impatient and abrupt and sometimes downright *pushy*. Factionalism and the seeds of counter-revolution arose. Distrust and half-hearted participation grew over the work assignments. Accusations of favoritism and soon another *big* meeting and the dictator was deposed and another person put in his place. New hope and a fresh start and everyone was happy again. Later the new leader resigned because she discovered all-too-quickly that her role had altered her relationships with her previous friends who treated her differently after the election. Finally the group invented a rotating dictatorship as the ideal, so that everyone could experience what it feels like to have to make the decisions in the interests of the group and *feel* the frustrations and burdens of power and trying to get others organized to achieve anything.



The highest level-Stage III-of a community seems to occur when it has survived long enough together so that there is a collective sense of history, plus a primary loyalty to the *group*. When a community is now called *our family* instead of *our community* it has arrived. At this stage the members are eager to get back *home* after trips into the outside world - even if those visits involve their original families and friends. At this stage the members sense that they are cared for more intensely *here* than anywhere else in the world.

What amazes me is that a randomly selected group of people can reach this higher level of community sensitivity in only three months. Yet it happened both times. The students ranged in age from 18 to 42, so it wasn't the result of romantic immaturity. I am now convinced that given the conditions of functional facilities, an isolated setting, and a group of people committed to sticking it out for the duration, that any normal human person can *make it* in a community. Most communities find considerable transience among their membership nowadays as *divorce* is rather easy in every aspect of relationships. The *Downeast* students lost a full semester's credits if they copped-out of the program so they had ulterior motivation to endure the rigors and joys of group living. Most communities have no such pressure point for encouraging endurance.

COMMUNITY NEEDS TRADITIONS

I am convinced that to be a community means to have an identity of some kind, not for the sake of the outside world or the postal box. Rather an identity that is internalized in the participants. This sense that there is some *thing* here greater than myself or each one of us is a critical feeling. Without it the community starves from lack of infusing spirit.

This *thingness* is manifested primarily by traditions. It could be as simple as a mealtime blessing or a handholding circle to end every group meeting. It might be a particular song that gradually feels like it belongs to everyone and is sung at times when everyone is together, a tradition which indicates the spirit ever-lent in the community. It may be a weekly ritual that evokes the deepest sentiments of all. It may be a regular game. It isn't corny as that thing we sometimes call *school spirit*, and it isn't prone to the complaint that *but we've done that before*. It is there; it is accepted; it is symbolic of a higher aliveness that permeates the community. It takes on its greatest meaning at a high-time such as a community gathering for a holiday, a ceremony, or a death.

The *Downeast* group had several such rituals evolve. The simple song *We All Are*

One proved most central to our short-lived traditions. We found it emerging spontaneously at the best times of our group life.

AUTHORITY IS INHERENTLY ALIENATING

One of the many double-edged swords in life is the need for authority and the desire for freedom. We can't seem to live with authority or without it. Authority means implicit and explicit structure and leadership. Whether it takes the form of a document or a personage, it somehow tends to aggravate the spirit of individual freedom. Yet the concept and the reality of *community* both presume authority, for without it we cannot have the slightest semblance of this thing we call *community*.

While it is a great honor, seemingly, to be named a leader or an edifying ego-trip to be self-appointed as chief guru or father-figure, the harsh facts of group life mitigate against the selfless, just, effective, admired leader. Accolades falter quickly and are revived only at the funeral. The decisions required, the frailties of human beings and the dilemmas of power all corrode the leader in the eyes of the community. Or, if the leader is remote enough to avoid close-up contact with the people, then the imagery and reputation may

endure as selfless, just and effective. But the leader, then, will feel a deep sense of anxiety, insecurity, and uncertainty about those very accolades and role. The leader is doomed to being *different*. As long as the role is played out the alienation is lurking.

The dilemma is resolved when the leader resigns and is showered with such comments as *you've changed* or *now I can feel comfortable with you again as you are one of us*.

In the **Downeast** program we had this problem with our leadership. Even though I was the instructor, it was present for me as well. At first, the most popular and likeable person was given considerable power and gradually subsumed even more. Within a month people were feeling *he's changed* as if somehow the role and power had corrupted him. Doesn't it always?

GROUP POWER CAN BE DANGEROUS

With the individual needing the acceptance and support that a group provides, and with the novice member feeling warmth, creative involvement, and exceptional intimacy with so many people of collective purpose, group-power becomes potentially dangerous for both the community and the individual. One may reject past lifestyle, relationships, and family and 'convert' to this new and exciting alternative. Converts are always the most intolerant and doctrinaire people as noted in Eric Hoffer's the **True Believer**.

The Sun Yung Moon organization is very persistent that its members remain in the community womb and do not visit old friends or family until it is deemed *safe* (for whom?). Neither do they wish outsiders to infect the groupthink and group life. Gradually the individual becomes so dependent for satisfying needs through the group as to become nearly paranoid about the outside world, often floating in a self-perceived state of bliss-consciousness in the womblike environment. This excessive *happiness* of the convert is just too much, too fast, too soon to be trusted or encouraged.

All communities know the power of the group. Visitors become a serious hassle; there is less and less contact with the outside world and a kind of inbreeding develops; repression of personal traits is increased to avoid the torment of the same-old-conflicts; members think in terms of *what's best for all* thus encouraging a middle-ground conformity that curbs creative initiatives. We all know how hard it is to make a revolution or enact substantive changes in a nation or institution or society...communes are not free of that same inertia. In the long run, individuals are changed more easily and are more dramatically affected by community than vice versa.

PECKING ORDER OF FRIENDSHIPS INEVITABLE

With a typically romantic/idealistic notion that a human can love everybody (equally) each participant in a community goes through an interior struggle. We always want to treat everyone fairly and with equal honesty and intensity. We don't want to be accused of favoritism or divisiveness or privatism. That is natural, of course, among people trying to relate meaningfully in a group of any sort.

An early issue that must be resolved in the formation of a community is the relationship of the *I* to the *We*. When do individual needs for intimacy conflict with the interests of the group as a whole? The fear that pair-bonding is ultimately divisive is a common viewpoint of the romantic/idealist. Whenever two or three are gathered, others feel excluded and often don't feel free to move in on that smaller unit. Estrangement or guilt are the result.

Unless one bans both the experiences and the terminology of intimacy, friendship and love, it is inevitable that a hierarchy of relationships will develop in any community or in life. As Reihhold Niebuhr so aptly explained in his **Moral Man and Immoral Society** the very qualities of love, caring, compassion, trust, and honesty are aspects of human contacts as persons. A society cannot be termed honest or loving; only a real, existing human being can. A society (or a community) is an abstraction; a person is the essence of reality. Therefore, we can speak about loving our community or vice versa, but they are just words attached to ideas, not persons. When I say *I love you* it is a much higher level of love than simply saying *I love my school* or *my community loves me*. In other words, a community is beyond morality. We can never expect the *I* to dissolve into some idealized notion of *We* for very long. The *I* is real and the *We* is ideal. The real always wins!

So we have persons relating to persons in community. That's fine, but sooner or later some persons relate more intimately and meaningfully with each other than they do



with certain others in the group. Pretty soon we have what might appear to be cliques or buddies or pair-bonds forming. We can only be close to a few people in life. We might live together for months in a community and hardly speak to some of our fellow communalists. Of those to whom we feel and act close there is always one whom we would, if pushed, admit as our *best friend*. And there is another who is running a close second and one who is third, and so on. A pecking order is inevitable. We ought not deny this or feel guilty about it. It is a law of life!

In the **Downeast** program we found that the students initially tried to be equal and fair and open to everyone in the community. As time passed, however, it became apparent that some people were relating more to each other than they were to others in the group. One heterosexual couple formed early. Resentments about that soon passed as the couple made a valiant effort to *spread their love around and share each other with the group*. The fact of this pecking order in the Downeast group was dramatized when a sociogram was called for at the end of the term. Some resisted, even resented, putting the names of group members into a sociogram, but complied when the instructor indicated that the results would be unpublished. Then they were able to arrange the names of their friends into a rank pecking order. Thus it became obvious to each student that while his ideal was equal love for every member of the community, in actuality he had grown closer to a few. It couldn't be otherwise in a human community!

WORK IS SOCIAL IN COMMUNITY

Work--physical or mental effort or activity directed toward the production or accomplishment of something. Work, certainly, is an essential part of living. In community, the joy of work is multiplied by the number of persons involved. The work is multiplied, too.

Not all the **Downeast** students had a positive attitude toward the concept of *work*. It took a while to create a system in which each person could contribute a required number of hours labor per week without infringing on personal needs and choices. Eventually the Twin Oaks system of labor credits proved most successful.

With this system in effect and the jobs being done, the attention turned to another need...socializing. Out in the *real* world we work for 8 hours a day and 5 days a week and then we socialize on the weekends. The **Downeast** community had already established times for chores, classwork, communication skill development, recreational activities, etc. But socializing, as they knew it in the outside world, was not built into the group-life. So a committee set about planning a party for Sunday evenings. There were the colored lights, music, food, (no booze by group vote for the sake of the half who felt uncomfortable at drinking scenes) and a few party games. There they were, all set to *socialize*...and nothing happened! We learned that night that the most powerful socializing influence was our daily work together. We were more convivial and companionable while washing dishes or picking apples than we could ever be to the tune of rock music and blinking lights. And we also gained a strong insight into the need alcohol and pot play in the artificial social situations which we set up in our usual, outside lifestyle. We gave up the weekend social and happily went back to living and working and playing together on a daily basis in community. Work was our unifier! It served as the glue for our social life.

COMMUNITY PRESUMES COMMUNICATION & SELF-HEALING

Perhaps the most critical aspect of any relationship is the quality of communication. When a community goes into the Stage III level of family, the communication must escalate beyond routine problem-solving and talking. In order to attain a caring and belonging sensitivity in the group, good

communication skills are required. Training techniques now exist for helping people learn how to say what they really feel, or how to listen for the sake of understanding rather than mere politeness. The **Downeast** community benefited from several long weekend training sessions with professional leadership. To the amazement of some, confrontation did not destroy the group. Rather, a full exposure of the truth strengthened and continually healed the community. Unlike a one-to-one relationship, in a community there is support available from other members of the group for each of the antagonists to see the problem through to a resolution. Following the rules of stating one's own feelings honestly and listening fully to the other's statements without interruption, considering alternatives, and coming to a resolution in an atmosphere of caring and love, most problems can be solved. Obviously, in life there are problems that have no solutions, too.

Just as important as discussing problems is learning better ways of freely expressing approval for each other. So often the positive aspects of personality are taken for granted and we pounce instead on the negative. Many people find it extremely difficult to give and to receive compliments. The **Downeast** students utilized The Circle. One or two evenings a week were devoted to a process in which one member sat in the center of the circle (without being able to speak or react non-verbally). Each of the others had an opportunity to share their perception of this person's strengths and weaknesses. The **speaker** frequently learned something new in relation to the center-person, and the person in the center received unusually powerful input. The impact of this process was so great that even the most negative of the members began to function more agreeably after being in the center of the circle. Regular and positive feedback is a commodity in all-too-short supply in our world.

Another aspect of communication is the therapeutic process of revealing those *innermost skeletons* which we all keep so carefully hidden in our closets. After living together in community for any length of time the layers of personality peel away. The healing feature of self-disclosure is well-known, but the effect of this kind of free expression of one's inner life in a community is profoundly beneficial in building trust and acceptance among all the members. Knowing that one is accepted regardless of past or inner torments can only happen in a community on the road to becoming a family.

CONCLUSION

In a world that seems to be fragmented and so individualized that we feel rootless and lonely, the dream of a loving and healing community cannot fade. After the social experimentation in the late sixties with alternative lifestyles, students today have much to gain by examining the results of the communal movement as it thrives today, and by reviewing those shocking innovations of Oneida or Ephrata or New Harmony in seeking better ways to live together. It behooves more colleges to conceive and design educational opportunities that give their students a chance to learn by doing and know from their guts rather than their heads some of the facts of life. The **Downeast** program seemed to be a step in that direction. □

For further information about the program's course content and format, write to Jay R. Stager, Hidden Valley, Freedom, Maine 04941

founded: Marrakech, halfway house for mildly retarded women and community center for mildly retarded adults • *core energy:* STAND, community media and counseling center; Human Services Coalition; Bonsilene House • *participant:* Clamshell Alliance, regional organizing against nuclear power; Women's Movement; Coalition for Human Service Alternatives; Ladies' Land Band Group, country retreat; New Haven Food Coop; Women's Liberation Center • *time:* 1969 to present

FRANCIE BRODY

founded: Project More, programs for people coming out of prison • *core energy:* Advocate Press, collective printing business; COMEX, journal of alternatives; New England Cooperative Training Institute; Training for Urban Alternatives; Coming Together, neighborhood communications; Bonsilene House • *participant:* #9; Unschool Educational Services Corporation; New Haven Food Coop • *time:* 1973 to present

DENNIS PEARSON

founded: Connecticut Feminist Federal Credit Union; Heavyset, women's printing collective; Bonsilene House, feminist commune; Feminist Economic Alliance, national women's economic coordination • *core energy:* #9; Human Services Coalition; Training for Urban Alternatives; Community Exchange Cooperative, original 1972 core alternative community organizing group • *participant:* Women's Liberation Center • *time:* 1970 to present

SUSAN OSBORNE

founded: Training for Urban Alternatives, grant from NIMH funding educational and training aspect of alternative and social change projects; 2 Chapel Street, communal house; COMEX; Community Cooperative, support for communal housing, coop play, single parenting; Community Futures, consultant network for coop community development • *core energy:* Communities Magazine; Unschool Educational Services Corporation, provides credible coordination for diverse development projects; Fed Up Coop, eating club; Community Exchange Cooperative • *participant:* Another Place Farm, regional conference and retreat center; New Haven Food Coop • *time:* 1970 to present

PAUL FREUNDLICH



Turn the page, please

I Remember A Time When A Collective Worker...

in 10,000 words or less

Originally this conversation was going to be with Susan Osborne about evaluation and community learning. Then it seemed natural to broaden it to housemates who'd been involved in much of the same experience. It's probably important that there are another 25-50 people in New Haven with whom we could be having a similar conversation; another 250-500 with similar organizational histories, but not as close to the core of their groups, nor possibly as analytical; another 2,500 - 5,000 who've at least participated in some of the organizations we're talking about. Perhaps this is, above all, a conversation about *community building*, and the personal struggle, satisfaction and contradiction involved for the builders.

Paul Here we have a group of people who've gone through a set of community experiences, starting more or less from scratch, put together their own lives and institutions, and all the connections between institutions - which means it's not just the Food Coop here and Women's Center here, childcare coops and dozens of communal houses and the Advocate Press all going their merry ways...

Francie You mean we're all networking freaks?

Paul Well, we all have a lot of connections. Our lives cross-reference over time. We've had to, even for survival. So here we are, participants who both have been re-formed by the community, and the people who created it. We've seen institutions and lives change, and the question is, *What's the difference? How are our lives different because of it and what effect has it had? What's the difference that over the past four years the three of you have lived together in a communal house; that we've all worked together in various combinations; played together?* Maybe each of you could take a few minutes to say a little about what you've done over the past few years and what you think is significant out of it.

Francie My name is Frances Brody. I came here in 1969 to finish up school at Yale, got through by managing to do my project in community, and my first big project was starting a half-way house for mildly retarded women, and a community center for mildly retarded adults. Marrakech still exists, but in a very different form than what we were originally trying to do: showing that lay people and students could do something that only professionals had done before. Also that retarded people could live in community. We felt that we proved ourselves right on both points, but then the organization itself changed, became much more professional, and also much more stable.

Then I got involved with the Human Services Coalition (which is how I met these two turkeys here) which was a group of primarily New Haven human service groups which were trying to gather together to have some political punch with the state. It had always been my dream to do some kind of networking organization (during this time I was also substitute teaching). Through the Coalition I got the job as



director of STAND in Derby, a community media and counseling center in the valley. And that was a real exciting experience for me because it wasn't staying in New Haven and working in alternative organizations. STAND was a much more traditional organization, but still quite radical for the Valley area (different than New Haven in that it's more cloistered, more working-class, higher unemployment). Our staff process changed constantly - always trying new things. Maybe that's what I've learned the most about in my various experiences at cooperative work.

Since then I've done some consulting with small alternative organizations. Right now I'm doing marketing for *Sister* magazine on a part-time basis. When I was at STAND we did a lot of experimenting with organizational structures ranging from functional hierarchies to various sorts of cooperatives, and from things that said they were cooperative but were covertly hierarchical to things that said they were hierarchical but were really cooperative policy making groups. The range I began to believe in the most involved cooperative policy making among the central working people, and input from anyone who had any involvement in the organization, and clear territory for everybody that put in much time, so that people had their work areas and they were responsible for those areas, and there were coordinators who were responsible to see everything got done...and I like to work on that continuum from hierarchy to cooperatives...

Dennis Dennis Pearson. I came to New Haven in 1973 from the state prison in Summers, CT...

Paul where you'd been warden...

Dennis No, boardin...after serving time on a trumped up marijuana bust - 1970, that happened. When I arrived in New Haven I was still effectively a prisoner, staying at a halfway house for my first six months and I started doing volunteer work at #9, a youth crisis center. My interest was mixed between drug treatment and exprisoner work...I was not at all focused, but the experience at #9, aside from having a couple of projects to work on, was essentially my introduction into New Haven community. #9 was a center of activity and I got to meet a lot of people socially and through them to know about other projects.

After I left #9, I began working on a volunteer basis with *Coming Together*, which was an autonomous division of the Hill Neighborhood Corporation. This served as my introduction to the neighborhood corporations and their role as sort of surrogate governments within the neighborhoods. I spent a lot of time fighting with them around beaurocratic procedures while at the same time trying to do some meaningful projects in *Coming Together* (which was organized as an information, technical support and inter-organizational coordinating project). Out of that developed a number of projects -- a tenant rights handbook, referral directories and organizing. I started narrowing my focus to criminal justice related stuff. I was a principal in developing *Project More*, a service program for people coming out of prison, which was pretty innovative at that time and did get funding. Also I developed and found funding for a public education program that went with that. I was on salary for a while (through *Coming Together* and the Neighborhood Corporation) and for a number of reasons got fired: One, I was totally naive about working within a beaurocracy where authority was centralized in an

Are you saying some people are less experimental than we are?
Oh, yeah.



Executive Director who was willing to go with you as long as it benefited the program, but was pretty conservative in terms of experimental approaches to real problem solving in communities. And I guess that was a good lesson.

After getting bagged at the Neighborhood Corporation, I continued on doing some criminal justice for a year or so, then shifted my work day emphasis to **Training for Urban Alternatives** (a three year program which supported the work of New Haven alternative projects, funded by NIMH). I had been involved with TUA peripherally since its inception, but became a member of its Administrative Work Group toward the end of the first year of the program through the full second year of the program. I then phased out of TUA and into the Advocate Press (a ten year old, collective print shop) which is where I continue to work. That's a long story...

Paul Doesn't even get you to NECTI...

Dennis My workaday routine at the Press during that time was one of responding to financial and organizational crisis and printing. However, I remained active in other projects and kept in touch with people in the community - largely coworkers within the TUA context, but others too, who had a sense of long-range, broader-based planning, and shared a language that had evolved. So I was kind of torn between my workaday printing, graphics and business routine at the

Press, and also involved in a long and evolving dialog around community development issues. Gradually a serious planning process developed out of TUA which ultimately resulted in the New England Cooperative Training Institute (NECTI). I moved into that process as one of the core people, and remain involved as a planner and decision maker, though there is paid, core staff which is doing the program (of developing conferences which further cooperative social change in New England). It's been hard...working two jobs...

Paul In terms of your ideas about planning, I know you put a lot into systemizing what went on at the Press.

Susan Also I think Dennis coming into the Press helped change its priorities. I'm not sure they *were* particularly pragmatic during those years of business and economic havoc. They simply chose to focus on the politics rather than the economics.

Dennis It had a history of community service, and during hard times, specifically the '74-'75 depression, community service didn't pay the bills. It required more economic intentionality. And I think my coming into it was at a time when people were beginning to realize something had to change, but nobody had the orientation, the energy or the technical where-with-all to make that happen. Not that I did, but I jumped up and down and insisted that those issues be focused on.

Francie I think that's a really important thing about the kind of work all of us have done in the community. That's one of the biggest lacks in the cooperative-alternative community organizations - and I left out a few others I've been involved in less centrally, like the Clamshell Alliance (New England organizing against nuclear power), the Women's Movement and the Ladies Land Band Group (which is working together to buy land to start building a feminist country place together)...and basically almost every group I've ever belonged to has been totally mystified by money and business practices; by the idea of solvency and figuring out how to pay salaries and the rent. And I find it almost shocking that in all these years of very sophisticated development in other areas we haven't learned those things. I find in almost any situation I walk into I'm being asked for advice on grants or money, and that's fine. The time I have I'm willing to give advice, but...

Paul You want to play some too.

Francie I'm not talking so much about myself. Just that it's important to give that range of skills a higher priority.

Susan It's also important to say that until recently those skills were undervalued. The four people at this table are community entrepreneurs. If we were going to write a job description for ourselves, we would say that's what we do best. We catalyze things, we take risks to figure out how to create new resources, and how to connect old ones. That can involve capital or people.

I can remember very well four years ago talking to women in the women's movement about grants for different women's organizations and being firmly put down. The idea of taking a grant was seen as being coopted - people didn't even want to talk about specific ideas. And since I did that, people felt that was a very mystified role, and mystified my role of bringing money into organizations. It's

only lately that people have begun to talk to me about being a resource person, and are beginning to value those skills.

Francie Just the things I'm doing for Sister - getting on the phone and hustling people to buy ads still seems mystical... and not very interesting. But people see the need, and I hope to have spread some of those skills by the time I leave.

Paul I find myself having some of those problems with **Communities**. It's easy enough to think about affecting promotion or marketing. But that first step when I'm out ahead of my experience requires so much concentration, I can feel the resistance to even thinking about it. And it's obvious I'd rather be working on editorial and production. That whole business aspect is only beginning to be more than a necessary evil - a challenge in itself. And I can see why it's easy for people to get paranoid toward others whose actions involve them collectively, and have skills which they don't understand... Maybe we should back up and have Susan say who she is, and what she's been doing?



We catalyze things, we take risks to create...new resources, and connect old ones.

Susan Susan Osborne. I came to New Haven in 1970 and my primary work groups (and I think it's interesting that's how we're defining ourselves, since we've all done a lot of other things) have been #9, a crisis intervention center; the Connecticut Feminist Federal Credit Union (CFFCU); and Training for Urban Alternatives. In each of these groups,

Community Learning

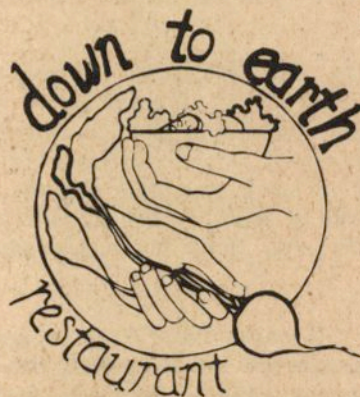
NEW HAVEN CONTEXT: a small city (135,000) on the shore of the East Coast of a large, rich country. A major university (Yale) with minimal community involvement, except through its power, money and ability to attract an elite. Large Italian/American population, newer black and Puerto Rican minorities. 70 miles from NY, 120 from Boston. Strong emphasis on governmental planning in the '60's; increasingly corrupt in the '70's; election of Frank Logue as mayor in '75 raised hopes of city's involvement in progressive social change.

MOVEMENT CONTEXT: Strong anti-war movement in late '60's, further radicalized (and confused) by separatism emerging around Black Panther trial. Marxist and Maoist ideology made strong impression (Socialist Organizing Group, Marxist-Feminist Study Groups, People's Center). Early women's movement with Women's Liberation Center and Sister Magazine now 8 years old. Strong lesbian community, with separatism an issue. Development of parent-coop day cares and schools (State Street, Morning Sun, Bishop St.). Dozens of communal houses, many with kids, spread out over city, suburbs and surrounding country, with annual communal conferences since 1971. Lively social and political life (parties, dances, groups). Several attempts at developing serious alternative community infrastructure, but relationships, both working and social, remain clearest sources of *community*.

People in *Alternative Community* consistently involved in human services (youth support [#9, STAND] health [Women's Health Services, several community clinics and education projects] mental health, prisoner support, legal aid. Business development has been slower, except for evolution of six year old New Haven Food coop into one of largest new wave coops (1.2-1.5 million sales, 2,500 households) and has secured funding for second and larger store. Connecticut Feminist Federal Credit Union failed after 3 useful years, 10 yr old collective Advocate Press doing well. Involvement with minority community primarily thru Food

Coop and People Acting for Change (PAC) a major CD organizing project in deteriorating Hill neighborhood, with Home Maintenance Corp. its companion for economic development. Public Power Project (PPP) major focus for movement organizing. Packaging of *community* under rhetoric of *cooperative training* brought in federal money (National Institute of Mental Health) in 1974 thru Training for Urban Alternatives (TUA) and a board, representative of alternative and social change projects, managed and coordinated the grant and successfully dispersed funding. Development continued in second 3 year grant (1976) for regional cooperative development, thru New England Cooperative Training Institute (NECTI). PAC, Home Maintenance, Food Coop and Unschool Educational Services Corp. (which TUA, NECTI and Communities Magazine are divisions of) have had increasing, tho still small impact on city, and some demonstrated ability to attract funding and jobs.

Dope and music have always been peripheral but present. Also peripheral are regional awareness and spiritual directions. Recently a Zen Center was started. 3HO has an ashram and a storefront. Ananda Marga has organized a new food coop, Edge of the Woods. Down to Earth, a collective, natural foods business which offers community entertainment is new, struggling and hopeful.



I've been at the hub; one of the people who provided core group energy for starting the organization or keeping it going. And I worked with each of those groups for at least two years. From each of those experiences I have questions about management and worker control, evaluation and planning. Those are very important to me because I've had to participate in the evaluation of each one of those for different reasons. #9 there was no formal evaluation done, but it closed when there was no adequate transition in leadership. I was involved in the evaluation of CFFCU which started with zero capital for operating funds (and

though it expanded rapidly and seemed quite successful - over \$200,000 in loans) succumbed after three years because of that poor start, and for lack of certain kinds of business management. And TUA, happily, I'm working on the formal evaluation for the funding source (NIMH) and it's simply ending after achieving its goals, so that's a very different kind of evaluation.

I'm also turning 30 next month and the evaluation that's going on about that is just ridiculous. That's the most problematic of all.

Francie I want to say something about **Bonsilene House**, which I think strongly affected all of our views toward the community...as long as we're still on introductions. Bonsilene House (that's the name of the street in Woodmont, Ct. where our communal house was located - a few blocks from the house Paul has lived in) was started in 1972. Susan is the only one of us who was one of the founding members...

It started as a feminist collective, of sorts. I guess it had to go through some changes when Dennis got out of the halfway house and suddenly wanted to move in. People had to make some choices about where the group was going. He did move in April, 1974...

Dennis And I'm happy to report that even after I moved in, after a quiet transition, it remained a feminist house.

Francie It did indeed. A few months later I moved in and I guess there were a few other changes. Basically it was a really tight unit. There was a lot of energy focused inwards on the house, although we were all very busy and often only had dinner together on the weekends. It was a very intentional household. We went through a series of house meetings where we did life histories and talked about ourselves in relations to various kinds of politics. We put a lot of energy into it and I think it changed us all and made a lot of difference in the confidence we were able to have in our values in the community...

Dennis I think one thing that really characterized the group, and I don't think it was unique to Bonsilene, as far as houses go here in New Haven: it was a group of organizers, planners, doers, activists...who were achieving some success in their work. There was always somebody embroiled in some issue. There was always somebody to listen about that. So there was really active sharing and support around the community work that individuals were doing outside of the house...

Susan Something else Bonsilene did for me was to demystify cooperative work. I began to see it as a set of skills, rather than a political or spiritual disposition. So that I began to say to myself, not only in terms of my household but in terms of my work, *this work and the life I live is composed of a set of skills. I have learned to deal with people in certain ways...with my housemates and work partners...*

Paul I wonder... It sounds like all these separate skills add up to the whole: a person has these skills, therefore they're a cooperative worker - that's one way of looking at it. I wonder if what happened to you at Bonsilene isn't rather that having already developed the beginning of some skills, that you got the cultural experience; that the chemical thing didn't happen so that you began to practice it more wholly as part of your life - the **being** of a cooperative person - that you were reacculturated through Bonsilene Street.

Francie I think in some ways that's valid. And it wouldn't only be true of Bonsilene, but of some of the jobs each of us had...certainly for me at STAND. Maybe the way it's true is bringing the skills Susan's talking about together in a natural, everyday sense with my values and politics and ways of wanting to relate to people...ways of growing and developing new skills which weren't necessarily part of that central core of learning how to be cooperative.

I think that I bring to cooperative work some of the very same skills that my brother who is a high powered business man has. There's a great overlap, but it's the melding together of our skills with our values and our lifestyle that makes them cooperative.

Paul What would stop your brother from moving into these environments?

Francie It's not impossible my brother would live in a communal house. He isn't doing it right now, but I think he has somewhat different values and priorities. Also he has a different analysis of the way things are and the way things have to change.

Yet it's very interesting that in his very hierarchical business he's most interested in finding workers who will work independently. He doesn't want to have to think for people, and he knows the organization produces more when everybody's thinking. Now that may not be a typical beaurocratic ideology...

Paul It also may not be a typical collective ideology. Anotherwords, we as a group of people may have a much more interdependent or even independent sense of what workers do than most people working in coops or community. *We* expect people within a collective to be very independent, to be able to carry their own load, to do things in their own way...

Dennis Only within the limits of the group. A strong level of individual initiative is a prerequisite for coming into a cooperative group. But that initiative has to be harnessed... in some cases when there are different levels of skills within the group...chained. If a person comes into a group with strong skills in certain areas, particularly the kind we've been talking about (risk-taking, entrepreneurial) those skills are not only not understood, they're seen as...

Paul Threatening...

Dennis Not only threatening, but as the tools of...all we're trying to get away from...

Francie Oppression, control...

Paul Control, right. People have been controlled in the past by...

Dennis By the language of that whole planning perspective. So it's a catch. And I think that's one of the most difficult problems I've experienced. I've been put through hell everytime I've tried to get a group to focus on planning.

Susan Part of the problem is - how many groups are specific about their purpose? And are able to define them in terms which aren't open ended? Most groups I've been in that called themselves *cooperative* have hardly been that. They may have been people who were trying to find a definition for something they called a *cooperative work style*, honestly looking for non-hierarchical, humane ways of living their lives. But that doesn't make a cooperative work group: That makes a group of people who have a somewhat ambiguous purpose. If a group gets together and has an ambiguous purpose, how can it balance itself to achieve that purpose? One of the subtleties, one of the learnings that I've felt over the years in cooperative groups is that you begin to have a sense of what the balance is of the roles within the group. You sense if someone's not there. If you're in a group where everyone reinforces their own biases, but you get a sense you're not getting a challenging viewpoint, or a business viewpoint...when the group feels

bonsilene

14th COMMUNAL NEWSLETTER

reprinted from COMEX, April, 1974.
Bonsilene House was rented til 1976,
with much of the group continuing to
live together thru another rental into
the present house which is owned
cooperatively.

How we began

How did it get started? Two women, cutting loose from confused situations met each other at a commune weekend at Clarity Farm. Their ideas about why they wanted to live with women only for the time being crossed, crossed, and built on each other. Things like: finding yourself, getting support from women friends, a "different level of struggle," independence, were the essence of it all. We vacillated, fantasized about just two living together, or being with one man, or living alone, city place, country place, etc. But finally some evening sitting on the front steps of a city point commune we decided to get a house in Woodmont. Many women were more or less interested, and we started discussing things. Meanwhile one of us found the rundown, delapidated Bonsilene house. We took one disgusted look at it and wanted it. Soon five of us -- Rosmarie, Sioux, Fran, Susan, Ginger* -- were committed to the venture. On a beautiful May evening we gathered together in Woodmont for Chinese dinner, made a deal with the houseowners and carefully chose rooms (finding the Tarot cards agreeing with us).

Some thoughts on friendship and goals, maybe?

Did you ever wonder how many bricks it takes
Red clay ones, brown mud ones,
To build a house, strong one, big one,
Standing on the plain, facing Northwind?

Did you ever ask how many sweaty workdays
How many dirty hands and bent backs,
How many stubborn and together heads we need
To hand the bricks along, stick them together?

Did you ever find out what's in the wet mortar?
Is it suffering and knowing of better places,
Passion, laughter and friendship?

Whatever, I like the mix, it suits me
While adding some rough sand for revolution,
Some soft sand for peace,
The bricks pass through my hands!

Rosmarie



* Carol and Schapper joined us in February.

Struggling, supporting, sharing

... And then we took a long look at the house. ... it was a wall to wall clutter and sorely in need of paint. Undaunted we continued working (until we discovered a piece of meat that had been living in the freezer for 6 months without benefit of electricity. With plugged noses the removal committee ceremoniously removed it, and the cleanup committee went to work using every remedy evolved for deodorizing frigerators.) Soon with help from many friends, and 2 truckloads of trash later, the house was ready.

Division of chores happened fairly easily. We all liked to do different tasks (or all hated doing different tasks). Chores were assigned for an indefinite period to be changed when they became unbearable. Our dish arrangement still leaves others in a state of shock. It's voluntary. After dinner someone volunteers to wash dishes and unlike mixed houses some of us have experienced, it gets done and shared pretty equally.

Beyond these kinds of typical communal struggles (who does the dishes and how often variety) we've tried to focus on the ways we provide support to each other, as well as develop an understanding of what it is we share... as women, as a commune, as individuals.

Several dialogues have grown out of this emphasis on support and sharing:

----continuing interpretations of what it means to be in a "women's house"

----how intentional is each person's involvement; is it more than just a comfortable, friendly place to live?

----how much more?

Also discussed: the level of incredible busy-ness of every woman who lives at Bonsilene; sexuality; differences in daily rhythms and life cycles; ways we deal with anger/negativity.

Bonsilene has been important to us because we've had time and space to think about our evolution as women who are breaking through oppressive roles, patternings, ways of being.

A continuing experiment

As of this writing, Bonsilene will continue to be predominately a women's house, but we're considering the possibility of having a man as a house member; if this is so, it is true that the conception of Bonsilene as "women's house" will change, but the struggle for collective, non-sexist growth will not.

like it's too narrow - that to me is not going to be a well functioning group. And I think it's a skill to be able to understand what kinds of balance are needed.

Paul I was just thinking of a meeting Dennis and I were in Wednesday night and we both walked out saying, *This is hopeless. You cannot proceed with this group of people...*

Susan It's not a well balanced group.

Dennis Even when things do work well (the sharing of skills, and a creative tension between workers) role divisions continue to exist on an intuitive level and not in an explicitly defined way. And I think that's a mistake. Because an organization is then dependent on this particular group chemistry for its existence, and when that group disperses, the organization suffers.

Paul It's tough because that's the point where the personal and the organizational are most clearly contradictory. Coops and collectives *are* more personal, more open to our feelings, more a part of our lives. So even the systems we develop become personal in relation to that particular set of people. When we're ready to leave, or have to, we'd like the organization to endure, both because it's a bummer to see something you worked hard on collapse, and because of the sense of accomplishment to know something you built is ongoing and useful.

Francie I'm learning a lot about leavings. When three of us left STAND who were powerful people, the dynamics of the group changed so incredibly that it was really difficult for the group to get its balance back. People were trying to compensate for roles that were gone, and the group suffered a great deal. The thing I don't understand about it, after thinking that I had left really well, is what was it in our planning around that transition that caused such a great imbalance to take place?

Dennis You all left at once. You represented not only the core leadership, but together represented the greatest seniority, understood the purpose of STAND, had evolved your own internal group practice. You'd routinized your agreements to the point they'd become intuitive and you took a lot of that intuitive understanding with you. You couldn't pass that on...

Francie Yeah, that's true. There was some overlap, but not of the people who had the seniority.

Dennis Six months of overlap might have done it.

Paul I'm thinking of last spring when two of the founding members of the Food Coop were thinking of leaving, the two most key people, and the rhetoric it was being covered by was *finding two new members of the collective*. Not seeing a potential leadership crisis, which is exactly what would have happened if they'd left and the Coop hadn't redefined how it was going to provide collective leadership or brought in people with specifically those skills.

With STAND when you made a radical change you opted for a certain kind of transition. It implied a certain kind of rebuilding. You've got to expect a whole renegotiation, and the best thing you can probably do is help pick your successors, tell them what you know and get out. Either you've got a competent bunch of people or you don't: If you don't the thing's going to fall apart; if you do, then they're going to rebuild it and it'll seem really weird to you. It's very confusing to go through that kind of transition because you

keep matching up what's happening against the way it was (should be). They think (and have been encouraged to) they've got the right to redefine the purposes, the cultural context, the tasks, the agreements...



...it's painful as an ex-leader to watch people having difficulties, seeing them periodically, and knowing there's nothing I can do.

Francie I think that's a really important point about leaving as a leadership figure. That's something I learned from Marrakech where I had more difficulty doing that. With STAND I was able to stay away. I find in some situations people asking me for things that aren't appropriate for me to give, and that I won't give. But it's painful as an ex-leader to watch people having difficulties, seeing them periodically, and knowing there's nothing I can do. That's the kind of pain you have to learn to live with when you leave places that you care about...

Susan I think one of the reasons why transitions out of communal houses or organizations is difficult is that there really is a leadership crisis within alternative culture. By that I mean that the rewards of leadership do not outweigh the risks.

(General agreement)

I think people are afraid to take on skills that involve grave interpersonal risks. I don't think there's an understanding between power and authority (linked to responsibility and accountability). It's better now, but I remember a time when there was an arbitrary disregard for leadership-as-power-tripping...in our adolescence...

Dennis Two or three years ago...

Paul Well, leadership should depend on consent, and if nobody trusts anybody else, you can't have consent...

Susan It's also true that in groups run by consensus that there's a problem with people having an unusual amount of initiative or energy: They need to see that things get done; the group needs to see that decisions get made cooperatively. Frankly, I haven't seen that work very well...yet...without a lot of protest...

Paul That's good, Susan. Mostly we've been talking as though we as leaders were defining our role, where most of the time we had to exercise leadership in a covert or facilitative way - I hope it's mostly the latter...

Dennis I think there's another problem, too. People get attached to their power, their sense of importance and the fulfillment of a knowing role within their program.

Paul At any given time **Twin Oaks** has three planners, and they can be overruled. The question about that kind of centralized authority is who are they accountable to, and is that accountability more than a sham? Is there enough information flowing around so anybody knows enough to be able to overrule them?

I think what we found in **TUA** was that when it got down to policy issues which had to do with how people really lived their lives and what they cared about, they'd yell if they thought there was anything going on. Otherwise they really didn't give a damn. And I think they were quite right. From what I've experienced the past few years, responsible leadership can make all kinds of managerial decisions and it's fine. But there's got to be a democratic process to handle the times when the managers step over that line and need to get overruled (and to keep the information about choices current).

Dennis I've come to believe, at least at this stage of my understanding (and I think Francie and Susan both were talking to this in their own ways, and I see Paul acting on this) functional division of labor is critical, and in some cases functional hierarchy based on several variables: Seniority because there's been a dialog over time, and the present is shaped by that history; because the lessons of failure are integrated into that; because a lot of skills have been integrated by people who have been into something for a long time, and can be applied without a lot of wheel spinning. I think we need to expedite our organizing and development work. That requires separating out new people from old people... It's going to be criticized as elitist, power mongering...

Paul Not as long as you have a process by which new people can become old people. A kibbutz I visited in Israel had a year's apprenticeship before full membership could be *considered*, and that seemed reasonable and indicated how seriously they took what they were doing.

Susan Yes, a clear process where people understand expectations.

Francie Even in Clamshell there's a difference in terms of the whole decision making structure. Informally there are people who've done a lot more work and been around a lot longer and they get listened to more. And they should.

Dennis And some of the inner core of Clamshell are very opinionated about strategy. With Clamshell, the strategy to the outside world is what's going to make it or break it. That's got to be orchestrated, very sophisticated, though it has to come across as simple. It's got to be done with precision, care and discipline. That requires having people with demonstrated skill free to do their work. We can't always be training new people...instead of doing work.

Paul Partially that is the work...but I know what you mean. Also we're overextended. I hope that's getting better, but some of it's just the social cost of so much needing to be done. When groups are fighting for their own survival - like **Morning Sun**, the school cooperative I was part of for three and a half years, always needed new people. It was always on the brink of survival. A new person coming in meant the assessment per family went down and more people for shifts. It was really critical to have new people. So it was, *Come in, here's this wonderful collective operation, and then...*

Francie Bam...

Paul That's right. There'd be this wonderful initial enthusiasm, then people would get in and they'd find they weren't heard. You'd say something and two minutes later someone else would be talking as if you hadn't. There was consensus, but there was an inner group of people who looked at you as if you were off the wall or you'd just get ignored... You didn't know enough. So though the forum was open, people learned to shut up until they knew enough what the culture was, then after a while they could talk intelligently...

Dennis That's a de facto apprenticeship program...

Susan Has to be explicit...

Dennis *You're here for thirty days as a participant-observer at which time...*

Susan *you'll know X, Y and Z...*

Dennis and set up training goals...behavioral objectives for these new people into the groups, both in terms of process and product. Otherwise a new person can come in and totally upset the whole thing if they're given a consensual vote. And it's threatening. At the Press where we're having to judge our success/failure by whether we pay our salaries, we cannot afford that kind of upset. A new person comes in and wants to change things in a way that's off the wall - we can't afford for that person to have a full consensual vote immediately. At the Press, legally as a non-stock corporation the board of directors owns the corporation. The workers at the Press are the board of directors, so legally we are a worker owned and managed shop.

Two years ago when we were technically bankrupt, who wanted to own the bankruptcy? But in a situation now where we're approaching a net value of 15 - 20,000 dollars in inventory, receivables, materials and equipment, not counting projected sales, that becomes an issue...ownership. It's linked to control of capital resources, possible income. It's linked to the whole question of equity - what's the pay



...what's the pay-back for 60 hours a week at \$400 a month?

back for 60 hours a week at \$400 a month? If someone leaves the Press do they just turn that equity back in and at some point the Board, the future workers, decide to sell it and slice the pie and that's it? And a new worker comes in and arbitrarily they're a fourth or fifth owner with a different sense of purpose?

Paul Dennis, I remember one you raised quite a while ago - what about the sweat equity of all those people who worked for piddling wages all those years at *Advocate Press*? Who's paying attention to them?

Dennis Well, we are paying attention to them in some sense, because we are honoring debts we incurred to them by way of promise for salary adjustments for low pay.

Susan which is an unheard of thing to do... In our house we've worked out a concept of sweat equity so that ownership also reflects work.

It's not as if everyone should go around ga-ga. There are things we can do. One of the alternatives is to set up a conditional trust arrangement where people have access to the trust if a set of conditions are met. And naming these conditions. Each thing we set up is going to have unique conditions because they are experimental...

Dennis But we're experimental folks.

Susan Are you saying some people are less experimental than we are?

Dennis Oh yeah.

The simple point is that success brings with it a whole new set of problems which we haven't really tackled yet.

Francie I think that's really important. With *STAND*, the point at which I left, it was three times the size of when I came. What do you do when instead of trying to pull the lowest person up from \$4500 you're pushing the highest person up to \$10,000? That's not high, but nevertheless people have the idea there's enough to go around, and people have a right to start asking. Everybody at *STAND* now is making more than I made for 3½ of my 4½ years there. And when there's scarcity, there's a certain kind of ease that people have in pulling together and fighting against the outside world that makes it a lot easier to be cooperative. And when there's less scarcity the honeymoon's over, the pioneering stage is over...

Susan I don't agree with that. I think when there's scarcity, cooperation is all you have. I'd much rather be part of a cooperative organization (and I haven't yet) which had enough capital and people and I'd like that to happen some day.

How do we measure an organization's ongoing success and failure...performance? How do we take its pulse... make decisions? One of the things I want to get in is that at the Credit Union, at one point, we laughingly established a list of what we called our economic indicators. Every month we'd take a list of variables...not just economic...but variables that had to do with our health as an organization...things we thought were important, and we'd compare that list with the preceding month.

Paul The Press has it easy. Either the books balance or they don't. The second thing is either people in the community are mad at them or they like 'em - so one's very clear and the other you feel. Then there's whether people within the collective feel good.

Susan But there's other criteria: whether people in the collective are getting new skills.

Dennis Also the books might balance and we meet our production load but we have no options if that one 10 year old printing press decides to die. We are stung...we're out.

Susan You could get a loan...

Dennis We could get a loan, but we'll have to pay dearly for it because it'll be a crisis, rather than knowing the thing's ten year's old and taking some decisive action now.

Paul You could have it negotiated with a bank that the loan would be there anytime you need it.

Dennis That's what I'm talking about: advance planning for long term survival.

Francie Right now they aren't paying any bank fees, and if their books are balancing, that's part of the reason.

Dennis Not only that, we've bought equipment out of our cash reserves - in six months we will be absolutely debt free - we pay all of our supplies and purchases within a ten day period for the 2 percent discount and we have not missed a pay day in two years.

Susan He loves that claim...

Dennis But there's a flaw in it...

Susan Yeah, you don't have any credit. It's all farfel.

Dennis It's a mistake not to be using the banks or the SBA

for capital expansion if we move into that. Trying to use our own money is naive: using someone else's is risky. It's just knowing all those things. If we're measuring our success, and we're measuring it on the basis of what we understand the situation to be right now and overlook the long range implications, failure will jump on us. But if you can understand your options in a sophisticated way...

Susan And if the whole group can do that...

Dennis Exploring those options requires an investment of time and it's a speculative kind of thing. You can't concretize it. You don't know what the pay back is. In a cooperative group to explain to someone who has a limited concept of planning, *Well, I'm gonna explore that and that and this..* is like saying I don't want to concentrate on today's work. It's a set-up because day to day work is real and the group is usually structured to handle it, or understands how to control it. So I get stereotyped for being abstract or playing boss and discouraged from taking initiative: *Well, you're always so abstract. Why do you want to do that? Why don't you just go and print?*

Paul You may have to put it on the line...I've done it with several groups...It reaches a point where the only thing you can do is threaten your own withdrawal...other than some sort of power play. In a sense the power is in your own negativity. So you say, *Look, my intuition, which is different than your intuition, is based on all these factors, I see if we don't plan for these eventualities, one day we're just going to get wiped out. And I'm not prepared to keep putting my time in for the next couple years...*

Susan Exactly what I said...

Paul *until the point where we get wiped out. And I haven't got the right, because I'm not the boss here, to say that I insist that we do it. But I will say that...*

Susan that I can't support it...

Paul *not only can't support it, but I'm smart enough to get out. There are other things I can do with my time and energy, and I say, either back me with the consensus or give me a division of labor and appoint me the planner...*

Dennis No.

Paul It is one possibility. And the third is, *I split and you go on your merry way...*

Susan No, *I split, but after we work out the sweat equity arrangement...*

Paul That's another thing. But I remember when you were talking about intuition before. It seems to me we always operate on intuition. It's a question of what criteria you consider critical. And the criteria you consider critical changes over a period of time...

Susan But you need to know what those criteria are...

Paul And if you're a bunch of people who have an entirely different set of criteria, you're going to go nuts. Because your intuition is telling you something very, very different than what their intuition is telling them. It's like getting someone in with a bunch of people where for him sexism has never been an issue. And he's going along and thinks everything is just dandy...taking control of the whole situation. And everybody else's intuition is saying, *that fucker...*

oooooooooooo

Francie I'm seeing a lot I wouldn't have expected in Clamshell. Even there the kinds of skills we're talking about are mostly mystified, but when I made a comment about trying to get a CETA worker for planning the blockade, everybody was in stitches. People were saying no matter what suggestion would come up (as long as the group could live with it) *Great, do it.* Nobody was trying to stop anyone taking initiative.

At the same time the group really works on total consensus. It's fascinating. I've been at meetings with 3-400 people where the group is working on consensus, and the major problem with that (aside from everyone putting so much energy into that that they're totally exhausted and unable to do anything else) is tyranny by a tiny minority - two or three people, not even necessarily educated about the issue, get uncomfortable about it and won't budge. Then the rest of the group can't meet consensus. I've only seen that happen a few times. People are working really hard on those problems and mostly I've just been astounded at how well consensus works in the Clamshell Alliance. And there are committees on everything, structural issues as well as parallel committees for different actions. I don't know where people get their energy.

Paul Francie, do you get a sense of tribalism from Clamshell?

Dennis Regional tribalism.

Francie It's the whole northeast region and people come wandering around, and for big events it's really very US.

Paul What I meant specifically was that what you were talking about was taking me back to **Morning Sun**...which for that time was my premier tribal experience. It was also a group which operated by consensus in relatively large groups - 30 to 40 (though our reading of consensus was different - after everyone had thoroughly been heard...once a minority agreed its position was understood, it was expected to accept the consensus) and it was also a group which demanded incredible amounts of energy - day care turns, school turns, financing, administration, carpooling, meetings, committees... But not only did **Morning Sun** demand a lot - it gave a lot. People were using it as more than just a cooperative service. For a time in their lives it was the principle for their own growth, their own being - politically, socially. Who are you? *I'm a member of Morning Sun.* Who are you? *I'm Clamshell.* And the whole learning, the interaction gets so rich. The consensus process, though it's tiring, it's people learning how to be in a new way.

Francie I think that's very true in the Clamshell. and I'm really resisting allowing a work group to take over and define my life. It's important for me to have more personal space. (Maybe I've already had that tribal experience in other groups.)

Paul As intense as some of our projects get and as crazy as that seems sometimes, particularly in cities it may be the only way to screen out all the rest of what's going on. The only way people are going to get a cross-cultural perspective, to understand what's really different from the established ways is to really get into it...so into it they can't see anything else. And later comes the point of integration.

Francie But I think that level of enthusiasm can be a problem, too: It limits the kind of people who can

participate in an organization to some degree. In the Clamshell, for instance, one of the things that was said at the blockade meeting I was at last weekend was, *How can we avoid alienation of middle aged people?* And somebody said, *Cut off your hair and shave your beard*, and everybody laughed. But it's true that a lot of these groups tend to be fairly one-dimensional...young adults...

Susan We reinforce each other's biases beautifully...

Francie in the Clam it's 18 to 35 or 40 mostly. Somehow we're limiting the kind of change we're doing to our own peers. And I think that's partly because of the kinds of involvement we're demanding.

Paul I don't disagree with reaching out. Certainly I've done plenty of that. But there's something about starting from the center, of starting from the heart or starting from what we really know how to do. Rather than arguing a lot of head things - *that the world ought to be this way*. And I think in a lot of ways that requires a certain preparation.

Speaking as someone who's forty, and who 7 or 8 years ago when I came to New Haven... At 32 or 33 I had to reach way back through a lot of rigidities I'd begun to develop (even though I'd been a filmmaker and involved with edge-of-straight-society-things like Peace Corps and educational change). Still I had to reach way back to be comfortable in the counter-culture. In some ways...well, I do okay...

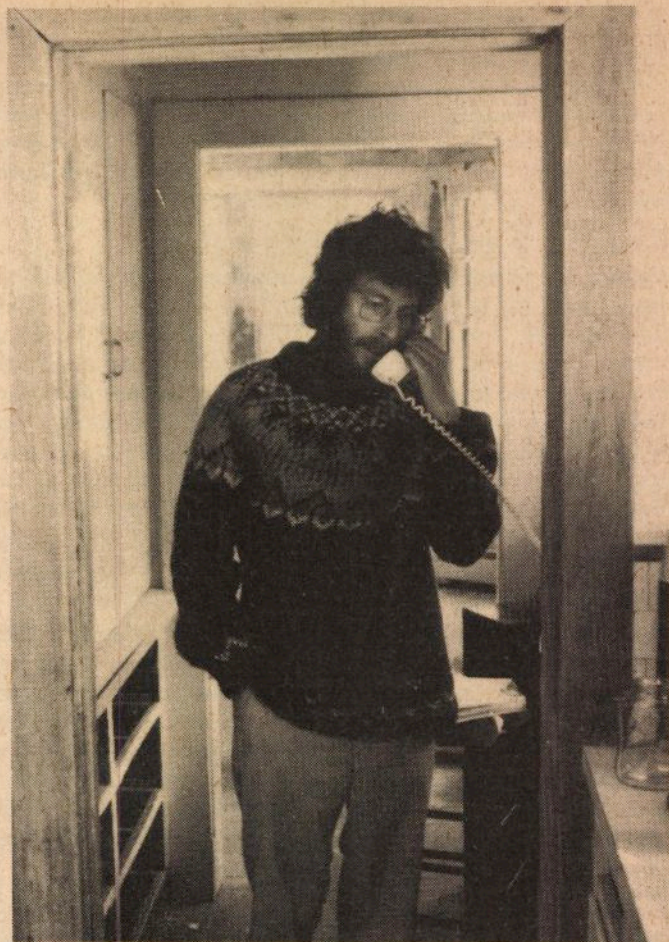
But if it wasn't easy for me, it for sure wasn't easy for people my age...people who now are in their forties who'd lived much straighter lives, even if they sensed it was important to make personal and social changes. And I think there's a lot of preparation, like a generational preparation - making significant changes whether in hierarchy or sexism or affluence or racism...the accumulation of attitudes and advantages are hard to give up.

What has happened is that five years ago in New Haven the folks making changes were early twenties to early thirties, now it extends to late thirties because we've grown up with it. I guess what I'm saying is that the way we may include many people in their 60's and 70's is to wait 20-30 years.

Francie I think it's important not to ignore the people I've met in Clamshell who've been doing this kind of work for 60 years, and we're relative babes in the woods compared to them...

Dennis True and an inspiration, but as our generational movement grows, I don't see **that** much progress in the world outside. I see us getting better at identifying and understanding what we're doing; getting more sophisticated at building organizations which suit our values and politics, but in terms of having an impact, it's miniscule, which is disturbing...

Paul I think we're lucky. Because we're only beginning to know what we're doing. If people had been taking us seriously a few years ago, they would have gotten a lot of misinformation (when you think of the rhetorical quality of our organizing - of how much we were trying to prove - we took seriously almost everything except: *we are in transition, experimenting with personal, collective and social change which we don't know much about, but it's important to be doing it because what exists now just isn't working.*)



At 32 or 33 I had to reach way back through a lot rigidities I'd begun to develop...

Dennis But we're coming out now professionally and we've got to learn a new game. The media image of the sixties lingers, and that's a major obstacle to overcome. We have to see ourselves as growing up. And as we convince ourselves, and have a little experience, we have to convince the world outside that what we're doing is serious business. That we're not just dropping out...

Susan That we're serious workers...

Dennis That there's some vision and integrity to this whole dance we're doing. And it's frustrating spending a lot of time learning the nuts and bolts of organization, planning, business, finance...all the trappings of the dominant culture which we had to reject, and now find we have to respect.

I've seen some dramatic changes in New Haven the last few years. The way the Food Coop's changed its management structure, and you can even call it *management* without putting your head in a paper bag...

Paul Just remember to bring your own paper bag...

Francie We're trying to evolve a system of dealing with those issues differently from the dominant culture, but still operate efficiently. Maybe that goes back to what I was saying about my brother. I want the skills he has. I don't want to use them in exactly the same way he does. The

problem within our groups is having the trust that we, as a group, can modify those skills so they aren't oppressive and controlling, and that's really hard to do.

Susan I think we need a kind of security about our own identity, on a personal and collective level, before we're prepared to do that. I agree with Dennis that we aren't reactionary the way we were in the sixties. I think we finally believe we're different than the mainstream on our own terms...

Dennis For better or worse...

Susan Sometimes that's very lonely. Knowing that, some people will opt to work for alternative organizations from here to eternity. That's good because we have to keep the home fires burning. But some of us, and on a personal level, this is my planning...in the next few years...I cannot get the skills I want from my peers any more. Not that I'm so hot shit. But there's not an ongoing conversation about management skills that I know that meets my needs...

Paul Tried the New School for Democratic Management?

Susan Yes, but that's just in its infancy and has to be built into an organization: I don't want to get sucked into that building process and I don't think I can get the skills I need in a two week program. I may have to find a teacher and leave for a while. It doesn't mean I wouldn't come back with those skills to this community...

Paul It seems clear that any of us, the four of us, are capable of working creatively anyplace along the line from alternative to traditional institutions...

Susan That's true. Any of us can work in a wide variety of human services...

Paul Any of us could be working for the city of New Haven, in a decision making position...

Susan Or the feds...

Paul Any of us could be working in a neighborhood level, social service agency (like **Coming Together**). Any of us could be working in social interventions (like **TUA**, **NECTI**, **CFFCU**). Any of us could be working purely in the alternative community (in coops and communes)...and to an extent we all do...

Susan We'd go crazy if we were stuck in one of them, Paul.

Paul I think the reason we'd go crazy is we know if we were limited to any one of these perspectives - if we were just folks working for the city of New Haven, it wouldn't be enough. Because there's no way that work by itself can define a decent social answer. The same thing if we're just working in these alternative structures. No matter how strong the houses or coops we build, we're still helpless in too many ways. And working on projects which try to make a social intervention presumes an awareness of established patterns, and a connection to alternative community - otherwise you're lost. You'd be trying to make changes, without knowing from what to what.

I think it's a matter of experiencing enough of the continuum to develop an intuition of how our choices relate to real change. Plus learn with each other, develop enough of a common construct so that we can... Who knows what the conversations are that the four of us will have a year from now or five years from now?

Dennis It doesn't change much. We've just got a little

slicker at doing what we're doing. The conversation and the assumptions behind the conversation remain about the same.

Susan I don't feel that. I think there are things we can do. I don't think we can do as much as I thought we could four years ago. I do sense the depth of our contributions though...

Dennis I think the assumptions are about the same, it's the means which are different. We're still looking to grow - both as people trying to assume professional roles, also seeking the fulfillment of helping an organization or a community grow...

Francie One assumption that's changed is working for the community instead of ourselves. Not that it's all wrong, just we have some more thinking to do. A lot of people are getting tired of being poor, and if we don't pay people enough, how do we keep the skills in the community? I think that's a really valid issue, not just greed and selfishness.

Paul I remember Dennis calling me on *collectivity* a few years ago. I said I felt I was as *collective*, in fact a little more, than I could afford to be at that particular moment. That when my community could take better care of me, I was prepared to go a lot further (and I was working on developing more supportive collective structures in New Haven). At **Twin Oaks**, where basically you get taken care of - totally (assuming your work contribution) it's possible to be collective in a more thorough way than it is here where there's not a system you can just plug into and say, *Take care of me. I've paid my dues*. Any of us who've been around know where to get support, but it takes experience and skill.

Susan One thing that strikes me is that there's not a lot of humor in it.

Paul I tried a few puns...

Susan No, really, Also it needs more specific anecdotes - not so specifically oriented to what's happening at the Press, STAND, or the Credit Union, but more like, *I remember a time when a worker was doing blah blah blah...* Some specific examples.

Dennis You've been doing too much evaluation.

Susan I think there are places where it became very abstract...

Dennis It's good, it's good...

Paul What would happen if I transcribed this and it went back to people to look at, and you could add in whatever you wanted...

Francie People will be wildly telling stories...

Paul I wonder if it will come out - how we are different and how would we put together our organizations now?

Francie Are you asking that now?

Dennis I think I've integrated a lot of those assumptions into NECTI, tried to at the Press.

Paul I think the truth is that as we look at our lives now, we find we've integrated a lot of our learning; that the lives we are leading are the product of that learning. □

IN RETROSPECT....

The people, processes, and ideas behind 5 years of COMMUNITIES magazine.

by Chip Coffman

An important part of our communications job must be to keep you in touch with the people and processes behind all the print which is Communities magazine; to demystify our corner of the media field. We haven't done that in a substantial way since the last "About Us" article over 2 years ago.

We'd like to take the occasion of the magazine's 5th anniversary to trace the origin and development of the Community Publications Cooperative, both for the insight that its history offers about the publications business, and for the perspective on the movement of which it is a part. This article is a sort of collage, drawn from diverse sources: files of early correspondence among CPC member groups; a taped conversation among 5 former and current editors, and of course, the 30 issues and 1900 pages [whew] of Communities

Vince Zager [presently the "International" column editor], who has been involved with CPC through most of its history, tells how it began:

"It started back in March of '72 when I wrote a letter to various groups that were publishing material relating to community, suggesting that we meet to discuss cooperation. My original drive was to form a cooperative magazine that would blend the different approaches that people were taking; such as *Green Revolution's* focus on decentralization; *Mother Earth News* on practical homesteading stuff; the people from the communities of Walden Three, Yellow Springs, and the Alternatives Foundation in California who were all reporting; and *Community Market*, which was pushing the economics of community. Six of the eight I invited got together at the '72 Twin Oaks Conference, the big event of the year. After a few meetings at that conference in July, it just seemed natural that we try to merge into one publication. There was an even greater force emerging from that series of discussions; to form a community publications cooperative; a body that would promote community as a direction for social change."

The publications cooperative was born during a time of excitement and ferment, as the communal movement was beginning to take note of itself and organize. Vince, along with many others, had turned away from the political activism of the 60's, yet had not relinquished the vision of

radical social change. Rather, their energies had been channeled into creating social alternatives; the more successful communes such as Twin Oaks and LimeSaddle. Conferences, such as the large annual Twin Oaks events, focused an intent to build from those successes by organizing various support networks, eventually to form an alternative society based principally on communal living. The Community Publications Cooperative (CPC) was to be a major economic vehicle, as well as the communications medium for this movement.

The optimism of those days was reminiscent of the high tide of demonstration politics, when "the Revolution" seemed right around the corner. The early 70's version of this political assumption was the belief that we were in the midst of developing alternative structures that would soon undermine the decaying capitalist system. Hence the comments such as the one ending a CPC network letter: "In cooperation...to usher in the New Society..Now."

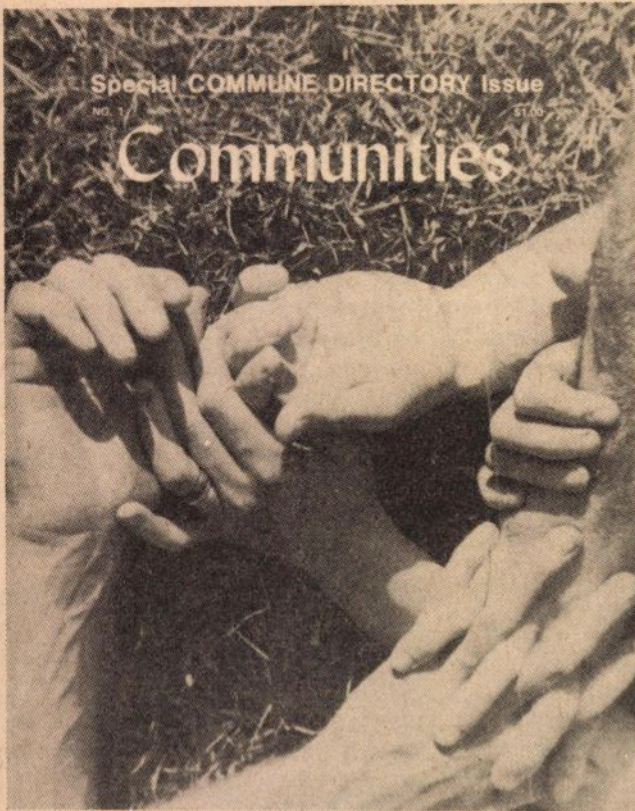
The introduction to *Communities'* first issue laid out a very sweeping agenda for the fledgling organization:

"...We optimistically look toward building a network involving city and country collectives, co-ops, communes, and communities in the hope that a viable movement can evolve leading to an open society that encompasses cooperation and peace. To accomplish this, we see ourselves as an anti-profit group that will consciously allocate monies to the broader community through various programs that will be our guidelines for the future.

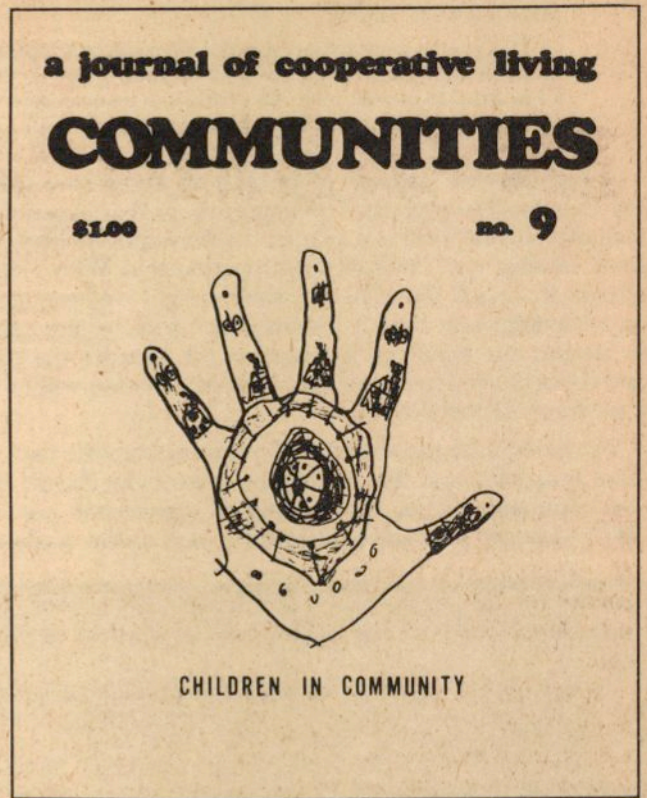
This cooperative will have a number of goals to accomplish. We want to:

- 1) Establish an alternative distribution network on this continent that will successfully provide the maximum amount of literature about various lifestyles to the people;
- 2) Publish a relevant bimonthly magazine to report on the communal movement;
- 3) Establish a publishinghouse to give others a chance to disseminate their ideas;
- 4) Involve other collectivities and cooperatives in the operation, thereby providing support for as many people in the movement as possible;
- 5) Provide capital for other collectives to borrow on a no-interest or low-interest basis;
- 6) Establish a land trust fund to provide farm land for needy groups;

Communities, 1972



....1974



....1975

COMMUNITIES
a journal of cooperative living

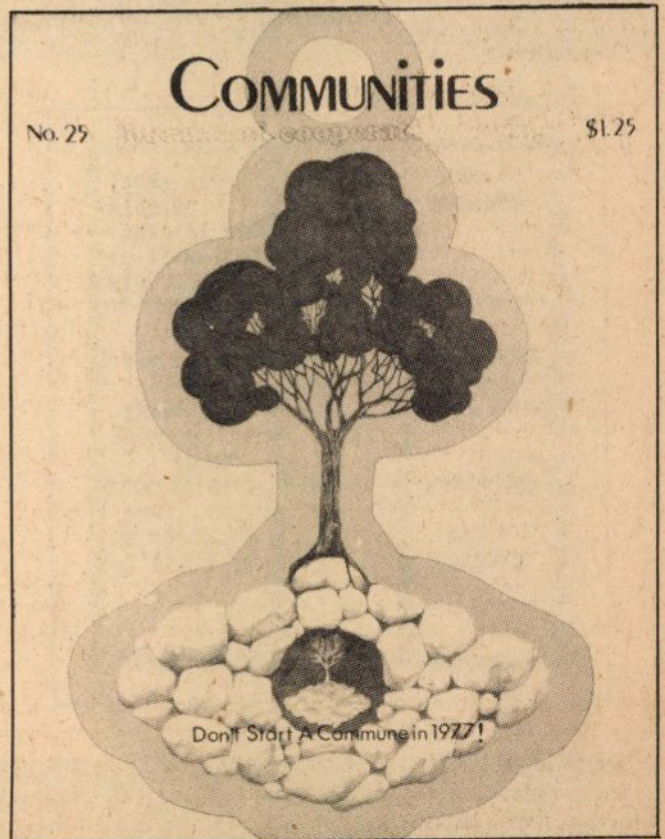
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Paolo Soleri
interviewed on
Arcosanti and
Community

Neo-Tao-ism & Tai-Chi
White Lotus
Study Center

Adventure Trails Survival School

....1977



7) Encourage the formation of centers around the country that can channel people to viable alternatives. Also, we would like to sponsor conferences like those at Twin Oaks to give people a chance to meet others of similar attitudes in their respective regions.

That's quite an ambitious list to implement, but we have a vision and many people to work on these projects. Our objective is to provide many alternatives to many people. In this way we feel we can effect change in the society."

A considerable amount of publishing know-how came together for this venture. The aggregate of that experience included several books, a regular book-length cooperative retail catalog, and 3 journal-length periodicals. With 7 such groups, it was felt that: "Just by sheer weight we have quite an advantage over similar publications. And, we are eager to expand our numbers, feeling that the broader the base and the better the coverage, the more effective we will be as a medium for social change."

The communal movement had matured from the days of loose anarchism and flower-child culture of the Haight. As one commentator on the communal movement put it: "We've learned a lot since the chaotic days of the crashpad

communes of the middle 60's...The very act of trying to communicate about our various processes indicates the dawning of a consciousness about the interrelatedness of all our actions."

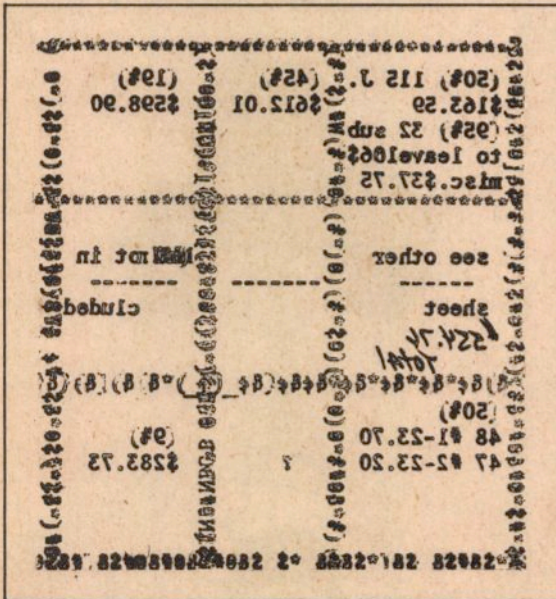
But CPC proved itself to be hopelessly unrealistic in the number and breadth of its goals - and woefully lacking in sound management and communications techniques. As the cooperative was quickly to discover, "more" did not mean "better". Committed to a cooperative, decentralized decision-making process on a low, no-travel, no-phone budget for 7 groups spread across 3000 miles...it was an administrative nightmare.

The magazine was organized and executed through a communications system called the Network Letters. Each group would write a letter with suggested decisions on the entire range of concerns, from promotional literature to accounting procedure to choosing a name for the magazine. Copies of each letter were sent out to everyone. It was a kind of chain letter club, with all of the links corresponding simultaneously. More voluminous than the actual contents of the Communities issues published during the first year, the Network Letters were a unique experiment that

The Lighter Side of a Business Office: Twin Oaks, 1972

The personalities who founded the Cooperative ranged from extremely colorful, counter-culturally oriented hippies who adopted names such as Dancing Bear, to intense, over committed politicized individuals. It was the latter folks at LimeSaddle, California, and Yellow Springs, Ohio who edited and produced the first 6 issues. The former, at Twin Oaks Community, handled most of the accounting and business in a truly inimitable fashion:

Official copy of the first CPC financial analysis, with accompanying explanation by one of the accountants:



"hey, girls and boys, we just ran off the first stencil - the real complicated sheet with all the \$\$\$ data? and guess what? that's right, dear friends. open letter to that page and you get

transported to the backward mirror dimension...don't worry though, you can get back to the real world just by reading this sheet in a garden-variety type mirror. ah, well, it's lucky i never hit wall street. - ebo da vinchi
tee hee

"...And, before y'all rush to ask questions or to write perplexed, disagreeing, and disagreeable letters PLEASE think on these things awhile; try and make some sense out of it and remember that you can't in all honesty expect much from the bozos that inhabit this institution (we were all committed long long ago) (nyahh nyahh gurgle burble drool - eb)"

When those "committed" folks weren't writing up the financial data [and in fairness, they did keep those and other organizational details somewhat together, between bouts of craziness] they would occasionally add a light touch to the Network Letters, as in this creative description of the bundling and mailing out phase of the first issue:

CPC BUSINESS OFFICE
TWIN OAKS COMMUNITY
LOUISA, VA.

Telephone (703) 894-5126

December 8, 1972

Announcer: "and now a new brand of network letter to our fellow flowers of the garden. this is a special program brought to you by georgia moon corn whiskey. dedicated to the proposition that networks do not grow by business alone - sugarworks presents - What's happening in the Virginia rocking chair and elsewhere..."

Cut to the from porch of Merion, the new branch of Twin Oaks old, elegantly dilapidated Virginia farmhouse with rockers and all. Luke, with cowboy boots, vest, kerchief - feet dangling off the porch. Playing Red River Valley on harp. Keno is in the rocker, a half-full fruit jar in his hand. He smiles at the camera. Keno "yep, things up here in utopia are getting mellowed out

explored the limits of written and decentralized communication - and swiftly exceeded those limits.

In the early stages, when everybody was corresponding regularly, there was a deluge of letters, perhaps ten letters a week of 2 to 9 pages each, with a copy going out to everybody. The letters would begin with comments like, "Help, I'm drowning in letters!", or "I spent all day yesterday figuring out what has been said by the letters of the past week." Groups would answer half of the many points raised by others, and skip the rest. Replies to the same point of discussion would cross in the mail. One editor's apt metaphor for this process was, "Imagine conversing with a tape recorder that always answers your previous question. That's what it seems like in our CPC correspondence."

Specific publication tasks were delegated to each of the groups. However, these functions shifted around in bewildering fashion, as the editorial "Our Process" in the fourth issue describes:

"Communities magazine grinds out of a number of places. There's LimeSaddle Coop near Oroville in California. They are an editorial office. Twin Oaks in Virginia manages much of the business stuff, keeping

these days. the cold weather's movin' in, tellin' us all to slow down a mite"

Luke stops playing and lackadaisically responds

Luke "that's what you said last summer about the hot weather.

Keno "yeah - it was true then too. and more's the pity sez i. i'll see more wasted time around this sweat shop or know the reason why, by god..."

Scene shifts to the front porch of Llano [white farmhouse at Twin Oaks] while Keno's voice continues. There are two long tables with people folding, wrapping, and putting address labels on Communities and Community Market catalogs

Keno "it's criminal, positively revisionist the amount of work that gets done here..."

Close up on hands stuffing completed Communities and Community Market packets into box. Fade back to see rows of likewise stuffed boxes

Keno "why there are folks in the outside that don't work as hard as us, i swear! sometimes i'm sorely tempted, SORELY tempted to go join a hippy commune and smoke dope, cut the soles off my shoes and learn to play the flute..."

Audio switches to the front porch. Babble of voices, spider John Koerner singing an upbeat rag in the other room. Various cries of "more scotch tape", "more yellow string", "more magazines". The front door frequently opens and shuts as Tracy, sweating and harried-looking, carries in new boxes of magazines to be folded, or carries out completed boxes. Ebenezer rushes in from the kitchen with a bowl of snow peas, going around to workers and popping them in their mouths. As he passes Tracy they exchange an insane glance, both completely wasted on adrenalin

Tracy "it's getting done, guy"

Eb "ehyup, but i sure wouldn't mind if it were all over."

Scene shifts to the same front porch, hours later. It looks like the Hiroshima book bindery. Utter quiet is almost deafening after the previous hubub. Camera slowly pans over the whole disaster area and then slowly out the window, into the darkness.

Communities had the rhythm and hit-or-miss quality of a pogo stick about to topple over.

subscription records and doing mailings. Here in Yellow Springs we've done various bits of the process. We arrange the printing of the magazine from YS and ship out the 68 forty-pound boxes to Twin Oaks and local distributors. This issue the YS News did the type composition. Walden Three is Rhode Island handled composition for the first three issues of **Communities**. Walden Three also did layout on issues 1 and 2. Layout for 3 and 4 took place in YS. After this issue, Denworth (or is it Two Brook?) Farm in Massachusetts, will take editorial responsibilities from Yellow Springs.

Yes, our structure is that complicated. It seems amazing that people are still hanging in there trying to work on a magazine together. You'll recall that before **Communities** we were three separate mags. **Alternatives/Modern Utopian, Communitarian and Communitas**. We got used to our own localized operations. Now we depend on the phone company and post office to keep things together... Fat manila envelopes go back and forth between the editorial offices - once Ohio and California - now California and Massachusetts - with possible articles for **Communities**. Responsibility for mag content alternates between California and Massachusetts. Each office collects its own copy for Reach, Grapevine and Readback. The two offices have veto power (sort of) on what goes in. At a distance of 3000 miles each issue brings a few surprises. "Hey, what's *this* doing in?!" So it goes. It takes some sort of trust and dedication to keep the process glued together.

It was the sheer energy of zealous people genuinely committed to a collective process that made CPC work in spite of the wildly improbable nature of its management techniques. As another letter put it, "Hell, we've been able to hold this thing together with a lot of communication, trust and tolerance, and very little talking to each other: what other group can make such a claim?"

Despite the breadth of its editorial ambitions, **Communities** was for a long time mostly about rural community living - the participating groups being mostly rural communes. The early material was predominantly description of existing groups along with fairly dry theory and history. In line with the zealous, utopian thinking, some of the articles were helpful hints directed towards the unenlightened; the how-tos of starting a commune, selecting members, etc. Interesting exceptions to these trends were the personal expressions of what it was like to live in community. Writing quality for all the articles varied from professional to incoherent.

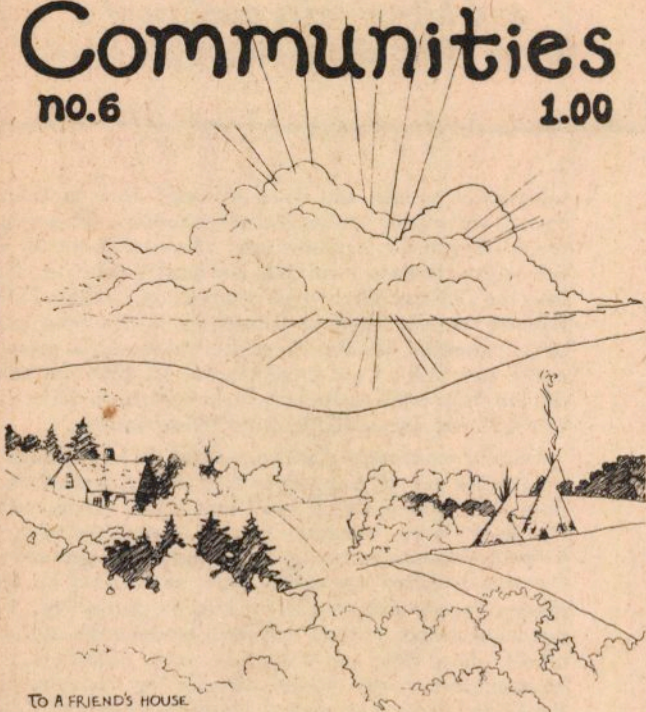
Like all low-budget alternative media, **Communities** has had to live with the lack of journalists or reporters to offer objective evaluations of the groups or projects described. It has rarely been able to use the outsider perspective that characterizes what mass media terms "good journalism".

Instead, the magazine has always relied on its

(cont. on page 3b)

Communities

no.6 1.00



TO A FRIEND'S HOUSE
THE ROAD IS NEVER LONG.

from "I think that I shall never see
A home as lovely as my tree", by 'Cole Sevsky'

Very few people realize how inexpensively you can live in the country. I didn't and was working in a large metropolis programming computers and making \$16,000 a year so I could buy a house in the suburbs when I saw my first issue of Mother Earth News. At first I was somewhat skeptical but after reading about Chuck Bartlebaugh's caboose houses (Mother Earth News No. 13) and Mike Oehler's underground house (Lifestyle No. 1), I began to think about getting out of the rat race. I wasn't turned on by the idea of dwelling in the bowels of the earth, and even a caboose seemed pretty earthbound to me, so I started to think of some other possibilities. I tried building a permanent hot air balloon kept aloft by heat from a manure burning furnace I'd built with a friend, and bought the air rights over a friend's property for \$50. We hadn't quite perfected the exhaust system on the balloon and Aremea, Tesbian and Lysistrata (my wife and two children) complained a bit but we'd gotten the stench pretty well under control when we were attacked by a pileated woodpecker during a snow storm.

He pecked three or four holes in our balloon and pretty well deflated our first plan for an inexpensive place in the country. We almost gave up when an idea hit us — if that wood pecker ruined our home — we would move into his. We went back exploring the woods on our friend's lot and found a group of six old trees with really beautiful holes.

We each set one up as a bedroom; used one as a living room and at first did our cooking in the clearing. With a little work and ingenuity we've set one tree up as a kitchen and are now all living comfortably together in the country. We gave our friend another \$25 for tree rights on his land, and are developing our own diet of grubs, moss, lichens, and Baby Ruths. I've quit work, but bring in some outside bread by working as a scarecrow in the summer. It's hard to believe that we ever spent eight years living in the city, and its certainly clear that we never want to go back.

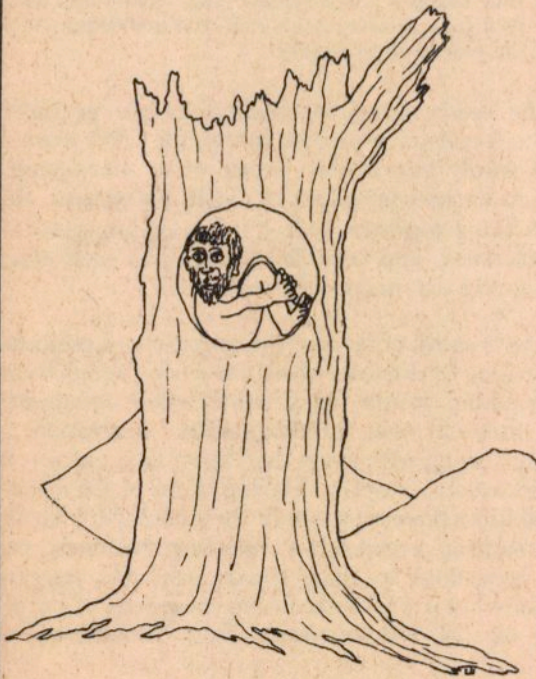
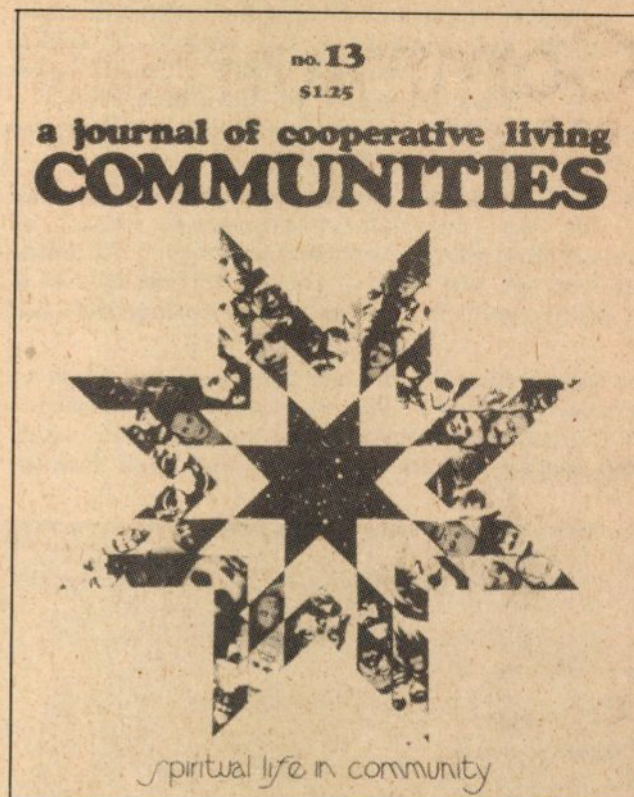
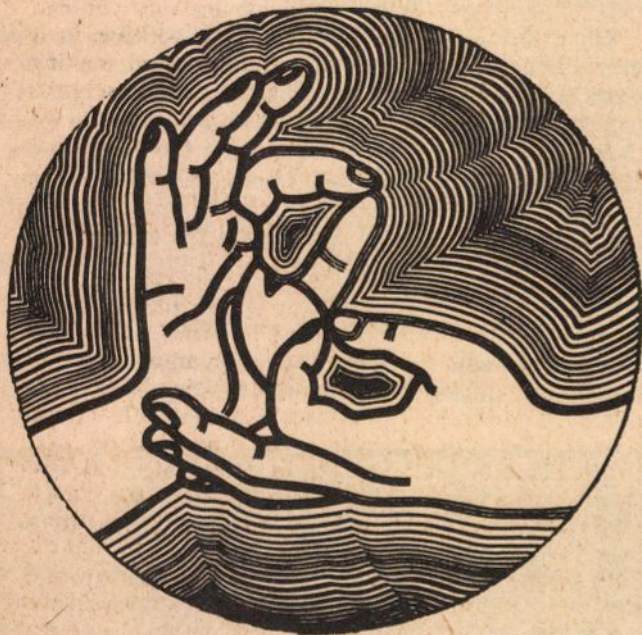


Figure 1 - The author relaxing at home



Figure 2
The Rat Race



LEADERSHIP IN SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

Only one thing is pure. And that thing exists in every person. If we stop everything to listen and to watch, we will know it. From it we were born; because of it we live. It alone can guide us.

A community can be led only by that one pure thing, guiding each person. As each person becomes more aware of that thing, and more attuned to it, the people of the community automatically become more attuned to each other, and cooperation is increasingly possible.

People can communicate perfectly only when each individual is in touch with the pure thing alive within, for knowing this power is the only common human experience. Only through communication can a community evolve. As communication grows and community evolves, awareness grows and people together live as no people have ever lived; beyond culture, beyond habit, beyond ideas in the living realm of consciousness. Life together becomes spontaneous. People allow themselves to be real.

As we move toward community we move beyond experiences of the past, we move further than any imagined theory could ever guide us. We move beyond fear and beyond limitation. That one pure thing inside is perfect peace, and it is perfect freedom. We have only to listen to it, and relax into it, and become one with it, and together we will unite in that peace and in that freedom.

LUCY DUPERTUIS, Divine Light Mission

contributors' capacity for self examination: the desire to live and communicate honestly that is characteristic of our movement. In part, this capacity comes from a sense of security and solidity about the paths we follow that relieves us of the need to propagandize about them. From the start, **Communities** has contained a fair amount of critical self-analysis: "Why Communes Fail", "The Colorless Movement", "What Happened To The Ithaca Project" - these and many other articles recount the falterings and failures, alongside the success stories.

The early issues were graphically barren, for the most part. The very conception of a magazine focused on communal alternatives, written and produced by the people living them out, was to be of enough intrinsic interest to draw readers, even if its pages were not attractively laid out.

For those readers whose imaginations were captured by communal alternatives, this assumption held. During a Twin Oaks planning meeting, when the merits and quality of the magazine were being reviewed, one member

commented, "When I was becoming interested in communal living, I'd have read **Communities** if it were dittoed off." The continuing demand today for our back issues indicated that some of that fervent interest is still around, motivating some readers to "get into" such material, even when it's not presented in the palatable form to which mass media accustoms us.

The political vision of those first few issues consisted mostly of extrapolations from the modest successes of newly established communes. CPC is itself a prime example of the naivete of many such projections. Other large-scale schemes that were born and soon buried on the early pages of **Communities** included the Communitarian Village in California (LimeSaddle's brainchild); Intercommunities networks on the east and west coasts; the Ithaca Project in New York; and Community Market, which in conjunction with CPC was to have a major role in quickly developing an entire cooperative economic structure.

Often enough, however, something real was left after these and similar schemes had deflated. Community

The Publishing Office in Action:

Some of the LimeSaddle folks, from a picture on the cover of the 1975 Directory issue.



*During most of 1974, LimeSaddle Community carried the major responsibility for keeping **Communities** going. A small, diverse group of some 10 people located in the countryside near Oroville, California, they were faced with the severe internal struggles that beset most communes, even as they took on major responsibility for **Communities**, along with other outreach projects. The following statements from Vince, one of the group's founders, offer some insights about how and why it worked:*

David: Where did you get the energy for Issue #11, after the #10 debacle?

Vince: Well, what happened was that along came a push at LimeSaddle to get a graphics business established, and we felt that since we had experience with the typesetting and enjoyed

LimeSaddle Community, 1974

doing crash layout programs, that we may as well be involved in graphics as well. **Communities** was to have been a sideline of our graphics business, and therefore we could certainly justify continuing with the magazine. Plus, I was still being pretty pushy about the magazine, seeing it as being important and a way of centering some of the energy of LimeSaddle."

And that energy was phenomenal. During 1974, carrying one/half of the magazine was only part of their activities. There were a series of conferences; an attempt at a West Coast network newsletter; continuing efforts to organize the Communitarian Village; the beginnings of a new cottage industry [the manufacture of soyburgers]; and the above-mentioned typesetting industry. All were time-consuming undertakings, and led occasionally to crash schedules [familiar to all of us in the publications business] such as the scene Vince describes in a letter to Twin Oaks:

Hey Brothers;

Wow, what a wild week at LimeSaddle! Geroe went to work Thursday morning up in Paradise, typesetting the "Small Press Review". He got back for dinner, and then worked on the magazine straight through from 6:30 Thursday til 6:30 am Saturday. HEAVY.

8 people were working in the office last nite all at once. I quit this morning at 1:30, knowing I'd have to be jumpin' early to drive a load of soyburgers to Marin. Well, I left August, Geroe, Mishra and Paulina still heavy into the layout. Springing back at 5:30 am into our garage office, there they still were. Finally Richard and I got our shit together, and BINGO, #11 was done. Got to San Fran by 11 am for the Del Vasto (leader of a French community called the Ark) press conference. Tonight radio show, and tomorrow the talk; hopefully will be able to sell the mag then and there."

*The "Reflections" article in Issue #12 [written by you-guessed-it; Vince] expresses why LimeSaddle - why for that matter all of us who've made **Communities** happen - remained committed to such craziness:*

"...With all of this, it isn't alienating labor, because it's our artwork; our expressive force, our contribution to reaching toward a better world. We eat it up. Although something wasn't quite right with each of the first 11 issues, we've

Market, although not realizing its ambitions, remains as a successful cooperative retail catalog. The Intercommunities Network failed, but provided contacts which have since generated other structures such as the Federation of Egalitarian Communities (see Grapevine, 1978 Directory issue). And Community Publications Cooperative, though never developing into a publishing house, or foundation, or most of the other things slated for it, did manage to get out a magazine which is still around...

Communities has had to struggle through several major crises to remain afloat. The first of these came during 1973 as the Network, not surprisingly, unraveled. Participating groups either went in other directions, or fell apart internally.

During this time, some outrageous blunders were taken in stride. There was a month's delay in typesetting the first issue. 15 pages of copy about "Social Change" were inadvertently left out of an issue, leaving the cover title "Personal/Social Change" only half-accurate. 10,000 copies of another newly printed issue sat in the publishing group's

maintained, and finally gotten to an issue that has flowed along without problems. The last few issues have indicated to us that we are progressing as an editorial group, and we are feeling that the publication is of value on many levels.

We haven't viewed our involvement in the magazine as an alternative business adventure (that was wise!). It's a labor of love. As people changed, the involvement has become more specialized, with a few now writing, a few typesetting, a couple more doing layout, and a couple of folks working on the graphics. Every now and then someone who hasn't been involved contributes a review or some layout work and things seem to flow along.

At times some of the people in our family have questioned the journal as just another contribution to the great pile of papers in the bookstores, and wonder why all the commitment for so little return. This isn't too heavy, and there is no animosity, just a critical eye. The gardener looks in on the editor, and the editor smiles at the gardener; every now and then we change hats. Fortunately, we aren't starving, so the involvement continues, and each of us enjoys a path toward expression in our community... We are feeling good about **Communities**, and see it continuing."



Vince Zager, a founder of both LimeSaddle and CPC, presently the "International" column editor. He now lives at Twin Oaks.

basement for over a month before getting mailed out to subscribers and distributors.

Financially, the magazine succeeded only in remaining true to its goal of remaining anti-profit; it never made any. Other ideologically motivated concerns of the early days, such as the danger of expanding beyond a readership of 20,000 and becoming too slick, were similarly avoided.

Communities had the rhythm and hit-or-miss quality of a pogo stick about to topple over. Miraculously, it didn't. Instead, the magazine arrived at a real turning point in its structure and process as its functions were consolidated at LimeSaddle and Twin Oaks communities:

"We had been low-energy at LimeSaddle because a few months before, half the group had left. So all these things, the network and our group, were sort of falling apart at once. **Communities** number 6 didn't exactly pick us up at all. Finally we got a lot of energy from a conference we did on the west coast. More people got involved, and there seemed to be much more general interest. There was a lot of support for Issue #7, and it was a total communal effort at LimeSaddle, with almost everyone in the group writing an article and working on the editing and graphics. We felt that with Twin Oaks now anchoring the East Coast, and LimeSaddle's energy really looking up, things were just going to zoom off with **Communities** magazine."

This renewed enthusiasm for publishing was shared by the other end of what had become a two-member Cooperative - Twin Oaks Community. This energy was mixed with a sort of clarifying disillusionment about the realities of communications networking, which was stated in Issue #7's introduction:

"Decentralization, flexibility, and personal experimentation are values of the movement, and we aim at maintaining them while searching for solutions to the problems they generate. Knowing that process is as important as product, we struggle to find a workable balance, like water which has now found its own level."

What is disturbing is that, of the large number of groups in our files, very few respond to requests for information or to invitations to participate in cooperative efforts. Perhaps this is to be expected, given the instability of many communal living situations, and the energy required to meet basic survival needs. Living communally often involves endless chores, so time devoted to working cooperatively with another group miles away is not considered well-spent. Still, it is disconcerting not to get replies from "our people".

This lack of response was to remain a frequent problem through most of **Communities'** editorial history. With the Network Letters, and subsequent mailings to communities in the editorial quest for material, **Communities** had run up against a discouraging reality: Regardless of how much printed cajoling in the magazine or in letters, the fact remained that people and organizations usually respond poorly to written communication. The "People Network" concept that assumes, as the early **Communities** editors did, that folks will develop the same investment as the publishers in getting **Communities** written, were bound to be disappointed.

The reality is that most people involved in something worth writing about are very busy doing it. Which leaves the editors relying on interviewing, phone calls, and above all, personal contact as the most effective means for

bringing articles into being. It is often true that the quality of a given article is directly related to the amount of personal contact its editor has been able to establish with the writer (as 2 traveling editors, Bob East Wind and Paul Freundlich, amply proved later on).

However, the topics for the subsequent issues in 1974 (Individuality and Intimacy - Children - Work) were of sufficient interest to generate abundant material, and the concerns about obtaining material were temporarily eased. For the first time, **Communities** had enough participation by its readership to allow the editors to merely edit, and not have to write most of the feature articles.

An important development was the strong thematic focus that emerged, giving each issue a concentration of articles on a single aspect of community life. This format was to persist for the next 2½ years, sometimes as a unifying factor, other times as a limiting one.

An even more important innovation came with the "guest editor" arrangement begun in late 1974. The idea was to allow decentralized participation by having an interested group put together all the feature material for one issue, to relieve Twin Oaks and LimeSaddle and to add different perspectives to the magazine. This approach has proven out as perhaps the most practical way to achieve CPC's original aim of cooperative involvement, while retaining stability and consistency. [*However, the first experiment in guest editorships was a trying one for the LimeSaddle production group. An eloquent editorial by Geroe gives invaluable insight into the workings of a magazine crew, and into the ironic theme of that issue, "Work in Community". Since it's one of the best and most-commented upon short articles to appear in Communities, we're reprinting it in full, following this article.*]

With 2 or 3 people at either end of the LimeSaddle/Twin Oaks partnership providing stability and continuity, the magazine settled into a pattern of alternating editorial responsibility, with occasional guest editorships. Content continued to be strongly focused on aspects of communal life (education - therapy - planning, etc.). With experience, the graphic quality improved enormously, as color covers, strong photographs, artistic drawings, and highlights enhanced the magazine's attractiveness.

In late 1975, a new strain of political thinking emerged at both communities; a perspective that took exception to **Communities'** preoccupation with communal living. Geroe at LimeSaddle first expressed this restlessness and desire for change to a regional focus in a letter to Twin Oaks:

"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 arrangements 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 literally an 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."

Geroe's observations paralleled some of the thinking at Twin Oaks, where David Ruth, one of the principle theorists and observers of the communal movement (see issues #12, #16, and #23 for his thoughtful analyses), had begun to turn to the "New Localism" of self-reliant communities, cooperative businesses, and consumer cooperatives. But while there was substantial agreement on principle, Twin Oaks stayed convinced that keeping the communication function of **Communities** at a national level was important. An agreement was reached with Geroe and Bruce (formerly of LimeSaddle, now founding members of a new collective in McMinnville, Oregon) for Twin Oaks, along with its guest editors, to assume all the functions except layout and distribution. The folks in McMinnville began another publication, **Seriatim**, based on Ernest Callenbach's **Ecotopia**.

Communities found the support it needed to continue and broaden its focus in two of its guest editors, who became involved in major ways. Bob of East Wind Community edited 2 issues in 1976, one of them focused on the range of alternatives in the Ozarks region.

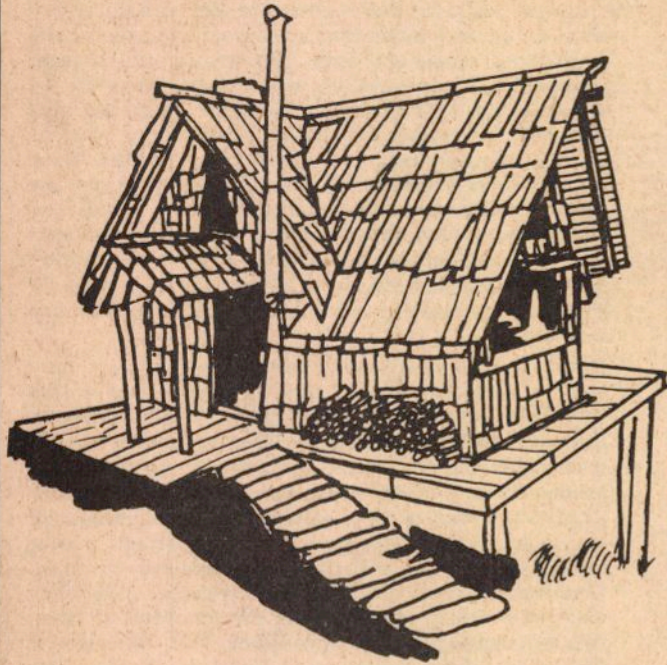
Paul Freundlich, then with the Training for Urban Alternatives support network in New Haven, Connecticut, explored the rich field of urban community by travelling over the U.S. in his search for representations of current urban alternatives. His guest edited issue #19 was a pivotal one for **Communities**; a dramatic change of scope which tangibly met David's and Geroe's concerns about linking the intentional community of communes, with that of other cooperative alternatives.

Paul's editorial introduction to that issue is one of the best articulated statements of the various forms and orientations of "community":

This issue of **Communities** derives from the experience of individuals and groups trying to survive and grow humanely in our cities. We are living together communally, raising our kids cooperatively, building collective economic structures. To develop practical relationships with each other is hopeful, painful, demanding. To work out relationships with the rest of society which often seems self-destructive and oppressive can be downright difficult.

...Many of those who work and live in similar ways may have quite different ideas as to why, and these differences sometimes lead to different choices:

1. **Seeing community as alternative in nature:** We are presenting an alternative to an on balance unsatisfactory society. They can take what we have or leave it alone - mostly we wish they'd leave us alone to build our own world. We welcome those who wish to join us - observe with interest our friends around the world, with some curiosity about useful networking and coordination.



From "Living In the Ozarks", by Joel Davidson

For myself and many others living here, the Ozarks are a state of mind. Geographically there are various boundaries used to define the region. Some say the Ozarks stretch as far as southern Illinois while others feel that the extremely rugged Boston mountains of northwestern Arkansas are the real Ozarks. Still others identify the geological section known as the Springfield Plateau as the Ozark "mountains". There is even a colony of Ozarkers who live in Anaheim, California in body but in these hills in spirit! If you think you are in the Ozarks, you probably are. Place is a very real feeling and the Ozarks give one a sense of Place.

...We believe that seeking control of the region's future is an important task called self-determinism. For the region to become self-deterministic, it must first develop a strong self-sustaining economy. This does not mean pampering tourism or shipping natural resources elsewhere or letting an altering ship of state rock our local boat. Self-determinism means taking care of business at home first. It means learning and living within the limits of the region's unique ecology. It means agricultural and industrial self-sufficiency must come before trade outside the region. It assumes that healthy national and international economy is based on a healthy local and regional economy. It implies that "local flavor" and customs are the result of people interacting with their immediate environment and that flavor is a good measure of the ecological balance between human and non-human inhabitants of the region.

From "Ozark Evolutionary Front", by Edge City Dave

...We are still here. But things have changed dramatically in five years. Instead of twenty homestead refugee freakos in

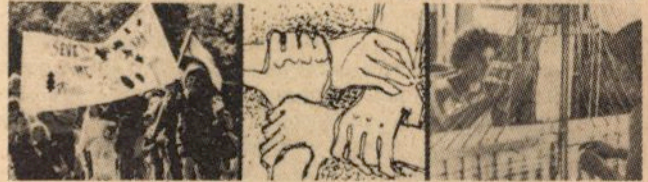
KAT KINKADE ON THE KIBBUTZ FAMILY
JUD JEROME ON COMMUNAL NORMS VS. RULES

COMMUNITIES

a journal of cooperative living
no. 22 \$1.25



NETWORKING IN THE OZARKS



1971, there are 250 or 300 in this area of Southern Missouri. More change; if our TV still worked, we could get three channels and NETY instead of just one.

Lots of other changes too. We have a Community. It's a spread-out one, but it works. It gathers now and then by the river and baptizes itself in its own totally unique intelligence and good will. The Community is coalescing and becoming aware of itself. The collective reality and evolution/de-evolution of the world is now too stupendously multiplex and out of control to assess. But if we collect those things which are positive, anti-entropic, and constructively human on the material and mental planes, I believe we will find ourselves here at the leading edge of a healthy aspect of the evolutionary process, understanding that this process is not reducible to terms that are linear or of single dimensions. The Ozark Evolutionary Front. Here we are. If there is really, as Thomas Pynchon calls it, a *counterforce* on this planet to the rampaging entropy, we are part of it.

*The Ozark Community gathers
now and then..and baptizes
itself in its own totally unique
intelligence and good will.*

2. **Community as the leading edge of society:** The USA will have to change, given crowding as a mental health problem, decline in energy resources due to waste and loss of economic colonies. A series of small, but significant experiments are being performed by some of the more adventurous types on the new frontier of our cities. By utilizing modes of cooperation instead of competition, by practicing economies of scale and consumption and by learning to deal with interpersonal issues, we are defining a new set of practical futures for an urban nation - doing more with less, living closer and more efficiently and liking it. We wish to be taken seriously by the society and in fact, recognized for this experimental role. We seek ways of creatively working with the established society - when and if it can understand that coopting us is self-defeating for a common good of productive social change.

3. **Community as oppositional in nature:** America (Amerika) is fundamentally corrupt, and we will only escape our part in that by embracing feminist and socialist principles and joining with the oppressed of all lands in a struggle for social justice and economic survival. We wish to point up differences, which means confront the society both with its own inherent exploitation and the reality of our humane practice.

4. **Community as what we do:** People can work together without much conception at all - except it feels better than how we were living and working before. We need to learn what we *can* do before possibly knowing what we *should* do. Being in community is our politics.

...In a small way, this is a report on the state of urban intentionality as of early 1976. Whether it means anything, given where power sits in this world, probably has less to do with our talent and seriousness, than whether we are allowed the time to experiment. Whether it means anything to you, probably depends on who you are:

- if you're involved in coops or community, much of what you read will sound familiar. Hopefully, there'll be a few useful ideas, and you'll be strengthened in your struggle.

- if you're thinking about changes in your life or in this society, we hope you'll have a better idea of what's involved and where the best point of access/organizing might be for you.

- if you've passed by the coops and communes as leftovers of the hippie, revolutionary sixties and gone on to the serious business of career, politics, government, academics, business - take another look:

Paul established a new urban/rural partnership, as New Haven and Twin Oaks became the coordinating bases for a decentralized editorial approach. A broader focus for the magazine has put rural communal living in its proper context among many cooperative approaches to social and personal change.

A dialogue among 3 **Communities** editors, whose involvement with the magazine has spanned its 5 years, outlines their personal vision of change, and also touches some key questions about the conception and relevance of **Communities**:

Vince: Through all the frustrations with communal living, I came to see that a lot of the difficulty was with individual egos and all the problems we'd absorbed while being socialized. A big part of what's necessary is to deal with one's own individual ego through personal therapy and getting in touch with the intuitive, more spiritual

orientation to life. Through that, plus the frustration of small group communal living and the reality of the lack of force of communities in North America, I came to see my whole involvement with society as being much different than it was in the late 60's and first half of the 70's. A lot of what I'm doing is dealing with my own garbage.

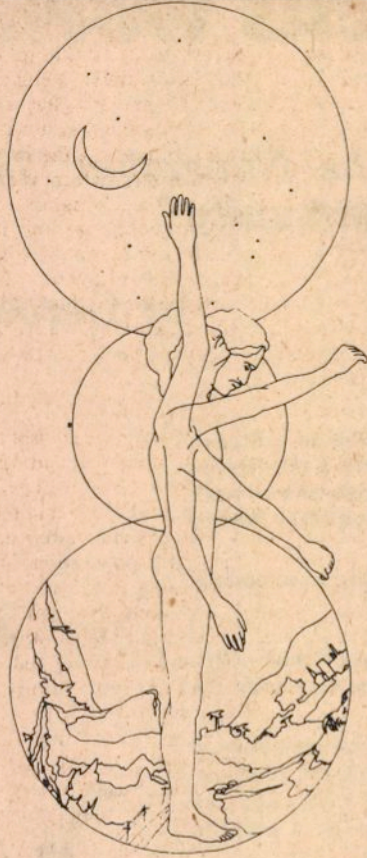
I guess I really feel that it's better to deal with things that are closer at hand, rather than spacing out into national and international visions of change. That was all really brought home when I was travelling around and seeing all the difficulties that exist throughout the world. No matter what the nation is - whether its structure is capitalist or socialist - there are struggles that are common to all peoples. There are all sorts of incompatibilities and inequalities that are going on within each culture, nation, or group. We all have to work on our own little problems, and may as well start close at hand rather than trying to solve the world's problems through networking. There may be a need for linking all that together, but I think it's got to be done in a local way.

David: My own ideas parallel Vince's in a lot of ways, but I come up with fairly different conclusions in relation to what Twin Oaks and **Communities** should do. I really agree with the regional approach that has small groups getting together to cooperate within a locality. And I believe that intentional community as a style of living is too narrow to embrace a significant portion of the population. Where its importance may lie is in being staging areas for local action and in being testing grounds for collective organizational processes. **Communities** can serve both to let other people know about what we're doing, and to attract the comments of others who are engaging in cooperative efforts. That's what I see as the purpose of the magazine; to be a way of stimulating thought about what we're all doing. The focus that Paul's putting toward the city is very valuable, and I'm hoping that we'll be able to do as well in talking about the kind of cooperative efforts that are happening in the country.

So I see the magazine as being very important for all of those separate kinds of movements - self-sufficiency in local government, worker-controlled factories, alternative forms of householding, etc. - that are contributing to change now. While I don't disagree that it's important to work on yourself and work in your locality, the stimulation you get by being in communication with other people who have been working on the same thing is incredibly important.

Chip: For me, the key is **Communities** as a medium for a pluralistic vision of social change, rather than for a revolution or **the** revolution, or for one social structure that's going to create a new society. I think that's the basic flaw in the extremes of the utopian vision, whether it's the Purple Submarine's super-families of 24 people, or whether it's Twin Oaks' former vision of a country populated by Walden II's. The mistake is in taking one alternative and projecting it onto society. I think that, like Twin Oaks, **Communities** has changed and matured. Rather than being the mouthpiece for a particular approach like communal living, we've become a forum for a lot of different things that people are doing."

From its original utopian models and ambitious, improbable projects, **Communities** has come to a loose form of alternative "pluralism"; something short of a defined ideology, which is nevertheless a particular perspective, an observation of alternatives that has to do with their intentionality and sense of community. Over its history the magazine has lurched and soared; learned and forgotten through its changing personnel and collective personality. And grown along with the movement of which it is both a reflection and a part. □

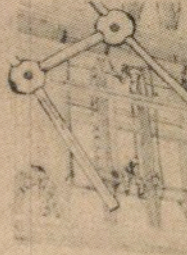


COMMUNITIES

Journal of
COOPERATIVE
Living

26

\$1.25



Social energy shares
with money and
pleasure a peculiar
property:
it is increased
by transmission.

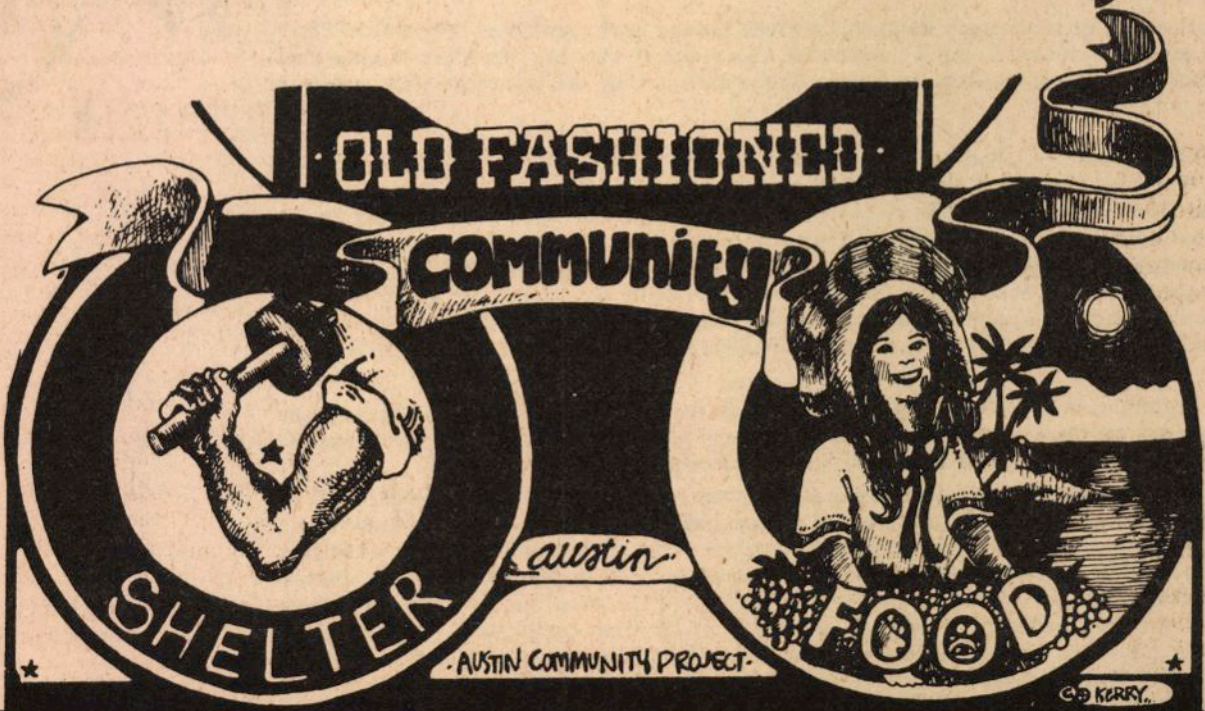
Phillip Slater



We chose to stand our ground. Because we know we've got to fight from here - we just can't permit (ourselves) to be shoved around from one community and one borough into another, one state into another... People in America move from one state to another as fast as you can deposit dimes inside a phone booth. But it's time to make a decision if we're going to let communities fall apart. That people are going to remain and care enough to continue to save their roots... their culture... and the places where they live.

Robert Nazario

AUSTIN, a Time of Changes



What Makes A Circus Work?

*the editorial introduction to the November '74
Communities, on "Work in Community"*

by Geroe

Wow, do we have some things to say about this issue.

The theme of this issue is "Work in Community", with major articles relating to attitudes towards work and how work gets done in communal situations. What irony. More than irony, hilarity really, because the work of putting out this issue is an outstanding example of how work doesn't get done in community, gets done sloppily, and causes terrible and unnecessary hassles and bad feelings.

Since the process of putting out this issue is probably more instructive with regard to communal work than most of the articles, we think it valuable to state what happened.

Several months ago, a group of people, some of whom had previously worked with CPC, expressed a desire to do an issue on work. The theme sounded good and the competence to do the job was there, so everyone was agreeable.

The guest editorial group put a lot of effort into the issue, and produced a good, creative body of material. The graphics were especially strong, including some of the best artwork yet to appear in the magazine. There was also an interesting and appropriate sub-theme which tied the magazine together -- the notion of work-as-circus. Work was depicted not as a tedious, mechanical necessity, but as enjoyable, chaotic, productive play.

Along with this (mostly graphic) depiction of work as circus/play, there were some explicit statements on the guest editorial group's attitude toward work (work/play/life). Among other things, these statements urged the reader to learn to enjoy the present as the only significant reality, and to put aside concerns about the future and efficiency in favor of doing what feels good to the body at the moment.

We think there's a lot that's good about this attitude toward work, and about the ways in which the guest editors expressed it. But we also think, as a result of what happened to the issue, that this approach to work is far from adequate. The reason is that this approach was unable to produce a magazine.

Just before the issue was scheduled to be sent to press, we at Communities/West (LimeSaddle) got a call from Communities/East (Twin Oaks), saying that the guest editorial group was not going to be able to complete production of the issue. The reason was never entirely clear, but it seemed that some new present reality had come into the life of the editorial group, and that they planned to split for the winter on a given date, whether the magazine was finished or not. Twin Oaks then thought that most of the work would be done, but that there would be a few loose ends to be tied, some pages to be pasted up, etc. Since Twin Oaks was in an intensive labor crunch, they wondered whether we could put the finishing touches on the issue and send it to the printer.

We were beginning to get into a heavy labor situation too, and weren't anxious to take on the added load, but we were expecting the arrival of some people who had worked the magazine before and felt we could spare a few days. Sure, we'd help. Who else was there?

From then on, the situation began to deteriorate at every level. At LimeSaddle, the necessity of preparing for winter, a financial crisis which forced some people into outside jobs and some unforeseen emergencies combined to raise our required workload to nearly 60 hours/week just after we received word that we'd be finishing the magazine. Every hour of that work seemed essential. The children's house had to be completed before the rains, as did the stone house, intended to provide shelter for 4 people, and still very far from completion. Other personal shelters had to be built, and still others winterized. Breakdown of an essential vehicle required an engine rebuilding job. There was harvesting, food preservation, and fall planting to do, and firewood to be collected. Our food business, the community's major source of support, continued to demand energy. A school structure for our children needed to be formulated and approved by



a given date. Buildings needed to be wrecked for materials to complete our structures. College opened, and we enrolled in courses to gain access to needed equipment and skills. We were spending an unprecedented amount of time in meetings, attempting to reformulate our directions and improve our group process -- items long neglected in favor of other work, and essential for keeping the community together. And, just to give us something to do (we are, after all, 12 people) we were gearing up to produce **Communities #11**.

Meanwhile, clouds were coming in from the East. Issue #10 was not going to be as near completion as had been thought when the editorial group moved out. Twin Oaks, thankfully, was pulling labor from somewhere to help get it in shape for us. When the first batch of material arrived, we had barely time to notice that it consisted of a depressingly thick stack of papers which had not yet been typeset!, and to realize that we would now have to hustle or rent a machine to do the typesetting, meaning that we already had more work before us than we had expected.

Then the rest of the magazine came. It was a nightmare, an editor's bad acid trip, chaos objectified. We didn't know whether to laugh or weep. We raged.

In a few months, if we're still together, if we have roofs over our heads and firewood stashed, if the 16-hour work days have ceased and the vibes mellowed, it will be funny. We will be prepared to try to understand and support our brothers and sisters who are searching with us for more satisfying ways of living, however varied our approaches. But in the past weeks at LimeSaddle denunciations and tirades against the expletive deleted hippies have been more profoundly obscene than any reactionary hate group ever had the heart for. To say we were angry at what we considered the utter copout of the editorial group, and their leaving the issue for us to bail out is like saying the ocean is bigger than a bathtub.

Oh, it's all right. Tomorrow we'll struggle to raise our consciousness and love everybody. But in the past weeks we've definitely regressed into a strong desire to kick ass.

Hold on a while. It isn't all out yet. We're into honesty about what we feel, right? About 6 pages of the issue were completed, ready for the printer. The other 58 were in the form of typed copy, in no discernable order. No, that's not quite true. A lot of it was typed in final form, and a lot of it wasn't. As for instructions as to what to do with this unordered mass, the most promising came from Twin Oaks:

"Your assignment, should you choose to accept it, is to burn the entire contents of this package while chanting the ancient formula, 'gitchie goomie yummy rum raisin'."

Worse and worse. The copy had been set on two different typewriters, and the editors hadn't noticed that the type was of different sizes. Due to the technicalities of the printing process, this meant that the printer couldn't deal with the issue in the usual way without making the material in one typesize illegibly small or the other too large to fit on the page. We called the printer and found her happy to solve the problem by dealing with one page at a time. Of course, it would cost more....and then, some of the small type had been set in columns of a size meant for large type, and so....well, we had to do some of it over.

And on and on. It was just too much to handle, trying to repair the mistakes in such a way as to follow the editor's instructions, if we could decipher them, and still get the issue out less than two months late. It was easier and faster just to take the raw material and redesign the whole issue



*There's nothing more wonderful than a circus -
and nothing more disappointing than a circus
that doesn't have its act together.*

according to our conception of how it fit together, instead of trying to get into the frame of reference of the ghost editors. We were in no mood to do it any way but easy and fast. So the artistic concept of this issue has been lost, or at least drastically altered, probably for the worse. That's what happens when you give up a baby. It doesn't come out the way you would have shaped it. If we do the work, it's our approach that comes through for better or worse.

Okay, the raving is over. What morsel of insight as to the nature of work in community can be salvaged from this fiasco? The first thing that comes to mind is that it is our uptight, efficiency-oriented consciousness that allowed the situation to bum us out. Why not take the guest editors' advice, slow down, mellow out, forget about production schedules, enjoy the present, and do what feels good to our bodies? Well, that's right on-up to a point. We should have

been mellow. It would have felt a whole lot better, and we could have accomplished the same thing. But...There are some things which are hard to be mellow about. Like rain. Rain is hard to be mellow about when you're trying to sleep in soaked blankets because somebody thought it was more fun to go swimming than finish the roof.

Of course, the magazine isn't quite like that, but there are still consequences from spaceouts. For example, in order to retain our 2nd class mailing status, we have to produce 6 issues/yr. If we lose that status, mailing costs soar. This is what killed *Lifestyle*, and it had a lot more money behind it than we do. With this issue two months late, we're left with two issues to get out in two months, the time usually required for one issue. How we would do that, even without the other things we have to do, we don't know. Another item is that LimeSaddle gets some of its income by distribution of other publications along with *Communities*. The costs and vehicle use time of making two distribution runs are prohibitive, so if *Communities* isn't ready on time, we can't distribute the other publications either. Oh, well, it's only food. Finally, the magazine has enough trouble meeting printing costs without having to pay extra to have foul-ups repaired. Without some semblance of efficiency, the magazine simply can't continue.

*The rest of the magazine..was a nightmare,
an editor's bad acid trip; chaos objectified.*

Well, it doesn't have to continue. But it feels good to us to do the magazine. So if we want to feel good in that way, we have to do some things, like meeting deadlines, which feel less good than going swimming but more good than losing the magazine. Which is a nice example of how silly it is to think that the absolute freedom to always do what feels good is possible. The world's physical structure doesn't allow that. The cycle of the seasons is a natural schedule of deadlines to which we have to adjust our impulses to satisfy the pleasure principle. And why, anyway, should we always serve the desires of the body, as though the body were separable from the mind/body organism? Letting the more gross physical feelings of the organism dominate our actions is enslavement of the total organism to the body, just as surely as constant future thinking is enslavement to the mind. It represents a lack of balance, of center. Western culture's suicidal overemphasis on rational, future oriented activity requires some counteracting, but it does not require an equally suicidal denial of the legitimate and natural functions of the mind, including the capacity to extrapolate, plan and shape the future so as to enhance present experience.

There may be a headspace -- an attitude toward work/play/life -- which is a good alternative both to the consciousness which demands efficiency at the cost of enjoyment, and to the one which demands concern only with present experience at the cost of not getting things done. Rather than abandoning an activity which no longer feels good for one that does, we might learn to fully experience and enjoy whatever it seems necessary to do, where 'necessary' means what is required for accomplishing what we would like to have happen. One thing this would mean is that if we make commitments and fully appreciate the experience of doing it. That's a hard space to find - everyone's looking for it. The best place to look is in community, where there is the possibility that others will learn to serve us as joyfully as we serve them, where people are willing to try because they care for one another.

Our attitude toward work in community: it gets done efficiently, joyfully, satisfyingly, not when members are concerned with doing what will meet their individual needs, bodily or conceptual, but when they are committed to using their unique talents and perspectives to meet the needs of the other members, who, often enough to make it worthwhile, will reciprocate. Work can then be a circus, a wonderful spectacle of activity in which all the freaks do their outlandish tricks in chaotic harmony. But the jugglers and the trapeze artists and especially the clowns need discipline -- a discipline that is easy because it satisfies. There's nothing more wonderful than a circus, and nothing more disappointing than a circus that doesn't have it's act together.

All right, it's done. Set it, proofread it, correct it, paste it up, and please take it away. Hand me the copy for #11. On with the show. □

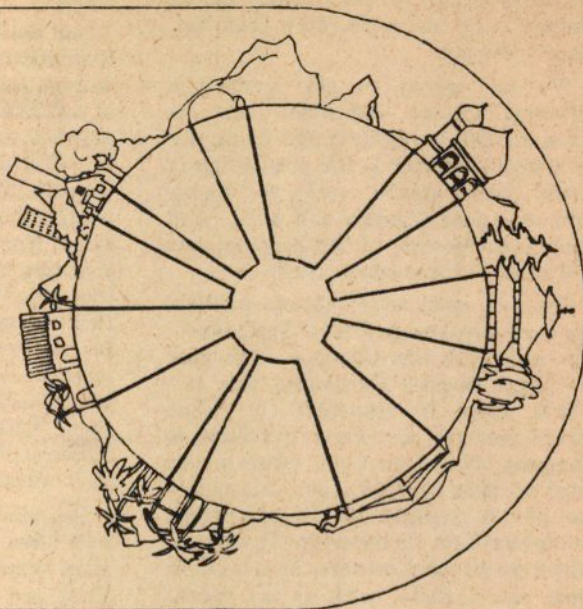


Geroe at the typesetting machine

international

Holmen Organic Farms - Norway

by Stein Jarving



For the past couple years, people at Twin Oaks Community have been corresponding with Stein Jarving, a person active in cooperative movements in Norway. Since 1974, Stein has lived communally in the countryside, first with the Log-Skrane field Commune and now the Holmen Gard. The thrust of these groups has been to merge with other activities in their area of a valley, and create an extended communal family.

Stein has been living on the farm for over three years now. His last letter gives us a good impression of life in this Norwegian commune.

Scandinavian countries are not highly populated. Of the few million people in each country, only a small percentage are involved in the cooperative movement. And even though there are many abandoned farms and small villages in these countries, few new age communities exist. It's interesting, therefore, to get an insight into the directions that Stein and his friends are pursuing.

Holmen Organic Farms is a group of 6 or 7 people, ages 18 - 35, living in the hills bordering the Atlantic in Southern Norway. We rent 4 rather small and previously abandoned farms here, totaling about 20 acres of tillable land and more than 1,000 acres of shrubs, hillside, and birch/oak forest. We are situated directly above a fjord (the sheer 900-foot drop is only a mile away from the main house). This area is, in a sense, the "Norwegian Ozarks". None of us were born in this area, nor had we been farmers before we came here. In origin, we are Norwegian, Swedish, English, and at times even American. From this you may understand that there is a shift in population here at Holmen.

I was the first to move here, and the only one who has remained since the Farms began in 1974. Young people have stayed for 6 - 12 months, picked up some skill in organic farming, and left to join an agricultural college, or to homestead on their own. Last year I was joined by a Swedish man, Kjell, who has settled here more permanently. There is also a

young woman, Lotte, who has been here more than a year and a half. With this stability, we've been able to enlarge the operation somewhat. During the season, from April through October, our numbers increase. This summer we were as many as 12, counting two small kids. Then we have all the short-time visitors, usually a couple hundred each year, who come from all over the world.

We are members of the English W.W.O.O.F. and Henry Doubleday Research Association, have an exchange agreement with John Seymour (a spokesperson for self-sufficiency in the U.K.), have occasional communication with "Die Kleine Erde" in Holland Tvind Schools in Denmark (those with the world's largest wind generator), and keep in touch with **Mother Earth News** and several good friends in the U.S.. Within Scandinavia we keep in contact with a lot of people by listing our address almost everywhere, and through the books and articles I write, and via the other activities in which we partake.

But life at Holmen is surely not only words. As of now, we have two dairy cows and 12 sheep, some chickens and 5 acres of organic vegetables; two acres for our own use (we are self-sufficient in most foods), and three acres for the sale of carrots, onions, cabbage, redbeet, potatoes, and comfrey. We are responsible for the import and sale of comfrey in Norway, where it previously was only known among a few vegetarians. With some success, we sponsor it as a superb silage feed for domestic animals, as well as a useful food for humans. We also sell comfrey ointment as an herbal medicine, along with some dried herbs of our own. On this farming, we make enough money to live a good life, even though we are all smokers and coffee drinkers, and have a truck and other machinery to take care of.

The structures here at Holmen have been kept at the bare minimum. We hold planning meetings two or three times a month, to sort out what needs to be done and when. Long-range planning is undertaken once a year. At that time, each of us chooses from the work list what co wants to do and when. Someone takes the initiative to get the larger jobs done, where all hands are needed. All income is pooled, some in the bank and some in a box by the door. Each of us uses what co needs, which is all right for a small group such as ours. Some regular jobs, such as taking care of the dairy operation or bookkeeping, are taken care of by rotation. When you're fed up, you see if someone else wants to take over - and someone always is willing. Kitchen work, too, is floating loose around like this. Yet, the food is usu

on time and very good, and the dishes do get cleaned (and not even mainly by the women - it's me more often than not, since I like it).

We are trying to get started in different cottage industries here at Holmen. One is spinning and dyeing our own wool. Another is the production of useful wood items, such as drying cabinets, door handles and such. And Kjell is on his way in bee-keeping, and will have 15 hives come April.

Then we must not forget our publishing company: Grønn Trad ("Greenline"). The first book was **Comfrey**. This year will come **Organic Gardening, Dry It - You'll Like It** (courtesy of Gene MacManniman), and **From Fertilizer to Compost**, by Gunnar Lund. Some of this stuff we do on our Gestetner, but mostly we get it printed by Regnbuetrykk Publishers Ltd., in northern Norway, of which we are part owners. They publish what else I write, such as my recent **Likevektssamfunn** ("Equilibrium Society") and the magazine **Vannbaereren**, well-known most all over Scandinavia. My first book - **Grønt Live** ("Green Life") - was published by a commercial publisher, for whom I also translated **Self-sufficiency** (or "Independence on a 5-Acre

Farm", as I believe it was called in the U.S.).

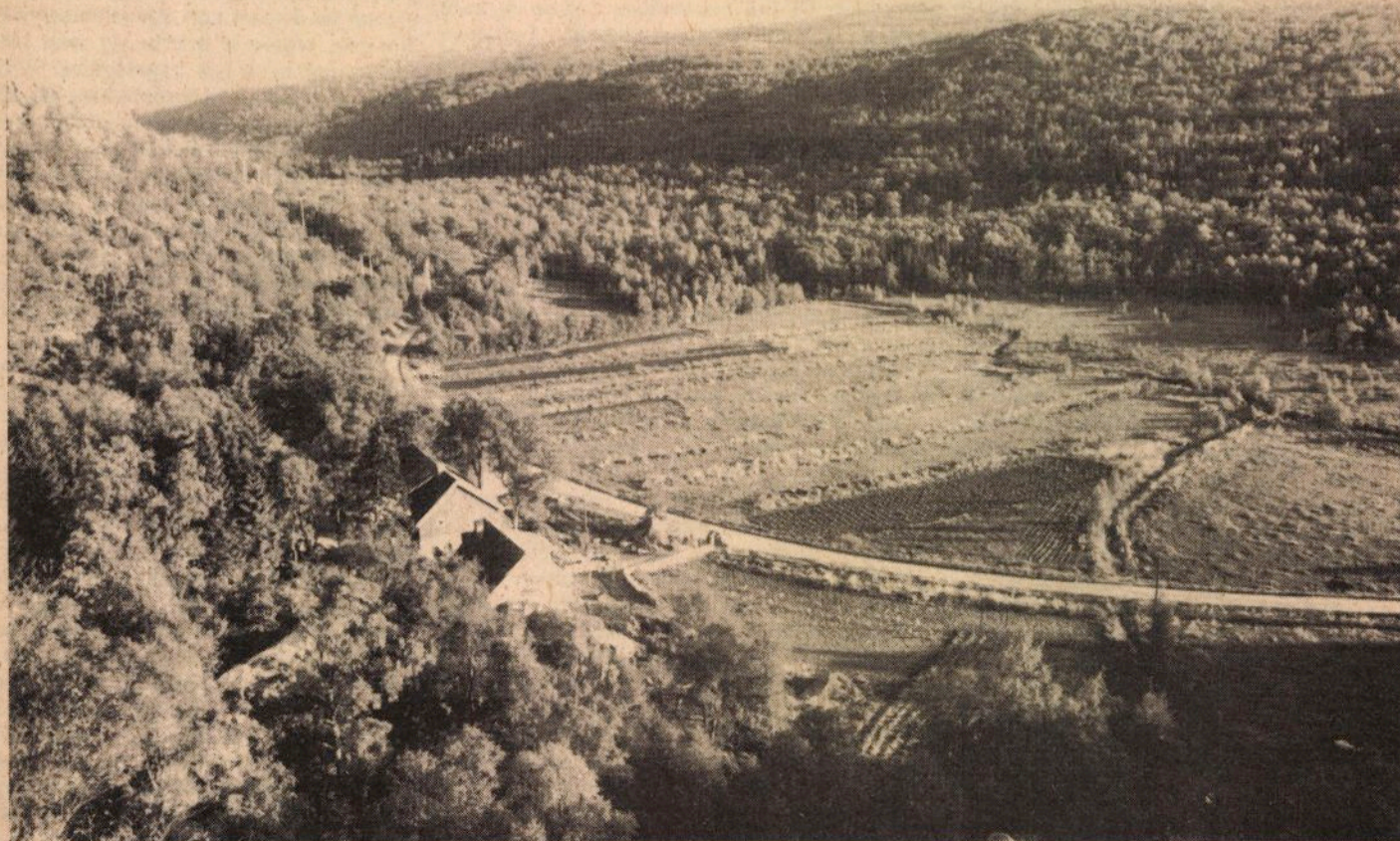
Our publishing activities and those of Regnbuetrykk are non-profit (though unintentionally so). We keep our prices at a minimum so as to reach as many as possible, and mainly aim for our effort to be self-sustained. I do not write mainly to earn money, but rather to inform people about what I feel they ought to know. You could say that we do not do anything just to earn money (bar the fact that I had to work on an oil tanker for three months last year as an electrician to pay certain debts). We usually do what we feel is right for us to do, and do things mainly when we feel like doing them. This sure sounds like an idealist/hippie attitude - and maybe it is - but for us it works.

We take our farming quite seriously, and have gained our old-timey neighbors' respect for the noticeable results. They are steady customers for all the vegetables they do not grow themselves. Our neighbors may ridicule us at times for not using any synthetics on our soil - but not for our ten-pound cabbages or two-pound carrots. They may find it strange the way we pamper our animals use next-to-no concentrates and refuse

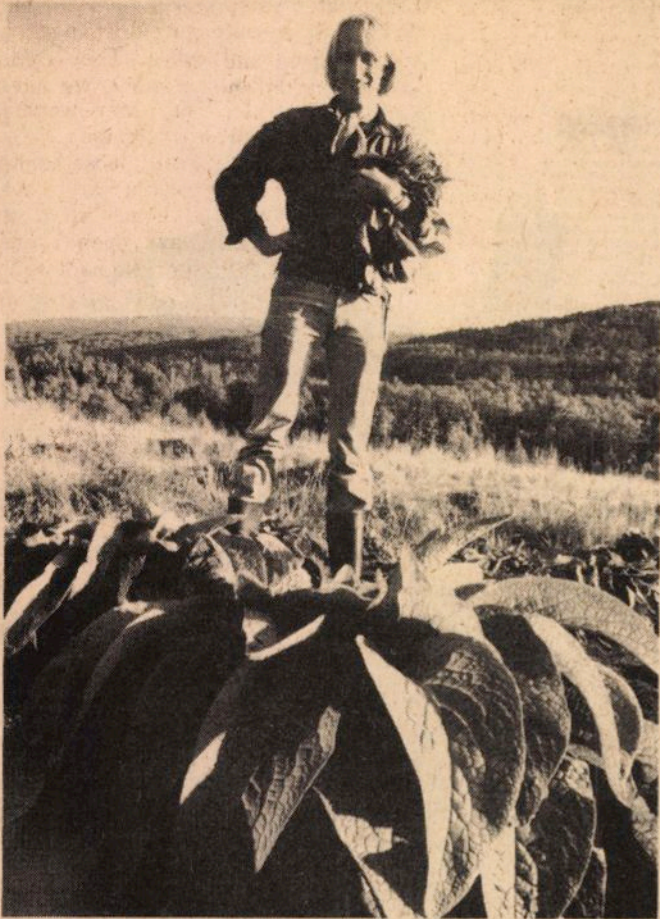
to keep high-yield hybrid animals - but they sure appreciate our sturdy, healthy looking sheep and cattle. They come around quickly enough when we have some up for sale. They may wonder about our long hair, no-marriage cohabitation, community sharing, loose habits and lifestyle - but the fact that they have become our very good friends and that their houses are always open to us betray the fact that they like us, too.

And we try to maintain our part of community responsibilities. Our truck can be rented by any of our neighbors for what it costs us to keep it. We lend a hand to whoever needs it. Business is mainly done by barter, to avoid the greedy hand of the tax man (the average tax is 40 percent here in Norway, plus 20 percent sales tax).

We are also scavengers: that is, we salvage what useful things we find at the local dump; appliances, light fixtures, furniture, clothes, china, carpets, crates, useful metal, etc. Even though we do not dig for it (just sample what's on top about twice a week when we pass the dump), we've got more useful stuff than we can handle. And this is only a small dump, supplied by 5 - 7,000 "customers", plus a few small factories

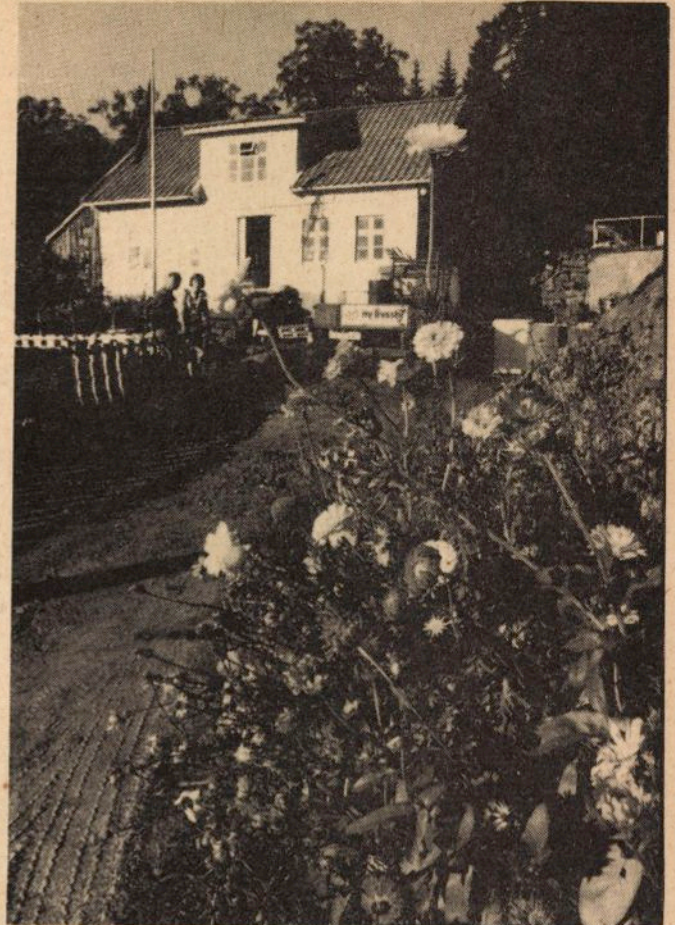


Einar F. Anundsen



Stein Jarving with his comfrey

Einar F. Anundsen



Asmund Lindal

in the near district. Norway is a very affluent society!

But this wastefulness is going to end. The municipality had plans to buy a \$1,000,000 mill to grind up the whole lot, but that was met by many protests. It stinks enough as it is, and the mill would destroy good soil and useful water supplies. Then we here at Holmen drew on our experience in handling garbage, and sent out several hundred mimeographed sheets to inform people about how this refuse could be advantageously recycled. The municipal government voted on our proposal, and I was voted into a committee of "Concerned citizens" which was given the money and power to remake the plans for handling the garbage in this county. This new plan is halfway done, and includes recycling of glass, paper and metal (and maybe organics). What's left is incinerated, and the heat produced will be used for meaningful purposes.

Every cent above what we need to operate the farm is being used to extend our activities, so that we can take on more people, better our facilities, and finally reach optimum use of this area. When (and if) we can buy the land we want - we will have the use of 40 acres of

good farming land, 2,500 acres of good sheep pasturage, and lots of forest for fuel. With this, we will be able to feed 40 people or more on a diet, including plenty of meat and fish (which are plentiful in the fjord). And with 100-200 sheep, 100-200 beehives, and a carpentry shop, textile workshop, printing business, blacksmith/mechanical workshop and our own primary school, we'll have plenty of work for additional people, and every possibility for self-sufficient survival. And we'll be a helpful set-up for the local community/county, in providing services and skills when needed, free of charge.

Although Norway has 12 political parties and 7 or 8 different religions going, we have not adhered to any. Our philosophy has its roots in Christianity and Buddhism; in the writings of Proudhon, Leo Tolstoy and E.F. Schumacher; with bits added by Gregory Bateson, Ivan Illich, Robert Heinlein, Herman Hesse, Carlos Castaneda, and even Ayn Rand (of all people!). One of our philosophies can be summed up as "Anything worth doing at all is worth doing well". That is possibly one of the main reasons we're still afloat. We are learning all the skills needed to

be totally self-sufficient, which is part of our aim.

We do not much measure anything in terms of money. We feel very responsible towards the future and towards the poor, hungry, and down-trodden three-quarters of humanity (of which there are a few thousands here in Norway, and close to 20 millions in the U.S.). What we do about this is mainly to use less, make fertile land that has been laid waste, and recycle what other people throw away. And inform others about what we do and why, and what they can do - without being fanatic about it (certainly, we're not perfect ourselves). We want to see a world of small, autonomous societies, totally without centralized governments, power games, starvation, wars, pollution, or large-scale hypocrisy. We pursue this seemingly hopeless and naive goal in our own quiet way, having a good time all along. □

Readers interested in visiting should write and get a response before traveling there.

*Holmen Organic Farms
Stein Jarving
4580 Lyngdal
Norway*



by David Ruth (3rd from right on the bottom)

I'd planned to devote this issue's Social Science Column to what I argued last time is an important approach to understanding the meaning of intentional community; that is, I'd planned to focus once again on the functioning of communal workplaces. Two recent articles on the organization of work in Israeli kibbutzim were to be reviewed, emphasizing the

problems of managerial power, of participation of the less powerful in policy-making, and of workplace democracy in general. I'll do that next issue, though, because I was asked by this issue's editors to provide an illustration of the issue's theme, *Community Learning*, by discussing my own learnings over the past six years as I moved from graduate school to Twin

Oaks and then to the *real world*.

Since stray paragraphs of that sort have crept into the first drafts of nearly everything I've written in the last few months since leaving Twin Oaks, I knew that the story had to come out of me. My thanks go to the editors of COMMUNITIES for indulging these egotistical impulses.

My graduate school years at Harvard had begun during the 1969-70 decline of political activism and rise of the human potential movement. My writing of *Guidelines for Activists: Lessons from Social Psychological Research* (mimeo'd hand-out) gave way to the small-group encounters which were teaching so many of us how much we had to learn. I found that most of us barely knew how to talk with each other, much less work together or govern together. Our egalitarian ideals were being undermined by political and intellectual arrogance as we argued with each other about the correct line and as we prepared to preach to the masses.

What became clear to me in my early brushes with the human potential movement was that a truly participative socialism would have to have learned a central lesson of the human potential movement: that progress comes when each person in a group has respect for the perspectives brought by every other group member.

After a couple of years of working with encounter groups, however, I became convinced (by a couple of my undergraduate students and by a couple of maverick social psychologists, Ira Goldenberg and Arthur Gladstone) that the ephemeral nature of most encounter groups meant that the crucial political issues involving the organization of work and the distribution of power and privilege were rarely dealt with; these issues were rarely linked to the realizations that encounter-group members had about their relationships with others. Furthermore, where such topics were a necessary focus, that is in the field of organizational development, the tools of the human potential movement were being used only to make the authoritarian power structure of capitalist firms seem less pernicious while changing nothing of consequence.

So I began looking for groups of people who were not only talking together, but who were trying to live and work together while experimenting with power structures intended to be non-authoritarian, participative and egalitarian. Ira Goldenberg suggested the residential youth centers and half-way houses which were attempting to work under *horizontal hierarchies* (see his *Build Me a Mountain*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971). Arthur Gladstone and the students suggested that communes, with their independence of government grants, would be more fertile cases for study. Communes could be the laboratories for the testing of ideals drawn from Marx, Kropotkin, Maslow and the human potential movement.

As I began searching for a community (or communities) to study, the question I was asking was becoming clearer: Can intentional communities find ways to maximize the open and honest communication among equals that is the goal both of socialism (which focuses on the equality of opportunity for power and privilege) and of the human potential movement (which focuses on the basic human equality that deprives each of us of the right to think ourselves better, more in touch with the truth, than others)?

In the summer of 1972 I found myself attending a 4th of July *Intentional Communities Conference* at Twin Oaks Community in rural central Virginia. The community immediately impressed me both by its ability to competently handle 300 people for a 3-day week-end, and by the articulateness of the various members who discussed the community's labor distribution system, child care, economics, and governmental structure. The 35 members of Twin

Oaks seemed to offer a refreshing alternative both to the laid-back disorganization of the open-land communes and to the uptight oppressiveness of capitalist America.

A two week visit that Fall left me starry-eyed, thinking I'd found utopia (*Not really utopia, of course, I'd say defensively to colleagues, but moving closer in that direction than I would have believed possible.*) A year more at Harvard, a number of visits to Twin Oaks, and even a loved-one who wanted me to stay in Cambridge, failed to dampen my ardour for the community.

Nor was I disillusioned by my first few months of membership, a tumultuous summer (1973) which turned out to be the heyday of the human potential movement at Twin Oaks. (See Mimi Dickey's *The Root Cellar Experiment: primal screaming at Twin Oaks* in *Leaves of Twin Oaks*, #24, Aug. 1973, pp. 4-5, and Orvie Sundance's *Marathon* in *Leaves of Twin Oaks*, #25, Nov. 1973, pp. 10-11.)

What threw me into doubt was a combination of three related developments: first, the autumn exodus of the leaders of *the screamies*, the people most into emotional encounter and self-actualization; second, the winter financial crisis, which many attributed to the summer's orgy of self-examination and individual development; and third, my own attempt, that winter, to serve as a branch planner, one of the 3 people who make the major branch-level decisions for the (by-then) 45-member Juniper branch.

The Autumn exodus affected me not only because those who left were my best friends in the community, but because I also had some desire for Twin Oaks to be the kind of therapeutic community they'd hoped to make it. The winter financial crisis underscored for many of us the lack of attention we'd been paying to the pragmatic issues of money management and industrial development. And finally, my brief stint as a branch planner demonstrated to me how little I understood about the workings of the community. On questions about the distribution of labor, for example, I was able to argue cogently why any proposal would not deal adequately with the community's high level of dissatisfaction with the labor credit system, but I could offer no plausible alternatives. (See my later descriptive analysis, *The Labor Credit System*, *Leaves of Twin Oaks*, #38, April 1976)

In the Spring of 1974 I moved, with my new mate Kip, to the 8 member Merion branch of the community, propelled partly by my hunch that the problems of a small group would be more tractable than those of the 45-member branch, and partly by Kip's desire to have our expected child raised among a small group of friends. The problems, if not more tractable, were certainly more emotionally intense; and, for a year and a half I focused my vision on the experience of fatherhood and on the workings of the small branch.



By the end of the summer of 1974, however, it began to become apparent that the community was heading for some sort of social crisis. More alarmed than most of us, one member, Piper, used the community funds at her disposal as manager of the Unitarian Fellowship at Twin Oaks to pay for a visit from Don Klein. Don is a community psychologist who many credited with having ameliorated an earlier time of divisiveness in 1971. Piper asked me to attend the meeting with Don, a meeting that began an involvement in social planning, that required I attempt at least to understand the community as a whole.

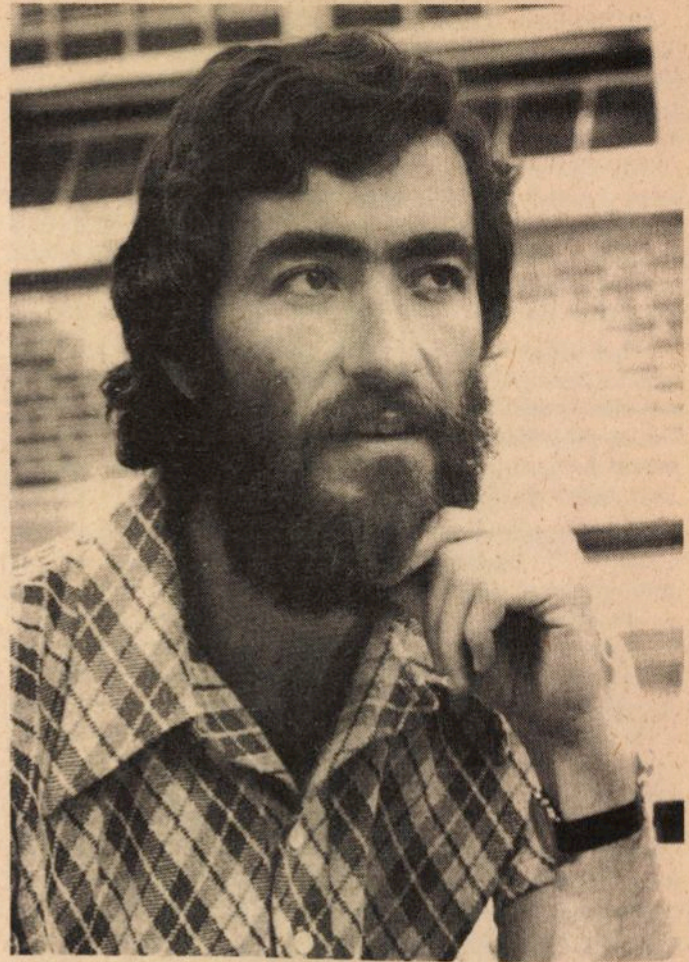
That meeting with Don Klein also began my search for some guidelines about how we might use *social planning* (whatever that was) to head off incipient crises (especially the present one, one about which the Community Planners were becoming more and more uneasy). The Planners appointed me *Social Planner* and gave me 20 hours a week to research the literature on social planning and to begin a learning seminar from which might come policy proposals.

While I was doing the research in the University of Virginia library, the sense of impending chaos in the community grew more compelling. I wanted to understand the growing dissension and divisiveness, but I could not settle on a theoretical perspective that would allow me to make sense of the community's malaise. So the Community Planners decided to poll the community to find out what was wrong; they directed Gerri, another member interested in social planning, and me to conduct and administer a comprehensive questionnaire, one which would enable them to make some sense of all the complaints they were hearing.

Gerri and I enlisted the whole community's help in generating the questions to be asked, and even administered one part of the questionnaire, that dealing with problems involving labor. The results, while interesting (see Gerri's *Social Planning: Leaves of Twin Oaks* #39, Apr 1976, pp 8-11), didn't help us or the Community Planners in our efforts to understand the ever growing social crisis.

By the Spring of 1976 it was evident to all that the hammock shop had become the private preserve of a quite cohesive group of men who called themselves *the boys*. In the hammock shop, Planners' decisions met with open ridicule; and the group's previously entertaining wit became quite heavy with venom.

Supporting *the boys* was a large social grouping, later to be the self-proclaimed *good-times group*. It was this group, and another one called *the affinity group* (see Susan's *A Small Group Proposal, Leaves of Twin Oaks*, #40 June 1976, pp 7-9), which caused me to write *Social Planning: The Example of the Small Group Problem (Communities* #21, Jul/Aug '76, pp 23-28) in which I grasped for a perspective from which to understand the growing factionalization in the community. In that article I hesitantly suggested a conflict-theory perspective in which *the boys*, the *affinity group* and the community's *ruling clique* could be seen as battling for power. In another article, *Individualism vs. Collectivism at Twin Oaks (Leaves of Twin Oaks* #40, June '76, pp 14-19), I suggested that it was the introduction of economic planning that was causing some of the conflict. It was concentrating power in the hands of the Planners at the expense of managerial power. The connection that I failed to make at the time, however, was that the managers of the hammock shop



(around which *the good-times group* revolved) and the child program (a chief concern of *the affinity group*) were especially affected by the centralization of power. Unlike some of the other powerful managers, neither group participated in the community's policy-making.

By the late Spring of 1976 the community was experiencing strife and chaos. The community's accountant walked off her job complaining of the abusiveness of *the boys*, and many members refused to even enter the hammock shop. Meanwhile, the good times group was making alcohol an item of conspicuous consumption, and the affinity group was chafing at their failure to influence the design of the new child-adult residence, a building they'd hoped would provide living space for a tight-knit group devoted to children.

Kat was called in from East Wind Community to help a new accountant make sense of books which Kat had handled 4 years before. And community psychologist Don Klein was again called; this time he was asked to design whole-community workshops that might enable the community to create some social order from the chaos.

Don and two colleagues precipitated 6 weeks of intense community discussion, *the process*, as it came to be called. Here the methods of the encounter group and the conflicts of community met as we formed into support groups of people who seemed to share similar values and then into *linkage groups* made up of representatives of each of the support groups.

In the linkage groups, members discussed every issue from child rearing to governmental power to physical design of the community. The goal was to arrive at common values. It turned out, however, to be as much a purging process as it was a method for achieving value consensus. While many members found that their conflicts with each other were based on misconceptions, many also found that their values and interests were not shared by the community's main stream. One member felt compelled to resign from his 3 powerful positions: Community Planner, economic planner, and construction manager. The entire good-times group left the community during the Fall, and the affinity group dribbled out over the next year.

Lani Higgins, a fledgling anthropologist who observed the community sporadically during that chaotic summer, emphasized in her analysis the authoritarian style of the Planner regime which had presided over the events leading to the process. (*The Mediation of Leadership: a brief exemplification of the application of Structural Analysis* - unpublished) She saw the social unrest as having precipitated a change in planning style from that of advocacy (Planners having firm ideas of what direction the community should take) to facilitators (Planners preside over the process of having the whole community articulate the community's direction).

Robert Hauhart, a sociology grad student who stayed at Twin Oaks during that summer, emphasized the conflict of ideologies, a "dynamic conflict between groups -- in this case a dominant status quo and a subordinate minority -- in terms of their ideological pronouncements" (*Community Ideology: The Evolution and Dissolution of a Deviant Subculture*, unpublished). In Hauhart's view, the deviant good-times group was a necessary component of the social order -- the dissenters who affirm the necessity of the dominant values. Hauhart, however, declines to comment on why this particular subordinate minority and dominant status quo wreaked such havoc in the community.

During that summer I'd participated in the directing of the process, but I'd also begun seeking help from theoreticians whose writings had attracted my attention. I wrote John Friedmann, a heretical planning theorist who'd declaimed on the impossibility of social planning (*Retracking America: A Theory of Transactive Planning*, Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1973). I wrote to Fred Thayer, a political scientist and organizational theorist who suggested that there were ways in which political power could be widely shared. (*An End to Hierarchy! An End to Competition*, NY: Franklin Watts, 1973). And I wrote to Ramon Sanchez, an educational philosopher who said that it was the division of labor which lay behind the divisiveness that can wreck community. (*Schooling American Society: A Democratic Ideology*, Syracuse University Press, 1976).

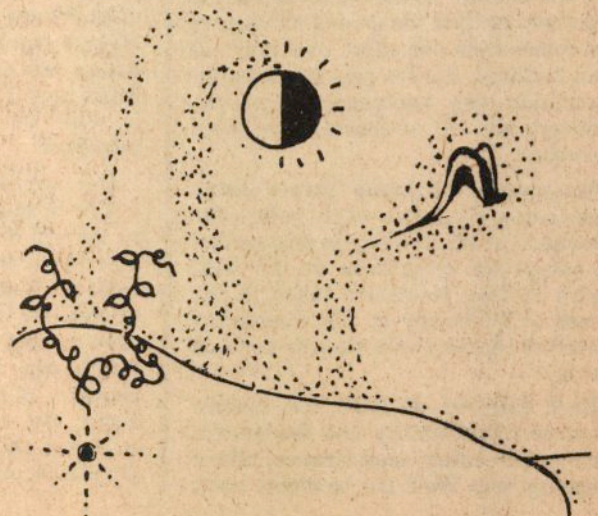
In their writings and in their responses all three emphasized the crucial importance of widespread access to the political process. I began to see that Lani Higgin's emphasis on governmental style was important, that Bob Hauhart's attention to the maintenance of community ideology was justified, but that both perspectives could profit from an examination of the relationships among the division of labor, the distribution of power and the ideologies which vie for community acceptance.

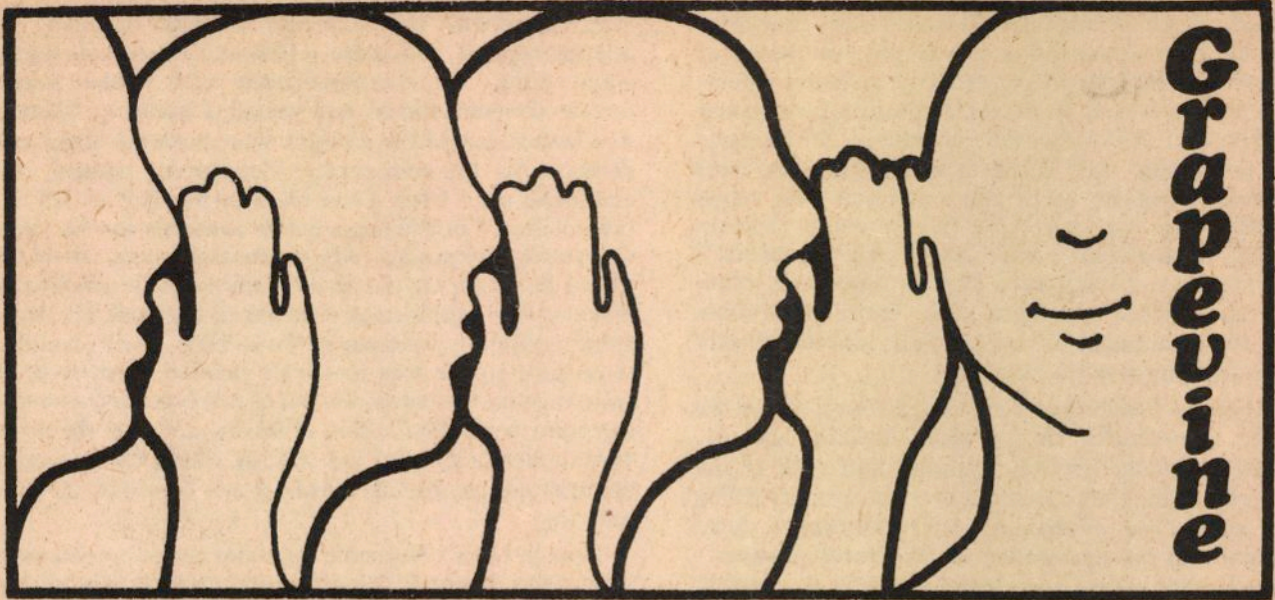
In the months that followed, I began exploring those relationships in two quite different, but complementary, ways. First, my correspondence with social scientists increased tremendously, and second, I became a Community Planner, one of the 3 people who make the major policy decisions for the community. The correspondence, which continued until I left Twin Oaks in the Fall of 1977, has been collected in 100 pages and is available for \$6, the cost of xeroxing and postage. My tenure as Planner, where I was forced finally to try out some of my ideas in practice, will make up the culminating chapters of the book I'm writing about collective processes at Twin Oaks. Both should cast some light on the way in which socialist alternatives must guard against the entrenchment of privileges and power that can come from the division of labor; and they should lend some understanding of the way in which the processes of determining community ideology can be either divisive or unifying.

Though I feel I learned a lot about collective processes at Twin Oaks, the main thing the community taught me is that a secular intentional community is more than an alternative family, more than a democratic workplace, and more than a socialist political unit; it is all three at once. And the complexity of its problems are a result of the combining of three experiments in one. It remains an open question, however, whether or not any of the three can be satisfying separately, or whether there are ways of intermixing the three more loosely than in the monolithic structure of intentional community. Because of my leaving Twin Oaks, I'll now get a chance to find out.

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Open House Community

In March of 1975, Communities issue # 13, Paul Thompson wrote an article called "Giving It All Away" dealing with the transition he and his wife made from the establishment to living in community. The Christian community called Open House Community began with their energy and they have sent us their bulletin as an update.

We live on 60 quiet wooded acres about 30 miles from a medium-sized urban center (lake Charles). In our early years (1970-1973) we were a family cooperative, then an intentional community whose purpose was to do volunteer social work. Now we see ourselves as a church. But a "church" in the earliest tradition of Christianity - "a group of believers united in heart and soul." Our tradition and heritage is Roman Catholic. We are trying to live a lifestyle with Jesus Christ - His Word and His Church - as the Center of our life together. All that we do and all that we are comes from our effort to center our lives in Christ. For the past six years our population has averaged 24 people, although not all, of course, have been members.

We gather for group prayer three times a day, six days a week, before our communal meals. Sunday is unstructured except for attendance at the local parish church. Meals are taken in the homes or informally at the community center on that day. No work is done on Sunday.

Each member of OHC has certain areas of responsibility and leadership; such as gardening, maintenance, office, shopping, etc. We'll try to direct work

activities according to talents and interests although that may not always be possible - depends on how critical the need is in certain areas at certain times. We do strongly believe all work is good as long as it results directly or indirectly in service to others.

OHC has no steady income. Our sources of income are from outside work by members, community crafts, barter, garden, and donations. All income is pooled and distributed according to need. We do trust that God will provide for our needs (He always has).

We are limited right now to primarily single family housing. Single people stay together in one of the houses. We look forward to construction of more private space for singles.

We have two regular meeting nights each week. One is for prayer and liturgy. The other is for community business and decision making, and is for members only. We try to operate by consensus: a state of mind and of being which exists **before** we come together, and which takes time and effort to achieve. Which is why we limit the attendance to members.

Our covenant evolved from our mutual desire to more fully abandon ourselves to the will of the Lord and to do so in a structured way, which would provide a basis of "identity" for the community. In prayer, we studied the available facts, drew on past experiences, and communicated our individual needs to one another. We generally feel peaceful about the result. The words of the covenant although few, provide a solid foundation on which to build community.

It is both a community statement and personal commitment - without which the community could not be. Hopefully, our covenant allows room for people to grow in maturity and leadership, by identifying the different forms or stages of mutual sharing of selves. Although we intend to set no specific time limits on the different forms or stages of membership, we expect each member to go through a period of prayer and discernment, both individually and by the group, before moving to a degree of deeper abandonment. Growth in the ability to share implies a gradual detachment from things, habits, preferences, and fixed ideas; all of which stand between the individual and the Lord.

Forms of Shared Life:

Covenant Member: A person fully committed to God and to the community without reservation.

Member: A person committed for a period of time, or with some other reservation which prevents full commitment.

Associate Member: Someone who is learning and working toward deeper involvement in the community.

Dependent: Member of a nuclear family (minor).

Guest: A person living at the community by special arrangements.

Visitor: Involvement in the life of the community for two weeks or less.

Open House Community, Rt. 7 Box 410, Lake Charles, LA 70601 (318) 855-2871

3HO

The Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization is going strong and growing stronger. There are currently over 100 3HO Teaching and Lifestyle Centers, ashrams, in major cities throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Our daily activities reflect our involvement with both 3HO and Sikh Dharma. We arise at 3:30 am to take a cold shower and gather together to perform our *sadhana*, spiritual practice. We believe that one tenth of our day should be devoted directly to God. The *sadhana* is two and one-half hours of prayer, Kundalini yoga, meditation, singing God's praises and reading the *Siri Guru Granth*.

In a typical ashram we take breakfast together after *sadhana* and then go about our daily work. 3HO members are all of various walks of life: students, professionals, housewives, farmers, gardeners, waiters, salesmen, etc. We gather together again in the evening for dinner.

3HO ashrams are spiritual communities. There is a parallel structure common to the lives of most 3HO members. Our way of life has its secular foundation in the Health, Happy, Holy Organization which is paralleled by its religious foundation in Sikh Dharma.

Through 3HO ashrams many lifestyle services are offered to the community, including classes in Kundalini yoga and meditation, vegetarian cookery, Burn-Out Prevention, drug rehabilitation, counseling. Childbirth education and self-defense are among the courses specially designed to meet the needs of women. We share these diverse teachings under the guidance of Siri Singh Sahibbhai Sahib Harbhajan Singh Khalsa Yogiji, commonly known as Yogi Bhajan, who brought them to the United States.

Sikh Dharma is a major religion which originated in northern India about 500 years ago. The main premise of the religion is *Ek Ong Kar, Sat Nam*, "there is One God Who created this creation; Truth is His Name." We believe that all who worship, worship the same God. The particular tenets of the religion are as follows: arise each morning in the ambrosial hours before the sun to praise God; make a living by the sweat of your brow; share with others. We are lacto-vegetarians and neither smoke nor drink. We are chaste unless married. We

don't cut or trim the body hair. We recognize as our guru and the living Word of God the *Siri Guru Granth Sahib's* holy book which is a collection of inspired writings from the ten Sikh gurus and from various saints and sages who lived in India between the 15th and 18th centuries.

If there is an ashram in your neighborhood, you probably know us by our dress of white clothing and turbans. The white clothing is to remind us that we must be as meticulous with our inside as with our outside if we are to maintain a pure consciousness.

3HO has twice yearly family gatherings at the solstices: New Mexico in the summer and Florida in the winter. Throughout the year Yogi Bhajan, our spiritual and secular teacher, travels to various ashrams to lead students of Kundalini yoga through the experience of Tantric yoga. In the summers, 3HO sponsors a Women's Training Camp for women of all spiritual paths to learn to know their own womanliness. These activities, our lifestyle and our dress function cooperatively to keep us in tune and in touch with one another. It is a very beautiful and rewarding way to live.

The changes we have experienced overall as a group can be attributed to time and the practice of the teachings given to us by Yogi Bhajan. The key words for our changes are "maturity" and "stability." As we have grown as human beings, our commitment to this path has deepened. We have married and are starting families, and the ramification of this has been an increased involvement with the community and a great increase in the development of our own spiritual community.

Another way in which our growth is demonstrated is through the increase in 3HO commercial businesses. Nationwide family members operate Golden Temple Conscious Cookery Restaurants; Nanak's Gardening; Shakti Shoes; Wha Guru Chews, organic goodies; Yogi Tea, pre-packaged spiced tea; to name a few.

Our religion is a living experience for us and gives us the strength to meet our lives courageously and with an ever-new mind. We do not proselytize. We believe that those who come into the "company of the holy" do so because it is their destiny to do so.

On the other hand, the tenets of our lifestyle can lead to a very high quality of life. We believe that everyone can benefit from yoga and meditation, nutritious cooking, holistic medicine, healthy childbirth practices, a knowledge of self-defense, and relaxation and massage techniques.

Courses in these lifestyle techniques are offered wherever we maintain an ashram. In this way we are constantly in touch with the pulse of the community.

Over all, these past three years have been good for us and we're just planning to keep on keeping up!

This update was submitted through the Kundalini Research Institute 778 Williams St. Pomona Ca. 91788. This organization is now part of the 3HO foundation.



Ananda Update

For more in depth articles about Ananda see issues #3, 9, 16, and 21.

What's New at Ananda?

Sometimes we can hardly believe that we've managed to arrive at Ananda and have the privilege of living here. So much joy! The inner life comes first, with us who make Ananda our home. We anchor our dreams, tastes, entertainment, education, manners, and architecture in principles of plain living and high thinking. By contrast, in the cities people cast all their energies into the narrow spectrum of the physical side of life; chasing the dollar and looking for happiness in things outside themselves.

We lead a balanced life here. That might seem dull to the person who's falling over himself to get more dollars and sense thrills. But we are growing more happy and strong by learning, increasingly, to cooperate with the universal laws of human sharing and right attitude. Visitors keep coming back to Ananda for a new taste of the joy that this has given.

The forest fire that burned fifteen of our houses and 450 acres of our land in 1976 has turned out to be, amazingly, a tremendously strengthening thing. We had just been emerging from the 'bare survival' phase in our community's growth, where working for food and shelter took most of our time. A new,



stronger sense of family was starting to come into the picture. As a result of what that fire did on a hot June afternoon, we suddenly had to pull together. We've put thousands and thousands of hours into clearing the land and building new houses; but most important about the whole experience is the stronger sense of spiritual family it's given us.

Paradoxically, pulling together has expanded our vision, not contracted it. It was getting out of ourselves more than ever, that let us experience new fellow-feeling. We want to keep growing that way, so people at Ananda are turning their energy to serving others who live outside the community. We're building a

new public retreat where people can get out of the cities and experience a saner way of life; we're going out and teaching classes in yoga, and giving concerts with our singing group, the Gandharvas. Swami Kriyananda, in his book **Cooperative Communities -- How to Start Them and Why**, talks about communities specializing in future, each supplying a need of all the other communities and all of them forming a network of cooperation. One of Ananda's main functions will always be to serve people's spiritual needs with the retreat and with spiritual books and teachings.

A great deal of our energy just now is going into distributing Swami Kriyananda's new book, **The Path -- Autobi-**

graphy of a Western Yogi, a 640-page magnum opus that took 27 years to write. **The Path** is receiving high praise for its wisdom, humor, and 450-plus stories and anecdotes of the great master Paramahansa Yogananda. (If you're interested in further information, write Ananda at 900 Alleghany Star Rt., Nevada City, CA 95959.)

An event that may interest **Communities'** readers is the 1978 Cooperative Communities Seminar, to be held at Ananda in May. The communities seminar is invariably a success. People come from all over the country to share community-building and harmonious-living methods that really work. You can write for details at the address given above.

What's the general outlook for Ananda? Lots of physical plans, to be sure. But Swami Kriyananda once told us, "Don't be in too much of a hurry to have material success. It'll come, and it's good to work for it. But when it does come, you're going to find yourselves thinking of what we've got right now as the good old days."

We measure Ananda's growth and progress by the spirit of unselfish, joyful cooperation among our members. That seems to be getting stronger every day. A cornerstone of our philosophy is to pray to God every morning to be used as His instruments for good during the day. It's been a good rule, bringing us through some very hard tests, and we feel that our success with the community will reflect the sincerity with which we apply it in the future.



Utopian Studies Conference

In October, Merritt Abrash of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute put together the initial conference on Utopian Studies, inviting colleagues and friends and others who were interested in the subject. (Though just what "the subject" of utopian studies is, remains an

area of concern and confusion.) Many of us felt that the high point of last year's meeting was the Sunday we spent with members of the Abode of the Message, a Sufi community housed in a former Shaker settlement in New Lebanon, New York (see **Communities #29** for further information about the Abode). Members of the Abode were warm and open to discussing philosophies and lifestyles with visitors.

One outgrowth of the first meeting is a new journal, **Alternative Futures: The Journal of Utopian Studies**. The editors state that the purpose is "To bring the utopian thinking of the present into confrontation with utopian aspirations of the past, and to assess the ways in which hopes or fears for the future have always shaped, and continue to shape, present action."

Most of the conference participants both years have been people who study about utopias. While this can be a stage between thinking and doing for some people, only a few participants have talked about actually living in the sorts of experiments they are analyzing. Last year's visit to the Abode served as an important connection between fiction and reality. This year's conference had no such connection, with three days of meetings in various conference rooms on the University of Michigan campus.

The statement of purpose for the 1977 meeting was:

"..To bring together people from a variety of disciplines and interests to evaluate the social ideals that have animated our past and will help to shape our future. Bertrand Russell wrote, 'The construction of utopias used to be despised as the foolish refuge of those who could not face the real world. But in our time social change has been so rapid, and so largely inspired by Utopian aspirations, that it is necessary to consider the wisdom or unwisdom of dominant aspirations.' Such consideration is the purpose of our conference."

The promotional literature of **Alternative Futures** also includes a quote from John Platt: "This is an age in which fictions, utopias and speculations of what might have become the most powerful political facts for world change."

However, most of this year's conference sessions were devoted to discussion of history and literature, mostly avoiding Platt's emphasis on deliberate and constructive change. A friend called the dominant thinking "the yeast theory of social change." (it just rises!) We laughed and made puns about it ("too much loafing around"), but beneath the humor was a dissatisfaction and a frustration with the overall tone of the scholarship and the conference.

The "Utopian Realities" session presented on Sunday morning was set up to try to bring some real-world consciousness and informality into the program. The panelists were: Betty Reardon, a consultant to the Institute for World Order and president of CPRED (Consortium for Peace Research, Education and Development), whose dominant interest is human rights; Peg Carter, Social Studies Coordinator for the Ann Arbor Public Schools and co-author with Betty Reardon of the Random House Series on World Order Studies; Noel Fields, Professor of Art at Lansing Community College and chairperson of the Human Relations Committee for the faculty union; Meredith Hazelrigg, writer, farmer and community organizer; and Valerie Restivo, writer, peace researcher, who is currently studying the connections between interpersonal and international relationships.

In an effort to get "utopia" out of the literary arena, we discussed the concept as a dynamic fiction, useful for effecting real-world change. As Betty has pointed out, we are too often crisis-centered, rather than problem-centered, and this tends to guide our approach to social problems.

Because so many people think "utopia" is synonymous with "commune", we wanted to expand awareness of other options. Betty, Peg, and Noel talked about working for change inside and outside of the public educational system. Peg and Betty have been involved in designing peace and global awareness programs for the schools. Noel discussed the difficulty of knowing when you are wasting your time. She related her experience of putting five years into a job as affirmative action officer for the college, only to realize that she'd been appointed with no intention of giving the position any real power - she had a title but no real credibility, and little ability to use that position to promote changes. She talked about knowing when to abandon one direction and take another.

Meredith discussed the need to keep power and leadership effectively distributed. He emphasized the need for an attitude that avoids hopelessness or frustration from the start. He talked about the importance of assuming you can make changes in an inadequate system.

All of us equated change with **process**. We discussed the need for integrating, synthesizing, connecting, networking - sharing ideas and resources. I shared a favorite quote from Idries Shah:

"Sufism, considered a nutrient for society, is not intended to subsist within society in an unaltered form. That is to say,

the Sufis do not erect systems as one would build an edifice for succeeding generations to examine and learn from...A Sufi school comes into being, like any other natural factor, in order to flourish and disappear, not to leave traces in mechanical ritual, or anthropologically interesting survivals. The function of a nutrient is to become transmuted, not to leave unaltered traces."

Someone asked, "How effective can your movement be if you only have 500 people?" Most of us thought 500 people was an enormous number. We talked about the **qualitative** effectiveness of our work. Success isn't always quantifiable, and a group's effectiveness can't be measured by the numbers on its roster. Small groups with good networks can have greater impact than large groups with endless membership lists. Two people can be a community, changing their ways of living together in ways that reflect their attitude towards changing society.

I hope that future Utopian Studies conferences will include the people who live alternatives of many kinds, both as participants and as presenters. There ought to be a better balance. It isn't that we need to eliminate literary scholarship, historical or technological considerations. It's that too few other options are available.

There was some interesting dialogue and some exchange of information, friendship and ideas. There could be much more. It is up to people who organize the conference, but it is also up to everyone else. I urge **you** to consider how your input could affect future conferences.

Anyone who is interested in the connections between interpersonal and international nonviolence, opening relationships, peace research and people, should feel free to contact me: Valerie Graber Restivo, Applewood Lane, Manchester Center, VT 05255

Anyone interested in submitting article proposals or manuscripts to Alternative Futures is asked to contact either Alexandra Aldridge, Dept. of Humanities, College of Engineering, U. of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109; or Merritt Abrash, Human Dimensions Center, RPI, Troy, New York 12181



Reach is a free reader service of Communities magazine. Ads should be typewritten and 50 - 200 words in length. We reserve the right to edit. Dated material requires a minimum of 6 weeks lead time. Feedback on ad response is welcome.

Margaret

CONFERENCES

☆Easter Weekend Conference at Aloe

From March 24 to 26, 1978 Aloe - a small intentional community near Chapel Hill, N.C. - is hosting a conference, inviting those seeking and affirming an alternative lifestyle, with a special focus on gayness.

Community members will offer workshops relating to sharing work, income, material possessions, time, space, and decision-making. In addition, Judy Lashof, Firefly, and Alan Tuttle from the Movement for a New Society will lead workshops which examine gayness as it relates to each of us personally and to society; also workshops specifically for lesbians and for gay men. With the goal of exchange and examination of feelings and political ideas about homosexuality and gay liberation, the conference will be organized using experiential exercises in addition to structured whole group and small group discussions. Men's groups and women's groups will be included.

The cost, including registration and 7 meals (Friday lunch at 2:00 pm through Sunday lunch) is \$25.00 per person. Deduct \$3.00 each for advance registrations - paid prior to March 10. Deduct an additional \$3.00 for very early registrations paid prior to Feb. 28. Limited dormitory-style sleeping space will be available. Bring your own tent or camper if you have one. When register-

ing, or for more information, enclose a large, stamped, self-addressed envelope to the following address.

**Aloe Community Route 1 Box 100
Cedar Grove, NC 27231 [919] 732-4323**

☆On the first weekend in June, Aloe will be hosting a community conference. Aloe especially invites people with kids, as we know from direct experience how difficult it is to find an intentional community that welcomes children.

Along with members of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities, Aloe members will facilitate workshops relating to living communally, with a special focus on the roles of parents and children in this alternative lifestyle. Cost, including 8 meals, is \$25/adult or 2 children. Deduct \$3 from each registration fee if paid before May 15, and an additional \$3 for those paid before May 1. Plan to bring your own tent or camper, if possible. Write for details. Early registrants may request scholarships if needed. If you would like to come a week ahead to help with preparations, tell us and you'll be welcome.

Aloe Community Rt. 1, Box 100, Cedar Grove, NC 27231 [919] 732-4323

☆Communities Conference June 30 to July 3 Dandelion will host its second annual conference for people interested in communal living. This is one of a series of conferences supported by the Federation of Egalitarian Communities.

As a community deliberately aimed at growing larger and promoting a community movement, we hope that the conference will broaden awareness and understanding of intentional communities in general, and attract new mem-

bers to Dandelion and other communities.

The emphasis will be on egalitarian groups such as those that use the *Walden Two* model, but the conference will cover areas relevant to any communal living situation. A wide range of workshops will be facilitated by Dandelion members along with people from other federation communities.

We invite those who are serious about joining community, either now or in a year or two. We also invite representatives of communities who would like to share their knowledge or do some selective recruiting. Come, learn and celebrate with us!

The cost, including meals and a place to camp, is \$20 per person registered before May 15, 1978; \$25 per person after May 15; children \$18. Write for more information or send us your advance registration fee of \$10 per person.

Dandelion Community, R.R. 1, Enterprise, Ontario, KOK 1Z0 [613] 3582304

☆Walden-II-Week

June 23 to 29, just before our Communities Conference, there will be a Walden-II-Week, a short-term, communal living experience, at Dandelion.

Ten to 20 people will live together for a week, forming their own government, communal treasury, work-credit system and social organization. With help from Dandelion members, the W-II-W participants will function as if they were going to live together on a long-term basis. For those thinking about communal living for themselves, this is a chance to "test the water before jumping in". Setting up the kitchen, planning menus, distributing work, preparing budgets and learning to

communicate are some of the first essentials. But, social interaction, positive reinforcement and enjoying the countryside are just as important.

So bring your camping gear and join us. Sorry, no children this time and please, no pets.

The cost will depend on your Walden-II-Week group. Registration deposits (which go to the sponsoring community) are \$15 per person. Upon your arrival your communal treasury is set up with an additional contribution of \$35 from each member. Some of this money may be refunded at the end, depending on how your group manages its money. And, you can attend both the Walden-II-Week and the conference for a special advance registration fee of \$20. Write for more information or send your registration deposit to:

Dandelion Community [W-II-W], R.R. 1, Enterprise, Ontario, KOK 1Z0

☆**Eckankar International Youth Conference March 24 - 26**

ECK, The Eternal Force will be the theme of this 3 day conference to be held in Sacramento at the Convention Center. The purpose of the seminar is to let people know more about ECKANKAR as the Path of Total Awareness, and how to work with The Force to achieve Self-Realization and God-Realization. Inspirational talks, music, song, dance, poetry, drama, and various art forms will create a positive, uplifting program. A unique feature of the program is that children will be speaking on their insights and awareness, along with adults. ECK teaches that children are far more perceptive to subtleties and that nothing can be taught you that is not already concealed as potential knowledge. For more information about ECKANKAR and the conference, contact: **Marjorie Klemp, P.O. Box 3100, Menlo Park, CA 94025 [415] 321-3100**

☆**School of Living** is a non-profit educational organization which publishes **Green Revolution**, as well as operating living-learning centers, and sponsoring conferences and workshops. Costs \$10-15/day. Partial scholarships available.

March 24-26 Poetry workshop and tutorials with Judson Jerome. Submit sample of work. Downhill Farm.

March 24-Feb. 1 Alternative Energy. Presentations, demonstrations, and field trips on alternative energy systems, including methane, solar, wind and water energy, and do-it-yourself projects. Heathcote Center.

March 30 School of Living annual business meeting and reunion. Deep Run Farm.

April 7-9 Vegetarian Cooking. Downhill Farm.

April 14-16 Non-Violence Training for relating on a person-to-person basis, organizing and group process using egalitarian methods, activism and non-violence, the use of affinity groups, consensus government, role-playing, evaluation for organizers. Deep Run Farm.

For conference details, reservations, directions, write the following address, including a self-addressed, stamped envelope (large).

School of Living, P.O. Box 3233, York, PA 17402 [717] 755-1561

☆**The Shakertown Pledge Group** offers training in **Simple Living: Personal and Social Change**. Workshops are held the first full weekend of every month. Training is for people who have already made a personal commitment to simple living and social change, but who may have difficulty maintaining that commitment or acting out of it.

The Shakertown Pledge Group is a multi-focus organization that works toward fundamental personal and political change, with a special emphasis on simple living and alternative lifestyles. We see simple living as a holistic, affirmative, assertive response to a multitude of personal, political, and economic injustices. We see simple living as a perfectly rational response to a global situation that allocates most of the goods and resources to the rich nations, leaving little for the poor. To us simple living also means a turning away from a personal preoccupation with material goods, a preoccupation that often leaves little time for personal and relational growth. The third aspect of simple living is social action. Acting out of our sense of personal strength and in community with others, we challenge boldly the institutions that prevent the liberation and well-being of all people (patriarchy, militarism, multinationals, etc.).

For each workshop, we will outline general areas we consider important to cover. This will be kept to a minimum because we believe learning is most effective when it is democratically designed and experientially structured. We see ourselves as facilitators/participants. Enrollment is limited to 30; register as soon as possible. Costs: \$20-30, including food (vegetarian) and lodging. Tasks such as meal preparation and clean-up are shared equally. For more information, write:

Shakertown Pledge Group, W. 44th St. & York Ave. S., Mpls, MN 55410

☆**Celebration of Life**

Spring equinox healing gathering. We invite you to share prayer, meditation, music, dance, hot baths, living foods, touch, and healing arts workshops. Please no dogs, no drugs, no alcohol. March 18th - 22 at **Healing Waters, PO Box 847, Eden, Arizona 85535. [602] 485-2008**. Preregistration due by March 10 - \$27; after March 10 - \$36.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

☆**New Age Nature Education and Research Center** is a non-profit corporation and an activist teaching community, relocating in South Riverside County. Animal skills are taught for pet shops, animal shelters, veterinary offices and the like. Students are the so-called unemployable, by virtue of age or physical condition. Jim Shapiro, 60, going on 39, has 30 years animal experience. Animal population includes 35 monkeys, birds, guinea pigs, exotic cats, llama, pigmy goats, racoons, kitty cats, and a dog. More animals to come. Currently doing it all by himself, Jim is looking for others with teachable animal skills who have "got it together". Age is no barrier. No smoking, dope, or hard liquor. Write for more information. **NANERC, Box 207, Winchester, CA 92396**

☆**Brooklea** is an educational program designed for people, primarily aged 17-21, interested in agriculture, farming, and wilderness, particularly as related to skills in self sufficiency. **Brooklea** teaches a variety of subjects related to the operation, growth, and maintenance of a farm, homestead, or wilderness area, provides academic and practical experience in each, and an environment for individual development of interests.

Brooklea Farm Project is not an accredited institution, nor does it attempt to permit persons to bypass formal education. **Brooklea** does prepare persons for employment, further education, and possible lifestyles. The program is organized in trimesters starting in Sept., January, and mid-March; students may enter at the beginning of any session. Costs: \$2200 for program, \$800 room and board. Write for application.

Brooklea Farm Project, Rt. 2, Fort Ann, N.Y. 12827

☆Fully accredited B.A. and M.S. degrees in Ecosystems Management, Appropriate Technology, Solar Energy Design, Environmental Horticulture, Environmental Planning, Health and Environment offered. Program includes wide variety of classes, tutorials, internships and directed independent studies. Students may receive credit for program-related employment, and "at a distance" studies. For further information and applications, write:

Antioch College/West Environmental Studies Program, 1161 Mission St., San Francisco, CA 94103 [415] 864-2570

☆**The Land Institute** is a non-profit, educational research organization devoted to a search for alternatives in agriculture, energy, shelter, and waste and to the development of a holistic philosophy. We offer a program for 8 - 10 students, college-age or older, each semester.

Students meet in a classroom-library located in the second story of a building heated by the sun and wood stoves and lighted by wind-generated electricity. The first floor contains a shop and work spaces for projects. Students arrive at The Land at 8:30 am and stay till at least 3:00 pm. Approximately half the time is spent reading and discussing assignments or individually chosen material. The remainder of the time is spent working on individual projects or cooperative group projects. College credit is available through either of the two Salina Colleges, Marymount or Kansas Wesleyan.

The **Land Institute** is located on the 28 acre property of Wes and Dana Jackson. Wes, director, was formerly professor and director of the Environmental Studies Center at California State University, Sacramento, and prior to that was a biology teacher at Kansas Wesleyan. Dana edits **The Land Report** and coordinates seminars and workshops at The Land. Write for further information:

The Land Institute, Rt. 3, Salina, KS 67401

GROUPS LOOKING

☆**The Whole Earth Brotherhood** needs pioneers who want to see our children have the opportunity to grow with soil underfoot, learning organic cooperation with plants and people.

1) **Why have we joined together?** We are a family who have in common the feeling that a simple communal life is the best way to work towards spiritual awakening and material self-sufficiency. Our guide is love for and dedication to one another.

2) **How do we treat money?** As ours (not mine and yours), including major possessions and assets. New members contribute voluntarily.

3) **What are our agreements?** Sharing on all levels, caring to keep clear our relationships, and daring to do the impossible while taking heed of the necessary. We are not into meat, processed food, drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or fanaticism. We practice natural healing when possible and praise the Source.

4) **How do we live together?** Preferably in small, private dwellings arranged like the rim of a wheel around a central hub of gardens, orchards, and commonly-used facilities. Using native materials and energy-saving ways in construction, we prefer minimal use of machinery, electricity, and cars. We are aiming for at least 50 - 60 folks, or about 15 - 20 families, though there are not yet a dozen of us.

5) **Where are we settling down?** We feel that a tropical climate is best for the simple life we espouse; the choice was Costa Rica. We are hoping to be able to buy a remote 500-acre valley. This place has gushing springs, large waterfalls, lotsa sunshine, 35 acres bananas, hundreds of fruit trees, a central area cleared in the midst of a virgin forest. This is the impossible.

6) **How do we support ourselves?** This is the necessary. We have been operating a small business, exporting dried bananas

from Costa Rica to the States, acting as middlemen. So as to get into production of other dried fruits and vegetables, we bought a 13-acre farm. A solar dehydrator is planned, pineapples are in the ground, the garden begun, and bamboo huts up. Besides giving us a base to gain our residence permits, the farm is also an "intermediate home" for those not yet able to live on the more remote land. We are working on different fronts to make this happen. For information write: **Herman Alper, 90 Edgewater Drive, #427, Coral Gables, FL 33133; La Hermandad, P.O. Box 74, Aptos, CA 95003; or Hermandad de Toda la Tierra, Orotina, Costa Rica, Central America.**

☆We are interested in adding 1 or 2 families to a five family vacation commune, 100 miles from New York City, which has existed for almost 6 years. Our estate includes a historic 33 room mansion, 25 acres of woods and park with swimming, hiking, and fishing available. Our group includes middle-aged adults working in business and the professions and 12 children, ranging in age from 11 years to adulthood. Our focus is on living in an extended family group during our middle years and on learning the skills necessary to build a lasting commune. Our long range view is towards the possibility of living communally in retirement. Adults and children govern and work together to restore the house and grounds. For further information, call **David Bell, [212] 563-95555, daily 9 am - 4:30 pm, Rose Schein [212] 543-5086, daily 7 pm - 10 pm. 6031 Tyndall Ave., Riverdale, N.Y. 10471**

☆**The City of the Sun** is a New Age community of persons who have come together to work toward achieving their highest spiritual potential. Our desire is to provide a place where people of like spirit and mind can move from the turmoil of our materialistic society and help each other accomplish our spiritual goals. The distinguishing characteristic of our group is that each Light Seeker is free to follow his/her own inner Christ guidance, so long as it is in harmony with Universal Truth. There is no one spiritual philosophy that all must adhere to.

There are 14 residents at this time, all retired and on social security. It is not easy for young people to find steady work. Women make up the majority of the community; there are 5 men. Most of us live in mobile houses, which vary according to each's needs and finances. There is one frame building and one of adobe brick. **City of the Sun** is located on

spring conferences at Another Place

March 16-19, 6th New England Community Conference

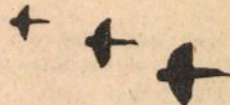
April 7-9, Massage

April 14-16, 5 Paths to Consciousness (Tarot, I Ching, Astrology, Numerology, Palmistry)

April 21-23, Music & Dance

May 11-14, Healing Arts

May 26-28, New Age Childraising



Another Place is a conference and networking center devoted to the co-evolution of a new society. All Conferences are on a sliding scale from \$35-75, depending on income. For more information, contact **Another Place, rt. 123, Greenville, New Hampshire 03048, or call 603-878-1510.**

flat desert with mountains in view whichever way one turns. The elevation is four thousand feet. Many are vegetarian, but some are not. No one addicted to drugs of liquor would be suitable for this environment.

We need able-bodied, creative men and women, dedicated to the high ideals of brotherly cooperation, to help build this community. Two small mobile homes are available for visitors and for use when people are moving in. In order to meet the cost of developing the settlement, installing utilities, etc., it is necessary for each new member (or family) to donate at least \$600. There is no rent for lifetime use of the residential lot, except a small annual county tax. Write for more information.

City of the Sun, P.O. Box 356, Columbus, New Mexico 88029

☆ **MICRO** is a network and support community of egalitarian, non-monogamous multi-adult families and individuals seeking families, based on the highest possible congruence of values, goals, and ideals. These include: lifetime commitment (security, stability, continuity, permanence); rational, scientific worldview (emphasis on verbal clarity, reason and logic; no religious dogma); self-actualization (no one-true-pathism), cultural diversity and decentralism; negative population growth (maximum of 1/2 child per adult); absolute openness and honesty; creating a supportive environment; contractual relationships (structured freedom). Further, we define ourselves as perfectionists-optimists-activists and philosopher-intellectuals. For more details please phone or send a S.A.S.E. to Delv or Meristem, Box 16211, Seattle, WA. 98106 [206] 762-9241

☆ **The Federation of Egalitarian Communities** is a group of intentional communities (Aloe, Dandelion, East Wind, North Mountain and Twin Oaks) spread out across North America. We range in size and emphasis from small homestead-oriented groups to village-like communities modelled after the Israeli kibbutz. All of our groups have been in existence for several years; one was founded in 1967. Although geographically far flung (from Ontario to North Carolina to the Ozarks), our common ideological base, which includes a central belief in cooperation, equality and non-violence, has brought us together in our efforts to offer more people a real alternative to a competitive and consumption-oriented world.

Each of the federation communities 1) holds its land, labor and other resources

in common; 2) assumes responsibility for the needs of its members, receiving the products of their labor and distributing these and all other goods equally or according to need; 3) practices non-violence; 4) uses a participatory form of government in which members have either a direct vote or the right of impeachment or overrule; 5) does not deny membership nor promote inequality among its members through discrimination on grounds of race, creed, age or sex; and 6) assumes responsibility for maintaining the availability of natural resources for present and future generations through ecologically sound production and consumption.

In federating, our aim is not only to help each other, but to help more people find a communal alternative and to promote the evolution of a more egalitarian society. We want people to know that cooperation holds more potential than competition, that taking care of our neighbors is important, and that personal achievement and gain can take a back seat to a loving concern for others.

All of our groups are interested in attracting more members, especially from classes of people who have been underrepresented among us: gays, working class and Third World people, women and older people.

Amidst our ideological similarities we are a diverse group of communities, and somewhere within that diversity we hope you will find a home, new friends and a life rich with challenge. We cannot promise utopia, but we do invite you to join our joyous struggle. For descriptions of each of the communities, including visiting and membership policies, write: **Federation of Egalitarian Communities, Box 6B2, Tecumseh, MO 65760**

☆ **Ohmega Salvage**, begun in 1975, is a structured experimental community whose entire support comes from dismantling buildings to recycle lumber and other building materials. Members are encouraged toward a total awareness of ecology and a reverence for the natural world. Through sharing of basic necessities (food, shelter, tools, etc.), we are attempting a simple but ample life oriented toward conserving natural resources in both our home and business activities.

We believe in the use generally of natural and organic foods without preservatives as a first step in developing a healthy life and as an ethical statement toward society. We are not politically aligned and do not, as a group, take up public political issues.

Ohmega Salvage welcomes new members of all ages (though we are at

present not set up to take care of children). Those interested may write for further information to: **Ohmega Salvage, PO Box 2216, Berkeley, Calif. 94702**

☆ **The Redeeming Social Value Project [RSVP]** is a non-profit organization dedicated to investigating, encouraging, developing, coordinating, and/or supporting any or all ALTERNATIVES which strive to attain (either by design, or by coincidence) the PRINCIPLES OF WORLD CITIZENSHIP which are:

1. Ecologic Consciousness
2. Universal Prosperity
3. World Peace
4. Equality
5. Social Tolerance & Freedom
6. Good Will
7. Non-Exploitive Behavior
8. Public Accountability

Our primary projects are (a) to live our own lives as sanely and artistically as possible providing observable **functioning** examples of ideals put into practice, and (b) to support and promote cross-reference/outreach services in the San Francisco bay area, while interfacing with various similar organizations at the national level. We operate democratically and voluntarily, seeking personal fulfillment and pursuing common ideals. News of our developing philosophy and actual progress is related in our quarterly publication, the ***RSVP News**.

Our ranks presently include two traditional families, one communal family, two open couples, and a lot of individuals who are in search of compatible friends. Several members presently support themselves by working in a construction and repair collective; members are also committed to establishing a child care program, a teen center, community education programs, and a model Urban Ecology House. We are actively seeking new members (those who want to plug in), collaborators (groups we can plug in to), supporters, subscribers, and sympathizers. For info, please write:

***RSVP, 681 Ellis, Box 885, S.F. CA, 94109**

☆ **Los Horcones**, a Twin Oaks-styled community established in '73, is seeking to contact people interested in communicating about the use of experimental behavior techniques in a communal setting. We are interested in people already living communally, those in academia, and those seriously considering living in community in the future. Our objective is to further the importance of behavioral approaches in community.

We are a community of 10 adults and 7

youngsters. The average age of adults is 25 years; the children are 5 years and younger. We obtain most of our income from our school for children with a variety of behavioral deficits. During the summer, we teach French and English in the nearby city. We are also engaged in a variety of work at our hacienda (35 acres) and our farmland (120 acres). We maintain ties with people in Hermosilla, a city 3 miles away. We have a number of buildings on our hacienda: school, children's home, dormitories, dining hall, laundry, recreation, and others. We enjoy a balanced lifestyle sharing our goods and developing healthy interpersonal relationships. We value our use of behavioral techniques to better our interpersonal contacts.

Our general objectives help us to define a set of desirable community behaviors. This set, along with our behavior code allows us to live in a manner consistent with our ends. In developing our culture, we value the results of experimental analysis and use a methodology from behavioral science to discover goals and more effective procedures to achieve them. Now, we wish to share some of the knowledge that we have gained through our experience in the past 4½ years with people who are genuinely interested. Please contact us at the address below. We are interested in having people visit to discuss and witness our programs; we welcome people considering joining our community.

Los Horcones, Carr. a la Colorado, Km 2,5 Apdo 372, Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico

GROUPS FORMING

☆I want to contact people interested in a community centered on, or including commercial farming in southeast Iowa. This would be raising corn and beans with high levels of soil conservation and minimum tillage. I have 160 acres and equipment. The connection between community and farming, as I see it, is having enough people available to do the farming at optimum times with optimum use of equipment by running around the clock without physical hardship on anyone. We would of course need other industries flexible enough to fit around the farming seasons. Hopefully, everyone would learn to do every task or skill, which would be real growth therapy and would break stereotypes.

I propose that our guiding principles be based in Humanistic Psychology, and especially on the premise that two main sources of joy in our existence are "orgasmic love" and "creative work". I

would propose that all members have a commitment to personal growth through group therapy and that group therapy sessions be used for decision making and problem solving. Confrontation can lead to a life controlled by thinking, not conditioned behavior. Contact:

Kenneth Muller, Rt. 2, Griswold, Iowa 51535 [712] 778-4544.

☆Poets and Chamber Music Musicians, Live Here! My criteria for long term residents are commitment as poets and the intangibles which lead one to share one's home with another. I will offer 1-18 month leases renewable by mutual consent. I may consult other residents about new admissions. It will take time to create a poet center. Meanwhile I am renting space by the week or month. Poets and string musicians will gradually displace other residents. Cooperative efforts may emerge as people wish. I am renting space to poets as private persons. Poetry readings or workshops seem likely. My name is Carla Eugster. I am, at 55, turning from direct action for social change to poetry. I have published in a few obscure publications. I wrote and produced a poetic drama at Goucher College. I am an amateur violinist.

A variety of accommodations are available, from 1 room dome to a large room in the main house, rent varies accordingly. Organic gardening space available. No illegal drugs. No cats. Rent reduction is possible in exchange for labor, especially maintenance, construction, carpentry, farm management, secretarial, and bookkeeping skills. Income sources in the area: teaching positions, building skills, unique craft or service possibilities. To apply, send information about yourself (be generous) and a few samples of your work. I'll gladly reciprocate. Anyone is welcome for 1 - 4 weeks. Phone ahead to be sure there is space. **Carla Eugster, Box 41, Woodville, VA 22749 [703] 987-8913**

☆Group land buy in Maine is being formed for mostly vegetarian, ecologically and socially concerned people. Subsequent division into individually owned parcels. People who are interested in community can transcend these barriers and become more communally oriented. Write or call: **Chris Greene, RFD 1, Box 420-A, Center Harbor, N.H. 03226 [603] 284-6697**

☆We are a couple interested in buying land in Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts (Amherst/Greenfield area) with several people (six to eight adults seems ideal) to form a small intentional cluster community where

each family would have their own house. We seek a way of life that offers autonomy and privacy, while enabling cooperation and a creative community life.

We're in our early 30's, are non-smoking, health conscious, loose vegetarians interested in social change, living ecologically, and right livelihood. We're planning to have children in the next year or two, want to learn more about farming, self-sufficiency, and crafts, and to share our love of folk music and dancing.

We'd like to meet others who have similar interests, and a certain amount of capital, perhaps form a discussion group to talk about priorities, problems, possibilities, do research, get together socially, make some music or whatever. Eventually we will be able to decide if we can make a long-term commitment to each other. If interested, please call (413) 665-4621, or write **Patricia Greene, Box 152, Whately, Mass. 01093.**

PEOPLE LOOKING

☆I am looking for a Christian community living on a farm, or a group planning to live on land in the country. I understand that to live on land, serve Lord, and others, involves hard work. I have some mechanical, electrical, and carpentry skills, and enjoy gardening and work on land. I am a healthy man in my late 30's and have a child with me. I have had experience in living in a communal setting, like vegetarian food (but can eat meat), and do not smoke. I'd like to join people in West Canada, or West USA. Contact: **F. Bertus, Box 69052, Stat. K, Vancouver B.C. Canada V5K 4W3**

☆I have been working for a number of years developing methods of finding land, and now support myself by using them. I see our group as one that gathers the available and neglected land and power, putting it to good use, making it available, while striving not to abuse this gathered power, not holding land for profit. I see this as applied heightened awareness. I would like to get in touch with people who would like to join in a not-for-profit group, people who want to build a better world, people willing to struggle with bigness, power relationships, sexism, racism, ageism. I'm interested in people who like to kick up their heels, raise some hell, people into open loving sharing relationships, freedom, ecological living, personal growth, etc. No past experience of any special kind is necessary. Lots of energy, joyfulness, playfulness, a desire to

increase awareness, and some means of support (while the group builds and while you phase-in) are helpful. Contact: **Steve Peake, P.O. Box 5002 Santa Monica, CA 90405**

☆I am seeking a rural Christian community in which I can live and work temporarily - up to a year. I have excellent secretarial skills to offer and am also a certified (in 3 states) teacher. A community which offers both honesty and respect for privacy would be preferred. Gardening and other outdoor work would also be welcome.

Elizabeth Costy, 1424 "p" St. #2, Sacramento, CA 95814

☆I am seeking persons who have experienced working at occupations and family life, including children. I hope to organize a spiritual ashram-type community of people who wish to continue working at fulfilling and highly remunerative pursuits with a desire to share one's resources for maintaining an atmosphere of personal growth, autonomy, and interdependency. These people will practice honesty, freedom, respect, acceptance, support, love, care, and recognize the rights as well as the needs of children, men, women, animals, plants and things which are creations of God or Nature or Life on Earth. Such a growing environment will obviously take shape by everyone's inputs. The center will utilize all the conveniences of present and future materialism to grow happiness, fulfillment, and any other state of mind called spiritualism. It will be located in the area between Medina, Akron, Kent, Alliance, Canton, Massillon, and Wooster Ohio. Write:

Shirish Pandya, M.D., 11461 Fox Lake Rd. Orrville, Ohio 44667 [216] 683-3241

☆We are a couple, ages 22 and 25, seeking a wholistic approach to living outside of a megalopolis. We desire to live in a household/community sharing lacto-vegetarian cooking, household expenses, and the day-to-day tasks. Our past has included housepainting, store-clerking, ceramics, batik, woodworking, simple carpentry, food coop work (most phases), auto and bicycle maintenance and micro-scale agriculture.

We would like very much to become involved in a group that has reached or is reaching for self-sufficiency in a non-isolationist manner. Jim is particularly interested in teaching in an alternative school or working with disturbed people or simply with those needing help. An opportunity to learn more about crafts and to become active in energy/environmental concerns with an emphasis on de-automation, would be ideal for both of us. We are very much into hatha yoga,

zazen, holistic health, playing music, and personal growth.

Please write: **Jim Wassen, 228 1/2 N. Chestnut #4, Lansing, MI 48933**

☆We would like to hear from other people who are interested in or have ideas for development of a cooperative living situation. Our ideas are for a community that provides for its support through construction, growing food organically, and having a small store to sell a variety of items, but we are open to any ideas. We would like to locate in the eastern half of the U.S. Self-sufficiency would be the ultimate goal.

Please write: **Ron & Deb Coble, R.D. 8, Box 342, York, PA 17403**

HELP WANTED

☆**Peace Volunteers needed now** to circulate the new Stockholm Appeal. The appeal is directed to Jimmy Carter, United Nations, and Leaders of all world's governments, and calls to strengthen d'etente and stop the arms race, to develop a new economic order in which people benefit from their own labor and resources, to ban nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and to bring about general and complete disarmament. For more information and for copies of the petition, write to:

National Peace Coalition, 4215 E. Escalon, Clovis, CA 93612

☆**Wheatville Food Co-op** has an opening for a full time co-manager. A direct charge food co-op located in a 5000 sq. ft.

building, Wheatville has 900 active members and three co-managers. Responsibilities including buying, supervising 10 daily workers, attending meetings, writing material, managing, using financial skills such as planning and operating within a budget, and working 40-50 hours/week regularly. Two year commitment. \$484/mo. salary. For more information:

Wheatville Food Co-op, 2901 N. Lamar, Austin, TX 78705 478-2667

☆**Help Wanted: Administrative Assistant** for New Age Church. Rural setting with natural hot baths. Church is non-sexist and non-dogmatic. We offer free rent and food and a small salary for person working to develop 1100 acre property in Northern California (rural center or Church). The land is to become a spiritual retreat for artists and idealists, plus a utopian childcare community. Individual must be responsible, hardworking, intelligent, with a bent for administration. Orientation in San Francisco. No pets, tobacco, drugs or alcohol. Inquire:

Utopian Peace Corps, Box 1174, San Francisco, CA 94101 [415] 566-6502



Twin Oaks Fifth Annual Communities Conference

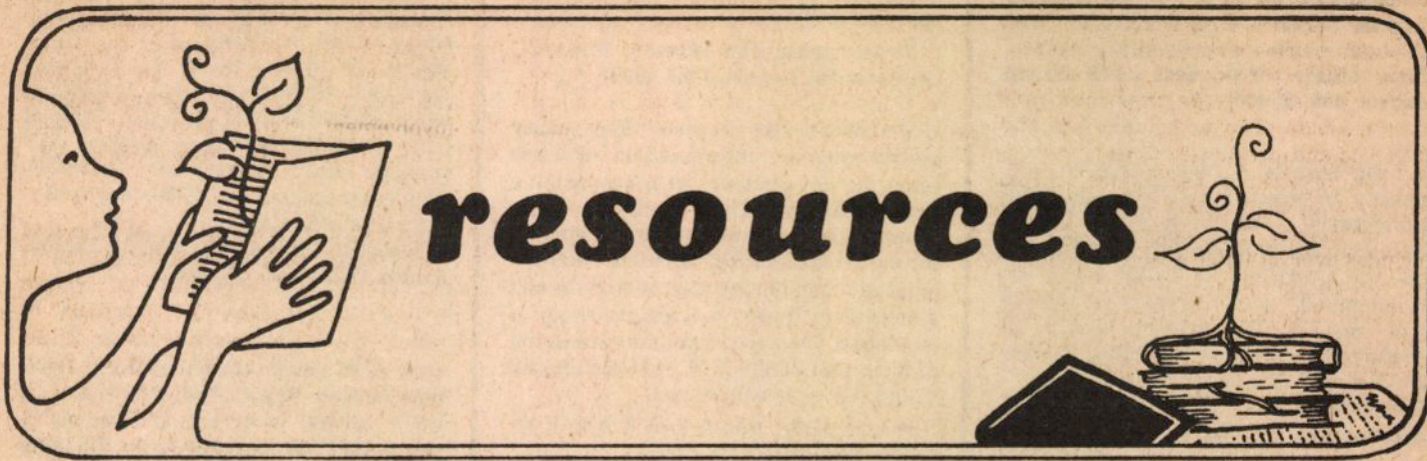
EXPLORE COMMUNAL LIVING...

at the **Labor Day Weekend Conference** hosted at Twin Oaks Community, an established rural community modelled after the kibbutz. Our aim is to broaden awareness and understanding of intentional community life, to help people find a communal or cooperative alternative, and to promote the evolution of a more egalitarian society. We invite anyone who is serious about joining community, as well as representatives of existing groups.

WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS - Led by folks from a variety of networks and collectivities, on a wide range of topics, including:

Community values and agreements • Group process and decision-making • Relationships in community • Therapy • Communal child rearing • Women in community • Spirituality in community • So you want to start a community? • Work and labor distribution...and much more

The cost, including meals and a place to camp, is \$30 for adults, \$15 for children. \$5 discount for early registration. To register, send \$10. For more information, write: **Conference '78, Twin Oaks, Louisa, VA 23093 (703) 894-5126**



"In The Making" is a directory of cooperative projects throughout Britain. Information and news on collective are 1 pound in Britain, and 1.5 pounds abroad, payable to **One Christian Renewal**, 169 Forest Rd., Loughborough, Leics, LE11 3HS England

Community is a quarterly bulletin published under the auspices of One for Christian Renewal. "Switchboard" the highlight (and bulk) of this 20 page magazine, is a resource for information about British Christian communities.

"Switchboard" is roughly the equivalent to **Communities'** "Reach", "Resources", and "Grapevine" columns. In addition to this, there are feature articles about conferences and projects. Subscriptions are 1 pound in Britain, and 1.5 pounds abroad, payable to One for Christian Renewal, 169 Forest Rd., Loughborough, Leics, LE11 3HS England.

Commune Network is a Scotland-based newsletter published monthly. Comprised of numerous ads and letters akin to **Communities'** "Reach" and "Grapevine" columns (groups looking for members, people looking for places), the 20-page magazine also features stories of readers' experiences in communes. The primary regional scope is the United Kingdom. Subscriptions 3 lbs. annually. Write:

Commune Network, Laurieston Hall, Laurieston, Castle Douglas, Kirkeudbrightshire, DG7 2NB Scotland.

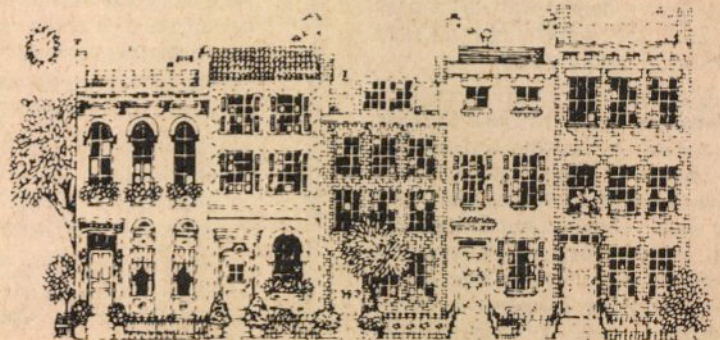
The Institute for Local Self-Reliance was established to investigate the technical feasibility of community self-reliance in high density living areas and to examine the implications of such decentralization. The staff of the Institute is committed to urban life and to the resolution of some of the problems which face the 75 percent of Americans who do live in urban areas. We are also committed to exploring the potential for self-reliance, not of individuals or of nations, but of humanly-scaled cooperative communities, of neighborhoods and cities. It is on this level that people have the intellectual, financial, human and political resources to make significant advances in the direction of community self-sufficiency; and it is on this level, also, that organized groups of people can take control over their own lives and wealth and begin to effect a transition away from the concentration of political and economic power which characterizes American democracy.

The Institute approaches self-reliance from many directions: basic research, development of working demonstration models of new institutions, new technologies and small scale production sys-

tems, development of educational materials and dissemination of information.

The **SELF-RELIANCE** newsletter reflects the concern with urban problems and with the application of small-scale, appropriate technology and social organization in overcoming these problems. The pages are filled with a variety of information about a variety of related activities, from worker-managed factories to small-scale production systems, from municipal banks to cooperative housing experiments. Published bi-monthly, **Self-Reliance** newsletter subscriptions are \$6 for individuals, and \$12 for institutions. (Slightly higher outside the U.S.) A sample copy \$.50.

The work of the institute is supported in part by foundation grants and primarily by the sale of literature and by technical consulting. The future of the institute depends upon the support of people who believe in the concept of local self-reliance and who want to actively assist in the promotion, refinement and evaluation of the concept. Please send S.A.S.E. for a copy of current publications list and project descriptions. 1717 18th St. N.W., Wash. D.C. 20009



Since the Spring of 1977, **The Mobilization for Survival Task Force** has saved the best articles written about the four goals of MFS: *zero nuclear weapons, ban nuclear power, stop the arms race, fund human needs*. The task force has also collected and prepared concise information on organizing techniques, media relations, bibliographies, and audio-visual materials. The Resource Packet includes over 30 articles, and is available for the minimum cost of \$4. Since the real costs are much greater, people who can pay more are encouraged to do so. **Mobilization for Survival, National Office, 1213 Race St., Phila., PA 19107**

Community problems and future solutions are discussed in a free set of resource materials available from Northwest Regional Foundation, a Spokane-based non-profit educational corporation. Produced last year, the 60 page set of materials discuss some of the major ideas and themes which emerged at the 1976 United Nations HABITAT Conference. If you'd like to receive a free copy of the materials, write:

Northwest Regional Foundation, P.O. Box 5296, Spokane, Washington 99205

The following is reprinted from Cascade, Journal of the Northwest. 454 Willamette St., Box 1492, Eugene, OR 97401. Issue #2, Sept. '77

Rarely has there been as comprehensive a manual on working collectively as **No Bosses Here** (\$3.00), by **Vocations for Social Change [VSC]**, 363 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02139, [617] 661-1570. The book tells how to start your own worker-controlled cooperative workplace, how to set up the decision-making structure, and how to deal with the interpersonal problems that come up. Chapters and appendices cover hiring and firing, bookkeeping, pricing and incorporation, resource places, and a bibliography. The book is the result of six years work and research in collectives by VSC, itself a collective. It involves personal observations by members of collectives in Boston, Washington, D.C., New York, and San Francisco, as well as numerous pictures, graphics, and cartoons.

The Briarpatch Review is the quarterly journal of the Briarpatch Network. Briarpatch is a loose network of friends and businesses who rely on their own instincts and values in living and working. Usually they choose to make less money instead of more, are honest, open, and happy about the work they are involved in. There is no separation between who they are and what their businesses are. As a group of people

interested in openness, sharing and learning, the alternative businesses work with each other, are inter-related, help each other out with their experience and with their contacts. Briarpatch is concerned with creating high quality products and offering them at fair prices, living on modest incomes, selling only what's needed and required, paying attention to how they grow, and operating as fairly and squarely with everyone as they can. Welcoming feedback and stories about people's attempts at right-livelihood, the Briarpatch Review is published at 330 Ellis St., San Francisco, CA 94102. Subscriptions are \$5/year/4 issues. Single copies and back copies are \$1.25 postpaid.



War Registers League/Southeast is a regional office of the **War Resisters League [WRL]**, a national pacifist organization founded in 1923. WRL/SE is attempting to organize and build links within the nonviolent network of the South. We also work closely with non-pacifist groups on a variety of issues.

Our major activities and programs have included work on the death penalty, feminism, disarmament, nuclear power, simple living, peace education, the B-1 bomber, the neutron bomb, support for the United Farm Workers and training for nonviolent direct action.

We are planning a four week tour of the southeast in March. The theme of the tour is "Disarming the World, Disarming Ourselves", and we will be carrying slide shows and literature and will be available to speak to folks on the issues listed above. We produce a newsletter six times a year, and we would be glad to send it to you. We request a \$3 donation to cover mailing costs.

Contact us at **WRL, 108 Purefoy Rd., Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514**

Wind Through the Pines is a new slide show produced by the Media Guild, inspired by the spring "Wind Through the Pines" co-op conference in Austin,

Texas, and available from National Association of Student Cooperatives. Exploring the boundaries of the co-op idea, the slide show is an excellent resource for cooperators at any stage of involvement. For information contact **NASCO, Box 1301, Ann Arbor, MI 48106**

The National Association of Housing Cooperatives is a national federation of individuals and organizations, whose goal is to promote the interests of cooperative housing communities. Members represent more than 100,000 families living in co-op housing in the U.S. **NAHC** seeks changes in federal policy and legislation, provides an ongoing liaison between co-op housing organizations and others, sponsors educational programs, arranges consulting services for housing co-ops, and distributes educational and technical materials on co-op housing. For additional information or a list of available publications, contact **NAHC, 1522 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005**.

How To Buy Land Cheap is a readable, step-by-step guide to how and where to find land and how to buy it, by someone who did. In his 45-page book, Edward Preston lists specific information resources and channels for discovering property being sold for tax delinquency, left overs from auctions, bargain houses, surplus government land in the U.S. and Canada. Properties are not all swamplands; genuine good deals reward persistent and patient and informed seekers. **How To Buy Land Cheap. \$3, 1977 by Boogie Publications, 425 E. 6th St., 5B N.Y., N.Y. 10009.** Boogie Publications is a small struggling press and this is their first production.

Rodale Press publishes four magazines and two newsletters. The primary focus of their publishing is in providing good information on natural living, organic gardening, environmental problems and solutions, and good health and nutrition. Some publications and correspondence are printed on recycled paper.

Prevention; The magazine for better health specializes in reporting controversial health developments. Sub. \$7.85/year/12 issues

Organic Gardening and Farming; The magazine of ecological agriculture provides information about organic soil conditioners and pest controls, as well as ideas on growing fruits, vegetables, and flowers. Sub. \$7.85/year/12 issues.

Compost Science; the journal of waste recycling reports on the entire field of large-scale composting and recycling of organic solid wastes. Sub. \$6./year/6 issues.

Environmental Action Bulletin: The action guide for ecological living. Spells out what individuals can do to fight for a better environment. Sub. \$12/year/26 issues

Executive Fitness Newsletter: For executives who are concerned about the way they live and work. How-to advice and instructions in every phase of fitness: exercise, diet, relaxation, building strength and stamina. Sub. \$15/year/26 issues

Organic Gardening magazine also facilitates a very informal rural apprentice program. The names of farmers and homesteaders who inquire for interns, or unpaid help, are given to individuals who write requesting work on an organic farm. Knowledge is exchanged for work. A list of apprenticeship programs - each a little different - is available on request.

Rodale also provides a reader's service which answers questions on organic gardening, keeps a listing of speakers, and sends out reprints on gardening,

coops, farmer markets, etc.

Contact: **Rodale Press, Inc., Organic Park, Emmaus, PA 18049**

News from Neasden is advertising disguised as bibliography. 'However that may be, it contains in convenient form much information on new radical publications (books, pamphlets, reprints etc.) which should be useful to publishers, booksellers and bookbuyers alike. (Monthly Review, November '76) **News from Neasden** is published in February, August and October and sent free to bookshops. We charge publishers for entries. Since the February '77 issue we have included about 3,000 words of 'real' reviews. We hope to increase this as we get more bookshop sales and subscriptions. The annual subscription is 1 pound or \$3. Libraries 2.50 pounds or \$6. The library subscription includes up to three copies of each issue and a copy of our address list.

22 Fleet Road, London, NW3 2QS

Holistic Health Interface, New England's first comprehensive health center for alternative therapeutics and wellness promotion, will open soon. Holistic health services are based on the view that the human being is a dynamic integration of body, mind, spirit with an innate capacity for self-healing and self-evolution. Health is a process of creative self expression; we are healthy to the degree we are manifesting our possibilities.

HHI will offer health evaluation, resource guidance, and education programs in stress reduction, self-responsibility, physical fitness, nutrition, and ecological awareness. HHI also offers training and consultation to health professionals, and plans to do holistic health research. Write **HHI, 63 Chapel St., Newton, Mass. 02158** for a brochure about these programs, services, and fees, in more detail.

Is Communal Living Dead?

TWIN OAKS BOOKSHELF

Rare Books
Collector's Items

For free brochure:
Bookshelf, Rt. 4, Box 169, Louisa, VA

Communities magazine doesn't think so as it enters its sixth year, and neither do we at Bookshelf. We Twin Oaks folks have been living "in community" for 10 years, and have no intention of stopping now that we're just getting used to it.

You know about *Green Revolution* and *Communities* as a source of information about communitarianism and subjects of similar interest, but did you know that you can get

1. books in which people who live in communes tell their own story:

January Thaw, by Blue Mountain Ranch

Story of a Walden II Commune, by Kat Kinkade

2. books about communes by people who've visited:

The Joyful Community, by Benjamin Zablocki

Living Together in a World Falling Apart, by Dave and Neta Jackson

3. theoretical books about the problems and rewards of living and working communally:

Communes: Creating and Managing the Collective Life, by Rosabeth Moss Kanter

Working Communally, by David and Eleni French

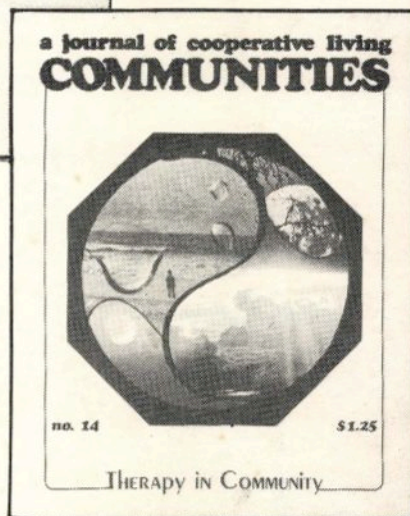
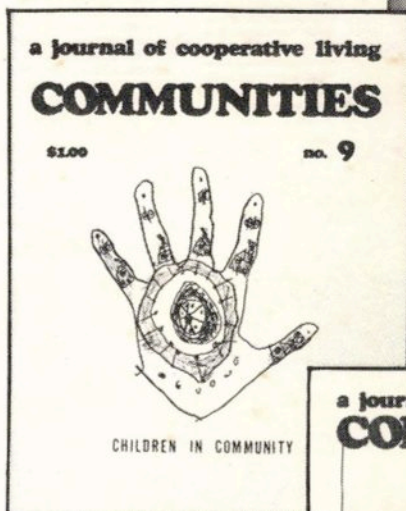
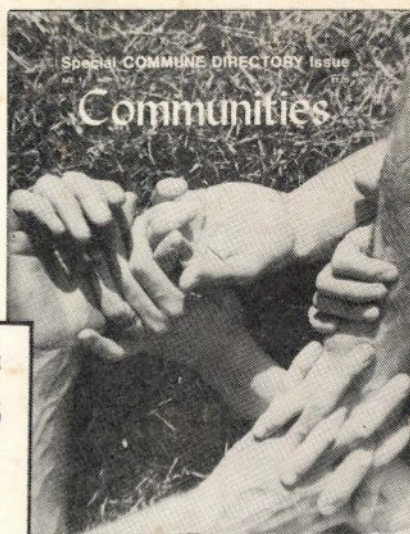
4. books which tackle related political and social issues:

Neighborhood Power, by David Morris and Karl Hess

Beyond Marriage and the Nuclear Family, by Robert Thumm

back issues...

1. Camphill Village
2. Urban Communes
3. Ananda Village
4. Community Heritage
6. Overseas Communities
7. A Cottage Industry
8. Individuality & Intimacy
9. Children in Community
10. Work in Community
11. Land Reform
13. Spirituality
14. Therapy
15. Education
17. Family, Sex & Marriage
18. Government
20. Middle Class Communes
21. Kibbutz; Communes and Neighbors
22. Networking in the Ozarks
23. Women and Work
25. Don't Start a Commune...
26. Urban Coops: Austin; New York
27. Movement for a New Society
28. Seabrook; interview ex-Twin Oaks
29. Democratic Management
30. 1978 Community Directory - a double issue \$2.00



Single issues—no. 1-15, \$.75
 no. 16-22, \$1.00
 Backset of available issues—\$18.00 no. 23-current, \$1.25

SEND A CHECK OR MONEY ORDER TO:

Communities

BOX 426
 LOUISA, VA 23093

Name _____

Address _____

\$ _____ for back issues _____

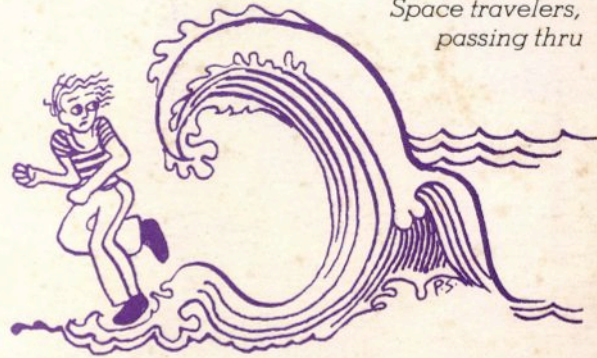
Waves of Praise Roll in for COMMUNITIES

*It was after your excellent articles on Kibbutz life [issues 22 & 23] that I resolved I must visit Israel. As an Egyptian citizen, I knew this to be difficult, but my cleverly constructed excuse is proving a significant contribution to world peace. So I say, "Thank you, **Communities.**"*

*Sincerely,
Anwar Sadat, Cairo*

Your picture of a communal, cooperative society unfortunately bears little correspondence with planetary reality. Good luck, and we'll see you on our way back.

*Space travelers,
passing thru*



praise from DISTRIBUTORS

*Making origami earthshoes out of **Communities** with granola soles is netting us a fortune.*

Happy, Healthy & Wealthy Ashram

praise from ADVERTISERS

Oh please stop the orders! We cannot fill the demand from our two line classified!

(Ed. Note: the offending item) Community of elves with patriarchal toymaster desires contact with children. Can supply gifts, but nothing kinky. Write S. Claus Industries, North Pole.

COMMUNITIES is actually a tax write-off for a consortium of wealthy condominium speculators. We lose money on every copy we sell by offering outlandish prizes to our readers. Become eligible for three weeks of hammock weaving at Twin Oaks or cheese cutting at the New Haven Food Coop by

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 \$11 FOR A TWO YEAR SUBSCRIPTION

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