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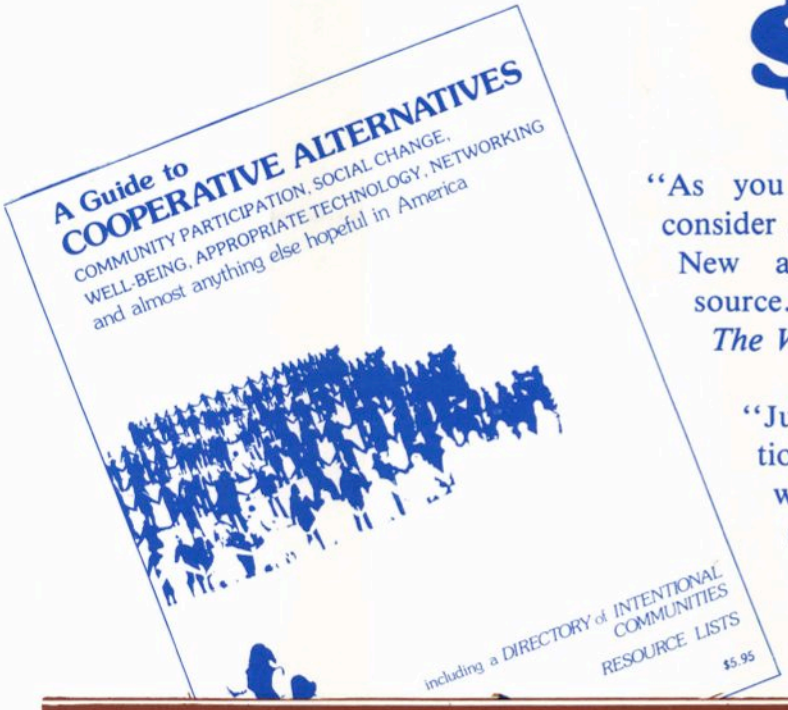

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Journal of Cooperation

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Spring 1986

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Special Thanks to

The Advocate Press
Geoph Kozeny for developing the special section on the Bay Area

To Our Readers

About five years ago, in the early stages of setting up Co-op America* we were sitting around a table going over available mailing lists. And this hot-shot Direct Mail specialist pointed out one list she thought would be just right for us.

There in black and white (and red ink all over) was *Communities Magazine*, circulation 30,000. "Wait a second, folks," I said. "It turns out I'm editor of a 30,000 circulation magazine. I have responsibilities. I'll see you later."

Well, I didn't really split. Someone had misplaced a decimal point and we were 27,000 subscribers shy.

Five years later, as part of my responsibilities at Co-op America, I edit our magazine, "Building Economic Alternatives"—which really does have a circulation of 30,000+. So what am I doing still occasionally editing *Communities* and continuing as part of Communities Publications Cooperative?

I guess because this is still what it's all about for me. "Community," like love and sex or dance and music, is worth doing for itself. It needs neither explanation nor justification. And as those who have shared a variety of peak experiences with me over the years know, I'd rather do it than talk about it—and that's saying a lot.

Thanks for Sharing

Communities has generated a very real flow of membership to hundreds of intentional communities over the past dozen years. Membership is the lifeblood of communities.

I'd like to speak directly to those communities and groups who have a long-term stake in this information-membership flow, and to those individuals who believe in the importance of a communities movement: If *Communities* didn't exist, we'd have to invent it. Supporting Chris Collins, Charles Betterton and the staff who are working for us, getting the magazine out, is a lot easier then reinvention.

The economic reality of *Communities* is an annual deficit of several thousand dollars. It's only that low because of substantial volunteer time. If you are among the beneficiaries of *Communities*, you can make a tax-exempt contribution to *Communities, Division of the Unschool Educational Services Corporation*, and mail to *Communities,* 105 Sun Street, Stelle, Illinois 60919.

Thanks for sharing.

This Issue

Several of my own communities are represented in this issue. The Bay Area folks are good examples, perhaps the best, of the urban communities of cooperation spread around this country. The people and institutions would be somewhat different in Santa Monica, Eugene, Austin, Minneapolis, Atlanta, or Boston—but it would all look like home to me (so what am I doing in Washington, DC?)

continued on pg. 56

**Paul Freundlich has been an editor of "Communities" for more than a decade, and is executive directory of Co-op America, a national non-profit marketing association.*

LETTERS

Dear Readers,

What follows are two letters from people who are reaching out to us for the kind of supportive interactions that communitarians are famous for. Communities Magazine is issuing each of these people a complimentary subscription, and we urge each of our readers to respond to them with a personal letter also.

The Editor

Dear Friends,

I found your address in *The Magical Blend* magazine. I am writing on behalf of myself and some of my friends. After reading about "1985 Directory of Intentional Communities" and your "Communities Magazine" we are quite sure these publications must be very, very interesting for us.

I am 25 years of age, study at the university. Together with some of my friends (between 20 and 34 years old) I am very interested in self-realization, non-conventional medicine, astrology, all New Age aspects, in all progressive views and groups. Thus your Directory and "Communities Magazine" seem to be just the things we need. We would like you to send us the Directory and one or some back issues of "Communities", from your publications.

In Poland there are rather few people interested in topics like we are. We have no New Age books or magazines, either. So your publications can be of great help for us.

But there is one more thing you have to know. Some years ago our government forbade to send money abroad which is because of the economic recess in our country. In this way we have been cut off from all interesting publications in the Western countries. Now we are fully dependent upon understanding and support of our foreign friends. We trust you will understand our difficult situation and help us despite the fact that we cannot pay—but it is not over ill-will.

If you are not in a position to send us your Directory and issue(s) of "Communities Magazine" we also will be very grateful for writing us as we are looking for contacts and friends.

Thank you very much for you help in advance.

With love and blessings from Poland,

Barbara and friends

You can write us at my address:
Barbara Rowinska
16-309 Plaska
woj. Suwalki
Poland

Dear Editor,

I'm now incarcerated in the Georgia prison system. I've been since 1978.

Since I've been in [I've] lost nearly all contacts with the outside world and have never felt so lonely or rejected as I do right now.

A letter doesn't sound like a great deal to most people, I guess, but to any person like myself it's a thrill to get mail.

I'm a white male, 29 years old. Loneliness doesn't pick any certain age, race or color to fall upon. I would be happy to receive mail from anyone who might want to share a smile from time to time.

Most of my friends here tell me there was no way you would ever publish a letter from a State prisoner.

But most of them have been here for so long they have forgotten how to ask for help and just don't have much faith in others or themselves.

That's why I would like for you to publish my letter.

I am unable to pay printing fees, but perhaps someday I can be of help to you.

Sincerely,
Roy Pittman

Roy Pittman E7114230
7175 Maner Rd.
Columbus, Georgia 31907

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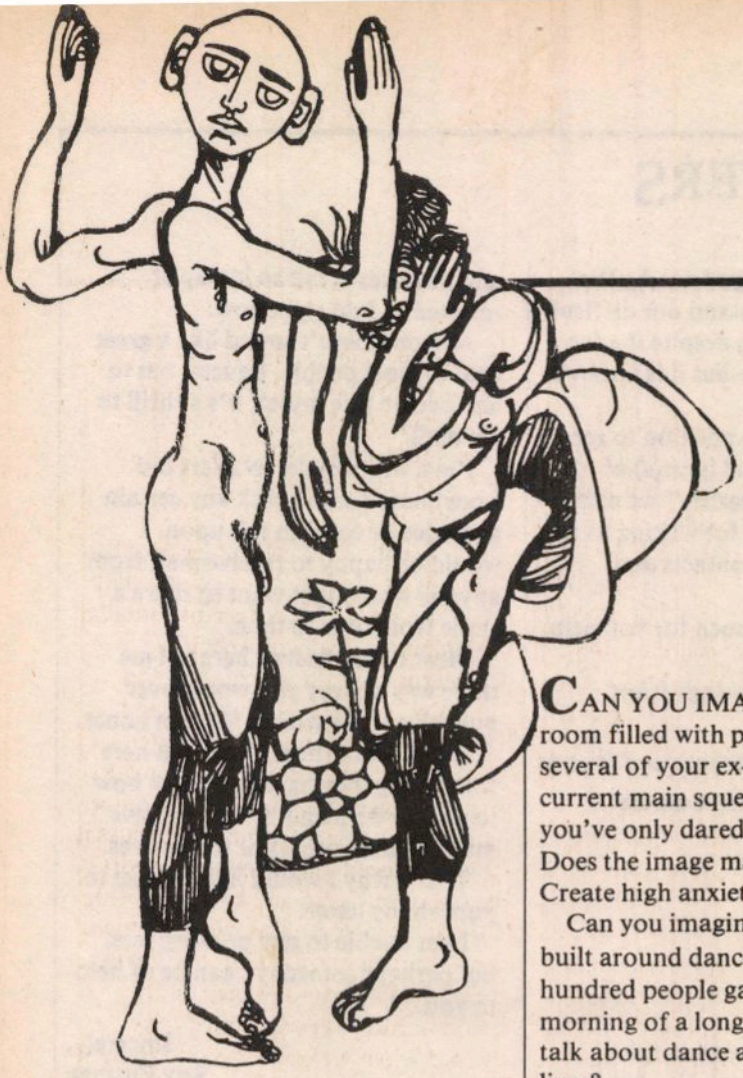
I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete (Signature of business manager, Charles Betterton)



Ex-Lovers

by Eve Cohen

CAN YOU IMAGINE dancing in a room filled with people, among them several of your ex-lovers, your current main squeeze, and some folks you've only dared fantasize about? Does the image make you smile? Create high anxiety?

Can you imagine a community built around dance? And three hundred people gathered on a Sunday morning of a long dance weekend to talk about dance and sexuality in our lives?

The members of this cooperative dance family live in various parts of New England and come together quarterly. Most of us attend local freestyle dances, which meet weekly in Boston, New Haven, Northampton, and New York, as well as other cities.

The dances are all smoke-, drug-, and alcohol-free, barefoot, and encourage breaking down the barriers of traditional partner dancing. People of all ages dance alone or in groups as well as couples. Sometimes the men boogie together, other times the women lead. It's a social place, too: a centering point for our lives.

The entire network gathers four times a year—fall in New Haven, winter in Boston, spring in New York (each weekend sponsored by the local dances). Then in the summer for a week in Vermont, we take dance workshops, camp, play, eat, sleep and dream together. After six years of this, we are a community.

This particular discussion took place at our most recent Boston weekend. As I sat impatiently on the cold floor of the junior high gymnasium, watching latecomers straggle in, I was amazed at the size of the turnout.

The discussion had been scheduled *after* our regular business, and thus we whipped through the other agenda items in record time. We took a collective deep breath, and dove into the issue at hand: how our sexuality and dance are related, and their roles in our lives. After we'd dealt with the matter of confidentiality, the discussion moved into a huge brainstorming session.

I tried to process each question as it was raised. How does it feel for me to be dancing in a place where there are current lovers, ex-lovers, future lovers, as well as strangers? How does it feel to be dancing with someone, and have them interpret my movements as erotic, as an invitation, despite my own intentions? How did I feel when I was very clearly choreographing my dance as a seduction, and the person didn't respond? How does it feel to be private and internal about my own sexuality and yet see others dancing erotically? How did it feel to dance in a group of people and want more than one person there, and to deal with that multitude of energies? How could I express my joy in living, in

We took a collective deep breath, and dove into the issue at hand: how our sexuality and dance are related, and their roles in our lives.

Eve Cohen lives, works, and dances in the Boston area. She teaches workshops for women on sexuality and the celebration of selflove, titled "Sisters Are Doin' It for Themselves". Both Eve and the workshop are willing to travel. For more information, contact Eve Cohen, P.O. Box 1365, Somerville, MA 02144-1365.

being with my family of friends, celebrate my sexuality through my dance, and not feel an obligation afterwards to the people I'd danced with?

My head was spinning. The questions touched sensitive chords in me. I pulled inward briefly, feeling too vulnerable, too quickly. As I tend to do in these situations, I drifted away to memories of my first exposure to this special community.

As a newcomer, I'd felt overwhelmed. The people were so *physical*, so healthy, and the aura of sex was so clearly there. But the dance seemed safe and overflowing with affection.

I remember trying to understand how this exercise differed from the heavy sex energy I had found in discos. Was it the absence of a spirit of conquest? It was present, though seemingly in a diluted form. Was it a lack of competitiveness or jealousy? Those too were in the community, but not treated as inevitable.

So what was it about these folks in brightly colored leotards and sweat pants, who danced and shook and rolled to the music, disregarding rhythm and the laws of gravity? Why did they seem so special, so attractive, and why did I have the immediate feeling that I'd found my home?

After attending our local dance for several months, my first extended jaunt with the group was in August 1982. The summer dance camp was a week at a new age community retreat in rural New Hampshire. Full of anticipation and apprehensions, I rolled out of my sleeping bag that first morning, shared a communal breakfast, and rambled out into the fresh air ("Fresh air!" my citified lungs shouted) and bright sunshine for the first large group gathering. I have a very clear memory of my reaction to meeting the community in full force.

All my concerns about sexuality were suddenly right there. I'd decided to be celibate for the week, but I was unsure how to make that clear, or how to protect myself if I didn't. I wasn't even sure who I was protecting myself against.

I was afraid of my own greediness. I was afraid of not being able to say, "no". In my worst fantasies, I feared I wouldn't have energy to do any dancing because I'd become immersed in my own debauchery.

So I let my feminism swing to the radical side, wore my hair in a crewcut, sang my woman-identified songs, displayed my buttons ("How dare you presume I'm straight" and "Amazon") waved my arms, and presented myself as a lesbian. I did it with humor and for that week I think convinced everyone, even *myself*.

Much to my amazement, people accepted me. I danced, sunbathed, ran around naked and got lots of love, hugs and massages. I spent the night with several folks without feeling pressured to make love.

I fell in love with the idea of communal bathrooms—sharing showers, having company while I took a shit or brushed my teeth. I was stoned on the sensuality. Everyone seemed so loose and so comfortable—my roommate, a gentle older man who'd led a massage workshop one night, walked in on me masturbating, and we had a good chuckle about it later. (It's been four years now, and we're still laughing.) All my preconceptions were falling apart. Whatever I was willing to give, emotionally and sexually, was fine. No demands—no obligations.

It took me a year to confess that I was really bisexual, and that I wasn't scared anymore. What a joy it was to come out, once again. In retrospect, I think people were affectionate and openminded about my odd antics that first summer. Where else had I gotten such unconditional acceptance?

Suddenly, I was jolted back to the present of the Boston weekend. The meeting was breaking up into smaller segments to deal wtih specific concerns regarding sexuality. On impulse, I jumped to my feet and asked if anyone was interested in talking about dealing with ex-lovers.

The suggestion got a laugh, but a good tight group formed to discuss it. I knew I needed particular support around this issue, as my relationship of over two years was winding down (after much backsliding) to a loving friendship. Our tolerance and communication skills were truly tested when we both chose to remain in the community, even as we were separating from each other.

Although I had brought Ken to the group, it now belongs to both of us—we share joint custody. This weekend was a first for us—we were both there, but separate.

What do we do when we're lovers with someone in the community and we break up? I remember telling Ken during a particularly angry separation that he had to leave the local dance because I had been there first and it was *my* home. Of course, he refused, and once I got over my hurt, I agreed. It would have been wrenching for either of us to leave, and sad for the community.

Next, we tried to compromise, saying, "Well, we just won't have other lovers from within the community and we won't bring other lovers to the dances." After lots of nitpicking about the definition of "lover", this one turned out to be just as unrealistic. The people we

both find most interesting, attractive, and desirable are *within* the community. And if, perchance, we happen to hook up with someone from outside, we want them to come to the dance—our community's equivalent of bringing a new lover home to meet Mom and Dad.

Realizing that none of our solutions were going to work, Ken and I began to look at alternatives. We became aware that we weren't the only ones facing this issue. In terms of relationships, the group is a fairly eclectic blend of singles and couples, monogamous, non-monogamous, long term, serial—like any other population. I used to feel guilty about my multitude of relationships within the group these past four years. Now I've realized I'm not the only one who has made those choices. We try to support all relationship alternatives, and are aware that the more shy and inexperienced among us might feel overwhelmed by all the physicality. Ken and I believe in this community, and are invested in having that community progress and continue to be safe and loving. Therefore, we are trying to create new ways of dealing with each other.

One of the things that's helped so much is the amount of support from other people in the community—it carried us through the most difficult parts of our breakup. Folks were available for us; either to mediate, or to support us separately if that was what we needed. They gave hugs, comfort—they listened and cried with us. Most important, they didn't take sides or exclude one of us; and they recognized that we were both individuals with separate needs at this point. Yet, we're each loved, even though no longer a couple. It was such validation to know that I wasn't regarded as an empty half of a now defunct unit—that I counted on my own. Basic stuff, but so reassuring to hear during a crisis.

Ending a relationship created some very uncomfortable situations, particularly during our hostile angry periods. Even though Ken and I tried to separate with a lot of caring, there's been pain and adjustment. It can be hard to see him, especially in a setting where we had such wonderful times as a team. That we were getting along so beautifully that weekend did not ease my anxiety. I assumed we happened to be having a good spate, but I don't expect it to always be so easy. The pain has lessened, but I expect to do some emotional stretching when Ken has another lover, or at least if he has one before I do.

When ken and I both chose to remain in the community, we needed to work things out so that we could both remain *comfortably*. I felt obligated not to inflict our difficulties and pain on the folks around us any more than was necessary. Nor did we want to cause upheavals in the community because of our conflicts.

If we manage to achieve some kind of harmony, and work things out so we can coexist peacefully, even lovingly, then we will have created a very unique bond. I feel so good about Ken—although we are no longer concerned with being a couple, we still care about each other deeply and intend to stay in close contact. It has taken three months of negotiating and tears, but I'm proud of the work we've done.

And in that small group discussion, it became clear that our community is full of similar relationships. The pairings and re-pairings (and repairs) that occur within small communities need not always be a liability. Those ex-lover bonds within our group make us that much stronger, tighter, and more powerful. It's not a joke saying that an army of ex-lovers cannot fail—we have an incredible tool here.

Combine that with our group's

The people were so *physical*, so healthy, and the aura of sex was so clearly there. But the dance seemed safe and overflowing with affection.

commitment and energy, and things *happen*. Definitely people of action. Already we put on four huge quarterly dance events, each in a different state, publish a newsletter, have established a dance scholarship fund, staged political actions, and run fundraisers. Some of us are in the process of buying land to build an intentional community in the country. We've put extra energy into childcare, recognizing that our kids are our future. Hopefully, we have also passed on the tradition of translating our personal beliefs into political action. I can think of no better legacy.

I think we take greater risks within our group. We are getting into some unfamiliar territory in terms of relationships, and I think we can take those risks because we feel safe and trust each other. Even if one of us uses poor judgement, is insensitive or self absorbed briefly, the group as a whole will come through. I feel a greater freedom to explore—to have several lovers at the same time, to be completely asexual if that's what I need, to hang out with my ex-lover and current lover together (a situation usually regarded as a social nightmare). It is possible.

Some of us also talked about how we'd love to have a day or extended period of sexual celibacy—a time to display and celebrate our sexuality openly, completely removed from needing or wanting to have sex. To separate the intention from the action. Instead, to experience the luxury of feeling the power of our sexuality out there on our skin, in the air, to fly with it. To create an absolutely safe space and time to play without armor.

I have an image of our varied relationships as luminous colored energy between solo dancers, spinning in a large circle formation. When two meet, there's a flash of white light, and when joined, a rosy glow surrounds them. They touch others, who continue their dance, but trail strands of purple and green back to the couple. If a pair moves out into separate dances, they each pull some of their color after them, still connected and just as intense. There are clusters of orange, yellow and blue as three and more people group and regroup. Our dance weaves a rainbowed spiderweb, a tapestry of colored bonds. Some whirl on alone, their colors undiluted by being solitary. Pairings are brief or permanent, the hues shimmering and melting into one another, while still retaining their own brilliance.

We haven't achieved utopia. There are rough spots, people who are freaked out by what they see and feel, couples who don't manage to resolve separations peacefully. But I've had a glimpse. We all have.

With our rainbow tapestry and our tools, I'm ready to take a step closer. □

Relaxing on the porch at the Dance New England Summer Camp

John Denver to Host

"Choices for the Future" Symposium

The Windstar Foundation is a 1,000 acre education and demonstration center founded by John Denver.

John Denver will host the *Windstar Foundation's* first annual *Choices for the Future* Symposium, June 13-15, 1986, in the new Snowmass Village Conference Center, in the heart of Colorado's Rocky Mountains.

Looking clearly at issues of today and making choices for tommorrow is the focus of the gathering. Distinguished presenters include: Jean-Michel Cousteau of the Cousteau Society on Seas and Oceans; Ted Turner, of Turner Broadcast Systems, on Media and Communications; Robert Muller, Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations, on Peace; Dr. Gerald Jampolsky, author of the best selling book, *Love is Letting Go of Fear*, and Diane Cirincione on "World Peace through Inner Peace"; Astronaut Rusty Schweickart on issues of Space exploration; Dr. Richard Alpert, also known by his spiritual name, Ram Dass, on Awareness/Relationships; William F. Farley, President and Chairman of Farley Industries, discussing "Making Dollars and Sense."

Host and founder of the Windstar Foundation, John Denver will discuss Human Spirituality. Denver will also engage Colorado's Governor Richard Lamm in discussion of our "Choices." Other top speakers will make presentations on hunger, conflict resolution, wellness, global resource management, wholeness planetary consciousness, and more.

John Denver will present the first *Windstar Award*, to the "individual in the world who is living out of passion and commitment to appropriate and concrete choices. By action and deeds, this individual is contributing to the creation of a sustainable future and advocating and promoting ways for all of us to participate." A $10,000 prize will accompany the *Windstar Award.*

Families are invited to attend and *Windstar* will offer a special "Earthkeepers" program for children during the event. Under the guidance of professional educators, they will have an exciting three day treasure hunt, the "Search for the Golden Tomorrow."

Choices for the Future is an opportunity to learn about the issues of today with some of the world's leading experts in their fields. It is designed for participants to interact, to imagine their own ideal future, and to begin to make individual choices and personal action plans to make their own idealism concrete.

Early registration for the three day symposium prior to May 20, 1986 is $395 per person, $650 per couple, and $300 for each additional person from the same organization or family. After May 20, the per person and per couple fees are $425 and $695 respectively. Cost for the Earthkeepers Children's program is $85 for the first child and $60 for each additional child from the same family. Day and evening child care will be available for an additional fee.

Windstar is a non-profit education and demonstration center founded by John Denver and Thomas Crum in 1976. It is located on 985 acres high in the Rocky Mountains near Aspen, Colorado. *Windstar* programs and projects work to create a peaceful, abundant, and sustainable future.

For complete information about *Choices for the Future*, contact the *Windstar Foundation*, Box 286, Snowmass, Colorado 81654; (303) 923-2145. Toll free number for registrations is (800) 542-5428. For accommodations, contact the Snowmass Resort Association at (303) 923-2010, or toll-free from Denver, 892-7100. □

BAY AREA

Since the 60's the San Francisco Bay Area has been a hotbed (waterbed?) of counter-cultural and progressive activity. Communal living, worker collectives, gay rights, co-ops . . . from the Haight to the Berkeley hills, to Sausalito and Marin, the flowers may be a tad faded, but as you'll find in this extraordinary special section—the beat does still go on.

Thanks to my old friend, Geoph Kozeny, a sturdy veteran of community and cooperation, for pulling it together.

Each month the Collective Networker Newsletter—with articles, a calendar of Bay Area collective events, and housing referrals—appears in mail boxes and drop-off points, as it has every month for the last eight years. Each year (or so) a new Directory of Collectives—with hundreds of listings and descriptions of groups—appears in bookstores and at every collective listed, as it has since 1976. Each month for the last six years, an organization called the InterCollective has held meetings and well-attended community events focused on collectivity and the collective movement—such as conferences, workshops, classes, and fairs.

Geoph Kozeny has been involved with all three of these projects which together form the backbone of the local collective movement. Geoph is also one of the founders of an eight-year-old cooperative household, "Stardance" and of a worker co-op which does architectural redesign.

In creating this section for "Communities", Geoph received help from various friends and co-workers in the Bay Area, particularly John Curl.

The Collective Outcome

BY PAUL RAUBER

Are you cold forlorn and hungry?
Are there lots of things you lack?
Is your life made up of misery?
Then dump the bosses off your back!

Are you almost split asunder,
Loaded like a long-eared jack?
Boob! Why don't you buck like thunder?
And dump the bosses off your back!

—Industrial Workers of the World Hymn, John Brill, 1916

ONE OF THE MOST concrete products of 20 years of social activism in the Bay Area is the establishment of an alternative business community with neither bosses nor wage slaves. Some 150 businesses here have dispensed with hierarchy in favor of some form of collective ownership and management. While these businesses are only a small slice of the local small business pie, they do establish the Bay Area, particularly Berkeley and the East Bay, as preeminent in the non-hierarchical business world, at least in this country.

Collective and cooperative businesses even have a sort of "most favored business" status with Berkeley's ascendant political organization, the Berkeley-Citizens Action, BCA's political platform proposes that "Berkeley establish the goal of becoming a world leader in the creation of a community-based economy oriented around the principles of local self-reliance, community technology and business democracy." The platform specifically mentions the Co-op markets and the Cheeseboard, Juice Bar and Swallow collectives as prime examples of the kind of businesses the new city government would like to promote.

The collectives have also been promoting themselves recently: the Cheeseboard, for example, offers advice and even financial assistance to new collectives just springing up. The Intercollective, a loose collective of collectives, sponsors the publication of a *Directory of Collectives,* the latest edition of which lists 370 West Coast collectives and will be in bookstores by mid-May. Members of the Intercollective also publish a newsletter, the *Collective Network.*

The Collective movement has come a long way from the heady and turbulent days of the early 70s. The collectives are less overtly political but stronger financially, less messianic in spreading collectivism but more mutually supportive. Collectives today offer not only workplace democracy, but something that was a rarity in the world of collectives only ten years ago: a living wage.

Collectives can be organized to do almost anything. In the East Bay, they sell cheese, repair cars, drive cabs, counsel tenants, sell books, work wood, lay floors, program computers, bake, litigate, agitate, entertain, publish. What they lack in capital and experience, they typically

make up in sheer human energy. This often leads to a situation of "worker self-exploitation," but it also makes collectives endlessly fascinating places to work. In the histories of collectives, the triumphs and tragedies of the group often take on a soap opera quality. Many collectives have failed; others have managed to overcome staggering setbacks that would have killed any normal capitalist enterprise only because the workers' interest in the survival of the group is greater than their own personal interest. By any normal standard, for example, Berkeley's Taxi Unlimited would have folded long ago.

I WAS AFRAID I HAD WAITED too long to interview Taxi Unlimited when the automated voice at the other end of hte line said that their phone service had been discontinued. Earlier in the week someone had told me that Taxi Unlimited's insurance had been cancelled due to non-payment, and nobody could talk to me until the latest series of crisis meetings was over. Fearing the worst, I stopped by Taxi Unlimited's cave-like office on Woolsey Street and was surprised by signs of life: Three drivers were sitting around listening to a television with no picture, scheming about how to make a comeback. The place looked like a 60s museum: brightly painted refrigerator, Indian print bedspreads hanging on the wall, even a Mr. Natural poster, somewhat yellowed by age. With no telephone, no dispatcher and only one working cab prowling the streets, at this point any change that wasn't complete dissolution would look like progress.

"A year ago there were 15 people working here," mused Rick, an intense electronic technician who has worked on and off for the collective since 1975. "Now we're down to four—well, really only three." Danny gave up trying to get a picture out of the television. "We're just keeping the name alive," he agreed.

Taxi Unlimited was founded as a private company back in 1961, and by 1965 had become a worker-controlled cooperative. The original idea was for something on the model of the Co-op markets, where people who bought shares in the company would be the ones riding in the cabs. A pervasive ideal in the collective world has been, and to some extent still remains, the formation of an alternative, democratic economy, where people can obtain the goods and services they need through a network of mutually supportive cooperatives and collectives. Taxi Unlimited was the transportation link in that chain, ferrying people to demonstrations, picking up hitchhikers, serving the disabled community through the Center for Independent Living. In addition, their famous, outrageously painted cabs added to what they call the "visual resistance" of the time. "We used to have really beautiful paint jobs," sighs Rick. "There was a time we could pay $150 for an artist to paint a car. Now we just have to go out there ourselves with a spray can."

AT THE OTHER SIDE OF town and the ledger sheet from Taxi Unlimited is the Cheeseboard, a shop that has come to symbolize as much as Chez Panisse the transformation of North Berkeley into a "gourmet ghetto." The Cheeseboard started in 1967 in a tiny storefront on Vine Street. The owners were a married couple, and the store was immediately successful, "primarily because it was the first cheese store in the area," according to collective members. During the anti-war and student movements, a bulletin board at the front of the store gave news of political activity. Cheese and bread were donated to community and political meeting. There was a five percent discount for anyone who wanted it and, from time to time, free soup and even free money in a box set out for deposits and withdrawals.

As the business expanded and more people were hired, the group began to act more and more as a collective. Finally, the workers and owners bought the business together. The Cheeseboard became worker owned and managed, even though—according to a history written by collective members for the 1981 *Bay Area Directory of Collectives*—"the political significance of such a move was only vaguely understood by the majority of the group."

By 1975 the Cheeseboard was so successful that it was forced to move to larger quarters on Shattuck Avenue and expand the staff to fifteen. According to the history, "attempts were made to increase politicization of the collective, but its membership as a whole could not agree on a single political ideology and fell back more solidly on its humanitarian ideals of equal pay, no managerial structure, anti-profit as a motive, and good, fair responsible service to its customers as well as feedback and support from the community in which it functioned."

After soap-opera sagas that would take your breath away, some collectives have gone on to that great revolution in the sky. Others are leaders of the over-the-counter culture.

Jobs were loosely defined and more or less interchangeable, although bookkeeping and ordering seemed to require that the same few people be involved for a period of a year or two. Little emphasis was placed on structure, but a great deal was placed on efficiency and conscientiousness. Conflicts were resolved either on-the-spot or at monthly meetings where decisions were made by a loose process of consensus.

With 17 members earning $11.00 an hour with fringes, the Cheeseboard is now a model of financial health, even able to lend money to other collectives at little or no interest. Members attribute the collective's relative lack of conflict to its financial stability, decentralized decision-making and lack of an official political ideology. Turnover is very low—the average length of stay is seven years. The result is that the workers are knowledgeable and enjoy their work. Customers like the atmosphere and come more often. Success.

Successful collectives grow like mushrooms, sending off little spores to start new collective enterprises. The Cheeseboard has spawned a number of such businesses: the Juice Bar at the Cheeseboard's old location on Vine Street is one; the Swallow Restaurant in the basement of the University Art Museum is another. It's almost 13 years now since one of the Swallow's founders had to take out a mortgage on her house to convince the UC regents that the collective restaurant had some solid financial backing. The mortgage has been paid off, there is a successful catering business alongside the restaurant, and the 15 Swallow workers are able to pay themselves $7.50 an hour with full medical and dental benefits.

The East Bay's collectives are not limited to service-economy activities like food and transportation. The Industrial Revolution is alive and pumping at Heartwood, a woodworking shop in South Berkeley; Inkworks, a print shop in North Oakland, and a smattering of other manufacturers. Heartwood's ten woodworkers each own and run their businesses individually, but they manage their machines and their workspace collectively. This has turned out to be an extremely practical way of doing business, since the machines required for fine cabinet work and furniture-making are almost too expensive for an individual woodworker to buy. One of the woodworkers, John Curl, explained, "The average person who works here is not a political person, but a woodworker who has joined the shop because it's advantageous in a variety of ways. We're all involved with our work, we like being part of a group, and we pretty much all get along." And Curl thinks the exchange of professional information is better than it would be in a conventional workplace. "I started working in a cabinet factory. There, I couldn't go over and ask somebody, 'Gee, how do you do that?' "

Curl points out that collectivity has different advantages and disadvantages for people in different kinds of businesses, a sentiment echoed by the people at the Missing Link bicycle shop. They particularly value the autonomy in scheduling that is possible in a collective. Bike enthusiasts can make some money repairing and selling bicycles and still schedule time to get out and do what they really want, which is to ride. The Missing Link people, who in 1978 were able to move from their cramped space in UC's Student Union building to spacious new quarters on Shattuck near University, have had their share of difficulties, "but nothing very different from any other new business," according to collective member Susan Turner. They pay well by collective standards, employ fifteen people, don't have any job titles and don't need any either, thank you.

STARTING A SMALL BUSiness is a dicey affair even under the best of circumstances. The potential for commercial disaster is multiplied many times when that new business is being run by a bunch of well-meaning amateurs with a fundamental hostility to modern management techniques and a chronic shortage of capital. There are stories that would harrow the soul of any shopkeeper—the collective bakery that was losing money for a year, but no one knew it because no one was doing the books; or the cheese collective in San Francisco that couldn't account for six percent of its total monthly sales, or some $6,000. Many collectives falter because of poor management or undercapitalization; others die because of ideological strife. Countless hours have been squandered at collective meetings trying to hammer out a politically correct line while the business itself flounders. A walkout by an anarchist faction of the Starry Plough Irish pub back in 1975 almost killed the business: The strikers claimed the opening of the Plough and Stars pub in San Francisco by the Starry Plough's owner presaged a chain of franchised—and non-collective—Irish drinking establishments all over the state. The anarchists set up a

picket line, which kept most patrons out of the politically oriented bar. Supporters of the remaining workers gallantly marched in every evening to drink themselves paralytic in the name of working class solidarity and against left deviationism. The Starry Plough survived, but not as a collective.

Uprisings Bakery in Berkeley and A Woman's Place bookstore in Oakland are two other businesses that came near the brink of dissolution because of ideological conflict. Uprisings is a survivor of the crop of overtly political collectives that sprang up in the early to mid-70s, when The Revolution seemed to be right around the corner and the creation of an alternative food network was a reality.

Uprisings was part of the People's Food System, a network of food collectives that was born in 1973 and dissolved in fear and suspicion in 1978. Morris Older of Uprisings describes the Food System in an article on *The History of Collectivity in the San Francisco Bay Area:* "Some had a vision of a people's food system that would completely bypass the huge corporations and supermarkets that now supply the food most Americans eat. Organic farming collectives would grow it, and trucking collectives would bring it to the city to be sold at community food stores." In the East Bay, the system also included the now-defunct Flatlands Community Food Store (its Ashby Avenue storefront became a repository for dead and dying pinball machines) and Ma Revolution Natural Food Store on Telegraph Avenue. But the Food System's hopes for unifying the wide range of Bay Area food collectives both politically and economically came to an end in April 1977 with a shootout at the San Francisco Common-operating Warehouse. One person died, Willie Tate of Ma's was badly hurt, and a number of workers were in jail. Unity was out the window.

The aftermath of the shootout saw the splintering of the Food System. Ma Revolution never recovered and went bankrupt in August 1977. Flatlands closed a year later, amid suspicions that one of its members was a police agent. "Basically a lot of people got intimidated and stopped working on the Food System," says Older. The dream of unity gone, the surviving collectives turned their attention to improving their own internal operations.

Uprisings Bakery Collective survived not only these tumultuous times but two evictions as well. When they moved to their former San Pablo Avenue storefront, collective workers had to assemble a used revolving oven with 300 unlabeled pieces. The collective now uses the kitchens of the Ridge Project Student Co-op, a 6,000-square foot baker's dream.

When I met Morris Older at the Ridge Project bakery, he was bent over books that showed Uprisings' approaching financial health. The collective has been trying to improve wages, which have gradually risen from 50 cents an hour (in the first few months all labor was volunteer) to $6 (plus health insurance) at present.

Uprisings doesn't hide its politics under a bread box. It is best known for its "talking bread" program: product labels printed with political messages from groups ranging from the Livermore Action Group to Oakland's Uhuru House, sponsors of last November's controversial "Community Control Housing Initiative" in Oakland. A fund-raising appeal on the bread labels from the Committee In Solidarity with the People of El Salvador raised $1,600. Older talks about community meetings where a majority of the people present heard about them through their Uprisings bread. The collective also donates surplus bread to food projects and political events, and makes its kitchens available to groups planning bake sales.

THE TENSIONS IN THE Woman's Place collective came to a head in the fall of 1982 when three members of the collective changed the locks on the store and posted a sign stating that it had been closed for reorganization. An internal debate over racism had been challenging the nature of what had become one of the largest women's bookstores in the world. Consensus decision-making, which has worked well for many successful collectives, was not helping. "The only part of consensus we seemed to get," collective member Darlene Pagano told me, "was if a person said 'no,' it didn't go through until that person could say 'yes.' What happened was that 'no' was a stronger vote than five 'yeses.'

A major brawl in the women's community ensued, and the matter eventually wound up in court. Seven months later an agreement was reached under the auspices of the Arts Arbitration and Mediation Service. The three women who did the locking

Collectives today offer not only workplace democracy, but something that was a rarity in the world of collectives only ten years ago: a living wage.

were given a month's pay and ordered to leave. The four women who were locked out were ordered to incorporate the business, train a new collective and phase themselves out within two years. Darlene Pagano was scheduled to leave the collective in April. She has mixed feelings about being in a collective, which she calls "a very quirky way to do business."

"It's a lot of work to be in a collective," says Pagano, "because hierarchy will form the minute you're not there to beat it down." Alice Molloy, one of the faction who locked the doors, is now part owner of a women's center and coffeehouse called Mama Bears on Telegraph Avenue. Mama Bears is *not* a collective, a form Molloy recalls with bitterness: "Years and years of hundreds of thousands of men and women sitting around in circles pouring negativity into the air."

What are the prospects for the new collectives that are constantly starting up? Strangely enough, the times are on their side. The current economic and political climate does little to foster the kind of Utopian thinking, ideological adventurism, or shoestring start-ups that brought so many 60s collectives to their knees. New collectives have the resources of the Intercollective to provide support, advice and terrifying tales of collectives past. And they have many veterans of collectivity to turn to for help and guidance.

New collectives are springing up all the time. One of the newest is the Rainbow Workers Cooperative, a sewing collective formed by 35 middle-aged women who were put out of work by the Sierra Designs plant shutdown last year. What advice do the battle-scarred veterans have for them?

Sahag Avedisian of the Cheeseboard warns abainst what he calls the three fatal vulnerabilities of collectives. The first is internal stealing; nearly every collective experiences it in some form. Even when the theft is not major, it has a terrible effect on morale. "You know how destructive it is when you realize that someone who's working next to you might be a thief?" asks Avedisian. "It's really a destructive thing to your psyche—a mean, mean thing."

The second vulnerability is a power struggle, of the sort that tore apart the People's Food System, and more recently, A Woman's Place. These start, in Avedisian's opinion, with the formation of "power cliques," incipient structures trying to take charge of the structurelessness. The Cheeseboard fights this vulnerability with an eclectic membership, some of whom do not even believe in collectives. This lack of a political line discourages the creation of ideological factions.

The third vulnerability is purely personal. "If you survive the other two then you start looking at each other," Avedisian says. With no bosses and no wage slaves, collective members have only each other to blame.

Miserly beginning wages are typical of many collectives, whose only method of capitalization is self-exploitation. Many groups never get past this difficult stage, a period beset by the twin dangers of flake-out and burnout. "You are constantly training new people to do the same thing over and over again," says Morris Older. "If you're serious about running a business you can't afford to keep doing that." The problem begins to resolve itself when wages hit about $4.50 an hour and a core group of steady workers begins to develop. No one, however, joins a collective for the money: in this respect the low wages are a self-protection mechanism against careerism and apathy. "You want to pay little enough so that you get the dedication," says the Intercollective's Mary Carleton, "which is one hell of a way to run a movement."

There are many ways to avoid burnout, high among them having an organization structure that not only spreads out the tension (and power) but gives the collective workplace the flexibility that is one of its most appealing features to many workers.

Independence, equality, hard work, democracy—what could be more all-American? And, as Sahag Avedisian said, in summing up the collective experience, "When it's high, it's really great, and when it's bad, it's interesting." □

Reprinted from ***The Monthly.***

Community Economic Development in the Bay Area

by Dyanne Ladne

Silicon Valley has produced a carpeting of million dollar houses, but it has not solved the high unemployment rates of such areas as East San Jose, Jose, East Palo Alto, or South Berkeley.

Economic development has been touted as the answer to local community financial woes arising from recent taspayers' revolts. The Bay Area has been no exception. What is becoming clear, however, is that although economic development has stepped up, its impact is not felt by the entire community. Silicon Valley has produced a carpeting of million dollar houses, but it has not solved the high unemployment rates of such areas as East San Jose, East Palo Alto, or South Berkeley.

Some communities in the Bay Area are adding another word to economic development: "community". In a few neighborhoods, people are organizing economic development that is targeted to the areas that need it, rather than depending on benefits that trickle down.

South Berkeley is 75% Black, with 64% of its households earning $15,000 a year or less. A much studied area, the community has received many campaign promises of revitalization. Very little has changed over the years, however, except a steady exit of Black renters.

A new movement is taking place, however, under the direction of Joe Brooks, assistant to the City Manager and Project Manager for South Berkeley revitalization. A native of South Berkeley, Brooks has recently returned from many years of organizing in the South. Under his direction, a representative community organization is forming that will help generate employment training, strengthen and expand the business and commercial base, develop and rehabilitate housing, and influence the provisions of improved City services. A recent meeting of three hundred South Berkeley residents was the first step toward giving the community a say in the kind of revitalization that the newly formed Office of Economic Development for the City of Berkeley intends to stimulate.

In East San Jose, unemployment is high, even though Silicon Valley, where it is located, has become a household word. The Eastside Community, which for many years has been primarily Hispanic, now includes a large Vietnamese, Portugese, and Japanese population. Until recently, these groups have not had a mechanism to work together for their common good. Redevelopment in downtown San Jose has done little to assist the economically depressed Eastside of town. Recently, several representatives of the community have begun to organize to get benefits for the Eastside as a whole. Three neighborhood business groups, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce and the San Jose Development Corporation have been meeting to coordinate activities. These activities include approaching financial institutions for increased participation in the area through the use of the Community Reinvestment Act, and the power of aggregate deposits by local businesses. Also planned is a "Buy East San Jose" program (similar to the "Buy Oregon" plan) wherein local businesses are networked with other local businesses for purposes of purchasing products and services.

East Palo Alto is another Bay Area city that is attempting to approach economic development from a community point of view. The recently incorporated city is a primarily Black community with a significant percentage of Hispanics, and a growing number of Pacific Islanders. The community is surrounded by highly successful electronics related industry, but its own unemployment rate is estimated at well above twenty percent. The City is organizing so that economic development is not done only for the quick construction jobs and profit for the developers. Careful thought is being given by the City Council, City Staff and a citizen's advisory committee as to how the needs of the community can best be met. Long term jobs being created by new businesses and the impact on the quality of life for East Palo Alto residents are being considered in the planning process. A system is being put in place whereby, newly created jobs are being networked directly to East Palo Alto residents through the local employment office. Local training facilities are getting early warning of proposed jobs so that they may gear up training to meet those jobs as they evolve.

The common theme of these areas is that communities are recognizing the necessity of acting together. Evaluating what is needed in the way of community economic development is the first step in rallying resources to help it happen. □

The Berkeley Co-op

BY BOB SCHILDGEN

I believe the real explanation lies in a failure in cooperative sociology. . . . this great co-op's problems result from a drifting away from its identity as a member organization.

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA has a national reputation for being—well—different. Which translates into progressive, daring, activist, bizarre, radical, innovative or diabolical, depending on your point of view.

The town developed this image in the 60s, with the Free Speech Movement, and it has maintained a high profile with a strong rent control law (recently upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court), a socially responsible investment policy, innovations in energy conservation and recycling, and pioneering programs for the disabled and the homeless.

Berkeley even has a reputation for a "foreign policy" because city officials have taken stands on international issues which conservatives would prefer to leave to such authorities as Ronald Reagan. Cliches about death of the "activist spirit of the 60s", often mouthed by media twits who seem to believe the radical spirit can be killed simply by declaring it unfashionable—these cliches simply do not apply to Berkeley.

A main feature in Berkeley's activism has been the Consumers' Cooperative of Berkeley, the largest retail food cooperative in the U.S., with over 100,000 members and sales last year of $52.3 million.

This big co-op has experienced serious setbacks in recent years, with sales down from a high of $83.6 million in 1980, seven of its peak of thirteen supermarkets closed, and an $853,000 operating loss last year. Although many would blame this decline on "bad management" or economic circumstances beyond the co-op's control or political divisivenes within the organization, I believe the real explanation lies in a failure in cooperative sociology. In my view, this great co-op's problems result from a drifting away from its identity as a *member* organization. This loss of identity as a member organization is apparent in several decadent symptoms: greatly diminished attention to co-op education, loss of a sense of a co-op culture, neglect of member potential, passivity of board and membership, and an increasing tendency to run the co-op *as a conventional business* at the expense of paying strict attention to its unique needs as a member organization.

Democracy here was never merely a slogan. It meant a great deal of member involvement in issues of concern to consumers and the community. On more than 80 different occasions, the organization's paid staff and volunteer experts offered testimony to state and federal agencies on such issues as pesticides, hazards, food labeling, and bottle deposit legislation.

The Co-op sounded what was condemned as an unpatriotic alarm about the radioactive Strontium 90 which found its way into milk through fallout from atomic tests. During the Vietnam War, the organization yanked Dow Chemical products from the shelves to protest napalm manufacture. When there was mounting evidence that aerosols were destroying the ozone layer, the Co-op stopped selling them. The group also participated in the boycott of non-union produce and Gallo wines during key organizing drives by Cesar Chavez and the farmworkers.

Most recently, the board voted to stop selling Coors beer as a protest against that company's anti-union

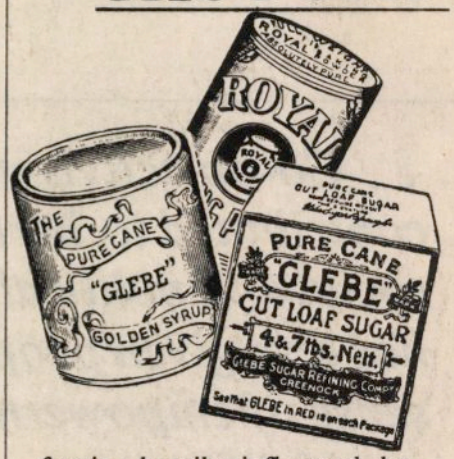
policies. Riding a wave of consumer activism, the Coop had such luminaries as Ralph Nader come to address its meetings.

In 1975, the organization actually defied the State of California, breaking the law by selling fluid milk below the state-mandated retail price floor in order to dramatize its legislative campaign which successfully knocked out a state policy that forced retailers to sell milk at an artificially high price.

Because the Co-op had an active personnel committee, it moved into affirmative action long before other businesses were forced to. Ethnic festivals raised political consciousness while opening local minds to a huge variety of foods. Nutrition education carried out by paid staff put the Co-op far ahead of the rest of the country in its knowledge of bulk foods and natural foods, with a full-scale health food supermarket opening in 1971. Scores of other actions, including participation in the Nestle boycott, have kept the Co-op in the public eye.

The point is that Co-op activism has not only contributed to Berkeley's overall social and political awareness, it has also given people a strong sense of empowerment, of making a real difference. After all, if people could control a supermarket chain, run it successfully while competing against multinational giants like Safeway and directly involve it in major issues of the time, that meant ordinary people could have a voice in running things, rather than allowing established politicians to have their way. With about half the households in Berkeley having Co-op membership, receiving its weekly paper, and being exposed to new ideas at its stores, the Co-op has made a significant contribution to the city's feisty spirit of challenging established assumptions and creating a vital, if raucous democracy. As G.N. Ostergaard and A.H. Halsey

HISTORY



By becoming aware of how problems develop, I hope that younger co-ops can take measures to avoid them. To fully understand what has happened with the Berkeley Co-op, it is necessary to look at the history of cooperative culture in Berkeley.

This big food cooperative started in 1937 as a gas station founded by a group of co-op organizers from the city's large Finnish community. The Finns were no strangers to cooperation, as co-ops played a large role in economic and political reform movements in Scandinavia. Finns had already been the backbone of a thriving cooperative movement in the Great Lakes states, and some of the Berkeley Co-op's Finnish leadership had received training and experience in the Midwest. Eugene Mannila, who retired in 1971 after managing the Co-op during its most successful years, said in a 1980 interview: "Many Finns were affiliated with the labor movement, and with the socialistic idea, and along with it the notion of a socialist economy was promoted. They combined the knowledge of it from back home with the interest and desire to do something to improve themselves. In other words, the capitalistic system was not the answer. There had to be a better system, and it was in seeking this system that they began to develop cooperatives."

At this point, the cooperative was ethnically so homogenous that the earliest dispute among members was whether to make Finnish or English the official language.

At about the same time, a different group was forming a food buying club and establishing its first storefront. This group was more centered around the University of California, heavily influenced by social gospel teachings of churches looking for an alternative to the unholy excesses of capitalism. They were inspired by the writings and lectures of co-op advocates such as Tokyohiko Kagawa, the "Japanese Gandhi", a minister and social reformer who envisioned co-ops as a form of "brotherhood economics" which promised to structure religious principles of brotherly love into economic activity.

Another important influence was socialist Upton Sinclair's candidacy for governor of California, because co-ops were a key element in that venerable muckraker's EPIC (End Poverty in California) program.

After the War, these two tiny organizations merged to form the present cooperative, which grew rapidly in the late 50s and early 60s to an eight store chain in the Bay Area.

A free-wheeling democracy, co-op style, was long an important part of this co-op. For almost 30 years, often goaded by an active membership, the Co-op played a strong role in consumer protection, environmentalism and nutrition education. At various times it has been a rallying point for civil rights, unions and peace activity.

. . . Co-op activism has not only contributed to Berkeley's overall social and political awareness, it has also given people a strong sense of empowerment, of making a real difference.

point out in their study of British co-ops, the co-op democracy *preceded* the political and primed the working classes for it. In Berkeley, co-op democracy has helped beget an extraordinarily vigorous level of democratic political movement.

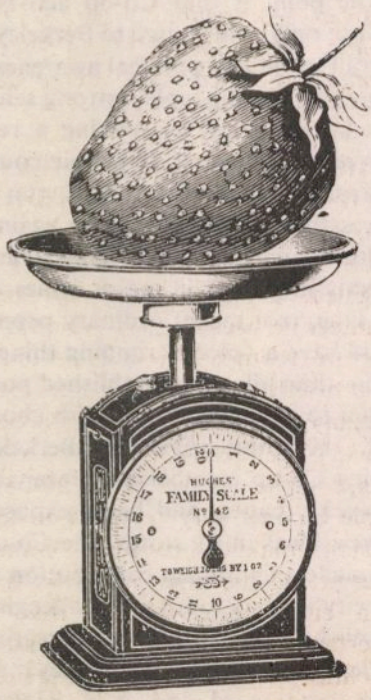
There also developed a cooperative culture. Earlier activists in the Co-op had a fair theoretical grounding in the theory and history of cooperation. They took cooperative education much more seriously than most co-ops do today. For them, education did not mean simply beating the drum for new members or issuing co-op propaganda. They studied it. There were discussion groups, a co-op library, and a general sense of co-op history and philosophy that merited attention. In 1978, Matt Crawford, a 45-year-old member who had been the Co-op's first black employee put it this way: "There's a body of literature about co-ops. They were formed by people who were seeking something more than the corner grocery . . . Not enough attention has been given to developing understanding in the basic philosophical notions behind a cooperative enterprise."

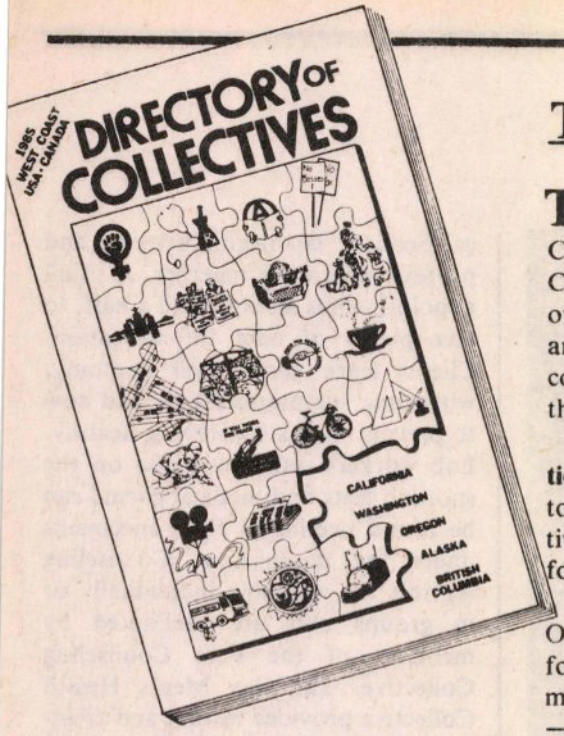
One of the main themes of this co-op philosophy was to create an entire cooperative economic system. After all, the Rochdale cooperative pioneers did not confine their goals simply to running a successful store. They wanted to create an entire economic and social system outside the existing capitalist framework. Because this goal was far too utopian to realize immediately, future cooperators settled for creating as many co-op services as possible, with the philosophical conviction that a co-op enterprise was intrinsically superior . . . worthy of support.

Impelled by such convictions, Berkeley Co-op members developed a number of cooperative ventures over the years, such as a credit union, which today has assets of $33 million and over 25,000 members. A consumer-oriented legal service group and even a funeral society were formed. The Co-op has also fostered substantial development of low and middle income co-op housing in Berkeley, the most recent example being a 47-unit complex located next to the site of one of its six stores. A large local group health service also grew out of the work of a co-op health study committee. In addition, the Co-op has offered substantial assistance to other co-op enterprises, such as a loan to assist a successful artists' co-op which was desperate for funds at a crucial point in its growth. Besides the direct influence of the Co-op, it has helped create a co-op milieu which has been fertile ground for numerous cooperative ventures in the city, primarily worker-owned collectives, with the result that between them and the Co-op, over 1000 jobs in the city of 100,000 are in the cooperative sector.

With this enviable history, how could such a flagship among U.S. co-ops find itself in serious trouble?

I contend that the major problem is one which has destroyed many co-ops in the past: the failure to maintain a strong identity as a cooperative through co-op education and a marketing strategy which reinforces an image of a co-op in its community. Along with this drift away from its identity as a co-op and its decline in recruitment and cultivation of members goes a tremendous decline in member participation, which weakens the co-op as a business. This decline dilutes the overall loyalty to the co-op while depriving it of its best source of creative ideas. □





The '85-'86 Directory Arrives

The 1985-86 Directory of Collectives (West Coast of USA and Canada) is off and includes listings of over 350 groups. In addition, there are several articles on local collectives, and on the history and theory of the collective movement.

Worker cooperatives & the transition to a self-managed society; History of the role of worker cooperatives in movements of social transformation.

Workers representation: two views. One warns of the danger of struggling for workplace reforms that merely make life more tolerable but do nothing to bring about fundamental change; the other points to the need and historical success of worker self-management in creating popular control of all phases of life.

Poland 1980: Break through for self-management. Direct democracy versus the Communist State: tactics that brought together and defended 10 million Poles.

Following is a sampler of three articles reprinted from the 1985-86 ***Directory of Collectives****. Interested in one of your own? Send $4 (includes postage and handling) to P.O. Box 5446, Berkeley, CA 94705.*

The Berkeley Free Clinic

BY AMY FRIED

The following article was written by Amy shortly before she left the collective and is not intended as an official representation of the Free Clinic. Amy joined the Clinic in January 1979 as a volunteer medic-in-training. She also worked with the Switchboard/Crisis Intervention Section and hald paid positions for two years. Besides working with people seeking services, she trained volunteers, worked on funding and outreach, fiscal planning, clinic-wide workshops, and decision-making. After 5 years with the Clinic, Amy has just moved to Minnesota.

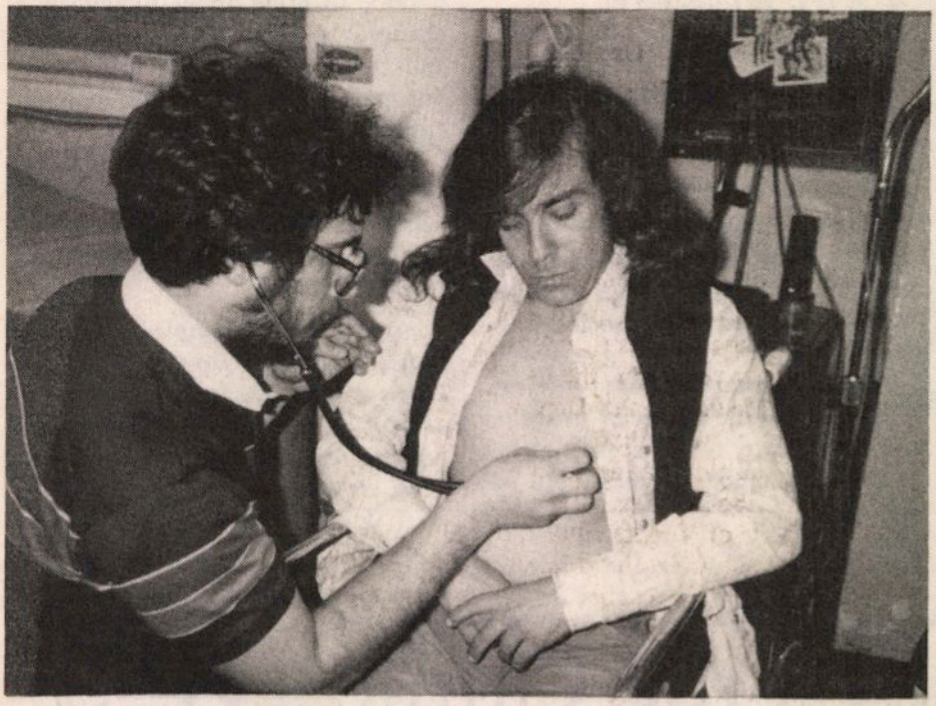
I started working at the Free Clinic over five years ago. What I've learned about working with other people as equals is more than I could have imagined. I didn't decide to start volunteering because of its collective structure though. I joined to learn about health care. This has been true for many others. People join as a way to work politically, to learn new skills, or to help others. Some of these people become very involved in the decision making process. Others never attend meetings regularly, but when an issue comes up that is important to them, they participate.

Politics have been a part of the Free Clinic from the beginning. It was started in 1969 when medics took to the streets to attend to demonstrators who had been badly injured during the fight for People's Park. A community clinic had been in the planning for months because people saw that many needs were not being met by the traditional health care system. Tear gas and National Guardsmen's clubs galvanized people into action. Many different groups were involved: former army medics, church groups, street people and community leaders like Fred Cody.

The clinic focus is still that health care is a right, not a privilege. Part of that right is client privacy. Should we accept funding which threatens confidentiality? Another right is the right to knowledge. We strive to break down the monopoly of knowledge in health information, tools, and techniques. Through our work, we and our clients gain more control over our lives. We recognize that caring about health means that we must focus on the social, political and economic problems that cause ill-health.

Structure

There are five sections now that make up the Free Clinic, and we see adults for a variety of medical and non-medical problems. Currently, about 150 people work as volunteers in the different service groups. In the Medi-



cal Section, lay health workers and professionals work together. A usual appointment is an hour and a half, to give plenty of time for education. Clients learn about their anatomy, what their symptoms mean, and how to prevent illness by staying healthy. Lab workers stand by to do on the spot lab tests and medical clients can be found peering at their specimens under the microscope. Counseling services are available individually or in groups and are facilitated by members of the Peer Counseling Collective. The Gay Men's Health Collective provides testing and treatment, by and for gay men, of sexually transmitted disease (STD). The Dental Section does education and basic dental work. The Switchboard attempts to stay open 24 hours and provides community referrals, survival advocacy, crisis counseling, drug and alcohol information and referrals, and drug emergency management. People can get information not only about street drugs but also drugs prescribed by doctors, including psychiatric drugs.

Each section acts as a semi-independent collective, under limited control and direction of the "all-clinic" level. Each section runs its own training for people who want to do service work. We believe that our trainings help to create a larger pool of people who can share their skills as community health workers, whether they are current volunteers or not.

The way folks become collective members is pretty nifty, I think. Someone is a member when he or she has completed a section's training program (10 to 20 weeks), and is judged to be competent to do the work. To stay a member, they then have to continue doing service work. Membership means being able to vote at all-clinic level meetings and at section meetings. There are many committees, different types of meetings and different ways they are

called. A lot of the structure is written down; some is not and is based on group memory. Learning this kind of information takes time. The training period gives new people a start at learning about the clinic as a whole, as well as their special section.

The relationships between paid workers and volunteers is interesting. There has been a lot of discussion about the amount of power that paid people have. Because they tend to be around more than volunteers, they tend to have more information. We have recognized this as a problem, so information-sharing is a written part of people's job descriptions. I have seen at least one fierce battle because some members believed that a particular paid worker was withholding facts which didn't support his analysys of a problem.

Because of such potential problems, the power of paid workers has been specifically limited. Collective members set policy. Paid workers have input, but no vote, unless they are also members, i.e. volunteers. (Most paid workers have been volunteers first and continue as members as well as doing paid work.) No one is allowed to be a paid worker for more than two and a half years. Coordinators are chosen in an election process by the members of the group they work with, and are accountable to those folks. For example, when there was a paid switchboard coordinator, section members did the hiring and firing. Usually, someone is hired on a two-month probation and then continues to work for up to a year. To continue past that year, they must gain approval from their accountability group. Clinic members believe that people who are paid need to keep in touch with what volunteers are doing and experiencing. If they didn't, *I* believe we would be setting ourselves up for a profound split, a reiteration of traditional conflicts between management and workers.

Getting funded has been a constant problem for the Clinic. Unlike most collectives, whose income is from fees or sales, our services are completely free. We meet our expenses through street collecting, canvassing, benefits, and donations from clients and other community people. We have also relied heavily on government funds.

Our structure has been hard for traditional funding sources to understand. Just a few years ago, the head of Berkeley's Mental Health Department called it "unorthodox and confusing". Thus, educating government officials about collectivism has become a part of fundraising. To make the process easier, the administrative work for government sponsored funds is handled by contact people, who come to the collective for approval for contracts and lines of negotiation. This is similar to traditional business situations where the negotiator does not have the final authority to close a contract.

I think that money has caused more internal splits than any other issue. In 1978, after Proposition 13 devastated our funding, a major division in the collective occurred. At the time, there was a group called the Administrative Collective, composed of paid workers, which made many clinic decisions. The A.C. was the same as the Board and was subordinate only to an "All-Clinic Community Meeting". When money was cut, some paid workers believed the clinic should continue to pay people out of savings, and close when the money ran out. Many collective members disagreed and called an All-Clinic Community meeting. They decided to cut paid work hours and to try to get the work done with fewer funds. The A.C. was abolished and replaced by a structure where paid workers and volunteers participate in open meetings. During this time a much larger number of collective members than usual went to meetings, discussed, debated, and decided to change direction. The reason they participated was that they weren't willing to let the clinic end, and the reason they were able to prevent that was the collective structure, which allowed unpaid workers to have the ultimate power.

In the past few months, yet more member input has been needed, since funding changes have led to an end of nearly *all* paid positions.* The only ones remaining are the coordinators for bookkeeping, cleaning, street collections and canvassing. We have dealt with this by doing what we call "volunteerization". In our decentralized fashion, each section has determined how to organize its tasks without paid coordinators. The average volunteer is now spending more time outside of their regular service work. One positive result of this is that more people have an insight into how the details of running the place fit together, and they feel greater responsibility.

Is the Free Clinic really a collective?

In spite of these kinds of volunteer controls, some people in the clinic have said that we are not a "real collective" since not everyone participates in meetings all the time I disagree. People come to the clinic for their own reasons and participate in what they choose. A medic may work with her shift-mates for years and attend the larger medical section meetings only when it's time to choose a coordinator. None the less, she feels a part of her shift, works in a group and practices criticism/self-criticism. She also takes a regular role in training and evaluating new medics on shift. A peer counselor may spend his time doing counseling, advertising for prospective volunteers, and attending an occasional section meeting, but never go to an all-clinic meeting. A switchboard worker may work her shift an dupdate referral information on shift. A Gay Men's

Health Collective member may do outreach in the gay community. Someone in the dental section may work with the Operations Committee to improve access for disabled people. All these contribute to the activity, vitality and diversity of the clinic. Meetings where policy is decided are open; people can choose to attend or not; most choose not to. Does this mean we're not worker run? They *are* al participating, while not going to that extra meeting.

The big question remaining for me is, "Are the meetings really accessible?" Access *is* sometimes limited by lack of information on meeting process or background data. People who have been around longer know more and so have more impact on decisions. We could spend more time sharing information, our meetings need time limits, and facilitation could improve. Too often, people are merely told about meetings; each person needs to be encouraged to lend his or her voice to discussion. Men tend to talk more at meetings, which shows that we still need to work on sexism. None of these problems, however, are severe structural blocks to participation, which can be seen by the increase in participation whenever an issue important to an individual or group comes up.

The Free Clinic has its problems with collective process, but I think that it is a good example of how a large group can function collectively. New workers infuse the Clinic with new energy and vitality, yet we avoid the instability of many alternative groups, as there is always a pool of more experienced people. Because the clinic is divided into several semi-autonomous sections, people in each section can make decisions that are directly relevant to them and have the comradeship of working collectively, without the day to day drain of deciding all the issues the collective faces. □

A Pot of Gold?

A look at Rainbow Stores an interview with Stuart Fishman

BY JAM SYLVAN

RAINBOW was started in 1975 by some followers of Guru Maharaj-ji, with contributions of money and equipment. They had had a food buying club and warehouse space, and started Rainbow as a retail grocery, for "all kinds of different reasons," said Stuart. "It was never well defined." Yet, it was not only for the guru's followers.

Around 1977, some of the workers set up the General Store to carry non-food items. Rainbow, incorporated as a non-tax-exempt non-profit corporation, put up approximately $5000 to fund the general store, with the expectation that the loan would be repaid soon. Since it took years to repay, the grocery workers felt the general store was being managed improperly. The two stores though part of one corporation, were run as separate organizations (not meeting together). The grocery people, however, assumed that decisions made at grocery meetings became policy and covered the general store. Of course, the general store people saw it differently—as taxation without representation.

At the time, Rainbow had very few debts, $40,000 in inventory, and had been built on much volunteer and low-wage labor. Stuart pushed for by-laws to establish that workers had the ultimate authority. The general store people and some grocery people favored collectivity, with everyone being workers and no one having equity. Other grocery people thought they had more equity or investment in the store, since they'd been in on the start of it.

General meetings of all the workers in both stores were held, workers read the articles of incorporation, learned the issues, and some started writing by-laws, completing about 90%. Then burn-out hit and everything was tabled. Business continued.

By 1982 the general store had coubled its profits, mainly due to putting its vitamins behind the counter. General store people looked at the grocery, saw it making little profit compared to the then vigorous general store, and pushed for separation. However, no satisfactory way to separate could be found.

Rainbow's business grew to the point of overcrowding the storefronts by this time. With little or no storage space and heavy in-store traffic (deliveries came in the front door, past customers), they realized they would have to move, and possibly go to banks for loans.

At this time, with thirty-five to forty workers in all, they reevaluated their structure, as to how it would be

presented, how to settle problems, and how decisions were to be made. According to Stuart, they had to make a lot of decisions quickly, they weren't organized enough to present themselves as an organized business to banks, and they didn't have an "efficient" decision-making process, being "too collectivized."

By-laws were written, based on the old 90% complete by-laws and, after months of hashing them out, were finally adopted. These by-laws set up a decision-making hierarchy, with the general membership (all the workers) having final authority. However, the general membership meets only once in three months, unless special meetings are called. The board of directors, who are also workers, meets once a week, with the minutes of their meeting published.

Said Stuart, "The board's basic role is to control excessive spending. The board doesn't control spending on goods that are bought and we sell, and it doesn't control spending on day-to-day supplies and equipment repairs, maintenance, and all those sort of day-to-day uses. But if a department or a group of the corporation wants to buy a new piece of equipment, or invest money in something new, or if somebody wants to get a raise, then they go before the board."

Even though decisions made by the board and members of the board can be recalled at any time, as Stuart puts it, "There's always a danger that the board can take over." The implications trouble me, remembering the incident precipitating the writing of the first incomplete by-laws, and a 1980 strike at South Bend Lathe in Indiana, by the worker-owners against their hired, non-owner, outside management, over investments, profits, hiring and firing decision-making.

In the spring of 1982 Rainbow started a wholesale company, which has practically taken the place of the defunct San Francisco Cooperating Warehouse (the mainstay of the dissolved People's Food System).

Rainbow has a wage differential. Their pay ranges from $5.00 per hour to $10.00 per hour. I asked Stuart why there's a spread of two to one.

He replied, "The spread is based on . . . ability and seniority . . . When I first started working at Rainbow I felt everybody should make the same. I was very idealistic. Not everybody works the same. And so you have to reward the people who work and get rid of the people who don't. Otherwise the people who don't are gonna do less work; the people who do the work are gonna do more

"At one point, people started feeling resentful; they were carrying the weight of the business on their shoulders. Not only were they doing more work, but they were taking more responsibility for the business: making decisions, and also taking the responsibility. They felt they wanted more money and they should have more of the benefits of the business because of that. And other people would come in and work the hours they were supposed to work, but that wasn't their major interest. They just

How It Works

The day to day management of the business is entirely conducted by meetings of the various groups (General Store, Bookkeeping, Produce, etc.) within Rainbow. These groups meet weekly or every other week, any worker can put items on the agenda and all workers are paid by the hour for attending.

The Board of Directors deals with issues like insurance and financial statements that most workers don't care to deal with. In other areas, the board often declines to make decisions and instead sends the issue to some other meeting for resolution. The board also acts as a microcosm at Rainbow and tries to clarify issues and options for joint meetings (meetings of the membership as a whole). You will understand the necessity of this latter function the first time you attend a joint meeting with 40 or 50 people present.

We had 10 such meetings last year with no one complaining we need more. Only 20% of hte collective need sign a petition to call a meeting.

What about our pay scale? Should the highly skilled, experienced, full time worker make the same as the musician supplementing his income by working 20 hours a week checking packs at the front of the store? Should the single mother of 2 kids get the same as both of them? What does this have to do with being a collective anyway?

To me, being a collective means having a worker based management and operating the business so it serves the needs of the workers as well as the other way around. Rainbow with its millions of dollars and dozens of workers still meets this definition.

wanted a job to support themselves.

"The longer people were around, the more efficiently they learned how to do the job. They're doing more work than people who haven't been there as long.

"And as people get older, they get concerned about their future, they want to put money away. 'I want to buy a house' or 'I want to buy a better car' . . .

"And there's one other factor that I think a lot of people don't realize, one of the people who started the wholesale business is very sharp, very attuned to business, very knowledgeable about the kind of food we're selling, about how it's manufactured; and a hard worker. A guy like that could go to any of the companies in the natural foods industry, and get hired for 30,000 or 40,000 bucks a year. I want to keep him working for us, because our business is going to survive because of people like him. I feel that, as a worker at Rainbow, [if] this person wants more money, I want to pay him more money, 'cause he's worth more money to us . . .

"I think Rainbow is a collective. It's gotta be bigger than any collective I know of in the Bay Area. So it has to be different. But it's not an idealistic collective. People don't come to work at Rainbow because they want to work in a collective. They come to Rainbow to work as another job. It's a workers' collective . . . After they're there they eventually start to understand there's a political process here, 'If I've got a gripe, I can't go to one person; I've got to go to a meeting.' The people who work there agree with this hierarchy of wages . . . I think you're talking about two things: what is a collective, and a set of political and ethical ideals. But you can have a fascist workers' collective, a communist workers' collective, a socialist workers' collective, and a new right workers' collective. They're all workers' collective. In our situation we

don't have the time, if there are other issues, [or if] there are different reasons for motivation. There *are* different reasons for motivation . . .

"We're a workers' collective . . . We're a regular business that has a different decision-making process. Our decisions are not made by a few people who call themselves the owners. Our decisions are made by a lot of people who work in various ways: on a day-to-day basis by authority that's been given to them or by authority they've taken, or on a week-to-week basis because they're board of directors, or on a quarter-to-quarter basis because they're workers that are attending a joint meeting, or on a bimonthly-to-bimonthly basis because they're food store workers meeting every two weeks . . . All the decisions are made by workers.

"There's no official division between management and workers. There *is* management. There *is* workers. There has to be management. Somebody's got to say, 'You didn't do this right,' to somebody who didn't do it right. Somebody's got to say, 'You're not doing your job.' Somebody's gotta say, 'You're doing a great job.' Somebody's gotta say, 'Gee, you come in on time all the time. That's great.' Somebody's gotta say those things. Somebody's gotta take action around those things. Everybody can't do it all at once.

"There *is* management. There *are* workers. There are people who take the management role more often than they take the worker's role. But on the whole, our decision-making process is a lot different than a normal business's in the United States. And our treatment of property, there's a lot of difference around property values . . . Some people think that the workers own the store. Other people don't think that the workers own the store. It's not clear who owns that store, or if anybody owns that store . . . So there' a big difference.

"But on the other hand, we want to be a successful business. 'Cause we've had plenty of bad examples in other alternative business—businesses that were created to serve the community and didn't serve the community because their ideals or their politics got in the way and prevented them from serving the community. So they only existed for a short period of time.

"Most of the community stores that were members of the People's Food System went out of business because they didn't do business. They didn't do their bookkeeping. They

didn't watch their profit structure. They weren't concerned about the efficiency of their workers. They weren't concerned about theft in their businesses. They weren't concerned about security. They didn't deal with those problems.

"They spent more time sitting around in the meetings talking about ideals and how they could save the world, anti-nukes, and anti-Vietnam. So, consequently, their purpose for starting a business: one, to serve the community with good food or good products, at reasonable prices, and two, to serve as organizing centers for people who shared certain kinds of political ideas; they went out of business and so they didn't serve either of those purposes.

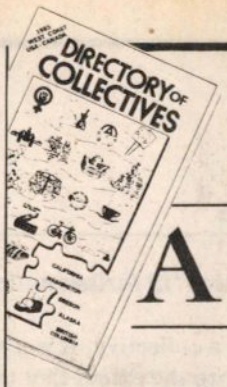
But they did serve to organize people. When they disappeared, the connections between people didn't disappear . . ."

Every group has a hierarchy. Rainbow is composed of many small businesses which we call "divisions" or "departments." Each has its own financial and organizational reality. Our formal structure ties them together. Try operating a multi-million dollar business with over 75 workers where everyone has to be involved in every decision, or even every major decision. There won't be any time to do anything other than make decisions.

So, does this mean that in order for a large collective business to make it in capitalist America, it needs a small group of directors to make major decisions, money to motivate better work, or people becoming managers?

I don't know.

Where's the spirit of collectivity? Is a collective still a collective if its members delegate away their power? At what size does a collective stop being a collective of equals? Do the workers run the business, or does the business run the workers, and how and for what purpose? And, what *is* a collective after all? □



A Woman's Place

Books with a Difference

by Keiko Kubo
Jesse Meredith
Darlene Pagano

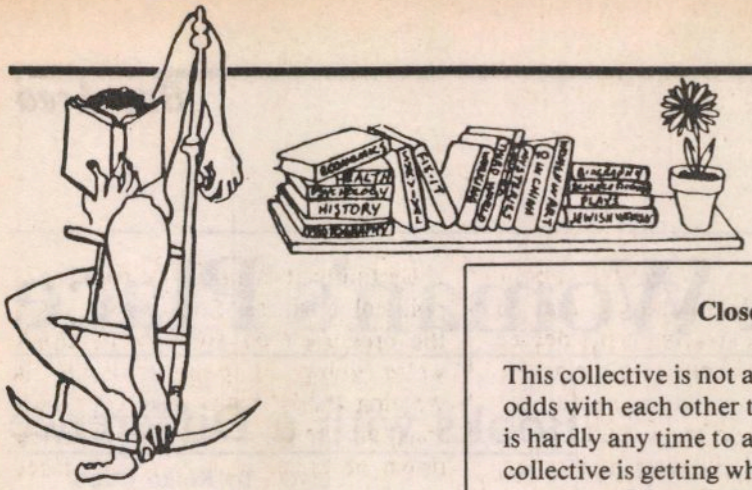
A Woman's Place is a collectively operated bookstore and information center in Oakland, California (on Broadway by 40th St.). Begun in 1972 by a group of unpaid workers with $300 worth of books, AWP is now a non-profit corporation staffed by six women of diverse backgrounds and interests. AWP is also helped by many volunteers who do bookkeeping, sales, childcare and all the other tasks that keep the store going.

A Woman's Place is among the largest of the over 100 feminist bookstores around the world, and has survived because of widespread community support. Women's bookstores are usually small independent centers of inforamtion and feminist action and have always had to struggle to remain open. Many have closed. In the S.F. Bay Area, only two remain of the eight feminist bookstores once in operation.

In the fall of 1982, A Woman's Place faced the most serious challenge to her survival and growth. A former collective member, whose name still appeared on many documents listing her as the "owner," plus two current members of the collective, joined together to change the locks on the bookstore's doors and posted notices stating that the rest of the collective was fired and that the store was closed indefinitely for reorganization.

The four of us who had been locked out joined together to oppose this action. We filed suit in Alameda Superior Court to prevent the three women from closing the bookstore and excluding us from its operations. We based our case on precedents in California law which favor treating a relationship in which people act like partners as a partnership, regardless of what they call themselves. We were successful in obtaining preliminary

Locked Out Four — September 12, 1982



orders from the court to reopen the bookstore and to protect our right to participate in the bookstore's operation until the case could come to trial.

The struggle was resolved in April of 1983 by an order of three arbitrators, agreed upon by both sides, under the auspices of the Arts Arbitration and Mediation Service (located in Fort Mason in San Francisco). We were certainly fortunate that such a community mediation service existed; the two sides could have spent forever trying to agree on how our dispute could be settled. As it was, we spent months just trying to agree on who the three arbitrators would be. The arbitrators issued a three-page decision, with almost no explanation of their reasoning; they said only that they agreed that AWP is a political business run as a partnership, i.e. as a collective, for the benefit of the community. (For a copy of the order, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the bookstore, and any donation you can afford.)

The three women who engineered the lockout were ordered to leave the business immediately, each with a payment equivalent to one month's pay. The four of us who were locked out were ordered to remain. We were given the tasks of incorporating the business, running it in a fiscally sound way, training a new collective, and leaving more slowly, two of us by April 1984 and two of us by April 1985.

What does all this mean for other collectives who may face a similar situation? Many people involved in collectives locally watched our case with much concern and offered their support. Our struggle was often frighteningly relevant to their groups. Although the decision in our case is legally binding, it does not serve as a legal precedent, since it was made by arbitrators rather than in a court of law. Many people feel, however, that it is an important community precedent, and we know of at least one collective in which a similar power-play was averted largely because of the result of our case.

We have learned several things that can be done to avoid such wounding and debilitating battles in the future. One of the most obvious is to make sure the collective represents itself as accurately as possible. We know that, for many collectives, it may be difficult to draw up papers which will accurately and legally reflect group understandings about ownership and responsibility. It is not uncommon among collectives to keep legal documents in the name of one or some of the members for 'convenience'. Many members may not wish to be recognized as legally responsible for the business or may be oppsed to any but the most perfunctory forms of legal organization. Our experience, however, clearly illustrates that not doing so can leave you at the mercy of the government and the courts, with less control and more complications than the restrictions you may face in incorporating or declaring yourselves a partnership of all your members.

Incorporating for us was fairly easy; we even found attorneys who did it for free out of a grant they had for county low-income legal work. (The National Economic Development Law Project, 1950 Addison, Berkeley, CA 548-2600) Our corporate name is 'Women and Children First', because the name 'A Woman's Place' was already taken. We chose to be a non-profit mutual benefits corporation because we wanted to include the principle that no collective member should have to invest money to join, nor should she take money out when she leaves. At the same time, this ownership form allowed us to mandate that, should AWP ever close, any extra money would go to another feminist institution. In this way we tried to reflect "community ownership". We also wanted all the collective workers to govern the organization as its Board of Directors. (In other forms of non-profit in California, the board must be 51% "disinterested" directors, i.e. not on

Closed 'til further notice for reorganization

This collective is not a collective. It is a collection of women completely at odds with each other to the extent that meetings are emotional battery; there is hardly any time to actually think about the bookstore; and no one in the collective is getting what she needs. This has been the situation for about a year now. The two women who originally were the actual envisioners, Carol and Alice, have re-formed into a collective of two for now, and have decided to close the store 'til further notice to regroup, reorganize, do necessary chores, and the like. The other 5 women, Darlene, Jesse, Elizabeth, Natalie, Keiko are being told, and will receive the pay due through September 15, plus any meeting pay due, plus one month's salary. We are sorry it has come to this, but it has.

Carol Alice

[Ed. note: Natalie, although nominally locked out along with the other four, sided with Carol and Alice in the controversy.]

the payroll or receiving any money from the corporation.) We highly recommend We Own It (Bell Springs Publication, available at AWP) which we found very helpful in making these decisions.

We think now that any political group must have, from its inception, at least some general, written agreements on its politics. While such agreement doesn't mean there won't be conflict or disagreement, it does give the group some guidelines and principles to use as the basis of decision making, discussion and accountability.

Those of us now at A Woman's Place strongly support the collective process as part of the overall politics for which the bookstore exists. For us, consensus means building a group unity, coming to a way of doing things that may not be any particular individual's way, but which works for the group. We regard a "no" vote as no more important than a "yes", and keep working until we come to an agreement. Vetoing and blocking is regarded as a very grave action, and a sign of a deep problem within the group. If anyone were blocking with any frequency, we would have to ask if that person should really be working in this group. We have also signed a "fail-safe" agreement so that, if we all come to a stalemate and are unable to mediate or move in any other way, we will take the problem to outside arbitrators, not to the courts.

As well as incorporating the store, we have also just incorporated a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation called "Women and Children Too", through which we will carry out some of the non-income earning projects of the store: a women's center/lounge, lending library, free books to women in prison, events, a children's area etc. We hope to use the tax-exempt status to solicit donations and grants.

One thing we've realized about consensus decision-making is that its success depends greatly on the degree of trust between collective members. This does not mean unconditional faith, but rather trust built on a foundation of challenging each other, giving successful criticism, and acknowledging our feelings towards one another. With this trust, we can make leaps of faith so that we can compromise with each other, accept that someone else's ideas might work better, and even be willing to try something although we think it might not work.

This is an exciting period of growth and change for A Woman's Place. This year we expect to have gross sales of over $250,000, pay six workers approximately $900 monthly in wages and benefits, and remain open every day of the year. As always, we will continue to sponsor events and make available information about feminism and progressive politics that is rarely available elsewhere. We are investigating computerizing some of our paper work, expanding mail-order business and reaching out to more of our community.

Certainly it is not easy running a political business. Sometimes, when the pressure's on so high we think we're going to pop: everyone is wearing their "high on stress" buttons, all the calculators are breaking down at once, and there are three problem orders that no one seems to know anything about. At these times, it's tempting to think that a more bureaucratic form of management might, at least, be a bit calmer. We have to remind ourselves then that bureaucracies are no more efficient than we are. Other days we're so bogged down in the small-business aspects of our work that we think we might as well be selling car parts. There are also the days, though, when someone comes in totally turned on about a book we recommended, or someone is amazed that the woman waiting on her knows so much about the whole publication history, contents and critical reactions to the books she wants, and we explain that working collectively means that we all get to know a lot about "our" business. Sometimes someone just walks in, takes a deep breath and says, "I'm so glad you're here." These days make it all worth it. □

The Collective — February 1985

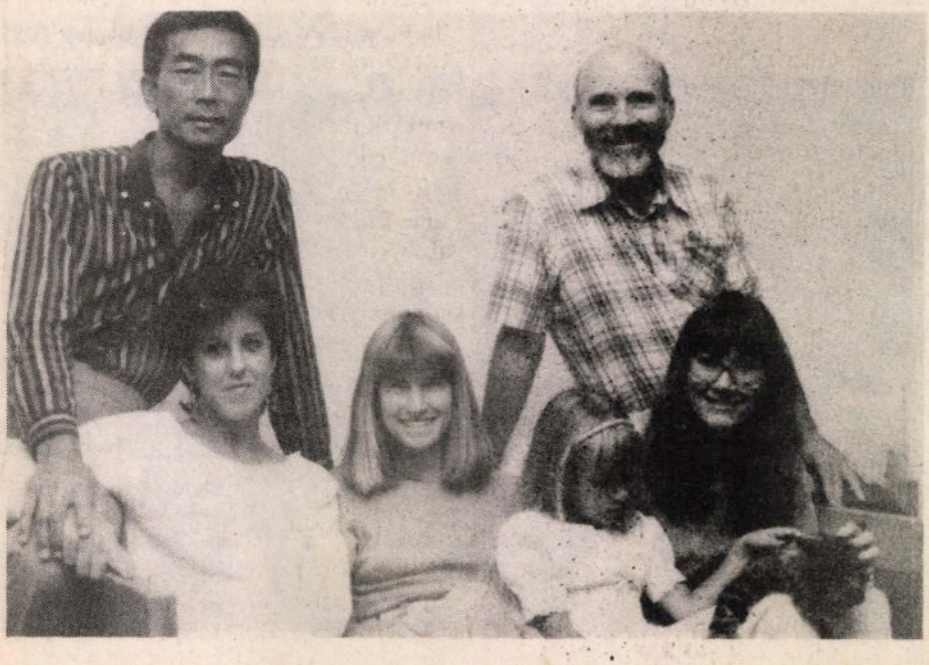
SHARED HOUSING
in the Bay Area

BY GEOPH KOZENY

Communal housing is a growing trend in the Bay Area, whether by choice or necessity. Many prefer it as an ideal home environment which provides a base of friendship and support; others find it a financial necessity given the premium cost of small apartments in the area.

The "intentional households"—those that choose to live together to create the supportive environment—are recognizable by several common characteristics: three or more adults, shared chores, shared meals, shared economics (ranging from pro-rated rents and utilities, to total income sharing), regular house meetings, and some degree of mutual interaction and support. Most of them are autonomous, so it's tough to estimate just how many are around . . . I'm personally acquainted with over 200, which is just the tip of the iceberg, perhaps ten or twenty percent of the total.

You can find them in the usual ways. "Housemates Wanted" ads on the bulletin boards at health food co-ops and neighborhood cafes, "Shared Housing" classifieds in the local newspapers, particularly those with 'progressive' leanings. Hidden in the thick volumes of "Roommates Wanted" (mostly share rentals of the non-communal variety) at any of the local referral listing services (which charge $8-$14 to look through their listings). Or you make an acquaintance at a community forum or a political rally, or meet a friend of a friend, and lo and behold—they live with three or four (or eleven!) others and "Why don't you come over for dinner sometime?"



But perhaps the best way is the several groups around which help potential housemates locate houses with openings, or in some cases, to form core groups which then form new houses. The most informal of these is the Communal Grapevine network, founded in 1978, which relies mostly on word of mouth referrals and monthly "Housing Raps". There are two free raps each month, one in San Francisco and one in the East Bay, which rotate among a dozen or so houses.

Project Share, started in 1981, is a non-profit shared housing service serving Berkeley and Oakland. Their focus is to help people deal with the housing shortage and to overcome the isolation of living alone; their activities include helping people learn about group living, helping them find places in existing houses, and organizing group households. There are also several similar projects started in recent years, often emphasizing low-income and single-parent housing.

One Berkeley architect, Ken Norwood, regularly offers workshops on how to group-purchase shared housing—for people who want to buy a home, but do not want to live alone. His idea is to bring together groups which then can buy a large house or multi-unit building, modifying it for shared living. He says that most of the people he works with are single women, single parents or the elderly—mostly middle class business professionals and skilled workers.

Innovative Housing, a non-profit agency founded in 1980, has organized over fifty shared households in five Bay Area counties. They offer workshops which introduce people to the concept of creative group living, then help form compatible groups by clarifying needs and desires, and by teaching shared living skills. They hold "master leases" on rental properties, acting as a go-between for conservative property owners and the

more liberal shared householders. They also own four of the properties. The household members are primarily low-income, and almost half are single parents or elderly.

A third of Innovative Housing's 1986 projected budget of $819,000 will come from a $30 monthly fee paid by each house member; the balance comes from grants and public agencies. Its overall goal is to operate "pilot programs demonstrating the marketability, cost-effectiveness, and social and environmental benefits of affordable housing within cooperative living environments."

It's interesting to note that the typical household includes about six adults—half women, half men. About half the houses have one or two kids, sometimes more. The age range is pretty well distributed from infants to folks in their 70's, though by far the biggest clump is the people in their 30's (the "Baby Boomers") and 20's (the students and the folks beginning careers).

Most members are also involved, at least peripherally though often thoroughly, in some 'progressive' cause to make the world a better place. Guess that if you're going to try to change the world, there's no better place to start than right at home! □

CONTACT INFORMATION

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3102 Telegraph Ave.
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Innovative Housing
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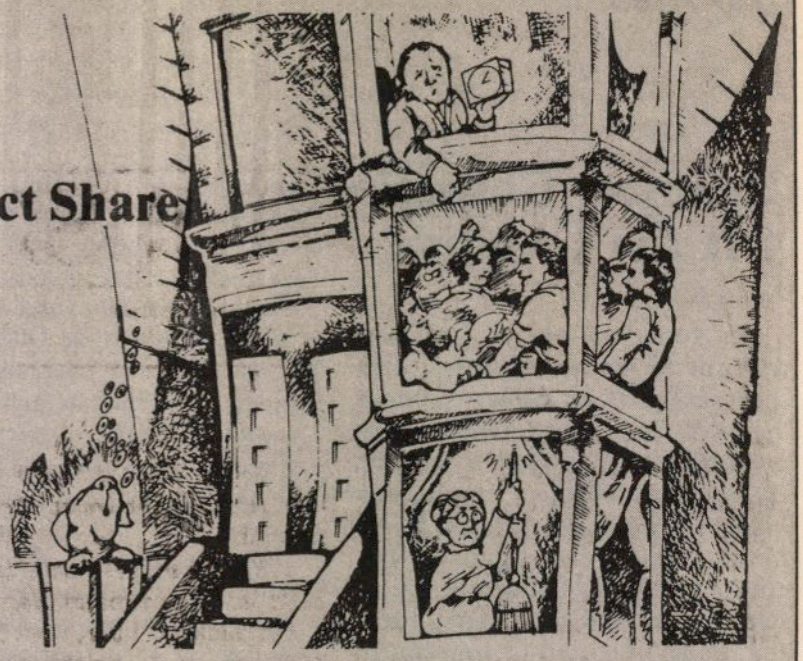
Mill Valley, CA 94941

Project Share



by Arthur Gladstone

Project Share is a nonprofit shared housing service, started in 1981. Many such projects have been started in recent years to help people deal with the housing shortage and to overcome the isolation of living alone. Like most such projects we've been especially involved with situations in which one person moves in with one other person. However, we also have a strong interest in communal living. We help people learn about group living, help them find places in existing households, and have organized two group households.

The first household we organized was in a large and luxurious old mansion in Oakland. A dozen people lived there enthusiastically. Unfortunately the house was only available for a short time because it was sold. We couldn't find another house that was big enough, so the group split and moved into two smaller houses.

The second household was intended especially to provide for single parents, who have a very difficult time finding housing. The initial group consisted of three single parents with six children, one part-time parent, and four other people. I was part of this group, as resident facilitator.

Most of the people had no communal living experience, so I thought I would help them learn about group living, decision-making, work arrangements, conflict resolution, etc. This turned out to be a mistake. At first people welcomed my role but resentments soon developed. Some people didn't like weekly house meetings, some people thought I was trying to impose my ideas on the group, some people thought I had too much influence. On the other hand, some people saw me as being in charge and came to me with all their problems and complaints. After 11 months of this I left. I think I got cured of some of my "helpfulness"! I might have been able to be useful as a facilitator if I wasn't also living there; trying to combine the two roles didn't work.

Up to now Project Share has been supported by grants from the cities of Berkeley and Oakland. Most of this money has come from the federal government, in the form of Community Development Block Grants. With threatened federal funding cuts we're not sure what we'll do after this fiscal year. □

Reprinted from
Berkeley Co-op News

Rainbow Collective Off the Ground

by Paul Rauber

The feast laid out on the huge tables in the middle of what is to be the sewing room for the new Rainbow Workers Cooperative reflected the multi-ethnic composition of the East Bay's newest worker co-op, with Filipino stuffed pig, Chinese bows, Mexican tamales and good old Southern fried chicken. The spread was to celebrate the end of a hard fought struggle and the start of cooperative production on April 1.

The table which held the celebratory feast would soon hold mounds of jackets, sleeping bags, tents and sportswear as the cooperative gets down to work. Although only two workers will start this week, Rainbow Workers organizer Betty Chisolm boasts that "we have 35 members and we plan to put them all to work by the first of May." She still can hardly believe her eyes, seeing the rapid progress of her dream coming into reality. "It's coming together!" she says with wonder. "It's fantastic!"

It was less than six months when the Sierra Designs outdoor equipment company announced that it was closing down its manufacturing facility in Oakland and contracting out instead to firms in Taiwan and the Philippines. It was a bitter irony for the 100 workers in the manufacturing plant, most of them middle-aged women who had come from Mexico or Asia themselves, to see their jobs exported back to their home countries.

What followed was a paradigm of effective response to a threatened plant closure. The workers contacted the Oakland-based Plant Closures Project, who helped them mount a successful consumer boycott and finally negotiate a settlement with Sierra Designs. In the end, the company agreed to fully support the workers in their dream of setting up their own sewing cooperative, donating $30,000 from a special promotional sale in January. After some initial prodding, the Oakland Office of Economic Development and Employment pitched in, and was instrumental in helping to secure the new Kennedy Drive plant and in arranging financing.

Munching on a tamale, Jan Gilbrecht of the Plant Closures Project ascribed the success of the Rainbow Workers campaign to "the dedication of the workforce and the high level of community support in Oakland." Is the Plant Closures Project going to become the Plant Openings Project? "It would be nice if we could keep pace with the number of plant closings that are going on," replied Gilbrecht with a wan smile. "This is the first new business opening that we've gone to."

The Rainbow Workers' first contract is with Walrus Tents, a new company run by some of the people who helped found Sierra Designs back in 1965. "It's just like getting the old family back together again," says Betty Chisolm. George Marks, whose spectacular moustachios readily explain how his company got its name, explains that as his business started to improve, he found himself in need of a contractor. "And what better contractor than our old friends who are now in business for themselves?" he asks. The workers are experienced, skilled, and dedicated to their new cooperative. Marks says he has been getting so many orders that he was worried about how to produce them. "We need the co-op, frankly, as much as the co-op needs us," he told the Co-op News.

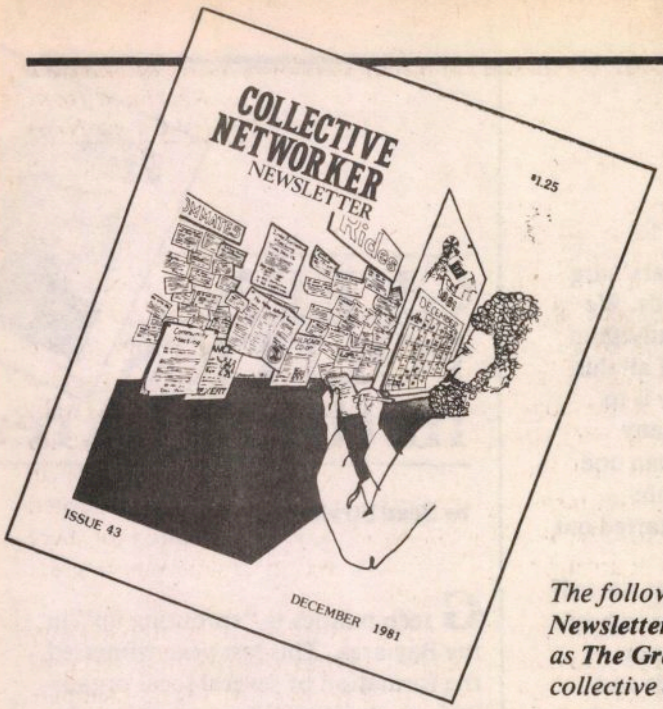
Sierra Designs president Alan Botsford was also mingling with the crowd. He said that the first of the estimated $400,000 in contracts his company will make with the Rainbow Co-op should begin in about two weeks. Sierra Designs donated tables, chairs and other equipment to the Rainbow Workers, and gave them a good deal on sewing machines as well. According to Botsford, "we ended up giving them the best possible price on the market, and then we discounted that by 10%, just to be sure that there was no question that it was a great deal."

Once full production starts, Betty Chisolm hopes to institute a series of weekly meetings with the 35 members of the cooperative: "We want to get people to realize that they *are* part owners, and get away from looking towards the boss, because we're all the bosses in a way."

As for the Plant Closures Project, with the fairy tale end to the Sierra Designs struggle they're off to new battlefields. The next is Blue Cross in Oakland. Blue Cross has sold its building to Kaiser, and while it doesn't have to vacate until 1990, there are indications that the move might come much sooner, with the possible displacement of 2200 jobs.

For these workers, says Jan Gilbrecht, the successful settlement between Sierra Designs and the Rainbow Workers brings new hope. "It shows that there are real alternatives to just sitting back and taking it when your employer announces a closing," she says.

While the Rainbow Workers' solution may not be a model for every situation, the broad community support they were able to attract has served to hearten other workers trying to hold on to jobs in their communities. "Clearly you're not going to have a workers' co-op at Blue Cross," says Gilbrecht, "but I think something might be able to be done to convince them to stay in Oakland." For the Rainbow Workers, the battle for jobs is temporarily over. For the Blue Cross workers, however, it may be just beginning. □



The following is a sampler of articles from the ***Collective Networker Newsletter****. The Networker is an eight year old monthly, formerly known as* ***The Grapevine****, which includes articles, a calendar of Bay Area collective events and housing referrals.*

ANOTHER BRIARPATCH STORY

BY LYNN GRAVESTOCK

Once upon a time, we were simply a small group of friends. Several of us had small businesses, and large questions. How do you stay alive in business if you don't necessarily want to become rich, famous, impersonal or focused on creating a larger business empire? What do the words say when you advertise without hype? And where then do you advertise? What parts of business let you afford informality, and when does informality invite disaster? Or perhaps, how on earth can I find a skilled bicycle mechanic who speaks and writes Spanish, French, and German, and who knows about the practicalities of budgets, computers and graphic design?

You already know that you can go to school forever and you probably won't get told or shown the answers that a Briarpatch business sometimes has a need to know. Out of our own frustration and loneliness here, we turned to each other for help. We taught each other, made suggestions, loaned equipment, traded skills and generally struggled to create a world we wished had been there all along.

The key to successful Briarpatch network is ongoing personal contact. If you own your own business and want to create, or tap into, a helpful supportive community, just do as we did—ask the people you already know the questions you need help with. Your pool of acquaintances and friends is an invaluable resource. You will find that in most groups of 20-30 people almost all needs will be met. For those that aren't, at least strong leads will be provided.

One danger that small business owners are particularly susceptible to is that of becoming a store "shut-in". We can't stress enough how important it is to keep lines of communication open. If you don't have time to get out and visit much, then make your customers part of your support group. You might be surprised at how much they have to offer, and how willing they are to share it.

Once you've got your business and a group of supportive friends, you've got a Briarpatch. Over time your community will grow and grow. . .

We did this for some years, and then we were given a small taste of national and international fame. Letters started pouring in. On the surface they said, "Send me anything you have. Can I join your group?" Underneath they asked "What do you know that can give me a sense of belonging? How can I be part of a small business where people care for each other?" Many had particular questions that demanded time and thought to answer, or which were parts of larger problems that we couldn't afford to resolve, for example: "Do you know anyone who will give me a job working with alternative forms of energy?" "How can I start a small business on $100 or less?", "Can you help us with our

co-op/writing/legal/accounting/problems?"

As the correspondence grew, we began to feel overwhelmed. Each letter from "out there" deserved a thoughtful response, and this diverted us from our first priorities—our own businesses, families and friends. We were separate individuals who happened to hold a philosophy in common, not a structured organization with an office and a paid staff. Occasionally, someone got paid a little, but they also had their own business to look after. Volunteers took turns answering the mail, but often lacked the overview to answer some questions, or the specific knowledge to answer others. Each change in volunteers also meant that someone would have to learn to answer this correspondence from scratch, while the writers wait.

Our response to this growing dilemma has been to consciously keep a low profile. All new "briars" are friends, or friends-fo-friends. We never advertise, and generally shun publicity. . . . The point of all this "keep it small" philosophy is to encourage the growth of many Briarpatch nodes, rather than one big, centralized organization: precisely the situation we started out wanting to avoid!

So what does it take to get started? Probably a good first step is to begin talking up the idea of a support network among your friends and acquaintances—and see who perks up at the suggestion. Another good resource for studying the Briarpatch concept is to get a copy of the *Briarpatch Book*, which chronicles the first years of the local Briarpatch Network (available postpaid for $9.50 from 151 Potrero, SF, Ca. 94110). For further reading on small scale business and worker self management, see the list below. □

SUGGESTED READINGS
on Collectives and Workers Self-Management

Honest Business, Michael Phillips & Sali Rasberry, Random House, New York, NY, 1982.

Mutual Aid, Petr Kropotkin, Porter Sargent Publishers, Boston, MA, 1902.

No Bosses Here!: A Manual on Working Collectively and Cooperatively, Karen Brandow & Jim McDonnell, Vocations for Social Change, Boston, MA, 1981.

Resource Manual for a Living Revolution, Coover, Deacon, Esser, Moore; New Society Press, Philadelphia, PA, new edition, 1985.

Small-Time Operator, Bernard Kamoroff & Jim Beatty, Bell Springs Publishing, Laytonville, CA, 1980.

Seven Laws of Money, The, Michael Phillips, Random House, New York, NY, 1974.

We Own It!, Peter Honingsberg, Bernard Kamaroff & Jim Beatty, Bell Springs Publishing, Laytonvile, CA 1982.

Workers Control: A Reader on Labor & Social Change, Hunnius, Garson & Case, editors; Vintage, New York, NY, 1973.

Workplace Democracy: A Guide to Workplace Ownership, Participation, & Self-Management Experiments in the United States and Europe, Daniel Zwerdling, Harper, New York, NY, 1978.

GREEN POLITICS in the Bay Area

by Sean Stryker

Green politics is "sprouting up" in the Bay area. This last year witnessed the formation of several local organizations dedicated to promoting decentralized community-based economics and alternative lifestyles.

The Greens of the San Francisco Bay area share certain values with the well-known European Green parties. All over the United States, in fact, grassroots community groups have been started to foster ecological wisdom, social responsibility, grassroots democracy, decentralization, spirituality, nonsexism, and nonviolence in this country.

In August, 1984, many of these groups were linked together when an inter-regional networking organization the Committees of Correspondence, was formed in St. Paul, Minnesota. This meeting brought together thinkers and organizers who have been active for years on peace, ecology, social justice, and human rights issues. The meeting included farmers, teachers, community organizers, and church leaders from all over the country. It was as a result of this meeting that people began talking about starting a Green movement in the San Francisco Bay area.

At first it seemed that was all they did—talk. "We'd been going to planning meetings for months," recalls Jerry Gwathney who publishes the national distributed *Green Letter*. "The focus was not on widespread public involvement."

Certainly there were many ideas to be discussed. A number of books had

been written about Green politics, including *Green Politics* by Frijof Capra and Charlene Spretnak, and *Seeing Green*, by Jonathan Porritt. People wanted to talk about the ideas in these books.

The Greens feel it is necessary for a new cultural worldview or paradigm to take root in society in order for a fundamental shift in values to take place. The emerging worldview emphasizes the ecological interdependence of all things, individuals and societies, and their connections to the cyclical processes of nature.

It is not only a question of material connectedness, however; the Green perspective relates ecological interdependence to the interconnectedness of social issues like world peace and social and economic justice. The idea that it is necessary to "think globally and act locally" captures the essence of this holistic outlook as it relates to concrete political and economic problems.

The Greens oppose all forms of exploitation—exploitation of nature and exploitation of cultures. They respect and value the diversity of different forms and ways of life. In order to resist exploitation in all of its varieties, the Greens see a need to take control of peoples' lives out of the hands of big business and big government and return it to the people themselves. They value the rights of individuals and communities to determine their own ways of living and their own history.

To promote freedom of self-determination, the Greens maintain that society must move from a highly centralized, hierarchical, and bureaucratic social order to decentralized, anti-hierarchical, and democratic modes of organization. They regard this movement as the way to create a safe, healthful environment in which social and economic justice, peace, and common security have eliminated the threat of nuclear war and created the conditions for a self-sustaining society.

As people were meeting in San Francisco to discuss Green politics, however, some grew discouraged with the lack of concrete action. Several people who lived in the East Bay, including Jerry Gwathney and Greg Jan, found themselves dissatisfied with small group discussions, so they decided to start a group that would be "opened up to the public," as Greg puts it.

The idea that it is necessary to "think globally and act locally" captures the essence of this holistic outlook as it relates to concrete political and economic problems.

They made a commitment to set up a series of educational monthly meetings to which the public would be actively invited. It was the beginning of the East Bay Green Alliance.

At its founding meeting in May, 1985, the East Bay group featured a panel that included, among others, Jonathan Porritt, Director of the Brithsh Friends of the Earth, a founder of the Ecology Party, and author of *Seeing Green*; Charlene Spretnak, co-author of *The Politics of Women's Spirituality*; Magaly Mossman-Rodriguez, a prominent community organizer; and Danny Moses, community activist and Editorial Director of Sierra Club Books is currently serving as the Greater Bay Area representative to the interregional Committees of Correspondence. Subsequent meetings have featured such notable people as Peter Berg of the Planet Drum Foundation and Dave Foreman of Earth First! Altogether, according to Greg Jan, some 600 people have come to one or more of the East Bay meetings since its beginning in May. And the numbers keep growing . . .

The East Bay organizers plan to continue these monthly educational meetings, but more is happening. The East Bay Green Alliance has formed a number of working groups addressing themselves to various issues. A Native American working group is currently involved with the campaign to resist forced relocation of 10,000 Navajos from their land on the Big Mountain Tribal Reservation. (They're being moved to make way for coal and uranium mining interests.) A Green City working group is helping the Planet Drum foundation with a Winter Solstice event to raise funds for its Green City project. An eco-feminism group is planning the Starhawk presentation on spirituality and politics, and an animal rights/deep ecology group is developing spiritual ceremonies.

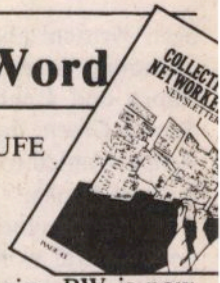
The East Bay Green Alliance also puts out a bi-monthly newsletter to keep members informed on what's happening, and they recently started a policy group to develop positions on a wide variety of issues and form, in effect, a kind of "shadow government." They hope to continue expanding these working groups to mobilize action on a wide variety of issues.

Organizers in San Francisco held the convening meeting of the San Francisco Greens on October 5, 1985, four months after the founding meeting of the East Bay Green Alliance. About 60 people came to find out about Green politics. They saw a slide show on Green movements

in France, England, and Germany, and heard from Danny Moses on the Committees of Correspondence. They then formed small working groups on Big Mountain, toxic chemicals in the household, community gardens, multicultural diversity, local economics in San Francisco's Mission district, and other issues. The Big Mountain working group has involved itself in the Big Mountain campaign along with the East Bay Native American working group, and it sponsored a presentation on the Big Mountain issue at the San Francisco Greens' November general meeting. In December, the household toxics and community gardens groups sponsored Debra Dadd, author of *Nontoxic and Natural,* and Jay Kilbourne, Director of the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (SLUG). These working groups will be collaborating to organize a grassroots anti-toxics campaign in the Richmond District of San Francisco. A newsletter group put out its first issue in November. Most recently, a land use working group and a policy group were formed.

The East Bay Green Alliance and the San Francisco Greens are both very young organizations, and it's still too early to say where exactly they are going. But the energy level is high, and there is a real feeling that these groups are on to something. Groups have also been formed in Marin, Sonoma, and Mendocino, and a group is currently in the process of being organized in Monterey. With the proliferation of these organizations in the Greater Bay area, and with the growing number of Green organizations nationwide, it is apparent to organizers working on a local level that they are part of something big. A recent report from an inter-regional meeting the Committees of Correspondence confirmed indications that the Green movement is beginning to take off. □

An Interview with Processed World



BY CHAZ BUFE

If you work in the financial district, you've probably seen people hawking magazines while wearing an oversized detergent box (marked "Bound, Gagged and *Tied* to Wage Slavery") and a peanut can (labeled "Humming Electronic Plantations—Making Us Nuts"). These fine folks are members of Processed World, "the magazine with a bad attitude," produced by and intended for dissident office workers.

Processed World is the largest circulation anti-authoritarian periodical in the United States with a press run of 4000 copies. PW is now in its fourth year and has just published its 14th issue.

I recently interviewed three longtime PW staff members at their not-so-luxurious headquarters in a South of Market warehouse. Two of the three, Lucius Cabins and Louis Michaelson, are founding members; the third, Meadow, has been involved for over two years. The founders of the group were members of the Union of Concerned Commies, an anti-nuclear/anti-military guerilla theater group.

Networker: How and why was Processed World started?

Cabins: We stole tons of paper from various banks. My prescription was: "A ream a day keeps the paper bills away." And sure enough the first two issues of Processed World were printed on paper expropriated from banks. The motivation was that these institutions are ruining us, so let's do humanity a favor and divert some of these resources they're squandering and do something good with them. And so we did.

The why was that we all came from political backgrounds, environmental, etc., and we wanted to do something about our daily lives. We were working in offices with other people who were intelligent and disaffected and could have been doing far more interesting things with their lives; so we thought we'd start a magazine and see what would happen. Luckily it took off.

It was our daily lives. It wasn't a case of entryism.* We didn't say "Hey! This is a vital area; let's get jobs there." Everybody who worked on the magazine worked in an office. Right now, at least half of the staff still does office work, although some of us have managed to wriggle out of it. Everybody in the group does have office wage slave experience, though.

Michaelson: There's quite a range. At one time or another, Processed World's staff has included virtually every non-supervisorial position from bike messenger to administrative assistant.

Networker: When you started Processed World, what was your structure like? Were you using majority vote? Consensus?

Cabins: For the first issue or two there were never more than six or seven people at meetings, so

*entryism is the practice of political groups infiltrating vital industries and areas of political work.

consensus was the rule, not that it was ever formally adopted. Around the seventh or eighth issue we began to form structures. But it's been very informal all along. The idea is that anything anybody wants to contribute is welcome, but if you don't have expectations in the first place and they don't contribute it's no great loss.

Networker: That brings up another problem called the tyranny of structurelessness. In a lot of collectives where there is no structure, those who have been around the longest or do the most work tend to call the shots, generally without even intending to do so. How do you deal with that?

Cabins: All along the open meeting has been the final arbiter. Naturally those of us who have been around the longest, been most involved and have the biggest mouths have a lot of influence. There haven't been any situations where there were large factions opposed to each other.

I'd say that we haven't dealt very well with that problem, frankly. The tyranny of structurelessness still prevails although we are in the middle of making some pretty interesting changes. For instance, just the other night Prod-Com, the production committee . . .

Michaelson: (interrupting) We're into bureaucratic acronyms.

Meadow: We have Prod-Com and Con-Com, the continuity committee.

Cabins: We finally decided to make the process of production more transparent by writing everything down and doing more deliberate skill sharing. So that will probably lead to less of a tyranny of structurelessness. But I don't think that setting up a specific structure will solve the problem because you're still dependent upon people taking responsibility and taking initiative. If it's a situation where a few people are doing a lot of work and the rest are just along for the ride, then it feels like tyranny.

Networker: How do you determine membership on your committees?

Meadow: It's totally voluntary. Anybody who wants to can be on them.

Cabins: Our committees don't make decisions; they make recommendations to the overall group.

Networker: How many people are involved with the project right now?

Cabins: That's an impossible question because it all depends on how you define membership. There are about 30 people who generally contribute something, 50 if you count collating.

Michaelson: There's actually a core group of 13 or 14 who consistently show up for meetings. There's been quite a turnover in that group. The only people left in it from the beginning are you (Cabins), me and Maxine Holz.

Networker: With that many people involved, do you still use consensus as a means of decision making?

Cabins: We use an informal consensus unless there's a real dispute and then we vote.

Meadow: But it doesn't mean that the majority always wins. For instance, if there were seven people mildly in favor of something and three strongly opposed, we might reject it.

Cabins: That brings up another point—that in a strict consensus system, one or two noisy people can block everybody else.

Michaelson: I think that a strict consensus system with no voting is a bad way to go. You need voting as a last resort. Pure consensus is for people who have all the time in the world.

Networker: Next question. How would you define Processed World politically?

Cabins: I avoid labels.

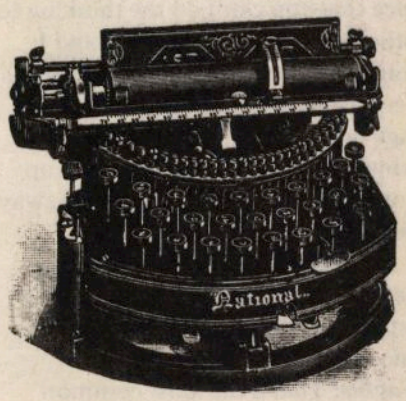
Michaelson: I think we can be more specific than that. There's a consensus that, at the very least, most office work is useless. It involves just moving information around or storing it, or it's used directly to dominate people. Second, that there's a great deal too much work being done which doesn't benefit ordinary human beings, and that we want to reduce the amount of work people have to do. Further, I think most of us would agree that the present world political, social and economic structure is oppressive and brutalizing and is destroying the world. We would all aim for a society which is nonhierarchical, run by some type of direct democracy, and in which work is done to satisfy people's needs.

Cabins: And that people have direct control over the work they do.

Michaelson: I don't think you'd find anybody with a hard-line anti-technological position.

Cabins: People who are anti-tech think we're pro-tech, and people who are pro-tech think we're anti-tech. In

The tyranny of structurelessness still prevails although we are in the middle of making some pretty interesting changes.



To me, the refusal of what exists is positive. It encourages people.

fact, we think that both categories are useless. You have to look at what your object is, what social relationships does it force, if any, and then how are you going to use it, if you are.

Michaelson: I think that at Processed World you'd also find a lot of ecological consciousness and support for feminism, although we're not sympathetic to anti-porn-type feminism or corporate feminism.

Cabins: What we support is a clearly defined anti-capitalist feminism, a type with completely different values. There's been a lot of feminist analysis in Processed World, and most of the people who have written it would call themselves feminists somewhere down the laundry list.

Michaelson: You could categorize the general operation as being anti-authoritarian.

Networker: That brings up one common criticism of Processed World—that it's purely negative, that you have no positive program.

Michaelson: A number of us tried to answer that charge in issue #14. But we all bit down pretty hard on the idea that you can't do the thinking for other people. On the other hand I think that radical utopian thinking is very necessary—as opposed to New Age or reformist utopian thinking which imagines that you can set up your new society without doing away with the old one.

I can't swallow that thing about negative and positive. To me, the refusal of what exists is positive. It encourages people.

Cabins: That's the most common thing we hear from people when they first see Processed World: "Finally. I've found other people who feel the same way. What a relief!"

Michaelson: One of the primary weapons of this society is the way in which it isolates. The first step out of isolation is a radical step.

Networker: After four years and 14 issues are there any changes you'd like to see?

Michaelson: The readership of the magazine is mainly young, white and hip and I'd like to see that change. Also, I've always hoped that Processed World would become a focus of on-the-job organizing. But we're not going to try to make the magazine all things to all people. A lot of its vitality comes from the fact that it's rooted in our subjective reality. Obviously we would really like it if people from different backgrounds would join us.

Networker: So you're dealing with your own experiences and think it would be aritificial to deal with other's issues.

Michaelson: Right. One's always a little suspicious of men who write articles about feminism, and I'd be suspicious of white members of this group writing about racism, at least white racism. I'd rather have people affected by it write about it.

Networker: What are your plans for the future?

Cabins: I would assume that we'll go to at least 25 issues; and I would like to see an anthology appear. It would be a shame to see all this energy disappear. We'd also like to be more involved with agitation and theater in the streets. □

Queries, comments, subscriptions ($10 a year), etc. can be sent to: Processed World, 55 Sutter St. #829, San Francisco, CA 94104.

An Alternative High School

BY TOBEY KAPLAN

Contra Costa Alternative School (CCAS), in the East Bay, is a truly alternative high school. By alternative, CCAS means allowing for choice—and what is offered here is an innovative learning environment that is quite different from public or other private schools. The school reflects the imaginations of teachers and students who have been working for CCAS since 1969.

A diploma from Contra Costa Alternative School meets state requirements, and graduates are eligible for admission to community colleges and the state university system. While encouraging basic academic achievement, the staff helps students create a non-pressured learning environment. The atmosphere of relaxed discipline allows students to develop their own sense of personal success. Students design their own learning and personal growth programs with assistance from the directors, and they can earn credits for classes and internships off campus.

Classes are kept small, usually less than a 10:1 student-teacher ratio for grades 8 through 12. Students from a mixture of social and economic backgrounds in Oakland, Berkeley and Contra Costa County come to CCAS, located in the basement of the Orinda Community Church, a short walk from BART. Currently CCAS serves twenty-three students and their families, all of whom have input into the collectively operated school. The

three directors, Joel Weber, Benee Beck, and Jeannie Dooha, all come from varied educational backgrounds and provide counseling and teach classes. The collective spirit allows each student to feel empowered, to exercise their voice and to take responsibility for the educational community. Students take turns chairing a weekly community meeting where decisions are made regarding field trips, student fund expenditures, and special events. Staff and students openly discuss problems and privileges. Parents have regular check-in meetings with directors and provide support to one another and the school. A board committee consisting of parents, former students, staff and community supporters all pitch in to help with recruitment, public relations and fundraising.

The school works best for students who are motivated by a non-authoritarian environment, who have gotten lost in large schools or who have been intimidated by the high pressure of academic success. The students themselves can best describe how they've discovered themselves at CCAS, where learning is a process of self-determination while they gain responsibilities, and learn to recognize their own values, needs and "improvisational genius".

When James first moved to the Bay Area he was looking for a private school. His brother knew someone who had graduated from CCAS, which is the way most students are referred—through other kids. At first James felt "confused and scared", but now "it's easy to make friends". He says "CCAS is a family situation—we're all so close . . . it's fun to come here, better than watching TV and better than other schools that I attended." James admits his history of flunking classes in other private schools, but in the past two years he's passed every class. The difference is "schooling is up to me . . . there isn't the pressure from teachers . . . students have the power here . . . the teachers are working for us . . . I have the responsibility of what happens and I can instigate new activities, classes . . .there's the feeling of respect you wouldn't get in a larger school." James adds that "CCAS might not be for everyone but this environment has made it easy to act in a mature way and set up a situation more conducive to learning . . ."

Denise agrees that in her experience teachers acted superior which intimidated her from learning. She says she was kicked out of public school which she never liked anyway. As a new student to CCAS, Denise reports "I've gotten more in two months here than in two years of public school . . . CCAS is a second family."

Tim quit public school because he felt badgered by "propaganda telling me what to do and how to behave . . . everyone was in a clique . . . you had to be a surfer . . . everyone had a label . . . I couldn't be an individual. In public school the teachers seemed like they hated the students, that's how I felt; they didn't care if I learned and when I got behind (in schoolwork) they wouldn't help. At CCAS, the teachers are on my side . . . "

There are dozens more stories like these, how CCAS has made a difference in the lives of students who had felt unsuccessful in completing their high school diploma program.

At CCAS, students don't just get through school and receive their diplomas. They become involved in the social, political and recreational activities provided by the greater Bay Area. The directors/staff use their extensive counseling skills and employ creative resources that are available. Students receive personal attention and help each other get through rough times. They motivate teachers to revise courses and suggest new classes—both teachers and students create exciting ways to learn. □

Tobey is the Consulting Coordinator and a Poet-in-Residence with California Poets in the Schools. She is also the Recruitment/Development Coordinator for Contra Costa Alternative School.

Community Memory Goes Public

Community Memory is a Berkeley collective that tries to make a computer data base available to people who don't own a computer.

The Community Memory system has been up and running on three terminals in Berkeley for 16 months. Every month, each terminal gets about 600 uses, and over a thousand new messages are added to the database. The terminals are located at the La Pena Cultural Center, at the Telegraph Avenue Co-op, and at the Whole Earth Access Store. These three public access terminals allow the users to put their own messages into the system, and locate-and-retrieve messages that interest them.

New terminals will be added to the system as soon as we (or someone else) can afford it. We're also talking with other groups about installing Community Memories in their communities. Eventually, our networking software will link together several similar systems so that any user can dip into the information pools of all the Community Memories.

The Community Memory system provides simple yet powerful ways to store and label information, which can then be browsed, selected, sorted and fished out. All the facilities of the system are available to all its users: anyone can post messages, read messages, and add comments or suggestions to them. Community Memory can be used as a community filing cabinet, a continuously available conversation on any topic, a place for people with common interests to find each other, a tool for collective thinking, planning, organizing and fantasizing.

Messages in the Community Memory might include:

- announcements and comments on current events, entertainment, restaurants
- debates about community and political activities
- listings of community resources
- information about bartering, buying, selling, and renting
- notices about groups and meetings
- graffiti, poems, dialogues, and multilogues.

The users themselves are the source of information in the Community Memory. □

Creativity and Mass Resistance

by John Lindsay-Poland

The Emergency Response Network creates an opportunity for us to gather in the communities that will sustain us from the simple reading of newspapers, to the trials of city life, through the crises we face in a violent culture. The network is finding shape by organization into affinity groups—autonomous groups of 5 to 15 friends or folks of common interests. About 3500 people have signed a Pledge in the Bay Area.

This process makes up the heart, the best potential, of the Emergency Response Network, or Pledge of Resistance campaign. We hope that the knowledge that 60,000 individuals will go to Federal facilities across the country (nearly half of them committed to civil disobedience) in the event of an invasion or "significant escalation" of U.S. intervention in Central America will deter such escalation.

Marching among tens of thousands of people in downtown San Francisco, we will not be simply going through the cliched demonstration motions; we will be exploring how to live more responsively in a world at war. And we won't be alone. □

THE PLEDGE OF RESISTANCE

__ Civil Disobedience Pledge

If the United States invades, bombs, sends combat troops, or otherwise significantly escalates its intervention in Central America, I pledge to join with others to engage in acts of nonviolent civil disobedience as conscience leads me at Congressional offices, the White House, or other pre-designated U.S. federal facilities, including federal buildings, military installations, offices of the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department, and other appropriate places. I pledge to engage in nonviolent civil disobedience in order to prevent or halt the death and destruction which such U.S. military action causes the people of Central America.

__ Legal Protest Pledge

If the United States invades, bombs, sends combat troops, or otherwise significantly escalates its intervention in Central America, I pledge to join with others to engage in acts of legal protest as conscience leads me, including such actions as participating in demonstrations, vigils, leafletting, and appeals to Congress and the White House. I also pledge to demonstrate my support for those who engage in acts of nonviolent civil disobedience in order to prevent or halt further death and destruction in Central America.

Let Them Eat Cheese

BY LARRY FISHER

It may well be Berkeley's longest-lived and most successful radical experiment, but for the members of the Cheeseboard Collective, the struggle continues.

IT'S NEARLY TEN O'CLOCK on a Saturday morning, and the store is already hot; about twenty people are lined up outside. As in the Depression era photograph on the wall, they are waiting to buy bread. But someone has added a caption to the photo: "baguettes—$1.50/pound." The Cheeseboard will sell 1,500 of them by the end of the day.

Besides satisfying Berkeley's craving for complex carbohydrates and various forms for aged butterfat, the Cheeseboard Collective has achieved notoriety as one of the longest-lived and most prosperous worker-owned businesses in the US. Now in its fourteenth year as a collective, the Cheeseboard is owned and operated by eighteen members, each of whom has equal equity, and an equal vote in store decisions.

But aside from the sign on the wall proudly proclaiming the store's collective status, none of the above is very apparent when the door opens at 10:00 a.m., beginning a rush that never lets up all day. I've always avoided the Saturday mob scene at the Cheeseboard; today, working behind the counter to get an insider's view of the store, I'm wondering what I've gotten myself into.

"Where do these baguettes come from?"

"Right here," I say, pointing to the back where Gary Salzman and Phoebe Sheldon are preparing the next batch, spraying water over the baguettes to help form the crust.

"They sure are nice and warm."

I nod. They are, in fact, fresh out of the oven and too hot to touch. Surrounded by the warm loaves—sourdough beer rye, provolone bread, curry cheese bread, Sunday bread, suburban bread, wholewheat rye, and multi-grain—and inhaling the combined aromas of hot wheat, cheese, olive oil, and oregano, it's hard not to salivate and easy to see why the lines are always long at the Cheeseboard.

In addition to the terrific bread, there's a selection of cheeses probably second to none in the country. Bucheron, Montrachet, raw milk Camembert, and Mascarpone keep company with stalwarts like Cheddar, Jack, and three kinds of Parmesan. With low prices and high quality, the store draws cheese customers from all over the Bay Area, who take a playing card—like the Jack of Hearts or the Queen of Spades—and wait until their number is announced. But why this store? Small food retailers have one of the highest mortality rates in today's generally depressing set of business success rate statistics; why has this one survived and prospered?

There are probably as many valid reasons as there are members of the collective, but many collective members agree that the store's success rests largely on the firm foundation laid by Sahag and Elizabeth Avedisian, who started the Cheeseboard as a private business in 1967. When they turned the business into a collective in '71, the two continued working and have remained active members in the collective.

"They didn't know that much about cheese, but they knew how to treat customers well, how to handle money, and they had a real strong sense of the work ethic," says Michael McGee, who left a career as an engineer to join the Cheeseboard nine years ago. "That has come down through the years and been transmitted to the whole collective. It's a mix of political morality, a wholesome business sense, the work ethic, and some luck."

Originally intended to finance the couple's further education, the Cheeseboard rapidly grew beyond their expectations. They soon found themselves with employees, a situation with which neither was comfortable.

Sahag had, in the course of "bumming around the world," spent three years on a kibbutz, and private ownership of his business conflicted seriously with his political ideals. So,

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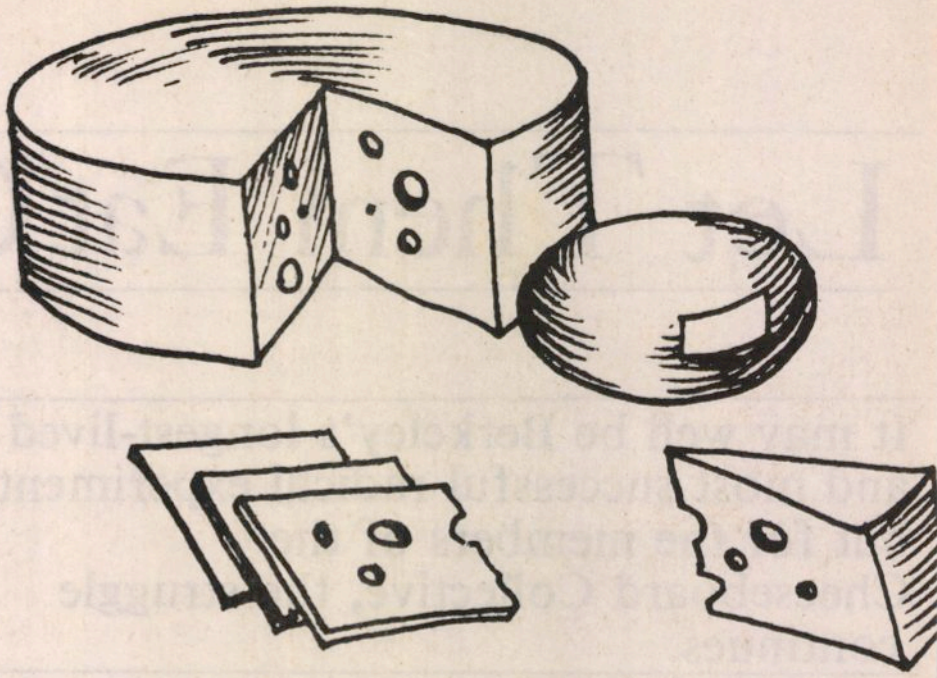


in 1971, he suggested that the store's six employees, together with Elizabeth and himself, buy the business and make it into a collective. "For me it was a political thing," says Sahag. "I couldn't see having workers and exploiting labor—my wife felt the collective would be a more humane way of doing things."

The workers were already being paid the same wages as the owners; to make the transition to a collective, everyone deducted $.50 an hour from their pay, and pooled the money until the purchase price of $10,000 was reached, which took nearly two years. As the two former owners made the same deduction from their own wages, they effectively bought the store from themselves.

Now, new members buy their way into the collective by working one week without pay. This becomes their equity in the store which they share equally with everyone, regardless of seniority. When workers leave the collective, they receive one week's pay at current rates.

Sahag sprinkles his conversation with the catch phrases of revolution; with his full brown and gray-flecked beard and worker's clothes, he looks the part. But his tone is sincere; remarks like "Everyone owns the world equally," are heartfelt. I ask why he couldn't have gone on paying good wages, and allowing employees a voice in store decisions, while remaining a private business? "It wouldn't have meant that much to me," he says. "It wouldn't have been a true expression.

Though most members of the collective share Sahag's beliefs in varying degrees, there is no party line at the Cheeseboard, no ideological grilling of new members. There is a general support of left-leaning liberal causes, such as non-intervention in Central America and the anti-nuclear movement, but though the whole store has closed on occasion for events like the Diablo Canyon blockade, even this commitment varies considerably from one member to another.

"There are people here who don't believe in collectives," says Steve Sutcher, who at 29 is the Cheeseboard's youngest member. "There are members who don't like cheese." Ten-year veteran Giorgia Neidorf seconds that opinion: "There is nothing that binds us except for the work and some kind of love that develops," she says. "But the larger the group gets the harder it is to have that intimacy."

Strongly committed to the growth of the collective movement, McGee has belonged to a group called the Intercollective Organization, which recently completed the fourth edition of a guide to West coast collectives. Nearly 400 collectives are listed, offering products and services ranging from plywood to street theater. Cheeseboard members have been directly involved in the start-up of two other Berkeley collectives—the Swallow Restaurant at the UC Art Museum and the Juice Bar on Vine Street—and the group often makes low interest loans to another worker-owned business. It also makes substantial regular donations to causes like the Women's Health Collective and the Free Clinic.

None of this would be possible were it not for the store's continued financial success, which has a lot to do with being in the right place with the right product at the right time.

"It was the beginning of the whole renaissance of gourmet food in that area," says Bob Waks, who became the Cheeseboard's first employee in 1968. "There were a lot of Europeans in Berkeley, and travelers to Europe who came back and wanted to recreate what they'd found there."

Waks joined the Cheeseboard before it was a collective, and says his feeling for that aspect of the store fluctuates from a strong emotional commitment to a more cynical outlook. "If the store is that important—the work form that could save the world from economic tyranny—how could people who understand it leave?" he asks. "It used to bother me, but you live with those kinds of paradoxes."

Waks is well-connected in the Berkeley food world, having cooked at Chez Panisse in its earliest year and helped to start the Swallow Restaurant. Outspoken and humorous, he often assumes the role of spokes-

"This is a solid transaction for us and the customers . . .A righteous transaction —it says something to the world about how a business can be conducted."

person for the Cheeseboard, to varying degrees of chagrin on the parts of his colleagues.

"Whatever you do don't say Bob Waks invented a revolutionary way of selling cheese," one collective member tells me, referring to a recent article on the Gourmet Ghetto which seemed to imply that the Cheeseboard was Waks' store. "There's really nothing revolutionary about it, but if anyone invented anything it was Sahag."

Revolutionary probably is too strong a word, but Sahag's method of selling cheese—cutting to order and always offering a taste—which was unusual seventeen years ago, has been adopted by many other shops. It's labor intensive and expensive—several years ago the cost of tasting was estimated at $20 per day—but it's also an important part of the Cheeseboard, almost a ritual.

"People love it," says Sahag. "Very few say no and even then we insist. If you're going to pay three dollars for a piece of cheese, you should know what you're getting." The tastes remove the burden of playing expert from Cheeseboard workers, eliminating future complaints and the risk of the unexpected for customers. Many cheeses change dramatically from one batch to another; the tastes help workers keep track as well. "If somebody tells you to taste it and they're adamant—take heed," says Bob. "It may not be bad, but there may be something someone may find objectionable."

Even without the tastes, the Cheeseboard's prices would be a good value; the store marks up most of its cheeses by 50 percent compared with the 80 or 90 percent at most other retailers. This means that a cheese which the Cheeseboard buys for $1 it sells for $1.50, compared with $1.80 or $2.00 at most other stores. A five percent discount is offered to those who need it—ten percent or more to older and handicapped people. With the tastes, and cutting to order, the Cheeseboard's product represents what Sahag is quick to call a "terrific bargain." "This is a solid transaction for us and the customers," says Sahag. "A righteous transaction—it says something to the world about how a business can be conducted."

There's a lot of laughter at the Cheeseboard, a sense of *joi de vivre* shared by co-workers and customers. There's also a rhythm to good clerking, maintaining a quick pace while still affording each customer a personal touch, the odd bit of banter or flirtation, and it's very important to creating a regular clientele, the kind of people who sustain a retail business.

"The personalities of a number of people here are real engaging," says Bob Waks. "That's kept people coming back. This is an entertaining place to go, besides just to get cheese." Cheeseboard regulars are "like bar customers," says Waks. "You don't even have to ask what they want."

Working the Saturday express line with Tessa Marrone, I can see her bagging certain customers' orders before they even call them out. Thin, with wavy dark hair cut short, Morrone alternates teaching piano with her 28 hours a week at the Cheeseboard, where she's worked for thirteen years. Energetic and compulsively neat, she grabs a broom to sweep up the mounting pile of breadcrumbs every time there's a lull.

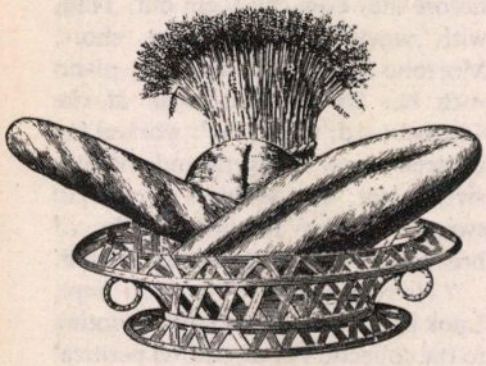
"We're not always real neat here. Look at the walls," she says, pointing to the collection of dog-eared political posters suggesting draft resistance and what to do in case of nuclear attack. "This place—it's ugly. But people love us anyway."

As if to underscore her remarks, an older gentleman dressed in basic banker's blue pinstripe comes in with a stack of recycled paper bags which he distributes among the others in front of the counter. "Look at this nice man," she says. "He's actually organizing them . . . you see, people help us."

Like many of her colleagues, Morrone says it is the collective structure which has kept her at the Cheeseboard. "It's fantastic," she says. "You have control over what you do; you can put a lot of variety into the job. Cutting cheese is not interesting, but running the store is."

But with eighteen owners, each with equal input, running the store isn't easy. Though many everyday decisions can be made individually, or by a majority of the workers on a shift, anything that affects the store in a major way must be decided by the whole group at the collective's regular monthly meetings. Again, while a simple majority will suffice for most issues, a single dissenting vote can block a decision if the individual is adamant enough.

The process isn't fast. The sign on the wall which reads, "We are a collective business, worker-owned and operated," took a year and a half to approve. Obtaining permission to do this article was a three month,



three meeting undertaking. New linoleum for the floor has been a hot topic for the past year. "It can be very frustrating," says Morrone. "You just fight. Meetings are exhausting and difficult."

Others say meetings can be fun and rewarding. They argue that nothing important needs to happen that fast, and that the group's decision-making process leads to stronger commitments. While a decision takes longer [this way]," says Steve Sutcher, "when it's implemented it's that much more whole-hearted." On the other hand, some really big decisions have been made very quickly. "Decisions are an organic process," Sutcher explains. "If it takes a long time, there's probably a good reason."

But Sahag says the process is one area where the collective has not lived up to his expectations. "I used to be a big believer that the collective decision process would almost always be right. But now I feel that personal relationships start to get in the way of that. How people feel about each other determines how they do things."

While personality clashes and power plays are a fact of life in any business, any organized group of people, they are a contradiction in a collective, ostensibly nonhierarchical workplace. Some in the group see them as inevitable, others as a profound source of vulnerability.

"A democratic workplace doesn't mean there's no hierarchy," says Friedel Gordon. "It just means there's no institutionalized hierarchy." The structure is, she says, "de facto, based on personality, seniority, sex."

Most people at the Cheeseboard agree that seniority plays the biggest part in perceived power, which would naturally make Sahag the most powerful member. He denies it. "I've always *not* accumulated power," he says. "If I'm so powerful, why has only one person I sponsored been allowed in the collective? Why are there people in the collective I don't think should be?"

Sahag says power is actually distributed according to personality and perceived commitment. Many new people have a lot of power in different areas, depending on their interest and motivation, he explains: "People perceive them as being competent, moral, energetic—so they have power."

For new members, dealing with the group can be intimidating. Laura McNall, who's been with the collective only a year and a half, says she thinks it's intimidating to customers as well. "When I used to go in there as a customer, I felt like I was at a party where everybody knew each other. In fact, it just looked that way, and at the same time they're intimidating, people here really make an effort to be kind."

With several years of baking experience elsewhere, McNall soon found herself in a battle of wills with Bob Waks, who created most of the Cheeseboard's bread recipes. It's a story I've heard with variations from several of the collective's members.

"He was into this real thick crust, which I thought just dried the bread out," she recalls. "I'd pull the bread out of the oven and he'd put it back in. Then I'd pull it out again. There was always humor in the fighting, but I was the new kid on the block and I was damned if I was going to be pushed around. So I went in swinging."

For Waks, with seventeen years at the Cheeseboard behind him, accommodating new workers' ideas has been the "biggest struggle," he says. "You naturally develop almost an arrogance with having been there so long. When someone comes in and wants to change things, I don't like it. But if I see someone's competence is really there, then it's much easier for me to let them have their way."

In the case of the thick crust, McNall got her way. "Eventually I changed my ways," says Waks, "because McNall's style became more popular. I liked it. It was moister and it kept longer. I was real aware of the process, but at first I was real resistant. It was something I felt attached to."

Not all clashes at the Cheeseboard are settled this amicably. Some seemingly minor disputes have led to people dropping shifts to avoid co-workers. "It was the same on the kibbutz," says Sahag. "There were some people there who hadn't spoken to each other for fifteen years." Ironically, he sees the collective experience contributing to this distance. "When you have to make decisions with the same group of people over a length of time, it eventually draws people away from each other."

Most clashes are settled among individuals, but if something between two people begins to affect the whole group, a meeting is called. "We try to let things take their course," says Friedel Gordon. "We use a lot of humor; we use silence a lot. It's a complicated thing. I always tend to talk about things. I've learned at the Cheeseboard that sometimes it's best

to be quiet and let things work out."

One issue that won't go away quietly is the potential problem of stealing. Several years ago, one member was found to have stolen a large sum from the collective. Though the money was paid back, theft has been a tough subject to deal with ever since.

"Now when numbers get a little strange, everyone's suspicious," says Michael McGee. "When things are shared equally, you don't want to feel that someone would take more for themselves, but collectives are not immune to that."

While obvious steps, such as tightening up the bookkeeping process, were implemented with little dispute, the collective hasn't decided how to deal with suspicions of theft in the future. Many prefer not to talk about it at all.

"If you start to distrust the people in your group, it's poison," says Laura McNall. "I don't want to believe that anyone could be stealing." The distrust itself could lead to theft, she adds.

Sahag sees the problem of employee theft as being particularly destructive to a collective. "When theft occurs in a collective, then you're no longer working for yourself. Then you're working for someone," says Sahag. "You're working for a thief."

Sahag lists theft, power plays, and personal idiosyncracies as the three fatal vulnerabilities that prevent most people from seeing collectives as viable businesses. He doesn't think they're insurmountable but believes that the collective has to be particularly aware of them. "You don't not get into it because you can't stop it," he says, "but you can try to limit it."

Sahag sees no conflict to creating a collective, which he calls a "footnote in the socialist history of the world," within a capitalist system. "The economic system's neutral—you plug into it where you want to be," he says. Nor is he uncomfortable serving what has come to be an increasingly upscale clientele. "Everyone in the world wants a bourgeois standard of living," he says. "It's a natural thing."

While most collective members betray a predictable distrust of yuppie aspirations, they agree that the Cheeseboard has changed along with Berkeley, along with the North Shattuck neighborhood. Because of the low turnover, the group as a whole has aged; most are in their late thirties now. Nearly all are in couples, and there have been five children born to members in the last couple of years.

Perhaps the most dramatic sign of the collective's own upward mobility was the purchase of 27.5 acres of wooded rolling hills and meadows in Mendocino County. Under Michael McGee's direction, a house has been built which members use as a retreat, and there are plans to build a barn for a future cheese-making collective. "I always dreamed of having land in the country," says Laura McNall. "This is better than anything I could ever have on my own. One thing I keep learning over and over again at the Cheeseboard is that something that would be impossible to do individually is possible with a group of people who want it to happen."

Unfortunately, about half the collective never uses the land, and its ownership has become a major divisive force in the Cheeseboard. "I'm not interested in Mendocino at all," says Bob Waks. "I'm very opposed to it—I've no interest in spending my extra time going into the woods for days at a time." Waks and others spend their leisure time in Berkeley, where they already have commitments, and would have preferred that the money be spent buying a building for the store. This option was investigated for years, but given the Cheeseboard's desire to remain near its current location, and the escalation of land values in North Berkeley, such a purchase wasn't possible.

McGee says he would never have pushed for the land if he'd known it would split the collective. Now, he says, people are leary of putting up funds for the cheese-making project. But, he points out, "if there were another project the collective wanted to do, the money could always be gotten out of the land."

A place in the country, the good wages and benefits, the freedom to close the store for political protests; none of these things would have been possible for long if the Cheeseboard hadn't enjoyed constant growth. Business has been good—growing from a weekly volume of $8,400 in 1978 to $15,000 in 1984—but this year, for the first time in its history, business is down for the first quarter, as compared with last year.

Reasons for the drop are numerous. People are eating less cheese as health concerns with cholesterol consumption spread. But the real cause seems to be new competition in the field. While the Cheeseboard's role in creating what's come to be known as the Gourmet Ghetto in North Berkeley is assumed these days—the store is credited by Alice Waters in both Chez Panisse cookbooks—that movement has spread far beyond the boundaries of Shattuck, Vine, and Cedar. There are many places now selling a variety of quality cheeses and breads, and merrily offering tastes; many customers may opt not to brave the lines at the Cheeseboard.

Still, roughly 3,100 people do every week, purchasing from 2,000 to 2,500 pounds of cheese—150 pounds of sharp cheddar, 75 pounds of Emmenthaler, 40 pounds of Italian and 80 pounds of domestic parmesan. The store uses a ton of flour each week

baking breads, buns, pizzas, and muffins. Many customers are almost fanatically loyal. On Saturday there's a five baguette limit; when customers want ten or fifteen, Tessa Morrone suggests that a competitor's are available across the street. Usually, no one moves.

"You have the best bread in town and you're not even a bakery," says a small woman clutching several shopping bags.

"We are a bakery."

"No you're not. You're a cheese shop."

"Well, we're trying to be a bakery."

"You're a cheese shop."

Unwittingly, the woman has hit on one of the regular issues at the Cheeseboard, one which assumes new importance as the store moves to change with the times. Is it a cheese shop or a bakery or something else? Friedel Gordon explains that one key to maintaining a growing clientele is finding new ways to market cheese, "how to move it in the right rhythm, facilitate it for the customer by presenting it in an interesting way." But equally compelling is the push to produce new products, things like fresh salsa and bran muffins that can be made in the store.

Both moves seem to be working; both help to breathe new life into the Cheeseboard and keep it stimulating for its members. Both seem indicative of the Cheeseboard's ability to accommodate to adversity.

In other ways, however, the collective is more vulnerable than a conventional business. When a long-term and much loved member died two years ago, the Cheeseboard responded as if it were a death in the family. The store closed for a week of mourning, and some members feel it's only now beginning to come to terms with her loss. "Renate's death had longer lasting effects than any of us can determine at this time," says Bob Waks. "She had her own irascible side, but she was able to soothe a lot of damaged egos. Now it's more difficult. Her particular gift that she gave to the store has not been replaced."

Ten-year veteran Giorgia Neidorf echoes and expands on Waks' concern. "Renate is still missed; now Tessa is going to India, Elizabeth works less, Sahag is gone a lot. It's hard for me to yield to more and more new people," she says. "Especially as the store changes, and we have a lot more competition, we'll have to go in new directions."

While admitting that the collective's continued existence depends on its continued willingness to change, Neidorf hopes the store can make it in its own way—"without hype, without sales, without pricing cheese at $2.99 a pound instead of $3.00, without fame, by just being who we are."

Showing the world that it can be done another way is important to Sahag as well. "Every day that we stay in business and have people perceive us as a righteous business is a little victory for me," he says. "It does show there can be some kind of alternative."

But he also says he feels the collective could go further than it has toward establishing a new order. "I can agree that America is the greatest, free-est country ever—in spite of what it's done to Blacks, Chicanos, Indians—but on a scale of 100, I rate it a four. I give the kibbutz twelve, the Collective fifteen. So it's better than anything going but not good enough."

The real question, says Sahag, is "are we capable of being better? Are we capable of establishing a world of peace and freedom.

It's easy to blueprint the Garden of Eden, but without enough individuals willing to work to bring it about, it's just a pipe dream." □

Toward an Association of Collectives and Cooperatives in the Bay Area

by The Intercollective Study and Planning Groups

How can San Francisco Bay Area collectives and cooperatives work together to become a significant alternative to traditional businesses? For the past year and a half, a group of Bay Area cooperativists have been studying that question. There have been regular group meetings and two area-wide conferences to present information and get feedback. The stated goal is ". . . to evolve an association of cooperatives that, while encouraging the diversity and autonomy of each member group, will facilitate their interaction, provide technical and financial assitance, and coordinate activities that will promote cooperatives as an effective and significant force in the region".

After the second conference, in November, 1985, the group entered its planning phase. The purpose of this phase is to go over the suggestions and concerns brought out by the conference participants, clarify and focus the guiding principles of the network and develop concrete program and structural proposals.

After the Planning Group has completed its work, it will submit its proposals to an area-wide conference for final revision and adoption. It is hoped that the conference will be held by late Spring, and that immediately thereafter the next stage will begin; the actual implementation of a support structure for collectives in the San Francisco Bay Area. □

Looking for COMMUNITY

BY JIM ALLEN

April Fool's Day, 1985. I close and lock the door of my office for the last time, turn in my key and head down the road, looking for community. It's a long road—interstate, U.S. highway, state route, county road, farm secondary. Then, at last, up a winding gravel drive, through an open gate and up to the door. The sign burned into the weathered wood says, "Please walk in."

Most of my friends told me that dropping out of the professional middle class at my age, 49, was indeed playing the Fool. I didn't much mind that title. If you come to perceive your life as pointless, selfish and even self-destructive, you change your life, don't you? I had been Serious long enough.

This new perspective came to me late, midway in the journey of life, in a midlife crisis, the details of which I won't punish you with. My response was to begin a cross-country quest among intentional communities of various kinds, looking, as we say—and this time literally—for the viable alternative.

The journey is not over, and what follows is a preliminary report. I have visited close to thirty communities across the country and across the spectrum of types.

I'm not providing complete information about any community. Mainly, I want to give a close-focus rendering of the ways in which I have seen, or at times only glimpsed, "community" working in the here-now of daily life.

In telling these stories, I have changed or omitted the names. My thanks to all the communities who took me in; thanks for your openness, trust and generosity.

Central Atlantic, April 1985

"Please walk in." A good sign, I think, and walk into my first community experience. It's a small farm community, seven adults and two kids, rotating chores and sharing income. After my office-bound routine, this is a healthy, satisfying life—planting trees, repairing fences, bottle-feeding the runt lamb, weeding the garden, tending chickens, doing laundry and housework.

People here live, work, eat and enjoy according to the natural cycle of the seasons. At the barn, the advice on the sign over the door says, "Attention: Be Here Now," and perhaps not as hard to follow here as where I've come from.

I think of this message one afternoon just before sunset as we go outside for an event, the first outdoor before-dinner circle of the year. Holding hands in the circle, we realize that Alan and small son Brad are missing. The we see them walking up the hill toward us from the river, small naked figures in the slanting sunlight, just topping the first rise in the lower pasture. They've had the first skinny-dip of the year, and Brad is dancing along, happily swinging the two small fish he's caught.

That evening there's a meeting. A friend from town, a woman going through a divorce, wants to join the community. She is invited to tell her story, but as she approaches the word "divorce" she breaks up and begins crying. Instantly everyone converges on her, kneeling or sitting on the floor around her, placing their hands on her. No one says anything. They simply give her their support as she expresses her grief. Afterward, the talk is gentle, realistic, healing. The decision is for her to move in on an open-ended trial basis, whenever she's ready.

As it turns out, she and her husband are soon reconciled, and she never moves in or becomes a member. Except for that one brief time.

Central Atlantic, May

A Walden II planner-manager community, seventy or so members,

full egalitarian and income-sharing, self-supporting with a small industry . . . and I realize that everyone now knows where I am. It's probably the most written-about and self-publicized community in the country. Also one of the most durable, established in 1967.

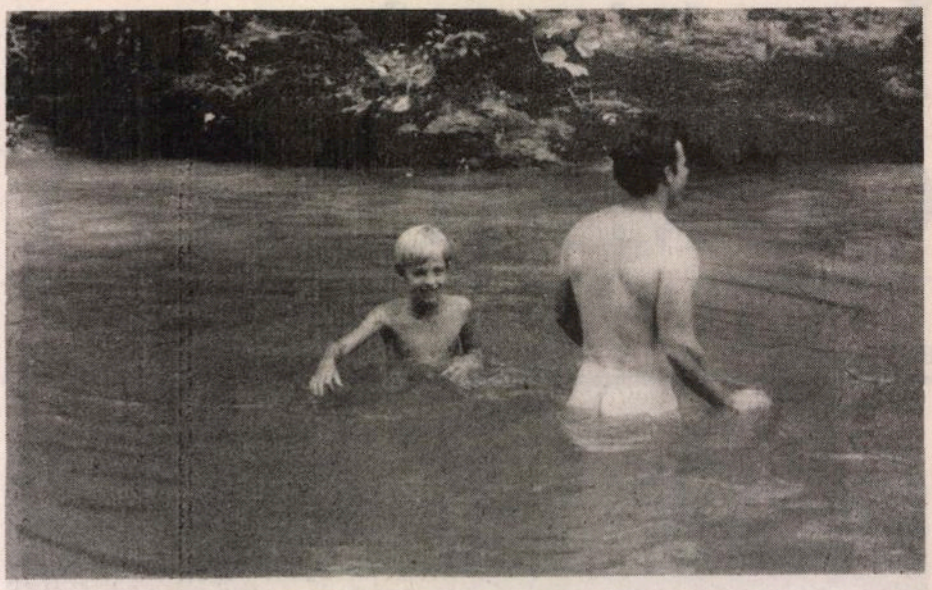
The size, the large number of visitors, and the elaboration of system and policy here all combine to make me a little uncomfortable at first. By the second week, though, I begin to get a more immediate and more satisfying experience of the place . . . and of the people as they are an interesting mix, spanning all age groups and with representatives from several countries. Many are visitor-shy. So many visitors flow through here. But most are friendly, helpful, serious about making the community work.

It turns out not to be an ideal time for visitors. The community is going through a major crisis; the membership sharply divided on the issue of whether to accept or reject a former member, Hawk, who wants to come back. He's in residence on a provisional basis, and he seems to generate intense feelings. You either love Hawk or detest him. As a somewhat charismatic spokesman for a more radically simple and politically active lifestyle, Hawk also serves to focus and heighten controversy on community issues of direction and purpose.

I realize I can't know exactly what's going on. The discussions are closed to me, and few members are eager to talk to a visitor about such a sensitive community problem. So I can't say precisely what the real issues are, or whether the right decision is made. What does seem clear is an essentially healthy process going on in the midst of much bitterness and personal assertion.

There is a committee, and behind them a planner board, with the power to make, or force, a decision, and get it over with. Instead, they opt for full community participation, giving time for much discussion and many bulletin-board opinion papers.

Finally, they bring in an outside



facilitator for a whole-community meeting to air out the issues, track down rumors, vent feelings. Visitors are not allowed, but what I hear about the meeting tells me these things really happened.

The virtue of planner-manager government is efficiency. The danger, obviously, is concentration and misuse of power. In this case, an inefficient process of community participation is allowed, with the result that Hawk withdraws his candidacy and leaves. It looks to me like planner-manager government working for community. On my last day here, an open planner meeting is held, the first in a long time. The subject: "empowerment."

New England, June

June 21, a cool dawn in a meadow surrounded by tall trees. Naked, we hold hands around a circle of stones, a central fire. The spirit-keepers of the four directions are invoked, and "The Circle is cast. We are between the worlds, out of space and time." Dancing, singing, chanting in the Circle. "We all come from the Goddess, and to her we shall return . . . it's the blood of the ancients, that flows in our veins . . . and the forms pass, but the circle of life remains." We end in a north-south line, taking the warmth of the sun on our bodies as it just tops the line of trees to the east. Then kisses and hugs all around, sharing a jug of herb tea, and the formal close: "The Circle is broken and unbroken. Merry meet, and merry part, and merry meet again!"

Following both neo-pagan and native American practices, this community also operates an old country inn as a New Age workshop and conference center. This weekend is Open House, and about thirty-five people show up. We have another solstice celebration for the guests, more elaborate but less authentic, with clothes on and touristy explanations provided. And morning group massage on the lawn, a garden work party, skinny-dipping at a local waterfall, family games and dancing, sweat lodge ceremonies.

The community strikes me as being well grounded itself in the idea of joyful, life-honoring relationships which it offers to guests. I see it in the way children are regarded. There are four of them, to eight adults. And no one says, "Who's watching Sally?" or "Who's taking care of the kids?" It's always, "Who's *with* Sally?" "Who's *with* the kids?"

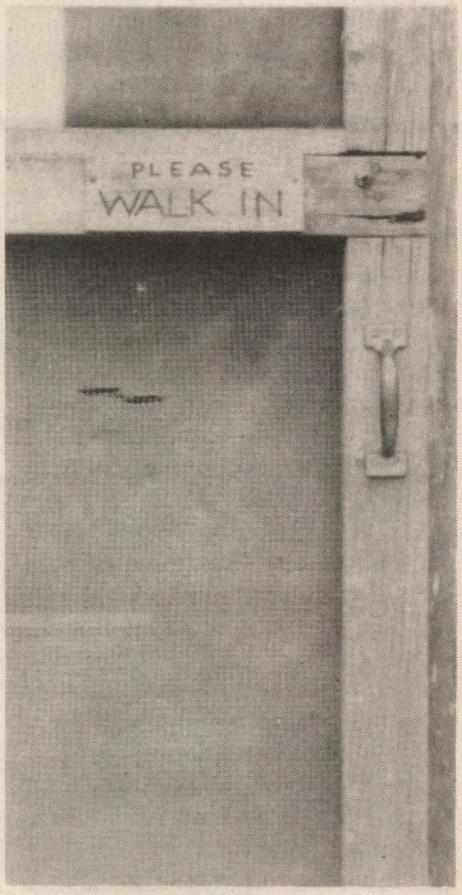
Missouri Ozarks, July

Where I turn off the asphalt onto gravel, the sign says, "Welcome Home." And this is the common greeting: "Welcome home, brother." "Welcome home, sister." It's the 14th annual Rainbow Family Gathering of the Tribes—A Peace & Healing Festival in the Cathedral of Nature, cast of thousands. An occasional, portable and very anarchistic community-of-sorts. I like the strong Earth-Mother consciousness of the people, and the Gathering-wide silent meditation on the Fourth for world peace and healing. But among the Brothers and Sisters there are scam artists and beer-swilling bikers, college kids, no-nonsense dope-and-sex types, fakers of all kinds. I haven't picked up all the nuances of the language and am not entirely sure I can tell the real from the fake.

One morning, looking for one of the Love Group camps, I misread a sign, take the wrong path, and end up in another group's camp. Embarrassed about intruding, I start to say something like, "Well, I guess you guys get a lot of tourists wandering in here, reading that sign wrong." One ugly, tattooed man smiles gently, cutting through my stammering and my Mexican-vest, hippie disguise, saying quietly, "We're all the same here, Brother."

Northeast, July

Here five families share a 135-acre farm. They lease the crop land to a neighbor, though, and in many ways look like mainstream Americans. Separate houses and incomes, and some sex-role differentiation. I see more women than men handling food chores, more men doing outside



work. All the men, but not all women, go to full-time outside jobs, mostly professional.

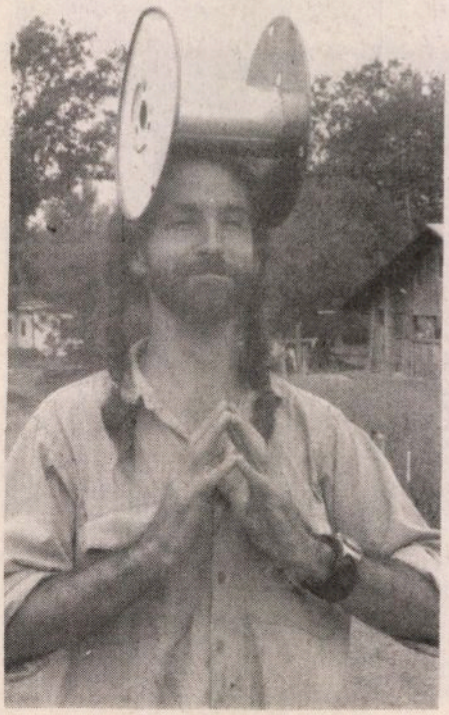
I'm told that when the community was started in the early '70s hair was a little longer and thinking more radical. They discussed alternatives, but opted for a family-centered, cooperative style, rather than communal. Working hard together, they built their beautiful houses, including two log structures, a geodesic dome, and a Nearing-style fieldstone. Their perception is that they have more "structure" now than in the early days. One gain that may be a result of their choice is stability. Turnover here is very low.

My own leanings are toward more community than I find here. I have to admit, though, that community works in different ways and degrees for different sets of people. Sweating with the Saturday work party crew in the common garden, I sense that these people have not lost the feeling of group effort and identity. Weeding in the corn rows goes rapidly and happily, with relaxed talk on both personal and community topics. I hear the community bond, too, at work beneath the non-communal formal structure, in conversation after the Sunday potluck. Jean tells me the Maynards are having money troubles. This is being talked over, and ways will be found to help them.

And the children seem to have learned something beyond the normal American middle-class scope. Sandy, just returned from her first term in college, has one sister, no brothers, but remarks that she didn't have much trouble adjusting to dorm life "because I had so many brothers and sisters."

Eastern Seaboard, July

Another community-reared teenage student with a difference: Judy doesn't write home for money, she wants more granola! And it really is superior granola, made by her mother in the community kitchen of this old Amish farmplace. Here again I find cost-sharing rather than income-sharing, and people going outside to professional jobs. These, though, are single-parent families plus singles, and their houses—an old trailer, two converted chicken coops and two frame cottages—have neither kitchens nor bathrooms. All share the single bathroom they added to the old farmhouse, and gather for common meals, rotating cooking and cleanup.



It produces, for me, a feeling of being with a large family.

What community visitors usually do when they're not washing dishes, is pull weeds. So here I am in the garden again, sweating with the weed detail. And reflecting that this is a family with a difference, determined to grow by adoption and to maintain itself in a healthy, responsible and egalitarian way. The garden is organic. Children share in the chore rotation. Members are active in the local peace group. The newest member is gay. Suddenly I realize I'm looking at a large copperhead coiled underneath the tomatoes. My first thought is to kill it. But Evelyn says, "No, let's not do that."

She doesn't give reasons, but I understand. I subscribe to these principles in theory at least. So I slow down and take more care in my weeding, realizing I'm now working in a much larger garden.

Eastern Seaboard, July

The level of trust demonstrated by communitarians often amazes me. In a lower-middle and blue-collar neighborhood of a large city, the front door of the house is wide open. I walk in and am met by a young woman, alone in the house. When I remark on the level of optimism implied by the open door, she answers, "Well, as my mother used to say, someone might want to come in."

She has to go to work in a few minutes, and will return later with others. She gives me her wedding album, containing newspaper articles on both wedding and the community, says to help myself in the refrigerator, and leaves me alone in the house. All on the basis of having received a single letter from me.

Eastern Seaboard, August

Nine people cost-share two townhouses. All have outside jobs; all are single, 20's to 40's, and there are no significant sexual pairings within the group. I wouldn't predict a very high level of community commitment for such a group. But it is there,

shown clearly in their determination to care for a member who is dying of a brain tumor. It has been a two-year ordeal, and the community is maintaining a 24-hour home care schedule for him.

Alabama, September

Back to home base to recharge and resupply. Some Alabama friends and I begin to talk halfway seriously about forming a community at their family farm here. But I wanted to get out of Alabama!

Midwest, October

On this leg, I combine trips with a friend from Alabama who wants to see friends of hers in Ohio and Michigan. These are mostly radical Christian peace and justice workers. Some are involved in church-based, inner-city land trust organizations, trying to preserve neighborhood communities by shifting property ownership from private to collective hands. These are not the kind of communities I've been most interested in, but I'm seeing another way the communitarian ideal finds expression.

Also, I've been interested in peace and justice activism, and have taken part in events as I could—the April Peace, Jobs & Justice march in D.C., the Pentagon ribboning, an anti-Cruise missile march at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida in October. Meeting others who are committed to this kindof work helps confirm my own commitment. And leads to a reflection: most of the communities I've visited are made up of middle-class drop-outs, and only two have had any Black members. Is a class and race bias to the community movement inevitable in this country?

En Route, October

Here's a typical community scene, not one that I want to present as salient in any given community, but one that *plays* in many: Pulling back the shower curtain and reaching for my towel, I'm looking at a woman sitting on the john. She smiles, says, "Hello, I'm Penny." A few minutes later I'm sitting on the john, Nathan is getting out of and Blue is getting in the shower, and unclothed Jane comes in to brush her teeth, her leg brushing my knee.

Often, this scene becomes an issue. Some want the doors taken off the bathrooms on principle. Others are disgusted. What seems significant to me is that when I tell mainstream friends about my community experiences it's almost always this, not income sharing or common ownership, that arouses the really strong negative reactions. And I notice that within the communities, it's most often the power-seekers that show least skin.

Upper Midwest, November

On a 55-acre farm, a New Age, Findhorn-style group carries on intensive organic gardening and alternative energy projects. They practice meditation and attunement rituals out of a belief in the reality of a transpersonal spirituality uniting all life and host workshops and seminars on these matters.

I join them in meditation, work and play. There's a special pleasure in splitting wood, working in the garden, roaming the woods, singing with them. But the quality of the place is hard to define.

When Betsy leaves for town with a shopping list and someone remembers mushrooms, we gather around the kitchen table, joining hands and thinking "mushrooms." Sure enough, Betsy comes back with mushrooms. Does this prove anything?

Perhaps poetry has a better chance of rendering this reality than anecdote:

Meditation

Outside, the noisy birds
the flock veering here and there
on the verge of flying apart

whose mind is this?

scattering to the single tree
breathing in and out
swaying in the roots

gathering in the farmhouse cellar
in split and stacked firewood
circling the old piano

singing

"It's in every one of us . . ."

Lower Midwest, November

Many communities are situated on farms, but few of those I've seen have tried to make a living from the land. This one does, and almost, if not quite, makes it. People come from miles around to buy their real stuff, old-fashioned sorghum molasses. I'm particularly impressed by the good relations these radical communitarians have with their conservative neighbors. They exchange labor and equipment, and visit back and forth. Community people take part in local affairs, one person for example singing in the choir in town.

Here again, satisfying outdoor work for me. And a first, milking the cow. Or trying to. Claire, who has also given me lessons in extracting unconscious sexist tendencies, laughs sympathetically and goes on pulling, singing happily in the rapid rhythm of her milking. Clear head, strong hands, gentle voice.

Rockies, November

My tiny sleeping cabin, a quarter-mile up the wooded slope from the main building, perches on stilts at the edge of a mountain stream. From my bunk, I look out through the upper window at a quarter moon and bright stars. The lower window shows me deer tracks in foot-deep snow, leading down to the dark stream.

I wake at four a.m. The temperature is fifteen degrees. I stoke up the woodstove, converted from an old-fashioned milk can, and get dressed to begin the day.

At this Taoist community, the work day ends by two in the afternoon, and most people return to their cabins, scattered up the mountainside, to get to bed by eight. So getting up this early is not too difficult. I like this early morning practice. Coming down through the snow by starlight, we gather in the main room for morning meditation. At first, the only light comes from the corner fire. Then, slowly, sunrise brings light and color through the

large window. Before work, breakfast—oatmeal, stewed apples, fresh raw goat's milk, nuts—and quiet talk, dealing with issues, planning the day.

And there is a major issue to be dealt with, the day will not be easy to get through. The founder and leader, who also owned the land, has died, leaving his estate in a tangled mess. The members are uncertain of their tenure. They are trying as a group to get control of the community's future, but are mistrustful of each other. Attention focuses particularly on Adrienne, who is feared to be trying to take power. Angry and fearful words have marred the peace of the Taoist retreat.

I don't know if it's Taoism or communitarianism that accounts for what happens next, but it is similar to what I've seen in other communities. Anger and fear are expressed. Attempts at understanding are made, and understanding grows. Conciliation and negotiation begin, and trust begins to be regained. As I am leaving, I hear of a breakthrough in the process. The community is still struggling to survive, but is now struggling together.

Arizona, Thanksgiving

My three sons and I rendezvous here for our annual reunion, spending four glorious days hiking and camping in the Superstition Mountains. I'm reminded of a passage from Richard Bach's *Illusions*: "The bond that links your true family is not one of blood but of respect and joy in each others' lives."

California, December

Ann, Leonard and Phyllis are pushing the idea of community to one of its logical limits: group marriage. Originally, there were two couples. When Ann's husband Ben decided to leave, Ann stayed. The three now would like to add another person or three.

These are risk-takers, high-energy people successful in careers and now bringing all their talents to bear on personal and group growth and transformation. They've read all the books, taken the seminars at Esalen and elsewhere, done the personal-challenge exercises such as fire-walking, gone to Findhorn and India. They want to explore "the possible" in human potential, and then create new tools for change, possibly computer-based, to best share what they experience.

It's always difficult for a visitor to see a community from the inside out. In the Age of AIDS, the group has sensibly adopted "polyfidelity", ruling out bedroom tryouts.

Getting "inside" is also difficult for me because of the urban and affluent setting. There's no wood to chop, no water to carry, no daily chores through which to find relationship. Our differences in personal and cultural styles initially feel as great as the distance between Alabama and California, though I don't think of myself as a stereotypical Southerner.

But there is a process going on here, and I slowly begin to understand its value. This community/marriage aims at sexual, emotional, intellectual *and* spiritual integration and growth. The process begins with a commitment to unconditional love and total openness, total honesty. What happens with a visitor, then, is first an invitation, a testing, to see if I have the desire and personal clarity and energy to sustain such a commitment. I'm invited to tell my "story," and Leonard, Ann and Phyllis listen, watch, and finally give feedback. I get both support and challenge. In turn, I listen to—and watch—them. And, slowly, begin to respond honestly.

Through this process, I begin to recognize, or admit to myself, the unresolved griefs and guilts, the energy blockages I am carrying. What I offer Phyllis, Ann and Leonard are my insights into discrepancies between what they say and what I see happening between them. We begin building a relationship.

Of course, as a visitor I'm not making the full commitment. I'm just trying it out, as I have tried out other community styles and roles. I can testify though, that even this limited participation yields a kind of altered state. There are still ways in which I don't "like" Leonard, Phyllis and Ann—or myself. But a new feeling emerges—of acceptance, empathy, growth . . . perhaps even love.

Back to Home Base, December

I fly back South for a three-week break, visiting family and friends and joining the peace witness and demonstration at the King's Bay, Georgia, Poseidon-Trident submarine base. About 150 are there, many from residential peace and justice communities, and we talk of forming a support network, to be call the Southern Life Community.

In Alabama, four of us walk the farm, talking over the idea of a peace community there, getting excited about the possibilities. But I wanted to get out of Alabama!

Ukiah, California, January 1986

Back on the road, a little road-weary but keeping on. I'll cover the rest of the West Coast, then zig-zag back across the country, stopping at communities I've missed and revisiting some of the more interesting ones I stayed with before. I begin to think I can make guesses about where the Trip might end. Right now, these would only be guesses, though, and all options are still open. What I have gained along the journey is a much clearer idea of what I'm looking for. For that, thanks, communities! □

FEDERATION of EGALITARIAN Communities

An association of intentional communities spread across North America, we range in size and emphasis from small homestead-oriented groups to village-like communities similar to the Israeli Kibbutz. A central belief in cooperation, equality, and non-violence brings us together in an effort to offer more people an alternative. Please inquire for further information.

Twin Oks, Box CMA, Louisa, VA 23093

Appletree Community
P.O. Box 5
Cottage Grove, OR 97424
(503) 942-4372

Chrysalis Community
P.O. Box 61
Helmsburg, IN 47435

Dandelion Community
R.R. 1
Enterprise, Ontario
Canada K0K 1Z0
(613) 358-2304

East Wind Community
Box 6B2
Tecumseh, MO 65760
(417) 679-4682

Sandhill Community
Rt. 1, Box 10
Rutledge, MO 63563
(816) 883-5543

Twin Oaks Community
Rt. 4, Box 169
Louisa, Va 23093
(703) 894-5126

Community in Dialogue:

Krutsio Community
Apdo Postal 2228
Ensenada, Baja California
Mexico 22800

This article is the first report on the activities within the communities which comprise the Federation of Egalitarian Communities, and on the projects and meetings of the Federation Assembly. 1986 marks the tenth year of the existence of the Federation, and the beginning of this regular feature in *Communities* magazine providing up-to-date information about our progress. Source materials include individual community newsletters, correspondence and Assembly reports.

Allen Butcher
Twin Oaks, May 1986

Appletree—Oregon

The community currently includes 4 members, 2 residents and 5 computers. Primary focus is upon planting gardens and repairing the structures on the land. Appletree purchased 23 acres on Winter Solstice, 1984 after existing as an urban collective since 1974; first in Boulder, Colorado then in Cottage Grove.

Appletree's first attempt to receive 501(d) determination from the IRS was refused, but the community expects to qualify at a later date. Currently three other Federation communities use the 501(d) Religious and Appostolic Association incorporation statute.

The community's current income sources are computer programming, renting currently unused buildings, and designing T-shirts and notecards. Marketing assistance is particularly needed for the businesses, and aid in developing an economic planning process is being sought through Twin Oaks.

Appletree's current capacity is for ten adults, and the community plans to grow to somewhere between ten and twenty-five members. Visitor flow has been reasonable with about twenty summer visitors in 1985.

Krutsio—Baja California, Mexico

Krutsio has received some assistance from East Wind in marketing its Nori harvested from the ocean, and the Federation secretary at Sandhill is helping in locating a U.S. distributor for the seaweed product.

Krutsio's location on the desert beach of the Pacific coast is 60 miles from the nearest town, and 550 kilometers south of Ensenada. The access road is a difficult-to-follow trail, outside contact is via ham radio, and water is distilled from solar panel drops. Three adults and two children live here with room for more.

Chrysalis—Indiana

Chrysalis is 4 adults, 3 children and 35 French Alpine goats, just 30 minutes from Indiana University in Bloomington. In 1985 12 goats were

bartered for on Alpine stud, so the community plans to market both goat milk products and goat kids this year. Construction has been focusing on goat and horse barns, and research gone into well drilling. Chrysalis hosted only three visitors in 1985 and hopes for a much greater visitor flow in 1986.

Sandhill—Missouri

The community's first new building, Karma, has been moved into, and the subsequent increase of space has enabled 3 adults and 2 children to join. Current population is 8 adults and 3 children. One of many successes in the Karma project is the perfection of small scale thermopane window fabrication and installation.

The 1985 industry harvest and processing of 400 gallons of Sorghum was the best ever, thanks in part to labor exchange help from Twin Oaks. The dogs and cats especially enjoyed the fermented sorghum skimmings. The honey harvest was only average with 3 gallons per hive, but enough to begin a joint marketing project with East Wind. The 4 item gift-pack includes 8 oz. jars of honey, sorghum, peanut and almond butters.

Sandhill's blacksmithing program has turned out 2 kitchen knives and various farm metal services in addition to metal leaves for the Blacksmith Association of Missouri (BAM) and production of the association newsletter.

Morale has been very good.

East Wind—Missouri

The EWC newsletter, *Windfall,* resumed publication after a three year break. Internal communication has also received new focus with facilitation and co-counseling workshops, and a group process organized by Taylor of Twin Oaks to re-affirm common values and goals and focus upon the changing child program and the managerial structure.

Child program changes included creating better space in its current building and work on plans for a new child building to support 20 to 25 children. Current child population is 6. The Ozark Learning Center was started in 1985 in a building just up the road which was a "little red school house" used by several generations of local people until closed some decades ago. Currently 2 EWC children and 6 local children attend. As with the rest of the community, the child program now has a General Manager.

The EWC, Inc. board-of-directors was transformed from the 3 person board-of-planners to simply the "Board". The Board consists of the community General Manager called the Planner with significant authority, plus the chairpersons of the Social and Resource Committees. Informed guesses as to reasons for this change are 1) stress of planner positions, 2) labor overextension and resulting governmental apathy. These governmental changes move East Wind closer to the Kibbutz model including democratic community process, and a fundamental division between the resource areas of labor, money, agriculture, industry, plant and equipment under Resource Committee, and the social areas of domestic services, membership, recreation and outreach under the Social Committee.

The 1985 industry year was the best ever generating $1.3 million in sales of 800,000 pounds of nut butters, 10,500 hammocks and 6,800 pairs of sandals. The $130,000 in profits over living expenses went mostly toward repaying long-term debt, but also to purchasing a new van and a used tractor after the last one drowned in a creek flood. The first cottage type residence was completed (and named Greyhaven) with six private rooms, a common room and deck.

Despite the successes East Wind still has a low membership (less than 50) requiring cutting back several managerial areas. All of the dairy herd was sold except the calves, with the intention of restarting with a new, more efficient dairy barn to be built in a few years. The Pendulum Chair business was sold to a local couple who intend to employ other local people.

With continuing excellence in income production and aid from the Federation in recruitment, East Wind looks forward to being out of debt and enjoying a substantial population by the end of the decade.

Dandelion—Ontaria, Canada

Dandelion celebrated its 10th anniversary in 1985, but noted that their population of only 6 adults and 1 child is still less than half of their long-range goal. They surmise that their remoteness from an alternative urban center is a contributing factor, which could very well be one of East Wind's problems as well. Dandelion has been doing much outreach and networking to improve this situation, and welcomes further aid from the Federation, including increased labor exchange for socializing.

1985 garden and dairy production were very good but the field crop experiments failed. One member has helped set up a blacksmith shop at a local farm.

Industry sales of hammocks and Pendulum chairs were mixed, retail normal but wholesale down in 1985. This is not a crisis situation, but it does prohibit the community from building the new kitchen/dining space in 1986. To cut heating costs more insulation was added to several

buildings.

Dandelion is looking for a new industry to add to hammocks. At craft fairs they are repeatedly asked what new products they have, but so far have resisted the idea of making cabbage patch hammocks!

Twin Oaks—Virginia

T.O. population is about 70 adults and 15 children. 4 children were accepted from outside, 2 were born in the community in 1985 and 2 in 1986. The adult population is up from an average of 63 in 1985. 7 of the new members are ex-East Winders, who, among other things, have transplanted the Validation Day tradition and Dungeon and Dragons game. The high population has almost filled available space, with labor now going to many previously inactive projects, including health maintenance and counseling services.

January saw the opening of the ⅓ million dollar Zhankoye KDC (kitchen/dining complex named after a Polish or Russian Commune) on a ridge site surrounded by trees, a slate walk and redwood deck. The building functions as a buffet-style restaurant with separate child and smokers dining rooms, and a large dining room also used for parties, folk danced, plays, yoga, etc. Community mailboxes, bulletin boards and food storage are also located here.

Moving all of these functions out of the court-yard buildings is resulting in remodeling work being done on several spaces to create a women's living room, and the original farm house, Llano, will become new office space and small group dining. Other 1986 construction projects are a two story bathroom/shower for an older 17 person residence, new dairy barn, greenhouse, and an eight room plus common space visitor cottage. 1987 construction will likely be residence.

Indexing business is growing (60% '85 over '84) and hammocks and rope making are also doing well. The spring '86 hammock push broke all earlier records with over 2,000 hammocks made in one month. Production still cannot keep up with demand, so subcontracting to a local differently-abled workshop will begin. 1985 record hammock production was over 15,500 units.

Movement support donations, letter writing brigade and political presentations are all very active. Separate women's and men's conferences are planned for this summer, and many people taking labor exchange trips to Mexico, Missouri, New Hampshire and Ontario. New networking activities have included the re-formation of the

Virginia Inter-Communities Network after more than 12 years, and contributing to the reinvigoration of the 37 year old Fellowship of Intentional Communities.

The Twin Oaks all-women auto crew recently purchased a third used Toyota. This is in support of two new community directions; one being to provide more efficient and appropriately sized vehicles for certain trips, the other is to stop purchasing products from major weapons manufacturers, in this case Ford. The name given to this new vehicle is helping to establish a tradition of all little cars being named after beverages. Currently there is Cocoa, Red Zinger and Blue Nun.

Oakley, the school with Twin Oaks helped found, has around 20 students, only 1 being from Twin Oaks. An Apple Computer with color monitor was donated and is greatly appreciated by all, although more educational software is needed.

Federation Acitivities

The biggest news is the tenth anniversary of the Federation. Assembly XX, fall of '86 at East Wind will be returning us to where it all began, with several special activities planned. One project being editing and issue of *Communities* magazine devoted to the FEC and its member communities.

A great success of the Federation is the *Peach* project, which stands for Preservation of Equity Accessible for Community Health. This is a federation-wide joint major medical coverage program to aid our communities in covering medical disasters. It is not an individual insurance program. This mutual fund preserves our financial equity in a fund available to loan back to member communities, rather than paying it all to insurance companies.

Most Federation communities have not written into their binding documents a provision that in the event of dissolution all residual assets will go to the Federation.

The new federation brochure and slide show are available, and a proposal for a cassette video will be presented at the May Assembly at Dandelion.

Two internal Federation newsletters have been started. One from East Wind focusing on culture and art, the other from Twin Oaks featuring news and business.

Travel funds for community members is a growing budget item as more trips are being organized for labor exchange, attendance and presentations at conferences and to the 1986 Pennsylvania Rainbow Gathering. In 1985 for the first time the Assembly sent a representative to the International Communes Network meeting held in Europe, and this has some support for becoming an annual activity. □

Fellowship of Intentional Communities

Report of the April 1986 meeting at Tanguy Homesteads

It had been nine years since Tanguy (pronounced "tankey") Homesteads had hosted one of the combined annual meetings of the Community Educational Service Council, Inc. and its sister organization the Fellowship of Intentional Communities. These two organizations have functioned fairly quietly these past thirty-seven years or so in providing networking services to a group of communities sharing organizational and philosophical ideals. CESCI (pronounced "seskey") has operated a small revolving loan fund utilized by many communities outside of this closer network of homesteading communities. These two networks have together maintained the Fellowship as an opportunity for social interaction and sharing of community experiences. The Tanguy meetings this recent April was a further strengthening of this tradition as several new community representatives, along with the many long involved persons, shared a weekend with the very friendly and accommodating Tanguy residents.

Visiting the beautifully landscaped Tanguy, is a unique experience in this country where so few community traditions have long histories. The Fellowship meetings discussed the situation of our representing a fairly small section of the larger communities movement, and of the potential for transforming our organization into a much larger, more vital network serving intentional communities of all traditions.

We view the uniqueness of this concept of networking the great diversity of community traditions in North America as something both very exciting, and very necessary.

The last two Fellowship of Intentional Communities meetings have discussed the potential of re-forming itself into a larger more dynamic association, and at the Tanguy meeting we set a program course to develop both projects of 'inreach' to more substantially inter-connect our participating community networks, and projects of 'outreach' to awaken the larger culture to the potential for building a better world of community fellowship.

The community networks currently involved or interested in developing the potential of the Fellowship are: Camphill Villages; The Community Service Network; Earth Communities Network; Federation of Egalitarian Communities; Inter-Communities Network; New England Network of Light; and the Society of Emissaries.

At present we have at least one major idea for each of the two primary project directions. Inreach we hope to address by working to facilitate visitation, labor and skills exchange among our communities. A possible strategy for reaching this goal is the development of some form of transportation network, designed for the needs of and maintained by our existing community networks. We recognize that frequent and meaningful community networking is best developed on the regional level, or through networks which exist among similar communities.

In the realm of potential outreach projects we have tentative agreement to focus on what we have begun to term the "major media event". The idea behind this courtship of the media is that as a movement of intentional community traditions we embody something which is very much an expressed need in much of at least the "new age" media.

Toward this ideal of nurturing a widespread understanding of intentional community we have determined that other nonland-based associations carry on important functions for the intentional community movement, and we therefore greatly value their involvement in the Fellowship. Institutions which have expressed support for the Fellowship are currently: Community Educational Service Council, Inc.; Community Publications Cooperative; Community Referral Service; Community Service; and National Historic Communal Societies Association.

As we are encouraging the involvement of networks and institutions in this organization, we further expect that it would be valuable to include both individuals and individual communities as well.

We decided at Tanguy to incorporate no later than August of 1986, probably as an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, and investigate incorporating as a form of trade association. Our home office will likely be at Stelle Community, and yes, we have a proposal for a logo!

In creating, or re-creating this association we are seeking a wider sense of community which will ultimately maintain us at home, in part by lending us all a sense of empowerment and of potential. We desire to aid new groups forming intentional communities by offering assistance in the technical aspects of government, labor, incorporation, architectural and social design, and other facets of community. We intend to support a central resource office which, among other services, will experiment with a computer aided matching project introducing specific communities to potentially compatible individuals seeking a communitarian lifestyle. A major goal is to particularly reach those people who could most benefit by being aware of the existence of community.

We may now have an opportunity to encourage a shift to an increasingly favorable media awareness of social alternatives. In the last few years several new books have been pub-

lished on community, with many organizations publicizing and promoting the concept. Our media event proposal is to attempt to engage the masses through discovering which performers are sensitive to the community ideal, and who may be willing to participate in a benefit concert. Depending upon the amount of energy these people may have for our cause, and upon the funding sources we can involve, we could go further to suggest that these persons visit first historical community sites, then existing communities, then meet and discuss their experiences and perceptions on video tape. Such a project is admittedly terribly ambitious, but through our extensive network the right contacts can surely be made.

There is no doubt that if we were to spark a major interest in our existence as alternative societies similar to what was experienced in the '60s, we would have to discuss both within our communities and in the network as a whole the potential disruptions such an eventuality would bring upon us, as well as the potential benefits.

This article is both a call to action and a call to reflection. Perhaps it is true that we can manage our future better through collective action, and that specific intent can bring to reality our greatest dreams. The opportunities are just becoming clear to us and we need only to discuss and agree upon what steps to take.

Anyone wishing to correspond about what is presented here is encouraged to write to the two current Fellowship of Intentional Community organizers:

Charles Betterton, 126 Sun St., Stelle, IL 60919 and

Allen Butcher, Twin Oaks Community, Louisa, VA 23093. □

Managers of Worker-owned Firms Meet at Conference

Somerville, MA—Managers and board members from worker-owned businesses around the country met at Tufts University recently for the first annual National Conference on Managing Democratic Businesses, sponsored by the Industrial Cooperative Association Revolving Loan Fund.

Most of the firms had been partically financed with loans from the ICA Revolving Loan Fund. The Loan Fund's financing to employee-owned businesses has created or saved jobs for over 210 persons in the last year, and helped these businesses leverage over $3 million in additional financing.

According to Laura Henze, Director of the ICA Revolving Loan Fund which is based in Somerville near Tufts, "The conference was designed to help managers and board members share experiences, issues, and strategies to address them in an open, supportive and problem-solving environment."

Worker ownership is a growing field in the United States. In most firms, each worker makes a capital contribution in addition to their labor, and in return is guaranteed the right to democratically elect a board of directors who, in turn, select managers, and a share in any profits or losses.

The ICA Revolving Loan Fund provides loans to workers to help finance their equity in the firm, and has recently expanded its activities to consider financing for equipment, real estate, or working capital. Some of the firms are organized as new businesses, others are founded in the face of plant closings, and some have been created when employees bought out other owners.

"The ICA Revolving Loan Fund has two purposes," according to Henze. "We provide risk capital for financing worker cooperatives started by low-income and blue collar workers in their communities, which, in turn, can help them find additional financing they need. We also assist these businesses during the critical start-up or expansion phase through monitoring, advice and activities such as this conference. Additionally, through ICA, we provide technical assistance on management, education or legal issues facing the firms."

In response to the growing number of applicants, the Loan Fund is now expanding its capital. The Loan Fund, which began its operations with $1 million in 1983, now has new capital and commitments that bring the Fund to $2.5 million. It is expanding its focus to include both equity-type financing and secured debt to meet the financing needs of a growing number of democratically structured businesses around the country. □

CLASSIFIEDS

COMMUNITIES

Stelle, City of Tomorrow Today

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Stelle Group
Box 121
Stelle, IL 60919

Looking for Political Community?

Pond House seeks feminist women for mixed household in social change resource center. $250 includes utilities and food. Spacious, mostly vegetarian, no smoking.

Winifred WindRiver
21 Abbott Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
(413) 772-0711

Rainbow Ridge, Berea KY: Poverty and powerlessness, seeds of war, are inherent in competitive economic system. Join McLanahans in developing a community-education "Center" to help people learn how to replace it with a cooperative economy. Room for 3 more families to build on 7½ acres available.

Rainbow Ridge
3689 Berea Road
Richmond, KY 40475

WANTED

Back issues of *Communities* wanted (no. 1, 4, 5, 12, 18, 19, 21, 24, 29). Write:

Claude Jutras
30 rue Front
Hull, Quebec, Canada J8Y 3M5

REAL ESTATE

CHATEAU, near Pyrenees Mts. in S. France. Lovingly restored for group living and seminars by Babaji Ashram. 19,000 sq. ft. under roof. $225,000.

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09300 Lavelanet, France
tel: (61) 01,36,52

For Sale: Geodesic Dome featured on cover of *Communities* magazine #67, summer 1985, 45 ft. diameter, hand manicured cedar roof. House is 75% complete; we can finish for you or you finish yourself and save. Located on five acres in Ponderosa Village, self-reliant cooperative community. Partially wooded, beautiful meadow. Water, power, phone, septic. Southern exposure. Near Columbia River. Send for pictures, maps, details.

Voelker
210 Ponderosa
Goldendale, WA 98620
(509) 773-3639

PUBLICATIONS

Directories of intentional communities: Britain, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Japan. $2.00 each plus $1.00 for postage.

Mr. Information
Box 955-C2
Ganges, B.C., Canada V0S 1E0

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To Our Readers

continued from pg. 2

Many of the rural communities which Jim Allen visited are also places in my heart. Suitably masked as they are in his essay, I'd better not name names.

And in this issue's lead article, you get a taste of life in the dance lane—in my community of choice these past several years—Dance New England.

I'll leave you with a poem:

War Stories

1.

Everyone has a few war stories
that tell of our moments
on the edge

The times when we were truly tested
and won through

Or else we wouldn't be here
now, would we?

Usually self-aggrandizing
seldom strictly true
Yet these stories
serve us well

2.

Ronald Reagan, Menachem Begin
overweaning pride
Rambo mumblings, contra bumblings
deserve a yippie pie

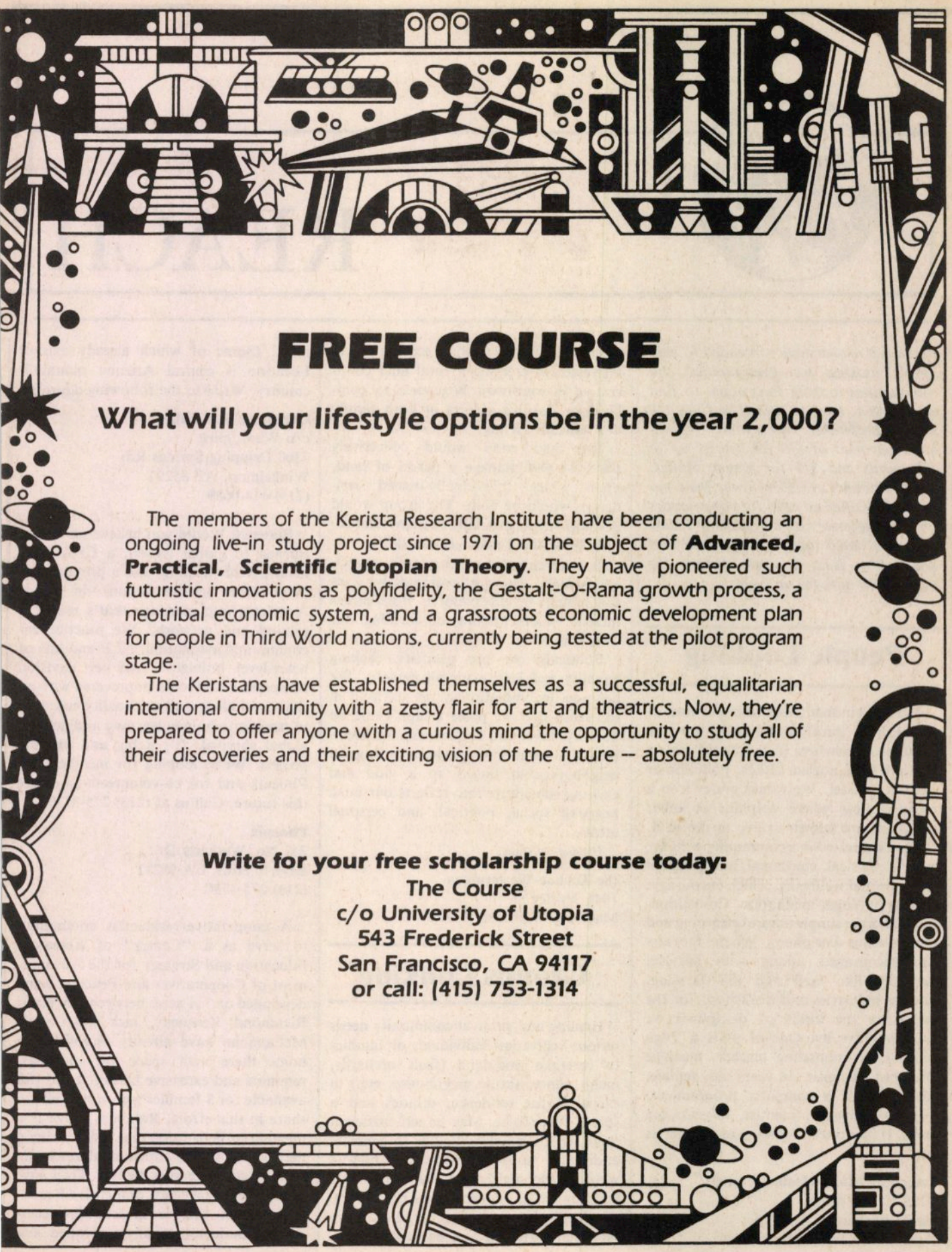
Rajneesh says,
"I roll my own karma"

3.

In one generation
the ethic went from procreation
to recreation

In the next
This is the way the world ends,
not with a bang but with a whisper.

—Paul Freundlich



FREE COURSE

What will your lifestyle options be in the year 2,000?

The members of the Kerista Research Institute have been conducting an ongoing live-in study project since 1971 on the subject of **Advanced, Practical, Scientific Utopian Theory**. They have pioneered such futuristic innovations as polyfidelity, the Gestalt-O-Rama growth process, a neotribal economic system, and a grassroots economic development plan for people in Third World nations, currently being tested at the pilot program stage.

The Keristans have established themselves as a successful, equalitarian intentional community with a zesty flair for art and theatrics. Now, they're prepared to offer anyone with a curious mind the opportunity to study all of their discoveries and their exciting vision of the future -- absolutely free.

Write for your free scholarship course today:

The Course
c/o University of Utopia
543 Frederick Street
San Francisco, CA 94117
or call: (415) 753-1314

REACH

Reach is a reader service intended to help people looking for communities and communities looking for people to find one another. Listings should be 50 to 150 words, preferably typewritten. We request payment of $10 for listings up to 100 words and $15 for longer listings. These amounts are 60% lower than our special classified ad rates for communities and cooperative organizations. Please note that dated material requires a lead time of at least 6 weeks before the publication date for an issue.

People Looking

☆We are 2 individuals wishing to find or establish a rural community on the seashore somewhere in the world with a low risk from nuclear attack, pollution or natural disaster. We would prefer it in a location near where dolphins or other cetaceans are known to live in the wild. We are interested in a community with the goal of physical, emotional, interpersonal and spiritual wellbeing, which encourages the use of Yoga, meditation, Co-counseling and other simple natural clearning and empowering disciplines. Where the arts are encouraged, along with survival activities like land and sea farming, cottage industries and workshops for the public in the kinds of disciplines we ourselves live by. One of us is a Yoga teacher, co-counseling teacher, massage therapist, feminist, 34 years old, female. The other is a computer programmer, yogi-co-counselor, scientist, 36 years old male. If interested in joining us contact us at:

Laughing Moon Healing Center
3116 Calle Fresno
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
Attention: Chandrika and Beto

☆We are a family of three seeking others interested in creating a rural land cooperative in southwest Wisconsin to combine the positive aspects of both family and collective living.

The land coop would collectively purchase and manage a parcel of land, upon which individually-owned residences would be built. The group would develop ongoing socially and environmentally sound land management skills.

Our search is for other people, especially parents, who are leading active lives that happily include children. Possibilities include homeschooling or forming our own school.

Politically we are pacifists, seeking equality and justice for all persons. We are non-denominational, yet spiritual in the sense that we place a high value on honesty, love, and forgiveness. As members of a community, we hope to be good neighbors contributing to a vital and exciting subculture that reflects our most heartfelt social, political, and personal ideals.

Please contact:

the Kuehne-Westermans
1841 Jenifer St.
Madison, Wisconsin 53704

Groups Looking

☆Healing and survival community needs serious vegetarian individuals or families to caretake this land (fruit orchards, maintenance, future greenhouse, etc.) in exchange for residence, utilities and a special place to be. May be self-sufficient there, or use developed skills to generate additional support income. Children warmly welcome! Future goals: children's learning center, underground radio communications and storage facilities, complete self-sufficient and healing environment. (Some of which already exists.) Location is central Arizona mountain country. Write to the following address.

Christmas Star Valley
c/o Wind Spirit
2300 Dripping Springs Rd.
Winkelmon, AZ 85292
(213) 474-0689

☆Phoenix: Would you believe—a lawyer (turned to global issues), a CPA (who loves psychic healing) and a programmer (who writes science fiction)—in a Los Angeles group marriage that's ready to expand and network? We practice encounter and meditation, NLP and lots of heart-level intimacy. And we envision computer-based tools empowered with all that psychology and spirituality can add, to transform human learning and achieve global survival. It's a big and exciting project. We're looking for members for Phoenix and for co-volunteers to create this future. Call us at (213) 275-3730.

Phoenix
257 No. Wetherly Dr.
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
(213) 275-3730

☆A cooperative/residential community to serve as a "Center" of Research, Education and Strategy for the Advancement of Cooperatives and Peace is being developed on 7½ acres between Berea and Richmond, Kentucky. Jack and Connie McLanahan have already established a home there with space for meetings, seminars and extensive library. Land still available for 3 families who would like to share in this effort. Rainbow Ridge is a member of Federation that is activating a network of similar educational/research/strategy centers across the U.S. Their aim: to replace the present Competitive Economic System that is investor/producer-owned, undemocratically-controlled and

profit-motivated—resulting in *poverty and powerlessness*—the "causes" of *war*—with a Cooperative Economy that is consumer-owned, democratically-controlled and service-oriented—resulting in an equitable distribution of wealth and an empowerment of people with an equal voice in determining economic affairs affecting their lives.

Rainbow Ridge
Jack and Connie McLanahan
3689 Berea Road
Richmond, Kentucky 40475
(606) 623-0695

☆Community for Peace and World Transformation—The tax exempt Aquarian Research Foundation of Philadelphia which has been more or less communal since 1969 has now decided to form a core group of people who will live together in their eight room house in Germantown for the purpose of forming a communal group dedicated to world transformation and peace.

Members of the community would be expected to work together full time in an affectionate environment aimed at changing the world's thinking so that a new era of peace and harmony can emerge worldwide.

Art Rosenblum, founder of the Aquarian Research Foundation has lived in communal societies for over 17 years and has visited many other communities for shorter or longer periods. He is a writer, publisher, airplane pilot, printer and author of *Unpopular Science* and *The Natural Birth Control Book*. He has been happily married for ten years and works together with his wife, Judy. They have two children, ages one and six. Art recently returned from a citizen diplomatic mission to the Soviet Union where he met personally with Georgi Arbatov, top Soviet official for U.S.A. and Canadian affairs. He will be listed in the next edition of Who's Who in the East.

People interested in helping to form this community should write:

Aquarian Research Foundation,
Art Rosenblum
5620 Morton St.
Philadelphia, PA 19144
(215) 849-3237 or 849-1259

☆Rare Opportunity for Enlightened Individual—Seeking a right relationship with the earth and its inhabitants? We are looking for a special person(s) to join our small cooperative community. We own/steward 40 beautiful acres of forest land at the end of a dirt road in the Applegate Valley, in southern Oregon, easily accessible to/from Ashland, Medford, and Grants Pass.

Our interests are quite eclectic, ranging for example, from solar energy and organic gardening to classical and folk music, computer telecommunications, publishing, education, spirituality, and social change. Professionally we are an editor/writer, a teacher, and a medical technologist.

A few years ago we cut and milled some of our trees into lumber, and are well along in the construction of our 1500 sq. ft. passive solar community house/office/greenhouse facility. The house has no bedrooms—instead, each person will eventually have her/his own personal "space" (cabin, treehouse, houseboat, etc.) as well as use of the community house.

We envision having from 2-12 people in residence on the land at any one time, assuming that each of us will at times want to travel, go to school, or simply live elsewhere. The goal is to create a supportive, vibrant "home base" community to call our own.

The land also is home for a tax-exempt non-profit institute. We hope the institute will eventually support some portion of our collective income. Presently we do a lot of networking and coordinate an on-going "mail-order" conference on bioregional economics. On the land we are developing a large research garden, a demonstration project in natural selection forestry (no herbicides, clearcuts, or burning), and a potentially commercial aquaculture (fish-farming) project in one of our ponds.

We are looking for compatible, progressive, alternative-minded people to join us. Some qualities/characteristics we think are important: 1) a desire to develop and implement a collective vision; 2) a combination of intellectual/spiritual interests with manual/physical skills; 3) an ability and desire to communicate well interpersonally; 4) positive energy and a willingness to work hard at times; 5) a relaxed, health-minded lifestyle; 6) an ability to make a living (or creative alternative thereto) in southern Oregon; 7) evidence of some artistic, musical, or esthetic sensibility; 8) some sense of adventure.

Interested? Get in touch soon and tell us a little about yourself. We will respond to all inquiries. Write:

Heartsong
P.O. Box 240
Applegate, OR 97530

☆Tolstoy Farm (est. '63) has 61 residents, 31 of them children. We hold 240 acres of corporate and 100 acres of privately owned land. Each household is independent, having mostly separate gardens, animals, income, etc. Several co-ops exist between various families for specific purposes such as milk cow care, irrigation systems, gardening or child care. Most of us are anarchistic homesteaders who respect privacy and voluntary cooperation.

As organic gardeners we believe in leaving the land richer than we found it by putting in more than we take out and letting nature work out the balance. As communitarians we've seen how forced structures fail. We feel that if we all put whatever positive constructive energies we can into the community a natural balance will arise.

Houses here vary from the primitive to modern solar heated/earth sheltered. Seven homes have solar electric systems. Turnover is about one home per year. Five people have been here most of the time since '64.

Newcomers become part of Tolstoy by leasing homestead space from the corporation to build on or by purchasing the improvements of a departing member. Homestead spaces with water are currently all taken. We have the potential to buy some adjoining land if a new member were to provide most of the cash. In recent years houses have sold for $100 to $5000.

Tolstoy Farm
Rt. 3, Box 72-M
Davenport, WA 99122

☆Looking for Political Community? Pond House seeks feminist women for mixed household in social change and resource center. $250 includes utilities and food. Spacious, mostly vegetarian, no smoking.

Winifred WindRiver
21 Abbott Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
(413) 772-0711

☆We own 96 acres of land 40 miles south of Rochester, NY. Currently three adults and four children live in two houses, with several co-participants living elsewhere. We have some animals, work at gardening and caring for our woods. Our communal commitment is informal and undefined. We are acquainted through the food coop in Rochester where several of us work. We need help with animal care, childcare, and exploring the potentialities of our land and ourselves, moving gently toward self-sufficiency, and would like to include others, preferably a family with children. Some financial commitment would be necessary. Write:

Upland
RD 2, 8509 Hudson Rd.
Wayland, NY 14572

☆Our suburban community is located north of Los Angeles and south of Santa Barbara, California. We are a vegetarian, spiritual United Nations looking for cooperative, self-supporting people. Living with us we have had people from diverse spiritual traditions. Our seven bedroom house is owned by us, a monogamous couple with three children; rooms are rented to household members.

We meditate together weekly, eat together, share cooking and chores. We are always building, changing, growing, integrating and accepting.

We believe in and love this way of living. We see our community at the forefront of evolution and as a center of light. If you are interested in this suburban lifestyle write to:

John and Melinda Warner
1731 Hendrix Ave.
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

☆Are you attracted by the challenge of communal living? Six federated rural communities invite requests for information, tours, or longer visits and membership procedures: Appletree in Oregon, Chrysalis in Indiana, Dandelion in Ontario (Canada), East Wind and Sandhill in Missouri, Twin Oaks in Virginia. Nonsexist, nonracist, gentle cultures based on equality, cooperation and environmental concerns.

Each community integrates progressive political, economic and social values with a rural lifestyle.

Enjoy clean country air and water, co-operative work based on collective consent, and "Sharing-and-caring" relationships—as daily realities.

Write for informative booklet (free, or donation appreciated) on these six egalitarian communities.

Federation of Egalitarian Communities
c/o Twin Oaks—Box FC512
Louisa, VA 23093

Resources

☆A new group called the Media Access Network and Distribution Co-op is offering a variety of resources for musicians, writers, and film makers. These include specialized mailing lists, bibliographies, and related publications. They are also starting a syndicated features co-op that will help to collect and distribute work by writers and musicians. A free catalog is available by writing them at:

Media Distribution Co-op
2912 Daubenbiss Ave. #66
Soquel, CA 95073
(408) 462-6245

☆ *World Game Report* (The Newsletter for design scientists.) Official publication of World Game Projects, Inc. a not-for-profit organization dedicated to developing solutions to global problems. Based on the world view of Buckminster Fuller, the World Game finds ways "To make the World work for 100% of Humanity in the shortest possible time, through spontaneous cooperation, without ecological offense or the disadvantage of anyone." The gameboard is planet earth. The players are any people who are concerned with life on earth and interested in developing new alternatives and opportunities for humanity. The purpose of the game is to eliminate scarcity, poverty, war and all threats to human well-being and evolution, and nurture global peace and security. For information on becoming a member and receiving this fascinating newsletter, and on the other products and resources being offered, write:

The World Game
University City Science Center
3508 Market Street #214
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Calendar of Events

Breitenbush Community—Healing Retreat Conference Center

Personal Retreats—We invite you to visit for a personal retreat to relax, hike, enjoy spring and the healing hot mineral water. $30/person/day ($25 on weekdays) includes cabin accommodations, vegetarian meals and 24-hour use of the hot springs.

• May 30-June1
Environmental Action Weekend—Let's do something real and practical about the environment around us. Emphasis: Spotted Owl, Willamette National Forest Plan, real trail work!

• June 6-15
Death of the Body—Death of the Self—Steven and Ondrea Levine's last retreat as they move into a new phase. Their retreats are really worth the investment. They teach with honesty, simplicity, wisdom, humor and just plain ordinariness.

Work Exchange-Residency—We are looking for people interested in cooking, housekeeping, and vehicle maintenance repair. If you are interested for long or short term, please contact us. Arrangements must be made before arrival here. Contact Mark or Dean.

Reservations, please. To register, please send ¼ fee as deposit to:

Breitenbush Community
P.O. Box 578
Detroit, OR 97342
(503) 854-3501
(message) 854-3715

• June 6-8, 1986

Money for Community Land Trusts

June 6-8, 1986. Practical solutions to financing is the focus of this School of Living sponsored Community Land Trust conference. A variety of workshops and resources covering the why's and how-to's of Community Land Trusts, legal and tax aspects, ecological land use, etc., will be presented. This conference will be of interest to individuals or groups, in or out of community, trying to get started or expand. Costs: $65-$85 (sliding scale) covers tuition, 2 overnites, 6 meals. For more information contact:

Heathcote Community Conference Center
attn. land trust
21300 Heathcote Rd.
Freeland, MD 21053
(301) 343-0280

• June 16-17, 1986

The University of the Future at Sirius:

A 2 Week Living/Learning Seminar in Community Sponsored by the University of Massachusetts, June 6-27.

Following on our successful seminar with the University of Wisconsin last year, we are offering another innovative course for (optional) 3 units of graduate or undergraduate credit through the University of Massachusetts, in the richly educational environment provided by an intentional community. We will explore the new patterns of living in over 30 new age communities today—in economics, governance, relationships, families and spiritual practices. Pioneering new ideas and techniques developed by these communities in conflict resolution, consensus decision-making, stress management and self-help health care will be taught. The emphasis will be not only on social change and the role of communities as "R and D" centers, but also on personal growth. There will be experimental sessions and cooperative exercises, as well as regular classes and hands-on training in solar building, organic gardening, vegetarian cooking, and sacred dancing. Course instructors Corinne McLaughlin and Gordon Davidson have visited over 150 communities around the country to research their new book, *Builders of the Dawn*, which is recommended for the course. Enrollment is limited, so register early.

Fees: $335.00 (non-credit); $395 (credit) includes means and accommodations.

Sirius
P.O. Box 388
Amherst, MA 01004
(413) 259-1505

• July 18-20 and July 20-25, 1986

Communities in the 1980's, weekend workshop, July 18-20; weeklong community living experience, with concurrent children's champ, July 20-25. Weekend co-led by Corinne McLaughlin and Gordon Davidson, authors of "Builders of the Dawn: Community Lifestyles in the 80s", and five Virginia communities (Twin Oaks, Sevenoaks, Shannon Farm, Innisfree, Springtree). Weeklong community experience and children's camp at Sevenoaks. Families and individuals can grow while vacationing in a community context (classes in body movement, nutrition, massage, politics of community and more). Children will have opportunities for swimming, arts and crafts, hiking in nearby Blue Ridge Mountains, help in improving their interpersonal skills and self-awareness, under the direction of experienced camp director, teacher and community members. Participants will also have option to visit the other communities noted above. Sevenoaks is located in the Blue Ridge foothills, on 130 acres with mountain views, swimming pond, hiking trails, ceremonial places and comfortable facilities. Contact:

Sevenoaks
Rt. #1, Box 86C
Madison, VA 22727
(703) 948-6544

• June 20-22, 1986

The Earth Regeneration and Reforestation Association [TERRA]—Global deforestation will be addressed region by region in simultaneous conferences called for the solstice weekend of June 20-22, 1986. The conferences are part of a strategy put forward by The Earth Regeneration and Reforestation Association (TERRA) to call attention to the extent of deforestation and its direct consequences for people everywhere on the planet. TERRA has invited hundreds of organizations representing all of the continents to hold parallel conferences both accessible to local people and oriented toward concrete local solutions. TERRA's own conference, intended to draw people from the U.S. mid-west, mid-Atlantic and north eastern states and contiguous areas of Canada, will be held in Slippery Rock, PA, USA, under the co-sponsorship of the Alter Project of Slippery Rock University.

For more information contact:

Dan Hemneway
P.O. Box 202
Orange, MA 01364
(617) 544-7810

Joanna Campe
152 South St.
Northampton, MA 01060
(413) 586-4429

• June 20-22, 1986

Earth Views Gathering IV

A Gathering to share Philosophies, Teachings and Research to enrich our Understanding of Ourselves, the Energies of the Earth and All the Gifts of Creation, at the Dunkirk Conference Center, June 20-22, 1986.

Features and Special Events— Gifts from Earth-The Ancient Tool Maker—Wanda Terhaar; T'ai Chi-Body Prayer—Janet Mattes; The Great Pyramid and Sphinx-Prophecies of Planetary Transformation—Joseph Jochmans; Earth Healing Ceremonies—AmyLee; The Findhorn Experience-An Encounter With the Great God Pan—Bruce McCausland; Many Lives-Many Voices—Sarah Benson; Penetrating to the Heart of Crystal by Attention to Transcendence in Geometry—Dan Winter; Healing with Herbs—Staff, Earth Spirit.

For further information, please write or call:

Earth Spirit-Earth Views
P.O. Box 261
Orchard Park, New York 14127
(716) 649-7755.

• June 22, 1986

Sikhs Host Leaders of Many Faiths in Ancient American Indian Prayer Ceremony for World Peace

On June 22, an inter-religious gathering will celebrate "Peace Prayer Day", an unusual day of prayer for world peace on a remote mountain plateau outside the town of Espanola, New Mexico, in the colorful Sangre de Cristo range—a site

revered for thousands of years by Hopis and other tribes but located only a short drive from Los Alamos and the site of the development of the first atomic bomb.

"Peace Prayer Day", led by the American Sikh community and their spiritual and administrative leader, Siri Singh Sahib Bhai Sahib Harbhajan Singh Khalsa Yogiji, also known as Yogi Bhajan, will bring together spiritual leaders from nearly a dozen faiths to pray for peace on this land whose sacredness, it is believed will lend special power to those prayers.

The participants, dressed in traditional garb and speaking many languages, will resemble something akin to a United Nations of world religions. Also included will be well-known peace activists, political leaders and advocates of social justice issues. A central altar will be constructed as a symbol of the unity of the world's religions.

Participants will include leaders of the Christian, Jewish, Sikh, Moslem, Hindu, Jain, Sufi, Buddhist and Bahai communities as well as individual members of organizations such as the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the World Congress of Peace and Religion, representatives of the Hopi and Navajo communities, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Sikh Dharma of the Western Hemisphere
1649 South Robertson Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90035
Krishna Kaur
(213) 550-9043

• June 25-29 and July 2-6, 1986

Smithsonian Announces Anniversary Program for 20th Annual Festival of American Folklife —Japan, Tennessee, Trial Lawyers and Traditional Crafts will be featured.

The Festival will be held at the National Mall between 10th and 14th Streets, Washington, D.C. on June 25-29 and July 2-6.

For 20 years, the Smithsonian's Festival of American Folklife has enlivened the National Mall, attracting Washingtonians and visitors from all over the United States and abroad who together have celebrated this nation's rich cultural diversity and the many international traditions from which it springs. The festival is co-sponsored by the Smithsonian's Office of Folklife Programs and the National Park Service.

This year's 20th anniversary festival will continue the lively tradition June 25-19 and July 2-6 with a varied program featuring Japan, the state of Tennessee, the occupational folk traditions of trial lawyers and an area focusing on the conservation of traditional crafts in the United States. As a special birthday present to festival visitors, there will be all-day, every-day concerts featuring favorite musicians from previous years. A nightly dance party led by festival artists will offer visitors the opportunity to participate in the festivities.

Smithsonian Institution
Press Contacts:
Susan Bliss (202) 357-2627
Alvin Rosenfeld (202) 357-2627
Public Inquiries:
(202) 357-2700

• July 30-August 3, 1986

The International Tesla Society and the **Pikes Peak Section of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers** (IEEE) are co-sponsoring the 1986 International Tesla Symposium in Colorado Springs, Colorado, United States of America. The symposium which will be held July 30-August 3, 1986, will feature topics that range from historical interests to technical discoveries and applications arising from Nikola Tesla's work.

For further information contact:

International Tesla Society, Inc.
330-A West Uintah, Suite 115
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80905

• August 25-31, 1986

The Second North American Bioregional Congress will be held August 25-31, 1986. Existing bioregional organizations as well as newly emerging ones are preparing for this event. All individuals, organizations, and movements working from an ecological basis toward a sustainable future for North America are encouraged to attend, both as participants and presenters. For complete information, write:

NABC II Office, The Bioregional Project of the New Life Farm, Inc.
Box 3
Brixey, MO 65618

• October 2-5, 1986

Call for Papers—The eleventh annual meeting of the Society for Utopian Studies will be held at the Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, California, on October 2-5, 1986. If you wish to organize a panel or give a paper, please contact our program chair, Professor Samson B. Knoll, at the address below. The deadline for abstracts and session proposals is June 15, 1986. Persons planning to attend the Conference should inform Professor Knoll no later than June 30, 1986.

Professor Samson B. Knoll
Chancellor Emeritus of the Monterey Institute of International Studies
Carmel Highlands,
200 Upper Walden Rd.
Carmel, California 93923

Late Arriving Entries

☆I'm a non-separatist, non-heterophobic, non-monogamous, lesbian living in the Kerista Commune in the Haight-Ashbury. I want to meet lesbians and gay men who are searching for an alternative to romantic loss of ego boundary, jealousy, and possessiveness. I wish to join with other egalitarian idealists who value excellent communication and desire adventure on a lifestyle frontier. We would be creating the world's first lesbian/gay polyfidelitous best friend cluster (variety in intimacy plus faithfulness inside a family where all the women take turns sleeping with the women and the men with the men; and the women and men have platonic, ideal-centered best friendships with one another). We'd be spending our lives in heroic comaraderie with other polyfide families attempting to launch a grassroots movement of creative, collective philanthropy. Philanthropianism springs naturally from the savings and surplus of committed communal living.

Responsible hedonists desiring Hope Opera not Soap Opera write or call for free literature and info on free rap group.

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753-1314

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Syntropy Transitional House
Box 51058-C
Palo Alto, CA 94303
(415) 322-7370

☆ We are a family—Michael, 39, Lisa, 25, Jenny, 3—who live on a 14 acre island and have a simple and natural lifestyle. Our 7 year relationship has been intense, exclusive and reclusive. It centers around seeing and experssing the truth of each moment, realizing God in everything around us and using our life situations as tools for our awakening. It's hard to find others with whom we can express ourselves in fullness and without hesitation. Most people that we meet don't feel the same need as we to be rid of the illusion, shallow thinking and false values that surround us. We are trying to be fully awake at every moment and open to the flow of life and change in and around us. We want to live with others who have these desires—who have embarked on the journey of awakening to who they are and who try to express this in everything they do. We are looking for another family, a group or a spiritual community. Our daughter needs playmates and we need support and insights to help us to more consciously raise and homeschool her. We have taken our desire for privacy to the extreme and living this life of isolation any longer will only hinder our growth. We feel an emptiness and need the love and support of others. Please write.

Michael and Lisa Pezzano
187-W Ben Ure Island
Oak Harbor, WA 98277

News Release

A concerted effort is being made by The Big Mountain Legal Defense Committee to gather support from the public in its efforts to resist the forced relocation of the Navajo and Hopi tribes from their lands in Arizona. "Over Ten Thousand Navajo people in the area around Big Mountain are being relocated—forcibly if authorities consider it necessary—off from their sacred homelands through the agency of the U.S. Government and Public Law 93-531, passed by a misinformed Congress in 1974. The relocation is scheduled to be completed by July 1986. Presently there is continual harrassment of Native people on the land. Livestock is confiscated, and they are forbidden to build or repair homes or any structure. The process of forcing them off the land is well underway." To find out how you can help, write:

Big Mountain Legal Defense/ Offense Committee
2501 4th St., Suite 18
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
(602) 774-5233

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BACK ISSUES

Highlights of some of the thirty-one past issues currently available through this SPECIAL BACK ISSUE OFFER!

64. Social notes on the Great Alternative Life Group in the Sky; a story of old folks in a future world; Kerista on Kerista;the case against consensus; and kibbutz education.

63. Living in community: at Stelle, Twin Oaks, International Emissary Community; peace efforts in Nicaragua and the women's peace camp in Comiso Italy; and democratic management

62. Progressive economics and politics; co-op housing; new ideas for your community and kibbutz society.

61. Parenting, childcare and education; co-op housing; working for peace—Syracuse Cultural Workers Project; and planning in community.

60. Reviews of gatherings in '83; alternative economics; school co-ops.

57. Feminist Therapy; Women's Resources Distribution Company; designing your food coop; a report on the National Audubon Society's Expedition Institute; the cooperative vision in science fiction; and George Lakey's thoughts about abolishing war.

55. National Consumer Coop Bank, Worker's Tust, C.U.G., Coop America; Computers in the Coop; CCA Institute; and workplace democracy.

54. Interviews with Bright Morning Star and Meg Christian; peace work in Europe; a discussion with 5 social activists; community land trust; kibbutz society; and neighborhood development

53. Spiritual Communities— The Farm, Dromenon, The Planetary Network of Light, Sirius Community, The Abode of the Message, Ananda Lama Foundation, The Renaissance Community and Shambhala

52. The barter system; networking; Santa Cruz Women's Health Collective; International Commune Conference; worker ownership; East Wind Community; and leaving community.

51. Political paradigms for the eighties— Citizens party, Santa Monica, CA., Center for Community Change; feminist political strategies; coops in El Salvador; Dandelion Community

50. Death and Dying: George Lakey on cancer; Conn. Hospice; grieving, and a death at Twin Oaks

48. International— Cuba, China, India, El Salvador, England, Israel, Spain, and the U.S.A.

47. Stories— excerpts from a Twin Oaks story; Barwick; Bay Area Collective; Berkeley Collectives

43. Health and community business— tofu making; Heartland; Radical Psychiatry; neighborhood health clinic

41. Friendship, family and sexuality; Synergy, Renaissance Community and Kerista Village

40. Community development; women and money; trusteeship; and an interview with a woman builder

39. Women sharing; the Hutterites of 350 years ago; housewife to activist; Healing Waters gathering; and workplace democracy.

36. Community in British Columbia; kibbutz child rearing; Kerista Village; and a readers' survey.

35. The Consumer Cooperative Bank—the institute, the movement and the bank; income and resource sharing; new communities; Consumer and Cooperative Alliance; and the utopian heritage.

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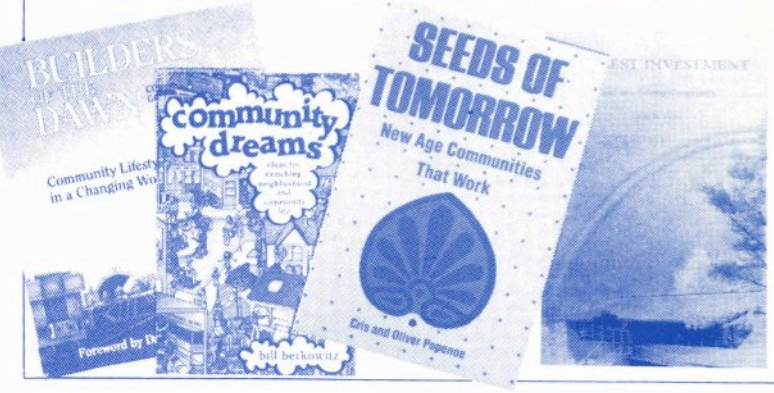

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