

COMMUNITIES

Journal of Cooperative Living

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Spring 1997 (Issue #94)

MAKING A LIVING



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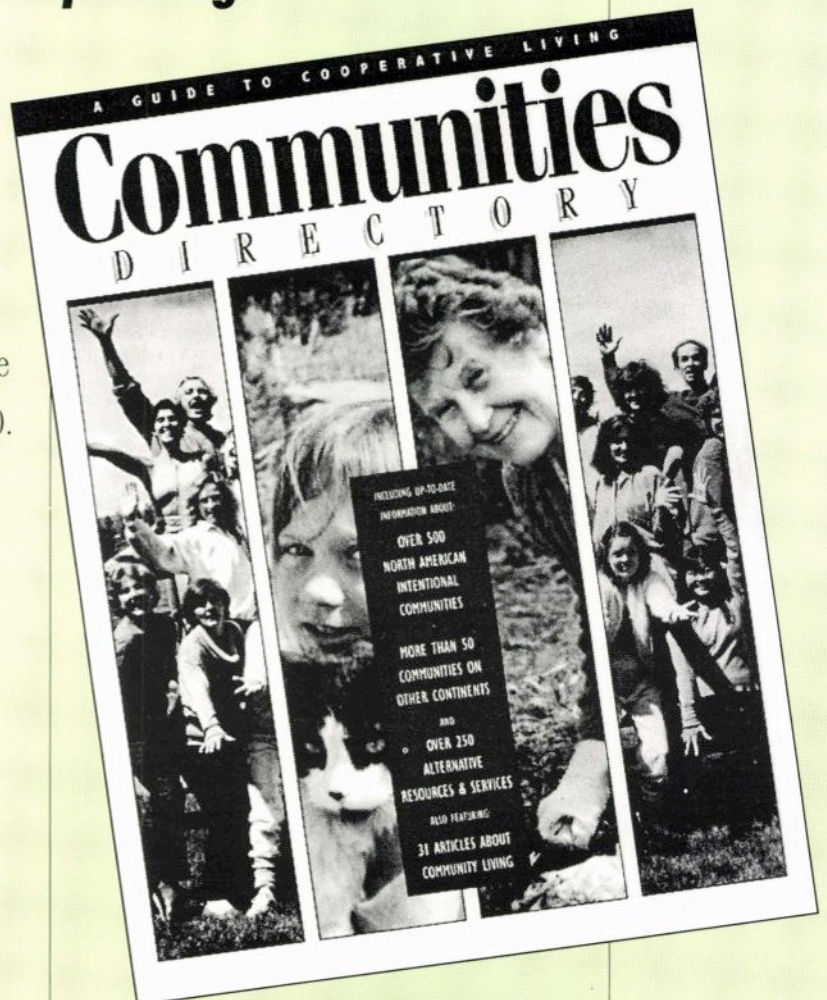
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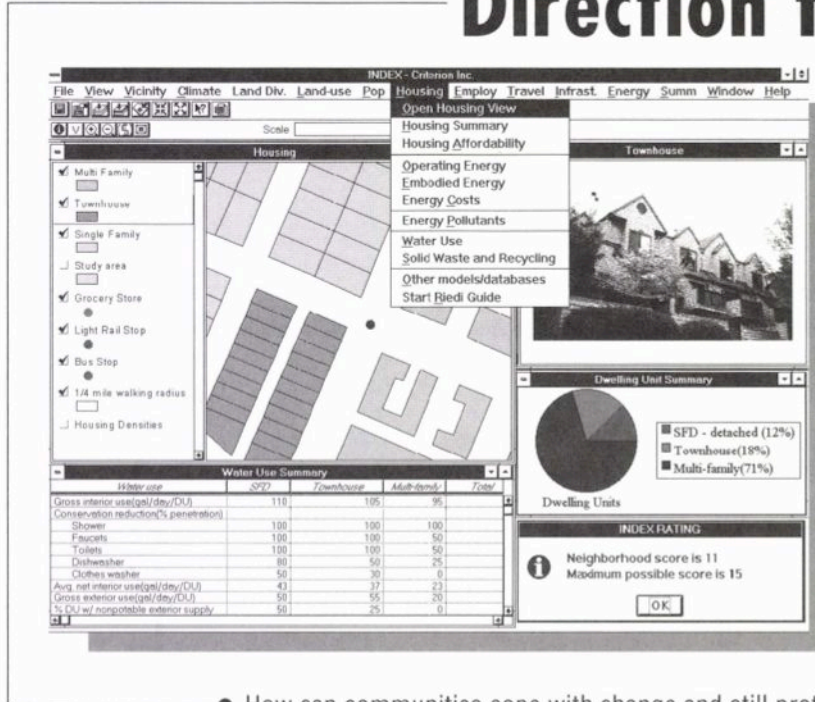


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Journal of
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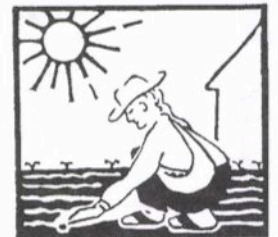
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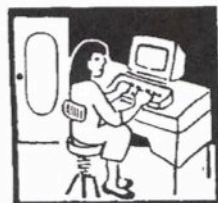
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Harvesting winter salad greens at Sunrise Farm and CSA Garden, a new business at Sunrise Ranch, in Loveland, Colorado. David Lynch and Judy Morris.

Photo by Ann B. Foorman.

BACK COVER

Cameron Taylor is Dairy Co-Manager at Twin Oaks in Virginia.

Photo by Jonathan Roth.

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Send letters to *Communities* magazine, PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541. Your letter may be edited or shortened. Thank you!

"Christian Communities" Issue: Praise, Disappointment

Dear *Communities*:

Thank you for the thoughtful issue on Christian communities. You showed a rich diversity of attempts to re-invent church, from the industrious Shiloh experiment to the simple Texan Benedictines. Likewise, you showed quite a range of different ways many of these experiments came to an inglorious end. You handled them with a balanced hand, acknowledging the inspiration and devotion of believers who followed the call to community, while showing compassion for those who fell from grace, especially those unable to handle authority responsibly.

Some of the latter stories were painful, reminding me of the wincing discomfort I felt at the news of Jonestown, just months after joining an intentional Christian community in California. Although we recognized our leaders as gifted, their authority was not unquestioned or absolute and the women were not prescribed to a subordinate role. However, when internal tensions and the diffusion of our common focus brought us to the breaking point, we keenly felt our lack of roots in a long-standing Christian tradition such as the Catholics, Hutterites, etc. In that regard, Julia Duin's suggestions (see below) were right on target. Despite our community's eventual demise, there is no denying that our lives were changed for the better and that the darkness was pushed back a bit.

Those contemplating joining or continuing commitment in a Christian community would do well to remember that true community is, literally, an act of God's grace, and not dependent on our native abilities or best intentions. Adopting this attitude can help us to hold lightly to our often fumbling attempts at community.

George Rodkey
Tacoma, Washington

In "Authority and Submission in Christian Community," (Fall '96 issue, p. 51), Christian journalist Julia Duin suggested that Christian communities: 1) include theologians as advisors, 2) refer troubled members to professional counselors, 3) learn from the traditions and mistakes of previous Christian communities, 4) watch out for extremism, and 5) make repentance and taking responsibility central to community life.

Dear *Communities*:

I think you missed a great opportunity. Your editorial stated the desire to redress the relative lack of Christian representation in *Communities* magazine, etc., however my reaction was one of sadness and disappointment. It was as if every effort to report on Christian communities had to be "balanced" by the negative and what was or has gone wrong in the past.

Sure, I know—you must be on the "cutting edge" and "tell it like it is" and not be a source of propaganda for Christian communities—but personally, I tire of such agendas! Why couldn't you have just presented a positive profile on some Christian communities minus the effort at "insightful journalism"—at least for your first real effort at covering (or reaching out to) Christian communities?!

Anyway, you may win some praise from social activists, but I doubt you will entice the host of other Christian communities to trust you with a story on them. I wouldn't.

I'm weary of the present fad that seems to have to ferret out the negative (though calling it something else to make it sound relevant). I suppose this might get me branded as "fundamentalist," or "out of touch." If I have missed something, forgive me, but my gut level response was "thumbs down" on trying to win the trust of many Christian groups. I would not recommend the issue to my relatives, friends, or those interested in our life at Shepherdsfield. I will still need to turn elsewhere for a good story on Christian communities that I can recommend to my friends.

Jon R. Welker
Pastor, Shepherdsfield Community
Fulton, Missouri

We're sorry you're disappointed in the issue. We weren't trying to balance positive with negative, as you suggest. Rather, Guest Editor Joe Peterson asked Christian communitarians, past and present, to address the questions he's most frequently asked—including "How do Christian communitarians live?" and "Why are there fewer Christian communities now than in the '70s?"

The articles were not written by professional writers, except for Julia Duin's, but by current and former Christian communitarians who

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responded to Joe's request for articles. They weren't attempting insightful journalism or to be social activists or to be on the cutting edge, as you suggest. They just told their own stories.

At least seven of the articles seemed quite positive to us, and two seemed neutral. "A Shiloh Sister's Story," and "The Rise and Fall of Shiloh," could be construed as negative. However, we honestly didn't see them as critical of Christian communities, but rather as describing what often happened in most '70s-era communities.

Julia Duin's "Authority and Submission in Christian Community" was definitely a critique, however a critique of authoritarian Christian communities only. We believe that anyone who read the articles about Koinonia, the Church of the Sojourners, Wesleyan Christian Community, or St. Benedict's farm would not—could not—conclude that all Christian communities were authoritarian.

Joe Peterson did not approach Julia Duin for an article to create something negative or to balance articles which were positive, as you suggest. He believed she had excellent insights and information, and that Christian communities—and all communities—can learn from and thereby grow stronger by learning the difficult lessons of communities in the recent past.

Dear Communities:

I want to commend your recent focus on Christian communities. The articles gave an excellent view of the diverse expressions of intentional Christian community in North America. When we are called to be part of the church, we are called into community. One of the important marks of renewal in the church today is a deeper sense of community shared amongst its members. Since

the earliest history of the church, in the book of Acts, this comes as a gift of the Holy Spirit and defines the church as a distinct community, living by the values of the Kingdom of God, in contrast to the surrounding society. The examples in your issue remind us again of the church's call to express its life as a living community with one another, and a visible witness to the love we have known in Jesus Christ.

Wesley Granberg-Michaelson
General Secretary,
Reformed Church in America
New York, New York

Shiloh Article: Underplaying Authoritarian Hierarchy?

Dear Communities:

Reading Joe Peterson's article in your Fall '96 issue on Christian Communities ("The Rise and Fall of Shiloh," p. 60), I get the feeling that we who bore Shiloh on our shoulders are becoming invisible again and voiceless, just as we were in Shiloh. The community he describes is not the one I lived in.

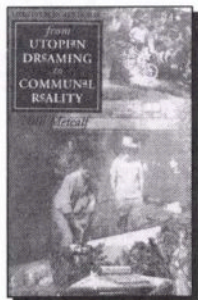
I am grateful to Joe Peterson for his part in organizing the 1987 reunion. He was never in the original Shiloh community, however, and it shows. I was there, from 1971 to 1976, ages 16 to 21, always at or near the bottom of a well-defined pecking order. Joe lists many interesting facts, but the heart of the story is missing. Dino Wenino, another five-year veteran of Shiloh, told me that the picture Joe painted of the community is "so contrived as to be almost sickening." I'll limit my criticism to two points: the freedom Joe claims we had, and

his statement regarding the current religious beliefs of ex-Shiloh members.

Shiloh was a place of privilege and lack thereof, an army of quasi-slaves supporting a small elite who had special, nice jobs. Joe's writing, "You could be as creative and entrepreneurial as you liked in Shiloh" is like saying that anybody in Stalinist Russia could be a party leader. Those of us on the bottom learned to obey orders instantly and without question. Any topic of discussion that might distract from the current task was considered, "unedifying," hence off limits. We were closely watched, and we in turn watched others.

The Fundamentalist faith we obeyed was degrading to our intelligence, and I was surprised to read that we ex-members had "kept" that faith. Most ex-Shiloh members I know have abandoned it. This includes elders, second only to John Higgins, Jr. in power and spiritual prestige; pastors; and deacons like me. For many, "knowing the Lord" is a distant, weird memory. Others believe in God, but in a manner inconsistent with Fundamentalism. I know some Fundamentalists among us ex-Shilohites, or evangelicals, but they are a minority.

Joe's conclusion that we are still Fundamentalists is based on pseudo-science. Joe has an M.A. in Sociology; I have an M.S. in Statistics. I am trained to point out what conclusions one can draw from a set of data. Joe bases his claim about the current beliefs of ex-Shiloh members on a survey that was concluded over ten years ago. Thus he assumes we haven't changed in ten years. But even as an attempt to find out what we believed in the early '80s, the survey fails because it's based on a biased sample. It's the kind of



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mistake that no political pollster would dare to make if he wanted to keep his job.

Sometime before 1987, the University of Oregon Department of Sociology mailed questionnaires to the approximately 500 people whom they were able to identify as former Shilohites, and for whom they had mailing addresses. Of these 500, 200 responded. Of these 200, Joe writes that "a vast majority" claimed to be evangelicals.

He tacitly assumes that the 200 who responded are a representative sample of the entire former Shiloh population. He ignores the fact that the last thing many ex-Shilohites wanted in the early '80s was to be contacted by the remnants of the failed, screwed-up organization by which many felt betrayed, where many felt they had wasted a large and valuable part of their lives. The 500 names on the list constituted less than half, perhaps a quarter of former Shiloh personnel, and were a self-selected group. They were obtained (Joe told me) from ads and notices in magazines, lists at reunions, and "the grapevine," as well as old Shiloh records. Names obtained in this way would contain a disproportionate number who were kindly disposed toward the organization and what it stood for. The proportions were distorted further by the fact that only the minority

who responded were counted. Jerry Frink, for instance, Higgins' former second-in-command and no longer a practicing Fundamentalist, found the questionnaire offensive and didn't respond. He skipped the reunion and went to Dylan and the Dead instead. In the calculations that led to Joe's article, Jerry didn't count, and neither did the rest of us.

Jacob A. Wegelin
Seattle, Washington

Dear *Communities*:

I was excited to read your articles about the Shiloh communities. I stayed in the Shiloh house in Eugene the summer of '69, when I was 22, and have wondered what became of them.

For me, the Shiloh experience mostly served as a recovery station. It gave me several drug-free months and helped transform me from a wandering hippie to a more functioning adult. For this I am extremely grateful.

However, I also feel that I was serious manipulated that summer: *brainwashed* is not too strong a word. I was told that not only was there only one true path to God and the Bible its only record, but that Shiloh elders alone understood the Bible's one true interpretation. It took me several years to stop being obnoxious to my relatives and friends,

and to again appreciate the spiritual beauty of my own Jewish heritage. Likewise, it took several years for me to embark on the true spiritual path of my heart without fear of "hell and damnation."

The problem, I believe, was more than Shiloh's hierarchy or its overbearing elders. It's a sad comment when an organization's members feel they have more of a handle on the truth than others. Spiritual integrity demands the acknowledgement of diversity of opinion, and the right of each soul to make his or her own spiritual decisions without threats, intimidation, or harassment.

I sincerely hope that current Christian communities and theology are more tolerant. Again, thanks for putting me in touch with this important part of my past.


Susan Chernilo
Brookline, Massachusetts

We encourage all our readers to be a part of the community dialogue. Have an opinion or comment about something you've read? Send us a letter!

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We have settled in northeastern Missouri and are working closely with 22-year-old community, Sandhill Farm. We hope to buy land nearby and start building by spring.

Dancing Rabbit

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Making a Living & Living with Tough Choices

ABOUT A YEAR AGO, I FACED ONE OF THE HARDEST choices in my 20 years of community living—whether to go along with a group proposal to begin using propane to cook sorghum (a sweetener our community produces each fall that represents the biggest cash crop on our organic farm), or to insist that we continue using wood. I was in anguish. When it came my turn to speak, everyone else had voiced support for propane and I was pulled in opposite directions by two deeply held values.

The main argument for propane was that it would save labor (it also offers touch-of-a-valve control of cooking temperatures, but this advantage is not so pronounced for a group that's invested 20 years apprenticing in the art of wood cooking). Many hours now devoted to cutting, splitting, and hauling wood, and stoking fires could be saved. Of course, some of those hours would have to be spent making money to buy the propane, but everyone agreed there would be a net surplus if we made the switch. We place a high value on giving members opportunities to do what they want, so long as basic community needs are met. Since the people doing most of the sorghum work wanted the change, it was compelling to support their request. Knowing this, the social voice in me wanted to say "yes."

There is, however, another factor: propane is manufactured from oil. Because our community also holds a core value of living sustainably, the switch to a non-renewable fuel looked like a move in the wrong direction.

Of course, wood is not necessarily an ecologically wise fuel choice—in many parts of the world trees are too scarce to be used this way—but in the rolling hills of northeast Missouri, wood is abundant. We can sustainably fuel the sorghum fires for decades with the scraps from other uses: the tops from trees cut for saw logs, waste wood from old buildings, or the slab wood residue from lumber making. Knowing this, the resource voice in me wanted to say "no."

Most of the time, our commitment to an ecological lifestyle and our commitment to creating a life of opportunities for our members does not clash. But here it did.

I have told this story because I don't think it an accident that we faced a clash of values while making choices about how we make a living. In fact, I think it's somewhat predictable.

Intentional communities are attempts to build realities out of dreams. The engineers (folks out there trying to figure how to do it day-to-day) can't build community exactly like the architects draw it up on the blueprints. Values that fit together seamlessly in the vision statement occasionally become conflicting guideposts in reality.

Because communities are inspired by dreams, there tends to be

lots of idealism and high values. At the same time, all communities need to generate some cash (no matter how rich the grubstake or how simply the members live, eventually the money needs to be replenished). That means dwelling in the hard-core reality of the cash economy, where funny things can happen to one's ideals. There is probably no aspect of community living where we are so apt to get our collective face rubbed in messy dynamics as when we attempt to find peace with the gap between what we are trying to accomplish and how we make the money that funds the experiment.

Though the wood/propane dilemma stands out as a particularly clear and tender example, the truth is we face making-a-living value compromises all the time. Despite our community's ecological zeal, we don't do anything that's really "pure."

For example, we also make tempeh, a cultured soyfood. Though not well known in the Midwest, our market is steadily expanding and we feel great about offering this tasty, high-quality vegetable protein as a way to explore eating lower on the food chain.

So what's not to like about tempeh? There are several steps in the process that involve ecological compromises. The beans need to be cooked, and we use—guess what—propane. After cooking and cooling, the beans are inoculated and placed in perforated plastic bags to culture. When they are finished, we seal them in another plastic bag, and store them in a freezer. The bags, of course, are an oil derivative. And the electricity for the freezer comes from a coal-fired power plant. Thus we fall short of Utopia here, too. It's hard work (and occasionally embarrassing) stepping back from our actions and testing for value consistency, but we find comfort in the knowledge that we make choices with our eyes open to the consequences, and our minds open to better options down the road.

There's a big difference between making a living and making a life. Narrowing that gap—making money in a way that's aligned with one's values—is one of the ways communities are trying to pioneer more integrated lifestyles. I invite you to view this issue of *Communities* as a progress report on what's been achieved so far.

Lain Sandhill

P.S. In case you were wondering, we agreed to make the switch to propane, but have postponed implementation for at least one more year of wood.

COMING IN FUTURE ISSUES

If you would like to write for Communities magazine, please contact the Guest Editors directly. Thank you!

"Sustainable Building and Design in Community" is planned for Summer '97, with Guest Editors Diana Leafe Christian and David Silverman. PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541; phone and fax: 970-593-5615.

"Food and Sharing Meals in Community," Fall '97. How food can bring a community together or cause divisiveness, from garden to table. Guest Editor Ranee Zaporski. Ofek Shalom, 12 N Butler St., Madison, WI 53703; 608-257-8880; e-mail: ewilliams@netconcepts.com.



'Making A Living?' A Curious Concept

“WHAT DO YOU DO FOR A living?”

This question, commonly asked in getting to know someone, could also be phrased, “How do you earn the money you need to pay your bills?”

The former is an infinitely more polite and poetic phrase. The latter, though crude, is probably a more accurate reflection of our culture. Sadly, a large number of people pick a career mostly for the money, working at a job that's not particularly enjoyable, often doing tasks they don't sense as being of any notable benefit to society.

The poetic phrasing also, unfortunately, reinforces our cultural habit of valuing “paying work,” regardless of its practical value, above “domestic work” such as cleaning the house, cooking the meals, washing the dishes, tending the garden, and taking care of the kids. It's probable we'd discover more interesting information if we asked instead, “How do you use your life energy?”

In San Francisco in the '70s and '80s, I was active in The Briarpatch Network*, an alternative network of communities, collective businesses, and individuals practicing “right livelihood”—the art of clarifying what it is in life that you are passionate about, then finding a way to make your living in pursuit of that passion.

One of the basic Briarpatch principles is that one's work life should be “seamless” with one's daily life—meaning that all the pieces should fit together in a well-balanced package, so that it's impossible to tell where “work” leaves off and “play” begins. In that context, the phrase “making a living” draws attention to the fact that most of us Western Worlders live in an interdependent society in which we use some form of currency (money, labor credits, barterable goods, debt) to pay for our needs (food, clothing, shelter,

health care) and our desires (recreation, education, art, hobbies, “things”). Part of the package is that the economic exchange is mostly accounted for at the level of the individual and the family, with any shared budgeting for common programs and amenities happening through corporations and governments, mostly of the large and anonymous (and often alienating) variety.

In general, however, people in the intentional communities movement have been moving in the right direction, though many communities are still in the experimental/developmental stage of their economic evolution. Today most intentional communities, especially those that aspire to model “sustainability,” seek to value all work that contributes to the common good. Those communities that identify themselves as being “egalitarian” take this concept one step further by placing *equal* value on *all* work done, either for income or in the course of daily life. However, often it seems that inspired communitarians (including yours truly) have replaced money-motivated workaholism with a version of workaholism driven by an altruistic passion for saving the world.

A basic first step in the pursuit of right livelihood is to look at ways to reduce expenses, either by conserving resources or by reducing consumption—improving efficiency, buying better-made products that last longer, developing renewable technologies (such as solar), sharing, reusing, recycling, rationing, repairing, improvising, and doing without.

Perhaps the most powerful choice we can make to reduce expenses is to change our

attitudes: to realize that we can live comfortably well with considerably less, that we can reject the pervasive and often subliminal message of advertisers to “buy, buy, buy” ... that we won't be modern enough, beautiful enough, rich enough, or normal enough unless we use their particular dish soap, deodorant, designer clothes, alcohol, automobiles, insurance, or investment program. This is another area in which contemporary intentional communities have made great strides. Appropriate technology, self-sufficiency, sustainability, and simple living are four of the largest categories included in the index of the most recent *Communities Directory*. Examples abound:

Raven Rocks, in rural southeastern Ohio, runs a large organic farming operation, uses wind energy, and is creating a large prototype underground building designed by Malcolm Wells, one of the leading pioneers in the field of underground architecture.

Muir Commons, a cohousing community in Davis, California, has 26 families living on less than three acres. About a third of the land is in vineyards, orchards, and gar-

We'd discover more interesting information if we'd asked, “How do you use your life energy?”

dens, and the residents favor native (water-conserving) landscaping in the yards. They have only one(!) shared lawnmower for all 26 households.

River Spirit, in the wilderness of northern California, has seven families living in a 40-acre pioneer village (off the grid), raising 95 percent of their own food organically (by hand), home schooling, and making much of their own lumber and clothes. They teach courses in permaculture, simple living, and wilderness survival skills.

CEEDS, with four farms in central British Columbia, offers apprenticeships in horse logging, labor-intensive organic gardening skills, and how to use sheep as a viable alternative to herbicide spraying for weed control.

Clearly lots of good things are happening, yet there are many ways to improve our lives and model sustainability. We'll have taken a collective leap forward when we've replaced the idea of “making a living” with the idea of “making a life.” Ω

Geoph Kozeny has lived in communities of one kind or another for 22 years. He has been on the road for eight years visiting communities of all stripes—getting involved in the daily routine of each group, asking about visions and realities, taking photos, and giving slide shows about the diversity and vitality of the communities movement.

*Briarpatch is still around, and is described in the Resources section of the *Communities Directory*.

peripatetic (per'i-peh-ter'ik): itinerant; traveling from place to place.



Shared Living Now Legal in Boulder

IF YOU CANNOT LIVE IN AN URBAN COMMUNITY, student co-op, or any form of group housing because your town forbids more than three or four "unrelated persons" from living together, take heart!

In what some intentional community activists hope will become a precedent for other areas, on September 3, 1996, the city of Boulder, Colorado, passed an ordinance allowing "cooperative houses"—joint ownership of a home by unrelated residents. While not the ordinance local community activists originally lobbied for, the new law is a step towards more affordable housing there.

Boulder's restrictive occupancy law requires that no more than three unrelated adults may share a house in a low-density area, and no more than four in a high-density area. Fines for violating this law were recently increased to \$1,000 a day for every day the law is violated. This high-density college town has pricey property values—starter homes cost \$160,000, the average home price is \$260,000—and a dearth of affordable housing, especially for college students and those seeking community living.

Some activists estimate that Boulder has thousands of "illegal" shared housing situations. Cooperative housing groups flourish elsewhere in the US; for example, in Ann Arbor, Madison, and Austin, which have a long tradition of student-run housing co-ops, and in California, where state courts have ruled that occupancy laws like Boulder's are unconstitutional.

Members of Boulder's citizen-initiated Cooperative Housing Committee, which advocated the new ordinance, originally wanted the city to grant renters the right to live together, so they could share resources and reduce expenses. The Committee's first proposal was that groups of renters who first met certain standards for low neighborhood impact could acquire a city permit to operate a renters' housing co-op—with restricted numbers of cars and pets per household, restricted numbers of co-ops per neighborhood, and financial incentives to use public transit. While this seemed like an excellent

idea to students, community activists, environmental activists, public transit officials, and even Boulder's affordable housing agency, many residents—particularly absentee landlords—objected loudly. They didn't want "Animal House" moving into quiet neighborhoods, they said. (And, speculated some proposal advocates, the landlords didn't want to lose lucrative income from exorbitant rents.) The Committee had to abandon their proposal for general rental co-ops, and organized a second proposal that they felt could actually get approved.

The approved, more conservative proposal allows homeowners, but not most renters, to pool resources. Unanimous City Council approval resulted from the Committee's three-year odyssey through city bureaucracy, public education in neighborhood meetings, and effective coalition building. Here are the requirements of Boulder's new law:

- Up to six or eight unrelated people (depending on the zoning) may share housing if 75 percent of them own the home (up to 25 percent of the residents can be renters), and if the city grants them a cooperative housing permit.

- The co-op buyers must provide a list of all neighbors within 300 feet of the home, so neighbors can be notified that a co-op is moving in.

- Co-ops in low-density areas must complete a city site review before they can move in.

- The co-op must provide one off-street parking space for every two residents.

- In the next 2.5 years Boulder can approve no more than 20 cooperative housing units.

- No more than 10 percent of any given neighborhood can be cooperative or group housing.

- Boulder can revoke a cooperative housing permit if the occupants receive two convictions in two years related to complaints about too many occupants, or excessive noise, garbage, or weeds.

For information about how to advocate such a law in your area, write Boulder Cooperative Council, PO Box 348, Boulder, CO 80306, or call Ben Lipman, 303-939-8463.

Community Membership Service in Pacific Northwest

THE NORTHWEST INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES ASSOCIATION (NICA), a nonprofit organization serving approximately 100 communities in Washington and Oregon, is now offering to connect communities seeking new members with people looking for communities to join. Those interested should send name, address, phone number to NICA, along with as much detail as possible about the type of group they're seeking, including preferred location, size, and financial requirements. Also include personal information such as special interests, skills, and experience.

NICA communities will provide descriptive memos about the nature, history, and make-up of their group, qualifications for membership, and other relevant information. NICA will send each seeker-applicant a copy of each of these memos from communities which meet the seeker's criteria.

Contact Howard Wechsler, Finney Farm, 4004 South Skagit Hwy., Sedro Woolley, WA 98284; e-mail: finney@nica.com; 360-826-4004. Please include \$2 to cover copying and postage.

Want to Tell Your Community's Story?

THE COMMUNAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION (CSA) invites interested people to submit proposals for papers to be presented at their 24th annual conference, "Communal Frontiers," to be held October 9–12, 1997 in Tacoma, Washington. They're interested in topics about the growth of community in the West, as well as the various political, social, and economic ways in which intentional communities foster or create "frontiers"—serving as innovative models for others.

The annual conference draws members of intentional communities, curators of restored historic sites and museums, university faculty, students, and descendants of members of historic communal societies. The conference will also offer informal social gatherings and tours of communal sites in western Washington.

For information on proposals and conference registration: Dr. Doris Pieroth, 5027 Sand Point Pl. NE, Seattle, WA 98105.

Do you have news of interest to communitarians? Send it to us, and we'll send the contributor of each news item that we print a free issue of the magazine.



Moving Toward Sustainability in Los Angeles Eco-Village

“IS THERE ANY RECYCLED CONTENT in that pipe?” I asked a plumber recently. He was replacing a two-foot section of pipe in our new apartment building in the Los Angeles Eco-Village.

Our flagship project in the Eco-Village is this 40-unit, 74-year-old, Mediterranean-style apartment building that we purchased last spring. Although we’re phasing the eco-retrofit of the building over a 10-year period, we work on the building every day—and not always ecologically. As much as possible, we are educating ourselves and others to do things in a healthier, more sustainable way. It is essential to learn what questions to ask and what to do with the answers. We look for ways to tie our work to the neighborhood economy *and* stimulate change in society.

“Is any pipe being made with recycled materials?” I queried further. The plumber didn’t know, but assured me that if we specify that we want recycled materials next time, his company will scour the market for us. Even a routine repair can help educate people in the mainstream.

Two weeks later, representatives from a window company measured the windows we must replace as part of our lead abatement work. We asked about the forestry practices of the company that supplies their wood. “Oh, they replace all of the trees they cut down and more.” Yet the words “sustainably harvested” did not ring a bell.

While the two men were measuring windows, I phoned around the country to find out the record of the timber company in question. As it turns out, it is among the

worst clearcutters and monocroppers.

We let the company reps know that we like their windows, and that once their wood is certified sustainable, we would be happy to order from them on future projects. (The Forest Stewardship Council in Waterbury, Vermont, is proposing national standards for certification.) Our window replacements will cost approximately \$50,000—not exactly peanuts. What if a dozen community developers in L.A. called this company for estimates of this size and told its reps the same thing! Together we could make a real difference in the broader economy.

A group of us, residents of the new building and other neighborhood Eco-Villagers, began working as a team on the building and learning about ecologically sound products when we renovated our first unit in the apartment building. (Nearly half the units in the building are vacant, and require moderate to major rehabilitation.) Several of us planned the work together—working on our own timeline, which was not particularly convenient for the new neighbor waiting to move in. While some volunteered their services, others worked for community currency, and others yet for dollars. Both intentional and other neighbors became real stake holders in the building through this project. We studied a variety of materials: non-toxic and low VOC (volatile organic compounds) paints, wood stains, wood patching materials, paint strippers, organic cottons (for curtains), and compact fluorescent light bulbs.

For our second unit rehab, we are contracting with a neighbor who has all the basic skills but knows little about sustainable development practices. The 30 units worth of rehab work remaining could provide livelihood for several neighbors over the next two years. The CRSP Board—Eco-Village’s nonprofit sponsor—would establish materials’ standards. Neighbors would have a financial incentive to hone skills, work locally, learn about least toxic materials, and subcontract with other neighbors for some of the work or form small co-ops!

This fall, a newly formed nonprofit consulting company on waste management issues decided to write a grant proposal to the California State Department of Conservation on behalf of L.A. Eco-Village. The grant would fund the purchase of products—made from recycled plastic beverage containers—for use in the neighborhood and for display on our tours. Do these products perpetuate the plastics industry? Most of the drinks that come in these containers are very unhealthy. What messages would we be sending neighbors and visitors?

We look for ways to tie our work to the neighborhood economy *and* stimulate change in society.

Can we, in good conscience, accept these products without making clear that we believe petroleum-based plastics should be phased out all together? Where are the products manufactured and under what conditions? How are they packaged? Perhaps the oil that is saved by recycling old plastic is actually spent in transportation and new packaging!

The public primary school in the heart of our two-block neighborhood has become a significant source of local employment; four Eco-Villagers now work at the school. Two had moved to Eco-Village intentionally and turned to the school for livelihood. Two others were teachers already employed at the school and decided to move into the neighborhood upon learning of its benefits. By eliminating their commute to work, these teachers have helped reduce auto dependency. One of them actually got rid of his car, becoming the eighth Eco-Villager to go carless. These teachers have since become active neighborhood participants.

Like other Eco-Villages in industrialized nations, we are not a “done deal.” We’re a sustainable-community-in-process doing the best we can based on who we are and the resources we have. Ω

Lois Arkin coordinates activities in L.A. Eco-Village, is the acting resident manager of the Bimini Arms Apartments in Eco-Village, and is the founder and Executive Director of CRSP, the nonprofit organization which sponsors L.A. Eco-Village. Co-editor/author of two books, Sustainable Cities: Concepts and Strategies for Eco-City Development (Eco-Home Media, 1992) and Cooperative Housing Compendium: Resources for Collaborative Living (U.C. Davis, Center for Cooperatives, 1993), she can be reached at 213-738-1254, or crsp@igc.apc.org; website: <http://alumni.caltech.edu/~mignon/laev.html>.



Cennednyss

CENNEDNYSS, ONE OF AUSTRALIA's lesser known but more charming and successful communities, is located near Adelaide, the capital of South Australia. At Cennednyss 20 adults and children live communally, sharing five houses and 16 acres of lush gardens, abundant fruit trees, and a small native bird and animal sanctuary. The adults range from their mid-30s to mid-70s.

The community was formed in 1977 when 27 people with a Christian social activist background, some of whom already shared tithing and co-operative food buying, bought land together. They named their community Cennednyss, the Old English word for "birth." Its founding members were passionately committed to racial and gender equality, consensus decision-making, and nonviolent conflict resolution.

The land was originally overgrown with weeds, so the members got help from professional permaculture designers. Today Cennednyss has hundreds of native trees and shrubs, and so many organic fruit and vegetables that they sell the surplus. They enjoy 11 varieties of apples, as well as pears, cherries, plums, citrus, mulberries, persimmons, quinces, feijoas, kiwi fruit, peaches, nectarines, walnuts, hazelnuts, chestnuts, and numerous berries, as well as extensive herb and vegetable gardens.

At Saturday morning working bees, members prepare gardens, repair roads, juice apples, or plant trees. They eat dinner together on Thursday evenings. Twice a month they hold business meetings, which always start with members sharing what is happening in their personal lives, their fears, and dreams. Childcare is shared by all members and appears on each meeting agenda. In these meetings they negotiate various chores: milking the cow, looking after guests, feeding chickens, and so on. Member commitments look into major community problems

and recommend solutions. Consensus works effectively because the community has been quite stable for 20 years and its members know each other well. Each meeting has two facilitators; members rotate this position.

All land, houses, vehicles, equipment, tools, animals, and crops are owned by Cennednyss Community Incorporated, which is financed by loans from members. There is no minimum loan, but dependence

also estimates his or her annual income. The total of everyone's income is divided by the projected group expenses, and each member contributes that percentage, which is usually about 25 percent of personal income. Each year the community also earns about \$2,000 from sales of organic produce.

Cennednyss' annual income, about \$70,000, is allocated (in approximate percentages) to vehicle costs (30 percent), farm expenses (15 percent), building maintenance (15 percent), telephones (10 percent), and home renovation, appliances, and decoration (8 percent). The community donates about \$2,000 annually to environmental and social justice causes. The remainder covers depreciation. They maintain their own health support fund, which helps them with any surgery or hospitalisation not covered through other insurance, and their own car insurance fund.



Most Cennednyss members work part time, to allow more time for parenting and community duties, such as this garden work project.

on one member's loan does not exceed 12.5 percent of the total capital. Community assets and contributions from members are revalued annually, acknowledging capital gain, inflation, and the value of improvements. A resigning member's loan is paid back within a year.

Members prepare an annual budget, estimating the full gamut of community expenses for the following year. Each member

Most members only work part-time in paid employment in order to allow more time for parenting and community duties and joys. Several work in Adelaide, a short city bus ride away. Members require less income because they have access to each other's professional skills: legal advice, car repair, midwifery, gardening, and building.

In order to enjoy each other's company and have fun during "non-work" time, they organize monthly social gatherings—a party, "group growth" exercise, or trip to the beach. Children are always included.

Members celebrate seasonal and personal events with harvest festivals and solstice and birthday parties. At midwinter, all members

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Bill Metcalf, a sociologist and social historian, has studied communities for 24 years. He is author of *From Utopian Dreaming to Communal Reality* (Sydney, Australia, UNSW Press, 1996), and *Shared Visions, Shared Lives: Communal Living Around the Globe* (Forres, UK, Findhorn Press, 1996). He has lived in Australia since 1970.



MY TURN

 by Gary Dunn

Caretaking: One Way to Make a Living

In the "My Turn" column readers share ideas, opinions, proposals, critiques, visions, and dreams about any aspect of community living. The opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the publisher, staff, or advertisers of Communities magazine.

MARK AND RUTHIE THOMPSON-Klein live an idyllic, rent-free life on an island in the San Juans in Washington state. They grow six kinds of tomatoes in their abundant garden, bicycle six miles to town, and when the weather is good, sit on the beach and muse. These folks aren't rich. They answered an ad for property caretakers and now steward 65 acres, 29 sheep, and a few chickens.

Not everyone who thinks they want to live in a community really wants to *live in a community*. Some seekers, in my experience, want to escape urban stress, live a simple life, and make a living doing something pleasant while they pursue their real interests.

I know this because a small percentage of people who read our newsletter on caretaking opportunities come to it through an ad in the *Communities Directory*. These folks were obviously looking for a change of lifestyle. They may not have found their ideal community through the *Directory*, and so sought country life as a caretaker instead.

So, for this issue on making a living, I'd like to suggest caretaking to *Communities* readers who yearn to flee the city and want tips for earning income in a rural setting.

Caretaking property has become an increasingly popular occupation in recent years. It appeals to people who want a lifestyle change, retirees seeking a second career, and people searching for new job opportunities. It is especially appealing for people who feel deeply connected with the Earth but don't own land themselves, or people who want an inexpensive way to experience life in a specific geographic region. Housing is provided by the land-

owner, so the caretaker lives rent-free. Sometimes a small salary is provided as well.

Who needs a caretaker? Wealthy landowners with second homes, companies, nature retreats, ecological preserves, camps, and national or state forests and parks. And increasingly, farmers. The average American farmer is 53 years old. Many farmers over 65 will retire and have no grown children

taker can just sit back and relax while watching over someone's home.

Some caretakers live alone on the property of an absentee landowner. This requires someone who can function independently and fulfill his or her responsibilities without daily guidance or instruction. Although a love of nature and solitude is important, it helps very much if this caretaker has hobbies and interests, for example writing or painting, to make life more interesting in remote areas. Autonomous caretaker positions may include winterkeepers at lodges and camps, managers for "gentleman" ranchers, or caretakers of resort properties during off seasons.

Alternatively, a caretaker may live and work with a landowner on a day-to-day basis. Depending upon the length and closeness of the relationship that develops between a landowner and caretaker, these positions can sometimes lead to partnership arrangements. Landowners may be homesteaders who are seeking a person to join them and participate in their efforts, retirees who need an extra pair of hands to help them out on their property, or farmers and

This job especially appeals to people who feel deeply connected with the Earth but don't own land themselves.

.....

who want to take over. Such farmers are increasingly turning to caretakers to maintain their land.

Caretaking jobs can vary widely, from living in a lighthouse on a private island, to looking out for the animals at a cattle ranch. Caretakers can be single people, couples, or families. (So far I have not heard of a small community group getting a job as a caretaker. However, why not? A group of, say, four or five tightly knit people who had been members of a community, or who intended to form their own, might apply for a caretaker position. They would offer a far wider variety of skills than one person or a couple.)

Caretaking can give someone the opportunity to work in dozens of areas, including groundskeeping, land stewardship, farming, organic gardening, forestry, ranching, animal husbandry, and fisheries. Or, the care-

ranchers requiring general and specialized workers. Other caretaking positions, such as those located on resorts, nature preserves, or hunting and fishing lodges, require frequent interaction with guests.

While some landowners seek experienced caretakers with specific skills, others are willing to take on and train people with general backgrounds. Many positions only require someone to be a presence on the property to avoid theft and vandalism, or to help make a home look "lived in." As in seeking a home in an intentional community, traits such as honesty, common sense, and flexibility are important. Potential caretakers need good references from previous employers.

How does one get started in caretaking? Where does a landowner find caretakers? I'd be happy to send you a report that answers these and other common questions about the field. (Please include an SASE.)

My sincere wish is that everyone seeking a community home finds it. And for those who aren't so sure, or who simply want to escape the urban rat race, caretaking may be the ideal way to find some peace and make a living, too. Ω

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Gary Dunn, a former corporate executive who opted for the simple life, publishes *The Caretaker Gazette*; 1845 NW Deane St., Pullman, WA 99163; phone/fax: 509-332-0806; e-mail: garydunn@pullman.com.



HISTORIC COMMUNITIES

by Steve Bjerklie

Becoming 'Someplace' Kaweah's Big Dream

ONE PINE-POPPING HOT AFTERNOON in the lower Sierra Nevada mountains of California, a gang of men, Kaweah community members, strained and bent to their task. Beneath the huge, leaden weight of a cast-iron boiler-engine, timbers supporting a hand-built bridge across the Kaweah River began to creak and groan. The men yelled and waved at draft horses pulling the engine, trying to hurry the heavy load across the weakening bridge. But groaning timbers began to splinter and crack, and the boiler-engine seemed to grow heavier by the second. The bridge's logs exploded, shards of wood shooting skyward like shrapnel. Screaming horses flailed for the river banks. Men sprang for cover. And into the river's swirling, icy waters the boiler-engine fell.

More than metal, however, crashed that afternoon in 1890. The boiler-engine was the key piece in the Kaweah's ambitious plan to establish a sawmill in the Sierra Nevada to log Douglas firs, ponderosa and lodgepole pines, and even, just maybe, the Big Trees, *Sequoia gigantea*, the largest living organisms on Earth. The booming valley towns of Fresno, Visalia, and Bakersfield required a seemingly insatiable supply of lumber. Doomsayers had called the sequoia groves inaccessible, but the communitarians beside the ruined bridge considered themselves unbound by the rules limiting skeptics and small thinkers. Revenue from their Sierra Nevada timber operation would support the new utopian community, named after the humorless river.

The labor-oriented Kaweah community was the inspiration of Burnette Haskell, a persuasive advocate of socialism, Marxism, and, occasionally, anarchy. (In 1886 he or-

ganized an unsuccessful plot to blow up the County Hall of Records in San Francisco.) Lawyer, labor leader, editor of *Truth*, husband to the curse-prone, pantaloons-wearing, fully emancipated Anna Fader, Haskell was unreliable and erratic. These qualities paled, however, next to Haskell's enthusiasm and imagination. Fired by the socialistic utopian vision described in Laurence Gronlund's *Co-operative Commonwealth*,

ing, the march toward founding Kaweah began. Open timber was a better find than gold. In October 1885, 53 men of the association, mostly from San Francisco, filed claims on Big Tree acreage in the Visalia land office. This was to be their homestead, as well as their goldmine.

Kaweah was to be a community where workers were kings. Provisions would be provided according to Marx's famous maxim, "To each according to his need, from each according to his ability." Money would be backed by labor: Ten minutes of work was worth five cents; twenty thousand minutes equaled \$100. The colony's first project was, indeed, laborious: to get to their future fortune, community members built an 18-mile road from Kaweah, located on the river, to the Big Tree groves 6,000 feet above, across some of the Sierra Nevada's most brutal country. The arduous, winding road was built entirely by hand and took four years to finish.

Kaweahans preferred no religion, had no sheriff, no mayor, no president. All management decisions were made in a raucous,



Haskell and his close friend James Martin, another San Francisco labor organizer, called together a meeting of fellow unionists and socialists in November 1884 to create the "Co-operative Land Purchase and Colonization Association of California." When an association member, Charles Keller, learned shortly thereafter that the forests of giant sequoia east of Visalia were open for claim-

once-a-month General Meeting, which sometimes lasted several days and included dancing and parties. When the income from the lumbering would begin to roll in, Kaweahans believed, it would finance a fantastic, far-reaching enterprise that would soon send "olive oil, pure Mount Vineyard wine, honey, curly redwood veneers, statuary marble, and selected California fruits" abroad on ships owned and sailed by Kaweahans to Australia, India, the Mediterranean, Europe and other distant shores. These ships would return to San Francisco loaded with goods for "New York and [the]

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Steve Bjerklie writes for *The Economist*, the *Metro* chain of alternative weeklies, and many other publications. His extended feature article about the history of communitarianism in Sonoma County, California, was published last year by *Metro*.



Making a Living or Making a Life

Reba Fellowship's Housing Ministry

NEVIN BELSER, THE HEAD OF THE housing management business of Reba Place Fellowship, is a practical man whose desk is piled high with notes of things that need fixing. Beside him on the floor is his well-worn tool belt ready to go. He balances administration with "hammer time" when he might patch a roof, fix a faucet, or show a tenant how to get rid of roaches.

Since Reba's beginning in south Evanston in 1957, the community bought one house after another as people came and the need arose for extended household living. The Fellowship also bought a few slummy apartment buildings in our neighborhood and gradually fixed them up. At this point the community owns 15 houses and six apartment buildings (120 units). These dwellings are all within an easy walking radius of two or three blocks.

I asked Nevin Belser to talk about his job and the vision of Reba Housing. It soon became clear that "making a living" or "running a business" are only incidental to what he calls "the housing ministry." And perhaps that is one reason why it has been successful.

"I've been in this work for 15 years now," Nevin said. "We manage these buildings for our own use in the community, for rental to Reba Church members, and for other neighbors. At our present scale we have some flexibility so that whenever someone wants to come closer to the church or

community, we usually have a vacancy. We've had apartments for refugees and for emergency support of homeless families. We're always taking risks with a few families. Occasionally we've had to ask people to leave, but usually the relationship goes on. We've always managed things on a non-

leadership meetings. This greatly enhances my job satisfaction. I don't think I could do this job if it were just a business."

Reba Place Fellowship has tried to launch quite a few businesses over the years, most of which have failed. Why did this one succeed? "Usually our other businesses have failed at the marketing level," was Nevin's opinion. "To start up a business, people in the world invest 60-70 hours a week. Here a business leader would also likely be a small group leader or a church leader as well. But the housing operation is different. Property management can be routinized. Evanston has a housing shortage and the market comes to us. We always have a waiting list."

"The down side of this business is that it takes a lot of capital. We have been helped by a couple of inheritances, but nearly all of our buildings were financed by ordinary bank loans." Faithfully paying the mortgages year after year means that by now more than half the properties are debt-free.

The Reba housing ministry has had a stabilizing influence on the racial and economic mix of the neighborhood as well. Earlier, in the community's history, Nevin said, "Our presence was an influence against white flight as blacks were moving in. More recently

"I don't think I could do this job if it were just a business."

profit basis, setting rents according to our costs. This has allowed many modest income families to stay in Evanston who could not otherwise afford it.

"At the same time we have been able to provide work for communal members, church people, guests, and others who need jobs. Our crew begins each work day together with prayer. In all, about twelve families are supported by the work. We collect rent, mediate tenant hassles, paint porches, haul trash, and do some renovations.

"We never got into this work with the intention of making it a business or earning a living. It was begun to meet our own need for housing. Our motivation is more ministry than business. But we try to be professional. Because this job has flexibility in the management roles, we can mix some community and church business into the week's schedule. I can offer pastoral care and go to

property values in the neighborhood have gone up considerably, and Reba Place Fellowship has been one reason for this. Now a few buildings are being gentrified, so we are also an influence to maintain affordable housing for low-income people.

"Most recently we have become involved in taking over an apartment building that was wracked by violence and drugs. Because of all the 911 calls that came from this building, the city of Evanston was happy to provide the down payment to help us buy it and try to turn it around. We have renamed it 'House of Peace.' Rather than become this building's landlord, we are working with state and city governments at the challenge of turning it into a housing co-op."

Jesus told us not to worry about what we will eat, drink or wear—about our livelihood. God knows our needs. But rather "Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness [or justice], and all these things will be given to you as well." Matthew 6:33. As we have tried to care about our neighborhood, its houses and its people, it seems that God has taken care of our own needs as well. Ω

David Janzen is a member of Reba Place Fellowship, coordinator of the Shalom Mission Communities, and coauthor of Fire, Salt, and Peace. David Janzen, 726 Seward, Evanston, IL 60602.



A Communitarian Council of Economic Advisors?

THE BAD NEWS IS THAT OUR hypothetical presidential candidate, Bonnie Indigo, lost to Tweedle Bob and Tweedle Bill. The good news is that most of Tweedle Bill's Cabinet has resigned. So, with hope springing eternal, we're advocating a communitarian Chairperson of the Council of Economic Advisors. We recommend ... Bonnie Indigo!

Bonnie Indigo and her supporters are lobbying for the economic changes generally favored by the 200 communitarians who responded to our Communities Questionnaire. Here's what our theoretical composite communitarian advocates:

1. Just say No to economic assaults on the environment!

"Poisoning the Earth and its inhabitants is like any other unprovoked assault—it is immoral and should be illegal. Yes, our national economy is so dependent on polluting technology that ecological economics could not be instituted overnight. We're willing to give polluters a 10-year transition to zero toxicity. After that, they're out of business! Profiteering producers and irresponsible consumers externalize the costs of their contamination to the general public and the natural world. We favor a *constitutional amendment* that would read: 'Within 10 years from the adoption of this amendment, activities that poison the Earth or its inhabitants, or upset the balance of nature, are prohibited'."

2. Replace outright land ownership with land-lease stewardship.

"Nobody has the right 'own' the Earth. Native Americans and other indigenous

peoples have believed this for millennia. Private and governmental 'ownership' of land has led not only to environmental pollution, but also to the loss of vital natural habitat, our shared commons, productive farmland, essential green space, and untold natural beauty. The vast tracts now owned or controlled by corporations, wealthy individuals, and government bureaucracies confer dangerous powers upon largely unaccountable decision makers. *Perpetual, outright ownership of land should be replaced by temporary leasing rights accompanied by the responsibilities of stewardship.*"

3. Democratize the economy.

"Free markets are vital but unpredictable. Citizens should not depend for their health and survival on the uncertainties of supply and demand. Vital necessities like food, medicine, and infrastructure should be provided for—though not necessarily produced—by the public sector. Personal amenities should be left to the market. *More important than public versus private ownership, however, is popular rather than elite control over production.* Community-owned businesses should be mostly localized and should be controlled by the citizens or their readily accountable representatives. Privately owned businesses should be owned and controlled by their workers. Private banks should be replaced by community credit unions, where citizens may invest their savings and where individual or cooperative entrepreneurs may borrow investment capital."

4. Provide for the young, the elderly, and the disabled.

"It is a crime for a rich nation to allow its

needy to suffer in poverty. We should replace the morass of demeaning and inadequate 'welfare' programs with a national standard of *dignified sustenance* for the young, the elderly, and the disabled. This 'single-payer' guarantee by the nation should include nutrition, housing, clothing, medical care, infrastructure, and education. To provide for, and earn, this guarantee, *able citizens should normally work for the equivalent of 30 years, perhaps from ages 25 to 54.* Each community should guarantee its residents productive and honorable employment."

5. Reduce the division of labor.

"Unlike our forbears and many intentional communitarians, most Americans have come to depend heavily on impersonal institutions and 'experts' for the life-maintenance skills they have lost over the last century. Public education and media should promote family-based and neighborhood-based self-reliance by emphasizing *citizens' development of a wide array of practical skills*, including home and health maintenance, birthing, child-rearing, conflict resolution, organic gardening, recycling, energy conservation, financial planning, vehicle repair, and arts and crafts."

6. Learn from intentional communities.

"By the criterion of a common good, today's cities are more nearly anarchies than communities. Because wealthy, powerful elites control patterns of development, our American 'communities' have unintentionally become ever more crowded, anonymous, dangerous, crime-ridden, unhealthy, ugly, alienating, anomic, and unpleasant. Observing today's intentional communities, especially the larger and longer-lived ones, could help inspire more North Americans—and our governments—to think globally and act locally.

"Intentional communities are both viable micro-societies in their own right and creative laboratories for the larger society. North Americans could learn from The Farm's mid-wifery and outreach programs; from Stelle's renewable-energy and educational initiatives; from Hutterite communal agriculture and Emissary organic farming; from consensus decision making at Sirius; from gender-role and marketing innovations at Twin Oaks and East Wind; and from hundreds of ongoing urban experiments in communal living. Our government should ask why so many intentional communities have little crime, impressive health and employment indicators, ecologically responsible economies, affordable and personalized architecture, educational success, and participatory democratic governance." Ω

.....
Mike Cummings has a B.A. from Princeton and an M.A. and Ph.D. from Stanford in political science. He has been involved in electoral campaigns and community organizing, and has published his research on communal and utopian studies. He chairs the political science department at the University of Colorado, Denver.

Harv Bishop's academic background is in journalism and political science. He has recently completed an M.A. in political science at the University of Colorado, Denver, where he teaches courses in environmental politics.



Planting the Seeds of Earthaven's Economy

EARTHAVEN VILLAGE OCCUPIES A remote mountain valley 15 miles from its post office and market town and 30 miles from the nearest city of any size. The last people who lived on this land were old-time mountaineers who paid their taxes making moonshine. The scars on the hillsides from their farming are just beginning to heal. We don't have many living examples of functioning local economy in the vicinity, just a few clues about what not to do.

As new settlers we have a double challenge/opportunity. We have to create a place for ourselves to live on the land and we need a way of supporting ourselves from and with the land. Neither can work without the other. We're too far from town to support commuters, so we need to generate income and employment within the village or the local area. There aren't any large employers within 20 miles and even service jobs are mostly 10-15 miles away over winding mountain roads. So we have to carry our businesses in on our backs, so to speak, or develop them from the resources of the land.

I think that our economy consists of nine sectors which I list below in a rough successional order.

1. Real Estate and Finance
2. Forestry
3. Wood Milling
4. Construction & Development
5. Education & Ecotourism
6. Local Services
7. Art & Culture
8. Electronic Businesses & Merchanting
9. Value-Added Agriculture & Horticulture

Each of these areas is already present in our individual or collective economic activi-

ties. The first five sectors are prominent or have already occurred at the village site. They represent the pioneer phase of the economy: they will dominate during the first 5-10 years and will gradually transform or recede in importance after that. The last five listed sectors are climax economies: they will increase and become more prominent over

the brokering or facilitating of other ecovillage and community start-ups.

We're also finding that we are having to finance some of our customers (who become our members). Because of the nature of our landholding (one title, no subdivision) our members can't easily obtain bank financing. So, in order to keep our membership economically and socially diverse, a private partnership of members has put together an investment group, called Earthshares, to enable the community to purchase its land without demanding a large initial investment of every member. This fund—about a quarter million dollars—now carries the largest part of the "mortgage" on the village property. As the community's debt is gradually retired, the fund will be able to lend money for new member site purchases and for home construction and business loans. Profit in this sector, in the form of return on money invested, is going to some members privately, but remains within the community.

The prospect for Earthshares is to transform into a community credit union which

We have to carry our businesses in on our backs, or develop them from the resources of the land.

time. Notice that Education and Ecotourism, above, falls in both groups.

It's worth looking at each of these areas in some detail.

Real Estate and Finance

Earthaven is in the real estate business—we have homesites for sale (or rather for long-term lease). We're doing all the things developers have to do: purchase raw land, have it surveyed and divided, put in improvements, create demonstration models, advertise and promote sales, woo customers, develop contracts, and negotiate deals. This layer of the economy is a common or "public" layer, done in the name of Earthaven Assn. It is being developed by volunteers, members who perform community service and receive vouchers for their time. (More about this internal currency system below.) The immediate "profit" or benefit is accruing to Earthaven, which is all of us. But eventually, these real estate services—the skills and experiences we gain—may be applicable to

can support the financial prosperity of the village. Over time, participation can expand from the present dozen members to include most households in the community. At 100 adults we should be able to support a financial institution based on our collective wealth and income, and that financial institution could provide 1-3 livings in local services.

Forestry

In order to build and garden this land we'll have to remove a part of the forest which now covers it, perhaps up to 80 acres of the total of 325. The value of that timber will be greater to us if we process and use it on site than it would be if sold to a logging company. The standing forest belongs to the community, but extracting it will require an investment in equipment and perhaps in hired skills.

This summer we selectively harvested timber from our neo-tribal village area—mostly mature pines and some red oak knocked over in last winter's ice storm. We hired a horse logger to fell and snake the logs down off the hills and out to the road. The area we cut was sloping land, some of it steep, and the work went on amidst construction of village infrastructure. Two men working

Peter Bane is the publisher and editor of *The Permaculture Activist*, a founding member of Earthaven, and "a dancing fool."



Because they used draft horses instead of tractors, Earthhaven's logging operation was remarkably quiet and made very little impact on the forest floor. Logger Richard Hall and his horse, Bob Marley.

with a team of horses brought about 15,000 board feet of lumber out of the woods in one week. We paid them \$1,900.

The logging was remarkably quiet and made very little impact on the forest floor, yet the presence of the great draft horses and the partnership of humans and animals was thrilling to see. We all liked the energy of the loggers and their horses so much that we would like to work in this way again, but we want to employ people who live in the village to do it. After all, the aim is to keep the money at home. One of our goals is to recruit a horse logger for the village or train one of our own members in these skills.

Since most of Earthaven will remain forested, we will have about 250 acres to manage perpetually. We will need to inventory the forest and develop a long-term management plan which includes placement of permanent access roads for timber harvest and firebreaks. We are attempting to obtain government support under the Forest Stewardship Incentive Plan for some of this preparation work. If we are successful, some members of the community may be paid to perform forest inventory and to develop the management plan.

At present the stand averages about 60 years in age. Some older trees exist at the backs of steep valleys, but on the whole the Earthaven forest is young. It needs significant timber stand improvement to release preferred species and superior trees for faster growth. Devastation of the herbal understory

by generations of farming, and now by heavy browse pressure from deer means that we must reintroduce the native and useful wild herbs. Selective seeding in conjunction with tiny patch clearcuts will speed succession and increase diversity as we restore the forest to health and vigor.

Managed for seed stock, veneer, sawlogs, fuelwood and poles using horses and human labor, Earthaven forest could support 2–4 livings within the village. Timber extraction will increase at first as we become better able to manage the work, reaching a peak upwards of 120,000 board feet per year in perhaps five years and declining slightly to a stable harvest level of perhaps 50,000–70,000 board feet per year. These numbers should be taken with some caution until a field inventory can be done. As timber extraction declines, non-timber forest production should come to dominate this sector. Mushrooms, honey, resins, medicinal herbs, nuts, seed, and craft material could represent 4–6 livings.

Lumbering

With as many as 150 buildings to be built at Earthaven, there's a big need for lumber over the next 10 years. In conjunction with the horse logging this summer, we hired a portable bandmill to saw the logs into boards. About 13,000 board feet were milled over the course of several weeks at a cost of around \$1,800. Community members working for vouchers put in a couple of hun-

dred hours handling logs, boards, and stacking lumber to dry.

As a result of land clearing for development, we will have over a half-million board feet of timber available over the next few years. The value to be derived from sawing this timber represents at least one full-time living over and above the investment in a sawmill; timber harvest and milling work could continue indefinitely. The added value of the lumber will increase over time as more valuable hardwoods (oak, walnut) become available and as the presently low value of local mill-run lumber increases due to rising global demand.

The need in this sector is for a financial arrangement that captures the economic potential of Earthaven's timber for its members. A number of partial livings are available in the first few years if a sawmill can be purchased within the village.

Construction and Development

This sector is set to boom. Demand exceeds supply for construction labor at present. At least 4–6 livings are available in building construction during the next 10 years as an average of 10 or more buildings per year will go up. In addition there are ancillary services in planning, surveying, design, architectural consulting, excavation and grading, landscaping, and materials handling and brokerage, which could provide 2–3 more livings or partial livings during this period. Key to success in construction at Earthaven will be diverse skills with local earth-based materials: clay, timber, and stone, and versatility with many different aspects of construction.

As building starts decline, remodeling and construction of outbuildings will provide some continued work, while provision and installation of energy technology should continue to support 1–2 livings. Cistern construction might become a specialty along with irrigation and piping.

Education and Ecotourism

This sector promises to be a driving engine of the economy at Earthaven. Workshops in permaculture design and various community disciplines were among the first money making activities at the village. In addition the educational program has attracted supplementary labor in the form of resident interns; this has eased the temporary shortage of construction help. A full-featured educational facility with classroom and meeting space for groups of 50 or more is planned. Half a dozen community members already make significant parts of their livings from adult education. The community at full capacity should easily support a full-time

teacher to coordinate schooling for children. The community could eventually support a bioregional training institute for youth.

In addition to workshop presenters, a manager/organizer will be required and the educational program should support a significant amount of promotional work (graphics, brochures, flyers, electronic notices, advertisement). Accommodations will be required for some participants beyond the community campground, so niches will be created for event cooking, bed-and-breakfast, and perhaps a dormitory facility. At least 6-8 livings can be generated by this sector and sustained for as long as the national economy remains coherent.

Travelers should help make up for irregular demand on the accommodations facilities, and additional ecotourism livings might be available in retreats, wilderness programs, and hosting overseas students (WWOOFers, cultural exchanges, and language programs).

Art and Culture

Outdoor theater, eco-spiritual ritual, festivals, pottery, woodcarving, instrument making, painting, jewelry making, cards, weaving, tribal clothing, and more are all within the arena of activities that will become more prominent as Earthen Village

develops. The community may become home to artists who market their wares elsewhere. Perhaps 7-10 livings may be made in the arts and cultural work.

Local Services

Health and body care, child care, cooking in the common house, shuttle transport to town, auto mechanics, tree care, laundry, elder care, counseling, haircuts, local food shop and coop, cafe, housesitting, village tours, library, village administration, and more will provide increasing numbers of jobs as the community grows in population. Upwards of 15 livings might be made in this sector.

Electronic Businesses and Merchenting

These are graphics, publishing, and information businesses as well as accounting and tax services, reception and office support services, packaging and shipping, Internet management services, computer programming, drafting, music studios, and photo and video production. Since these goods are easily exported, they represent a significant cash income sector for the local economy. A dozen or more livings may be made in these ways at Earthen.

Specialty Agriculture, Horticulture, and Food Production

Nursery crops including rootstock, bedding and ornamental plants, medicinal and culinary herbs, organic fruits, preserves, wines and vinegars, gourmet vegetables for area restaurants, cheesemaking, brewing, mushrooms, cut and dried flowers, poultry, aquatic plants, trout, beneficial insects, sheep, bamboo, seed production, dyestuffs, tinctures and salves, honey and beeswax, hemp when legalized, basket willows, and nut crops could provide agricultural income and services for as many as 20-30 villagers over the next 15 years.

A Community Currency

Earthen has created an internal currency based on labor hours to equalize contributions from members to the community's work. When community members put in more than their required hours (four/week), they receive these currency vouchers corresponding to their contribution of time. The vouchers are redeemable in resources from the land; for example, timber and other materials, and are tradeable within the community. A lively exchange already occurs between some folks on the front lines of construction and the community's massage therapists and healers. We imagine that our currency will come to support a larger and

larger internal trade economy as more of us take up residence on the land. When our mortgage is retired in six more years, the community may begin to accept these vouchers in payment of certain fees, just as they are now tradeable for service hours.

Earthen's members presently include a doctor, two nursery people, a theater designer, three psychotherapists, two yoga teachers, a plasterer, a nonprofit manager, a dancer, a painter, two publishers, a wildlife biologist, two potters, a sign-language interpreter, a massage therapist or three, several teachers, carpenters, and religious workers, and that's just what we're doing these days!

Our community consists of 29 adults and a handful of children. In addition we have a half-dozen live-in friends and long-term guests working with us, some of whom may decide to stay. We live in 23 households, mostly in the Asheville/Black Mountain area. Seven of us already live in the village. Re-settlement onto village land will allow most of us to reduce our cost of living while increasing our quality of life. We expect to have more and better social interaction, a cleaner environment, less need for auto transport, lower energy costs, lower housing costs, and higher quality food, primarily from our own and our neighbors's gardens. Our health should improve and our need to earn income should diminish as we settle into Earthen's embrace. Ω

Excerpted with permission from The Permaculture Activist, #35, "Village Design"; \$5, single issue; \$19, triannual subscription. PO Box 1209, Black Mountain, NC 28711; 704-298-2812.

Earthen community: PO Box 1107, Black Mountain, NC, 28711.

Back Issues of Growing Community newsletter are available for \$5 each. For a complete description of back issues, write Growing Community, PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541.

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*the
yurt*

Crafted By

*nomadic
arts*

THE YURT, SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, HAS SERVED COMMUNAL PEOPLE. OUR PRESENT NEED FOR COMMUNITY HAS BROUGHT THIS CIRCULAR HOME BACK AS AN ANSWER. COMMUNITIES CAN BE STARTED, ADD MEMBERS, OR HAVE VISITOR SPACE WITH THE YURT.

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CHILDREN IN COMMUNITY

by Daniel Greenberg

Why Educate in Community?

IS IT BETTER TO EDUCATE CHILDREN in intentional community schools, rather than in public schools? The advantages of community schools include increased parental participation (which confers social and academic advantages), decreased bureaucracy, and more personal teacher-student relationships. While these are similar to those found in any school with relatively small enrollment, they are perhaps more fully realized in a community environment.

The typical child in the U.S. attends school for six hours a day, 180 days a year, for 12 years. Consider that children are available to learning approximately 12 hours a day (for example, they aren't sleeping, eating, or doing something else). We may assume, then, that formal schooling accounts for around 16 percent of a child's total educational hours between birth and 18 years of age. In other words, children's outside-school educable time is over six times that of in-school time.

It is no wonder then that study after study has revealed the importance of parents in their children's education? Parental involvement tends to be stronger in community schools than in larger public or private schools. In many communities, parents are the teachers, or participate as aides or cooks. Even when parents aren't directly involved in the operation of the school, the close-knit network found within most communities allows teachers to maintain close contact with the parents and to be viewed as respected and valued members of the community. As a teacher in one community stated:

We really rely on the parents to back us up. If a kid is not doing well, he gets

kicked out of class and gets sent to his parents and then he has to have his parents come back to class with him or her to get back into the class. The teachers are very in touch with parents and everybody knows each other really well so things are not going to go unnoticed for very long.

Small schools are typically more manageable than large schools. Paperwork and bureaucracy are still present, but kept to a minimum. This allows teachers greater flexibility in decision making and greater control over what and how they teach. This benefit was articulated by two teachers in different communities:

We can change just like that. ... We have a philosophy, but it's the ability of the teacher to have the freedom to work with the kids that are there, rather than say, "in 4th grade, they study inventors and inventions." The teacher has that option and if that's right for those kids, then she just goes with it and brings in everything else to that particular subject area.

Everything we do in our village we call "familyism." Familyism erases all the formalities and the bureaucracies and the rules and regulations. It breaks it down to where we're all a bunch of friends and family living together. Because we're small, you don't have to have all those formalities and live by those kinds of things. It really makes for a more happy environment I think for the individual to function in, for the teachers and students, both. Students are very happy with this kind of lifestyle. I think they thrive.

In communities, teachers are often friends with their students' parents and have known their students for many years, sometimes since they were born. These factors allow students and teachers to relate on more personal levels and be aware of each others needs and idiosyncrasies. This allows for more individualized instruction and more attention on the students. As one teacher put it:

A lot of the bottom line about what makes the school good is the relationships, the real relationships that we all have. The real feeling that goes back and forth between the kids and the 100 percent attention when we look at the kids and really grok where they're at and how they feel. When you have that kind of a medium, then a lot of information can go by really quick. You have a lot of real transmission of mind. That's where the real education comes in.

A few teachers also acknowledged, however, that without the external structures and formalities inherent in most school environments, they may occasionally have to remind the students that they are, in fact, the teachers.

There's not a whole lot of generation gap. ... We all go to the same parties. ... We all have a common society ... and that means that we're pretty good friends. We know each other pretty well. Sometimes I might even have to say, "Don't take advantage of me because we're all such good friends that you won't recognize the teacher in the situation."

In general, however, discipline is less of a problem in community schools. In addition to the relationships that students generally have with their teachers, community schools provide students with frequent opportunities to become involved in their school and to develop leadership skills in a variety of situations. When students feel needed, they are more likely to feel a sense of pride in their school, their community, and themselves. Ω

FOUR SEASONS WORTH OF COMMUNITY WISDOM

can be found in your mailbox when you subscribe to Communities magazine.

See p. 27 for details.



Daniel Greenberg, Ph.D. visited and corresponded with over 200 intentional communities in the U.S., worked with children and families at the Findhorn Foundation in Scotland, and now leads undergraduate programs on domestic and international communities with the Gaia Education Outreach Institute, in Temple, New Hampshire. He can be contacted at RR 2, Box 793, Derbyshire Farm, Temple, NH 03084.



FEDERATION UPDATE

by Gordon Sproule

Does 'Success' Spoil the Commune?

The Federation of Egalitarian Communities (FEC) is a mutual-support organization for a number of egalitarian, income-sharing communities (communes) in North America. They include Twin Oaks, East Wind, Tekiah, Ganias, Krutsio, Acorn, Blackberry Farm, Sandhill Farm, Terra Nova, and Veiled Cliffs.

“HEY, THAT’S MINE!”
Will we ever hear this in a Federation community?

Are our income-sharing communities destined to become individualistic economies with everyone working for personal gain? Will we switch from group control to personal control of major properties, such as kitchens, cars, and TVs? Are the stories true about the inevitable privatizing of historic communes?

While smaller Federation communities show no signs of a trend away from communal economies and living arrangements, both of our larger communities show signs of what might be called “de-communalizing.” Twin Oaks, where I live, still shares income and most property but some members chafe under our agreed-upon limits to personal money, private ownership of cars, and which videos they may watch at home.

A frequently heard analysis is that economic success spoils an income-sharing community. The opportunity for members to earn personal money from a successful community business is too great to resist. Or, a community business may need more hours of labor, so it uses private money incentives to motivate members to work longer, or hires workers from outside the community, or both. These solutions have been employed to some degree at Twin Oaks and East Wind.

Let’s check the accuracy of some oft-mentioned historical parallels.

The name “Amana” reminds many folks of kitchen appliances. Was the success of Amana refrigerators responsible for the sudden privatization in 1932 of the theretofore communal Amana Colonies? Actually, it was not. The appliance business did not begin until after Amana’s “Great Change” in 1923. Amana had had, in fact, financial difficulties taking care of its members. Hardship, not success, led to the switch to personal incomes and personal ownership of property.

Another important difference between Amana and our Federation communities is that Amana was first and foremost a church, not a commune. It had existed for 120 years before economic circumstances in the 1840s pressured it into collective living. Federation communities, on the other hand, formed with a specific commitment to live together and share economically.

What about the Oneida community (1846-1881)? Economic success was not the problem there either, despite the popularity of Oneida silverware. Oneida’s difficulties included a move away from its original spiritual foundation; the frailties of its aging founder, John Humphrey Noyes; conflict among the other leaders; and harassment from outside.

The Israeli kibbutzim offer a closer parallel with our larger Federation groups. Economic success has enabled kibbutz facilities such as private family apartments and per-

sonal TVs. Kibbutzim have experienced conflicts over “de-communalizing” children’s sleeping arrangements, and hiring non-kibbutz members to work in the community.

Like Twin Oaks, many kibbutzim began poor; however, growing economic success has challenged collective control. It’s easier to share resources when there isn’t enough to go around! When the survival of the community is in doubt, ideology and self-sacrifice are often important values.

Later, when the community can afford to build apartments instead of dormitory rooms, and provide cars and personal VCRs, the deprivation of the early days seems old-fashioned, even embarrassing. It’s one thing to tell questioning visitors that we cannot afford various personal privileges; it’s more difficult to explain to them (or, worse, to our families) that we limit our privacy and personal freedom for the “higher good” of our community.

Many kibbutzniks are from the same Western, individualistic culture that produced Federation members: a culture which values political and personal freedom highly. This culture frowns on societies, such as the former Soviet Union, or perhaps even the Catholic Church, in which individuals are dominated by the larger system. This pervasive belief makes the constraints of communal life harder for us.

No one at Twin Oaks advocates complete de-collectivization. Some members want to earn personal money working at home. Some want fewer restrictions (or none) on television and video. Others want personal cars.

In all cases, arguments are similar. Proponents of “liberalization” claim the community shouldn’t limit its members’ freedom, and that what they see as members’ needs take precedence over long-held community values. They say that no members would be forced to earn personal money, own a car, or watch TV. Opponents argue that the nature of Twin Oaks itself would erode. They believe our goal is an egalitarian culture without varying individual incomes, and a nonviolent culture without what they see as the corrupting influence of TV. And they say that members who prefer to own a car and a TV set and have a personal-profit economy have the whole outside world to live in, so why change Twin Oaks for the rest of us?

If we follow our usual pattern, Twin Oaks will adopt some form of compromise between these two points of view. Will this be a sign of flexibility and adaptability which augers well for our survival as a group? Or will it be one more step down the slippery slope away from community?

Only time will tell. Ω

Gordon Sproule (e-mail: Gordon@Twin Oaks.org) Twin Oaks Community, 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093; 540-894-5126; fax, 540-894-4112.



FELLOWSHIP NEWS

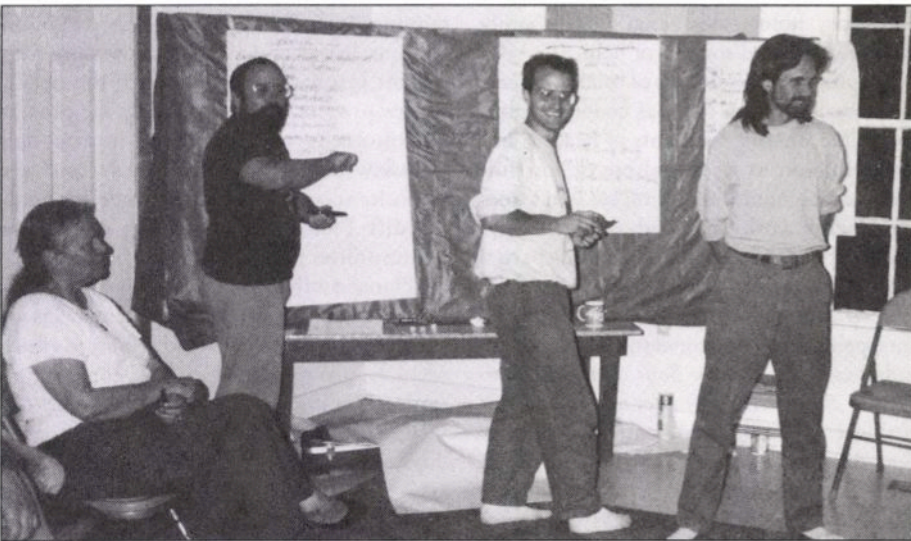
photos by Jillian Downey
text by Diana Leafe Christian

Restructuring Continues

We thought we'd show you, rather than tell you, about the November '96 Fellowship for Intentional Community Board meeting at The Farm in Summertown, Tennessee.



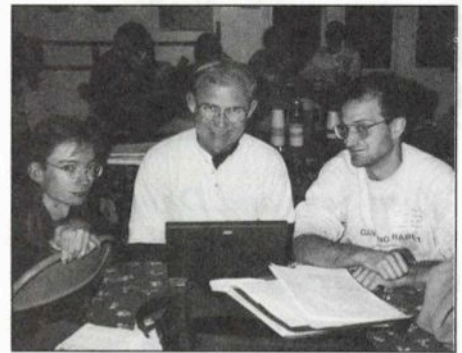
This chart illustrates the Restructuring Committee's proposal that nine Board members serve as liaisons to project implementors in an outer ring of project "clusters" (Finances, Administration, Publications, etc.) Geoph Kozeny (standing) explains the chart. Seated (left to right): Caroline Estes, Dan Questonberry, Harvey Baker. Our day-long meetings were held in The Farm's Community Center.



In this session, Paul DeLapa (far right) facilitates the discussion while Zev Paiss and Tony Sirna (left and right) serve as scribes, and Caroline Estes looks on. We passed most of the Restructuring Committee's preliminary proposals—we'll most likely have a smaller Board and many more people involved in Fellowship projects.



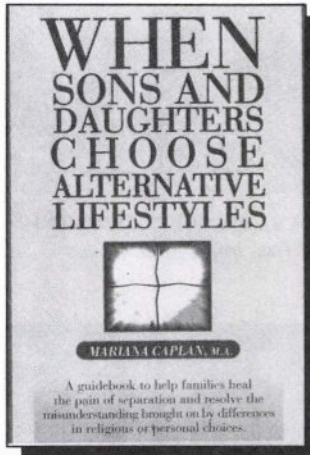
The Farm put us up in bunk bed dorms in their EcoVillage Training Center. It was cozy and fun.



Committee meetings often last into the night. (Left to right): Elph Morgan, Bill Becker, and Tony Sirna.



Sometimes even the most hard-core "meeting junkies" need to rest. Laird Sandhill and Betty Didcoct.



When Sons and Daughters Choose Alternative Lifestyles

by Mariana Caplan, M.A.

Hohm Press, 1996.
Pb., 232 pp., \$14.95.
Bookstores, or Hohm Press
PO Box 2501
Prescott, AZ 86302
520-778-9189

Reviewed by Diana Leafé Christian

DO YOU KNOW FAMILY MEMBERS WHO are outraged or grieving because a loved one pursues an unorthodox lifestyle, practices a non-mainstream spiritual practice, or ... lives in an intentional community? If you've sought a way to heal such a rift, this book offers a wise and compassionate perspective to help people relate across generations and across the often bitter separations that occur when adult children pursue a lifestyle their loved ones cannot understand—from joining a convent to coming out as gay or lesbian or living in a commune.

The book is written for the relatives and friends of the person who has made the unexpected choice. It does not tell readers how to convince their family member to change nor does it hold out false hope that everything will be all right if only he or she abandons that choice. What it does do is tell parents why, most likely, they are feeling as they are, and what to do—and not do—to satisfy their questions about the safety or well-being of their adult children without alienating them or destroying the relation-

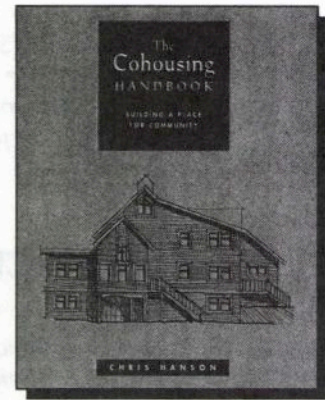
ship. *Relationship* is everything, Caplan emphasizes. Alarmed parents can panic, feel threatened, and lash out. No matter how frightened or sorrowful the parents may feel (or how over-zealous the adult child), says Caplan, it can only harm the lifelong relationship if the parents attempt to persuade, coerce, manipulate, or threaten. Consider the vicious cycle that occurs when the adult child, hurt or annoyed by a barrage of criticism, pushes the parent away and diminishes the amount of contact between them. The parents usually conclude, erroneously, that the "controlling" community or sect has forbidden further contact.

Caplan offers excellent guidelines for the short-term, including "Don't Panic!" (people are rarely in imminent physical or emotional danger in their new surroundings), "Don't Jump to Conclusions," and "Start a List of Questions." (What are the philosophical or spiritual beliefs? How does the group support itself financially? If there's a leader, can the parent ask the leader questions?) She suggests essential skills and attitudes. Learn to really listen. With empathy, tune in to the person's actual experience, not what you fear is his or her experience. Respect the person, even if you can't respect the choice. Keep the door to communication always open. Other powerful chapters include "How to Support When You Don't Agree," and those on the psychological issues at play in family relationships, and sources of help.

Caplan provides dozens of brief, first-person anecdotes from families and adult children alike, sharing incidents of healing and reconciliation as well as those of hurtfulness—a poignant illustration on what does and doesn't work. Included are five longer stories about the long road to full or partial reconciliation, and what it took.

Caplan always emphasizes with the parents' pain, fears, and concerns, but nowhere inflames them. *When Sons and Daughters Choose Alternative Lifestyles* is an excellent antidote to the myriad "cult"-scare books that do play on parents' worst fears. For someone you know, for a parent or their adult children, this book offers calm support, and is perhaps perhaps a touch of just the healing balm that's needed.

Diana Leafé Christian is Editor of Communities magazine.



The Cohousing Handbook: Building a Place for Community

by Chris Hanson

Hartley & Marks Publishers, 1996.
Pb., 278 pp., \$24.95 + \$3.50 S+H.
Bookstores, or Hartley & Marks
PO Box 147
Point Roberts, WA 98281
1-800-277-5887

Reviewed by Diana Leafé Christian

YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS ARE FORMING a new community—not necessarily a cohousing community—so why should you read *The Cohousing Handbook*? Founders of any kind of new community, cohousing or not, can learn from this book. All community founders need grounded, "left-brained" advice on how to find co-founders, make decisions, resolve conflicts, collect and account for dues and funds, buy land, choose legal options, create a site plan, and construct community buildings. Author Chris Hanson is an architect and land development consultant intimately familiar with the details of this process, and particularly the process of cohousing communities—he founded Winslow Cohousing near Seattle, and was consultant and project manager for both Cardiff Place and Windsong cohousing communities near Vancouver, B.C.

Hanson offers practical, engaging, easy-to-digest advice on the people aspects of forming community—establishing a group identity, group dynamics, decision-making options, and speaking with one voice—as well as the business and technical aspects. These include locating and purchasing land (this chapter alone is worth the price of the book); legal options, including ownership structures, risk management, tax questions, sample documents; finance and budget; designing workable site plans and community buildings; attracting members; scheduling and planning; permits and approvals; and

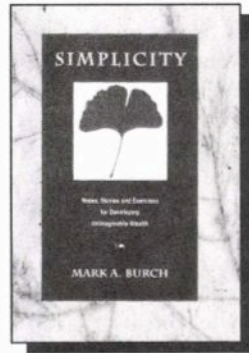
construction advice. Of course the farther into the book you go the more strictly it applies to cohousing; however, much of that is transferable to other situations.

The author provides real-life examples, drawings, illustrations, and plenty of sidebars full of tips and great ideas—including the “Colors of Empowerment” decision-making technique using colored cards, building trust within the group involving money issues (start small), how to find good land not currently on the market, and much, much more.

What does it take to start a new community? First, the author says, define a vision—a clear image of your hopes and dreams. Second, understand the existing conditions for creating your community. (What do banks and building officials expect? What does zoning allow?) And third, identify pathways, the necessary course of action from here (the vision) to there (the completed project). What, in his opinion, makes many groups fail? Often, the inability to identify and accept achievable goals.

One minor complaint: early on Hanson mistakenly says that intentional communities, in contrast to cohousing communities, “emphasize community at the expense of privacy.” Apparently he’s been influenced by media stereotypes and is unaware of the

many different kinds of intentional community. No matter. *The Cohousing Handbook* can provide invaluable help to community founders everywhere.



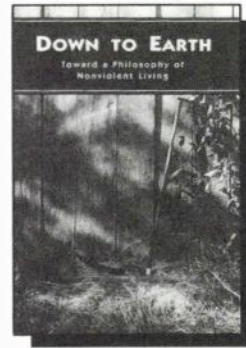
Simplicity: Notes, Stories and Exercises for Developing Unimaginable Wealth

By Mark A. Burch

New Society Publishers, 1995.

Pb., 130 pp., \$12.95.

Bookstores, or New Society Press
4527 Springfield Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19143
215-382-6543



Down to Earth: Toward a Philosophy of Nonviolent Living

By John Nolt

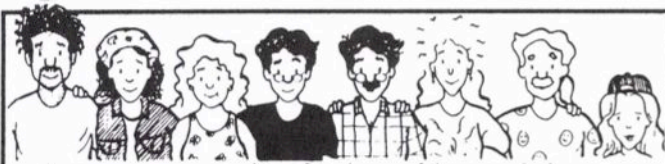
Earth Knows Publications, 1995.

Pb., 224 pp., \$14.95.

Bookstores, or Narrow Ridge Earth
Literacy Center
Route 2, Box 125
Washburn, TN 37888

Reviewed by Ellie Sommer

I SHOULD BE TIRED OF “SIMPLIFY YOUR life” books, but I am not. It’s like studying Zen or Vedanta or martial arts—you do



IS IT *Utopia* YET?

An Insider's View of Twin Oaks Community In Its 26th Year

by Kat Kinkade

Is it Utopia Yet? is a lively, first-hand account of the unique struggles and triumphs of the first 25 years of Twin Oaks Community, one of America's most prominent and successful communes. This thoughtful and entertaining 320 page book, from the author of *A Walden Two Experiment*, is illustrated with 16 photographs and 60 cartoons.

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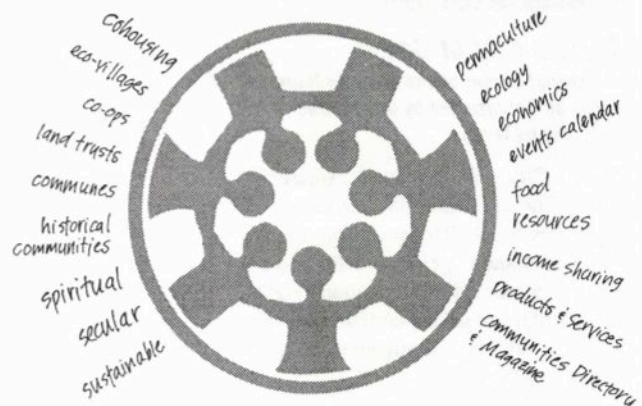
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the same thing over and over and over ... until you get it. And so it is with simplification. The old analogy of the onion applies here more than anywhere else. As you shed stuff in the quest to simplify—and by the way, this “stuff” is not only the material kind, simplifying also means giving the heave-ho to old ideas, beliefs, habits, and sometimes even people—you realize how much more there is to let go off. You begin to see the forest—and what a vast and cavernous forest it is.

Two books echo similar sentiments: From Mark Burch, author of *Simplicity*, we learn, “North American society has been built on the assumption that more, bigger, and faster defines better, healthier, and happier,” and John Nolt in *Down to Earth* writes, “The free market exists to maximize satisfaction of human desire. But it does so by providing incentive to produce goods for which there is an *immediate* desire. ... The free market maximizes satisfaction of desires only for the present generation.”

That we are a bloated society ignorant to our consumer mania and rationalizing our over-development and reckless use of resources as progress and growth is not new, I am sure, to *Communities* readers. However, as I mentioned, it is not a wasted effort to

review the path to simplicity ... in the interest of letting go of another layer.

Burch's approach is *not* to rehash much of what has already been said about treading lightly on the Earth, but instead to offer “a serious process of self-exploration and growth in mindfulness.” Mindfulness is an important theme for Burch, who, as does Nolt, spends a considerable amount of time on the concept of how nonviolence evolves into simple living (or vice versa), a process they say is inevitable when one simplifies.

At the onset, Burch dispels with any myths a reader may have about simplicity and poverty. Simplicity is not, he emphasizes, false asceticism, involuntary destitution, or naive back-to-the-land movements. If he sounds a little blunt, he is. There is no hiding his disdain for those who overlook the poverty of other nations with a wave of a hand and a flippant remark about “a simpler way of life.” While it may be necessary to accept poverty gracefully, “simplicity is joyous; poverty is not,” he clearly states.

As he promised, Burch does not spend a lot of time quoting Gandhi and Thoreau and Schumacher (Nolt does, by the way). Instead he jumps right in to *how to examine your life and make it simpler*. Not with specific suggestions such as drive less, hang up your laundry, eat plants, or recycle, but with an investigation of exactly what simplicity is in relation to yourself, others, the Earth, and spirituality. His tools are keys to understanding and becoming not a potpourri of helpful hints for green living.

He begins with a number of interesting and refreshing points, although I cannot say they are astounding, which only attests to his loyalty to simplicity and mindfulness! Following are exercises and ideas for study circles on simplicity. One of my favorite is “The uses of nothing,” in which you imagine yourself on a tropical island with plenty of native food and water and some clothing. One scenario has you alone, another with a group. One allows you bring \$100 worth of stuff, another allows you bring \$10,000 worth. Each question provokes a labyrinth of speculations about your values.

In the study circles section, Burch offers detailed outlines (including agendas, methods, and materials required) for using the exercises in group situations—even retreats and workshops.

Nolt, on the other hand, while expressing the same disdain for modern society as Burch, feels compelled to lecture about the writings and insights of the fathers and mothers of the movement toward less. Not necessarily a new slant, but Nolt's writing is strong enough to allow the reader to move with fluidity through information that is well

documented elsewhere. Nolt has a gift for weaving his personal story into the narrative and for explaining some complicated economic concepts in relation to nonviolent (simple) living. Actually, Burch also offers an interesting economic concept when he describes how our right to private property is maintained by violence.

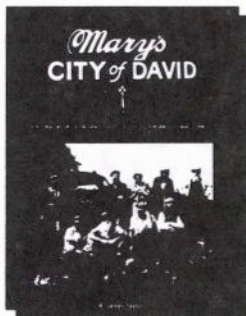
I found it easier to argue with Nolt, perhaps because he swings on a limb more in his philosophy than Burch. Despite his strong writing skills, Nolt has a tendency to wander and sometimes you wonder just exactly where he is going. But then he focuses again: clear as spring-fed lake.

Nolt is an energetic supporter of the Narrow Ridge Earth Literacy Center in Washburn, Tennessee. At the end of his preface, he lets the reader know: “Though I have profited richly from this book, I make no money from it. Your purchase supports the good work of the [center].”

Burch, a Canadian, has been a counselor and therapist and at the writing of his book was working as a specialist in sustainable development education. Both these simplicity crusaders do not think we should live in caves or stop generating electric power. They just urge us to be mindful—to choose reducing consumption over recycling and to choose reusing what we have before recovering what we've thrown away. Both advocate “steady-state” (Nolt) and “sustainable” (Burch) economies, but at the end of both books, I am still left wondering just *how* this will be achieved on a global level.

When I peer into people's shopping carts full of ersatz foods and throwaway paper and plastic items, when I notice the lack of public transit, when I see my friends' homes brimming over with the latest stuff, I wonder if we will ever make it to a simple life. Mostly I watch people suck up the Earth's marrow without a blink. So do Burch and Nolt. They attempt to offer solutions, but how to get people to try them?

It's a shame their books aren't required reading in the elementary school system. If kids can surf the net, they can understand that, as Nolt advocates at the end of his book: “The Earth cannot sustain the industrial growth that has created this astonishing wealth... We are the profligate and the rich. The majority of the world's people are poor and there are more of them every day. To continue to increase our riches and conveniences beyond any excuse of necessity while their relative poverty deepens is unconscionable. To attempt to elevate their standard of living to anything approaching ours, by any technology we can now envision, would so thoroughly industrialize, deplete, and poison the Earth as to rob our



Mary's City of David

A Pictorial History of the Israelite House of David as Reorganized by Mary Purnell

by R. James Taylor

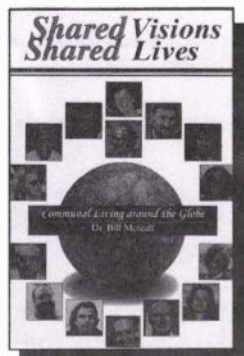
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descendants of all hope. We must therefore learn to live with less."

Ellie Sommer, who loves to read, edits manuscripts and ghostwrites professionally. She and her husband Paul are members of a fledgling community in Gainesville, Florida.



Shared Visions, Shared Lives: Communal Living around the Globe

By Bill Metcalf

Findhorn Press, 1996.
Pb., 192 pp., \$13.95.

Reviewed by Diana Leaf Christian

EVERYBODY LOVES A GOOD STORY, AND this is a book of 15 good stories. Longtime community members from Brazil to India to Israel tell personal and engaging accounts of their lives. Editor Bill Metcalf, our "Community Living Worldwide" columnist, used "biographical discourse" to induce these far-flung communitarians to tell us how they got there, how their communities have changed, what they've learned, what they'd do differently, and where their communities seem headed today.

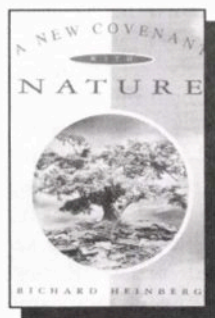
I loved "Hard Fall to Accountability" by Anne Blaney, about her life in the Emissaries' 100 Mile Community in British Columbia. Bless Anne, she doesn't mince words. She tells what it was like for a fairly assertive, independent-minded woman to live in close-knit, spiritually rich community with an unswerving commitment to spiritual service, yet which was "patriarchal, top-down, with obedience expected." She describes how, with the death of the leader, long-suppressed community difficulties emerged and were finally dealt with, and how subsequently, the social, political, and economic organization changed radically. Now Anne serves as General Manager of 100 Mile Community. Hers was one of the most refreshing and straightforward accounts of an Emissary community I've read yet.

I was tickled by Albert Bates' down-home account of early days at The Farm, in "Tie Dyes in Cyberspace"; inspired by "In Search of Non-Violence," Thérèse Parodi's story of life at a l'Arche community in France; and moved by Sonia Christophe's poignant "A Brazilian Community in Crisis"—for me this tale of a struggling new age community was "déjà vu all over again."

My all-time favorite, however, was Juan Robinson's description of Los Horcones, a secular, income-sharing community that practices "radical behaviorism" in Sonora, Mexico. These dedicated, good-hearted folks believe that human beings can become better, and better at living with one another, if they give each other positive negative reinforcement as part of their daily life, "shaping" each other's behavior towards community norms. They have unusually good success applying these techniques to the autistic children they care for professionally, and are quite honest about where they feel they've succeeded and where they've missed the mark in their goals. Makes you want to go visit.

While my enthusiasm remained high reading this book, I was slightly disappointed with its production standards, in regard to cover graphics and photo reproduction.

Nevertheless, if you want to broaden your lens on community life, to take a peek into the community style of other cultures, and to meet some fascinating, committed people, *Shared Visions, Shared Lives* is for you.



A New Covenant With Nature: Notes on the End of Civilization and the Renewal of Culture

By Richard Heinberg

Quest Books, 1996.
Pb., 219 pp., \$20.

Reviewed by Tony Sirna

RICHARD HEINBERG'S *A NEW COVENANT With Nature* may change your whole worldview, or at least help crystallize the one

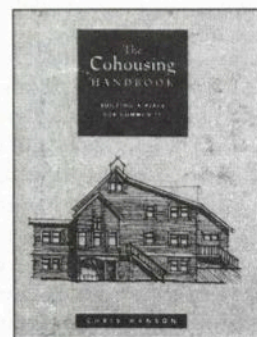
you have. With a clear and thoughtful style Heinberg takes an anthropological look at how humans have related to nature in various cultures and concludes that "civilization" is destined for collapse. His hope for humankind and its participation in the ecological world? That small groups form self-reliant, ecologically based, intentional communities.

Heinberg delves into the basic categories of human cultures and their "covenants" with nature: hunting/gathering, horticulture, herding, agriculture, and modern civilization. Every culture has unique relationships with nature that define its covenants with nature that define its covenants with nature that define its covenants with nature, what it can take from nature, what the culture must give to nature, and what its place in nature is. In addition, he includes a thoughtful analysis of economics, governance, the arts, science, and spirituality, and their places in driving our current Western culture towards collapse. But rather than merely examining what's wrong with society, Heinberg gives clear guidance for how each of these cultural elements can be turned towards a path of cultural renewal.

A New Covenant With Nature concludes with suggestions for both personal changes

(continued on next page)

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Reviews

(continued from previous page)

and global political and economic changes that could help avert or at least diminish the impending ecological degradation and human suffering to which our current culture would otherwise lead. Globally, he calls for abolishing secret government, reforming agriculture, decentralizing government, abol-

ishing corporations, and reforming our economic system. He sees hope in the recent trends toward feminism, eco-ethics, Earth-centered spirituality, and a resurgence of indigenous cultures. At a personal level, Heinberg calls for people to start living out models of sustainable community living, employing such alternatives as biointensive agriculture, alternative currencies, permaculture, revitalizing democracy, and bioregionalism.

With clarity, wit, and passion Heinberg demonstrates the need for that which so many in the communities movement are already dedicating their lives' work. It's a perfect book for reinvigorating your radical idealism or making believers out of those becoming disillusioned with the current mainstream culture. Ω

Tony Sirna is a member of Dancing Rabbit, a forming community in northeast Missouri.

Cennednyss

(continued from p. 11)

take part in a two-week "Angels and Mortals" game, during which each member becomes the anonymous "angel" of another member, showering him or her with goodies and treats. It's a time of secrets and intrigue until all is made known at the "Revealing" party.

Every year they hold a Community Review session to assess their achievements and

directions. This helps them clarify goals, individually and for the whole community.

Cennednyss has hosted over 150 young people from all over the world, mostly backpackers and WWOOFers (Willing Workers On Organic Farms), who stay from a week to several months and work for their keep. They learn about organic gardening, consensus decision making, and communal living.

Cennednyss members relate intimately, almost as an extended or communal family. Several children have been born at Cennednyss (which they celebrate by plant-

ing trees) and in 1993 when one of the founding members died, they created a special garden with a "Thoughtful House" in her honour.

Through celebrating these rituals of birth, life and death, Cennednyss members demonstrate a stable, socially rich, and prosperous intentional community. Ω

Note: We preserve the spelling of our Commonwealth authors. Cennednyss, PO Summertown, South Australia, 5141, Australia. Fax: 61-8-83901203. E-mail: dlq@adelaide.dialix.oz.au.

Kaweah

(continued from p. 13)

Colony via Cuba, the Brazils, Peru and Mexico," according to Kaweah's newspaper, *Commonwealth*. Big Trees seemed to generate Big Thinking.

At its height Kaweah harbored more than one hundred colonists. The members organized schools, bands, drama groups, baseball teams, and wild differences of opinion. Debates of all kinds were encouraged. On the practical level, work left undone by layabouts and arguers was completed by others taking up the slack (screening of applicants to Kaweah was never thorough). Burnette Haskell himself had a habit of not following through on plans. There was never enough real gold-backed cash in the community, even though donations steadily arrived from Kaweah's supporters from throughout the U.S. Coverage of Kaweah's dream by the media, which at that time was suspicious of social experiments and "European" ideas, was harsh: The Fresno Daily Republican called the colony "an infamous bunco game."

There were other problems, too, chief among them the U.S. government's suspension of the land claims. Several of the original claimants were not U.S. citizens. The

Visalia land office also noticed that several more Kaweahans listed the same home address in San Francisco on their paperwork. Curiosity aroused, the Visalia officers appealed to Washington for council. Ultimately, U.S. President Benjamin Harrison negated all the community's land claims when he signed, on October 1, 1890, the bill creating Sequoia National Park.

And there was failure. Amidst the knot of problems Haskell and his communitarians struggled to unravel, the collapse of the bridge and the destruction of the boiler-engine was a huge blow. No boiler-engine meant no sawmill, and with no sawmill, they logged few trees. (And fortunately, never any giant sequoias.) Kaweah's morale sank. By 1892, little more than six years after its founding and less than two after the bridge disaster, Kaweah was no more.

The community's larger failure, though, remains relevant and recognizable. Kaweah could not organize the diversity and differences it encouraged into a self-perpetuating society. With Kaweah's long-term future always in doubt (a general condition only exacerbated by its land-claim hassles), and the Marxist theory espoused in the General Meetings often unsupported by reality, selflessness was difficult for Kaweah to sustain. People simply gave up.

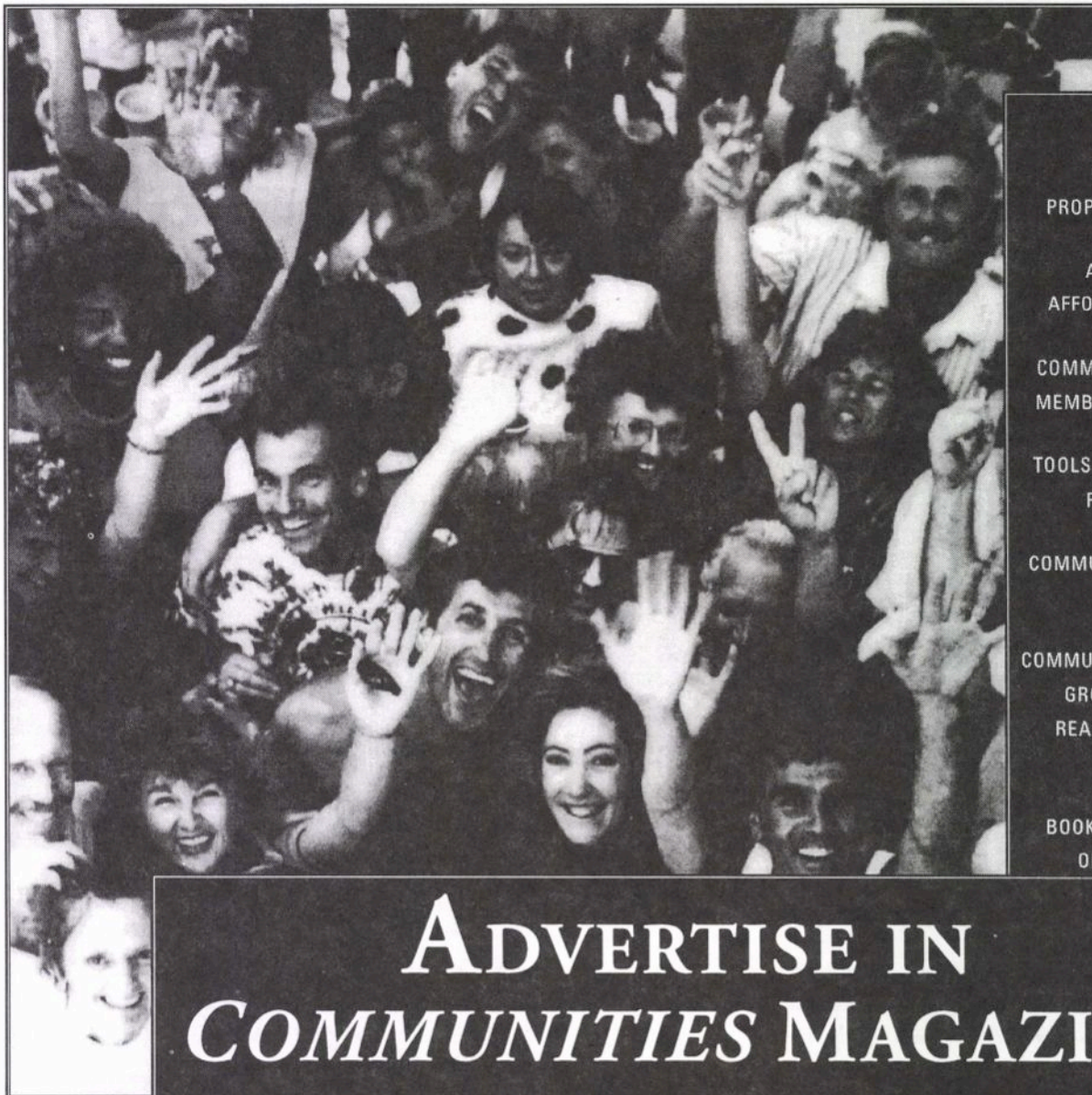
Anna Fader, in fact, eventually gave up

on Burnette Haskell. After separating from her husband in 1896, she moved to northern California, where she taught school for 23 years. She died in 1942. Haskell, however, did not give up. In 1900 he searched for gold in Alaska; in 1901 he organized a cooperative to exploit the Philippines; in 1904 he opened a new law practice in San Francisco. He remained a dreamer, always looking for the dream that would pay off. In his final years Haskell searched even harder, relentlessly scouring the bottom of a bottle. He died a drunk in 1907, even as the Big Tree groves he believed would astonish the world did exactly that—though through tourism, not timber. Ω

Further Reading About Kaweah

California's Utopian Colonies, Robert V. Hine (University of California Press, 1966; revised and renewed 1983). 211 pp.

Kaweah Remembered: The Story of the Kaweah Colony and the Founding of Sequoia National Park, William Tweed (Sequoia Natural History Association, 1986). 16 pp.



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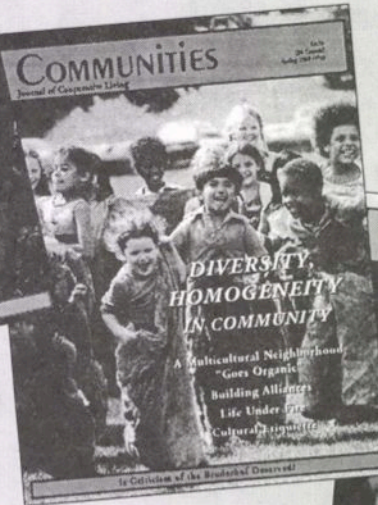
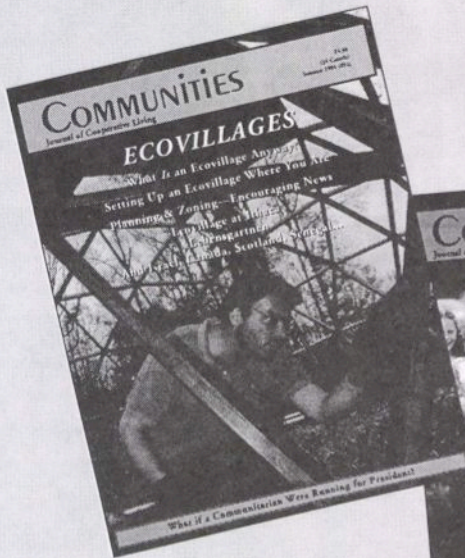
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MAKING A LIVING IN COMMUNITY

FROM THE EDITOR

.....
Diana Leafe Christian

IT'S EIGHT O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING AND TIME TO GO TO WORK. We all troop down to the community-owned shop to weave hammocks, right? *Wrong!* Communitarians organize their work lives in an amazing variety of ways. You'll meet some of them on these pages.

Some own their own businesses. Blue Evening Star sews tipis and yurts with a bevy of industrial sewing machines among the red rock mesas of Arizona (*"The Expanding Circle,"* p. 34). She employs other Aquarian Concepts members in her business.

Nina rips logs into lumber with a portable sawmill in the woodlands of Virginia (*"Sawdust, Cow Manure, and Confidence,"* p. 62). She hopes that fellow Abundant Dawn members will join her someday in a worker-owned co-op.

Amidst the burr of saws and clouds of sawdust people build cabinets at Heartwood Design, a woodworking shop at Shannon Farm in Virginia (*"Profit Is Not a Dirty Word,"* p. 38). Everywhere folks are busily clamping vices or gluing frames, but—who are the workers here and who are the owners? Who are the community members? Three of the four partners of this worker-owned co-op are Shannonites and one is not. Some of the co-op's seven employees are community members, some aren't.

In the more meditative atmosphere of a woodshop at Dunmire Hollow in Tennessee, Harvey Baker creates beautiful cherry wood furniture in the custom woodworking business that he owns with a partner (*"Investing in Our Lives,"* p. 45). Like many small, rural communities, Dunmire Hollow cannot offer community jobs or entry level positions, so new members must bring their professions or cottage industries with them.

Larger, income-sharing communities *can* offer many jobs. At East Wind in southern Missouri, newcomers do community maintenance tasks or work in outdoor furniture, sandal, or nut butter

shops (*"Boss? What Boss?,"* p. 30). In these businesses everyone is an owner; anyone can change jobs or hours anytime; and flexibility and convenience, not profit, is the bottom line.

Now we're in Vancouver, where we see members of Community Alternatives Society finish their morning coffee, fold up the paper, and—what? Leave for jobs outside the community? (*"I Own Isadora's,"* p. 42). Hmm, seems not all income-sharing communities run their own community businesses. But here are some CAS members going to jobs that benefit others, jobs that they created themselves with the help of the community's non-profit status.

Kommune Niederkaufungen in Germany was founded to challenge the prevailing economic system and demonstrate what sharing resources and incomes can do (p. 52). Niederkaufungen's 12 community businesses—from catering to metalwork to organic produce—generate a high standard of living and enough money left over to donate to worthy causes.

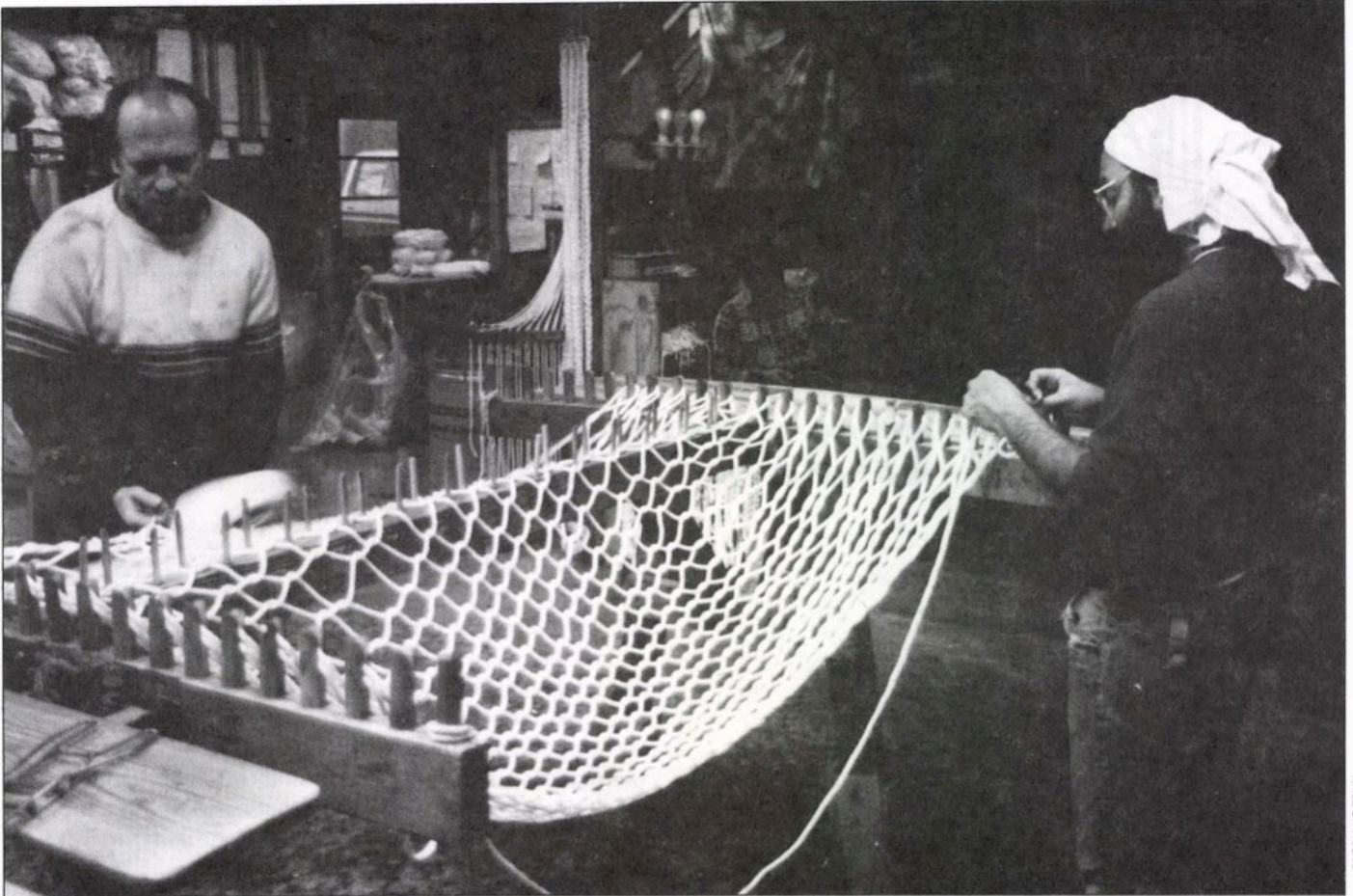
What if your community does genuine good in the world and helps influence the course of culture in North America (even becomes famous), but doesn't keep an eye on the bottom line? What if you're up to your eyeballs in soybeans and good works but can't pay the gas bill? (*"The Great 'Changeover' at the Farm,"* p. 56.) Michael Traugot tells what led up to the 1983 crisis and how this well-known community survived it.

Sunrise Ranch, long supported by donations, must now make its own living (*"Making It On Our Own,"* p. 49). Its members now work outside the community, welcome guests to the community's conference business, or create their own businesses.

Like shuttle craft linked to the mother ship, Dancing Rabbit members lock on to computers in a large California corporation, but don't leave home in rural Missouri (*"Telecommuting,"* p. 61). Just down the road, the folks at Sandhill Farm make a living not by growing organic sorghum and soybeans—but by turning them into syrup and tempeh (*"Straw into Gold,"* p. 37).

Okay, if you're *really* curious about making hammocks, we've got that, too. Anna Young tells all, starting on the next page...

Diana Leafe Christian is editor of Communities magazine.



GEOPH KOZENY

The hammock shop makes 17,000 hammocks a year.

‘Boss? What Boss?’

by Anna Young

East Wind Community, formed in 1974, is located in the Ozark hills of rural southern Missouri. East Wind was a founding member of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities (FEC). It holds its land, labor, income, and other resources in common; makes decisions democratically; and promotes egalitarianism and nonviolence.

RECENTLY I HUNG UP ON AN OBNOXIOUS PHONE solicitor who promptly called back to berate me for my rudeness and to demand to speak to my boss. Imagine his surprise when I replied, “I don’t *have* a boss.”

This envious state of employment is the case for many—very likely all—East Winders. Sixty bossless women and men own and operate three community businesses that gross more than \$2 million a year. We mostly choose and schedule our own work; we’re not required to follow the orders of any one person who can retain or dismiss us from our membership; and we simply laugh at the idea of time clocks or dress codes.

For those accustomed to corporate America this may sound too good to be true. Well, it’s surely not always paradisiacal and we have our dysfunctional episodes, but during the 23



MARTHA LORCH

Sandal making requires more skill, concentration, and patience than the community's other businesses.

years of East Wind's existence, we have proven that there's life beyond hierarchy.

As an egalitarian community, we try to ensure that all members are equal in status. Of course, some tasks are hard to accomplish unless someone is nominally in charge. For this reason, we elect or appoint managers for different work areas; these managers control community-set budgets and approve the hours labor workers have claimed. Managers get no extra financial rewards; however, they gain satisfaction from seeing their work areas run smoothly and from reaching valued community goals. They don't have special or formal rank, but earn the informal respect of their peers through their contributions and accomplishments.

Our businesses provide a concrete example of how successful this alternative approach can be. In 1996 we shipped around 17,000 handmade hammocks, over 3,000 pairs of rope sandals, and about 750,000 pounds of nut butters and nuts.

The Joint Hammocks Business

Since November 1974, East Wind has manufactured hammocks in partnership with Twin Oaks Community in Vir-

ginia. This project began soon after East Wind's founding members, who included several ex-Twin Oakers, moved onto the land in May 1974. Twin Oaks landed a lucrative hammock account with Pier 1 Imports at that time and needed help to fill the orders. Pier 1 Imports has grown dramatically since then and so has East Wind; in a sense, East Wind has succeeded as a community *because* of Pier 1's support.

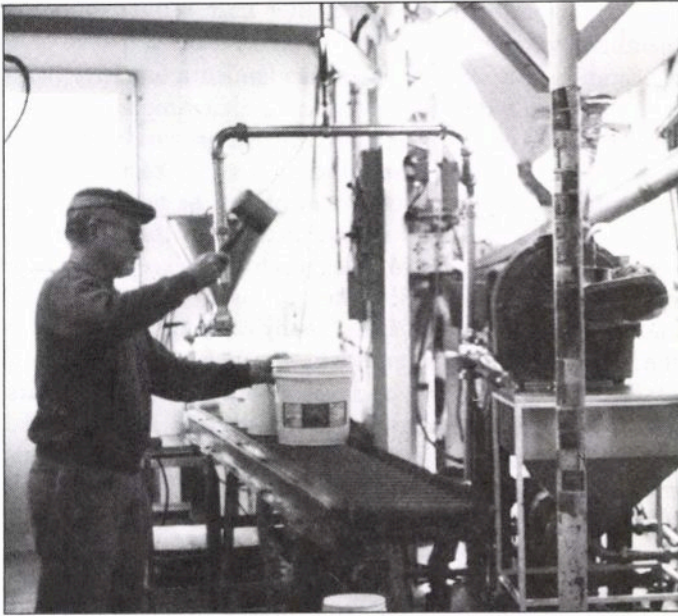
Making hammocks is a craft business in that it requires very little expensive and complex machinery, except for a large stretcher drill. Hammock making is easy to learn so visitors and new members often spend many of their work hours in the hammocks shop, where we have a nice stereo, coffee and snacks, air conditioning, and reasonably comfy work chairs. Twin Oaks does most of the administration for the Pier 1 account. Twice a year, Twin Oaks and East Wind hammock-makers come together for Joint Hammocks Talks, alternately held at our community or theirs. At these events we distribute sales figures, crunch numbers, answer questions, discuss problems, and get to meet our counterparts. In the larger sense, Joint Hammocks Talks are opportunities to socialize and for non-hammock-making members to catch rides to the other community and do labor exchanges. (All FEC communities participate in labor exchange, where members of a community can go to work at another FEC community, later to have their efforts repaid by the host community.)

No discussion of the hammocks business could be complete without bringing up "polypropylene," a synthetic, petroleum-based plastic from which most of our hammock ropes are made. Polypropylene is not biodegradable. Since one of our community tenets is to "live lightly on the Earth," it is a little jarring to consider that from one-half to two-thirds of our yearly income comes from a manufacturing process that uses a non-recyclable material. We've tried making and selling cotton and organic cotton hammocks with very little success; customers evidently don't want their hammocks to biodegrade. We're also making recycled polyester rope hammocks which to date have had limited sales. The recyclable hammock is more expensive than the polypropylene hammock and doesn't come in colors. Pier 1 is not interested in cotton or polyester hammocks and since over 90 percent of our sales are to Pier 1, the opportunity to get out of "polypro" seems remote.

Over the years, we've often asked ourselves with a shudder: "What if Pier 1 *dropped* us?" East Winders have worried about this for years, so in order to diversify and become less dependent, we started other businesses.

The Utopian Rope Sandals Business

In 1977, we developed the Utopian Rope Sandal, which was originally conceived of as a way to use scrap polypro rope. We melt ropes together into a mat, out of which we cut the soles, and then attach rope straps with a soldering iron. The resulting sandal is nearly indestructible, comes in many colors, and can be machine-washed and dried without fading, shrinking, or stretching. The sandal business is another low-tech craft business, but it requires much more skill, since a slip of the



East Wind Nut Butters is the community's most ambitious, risky, and profitable business.

soldering iron can ruin the incipient sandal swiftly and irremediably. Some East Winders who would like to make sandals can't get the hang of it, while some who are able tire of the exacting work and attention that sandal making requires. For these reasons sandal makers are always in short supply, and in the summer season, the sandals are often back-ordered for weeks. This has caused many good managers to burn out.

Over a year ago, in an effort to get more East Winders to sign up for sandal making, we purchased a used mobile home for our sandal workshop. The previous space was tiny, badly ventilated, and windowless. The new space has several work stations, its own refrigerator, coffee maker, and stereo, and a beautiful view down a wooded hillside. Even with the new space, it has still been a struggle to get sandals made, but in the summer of 1996 a judicious supply-and-demand-oriented price raise slowed orders enough so that we could—almost—keep up. The sandals business is valuable to us because since demand is so high—with zero marketing efforts. We figure that if we ever needed to, it'd be easy to increase sales. Like the hammocks business, we sell mostly to retailers but also to individuals through our mail order catalog.

The Nut Butter Business

In 1981, we began our most ambitious and risky business, East Wind Nut Butters. Our principal product lines are peanut butter and organic peanut butter, sesame tahini and organic sesame tahini, cashew butter, almond butter, and boxed bulk nuts. We sell to natural foods distributors and other food manufacturers. East Wind Nut Butters is a more ecologically sustainable business than the hammocks or sandals businesses because the ingredients are natural and the packaging recyclable. Nut Butters is also a far more capital-intensive busi-

ness; its start-up costs—purchasing the 700-lb. batch roaster; the cooling, cleaning and blanching systems; and the mill and packaging equipment—were around \$100,000.

We started this business with the help of our friends at Once Again Nut Butter in upstate New York, which at the time was a worker-owned collective. Once Again had indicated in response to a survey of cooperative business alliances that they would be willing to help another worker-owned cooperative start a similar business. Since then, Once Again has become a family-owned corporation with regular employees. We've grown and so have they; mostly we serve different geographical regions, but there has been some overlap and territorial stepping-on of toes in the past. We're still good friends though, often visiting back and forth. It's always useful to have amicable contact with another business that shares the same concerns, problems, and market conditions.

East Wind Nut Butters has its own production building, "The Nuthouse," and its own 3,600-square foot cold-storage warehouse, "Siberia" (it's huge and it's cold). In the mornings, two "roaster" members load and roast from 2,000 to 5,000 pounds of nuts, and mill and pack bulk items—cashew butter into 15-lb. containers, peanut butter into 35-lb. containers, and boxed, vacuum-packed nuts into 25-lb. containers. After lunch, five or six people package jars and/or 5-lb. tubs destined for retail shelves. Unlike hammock and sandal production, the work shifts in the nut butters business occur at designated times during the day, and the work is less self-paced and more like an assembly line. The morning roasting shifts demand workers with the ability to lift 50-lb. bags of nuts, as well as the ability to operate a serious amount of loud and sometimes ornery equipment. Since a morning's roast

"We own it. We can change it if we want to."

can consist of up to \$12,000 of raw materials (for example, in making almond butter), it is important that the morning roasters have a high degree of training and attention to detail! In the afternoon a coordinator supervises the packagers, operates the mill, and makes sure the workers are using the right labels and filling the correct containers with accurate amounts of butter. The afternoon coordinator also helps lid, label, box, and/or stack the finished goods.

Running a food business has many more complexities than manufacturing hand-crafted items. For example, the nut butters business must deal with the certification paperwork of the Organic Crop Improvement Association, inspections from the Kosher inspection service rabbi, and the requirements of various government agencies. (And representatives from the FDA and the Missouri Department of Health are known to drop in without notice.) In addition to this business' much larger capital investment in manufacturing equipment, its raw materials (nuts are often purchased in 40,000-lb. truckload

quantities) and on-hand finished products consume a large amount of working capital. Even so, Nut Butters is now East Wind's most profitable business, earning well over \$10 per hour in 1995. This wasn't the case the first few years. Initially the budding nut butter business earned such a low dollar-per-hour figure that we contemplated shutting it down.

Business as an Aspect of East Wind Life

Supporting ourselves through our three businesses takes, on average, less than 20 hours per week per adult member. We spend the remainder of our 40-hour work week providing products (organic dairy products; hormone-free beef, pork, and eggs; super-fresh unsprayed vegetables and fruits) and services (childcare, communal meals, auto repairs, shopping in town) for each other, which makes our daily lives both simpler and richer.

To achieve this idyllic state of affairs we must manufacture all those hammocks and sandals and nut butters, which can be perceived as an onerous task, especially when one gets used to being as "spoiled" as we are. Managing businesses or other work areas is often an unduly heavy responsibility in the absence of any tangible reward. We have mechanisms, such as weekly production quotas on an as-needed basis, to ensure that people do their fair share of work in the business and in communal activities. However, we don't have a system that ensures that the responsibility of managing—unadulterated by the joys of bossing—is distributed in an equitable manner.

East Winders share major decisions on business income and budgeting domestic expenses via the annual planning process that occurs in a series of community meetings. The resulting plan is then decided by majority-rule voting. (While some East Wind committees and work areas operate by consensus, it's rare that any decision made in community meeting will be unanimous.)

For example, some members want us to do less industry work and maintain a lower standard of living while other members want more work and a higher standard of living. East Winders all get the same stipend, currently \$75 per month. Some members want more personal money and some want less. For those who want more, we offer the SPOTS (Special Production Off The System) program in hammock making, in which a member can earn more income on a piece-work basis. The member doesn't claim regular labor-credit hours for SPOTS work and nets \$10 for about an hour-and-a-half's extra labor. But one facet of our income-sharing system (and essential to our 501(d) tax status), is that we all declare, on our tax returns, the same amount of income. Therefore members have no financial incentive to fulfill much of their labor quota in business areas, so many East Winders do as little industry work as possible.

Most weeks during the year our hammock industry quota is from four to eight hours per week, and our nut butters industry quota, up to four hours per week. (Sandal production can serve to fill either or both quotas.) Still, it's not too difficult to show up and weave a few hammocks or slap lids or labels on a few jars of nut butter. More difficult is finding

Egalitarianism

1) A belief in human equality: a) a belief that everyone is equal in intrinsic worth and is entitled to equal access to the rights and privileges of their society, specifically, a social philosophy advocating the leveling of social, political, and economic inequalities; b) the belief that everyone is born equal in aptitudes and capacities.

2) The suppression of all distinctions between individuals and groups as inherently unjust; an extreme social and political leveling.

3) Social, political, or economic equality. ("An egalitarian age can have no place for the snobbish and feudal notion that one occupation can be of greater worth than another." —Christopher Hollis)

Paraphrased from *Webster's Third International Dictionary* (G. & C. Merriam Co., 1976).

members who are willing to take on managerial responsibility in the absence of any reward for doing so! Like people everywhere, East Winders have a tendency to not comment on good work but to squawk loudly when they perceive a problem. It can be tough for a member managing any East Wind work area, business or domestic, to deal with this.

Periodically, a bit of chaos erupts. For example, sometimes when people change or exchange jobs we develop a work "void." When no one steps forward to assume responsibility, serious problems develop. On the other hand, under our non-hierarchical system, there's not much worry that someone will seize an unhealthy amount of power because, heck, around here, there's only so much a mortal communitarian can or wants to be in charge of.

I believe the risks of a responsibility void are more than offset by the psychic benefits of knowing in our hearts that "we own it," and "we can change it if we want to." The succession of our people through our tasks and the wide-open opportunities to use our creativity to solve problems seems likely to continue, as it has for over two decades.

Some years ago I was complaining about the vagaries of the management at AT&T to my grandfather, a retired bricklayer, steelworker, and postal employee. He gazed at me sadly, patted my hand, and said, "You know, Anna, wherever you work, you will always have a boss." If he were alive to visit East Wind, I'm pretty sure he wouldn't "get it." But I like to think he'd be pretty tickled at the concept that we work—and we do not have a boss. Ω

Anna Young has lived at East Wind Community for over three years. She spends most of her work energies trying to get a grip on managing East Wind Nut Butters.



BLUE EVENING STAR

Rejecting square shelters, the author has sewn tipis everywhere from school buses to mountain meadows in Northern California.

The Expanding Circle

by Blue Evening Star

Founded in 1986, Aquarian Concepts is a spiritual community of 100 members who live in various group houses in Sedona, Arizona.

I CAST MYSELF OUT INTO THE WORLD AT AN EARLY age and needed a place to get out of the rain. The square world of our dominant culture held no fascination for me, and so I entered the world of circles. I sewed my first tipi in 1976 in the mountains of Northern California. It was 18 feet in diameter, and I lived in it all winter, with a community of eight people in four tipis. We had a lot of fun sewing the tipis, getting the poles, finding land to live on, setting them up. We stayed warm and dry inside, eating apples and making lots of music. This was the birth of the Mugwort Family Band, and we loved living together so much that eventually we bought land and continued to live in tipis for many years.

In the early '80s, when the group had evolved into the Inspiration Gardens Community, we sold tipis to our friends and neighbors. We had a treadle sewing machine set up on an old logging platform on our land. We put straw down on the dirt to keep the canvas clean and hung a parachute from the trees to protect ourselves from the hot sun. In the winter, we arranged to sew in the local school gymnasium. Every

BLUE EVENING STAR



When the author and her staff connect with the bigger picture, everything works well. Here, raising a yurt in the Arizona desert.

night we hauled the treadle and the canvas to the gym, sewed for a few hours, and then packed it all up. The first words my son learned were, “Don’t crawl on the canvas!”

I’ve sewn tipis in school buses, under trees on a pine-needle carpet, on a turkey run/cement pad, in friends’ garages, and next to lakes and mountains. I’ve cut out tipis in cul-de-sacs, in grassy lawns in public parks, and just about any flat, clean place you can imagine.

In 1991, I stuffed all my worldly possessions into the back of my pick-up truck and moved to Sedona, Arizona, to join the Aquarian Concepts Community. I had a commercial sewing machine; a ladder to measure yurt roofs; some canvas and poles to make myself a tipi to live in; a few other odds and ends; and my wolf, Taiwaney. I had \$40 when I pulled into town, but believed that planting myself in Arizona would accelerate both my soul’s growth and Living Shelter Crafts. I knew I was coming home.

Now, five years later, Living Shelter Crafts has three commercial sewing machines and 15 community members trained to build tipis. I have published a book on tipis and yurts (*Tipis and Yurts: Authentic Designs for Circular Shelters*), and have recently introduced “tipi nightlights,” small lamps that, with a flicker-flame bulb, look just like a tipi with a glowing fire at night. I wanted to do something for all those people who said, “I’ve always wanted a tipi!”

It is beneficial for businesses to diversify, and the yurts were a natural evolution from tipis. Ten years ago some friends showed me a yurt they’d built, and I took it from there. We are constantly improving the yurt design while maintaining our goal to keep the yurts portable and keep the price down. The yurt design has especially come together since my move to the community. Brainstorming with community members has notably enhanced my business.

The employees of Living Shelter Crafts are either students or teachers in training in our community’s spiritual school, working in a variety of capacities. This works well, as the flexible hours of the tipi and yurt business are compatible with the many tasks in our ministry.

We have a clearly defined authority structure in the community, based upon individual spiritual gifts, humility, and overall stability. This authority structure permeates the cottage industries as well. For example, my business manager, Santeen, is also my spiritual elder. We find serendipities and education for soul growth at every turn. This is as true for the making of tipis and yurts as it is singing in the choir, working in the garden, living in a community house, or packing and shipping out copies of our community’s book, *The Cosmic Family*.

We find that when we are self-assertive—locked in lower emotion and lacking in humble recognition of God’s presence—the sewing machine breaks down, the orders dry up, and we can barely communicate or function together as a corporate family. Then we change our thoughts by remembering why we are here, reconnect with the bigger picture after an inspirational class or prayer, and bingo ... suddenly everything is working again. The phone begins to ring off the hook with tipi and yurt orders. Long-lost members of our cosmic family become fascinated with the idea of getting a yurt, one thing leads to another, and they join in our spiritual work.

Our intent to build our personal relationships with God and assist our brothers and sisters in the unfolding of their true destinies allow us to enjoy a high level of personal relationship (as boss, as supervisor, or as employee) in Living Shelter Crafts. If we have a grievance over someone’s behavior, we have several procedures for addressing it. One

popular method is "The Cosmic Chip Game,"* in which we give one another small chips for specific incidents, and let the person know what we believe is the underlying pattern behind his or her inappropriate behavior. Another recourse, if simply speaking to the person directly is not effective, is to call upon the services of one of our community's spiritual counselors. Every aspect of our work in the community is seen as an opportunity to grow spiritually.

Other community-related businesses and services help our members make a living. These include Spirit Steps Tours; The Bright and Morning Star Band; Future Studios, an artisan's collective; Avalon Gardens, where members grow vegetables; a publishing company; a wholesale organic food co-op; and a homeschool cooperative for our children.

Each community member is responsible for his or her own financial affairs. All community services to members (teaching, counseling, healing, etc.) are offered on a purely donation basis. Members are encouraged to donate financially, but work exchange is welcomed for those without the finances to give.

In Living Shelter Crafts, employees are paid as independent contractors. As the owner of the business, I earn the profit. In the future, I plan to spend more time teaching and healing, and will turn over the management of Living Shelters to others. I look forward to the day when my personal finances are contributing 100 percent to community coffers.

I have always known that Living Shelter Crafts was meant to be a cottage industry for a spiritual community. Living Shelter Crafts is God's business, and the more I can get my little self out of the way, the better the staff and I work together.

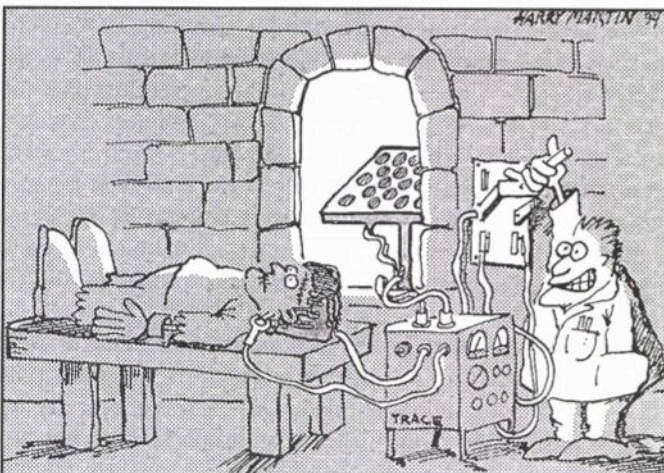
Now that I have begun to experience managing a business within the context of a spiritual community, I wouldn't want to do it any other way. The years of building Living Shelters more or less on my own were tolerable only because I knew I would one day find my family and be given the opportunities to discover my highest service within it.

My recommendation is, find out what God wants you to do and start doing it. Vision plus practicality equals stable growth. Real progress cannot be made in an isolated system. Find your truest family, tune yourself to God, and start building a higher reality in your life, one right decision at a time. Ω

* (© 1996 Gabriel of Sedona)

Blue Evening Star owns and manages Living Shelter Crafts as a member of the Aquarian Concepts community in Sedona, Arizona. For information about her shelters or book, write Living Shelter Crafts Tipis and Yurts, PO Box 4069, West Sedona, AZ 86340; 800-899-1924.

For information on Aquarian Concepts Community: PO Box 3946, West Sedona, AZ 86340; 520-204-1206.



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Bringing in the cane—harvest time at Sandhill Farm.

Straw into Gold

How One Community Creates Value-Added Products

by Diana Leafe Christian

IT'S SORGHUM HARVEST TIME (SOME CALL IT THE "sorghum festival") at Sandhill Farm in northeast Missouri. Approximately 30 people—Sandhill members, folks who've driven hundreds of miles from other communities in Missouri or Virginia, and community seekers who've chosen this time to visit Sandhill—are busily whacking sorghum cane with machetes and heaving the pithy, eight-foot-long stalks with a "thunk!" into hay wagons. The wagons are hauled to an old-timey cane press, which is powered by a belt hooked to the tractor. The stalks go in one end; raw cane juice dribbles out the other. The cane juice slides, gravity-fed, from stainless steel settling pots to the massive sorghum cooker, three feet wide and 16 feet long, built decades ago by a Tennessee blacksmith. Amidst the satisfying aroma of woodsmoke, the juice cooks and thickens continuously, and by the time it has reached 232° F, emerges from the cooker's nether end as a delicious, nutritious syrup. It's poured into bottles with the Sandhill Farm label, and sold at regional craft fairs, grocery stores, and to the distributor Blooming Prairie, where it's trucked to health food stores all over middle America. Sandhill Farm Sorghum nets the community approximately \$12,000 a year.

Sorghum, beloved in the region (just ask grandpa), used to be produced all over the Midwest. Nowadays, hardly anyone goes to the trouble: it's simply too labor intensive to be profitable. But not so for an intentional community, which often has an abundance of just what's needed: labor.

Sandhill makes a decent living creating value-added products with that labor. Most farmers grow a crop and sell it to a

middleman, who sells it to someone who makes retail products, who sells it to a distributor, who sells it to a store. Sandhill turns their crops directly into desirable products, and sells them directly to customers or to their distributor. Sorghum is worth much more to people as syrup than cane. With six people, Sandhill has enough labor for most of their products, and for the sorghum harvest they get help through a labor exchange with other communities.

"We didn't start out with the philosophy of selling 'value-added' products," says Stan Hildebrand, Sandhill's farm manager. "We were basically trying to figure out how to make a living on the land and stumbled into this niche."

The community makes money with other products, too. Their 50–70 beehives produce 4,000 pounds of raw honey a year. Processing, bottling, and marketing the honey themselves, they net \$8,000 annually.

Unlike neighboring soybean farmers who, at the mercy of agribiz markets sell their harvest to huge distributors, Sandhill turns the ubiquitous bean into packets of tempeh for health food stores. Community members taught themselves the delicate process—innoculating cracked, cooked beans with microorganisms, letting it ferment for the right length of time at the right temperature—which transforms it into a highly nutritious, Indonesian-style protein staple. Sandhill Farm Tempeh nets the community approximately \$1,500 a year. And lately, sales are increasing.

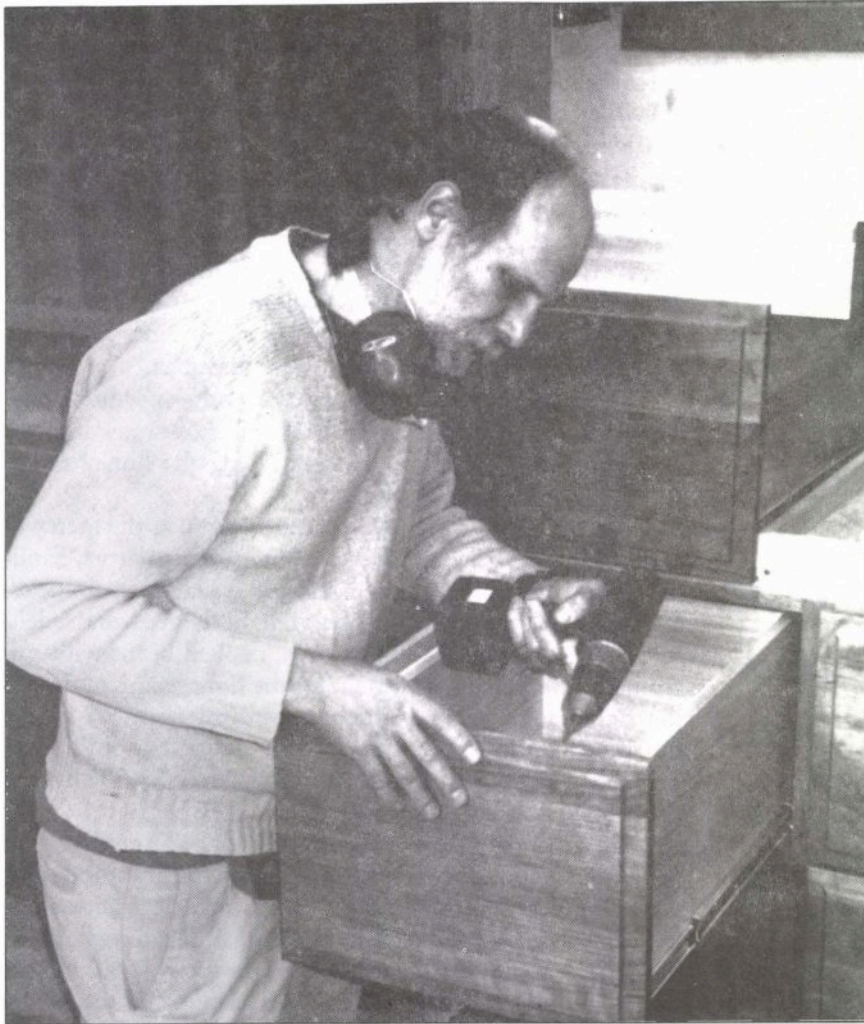
Other than the time spent on these labor-intensive processes, the community's expenses for growing and producing these products are low—gas for the tractor, electricity, a few items for tempeh production, and bottles. Sorghum cooking fuel is free: they have plentiful wood in their woodlots. For soil amendments they use Biodynamic preparations, under \$20 a year.

Theirs is also not a massive operation. While Sandhill has 135 acres of rolling fields and woods, only 15 are kept in annual agriculture. Sorghum takes just five acres; soybeans, one acre. They grow mustard on a quarter acre: prepared mustard nets \$1,200 a year. They grow garlic on 1/6th of an acre: garlic bulbs and garlic puree nets \$800 a year. And they grow horseradish on just 1/10th an acre: prepared horseradish nets \$1,000 a year. This is a small scale, human scale ... some might say "community scale" business.

It works because they have willing hands, shared resources, relatively low farming expenses, and a willingness to find markets for their products.

"For a long time we fought the marketing aspect of the business," says Stan. "We wanted to grow food for people, but we didn't want to have to sell anything. But as we learned how to market our products we discovered that it was fun. People *like* buying directly from the farmer. They enjoy knowing the people who made it. It puts the human component back into agriculture."

Is there something the rest of us can learn from this? "Value-added" may be just the ticket for some rural communities that might grow—and process and market—products which are wholesome, sustainable ... and profitable. Ω



Heartwood Design has earned a reputation for producing beautiful, high-end, custom work. Doug Hedstrom finishes a file drawer.

Founded in 1974, Shannon Farm is a 520-acre community located at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia. Members earn a living in a variety of ways (half of them work outside the community), including teaching, health care, computer programming, food service, management, insurance, and woodworking.

ANY FRIDAY, 4:30 P.M. MACHINES are silent. Tools are put in their places. Sawdust is swept into piles and unfinished work is neatly arranged for Monday's attention. It's clean-up time at Heartwood Design. The partner-owners and employees of the woodworking collective at Shannon Farm community hurry to get everything in shape so the weekly happy hour can begin.

The closeness and conviviality of this hard-working crew finds expression throughout the week, but the end-of-the-week "kick back" time has become a regular event of fellowship. Beer comes out of the fridge, a guitar provides melodic background for relaxed conversation, gossip, and jokes. Playing together is as satisfying as working together.

The Shannon Farm community was three years old when Heartwood was founded in 1977. The community, struggling to meet payments on its 500 acres, was in no position to take on additional financial commitments or further risk. In Shannon's economy, members were responsible for their own livelihood. For most, that meant unwelcome commutes to jobs in nearby cities. The prospect of walking to work and spending nine-to-five in their own foothills of Virginia's Blue Ridge mountains seemed like an impossible dream.

That is, until Heartwood Design was born. The vision of a few woodworking enthusiasts turned into reality when new community members moved in with a truckload of tools. Families and friends came up with the money to build the shop, and the group solidified during a year of working together on construction, planning, and incorporation. The structure was simple: equal pay, equal risk, equal responsibility. Any community member was welcome to join. The only criteria was a wish to participate in the vision of crafting fine furniture in an atmosphere that supported learning new skills.

Profit Is Not a Dirty Word

by Julie Mazo

Shannon made land available at no cost to the fledgling business. In return, Heartwood gave Shannon members free access to its tools and expertise and arranged for low-cost building materials. In a community of owner-built houses, this barter arrangement has served both parties well for 19 years.

There is one hitch, however. If the Heartwood partners ever want to divest themselves of their business, they would have only their tools and the company's reputation to sell. The market for the compound of industrial buildings on community property would be restricted to Shannon members, as the land under the buildings belongs to Shannon.

IN THE EARLY YEARS, MANY OF THE WOMEN AND MEN who chose to live in community were attracted by Heartwood's earnest idealism. There was no hiring process; the door was wide open. For most of these novice woodworkers, however, the open door became a revolving door. At one point in time, as many as 11 community members were partners, and, during its 19-year history, more than 25 Shannonomies have worked at Heartwood at different times.

Practical drawbacks to the collective's egalitarian ideals began to show up as the business grew. People had varying levels of commitment and devoted unequal hours to the business, while everyone had an equal voice in making all decisions. During the long hours spent discussing issues critical to survival in the marketplace, reaching consensus was onerous.

This worked itself out over time. Some people, needing more income to support growing families, left for other occupations. Others became disenchanted with the hard realities of a wood-working operation. By 1984, natural selection had left Heartwood with a core of five partner/owners dedicated to learning and practicing the skills that would grow the business. This was the point at which Heartwood became an employer for the first time, hiring Shannon members and friends who wanted a paycheck without the responsibilities of partnership.



GEORGE KOZENY

The business has become a solid operation with four worker/partners and seven employees. Jenny Upton and George Krieger review a job order.

By supporting Larry in finding a niche that fit him, Heartwood unwittingly created a means to save itself financially.

Another milestone was reached in 1984. For seven years Heartwood had turned its collective hand to whatever jobs came its way. Members hoped that enthusiasm and goodwill would keep the business going as workers struggled with tasks they hadn't mastered. It didn't work. Heartwood was broke and in debt. In desperation the partners took a long, hard look at themselves and at the marketplace.

At the end of an anguished process they reached the astonishing conclusion that profit is not a dirty word.

"We'll figure out what we can and can't do profitably, and concentrate our efforts on making the business viable," the partners agreed.

This is easier to talk about today than it was to live through. Initially they feared that their new goal of profitability would require a sacrifice of their ideals, that fine handwork and investing as much time as necessary in learning new skills would go by the board.

Finally, the group became more comfortable in its commitment to what they called "responsible capitalism," a businesslike approach that does not compromise quality of product or of management.

"If we can't make it happen this way, we'll walk away knowing we tried," decided the partners.

And the experiment began. Sanding sets of children's blocks was boring and tedious, but brought in badly needed income. Ordering cabinet doors from factories was cheaper than handcrafting their own. Careful analysis of jobs revealed what could be subbed-out for greater efficiency, and what they should do in-house.

Until that time, "Who absolutely needs to get paid this week?" had been the question that determined Heartwood's payroll. A new incentive system was implemented whereby



Heartwood president and shop manager Jenny Upton checks a measurement.

people got paid according to how much profit the job brought in.

"With this direct feedback," remembered the partners with some amusement, "things got efficient real quick!"

Inexperienced members were no longer allowed to butcher quantities of fine wood in the process of learning how to turn handmade furniture legs on a lathe. For the first time, Heartwood said "no" to jobs it could not do well enough and quickly enough to make a profit. The focus gradually turned to residential cabinetry and built-ins. Stability didn't arrive overnight. A line chart of Heartwood's finances would be jagged rather than a smooth, upward curve, and periods of insecurity still haunt the partners from time to time.

Larry Stopper, one of the founding members, helped guide Heartwood through the transition, and he remains a partner today. Larry had been among those with more woodworking interest than skill. In accord with the early value of inclusivity and finding a role for everyone who wanted to be there, Larry experimented with task after task, proving to himself and his colleagues that the shop wasn't the right place for him. As a result, Heartwood's innovative, ecologically sound solar wood-drying kiln was born.

"It started as a seat-of-the-pants operation," Larry admits. "I read everything in print and studied other lumber kilns, but people were using them to dry firewood, not fine lumber. My first goal was to produce enough for Heartwood's needs. As I began to understand what I was doing, the kiln started to turn out a surplus. All of a sudden I had to develop a market."

This "too-slow" shopworker became a skilled salesman whose success brought in profit that carried the rest of the

Heartwood operation during the hard transition years. By encouraging and supporting Larry in finding a niche that fit him, Heartwood unwittingly created a means to save itself financially.

Tim Rowe, a partner for 18 years, is generally considered to be the worker/owner with the highest level of woodworking and design skill. His knowledge is expressed in a warm, personable way that attracts customers who sometimes become friends. It's not unusual for Tim to put in 12- and 15-hour-days to get a job done. His slower-to-get-started partners throw affectionate insults his way when he comes to work whistling, cheery, and joking the next morning.

Patrick Hughey-Commers' entrance onto the Heartwood scene in 1987 marked another milestone for the ever-adaptable business. A friend, but not a member of the Shannon Farm community, his prospective partnership was the only one ever brought to Shannon's Monthly Meeting for community approval.

"There have been times I felt like an outsider," the soft-spoken financial manager and job overseer admits, "but Heartwood has become my five-day-a-week community. And I feel very connected to Shannon, too. Many non-members attended Shannon's party to celebrate the burning of its mortgage," Patrick reminisces. "I was startled to realize, though, that I was the only non-member in the dancing circle around the bonfire. It had just felt right for me to join in."

Jenny Upton, one of the Shannon women who felt drawn to the non-traditional field of woodworking, has been a partner for 15 years. "I didn't want society to tell me what I should be doing," she remembered. "I wanted to discover for myself what I could do and do well. Heartwood gave me the time and space and support to learn woodworking and to learn about myself."

In the beginning, Jenny worked on wooden puzzles, spaghetti measurers, and other simple craft items. At times she felt she wasn't carrying her share of the struggling company's load. Many days ended in discouragement, with Jenny telling her partners, "I think I should quit. I'm just not good enough." Today her male colleagues take pride in introducing customers to the petite, dimpled blonde. "This is Heartwood's president. She's in charge of your job."

Jenny's partners value the feminine perspective she brings to the workplace and to the group dynamics. What she may lack in brawn and finely honed skills is more than balanced by the administrative ability she brings to her role of shop manager. Through the years, Jenny could always be counted on to do what needed doing, however unexciting it may have been. Although her gender sometimes leads to an occasional awkward moment with sub-contractor crews at a busy work site, Jenny has learned to hold her own.

While Heartwood Design Inc. is not a community business, it is a business deeply involved with its community. Not a day goes by without visits from Shannon members. They come to borrow tools, to collect sawdust for garden mulch, to pick up a UPS shipment (Heartwood's office is the drop-off site for packages), to ask about repairing a broken chair, or

simply to enjoy the rich woody smells in the shop while admiring work in progress. Shannon issues are debated as cabinets are assembled, and Shannon news moves swiftly along the grapevine that winds through Heartwood. The integration between the two entities makes it hard sometimes to know where community life ends and business begins.

Despite the shift from its egalitarian beginnings with everyone a worker-owner, attitudes and atmosphere at Heartwood continue to display a strong collective spirit. In fact, some ironies have accompanied the transition. "I sure don't feel like a boss," says Tim, "when I have to put in extra-long hours because none of our employees want to work overtime that week. I'd like the power to tell people whose salaries we pay: this needs to be done and I need you to do it."

The partners perceive themselves as having more responsibility than those they hire, rather than more authority. Collaborative consultation is the tone, and top-down language is foreign. Owner-workers give themselves the same benefits they give employees. And often the bosses take home smaller paychecks than a valued employee who has given years of service to the business.

Regular meetings are interspersed throughout the work week: sales meetings, scheduling meetings, and staff meetings. Partners meet frequently to evaluate how things are going in general. They care deeply about one another and about the successful operation into which they have poured so much of themselves. How they do business is as important for them as the bottom line.

Consensus has always been the way Heartwood makes decisions, and this is considerably easier today than it used to be. Part of the reason is numbers: four people can come to agreement more readily than a larger group. Equally significant are the many years of shared experience. Strong bonds of respect and fellowship connect the partners and help them work together. When personal goals are not in harmony, these can be resolved for the sake of keeping the business going.

Looking to the future, Patrick says, "We're becoming even smarter, more efficient, more conscious of sales quotas, overhead ratio, and the profitability of each job we take on." Following its tradition of adaptability, Heartwood is currently contemplating a full-time salesperson to knock on builders' doors, and experimenting with TV and radio advertising.

Heartwood has done more than just

survive for 19 years. Founded by idealists who wanted to work wood with their hands, and managed by people with no business training or experience, it has successfully evolved into a solid operation that provides a stable livelihood to its four worker/owners and seven full-time, part-time, and occasional employees. Heartwood has earned a stellar reputation in the marketplace for producing beautiful, high-end, custom work on time for commercial and residential customers. Integrity and respect are evident in its products and its relationships, not least of all with its community of Shannon Farm. Ω

Julie Mazo, a member of Shannon Farm Community since 1989, enjoys exploring the multifaceted aspects of community life in writing as well as in day-to-day experiencing. She has contributed to previous FIC publications, and communities use her services as mediator and facilitator of problem-solving. Julie also provides training in the Formal Consensus process.





'I Own Isadora's Restaurant'

Can innovative community members generate incomes for themselves AND benefit the greater community?

by Jan Bulman

Community Alternatives Society is an egalitarian community of 45 adults and children, whose members live in a large co-op building in Vancouver, Canada, and on the community's 10-acre farm an hour away.

WARM, FRAGRANT WHOLE-GRAIN MUFFINS. Crisp, pungent salads made from wild greens. Nonprofits benefitting farmers and cityfolk. A wildly popular, "patron-funded" natural foods restaurant.

Such innovative products and services have provided many jobs for community members over the last 19 years. Of course, we've had good things going for us:

- We attracted bright, energetic, creative, risk-takers—people who are unafraid to try new approaches.
- We are organized as a nonprofit, and so attract funds from government agencies and philanthropic organizations. I can hardly think of any of our projects that didn't begin with a start-up grant of some sort.
- We learned how to write grants.
- We *never* give up. Persistence pays off!

Isadora's ... A Gift to the City

For example, all of our members are interested in food (past the obvious need to consume it!), and many folks secretly have a yen to try their hand at running a restaurant. Anyone can learn to do that, can't they? And it would be nice to have a small family-style place where some of us had jobs, and where our teenagers could get part-time work. And more importantly, we wanted to create a community-building project for the larger Vancouver area.

As luck would have it, in the early '80s the Canadian government wanted to develop a particular waterfront area of Vancouver as a visitor destination, with a family-style restaurant. They approached an alternate school that ran a small cafe, "Theodora's," that trained unemployed youth in restaurant skills, and asked if the staff was interested in creating this new restaurant. The Theodora's people felt overwhelmed by the project and called us in. Two of our members ended up working almost full time for the next two years, along with several others of us, including myself, and some from Theodora's. We began to raise funds, find the site, hire the

designers and contractors, and one of our members even worked on the construction of the 120-seat restaurant. We assumed some of us would eventually work there as cooks, waiters, and managers once it opened.

Our community loaned the project \$6,000. The federal agency also gave us a start-up grant of \$80,000. But our best capitalization plan was to sell shares for \$100 each, with a button that said, "I own Isadora's Restaurant!" For a \$100 investment, the shareholder would receive \$25 worth of complimentary meals each year that they left their money in. Fourteen-hundred people responded—this wild idea netted us \$140,000. We then had enough financial clout to secure an additional \$120,000 in bank loans. We found the ideal restaurant site in the targeted area, hired an architect, and bought all the stoves, refrigerators, tables, chairs, and so forth. In May 1985 we opened the doors to Isadora's Restaurant.

One of our star members became the business manager, but the family-style, natural foods co-op restaurant was so popular its first summer that none of the rest of us qualified as the professional chefs and waiters that the business required! We were good at creating plans and raising funds, but at this point the rest of us withdrew. We needed a way to financially reimburse those of us who had worked so hard to get the business going. After each worker had determined the number of hours he or she had contributed to the project, we asked the new restaurant management to grant us a lump-sum reimbursement to be added to the business debt. This sum was to be paid back over a five-year period, prorated according to the number of hours each person had worked over the years. Some of us, including myself, elected to take our payback funds partly in cash and partly in additional "I own Isadora's" shares, and over the years we ate some of the debt owed us. (It was delicious!)

While we only managed to create one permanent jobs for ourselves, we certainly met our larger goal. People in the greater Vancouver community know Isadora's Restaurant well, and flock to it for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. "You know," many of the shareholders tell the waiters proudly, "I helped *build* this place."

Promoting "Organically Grown"

Since the early '80s, several community members have actively promoted and educated people about organic food, and helped create the British Columbia Association for Regenerative Agriculture (BCARA). Through helping initiate and chairing this organization our members have been crucial in the process of working with the B.C. government to license organic farms, thereby helping consumers to identify produce that is truly organic. (Our organic farm in the Fraser Valley was the second licensed in the lower mainland.)

Two other members, also organic food activists, created a nonprofit organization, Farm Folk/City Folk, that has generated a high profile locally. Through large conferences, workshops, publishing, and lobbying efforts, Farm Folk/City Folk helps city people learn where their food comes from and gives rural growers a voice for their concerns. The organization publicizes Community Supported Agriculture, a well-known

farmer-to-householder, grower-to-buyer system that our farm participates in. Our community's involvement with BCARA and Farm Folk/City Folk has not garnered us many financial rewards but has been "good work" in the world.

Our (Wild!) Salad Days

About 11 years ago our community applied for a federal employment research grant. Six people, including four of our community members (who titled the application, "How to Make a Living on a Ten-Acre Farm"), researched everything from egg production and raising rabbits to growing edible weeds. The edible weed, or "wild salad" concept seemed to have significant merit. Just about then the 1986 World's Fair came to Vancouver. The organization sponsoring the Canadian Northern Pavilion heard about our research and, for their pavilion restaurant, ordered all the wild salad we could produce. Our wild salad was an instant success, with rave reviews in the local media.

The initial four community members who researched wild edible plants organized as a partnership called The Glorious Garnish and Seasonal Salad Company. The Glorious Garnish company is a separate entity from the community itself; however, it leases a portion of the community's farm land. The four members have a carefully worked-out contract, updated yearly, that stipulates how much they must pay the community annually for land lease, utilities, greenhouse, and office space. Besides these fees, the four buy their own seeds, soil amendments, refrigerated truck, and other supplies. They keep all the profits.

The benefit to the community as a whole is that the farm has never been in better shape. The land is well stewarded and the soil is in excellent condition. A disadvantage is that our farm is now a busy work site, and community members who live in the city sometimes feel like intruders when they visit. (We'd like to know how other urban/rural communities manage this dynamic.)

Eat Muffins, Help the Handicapped

The Muffin Works business came about because one of our members had a mentally handicapped son who had just finished high school. The member asked if our community could help her set up a business that would employ her son and several other mentally handicapped people. At that time a local government project offered \$10,000 grants for feasibility studies that showed how proposed businesses might be viable over time and benefit the local economy. Our community proposed a coffee shop and muffin delivery business that would employ mentally handicapped people. We got the grant, and the ensuing feasibility study showed that this *would* be a viable business. This fact helped us get another, larger grant to subsidize the operation the first three years. Beginning in 1983, we operated the "Muffin Works" as a wholly owned subsidiary of our nonprofit, the Community Alternatives Society.

Although the muffin business never really made much profit, it paid the salaries of three community members—the retail store manager, the young adult son, and myself, as business manager—as well as three other mentally handicapped young adults and a professional baker. However, the Muffin Works met our original

goal—to provide employment with dignity and a decent wage for handicapped young people. (One of the employees with a mental handicap was better than any of us at customer service. Her “social IQ” was high—she remembered every customer’s name and provided friendly, personal service.)

Several years ago we tried to create a second store at a new location, but our new site was unsuccessful—our employees, who worked at a slower pace than most people, were unable to meet the service demands at the new site. Also, there was always the fear among community members that the Muffin Works business, with its special needs as an employer of people with handicaps, might place the community at financial risk. While this never happened, our profit was always marginal and the business didn’t benefit us financially, other than providing some jobs and salaries. However, the muffin business certainly made a tremendous difference in the lives of several young people. The community member’s son, for example, was transformed from a boy who didn’t leave the house and watched TV all day to a young man with his own apartment,

his own job, and his own independent life. Just last year we gave all of the assets of the business to a new nonprofit organization, because the three of us most involved had become burned out or went on to other things.

CLOSER TO HOME, WE HIRE COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO do jobs for the community itself when we can, such as painting, maintaining the building, bookkeeping, administering the dental plan, or babysitting for community meetings and events. No one works full time for the community. We have three categories: skilled labour (paying members \$25 an hour); semi-skilled (\$18); and unskilled (\$12). At our best, we work out clear policies around paid community work. At our worst, we squabble about it in meetings until we reach consensus.

The community has helped several of our members in the job market in other ways. For instance, we put up the collateral for loans that members were unable to qualify for singly, which enabled our computer collective to purchase excellent computers and modems. This helped members with computer skills get

access to equipment they needed for employment. We designated a room in our community building for them as well. We also designated a room as studio space for a similar video collective, and that enabled one member to produce a videotape for a master’s degree.

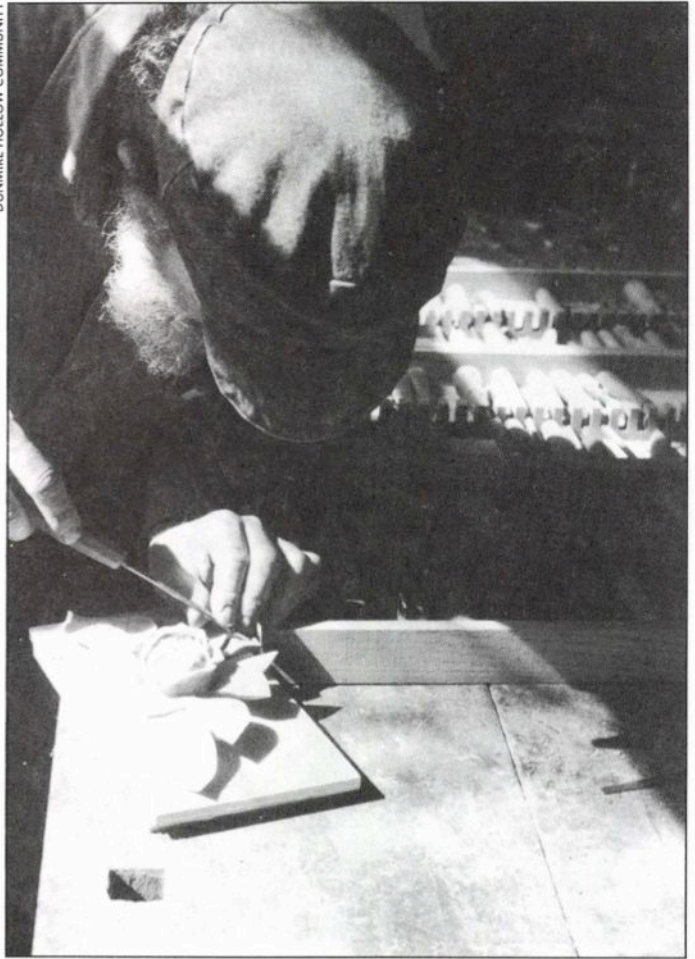
Our next creative endeavour will most likely be envisioning a new role for the farm. The Glorious Garnish business has been hard hit by the new free trade agreement. Cheaper produce coming up from the States, where there is a longer growing season, has cut into the company’s formerly profitable market. We are therefore considering an organic farm demonstration site and workshop centre, offering herb walks, classes on permaculture design and organic gardening, and even a small retreat space. Our wide network of past resident members, and the many groups and organizations we’ve worked with over the years could all be assets in this new project. We’re actively seeking information from others about this kind of venture. And once again, we’ll use our business and grant-writing skills ... and that unfailing asset, persistence. Ω

Jan Bulman has lived in the Community Alternatives Society community since 1976. She has worked as a social worker, researcher, executive director of a children’s agency, and in her community’s Muffin Works and video businesses.

Note: we preserve the spelling of our Commonwealth authors.



DUNMIRE HOLLOW COMMUNITY



Investing in Our Lives

Work & Commitment in Two Communities

by Harvey Baker

The woodworking business often requires intense concentration, and the geometric, spatial, and numerical abilities of a mathematician.

TURN OFF THE TENNESSEE BACK ROAD, ONTO THE narrow gravel lane. Go through the paper company clear-cut (sigh) into the maturing southern hardwood forest. Burst out into the sunny clearing of rolling meadows, wildflowers, fragrant orchards, and lush gardens. Go down the hill, around the curve, to a half-buried building hidden behind stacks of rough lumber and piles of shavings. Open the faded blue double doors; smell the sharp tang of freshly cut wood. Listen to the shrill buzz of a table saw, the loud roar of a monster planer, or possibly the quiet swish of a sharp hand plane. Feel the crunch of curled wood chips underfoot. Welcome to Dunmire Hollow Woodshop.

The woodshop is my second home. It's where I make a living at Dunmire Hollow Community. My partner David and I own this custom woodworking business, having created it together over the last 20 years. He and I make everything from mop-bucket rollers to ornate hand-carved church furniture. I love my work, and it makes me an honest living. These days, that counts for a lot.

This morning I'm rubbing out the finish on a custom cherry

table. As I work, I muse on the meaning of my life, why I'm here doing this somewhat tedious and conceptually simple task, why I'm still living in this community after more than 20 years. What binds me to this place, this work, these people?

As the beauty of the curly cherry grain becomes more visible, and the luster deepens, I reflect on why I'm not willing or able to turn over even this seemingly menial work to an employee or apprentice. Beyond the personal satisfaction of creating such beauty, it is clear to me that the quality of the finished product is determined by the multitudinous small steps of the process, from selecting just the right boards in the stack outside the door to polishing the wax on the polished finish on the polished wood. As with running the business as a whole, each step of the creation process needs to be infused with the vision, experience, skill, attention, and commitment of an owner, not a hired employee or apprentice. For this reason, and because of the mounds of government paperwork that would be required, my partner David and I have an agreement never to hire an employee. Our home industry has no entry-level positions.



MARTHA LOBICH

East Wind offers housing and jobs for new members. Here Juli cuts a sole in East Wind's sandal shop.

Unfortunately for potential new members, this is true of Dunmire Hollow Community as a whole. Each of our five families is economically independent and is responsible for generating enough income for its needs (and maybe its wants). Each of us pays modest monthly dues for community maintenance, improvements, and taxes. Our economic base is diversified and dispersed—most members work away from the Hollow at a variety of jobs: teaching, small engine repair and sales, nursing, doctoring, construction, sewing, and directing a small nonprofit. Our woodworking shop and my wife Barbara's environmental education consulting business are the only businesses located in the community. Though surviving economically remains a struggle even for some established residents, at least we've all made it over that initial hump.

Work availability is far more challenging for a newcomer to Dunmire Hollow. There are no production jobs in the Hollow, and the low-skilled jobs outside the community tend to go to local residents through friendship and kinship. Though living costs are low, pay scales are also low. There is little uncommitted discretionary income in the area available for a new business to siphon off. The scarcity of entry level jobs adversely affects our community's ability to attract and

keep new members. Fortunately, those folks who do get established tend to stay around.

The work situation can be quite different at other communities. One example is East Wind, a community of about 60 people in southern Missouri that I've enjoyed visiting several times. Although they're located in an equally poor rural area (and like us, they're 23 years old), they have plenty of entry level work for new members. Their economic system is very different from ours; they operate with a common treasury, providing all the life essentials to their members and paying each a small monthly allowance for discretionary spending. In return, each community member is expected to work between 45 and 50 hours per week for the community. Income is produced primarily by three on-site community businesses: hammock weaving, sandal making, and producing and selling nut butters (see "Boss? What Boss?," p. 30). These production-oriented businesses allow new members and visitors to go right to work after a short training period; previous job experience is relatively unimportant. The businesses sell wholesale to a nationwide market and are not affected by the weak local economy. And because East Wind has its own businesses, new members don't have to seek work in the limited local job market. East Wind's businesses make short-term integration of new members easier for them than our dispersed jobs do for us at Dunmire Hollow.

I see the long-term consequences on membership retention of these economic choices as exactly opposite of their short-term effects. Five of Dunmire Hollow's founding members still live here, another resident was born here 22 years ago. The average duration of involvement with the community is 17 years. Although people sometimes leave our community because of economic factors, most leave for other reasons, such as family needs, the limited educational opportunities, cultural differences, the desire for a more urban lifestyle, or, in my shop partner David's case, to live with his new wife. Several former residents have returned after improving their job skills elsewhere, or after furthering their education with partial support from the community.

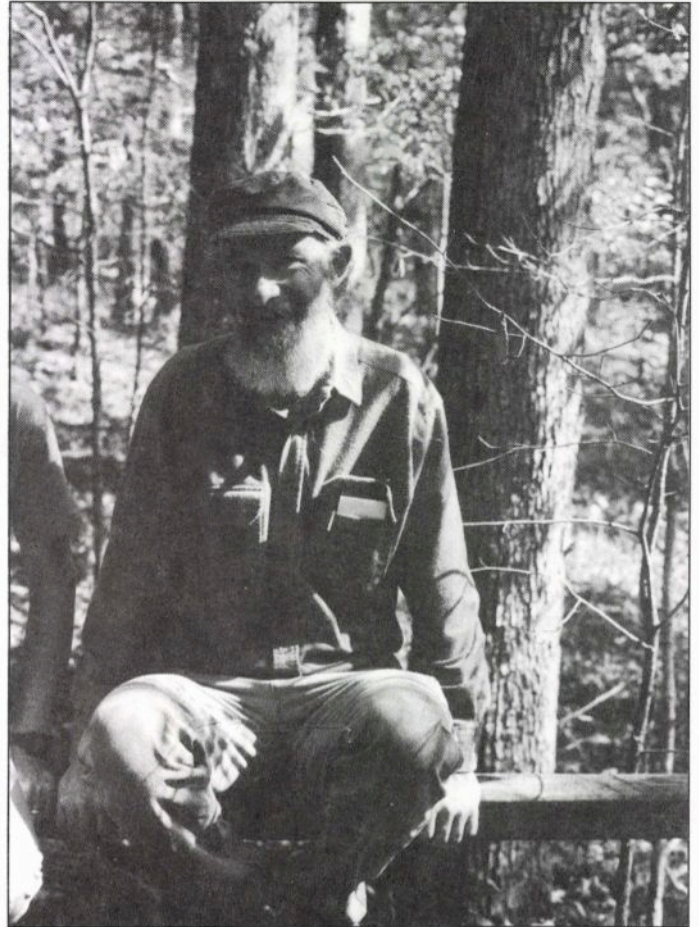
By committing their own money and energy to develop work opportunities, members here can pursue career paths of their own making, and take responsibility for success or failure. The community as a whole gives emotional and informational support, and sometimes a little financial support, but the responsibility rests with the individual. When members get established, the investment they've made and the appropriateness of their chosen work strengthen their connection and commitment to life here. I'm a perfect example of this. Our woodworking business uses more of my abilities than any other type of work I can imagine—the geometric, spatial, and numerical abilities of the mathematician I once was; the design creativity of an artist; the customer skills of a people person; the motor skills developed as a kid by making things large and small; the muscles of my body that cry out for use if I sit at a desk too long.

In contrast, the average length of membership at East Wind is much shorter. For example, when I first visited in 1987, the

average member stayed three years; the median stay was two years; and the longest stay was nine years. I see one factor in this higher turnover being the limited work options at East Wind. The alternatives to staying in entry-level production work are to move into managing one of their three businesses, or to move into the community's internal economy: agriculture, construction and maintenance, childcare, or various aspects of domestic work. For some of the folks at East Wind, the mix of work opportunities provides satisfaction and variety not easily found outside the community environment. For a significant number of residents, the existing options only work for a while; if a member wants to do a particular type of work not already in the mix, the community may not be interested in expanding into that arena.

As I enjoy the warmth of the sun streaming through the large south windows of the shop, I realize that a business like ours would almost certainly not have come into existence at a community like East Wind. For a large income-sharing community with considerable membership turnover, it is unwise to invest heavily in any business that relies for its success on the presence of one or two individuals, when they could be gone next week or next year. Expensive equipment would be underutilized, and investment in human skills could bring no return to the community. David and I as individuals took a risk in setting up a new business (any new business is risky), but it was our own choice, and we were the ones who would benefit or lose. If we wanted to eat rice and beans and peanut butter sandwiches for five years while we put every available dollar and hour into the woodshop, that was our choice, as long as we also met our community commitments. It's a lot harder for a whole community to make that kind of sacrifice so that one or a few members can have a fulfilling career. For David and me, and the others here who have developed supporting, creative work, it's hard to turn our backs on that personal investment. The connection is not just financial; it exists on an emotional level as well, for our work is our personal creation.

As I think of Barbara scripting a forestry exhibit at her computer in the house we built to fit us and the way we live, I realize that the two communities' housing styles reinforce



While Dunmire Hollow has temporary housing for newcomers, unlike East Wind, they provide no jobs. Author Harvey Baker takes a break in the woods outside his shop.

What binds me to this place, this work, these people?

.....

the effects of their work structures. Each family here is responsible for its own housing: residents build, buy, restore, or share housing as they wish and are able. As with work, there is an initial investment to get past that can be hard for newcomers, but the result can be satisfying and far more appropriate to one's life than typical U.S. housing. At East Wind, on the other hand, the community provides housing, just as it provides jobs. Folks mostly have their own rooms in dormitory-

like buildings. The room is generic; it existed when they came, and it will exist when they leave. There is no personal investment by the individual to create it.

Joe, East Wind's Nut Butters manager in 1992, said that for him, the variety of work options at East Wind worked well. His guess as to why members stay longer at Dunmire Hollow is that they invest far more of themselves, both financially and emotionally. "The only investment people have in East Wind is 'sweat equity,' and not as much sweat equity as they'd have to invest living elsewhere," he noted. "Also, there are no extra material rewards for staying longer, nor is there much of a sense of having worked for some great goal or ideal."

The phone rings, breaking into my reverie. It's my neighbor Nancy. She's bringing pasta with pesto sauce to our weekly potluck supper tonight. We'll be bringing steamed butternut squash from our garden. It stores all winter in the woodshop's even temperature, maintained by the earth that surrounds its north and west walls. After I hang up, I muse on the long-term friendships I have here. Dunmire Hollow operates by consensus, which builds trust and connection. We have a fundamental agreement to try to work out our conflicts with

each other. Our friendships deepen in ways that require time and a variety of experiences together. We enjoy the good times together, and use our skills to get over the occasional interpersonal bumps. While this aspect of life here binds me to this community it can be a struggle for a newcomer. Coming into a group with so much history can be intimidating; trusting in conflict resolution and consensus can be difficult to the uninitiated.

East Wind uses voting at their meetings, with which everyone in this country is familiar. It requires no leap of faith from newcomers, and no training period. I was impressed watching the skilled facilitator navigate through the interpersonal land mines and abrasive factionalism (apparent even to this newcomer) to get business done. Yet, it was clear to me that the voting process can leave a residue of frustration and alienation that works negatively on people over the long run. (Yes, after living immersed in consensus for over 20 years, I admit to being a zealot.)

I puzzle over how Dunmire Hollow might provide easier integration of new members. We have existing temporary housing for newcomers to live in, so that they don't have to start building as soon as they arrive. But we might also open our lives to new people, using our long history together to offer inspiration and make them feel more at home. But that still leaves making a living. We have no existing production labor pool, no pre-existing business with orders for production and goods, and nobody wants to be a manager. In fact, we have none of the necessary components for a production business except our woodshop (which we didn't set up for production). In our early days a small construction company provided work for unskilled community members; however, that died in the recession of 1979–1992. The best we have been able to do for newcomers in recent years is to use our extensive contacts in the local business community to help them find work.

East Wind's challenge is no less daunting—how can it commit limited community resources to develop skills and facilities so a few members can have more fulfilling work? How can it develop a diversity in work and housing that better fits people's needs as individuals, and also create greater group cohesion through a less divisive meeting process?

Although it is challenging for Dunmire Hollow and East Wind to develop in ways that allow us to better attract and retain new members, I believe there are good examples of options to consider. Alpha Farm community in Oregon, for



Partner David Baker describes cabinet choices to customers. Both partners own this business; they will never have employees.

example, sent a member through architecture school in exchange for a commitment to remain in the community after finishing his degree. The Farm community in Tennessee, with 250 members, is large enough so that its own labor pool (including teenagers) supplies its businesses with employees of various skill levels. And newcomers in more affluent communities are sometimes able to get established by doing handyperson work for members who work outside the community. Home industries can grow organically, developing more skilled workers, and work for those

workers, while still retaining entry-level labor needs. Meeting processes, attitudes, and goals can be altered gradually over time. For example, the Miccosukee Land Co-op, after 20 years of using voting in their meetings, has moved away from the divisiveness of parliamentary procedure toward an agreement-seeking process that often leaves the final vote a mere formality.

Over time communities develop definite directions. Their traditions, their composition of members, and their weaknesses can make changing directions more difficult, even when both the weaknesses of the current system and the benefits of changing that system become obvious. To attract and keep members—and to keep them happy—I think it's wise to include both basic entry-level options *and* a considerable diversity of opportunities for long term members to grow into.

As I consider the two communities, East Wind's and Dunmire Hollow's early decisions about jobs, housing, and meeting process, have had profound consequences for each community in how well they attract and keep members. It's becoming clear to me that communities ought to think about these matters ahead of time!

After I bask a few moments in the table's finished glow, I head out the blue doors, stop by the garden whose soil fertility I've invested in for 20 years, and pull some carrots and pick fresh greens for our luncheon salad. As I head across the meadow and into the woods to the house we built with the help of our friends here, I realize that my life in this community is like our double-dug raised bed garden: it seems like an awful lot of extra work at the beginning, but those roots sure do grow deep! Ω

Harvey Baker is a co-founder of Dunmire Hollow Community and a custom woodworker. He has been a board member of the Fellowship for Intentional Community since 1988, and is president of the Communal Studies Association.



Sunrise Ranch's successful retreat and conference business uses the community dining room, shared by community members and guests.

Making It On Our Own

by Bill Becker

MAJOR CHANGES HAVE COME TO THE SUNRISE Ranch community in the last four years—and that includes how many of us earn a living!

Things *look* pretty much the same. Our 360 acres of fields and pastures are nestled in a narrow valley flanked by curving red rimrock and a green, pine-covered ridge. Our physical infrastructure is substantial: over the decades we've built many homes and an apartment complex for members and guests. We have a back-up electric power generator, water treatment plant, a huge garden, a livestock and dairy operation, administrative and maintenance centers, a large dome auditorium, and a retreat center with a commercial kitchen and dining facilities. One of the older communities in the Rocky Mountain region, Sunrise was formed in 1945 with just seven members. It began and still serves as the headquarters for the International Emissary network, a non-sectarian spiritual community of friends around the world. Currently 107 people live here, ranging in age from six months to several in their late eighties.

Sunrise shares values similar to other communities: a sense of land stewardship and care that respects the rhythms of na-

ture, a strong desire to live and work together in harmonious relationship, and the acknowledgment of the divine source in each one. Living these values in practical daily relationship is a strong part of our intention.

Until about four years ago, our community was entirely supported by donations from our wide network. Virtually all residents worked on the site, dedicated to various Emissary programs: managing correspondence courses, teaching classes, sharing attunements (our healing modality), producing international conferences; or they supported the community itself: in agriculture, cooking, domestic service, maintenance, and so on. Many residents worked long, hard hours, motivated by the Emissary vision.

Friends and supporters around the world sent donations to Sunrise Ranch to enable us to do this work. Some of the donation income went to national and international programs, some to maintenance and supplies, some to support the residents themselves. Everyone received room, board, a medical allotment, and a monthly stipend for incidental expenses. This gave residents a sense of security and the understanding that, in working together, all would somehow be cared for. The

community generally did care for everyone's needs, and the resources were available to do that.

However, in 1988, with the death of Martin Exeter, the second spiritual leader of the Emissaries, it became clear that change was upon us! The revenue from donations steadily decreased, which compelled us to explore new ways of supporting our community and its residents, relying more on our own initiative. We found ourselves in another stage of growth. During this time, we also shifted from a fairly hierarchical model of management to a consensus-based governance with elected councils and rotating leadership. The transition to consensus decision making, as many know, is not without trials and tribulations, labors and weary moments. Rolling all these pieces together—becoming economically more self-sufficient while creating a whole new way of living and working together—was, and is, to say the least, challenging.

We encourage entrepreneurs in our midst.

While we were all increasingly aware that we couldn't support our programs and our members in the way we had before, and while some activities and job positions within the community ended (for example, we no longer ran as many Emissary programs, or saw the need for hosts to seat people in our dining room), we had no conscious intent to downsize. We did not ask anyone to leave, nor did we put subtle pressure on anyone to do so. Instead, we trusted that we would be guided in the right direction. Some people left, confused or unsettled by the changes. However, many people who left did so because it felt like the right timing, the right rhythm in their cycle, to go on to the next phase of their lives. We gave people all the assistance we could, often including many months of free or low-cost rent while they explored various options.

Now, about half the employable adults work outside the community and pay rent, and in most cases, board. Some work on site in their own cottage industries, and also pay their expenses. The rest of our members work for the community itself, in Emissary programs (such as sharing attunements or the International Emissary Youth Network), in maintaining the community, and in the community's retreat and conference center business, as kitchen staff, gardeners, maintenance people, hosts, financial managers, and domestic service workers. About 25 of our residents are retired elders, who work in varying levels of productivity.

We asked ourselves then, and continue to ask, "What is the appropriate number of people required to run Sunrise Ranch?" We've created managers and work teams who, working over time, are getting a more realistic grasp of how many person-hours it takes to run various areas. We are creating more cleanly defined boundaries and clearer pathways for accountability. We are becoming more professional.

Where before working outside the community and paying rent was not an option (for reasons often not clearly defined or understood), now working outside is encouraged, particularly as a means of assisting people in what is now recognized as a natural growth and transition cycle of change and maturity. Our values have changed in the sense that we explore and accept forms of expression that in the past would have been unacceptable (for example, working on "shadow side" issues and attending personal transformation workshops). But I think, in review, that our history shows this kind of value reassessment is to the good!

We encourage entrepreneurs in our midst. We support them in creating cottage industries with free or low-cost rent of facilities for the start-up months or through donated labor hours to help with new business ventures.

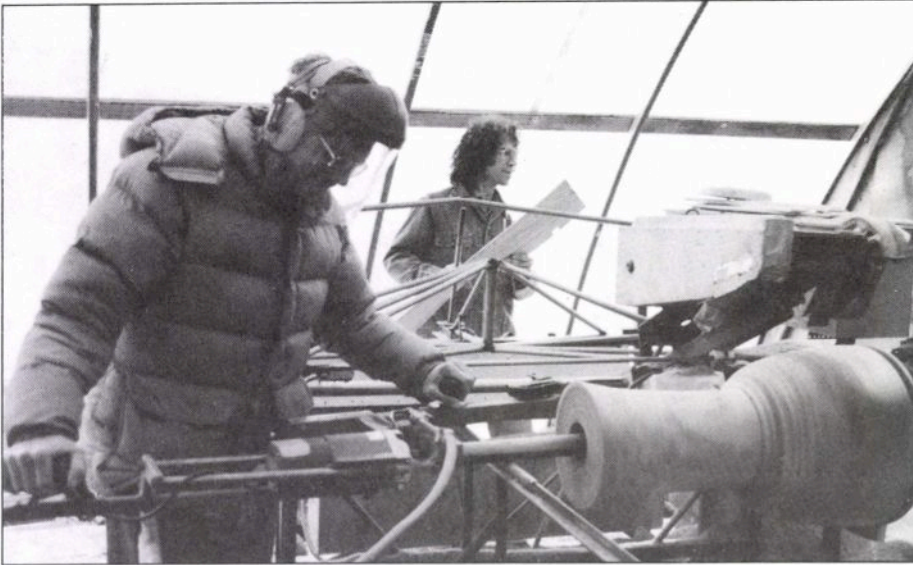
Let me introduce you to some of these community entrepreneurs.

Two of our residents created DC Drums, which makes beautiful African-style djembe drums. One partner, a former woodworker and finish carpenter, invented a machine that hollows out logs for these wooden drums. No trees are felled: the wood comes from windfalls of cottonwood and elm trees in city streets. Some musicians say DC Drums are the best djembe drums made. The new age musician Yanni has a DC Drum in the percussion section of his group.

Two other members, who ran the community's livestock, dairy, and farming operation, created a Community-Supported-Agriculture (CSA) business, where people from as far as 70 miles away buy shares in the garden and pick up their weekly supplies of organically grown vegetables. Sunrise Farm and CSA Garden is supported not only by its 40 shareholders, but by revenue from sales of the farm's fresh eggs and organic meat; and through the member-owned dairy co-op, organic goat and cows' milk; and by farm tours for schoolchildren. Our community helped this business get started in major ways, including granting a 10-year lease of the farm facilities, gifting the business with equipment and livestock, and placing a substantial order for meat and eggs the first year.

Two other members manage a distribution node of a long distance telephone service and rent office space from the community, handling telephone accounts for community members and others across the United States. Other members are creating network marketing businesses, selling a variety of health products or automotive additives. Some entrepreneurs are artists, making paintings, jewelry, or craft products, which they sell at galleries, craft fairs, or our own artists' guild shop. All these enterprises were born out of the enthusiasm and interest of the individuals involved.

In 1993, Sunrise Ranch started up its own retreat and conference business, utilizing facilities already on site and accommodating residential groups as large as 70 with meeting space for more than 400. This booming activity now provides nearly one-third of the annual operating revenue for the community. The business requires 10 to 12 Sunrise members, some part-time, who, like other community employees, receive room, board, and a stipend. So far all marketing for our con-



Bill Crosman routs out a djembe drum shell from the trunk of a windfall cottonwood tree. David Ward, background.

ference business has been by word of mouth, and we're almost always fully booked. All groups that use our facilities have some resonance with our own spiritual mission: for example, we have hosted Brugh Joy, Claudio Naranjo, Don Campbell, the Naropa Institute, and the Foundation for Community Encouragement, and workshops on the "Sovereign" and "Warrior" roles and other men's movement events. We're proud of our facilities, and proud of the fine people we've attracted to use them!

We are also supportive of the nearly 30 members who work outside Sunrise Ranch, many of whom use skills they previously provided for the community, in the building trades, as teachers, engineers, massage therapists, salespeople, computer consultants, and seminar leaders. Our local economy in this part of Colorado, while growing, is not laden with high-paying jobs. And because of the expenses of room and board (generally \$300 to \$700 a month, depending upon accommodations), becoming a rent-paying member does not generally work if the outside job pays minimum wage.

Some of our residents who still work for the community also work outside, part-time. This moonlighting is supported. It provides additional income to people living within the relatively modest means of income-sharing economics (most residents employed by the community receive a stipend of \$200 to \$300 a month, depending upon how long they've been here). Their part-time work also generates a wider connection with new friends.

These new ways of working have taken us into a new frame that has changed how many of us think about community. *Change* is now a more regularly accepted feature of our lives together.

We still work to find the balance between the numbers needed to sustain the large physical plant operation of our

community and those needed to assist in its financial support through paying rent. We are still trying to balance the staff hours needed to care for our retreat and workshop business with keeping a wholesome equilibrium in our lives—the significant feature that drew many of us into community in the first place. One solution has been to hire non-residents to assist where community help is not generally available. We don't have to do everything!

We have also wrestled with how we might care for the needs of our seniors in ways that honor their years of service to the community. A solution that looks promising is our new "senior co-op," in which seniors and several other longtime residents jointly decide how they will handle the changing needs of each elder, on a case-by-case basis.

In any case, economics—the generation of funds needed to do all that is

ours to do—is a topic not likely to shrink from a primary place in our considerations together. So far our story has no conclusion. If anything, we see more unknown and more transition ahead. We often use the metaphor that we're "in the whitewater"—the most dangerous, yet the most exciting, part of the river trip. We are in the midst of discussions on accountability (what *is* a full-time workload?), resident agreements (what are appropriate behavioral and social norms for our community?), and issues of managing our workload with the people we have. The jury is still out as to the extent of financial impact that rent-paying members will have on our overall revenue needs. Can we afford (socially and financially) to allow everyone who wants to pursue outside work and pay rent to do so? How will the community be cared for? Who will decide? And, the members who own their own businesses face the same difficulties that any beginning enterprise would face: so far we seem to be adapting to the challenge.

While our decision making now involves the participation of all concerned, we are not egalitarian in the sense that all personal assets of residents are contributed to the whole community, and so naturally, some members have more money, or earn more money, than others. Does that produce envy? Sometimes. But inherent in our living together is the view that each individual is responsible for his or her world and that any attitude that interferes with our clear relationship needs to be personally dealt with, not secretly blamed on anyone else. Our first 50 years were exciting and full of adventure. It will be interesting to see what the next 50 bring. Ω

Bill Becker has lived on Sunrise Ranch since 1984, and in the larger Emissary community since 1970, working in coordination and finance roles. He now manages the community's retreat and conference business.



KOMMUNE NIEDERKAUFUNGEN

Niederkaufungen members, who juggle more than finances, want to challenge assumptions of the existing economic structure.

Kommune Niederkaufungen

*Germany's largest secular
intentional community
challenges 'the system'
... and thrives!*

by Sven Borstelmann

RIGHT FROM THE START OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS had ambitious goals. Among other things, we wanted to prove that we could survive financially in a capitalist society without yielding to the seemingly unchangeable and sometimes barbaric rules of the system. We didn't want to create an unspoiled little island in the middle of our densely populated, industrialized country. Rather, we aimed at setting up collectively run businesses that produce for the market as well as for our community's needs.

The setup was, and still is, fairly simple. Members hand over all their assets to a trust, which owns the property, all businesses, and all means of production. The trust, which consists of all members, decides by consensus what to do with the money—where, and how much, to invest. It is not intended, nor is it possible, to privatize our businesses or property. All members' earnings go into one fund, out of which we pay all daily expenses. There are no fixed wages, member stipends, or personal allowances for pocket money. Instead, members take what they think they need out of the cash box in our office and write it down in a book. Individual expenses of more than about \$130 U.S., such as for buying a bicycle or stereo or taking a bigger vacation, must be

KOMMUNE NIEDERKAUFUNGEN



Niederkaufungen's construction company installs cellulose insulation, one of their specialties.

The 12 Businesses of Kommune Niederkaufungen

The 72 members of Kommune Niederkaufungen live in a large building complex in the small central German village of Kaufungen, near the city of Kassel. The community practices a shared economy, consensus decision making, shared childcare, and an ecological approach to work and lifestyle. Most of its 12 community-owned businesses, or "work areas," grew out of goods or services members already provided for the community. These include:

- Carpentry shop
- Seminar center
- Construction company
- Catering business
- Organic vegetable business
- Cattle operation
- Leather workshop
- Layout and printing business
- Architect's office
- Kindergarten and childcare center
- Metal-work shop
- Administration/consulting business

announced beforehand, so members have a chance to question the expense or give advice about the purchase. This system has worked for more than 10 years (of course, not without conflicts).

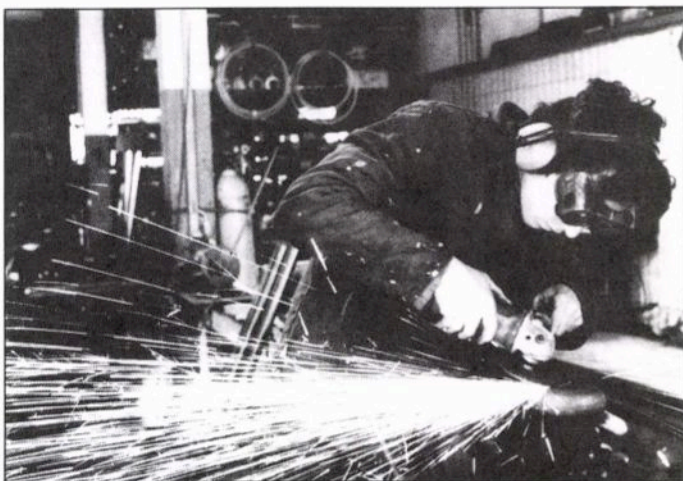
We were somewhat lucky when we started our community. Real estate prices and interest rates were low in the mid-'80s. The founding members were relatively well off, and a supportive network of friends and relatives provided loans and donations. It turned out that our four-year forming period (the time before we actually started), was important: not only did we manage to save some money, which gave us a good start, but some members had already started businesses. Thus we gained experience in various areas—finances, legal structures, administration, group dynamics, and several professions—before we moved in together. We also had many ideological discussions during that time and wrote our "Paper of Maxims," so the basics were set. In a word, we didn't have to start from scratch.

We bought a four-acre parcel with an existing building complex: the old, run-down manor house and companion buildings in the village of Kaufungen. A great deal of work had to be done on the buildings, and such work continues

today. The condition of the buildings has caused a conflict that has been with us through the years—how much labor should be spent on internal needs, and how much on making money? At the start the bias was clear: Should we have drafty windows or nothing to eat? Businesses had to get started!

An already-existing construction company was the first work area to earn money, soon followed by a carpentry workshop. As the community grew in numbers new work areas were developed and professionalized. For example, within a few years the community's childcare group turned into a public kindergarten. Our garden crew set up an organic vegetable business, selling produce twice a week from our yard and on Saturday mornings in the regional market fair. Our internal "education group" renovated the old farmhouse and turned it into a seminar center in which we present workshops on ecological and community issues. We also rent it out to other groups. The kitchen crew, which started out cooking for the community, is now a professional catering service, providing seminar guests with delicious wholesome meals and creating buffets for local celebrations.

While our 12 businesses cover quite a range, we haven't



KOMMUNE NIEDERKAUFUNGEN

TOP: Another construction speciality is rainwater roof catchment systems. BOTTOM: In the metalwork shop. "Our work is related to needs, not luxury goods."

run out of ideas about how and in which directions to expand. Our work is related to human "needs" rather than to "wants"; we don't wish to produce luxury goods.

The official connection between the community and each of its businesses or work areas is complex and varies according to the legal set-up of each. However, our general guidelines are:

- Major investments need an okay in the weekly community meeting.
- Decisions about work hours, vacations, internal specialization, what to charge, ecological standards, and so on, are normally left up to each work area.
- Each work area presents a yearly account in the community meeting, giving other members the formal opportunity to ask questions, criticize, or praise. (Of course, informally we constantly give each other feedback at mealtimes or whenever we get the chance.)
- We have no non-community employees. (We don't want bosses and we don't want to be bosses.)

- All profits go into community funds. We decide how to spend them in community meetings.
- Each member works in one, and only one, work area.

As you can see, we have no required number of hours to work, and no "labor credit" system to keep track of hours worked. This is because we simply cannot agree on a definition of "work," and because many of us don't see the point in obliging all people to "work" for exactly the same amount of time. And, to some extent, we prefer the advantages of our 12-business "division of labor" (effective production, equality within a work area), to a system of frequently changing our work activities. Both issues have been, and will probably continue to be, the subject of many controversial discussions.

Lest you get the impression that our organization of labor is stiff and inflexible, let me add that members can switch from one work area to another when their work preferences have changed, or when group dynamics in a given work area are so deadlocked that no option remains. And, of course, we help each other when a business has a short-term demand for extra labor, for example, during harvest time. Our members can work outside the community if they don't find satisfying jobs within our work areas or if they wish to seek further training or qualifications. Presently around 10 percent work outside. We usually also have a few "jumpers," people still in their trial memberships or those who are no longer integrated in a particular work area, who do internal maintenance and carpentry work or replace others in cases of illness.

In times of economic crisis or when a business is structurally unable to "earn its share," our far-reaching shared economy enables us temporarily, and in some cases continually, to "subsidize" some work areas in their start-up phase. In our ideological framework, "work is work." We want to get away from the unjust and unjustifiable wage-differentiation of the wider society.

Our financial situation has been stable through most of the past 10 years and our standard of living has slowly but steadily risen: a fact that is applauded by some members and criticized by others. Presently we earn about \$1,000 U.S. per adult member per month (approximately \$52,000), and spend

The Inherent Satisfaction of Work

Our experiences within the dominant sphere of labor are oppressive. We have come to know work as senseless, its sole significance being to earn the money to buy as much as possible. We lose all relationship of value between the goods we produce and consume. What lies nearer to our hearts—to start a project in which work can be meaningful and simultaneously satisfy our basic needs.

—From Niederkaufungen's "Paper of Maxims"

about the same amount on monthly expenses, which includes everything—food, “rent,” cars, clothes, books, health insurance, telephone, cigarettes, beer, chocolate, ice cream, holiday trips, and so on. Of course, the figure of \$1,000 gives an incomplete picture of our standard of living. On the one hand, our shared resources cut down expenses considerably: for example, 52 adults share seven cars, two washing machines, and two video recorders. On the other hand, we spend an extraordinary amount on organic food, train tickets, and education. Also, we contribute approximately \$1,500 to \$2,000 U.S. monthly to various charitable organizations, especially Third World groups, and we contribute financially to other intentional communities, including several in Germany and one in Italy.

To put this generally successful image into perspective, we have to admit that about 20 percent of our income is not earned with our labor, but comes from the German labor office as unemployment benefits and other funds. To accept state money causes us ideological conflict; however, we justify this by saying (to ourselves and our critics) that we do even more unpaid social and ecological work for the benefit of society than the state does, and we use their money more wisely (for example, we have no military spending).

We intend to be(come) a long-lasting community. One of the material expressions of that intention is the community

pension fund, which we started six years ago. Although we are still struggling with the municipal tax authorities about the legal structure of that fund, we consider it a great achievement to make ourselves, to a certain extent, independent from fragile state pension schemes. The preferred, but perhaps unlikely, option is that our own children and/or a constant influx of young new members will prevent the “aging” of our community, which we otherwise might have to face sometime in the future.

After 10 years of communally making a living, we have transformed many of our original ideas into reality. Some disillusionments were inescapable (we still know the difference between work and leisure time); some naïveté is lost (to work collectively doesn't, in itself, make you happy). However, what we have built up over the years is large, stable, and good—and we're making it happen each day right in the heart of the beast. It is possible! Ω

Sven Borstelmann, 36, has lived in Niederkaufungen since 1988. He works in the administration work area and is a part-time psychotherapist in Kassel. For the last two years he has co-edited Eurotopia, the German equivalent of Communities magazine.

Visitors and guests are welcome at Kommune Niederkaufungen, but must make arrangements first. Kommune Niederkaufungen, Kirchweg 1, 34260 Kaufungen, Germany.

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Chomsky

“Modern industrial civilization has developed within a certain system of convenient myths. The driving force of modern industrial civilization has been individual material gain, which is accepted as legitimate, even praiseworthy, on the grounds that private vices yield public benefits, in the classic formulation. Now, it's long been understood—very well—that a society that is based on this principle will destroy itself in time. It can only persist with whatever suffering and injustice it entails as long as it's possible to pretend that the destructive forces that humans create are limited, that the world is an infinite resource, and that the world is an infinite garbage can.

At this stage of history, *either* one of two things is possible. Either the general population will take control of its own destiny and will concern itself with community interests, guided by values of solidarity, and sympathy, and concern for others, or, alternatively, there will be no destiny for anyone to control.”

— *Manufacturing Consent*



THE FARM NEWS SERVICE

The Farm School at its largest had 365 students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and ran on shifts like many public schools.

The Great 'Changeover' at the Farm

*What happens when a
successful community
doesn't know its
bottom line?*

by Michael Traugot

In 1970 visionary Stephen Gaskin led hundreds of people in a nationwide search for land in a caravan of school buses. He and his followers founded the Farm in Tennessee, which became one of the largest and most well known communities in North America. Organized as a commune for its first 12 years (1971 to 1983), all income went into a common treasury and was spent according to need.

The Farm appeared to be wildly successful. Farm Foods sold soy foods nationwide, including "Ice Bean," the first commercially produced non-dairy ice cream in the U.S., which became a million-dollar business. The Electronics Crew invented and marketed new solar technology and the "Nuke Buster" Geiger counter. Farm women played a crucial role in resurrecting midwifery

in our culture. *The Book Company* published the best-sellers, *Spiritual Midwifery* and *The Big Dummy's Guide to CB Radio* (the latter selling a million copies), along with dozens of books on soy technology, vegan cooking, solar power, electronics, and Farm-style spiritual teachings. Hundreds of people visited each year; the Gate Crew worked round-the-clock shifts screening visitors.

Stephen Gaskin and midwife Ina May Gaskin spoke to sell-out crowds everywhere; the popular Farm Band also toured nationwide. The Farm provided room, board, and free medical service to hundreds of pregnant women; offered sanctuary to Central American refugees; and through their international relief organization, *Plenty*, sent food and technical assistance to people in depressed areas from Guatemala to the South Bronx.

Known in Tennessee as the "honest hippies," Farm members worked hard, attempted to pay all bills promptly, and earned the respect of Bible Belt neighbors.

Unfortunately, they were in the red.

GRADUALLY STEPHEN'S CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP had evolved into a system of government in which the leaders of each work crew became the community's Board of Directors. While the Farm, organized as a nonprofit, had always been required to have Officers who were legally responsible for its finances, the actual day-to-day operation had been considerably more informal. As the Farm ballooned in population and complexity, however, it became increasingly difficult to get accurate records or track the community's cash flow.

The first attempt to understand and solve the Farm's out-of-control finances came after the Farm's major agricultural losses, beginning in 1976. Board members realized they needed to monitor and ultimately control the Farm's many different checkbooks. They began to assemble an overview of the community's widespread businesses and charitable projects. By the end of 1976 they had pretty much figured it out.

The yearly cash flow had grown from approximately \$125,000 in 1971 to \$1,000,000 in 1975. The overall debt was approximately \$600,000. Because of the Farm's increasing population, support for pregnant ladies and sanctuary cases, and its overall expansion, the community's income was no longer enough to meet its basic needs for food and utilities.

In fact they had been operating in the red for years. They had paid only immediate cash outlays with income and simply charged the rest, through loans, credit extended by local businesses, or ever-mounting unpaid hospital and medical bills.

Board members made specific recommendations and urged the community to follow them. Beginning immediately, the Farm must generate a real net earned income of \$10,000 per week to cover their bills, the Board said. It must increase the number of people that earned income from outside jobs. It must develop a procedure for shifting people around as job opportunities arose off the Farm or were created by Farm businesses, depending upon cash flow needs.

The Board assumed control of the labor force, and appointed a personnel director who prepared a chart of everyone's



The Farm Store, now privately owned, once offered the entire community free food and other supplies.

job, and made sure that each person was actually working. Getting enough people out working at outside jobs that returned immediate cash was the Board's most difficult task. For one thing, housing starts were down, and the national employment situation wasn't good. There was also resistance on the part of individual members and the community as a whole. Many of the services the community valued the most—midwives and clinic, school, soy dairy, farming crew, gate, water system, roads, all the infrastructure—were run for the community by community members. These services saved money but did not bring in cash. Farm folks faced tough decisions. Which of these services should be given up, and who should perform those that remained?

The Board and the people of the Farm tried many avenues over the next few years to get themselves out of debt. They allowed the book publishing, electronics, and soy foods businesses to continue operating without contributing funds to the community while those businesses were developing. But they didn't become solvent enough soon enough.

The Farm Work Crews

Over a dozen work crews covered every aspect of Farm operation and generated outside income as well—especially significant when the Farm was at its largest (1,400 people in 1980). These included the Farming Crew; the Canning and Freezing Crew; various Cooking Crews; the Horse Crew; the Farm School; the Motor Pool; the Ham Radio and Electronics Crew; the Gate Crew; the Farm Building Company; the Soy Dairy; the Book Company; the Farm Store; the Painting Crew; Farm Hands; and the Medical Crew. There were also crews to maintain outhouses, and operate the flour mill, water system, and public laundry facility.



ALBERT BATES

Now privatized, the Farm Soy Dairy was once a multi-million dollar business making "Ice Bean," the first commercially produced non-dairy ice cream in the United States.

A vegetarian restaurant in Nashville failed because of personality conflicts. A solar water heater business was nipped in the bud when the Reagan administration ended subsidies to homeowners. Various other ventures met with varying success, but none proved to be the money-makers the community sought.

Through creative juggling, paying the hottest bills first, consolidating loans, and spending windfalls on unpaid bills, the Board managed to keep the community afloat for seven more years.

Some of these efforts were quite heroic. For example, starting around 1980, the community sent out tree-planting crews all over the country. Ten to 20 people spent two months at a time, mostly camping out, planting trees in swamps, in thorns, or in stiff brush. They put up with snakes, storms, and the lack of money. They worked extremely hard and earned money, but not nearly enough to pay back the debts.

Throughout the next few years income was rarely more than \$6,000 to \$8,000 per week, not the \$10,000 needed to cover expenses. Through creative juggling, paying the hottest bills first, consolidating loans, and spending windfalls on unpaid bills rather than investments, the Board managed to keep the community afloat for seven more years.

The financial situation continued to worsen. The community had spread itself too thin. The Farm continued to take

on new people, including those who needed help, until 1980, while simultaneously continuing to support Plenty projects and many functions on the home front.

The national and local economy was also deteriorating in the 12 years from 1971 through 1983. Family farms were going under, fuel prices were rising, interest rates were rising, housing starts were down, and money became tight. Real wages declined steadily.

Owning their land and raising much of their own food, taking care of each other medically at a grassroots level, heating with wood cut from their own land, using surplus materials and equipment—these measures all provided the Farm with something of a buffer against the ravages of the larger economy. But despite its degree of self-sufficiency, the Farm was not immune to these outside pressures.

The original focus of the Farm had been as an ashram, an experiment, a project to help the world. Now many wanted it to simply be a home for families raising children. Many people felt they needed more living space and more resources to adequately care for themselves.

And the Farm lacked an important resource: it had no "older generation." In a sense, Farm folks had to reinvent the wheel, as they lacked the wisdom and practical know-how, especially about business, that an older generation would have provided. This also meant there was no economic cushion—no grandparents to fall back on for financial help or to take care of the kids while both parents worked.

Along with all this many members felt a loss of faith in Stephen's judgment and his ability to lead the community. Even though he was not a part of any official governing body, Stephen continued to have a great deal of influence in the community. He usually stood up for doing more charitable projects, welcoming new people, and continuing the original ideals that had held the community together against improbable odds. He often disagreed with those who wanted to close the gate, send people away who were not self-supporting, and at least temporarily stop doing charitable projects. Arguments over these issues even erupted at Stephen's Sunday Services, and fewer and fewer people attended.

Stephen had been a teacher to most of the members of the early Farm, and as time went by, many of his students started to feel they were outgrowing the student/teacher relationship. For example, they wanted to set their own style when it came to dress, diet, hairstyle, employment, and drugs of choice. And a growing number of people wanted to make and spend their own money and take care of themselves, figuring they could do it better than the community had.

Competition for scarce resources grew. At one point it came

to a choice between bringing running water to an area of the Farm that didn't have it yet, or installing a cable communication system around the community. The cable system got priority—communication was determined to be more important than basic conveniences—and it caused some bitterness among the folks who didn't get their running water, but had to continue pouring it out of jugs, as they had for years.

For many reasons the hardy pioneers who had hung together over 7,000 miles of road on the Caravan, who had faced down and befriended angry and suspicious neighbors, birthed babies in buses, and put up with "Wheatberry Winter," when the flour mill hadn't been set up yet and there was no money for rice—were becoming tired of living in poverty.

In the early '80s, the lack of basic services and growth opportunities prompted many people to leave the Farm. Some needed to go on with their careers, live nearer their parents, or live in a different climate. But most left for economic reasons: it just didn't look like the Farm was going to get it together. In 1980 there were 1,400 people on the Farm. By 1983, some 800 people were left.

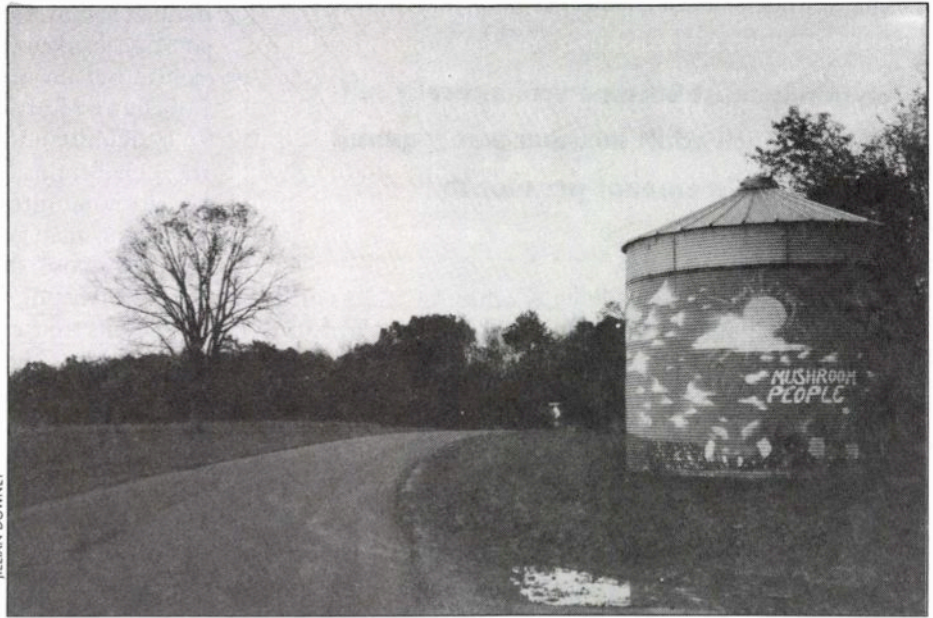
From 1980 on, the community seriously sought a different way to manage its finances. A constitution committee studied land trusts and other forms of communal organizations and worked out possible scenarios. The community held many meetings. People talked about it daily.

The debt grew to a staggering \$1,200,000.

By the summer of 1983, the Board of Directors arrived at a momentous decision. As they saw it, the legal responsibility of the nonprofit corporation was to pay off debts before supplying any member services. They suggested a new plan. Each family must become economically self-sufficient, and each adult member would be required to pay a certain amount per month. A good chunk of this monthly revenue would go toward repaying the debt; the rest would fund basic community necessities: roads, water system, taxes, and a certain amount of bookkeeping. All other expenses would have to be approved by community members. Anyone unable or unwilling to support themselves or pay the monthly dues would have to leave.

After much heated discussion, the community overwhelmingly adopted the new plan. The land and other community assets were still held in common, but each family was now on its own. Not unexpectedly, this led to another exodus. In the first few years after the initial shock of the '83 Changeover, about two-thirds of the remaining Farm families left.

The Changeover put many people on shaky ground. Those who had worked on crews that took care of the community were now potentially jobless. These included the clinic personnel, midwives, school teachers, storekeepers, soy dairy



Today, with just 225 people, the Farm is fully paid off and out of debt.

operators, gate personnel, the promo crew—positions the community had considered extremely important. Those who wanted to stay had to hunker down and figure out how to make it as individual families in a rural depressed economy. Many Farm members now had to start going to school, or

The Farm's Activities Today

The Farm is still an innovative, culturally influential hub of lively businesses and good works.

Community businesses still owned by the Farm include: Swan Industries • SEI International • The Farm Gate • The Farm Community Center • Book Publishing Company.

Its independent, member-owned businesses include: Farm Soy Dairy • Tempeh Lab Inc. • Farm Veggie Deli • Total Video • The Farm Store • Farm Excavation • Farm Motors • Farm Legal • Farm Building Co. • JT Bookkeeping • The Dye Works • Farm Hay Co-op • Structural Integration • Dovetail Woodworking • Dataway • Mail Order Catalog • Farm Insurance • The Farm Bakery • Mushroompeople.

Nonprofits run by the community or by community members include: Ecovillage Training Center • FarmHands • *Birth Gazette* magazine • Natural Rights Center • Kids to the Country • RB Construction • Victim Offender Reconciliation Program • Global Village Institute for Appropriate Technology • The Swan Trust • The Farm School • Rocinante • Plenty—now in 15 cultures worldwide.

Each family must become economically self-sufficient. Each adult member was required to pay a certain amount per month.

take entry level jobs—exactly what other Americans of their generation had already gone through. People who had not thought much about a personal career now had to focus on themselves rather than on building a community or helping those less fortunate.

While no one was going to starve, many people who had given up everything else—including the pursuit of a personal career in the American mainstream economy—were suddenly out of a job. This was probably the period in Farm history when people felt the most bitterness and anguish. Farm folks

daily departed from the home in which they had invested a significant portion of their lives, taking with them their experiences but no material assets. It was a difficult time, emotionally and financially.

Individuals and families found many different solutions to these challenges. Many of the services provided by the community were turned into private businesses owned by individuals or small groups of members: the midwives, the clinic, the motor pool, the Farm Store, the soy dairy, the bakery, and the Farm School. The Soy Dairy sold its Ice Bean business to some of its workers, with the community maintaining a substantial share. The Book Company found an investor and re-organized, but was still owned by the community.

Farm construction crews still worked in the local area, but gradually downsized and became the private businesses of one or a few individuals. Those who could not find work in a Farm business worked in the local towns.

One of the most popular and successful solutions was nursing. Many of the people, mostly women, who had worked at the clinic now enrolled in the local community college's excellent two-year nursing program, which resulted in an RN degree. Some took out loans or got help from their parents. They all did well in the program, and most have become successful health professionals.

Today the Farm has a more realistic and economically sustainable population of about 225 members. While some still work for the community itself, the majority of people run their own small business inside the community, work as employees of those businesses, or commute to jobs outside the community.

Despite the abruptness of the Change-over and the rapid decrease from 800 to 400 potential dues-paying members, the Farm managed to pay off its total debt in little more than three years. By becoming financially stable and living within its means, the community secured its acres of fields and woods for its members, for all Farm families who had to leave, and for future generations. Ω

Excerpted with permission from A Short History of the Farm (1994), by Michael Traugot.

Michael Traugot, a founding member of The Farm, was educated at Harvard. A father of five, he has worked as a farmer, teacher, fabric artist, group facilitator, and shiitake mushroom grower. He will receive his M.A. in Sociology from Fisk University in May 1997.

A Short History of the Farm (Pb., 80 pp.), \$12.50 postpaid, from Michael Traugot, 84, The Farm, Summertown, TN 38483.



TELECOMMUTING

*You CAN Get
There from Here*

by Diana Leafe Christian



EVERY MORNING I GET UP AND WALK FIVE FEET to my job, which takes place in a tiny office with a computer, modem, and fax machine. In this electronic age I can “go to work” from my rural community without leaving home.

Telecommuting is an increasingly popular way to make a living in intentional community. Several of us who work for *Communities* magazine telecommute, including myself, in Colorado; our art director, in Seattle; our cover art director, in San Francisco; and our database and circulation managers, both in Virginia.

In fact our database manager, Velma Kahn, a co-founder of Abundant Dawn community and self-employed computer programmer, brought a few clients with her when she moved to Abundant Dawn in rural Floyd County, Virginia. Brand new communities, often plagued by lack of funds, tend to be significantly more successful if the founders create or bring with them viable ways to earn a living *before* they move onto the land.

Jim Wetzel and Nancy Wood, cofounders of Eden Ranch community, knew this well. They created a “portable” business before they bought their rural land near Hotchkiss, Colorado. Jim and Nancy compile county statutes (which change often), and distribute them annually to county officials, such as sheriffs, assessors, County Clerks, and so forth, all over the state. They can access data about new statutes through online services, the mail, or CD-ROM, and create their yearly statute manuals through desktop publishing. Computers, phonelines, a fax, a modem, and a local printing company are all they need. (Because their business tripled last year, Jim and Nancy hope one day to offer new members telecommuting jobs in this growing community business.)

Several cofounders of Dancing Rabbit community are also telecommuters. When they chose rural Scotland County, Missouri, as the place they’d build their community and moved there last fall to look for land, they brought their jobs with them. Three worked for the same Silicon Valley-based company: Tony Sirna as a programmer, Cecil Scheib as a writer and reviewer of Internet sites and Web pages, and Rachael Katz as a Web-page designer.

Telecommuting offers distinct advantages. Besides the obvious—you can live where you want, regardless of the local job market—telecommuting also offers flexible, self-defined

hours. You can rise at five to watch the sunrise, work awhile at the computer, take off for breakfast and a hike, work some more, take off for lunch and a nap, and work as late into the evening—or not—as you like. People with company-based jobs like the Dancing Rabbits’ can also benefit from an urban wage-scale and a rural cost of living. For programmers especially, the potential is there to earn a great deal of money, relative to most communitarians.

The discovery of the Internet by regular folks and its rising popularity in recent years has made an enormous difference in job opportunities online. “None of us would have these jobs without the Internet!” says Rachael.

There are disadvantages, too. Owning a computer, software, and modem, carries its own financial cost, and people who work in the programming or web-related industries are often obligated to stay constantly informed about the latest equipment and software in their field. “But that can be considered a cost of doing business,” says Tony.

“You’re at the mercy of a phone company,” says Cecil, “or the weather, like when a thunderstorm disrupted our phone service recently. We all had deadlines and we couldn’t do any work!”

“At the same time,” adds Tony, “unlike members involved in gardening and farming, our schedules aren’t *dependent* on the weather. We can work anytime. The down side is, though, that working on a computer all day can isolate you from the outdoors. You can get out of touch with the weather and the seasons.”

“On the one hand, you’re insulated from office gossip,” says Rachael, “but on the other, you can miss the feeling of knowing what’s going on in a company.”

Another disadvantage can be the increasing sense of isolation from other community members. If you hunker down in your room all day, glued to the computer screen, you can miss many of the community activities going on all around you, and miss important aspects of community culture. To counter this, says Rachael, “We put all our computers in the living room.” Now the telecommuting Rabbits feel like they’re working together, and can say hello and see what’s going on as other members pass by.

What are the opportunities in telecommuting? Some are simply regular jobs transplanted to home, and linked to the necessary people and resources by phone and modem. These include jobs in publishing or graphic design, or in compiling and distributing information, like the Eden Ranch election regulation business. Others require expertise in programming or Web-related skills. For the latter, job opportunities are many. “There are more jobs out there than people to do them,” says Rachael. This is especially true in the new and growing field of computer 3-D design and animation.

But many jobs, Cecil reminds us, require no specialized training. “These are jobs any literate, educated person can do.”

Well, time for lunch. I’ll put down the mouse, save the screen, and join my housemates in the next room for a bowl of hot soup. Ω

Diana Leafe Christian is editor of Communities magazine.



ABUNDANT DAWN

Draft horses are sometimes used to drag logs out of the woods. The author, right, with horse-logger Jason Rutledge.

Sawdust, Cow Manure, & Confidence

*What can
community living
teach us about
Life and Work?*

by Nina Barbara Cohen

SOME DAYS NOTHING GREETES ME AT THE JOBSITE but a pile of logs, passively waiting to be cut. Other days the whole family comes out to watch, friends and neighbors stop by throughout the day, and I spend as much time talking about lumber as I do milling it. At some jobs I have only to park my portable sawmill on a level, gravelled lot and a guy in a forklift brings me clean timbers to rip. Other times I have to thread the 24-foot-long machine through narrow, rutted logging roads to a clearing where logs lie haphazardly, dragged to the site by an old farm tractor or a team of horses. Some days it's nothing but poplar, poplar, and more poplar, peeling by in endless pale boards. Other days I get to cut gorgeous dark walnut, cherry with fascinating swirly grain, or spicy-smelling sassafras. Sometimes the saw purrs smooth and square through each slice. Other days every little part conspires to split all at once.

There seems to be no typical day at work in this biz. But here I am running my own portable sawmill business, Smartwood Custom Cutting, and I've got community to thank for it.

I KNEW I WANTED TO JOIN TWIN OAKS COMMUNITY AS soon as I saw the farm manager drive by on an old John Deere. I'd never in my life seen a woman on a tractor. Despite years as an active feminist, I realized that until that moment I'd

believed deep down that only folks with Y chromosomes could drive them! A few months later, I joined Twin Oaks.

I first trained at the community's sawmill, where the manager allowed me to drive the forklift. I discovered a hitherto untapped fascination with *big* things: logs, machines, towering stacks of lumber—they were like Tonka toys on steroids!

"I hope you make use of all this," the manager said, all too familiar with the pattern of community members, especially new ones, who pick up and drop work tasks like kids in a toy store. Happily, I stuck with the sawmill, working shifts throughout my years there.

My newfound love of things large eventually led me to the barn and its dairy cows. There I took on the most significant job of my life to date: managing the dairy program. I found myself with more responsibilities that I'd ever had before, and began cramming my head with facts about farming practices, bovine health, milking equipment maintenance, sanitation, record keeping, and more. This experience has proved invaluable in running the sawmill business.

Several years later, in 1994, when I left Twin Oaks to help start the new community of Abundant Dawn, I realized I had acquired an extraordinary education. As I decided how to make a living, created a business plan, and bought the portable sawmill, I found myself using the new skills and new attitudes that I'd picked up at Twin Oaks.

Before I moved there, I was a fairly angry person, hyper-aware of my gender. However, living in community, I frequently forgot about gender issues. I pursued my "male" interests without hassle. No one treated me as "special" for enjoying non-traditional work, since so many men and women there take advantage of the nonsexist culture to learn tasks previously denied them. I felt "normal" for once in my life.

Surprisingly, I encounter little sexism from my sawmill customers. Granted, this part of Virginia is well known for its high population of "alternative" types within the traditional Appalachian culture. Yet, almost all of my customers, from hippie homesteaders to elderly farmers, treat me as if they have perfect faith in my abilities. Almost no one asks how a woman got started in this business. In fact, I'm amazed at how much fun I have meeting all kinds of people and finding unexpected commonalities. A friend pointed out that it takes two to create a dynamic, and perhaps the reason I no longer encounter sexism on the job is because *I've* changed.

I no longer expect the worst. I come to my interactions with the assumption that I deserve and will receive the respect due anyone. I'm more relaxed and less defensive now that I have confidence in my own abilities. I'm much more open to people with different cultures and values. The righteous anger that suffused my dealings with men has mostly vanished. I'm still outraged by the world's injustice, but no longer blame individual men for it.

Another result of my community education came out of the pervasive sense of security I experienced at Twin Oaks. Before moving there, I worried constantly. What if I lose my job? What if I can't pay my rent? Taking risks was unimaginable. But as I lived in a community that covered all my needs,



The author checks her portable sawmill at a jobsite. Living in community gave her the confidence to take on this business venture.

ran prosperous businesses, shared resources, and generated a comfortable standard of living, I began to relax. As dairy manager, I planned the yearly budget and tracked expenses without the awful fear of going under financially. I had the opportunity to try new methods, such as using new equipment or changing the feed, without worrying about disastrous consequences if my experiments failed. Rather than leaving me passive or dependent, those years of security generated more strength and confidence. With much of my old fear gone, I see the risks and consequence of starting a new business with greater clarity. So what's the worst that can happen? What can I really lose? I won't lose my resourcefulness, or the network of friends in the communities movement who help me whenever I need it.

The communities network continues to provide tremendous support for my business. I return to Twin Oaks regularly to work at the sawmill there. It's a mutually beneficial exchange: I provide needed labor, and the sawmill manager and I talk shop, trading knowledge and tips. As I begin to hatch ideas for expanding the sawmill business—maybe I'll get a lumber-drying kiln, or seek new contracts with sustainable loggers—the manager and others at Twin Oaks share insights, expertise, and offers of help. Folks in nearby communities have steered business my way, and respond with enthusiasm to my plans for expansion. I know many people to whom I can turn for help.

Joining a community was the best move I ever made in terms of learning how to make a living. I don't regret for a moment not going to business school and becoming an investment banker like so many college friends. Community is a school I recommend over any college, and the best part is, you don't ever have to graduate. Ω

Nina Barbara Cohen, 29, grew up in New Orleans. She was dairy manager of Twin Oaks, and later helped co-found Abundant Dawn community in the Blue Ridge Mountains of southwest Virginia. Lately she's been tracking sawdust all over the house, which her friends say is an improvement over manure.

COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY SPRING '97 UPDATE



One of the Fellowship for Intentional Community's primary objectives is to provide the most up-to-date contact information for intentional communities that we can find, and our Communities Directory is the centerpiece of that work.

While we do all we can to make the Directory as current and comprehensive as possible, it takes us more than two years to complete—and every week we receive new leads for communities, plus numerous address and phone changes. Rather than trying to create an updated directory every few months, we regularly publish the late-breaking information here in Communities magazine.

All of the information contained in this update was received after the 1995 Directory was released, and the Index Codes tell you which section of this update to look in:

- [n] *New Listings*—these groups were not listed in the Directory.
- [u] *Updates*—changes in contact info, purpose, size, or structure for groups previously listed here and in the Directory.
- [d] *Disbanded or no forwarding address.*

The information here is condensed and abbreviated, and will be more thoroughly presented in future Directories. For example, the book format includes a cross-reference chart of many features including population statistics, number of acres, leadership and decision-making structures, diet, schooling, spiritual practices, and so on—plus maps showing approximate location. If you would like to examine a copy of the current edition, please contact us at the telephone number listed below and we can direct you to nearby libraries that have copies.

You can help us, too! Please let us know if you discover any leads about new communities, or find that we have incorrect information in current listings. Please send to Directory Update, Rt. 1, Box, 155-M, Rutledge, MO 63563, or give us a call at 816-883-5545. Thank you!

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NORTH AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

CONNECTICUT

[u] Community in Bridgeport

INDIANA

[n] Feral Ambition Project

MAINE

[n] Community in Portland

MANITOBA

[u] Community in Winnipeg

MASSACHUSETTS

[u] Community in Boston

[u] Community in Hyannis

MISSOURI

[u] Ananda Kanan Ozark Retreat Center

[u] Community in St. Joseph

NEW HAMPSHIRE

[d] Green Pastures Estate

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[u] Community in Woodstock

ONTARIO

[u] Lothlorien Farm

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[u] Community in Bellows Falls

[u] Community in Island Pond

[u] Community in Rutland

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[u] Community in Harrisonburg

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[n] Salmonberry Community Land Trust
(Finney Farm)

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

AUSTRALIA

[n] Crossroads Medieval Village

[n] Jindibah

[u] Peppercorn Creek Farm

BRAZIL

[u] Community in Londrina

FRANCE

[u] Community in Sus

GERMANY

[u] Community in Oberbronnen

[u] Community in Penningbuttel

SPAIN

[u] Casa "Quatro Vientos"

NORTH AMERICAN NEW LISTINGS

ANNUNCIATION HOUSE

1003 E. San Antonio
El Paso, TX 79901
915-545-4509/533-4675

Our community seeks to provide an experience of service and solidarity with the poor in the border community of El Paso/Juarez, focusing on the realities and needs of the undocumented and refugees in the colonias of Juarez, Mexico. We operate three large houses of hospitality, including food, shelter, clothing, and social needs as well as networking with immigration counselors. An individual and volunteer effort, we are sustained by contributions and donations. Service here is a way of being and living at a particular time in one's life. The work is your life and the living is your work.
11/96

FERAL AMBITION PROJECT

(Forming)
PO Box 771
Bloomington, IN 47407

We aim to secure a more direct, more natural, more viable means of living. By living simply in small hand built cabins in the woods, banning the use of the internal combustion engine, we can offer a viable alternative to conventional lifestyles. This is not so much a turning away from society as a turning toward something more compelling, more pertinent, more real. We are dedicated to assisting others in establishing a life in natural balance. We are not strident purists, but intend to sketch out the direction. Some of us have jobs in town and drive cars but the ambition is to approach the ideal at a secure pace. Parking is provided at a per cylinder fee rate half a mile from the cabins which encourages use of the community vehicle and alternative transportation. SASE requested. 11/96

SALMONBERRY COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (FINNEY FARM)

4004 South Skagit Highway
Sedro Wooley, WA 98284
360-826-4004
finney@ncia.com

We are an intentional community of eight adults and one child started in 1990 on a 105 acre land trust. We are building a self sustaining nucleus of enthusiasts living lightly on the land. Our plan is to attract people with skills, resources, and enthusiasm, of diverse backgrounds, ages, races, origins, beliefs, and sexual preference. We are now seeking a few people to join us on a full time basis living on this beautiful piece of land and contributing your ideas and energy to make it a reality. Members make a monthly lease payment which covers our operating expenses. 1/97

NORTH AMERICAN UPDATES (PREVIOUS LISTINGS)

ANANDA KANAN OZARK RETREAT CENTER

3157 County Road 1670
Willow Springs, MO 65793
417-469-5273 voice
417-469-4474 fax

New address. Previously listed as "Ananda Marga."
10/96

LOTHLORIEN FARM

RR1
Ompah, Ontario K0H-2J0
CANADA
613-479-2453

New address and phone. 12/96

MAGIC TORTOISE FOUNDATION

(Re-Forming)
216-M North Pueblo Road #107
Taos, NM 87571
505-751-9601 voice
505-751-7507 fax

New address and phone. Community is beginning to rebuild after serious fire in May 1996. 1/97

NEW SOCIAL ORDER IN MESSIAH ("COMMUNITY IN" ASSOCIATION)

Basin Farm
PO Box 108
Bellows Falls, VT 05101
802-463-3230

Community in Bellows Falls
17 Westminster Terrace
Bellows Falls, VT 05101
802-463-4149

Community in Boston
52 Alban Street
Dorchester, MA 02124
617-282-9876

Community in Bridgeport
2403 North Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06604
203-367-2866

Community in Buffalo
2051 North Creek Road
Lakeview, NY 14085
716-627-2098

Community in Harrisonburg
240 Paul Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
540-564-0621

Community in Hyannis
19 Camp Street
Hyannis, MA 02601
508-790-3172

Community in Island Pond
PO Box 443
Island Pond, VT 05846
802-723-9708

Community in Portland
55 Finn Parker Road
Gorham, ME 04038
207-839-7912

Community in Providence
184 Irving Avenue
Providence, RI 02906
401-751-5835

Community in Rutland
115 Lincoln Avenue
Rutland, VT 05701
802-747-7217

Community in St. Joseph
1923 Clay Street
St. Joseph, MO 64501
816-232-0095

Community in Winnipeg
583 Stradbrook Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3L-0K3
CANADA
204-284-9665

Community in Woodstock
Pine Grove
Route 23A Box 158
Palenville, NY 12463
518-678-2206

Current, updated contact info for all "Community In" communities in North America wanting publicity. This network also includes groups listed in the *Directory* that chose not to be listed here. 1/97

INTERNATIONAL NEW LISTINGS

CROSSROADS MEDIEVAL VILLAGE

(Forming)
PO Box 505
Yass, NSW 2582
AUSTRALIA
rhys@macquarie.matra.com.au

New listing. "Crossroads is a community group whose members are developing a mediievally-inspired village in which to live and work. The design is based around a recreation of the medieval French village and castle of Chalencon. We have purchased a 453 acre property at Yass, have zoning approval, and are in the process of receiving development approval for our proposals. We plan to build 60 houses, with overall design heavily influenced by permaculture. Our other aims include sponsoring educational programs and research, ecological yet affordable housing, an environmentally sustainable farm, and building a strong sense of community." 11/96

JINDIBAH

(Forming)
Fowlers Lane
Bangalow, NSW 2479
AUSTRALIA
61-66-872-244 voice
61-66-872-245 fax
ourtimes@om.com.au
<http://nucleus.om.com.au/wbsg/jindibah.htm>

New listing. "There is a unique opportunity for six couples to join the six founders of an intentional community based near Byron Bay, NSW, Australia. Byron shire is at the leading edge in Australia of the world wide movement to apply the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) to land development. Jindibah is on an 111-acre parcel on undulating land with lovely views of the South Pacific ocean. The intent of the six founders (four of whom are currently living on the property) is to create a natural environment for peaceful living and working in a convenient and tranquil rural setting." 12/96

INTERNATIONAL UPDATES

NEW SOCIAL ORDER IN MESSIAH ("COMMUNITY IN" ASSOCIATION)

Peppercorn Creek Farm
1375 Old Hume Highway
Picton, NSW 2571
AUSTRALIA
61-46-772-668

Community in Londrina
Rua Senador Souza Naves 1035
86010-170, Centro Londrina
Paraná, BRAZIL
55-43-339-0533

Community in Sus
Tabitha's Place
64190 Sus
Navarrenx
FRANCE
33-5-59-66-14-28

Community in Oberbronnen
Wirtgasse 3
73495 Oberbronnen
GERMANY
49-79-64-15-50

Community in Penningbutterl
Unter den Linden 15
27711 Osterholz-Scharmbeck 9
GERMANY
49-47-918-9657

Casa "Quatro Vientos"
Paseo de Ulia 375
20014 San Sebastian
SPAIN
34-43-58-00-29

Updated info for international "Community In" groups wanting publicity, omitting groups included in the *Directory* that chose not to be listed here. 1/97

DISBANDED & BAD ADDRESSES

GREEN PASTURES ESTATE

Epping, NH

"Our community is in the process of dissolving and we have the property up for sale." 1/97

Help us keep our Directory Update up-to-date!

If you represent or know of a community that is not listed in the current edition of our *Communities Directory*, please let us know! We want everyone to have a chance to be included, and we are always interested in new leads for our frequent updates. Please use this form to send us your referrals, or just give us a call at 816-883-5545.

NAME OF COMMUNITY

CONTACT PERSON

STREET ADDRESS

CITY/TOWN

STATE/PROVINCE ZIP/POSTAL CODE

PHONE

YOUR NAME

YOUR PHONE

DATE

Please return to: Directory Update, Rt 1,
Box 155-M, Rutledge, MO 63563

CLASSIFIEDS



Classifieds are for anything by, for, or related to communities and community living. Send for info on how to place an ad. Communities, PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541; phone/fax: 970-593-5615.

CLASSES, WORKSHOPS

TIMBERFRAME STRAW BALE/straw clay workshop, April 16–20, with Robert Laporte, Natural Home Builder, for a community building in cohousing community. Located near Moab, Utah in remote wilderness setting. Call 505-986-5847 for details or write 326 Staab St., Santa Fe, NM 87501.

HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS, with Special Discounts for community founders, members. Solar Home Design, Environmental Building Technologies (Strawbale, Rammed Earth, Adobe), Photovoltaic Design & Installation, Advanced PV, Wind Power, Micro-Hydro, Solar Cooking. Held in Georgia, North Carolina, Washington, Texas, Colorado. Weekend workshops, \$250; week-long, \$450. Solar Energy International, PO Box 715-C, Carbondale, CO 81623; 970-963-8855; fax: 970-963-8866; e-mail: sei@solarenergy.org.

TWO-WEEK PERMACULTURE DESIGN Course, with Certification. Intensive residential program. Multifaceted learning environment, diverse instructors, design work, hands-on projects, field trips, Earth-friendly buildings, great organic food. Sept. 13–26., Masonville, CO. Instruction, room, & board: \$750 before 8/15; \$800 after. Sandy Cruz, High Altitude Permaculture Institute, Box 238, Ward, CO 80481; 303-459-3494.

COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT, INTERNS

TWO FULL-TIME MAINTENANCE POSITIONS available at Sunrise Ranch, a spiritually based intentional community of 100 residents in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. We are seeking 1) a person with experience and demonstrated capacity in commercial and residential HVAC—minimum 6-month commitment; and 2) a Handyman, light electrical, mechanical repair, painting—minimum 1-year commitment. Room, board, and salary. Personnel, Sunrise Ranch, 5569 NCR 29, Loveland, CO 80538; 970-679-4251 or 679-4226.

FARUK CREEK FARM. Sustainable community forming on Sunshine Coast, British Columbia. 42 acres of remote property three hours from Vancouver (water-access only),

surrounded by hundreds of acres of forest on calm channel leading to the open ocean. Seeking innovative, productive people for inclusive, tolerant, intergenerational community with individual sustainability and some joint community facilities and ventures: farming, holistic center, boat building, adventure tourism. 604-883-2637.

SEEKING COLUMNIST for *COMMUNITIES* MAGAZINE. Do you have experience in cohousing—as well as in other kinds of intentional communities—and you love to write? We're seeking a writer for the quarterly "Cohousing Report," covering the unique aspects of cohousing which contribute to a greater understanding of community life in general. The pay? Our undying thanks, an ongoing subscription to *Communities* magazine, and perhaps, an ad trade for our columnist's product or service. (Not to mention the fame and glory!) PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541; 970-593-5615.

COMMUNITY LAND FOR SALE

BEAUTIFUL COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY on 26-acre organic raspberry farm, seven miles south of Montrose, Colorado. Stream, beautiful mountain views, water rights/irrigated fields. Barn, greenhouse, and hoop house. Recently renovated 3-bdrm, 2-bath house, with new oversized kitchen and extra large living room with vaulted ceilings and great views—perfect as a community building or Common House. Plus—charming retail store (with processing kitchen) on busy highway. Approximately 8 acres in raspberries; the rest in hay, flowers, honey, over 100 apple trees. Property is zoned agricultural with high-density house clustering allowed. Excellent community business opportunity—work regionally while developing agricultural business. \$544,888. Elizabeth Plamondon, 970-728-4956; PO Box 839, Telluride, CO 81435; e-mail: elizabeth_plamondon@infozone.org.

BUY YOUR NEW ZEALAND DREAM on Waiheke Island. Over one acre, 50 meters from beach. Tourism zoned, currently backpacker's lodge. Enormous potential—intentional community, exclusive resort, motel, timeshare, health farm, or private retreat. John Ball, 54 Palm Road, Waiheke Island, New Zealand; 649-372-8662; e-mail: 100356.563@compuserve.com; Web: www.thehomepages.com/pages/palmbeach.

PRIME LOT now available in Union Acres community, in the mountains of western North Carolina. 5-1/2 wooded acres and bold, rushing stream. North- and south-facing slopes, solar homesite, garden area, privacy—all in a healthy, established community of great people! Contact Larsens, Rt. 1, Box 34-H, Hot Springs, NC 28943; 704-622-7112.

COMMUNITY PRODUCTS

BUFFALO HIDE MOCCASINS. Handcrafted by artisans of Aquarian Concepts Community. Custom made in ankle, calf, or knee height. Sheepskin lining available. Free brochure. *Living Nature Creations*, PO Box 3694, Sedona, AZ 86340; 800-430-7988.

TIPIS AND YURTS, custom made. Tipi and yurt kits, all sizes, authentic materials and expert instructions pro-

vided. Book, *Authentic Designs for Circular Shelters* (\$30). Circle Living Workshops. For book, free brochure on these products, and schedule of 1997 workshops—*Living Shelter Crafts*, PO 4069, West Sedona, AZ 86340; 800-899-1924.

WORLD CLASS DJEMBES. Possibly the best sounding djembe you'll find anywhere! Strong and lightweight, made from beautiful local hardwoods, each drum is turned from a single log, then taken to a fine finish by master wood-turner David Ward, Sunrise Ranch community. (See article this issue.) \$450 and up, reduced prices on seconds and shells. *DC Drums*, 5569 NCR 29, Loveland, CO 80538; 970-679-4292.

BOOKS, VIDEOS ON COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY BOOKSHELF. A mail order source featuring books on communal and cooperative lifestyles. Free catalog from *Community Bookshelf*, East Wind Community, Tecumseh, MO 65760; 417-679-4682; Web: <http://www.well.com/user/eastwind/bookshlf.html>.

VIDEO ON INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES. "Follow the Dirt Road" shows what's happening in today's North American communities—socially, politically, economically—and more! 53 minutes. \$28. Monique Gauthier, FTDR, 207 Evergreen Ct., Landenberg, PA 19350.

"LOOKING FOR IT" is a two-hour video diary/documentary on communities and the communities movement. Patch Adams says, "I was glued for two hours. You've done a great service for the communities movement. I think your goal of wanting people to come away from their viewing wanting more has more than been met. This videotape deserves a wide viewership." © 1995, Sally Mendzela. Two-hour VHS. To order, send check or money order for \$24.95 to Sally Mendzela, 36 North Center St., Bellingham, MA 02019; 508-966-5822 (w); e-mail: nosmoke@otw.com.

COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY Kirkpatrick Sale calls it, "The most comprehensive and accurate reference book ever published on community living!" 540 completely updated listings for North American communities and 70 on other continents, plus many communities formed since 1990 edition, with contact information and a full description of each. Maps, cross-reference charts, extensive index for finding communities by areas of interest, 31 feature articles on various aspects of cooperative living. Published by Fellowship for Intentional Community, publishers of *Communities* magazine. Pb., 440 pp., \$28 postpaid (\$30 outside US). *Communities Directory*, 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093.

PERIODICALS

DRY COUNTRY NEWS #17. Rainwater catchments, desert gardening, cheap land, solar energy, herbs, concrete domes, more! Sample \$3. Subscription \$10. Box 23-E, Radium Springs, NM 88054.

COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE BACK ISSUES. Past issue themes: Intentional Communities and "Cults"; Ecovillages; Love, Romance, & Sex in Community; Growing Older in Community; Diversity; Christian Communities; Growing Up in Community; much more. Single

issues \$5 postpaid, or \$4 for 2-4 back issues; \$3.50 for 5-9 back issues. Send for description of all 80 back issues and special discounts, at no charge. Communities Back Issues, Alpha Farm, Deadwood, OR 97430.

EUROTOPIA: Living in Community. European quarterly magazine about community living—ecovillages, cohousing, communes, and more, in Europe and worldwide. German language. *Eurotopia*, Hasenhof 8, D-71540, Murrhardt, GERMANY.

ENJOY RENT-FREE LIVING in desirable locations worldwide. *THE CARETAKER GAZETTE* is a unique newsletter containing job openings, advice and information for property caretakers, house-sitters, and landowners. Published since 1983, the Gazette includes letters, caretakers' profiles, and classifieds. Free advertising for landowners. Each issue contains over 80 job opportunities worldwide. Bimonthly publication for only \$24/year (6 issues); \$15/half year (3 issues). 1845 NW Deane St., Pullman, WA 99163; 509-332-0806.

PERMACULTURE DRYLANDS JOURNAL. Ideas, issues, information on sustainable living through natural systems. Ppd. sample issue \$5. Subscription (3/year) included with \$25 annual support of Permaculture Drylands Institute. Dept. C, PO Box 156, Santa Fe, NM 87504; 505-983-0663.

COMMUNITY CONNEXION, leading-edge newspaper in Oregon and southwest Washington, about emerging culture, building a more humane and sustainable world. Send for information about our low advertising rates. Over 200,000 impressions (6 issues) annually, including

over 7,000 copies delivered every other month directly into homes of alternative thinkers. *J. Poling*, 503-286-5402; PO Box 8608-CJ, Portland, OR 97207.

SUBSCRIBE TO COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE. Your source for the latest information, issues, and ideas about intentional communities and cooperative living today. Supplements *Communities Directory* with accurate, current information about communities in North America—including those now forming. Each issue focused around a different theme: Diversity; Ecovillages; Growing Older in Community; Love, Romance, & Sex in Community; Creativity & the Arts in Community; Sustainable Buildings & Design in Community. Reach listings: communities looking for people, people looking for communities. Four issues /year, \$18 (\$22 outside US); two years, \$31 (\$38 outside US). 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093. Or see pg. 27 for order form.

PERSONALS, SPECIAL OFFERS

LONG-HAIRED SWF (28, 5'7", 115 lbs.), environmentalist, nudist, feminist, pragmatic, minimalist, optimistic writer seeks non-religious, liberal, financially responsible, healthy, evolved SWM (25-38, long-haired?) no smoking/drinking/drugs, for semi-rural California marriage, kids. Backpacking, anthropology, homeschooling, community, gardening, massage, simplicity. Photo/letter: PO Box 4533, West Hills, CA 91308.

MALE ARTIST/NATURALIST/lepidopterist wants to share creative lifestyle with meditative soulmate of any

nationality. Desire rural location or environmentally focused community in southern or coastal U.S.; mild climate, near water. Would like travel companion for tropical rainforest. Me: Late 40s, nonconformist, totally nature-oriented; cartoonist, children's books, art, computers, eco-alternatives. No dependents; prefer none. You: Like children, animals, bugs, birds, have sense-of-wonder; creative, physically affectionate; open to intimate bond. No nicotine or drugs. Drop a line and let's explore; bio available. *Mike Axtman*, 1251 E. Lugonia Ave, #121, Redlands, CA 92374.

LOOKING FOR INVESTORS and people for building silence retreat/resort/intentional community in Northern California. Call *David* or *Astrid*, 909-338-9903.

With the Peasants of Aragon

by Augustin Souchy
an eyewitness account of
peasant collectives in
liberated Spain (1937)

as translated by Abe Bluestein
83 pages, 2 new maps, index
\$5 each or \$3 each for 3 or more copies
postage paid by publisher
Ed Stamm, PO Box 1402,
Lawrence KS 66044-8402 USA



RAINBOW RIDGE
ECOVILLAGE

Searching for a spiritual community?
Earth changes on your mind?
Looking for a place to begin?
Then create your vision with us.

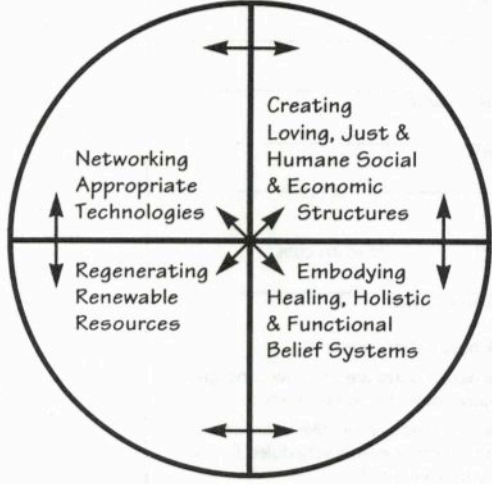
We are an intentional community with homesites on 60 acres of beautiful north Georgia mountain property with trails, ponds, creeks, trout streams, amphitheatre and room for organic gardening. Homesites range from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

(706) 636-2544 E-mail: asapinc@ellijay.com
WWW: rainbowridge.w1.com
P.O. Box 1056, Ellijay, GA 30540

Gaia Education Outreach Institute presents:

The Game of Eco-Village: A Permaculture Design Course

June 5 - 20, '97, Derbyshire Farm, Temple, NH



- Ecological community design •
- Participatory learning • Spiritual practice •

4 College credits available for program running June 5 - 28.

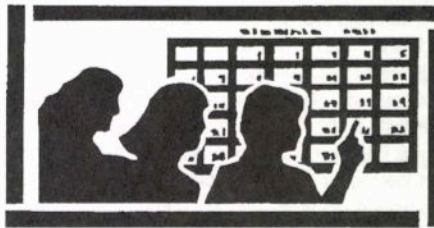
Send for brochure:
GEO EcoVillage Course, Derbyshire Farm, Temple, NH 03084
603-654-6705, or email us at geo@igc.org

Northwest Intentional Communities Association



NW Communities networking
Newsletter and gatherings
For sample newsletter
send \$1 to:
NICA
22020 East Lost Lake Rd.
Snohomish, WA 98296

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



This is a calendar of:

- 1) events organized or hosted by intentional communities;
- 2) events specifically focusing on community living;
- 3) major events with significant participation by members of the communities "movement."

Most of these events occur with some regularity, so this calendar is a fairly accurate template for what to expect next year. Events listed as "hosted" are generally scheduled at a new site for each meeting.

Please send us suggestions about what we might include in future calendars (use form on this page). Also note that the Fellowship publishes a quarterly newsletter (free to FIC members) that includes announcements of and reports about similar events. Information about joining the FIC can be found on p. 76.

Monthly • Community Living Experience

Shutesbury, Massachusetts. Learn the "why" and "how" of community by experiencing the daily life of Sirius community. *Guest Department, Baker Road, Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-1251.*

Mar 28-30 • Divine New Order Community Weekend Seminars

Sedona, Arizona. Learn about structure, foundation of a successful community, based on Fifth and Continuing Fifth Epochal Revelation. *Gabriel of Sedona/Aquarian Concepts Community, PO Box 3946, Sedona, AZ 86340; 520-204-1206; acc@sedona.net; http://www.sedona.net/sdl/aquarian/.*

Mar 31-Apr 5 • Photovoltaic Installation & Design

Iowa. Participants learn practical design and installation of PV systems. System sizing, site analysis, hardware specification, component selection. Special discounts to community members and founders. *Solar Energy International, PO Box 715-C, Carbondale, CO 81623; 970-963-8855; fax: 970-963-8866; e-mail: sei@solarenergy.org.*

Apr 7-12 • Photovoltaic Installation & Design

Georgia. See March 31.

Apr 13 • Meeting, Community-Seekers' Network of New England

Brookline, Massachusetts. Discussion and exchange of information among people seeking to join, start, or learn about intentional communities (and planning group visits to established communities). *Second Sunday of each month. 6:30-9:30 pm, at Workmen's Circle, 1762 Beacon St. CSN/NE, 15 Marcus Rd., Sharon, MA 02067; 617-784-4297.*

Apr 16-20 • Timberframe Strawbale/ Straw Clay Workshop

Moab, Utah. Build community building in a cohousing community in a remote wilderness setting, with Robert Laporte, renowned Natural Home Builder. *505-986-5847; 326 Staab St., Santa Fe, NM 87501.*

April 28-May 3 • Photovoltaic Installation & Design

Arizona. See March 31.

May 11 • Meeting, Community-Seekers' Network of New England

See April 13.

May 21-24 • Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) Organizational Meeting

Edenvale Community, Aldergrove, B.C. Biannual working organizational meeting (formerly called Board meeting). *Jenny Upton, Shannon Farm, Rt. 2, Box 343, Afton, VA 22020.*

May 30-June 1 • Divine New Order Community Weekend Seminars

See March 28.

Jun 2-13 • Photovoltaic Installation & Design

Colorado. See March 31.

Jun 5-20 • The Game of Eco-Village: A Permaculture Design Course

Temple, New Hampshire. Learn about community, ecology, and ecological design by helping create two eco-villages: one for two weeks, the other to soon grow out of 75 acres of southern NH beauty. College credit possible. *Gaia Education Outreach, Derbyshire Farm, Temple, NH 03084; 603-654-6705; e-mail: GEO@igc.org.*

Jun 15-29 • Building with Adobe, Domes, Sweat Lodge

Pagosa Springs, Colorado. Two-week work-study program at community retreat and conference center. Attend for all or part of program, building adobe studio/meeting room, sweat lodge and medicine wheel, erecting dome guest cabanas, gardening. Sliding scale for meals. *Light As Color Foundation, PO Box 2947, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147; 970-264-6250.*

Jul 1-7 • Annual Rainbow Gathering of the Tribes

Washington or Oregon, a national forest. Week-long participant-created cooperative ecological village. Camp out in the cathedral of nature. Free, of course. Contact: *Rainbow '97, PO Box 5577, Eugene, OR 97405.*



TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY EVENTS!

NAME OF EVENT

NAME OF SPONSOR OR HOST

CONTACT PERSON

PHONE

DATE THIS FORM COMPLETED

STREET ADDRESS

CITY/TOWN

STATE/PROV ZIP/POSTAL CODE

PROPOSED DATES OF EVENT

- Check here if dates are firm.
- Check here if dates are tentative, and give alternative dates being considered.
- Check here if you would like information from us on other events scheduled for the dates you have listed.

Deadline: 3-6 months before event. Please enclose information describing the event(s) that you wish to have listed.

Please mail completed form to:
Community Calendar
PO Box 169
Masonville, CO 80541

Jul 11-16 • International Summer Summit

Sunrise Ranch, Loveland, Colorado. Conference and Outdoor Excursion for People in their Teens and Twenties. Live performances, dancing, guest speakers, experiential workshops (w/open space technology), 2-day trip to local national park. \$275; \$210, camping. *YouthSpirit International*, 5569 NCR 29, Loveland, CO 80538; 970-679-4250.

Jul 20-Aug 2 • Yes! Sustainable Living Skills Retreat

Lost Valley Educational Center, nr. Eugene, Oregon. Sustainable living/creating community retreat for youth, 16-25. Eco-homes, solar ovens, permaculture, sustainable forestry, herbal tinctures, organic cooking. Sliding scale, \$625-\$1000. Other Yes camps in MT, NH, WA, OK, and CA. *Youth for Environmental Sanity*, 1295 Brisa Del Mar, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; 408-454-9970.

Aug 21-23 • Twin Oaks Women's Gathering

Louisa, Virginia. Multicultural weekend celebrating creativity and empowerment. Music, performance, ritual, drumming, and more. *Twin Oaks*, 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093; 540-894-5126.

Aug 22-24 • Loving More Annual Conference: West Coast

San Francisco, California. Workshops, events on polyfidelity, polyamory, networking with kin-

dred spirits. Camping/dorm accommodations. \$175 till 3/31. Call for rates after that. *Loving More*, PO Box 4358, Boulder, CO 80306; 303-543-7540.

Aug 29-Sep 1 • Twin Oaks Communities Conference

Louisa, Virginia. Celebration and exploration of community living. Workshops, networking, socializing, and more, for community seekers, experienced communitarians, others interested in community lifestyle. *Communities Conference*, 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093; 540-894-5126; alex@twinoaks.org; Web: http://www.twinoaks.org/cnty/cntyconf.htm.

Sep 12-14 • Loving More Annual Conference: East Coast

See August 22.

Oct 9-12 • "Communal Frontiers," Communal Studies Association Annual Conference

Tacoma, Washington. Sessions, papers on the political, social, and economic ways that communities provide innovative models for life, and the growth of community in the North American West. Social gatherings tours of western Washington communal sites. Ramada Inn, other lodging, camping. *Dr. Charles P. Le Warne*, 20829 Hillcrest Pl., Edmonds, WA 98026.



Abundant Dawn Community

Investment Opportunity

Put your dollars to work in the communities movement and enjoy an 8% return.

Abundant Dawn Community is now forming an investment pool for land financing and infrastructure development. The investments will be secured against the land and improvements.

You can participate in this pool for as little as \$2500.

For information, write:

*Abundant Dawn Community
Rt. 1, Box 35
Check, VA 24072*

call: (540) 651-3781
e-mail: velma@swva.net



**JOIN US—FOR KNOWLEDGE,
GOOD TIMES, AND
COMMUNITY INSPIRATION!**

The *Communal Studies Association* looks into intentional communities, past and present. We write about them in our journal, *Communal Societies*, and our newsletters. We tell people about them—and visit historic sites as well as contemporary communities—at our annual conference, held at a different historic community in North America. Our office is located in the historic Amana Colonies in Iowa.

To become a member, receive our publications, or join us for the fun at our annual conference, contact:

Communal Studies Association
PO Box 122, Amana, IA 52203
phone/fax: 319-622-6446

csa@netins.net www.ic.org/csa/

CoHousing



Want to know more about CoHousing?

CoHousing magazine focuses on the fastest-growing kind of new community in North America. *CoHousing* provides information

about CoHousing communities in every region (where they are, what they're like), excellent resources, and practical "how-to" information for developing and living in these great "micro neighborhoods."

"The Cohousing Network nurtures, incites, and cross-pollinates the movement."

—MILLENNIUM WHOLE EARTH CATALOG

Call or write today for a free information packet or send \$25 to start your one-year subscription.

**The Cohousing Network • PO Box 2584
Berkeley, CA 94702 • 510-526-6124**

REACH



Reach is a regular feature intended to help match people looking for communities with communities looking for people. As the most up-to-date and widely read clearing-house available to you, Reach reaches those who are seriously interested in community.

Please use the form on page 75 to place an ad. Note: **THE REACH DEADLINE FOR THE SUMMER 1997 ISSUE (OUT IN JUNE) IS APRIL 10!**

The Reach rate is only \$.25 per word (up to 100 words, \$.50 per word thereafter) so why not use this opportunity to network with others interested in community? Now we offer discounts for multiple insertions as well: \$.23 per word for two times and \$.20 per word for four times (and you can even make changes!). Please make check or money order out to Communities, and send it, plus your ad to: **Patricia Greene, PO Box 391, Westport, NY 12993.**

Listings for workshops, land, books, personals, etc. belong in the Classifieds section, so please contact Editor Diana Christian.

COMMUNITIES WITH OPENINGS

ABUNDANT DAWN, Floyd County, Virginia. Abundant Dawn Community is currently two subgroups, one income-sharing and one not. We will be a village composed of several of these smaller groups, enjoying the intimacy of family/tribal circles and the stimulation of a wider group around us. We live in beautiful Floyd County, where a vibrant "alternative" community thrives. We grow much of our own food, meet and eat together regularly, and pursue a variety of work. Willingness to

engage in interpersonal work is a core value. We're actively seeking new members, both singles and groups, with or without children. Visitors welcome. For more information, write: *Abundant Dawn, Rt. 1, Box 35, Check, VA 24072.*

ACORN, Mineral, Virginia. We've been living and working together on 72 acres since 1993; now 20 members and growing to at least 30. Values include nonviolence, equality, ecology, cultural diversity, and self-sufficiency. We share income and make our decisions by consensus. Visitors and prospective members welcome! Write or call for more information. *Acorn, 1259-CM6, Indian Creek Rd., Mineral, VA 23117; 540-894-0595.*

AQUARIAN CONCEPTS COMMUNITY, Sedona, Arizona. Planetary Divine Government. God-centered community based on teachings of the Urantia Book, continuing Fifth Epochal Revelation—The Cosmic Family Volumes as transmitted through Gabriel of Sedona. Clean air, pure water, organic gardens and farms now developing. Starseed schools (all ages), medical clinic, and healing center. Founded in 1986. Currently 100 members full-time. International flavor. Growth potential unlimited. Acquiring new land as needed. Some living on land, others nearby. Income from community businesses, work available nearby in town. Gabriel of Sedona and the Bright and Morning Star Band and Future Studios art and film productions. Serious spiritual and personal commitment required. *Aquarian Concepts Community, PO Box 3946, W. Sedona, AZ 86340; 520-204-1206.*

BREITENBUSH HOT SPRINGS, Detroit, Oregon. Breitenbush is a wilderness retreat and conference center operated by an intentional community and organized as a worker-owned cooperative, with hot tubs, natural hot springs, and a steam sauna. We're off the grid. Our work and business ethic is one of stewardship: caring for the land while ensuring accessibility of healing waters. Breitenbush hosts events involving human potential: meditation, yoga, shamanism, theater, dance, etc. We provide housing and a variety of benefits for our staff of 60 people. We are looking for talented, dedicated people: administrators, housekeepers, cooks, builders, and massage therapists. Our mission is to provide a safe and potent environment for social and personal

growth. *Breitenbush Hot Springs, Detroit, OR 97342; 503-854-3320.*

DU•MA, Eugene, Oregon. We are a small, stable community. We have created a calm supportive environment for nurturing community, supporting interpersonal communication and personal growth in our spacious 3-story home. Our interests include: gardening, music, art, feminism, progressive politics, serious and humorous discussions and more. We seek new members who are compatible, have time and energy to contribute, are financially stable and are looking for a well-established community to live and grow with. Visitors welcome by arrangement. Contact: *Membership Coordinator, Du•ma, 2244 Alder St., Eugene, OR 97405; 541-343-5023.*

EAST WIND, Tecumseh, Missouri. A 50-member Federation of Egalitarian (FEC) community, est. 1973, located on 1045 acres of land in the Ozark foothills of southern Missouri. The topography is heavily forested and scenic. Like other FEC communities, East Wind members value ecological awareness, equality, cooperation and non-violence. Personal freedom is important to us. We enjoy flexible work schedules, incorporating choices from our successful businesses and domestic labors. Write or call *East Wind Community, Box CM-R, Tecumseh, MO 65760; 417-679-4682 or fax 417-679-4684.*

ECOVILLAGE COHOUSING, Ithaca, New York. Environmentally oriented cohousing community near culturally diverse university town on the Finger Lakes. The first neighborhood of 30 passive solar homes and a beautiful Common House is almost complete. 176 acres include fields, organic gardens, ponds, and gorgeous views. **COME JOIN AND PLAN** the second neighborhood. All ages welcome. Call or write: *Liz Walker, 109 Rachel Carson Way, Ithaca, NY 14850; 607-272-5149.*

GANAS, Staten Island, New York, G.R.O.W. II (Group Realities Open Workshops), Parksville, New York. Ganas, a NYC intentional community, is now creating G.R.O.W. II, which consists of a small hotel, campgrounds and diverse workshop programs on 72 acres in NY state's beautiful Catskill Mountains. This new country project will add physical fitness, emotional growth and many cultural activities to our lives. G.R.O.W. II programs will begin in 1997. Renovation, landscaping and other prepa-

Blackwater Homestead...Country Seclusion

Located on fifty acres approximately 60 miles from the Washington, DC area in southern Rappahannock County, Virginia, Blackwater Homestead is an established 6,000 square foot residence featuring three large living units, two with fully equipped kitchens, bath and sleeping quarters. Also, there are large, comfortable gathering areas and guest rooms. The 700 square foot great room is enhanced by massive barn timbers. There are four guest bedrooms and two guest baths. The residence houses a 12 x 38 foot indoor swimming pool with dressing room, shower and cedar lined sauna. The screened porch provides a panoramic view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Blackwater Homestead's passive solar heating system and natural cooling provided by the northern air flow directed out clerestory windows, make it environmentally friendly. The hay producing grassland and marketable hard woods are home to deer, fox and turkey. The Blackwater Creek at the border is a haven for duck, heron and beaver. A country estate perfectly suited for a communal living residence, conference center or retreat, offered at \$ 499,959. Contact Butch Zindel at:

The Buyer's Agency, Inc.

Washington, Virginia 22747 (540) 675-1190

rations are happening now. We're also expanding our NYC retail businesses and need new people for both projects. Ganas started in 1980, grew from six (all still here) to about 75 adults of all ages, philosophies, and ethnicity. We meet daily to learn how to communicate with love, truth, intelligence, and pleasure, and to make decisions together. Visitors welcome. Ganas welcomes visitors. Write: 135 Corson Ave., Staten Island, NY 10301; 718-720-5378; fax: 718-448-6842.

GESUNDHEIT INSTITUTE, West Virginia. We seek a permaculture gardener, carpenter, administrator and jack/jill of all trades. Serve humanity in a 25-year-old revolutionary medical project. We are working to build a 40-bed free hospital on 310 West Virginia acres. Want happy, funny, loving, cooperative, creative communitarians. Be an example of joyful relentless service! Must love life, delight in work and enjoy mingling. We prefer volunteers but can pay low salary. This could be a job for life. We hope you like to teach and don't need much privacy. Contact: *Patch Adams, M.D., 6877 Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA 22213; 703-525-8169.*

GOOD SAMARITAN COMMUNITY, Elk, Washington. All things common Christian community based on Acts 2:4 and 2:44 with a mission to care for handicapped children and provide a retirement home for the elderly that is both Christ-centered and Christ-led. Open to potential members who make a life-time commitment and to workers who come for a season to care for the children and the elderly. For a prospectus contact: *Don Murphy, Fan Lake Brethren, 2762 Allen Road, Elk, WA 99009; 509-292-0502.*

GREENPLAN/ASHBY TREEHOME is expanding. We are starting several eco-houses in Berkeley this year and will have more openings, construction jobs, and van pools to rural sites. 510-849-9673.

RAINBOW RIDGE ECOVILLAGE, Ellijay, Georgia. We are an intentional community on 60 acres in beautiful north Georgia. We are dedicated to individual spiritual growth and personal development. Yet, we are extended family sharing core values while living in harmony with the environment, using the Earth's resources wisely, caring about our neighbors, and creating a place where unconditional love and support for each other can grow. If you are a visionary that would like to become a property owner with the goal of building your own ecologically friendly home on a 1-2 (or more) acre site, in a community that affirms life joyously, cherishes children, is blind to color, gender, and age, then we invite you to request our brochure. Homesites range from \$10,000 to \$25,000. Paul, Lisa & Harmony; Colin & JoAnna; Ron & Patty; JoAnn, Lee, Paul & Sage; and Michelle. Write: *PO Box 1056, Ellijay, GA 30540; phone: 706-636-5544; fax: 706-636-2546; e-mail: asapinc@ellijay.com; WWW: otsbn.com/~rainbowridge.*

Athens, Ohio. Wimmin's Rural Co-op seeking more residents. We are an educational, non-profit, tax-exempt land trust on 151 acres with many scenic homesites available. Only 20 minutes from Ohio University, Hocking College and other intentional communities. SASE to: *SBAMUH, PO Box 5853, Athens, OH 45701; ad965@seorf.ohiou.edu.*

TEN STONES COMMUNITY, Charlotte, Vermont. We're a vibrant and diverse intentional community near Burlington, VT. Our 88 acres is rural and only 20 min-

utes south of Burlington. We are a group of people who hold values of community, ecology, and support for each others' personal and spiritual growth. Our land includes woodlands, meadow, a pond, and community gardens, and we are near Lake Champlain. We have 1/2-acre home sites available for \$52,000, including utilities. Please contact *Ed at 802-425-4525 or Tim at 802-425-2263* or write *RR2, Box 2116, Charlotte, VT 05403* for more info.

COMMUNITIES FORMING

ANN ARBOR COHOUSING COMMUNITY, Ann Arbor, Michigan. We are building an intentional community of 40 units, one to three bedrooms. We will break ground in the spring of 1997 on our 20-acre parcel of land just outside of Ann Arbor, but within the city school system. Land includes ponds, 10 acres of woods, southward facing slope for building. 16 units still available. We do not profess a dogma, but plan a community kind to the environment and caring of each other. We seek diversity of ethnicity, age, sexual preference. Especially welcome families with children. Will share gardening, some cooking and responsibilities for upkeep of our place. Decisions made by consensus. Call *Nick at 313-769-0268 or Susan at 313-677-2240.*

CASCADIA COHOUSING, Seattle, Washington. Cascadia in urban Seattle is seeking members. We are actively looking for land less than 15 minutes from downtown, and we value walking distance access to many services and public transportation. We are an energetic, committed, multi-generational group. We hold monthly potlucks to get to know prospective members. Call *Lyndee, 206-706-9136 or Oksana 206-881-6681* for upcoming potluck dates or for more information about the group.

CENTRAL NEW YORK STATE. Syracuse-Ithaca area. We are a couple with a three-year-old who are talking with others about a small cluster of 4-6 families living on 50-100 acres of rural land. We will be as diverse as possible and share a commitment to supporting each other well as friends as well as people working independently in the wider world for social justice. *Joe Pullman, 6635 Morgan Hill Rd., Truxton, NY 13158; 607-842-6751.*

CENTRAL TEXAS. Seeking people interested in starting a Catholic community in Central Texas. To develop a rural, organic, spiritual lifestyle with a calm supportive environment. A co-op community with options of cohousing or independent homesteads. To have a common house to encourage more community activity and to gather for fun, meals, business, worship, etc. Write: *Community, Box 154061, Waco, TX 76715.*

CIRCLE UP SPRINGS, Moab, Utah. Live with friends as neighbors in a rural, off-grid, cohousing community on 124 acres with perennial creeks and springs, arable land at 5,900 feet. Located at base of mountains adjacent to public land. Area characterized by pinyon-juniper forest, cottonwoods, quiet. Mixture of private and community control of land, consensus decisions, balance between group and private life, developing sustainable lifestyles, deepening ties with nature, commitment to honest communication. We envision community activities to include gardening, construction, seasonal celebrations and sharing meals. Construction begins April 1997. Include SASE to *Community, Box 1171, Moab, UT 84532.*

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CLEARVIEW, Moriah, New York. We are planning to buy 184 acres in Adirondack Mountains on Lake Champlain. Lake front cabin, sandy beach, 100' waterfall, rock cliffs, caves, 25 acres fields, mature forest. Earth-centered, spiritually focused, community-experienced couple welcomes co-creators. Good sites with lake views for small sustainable village, common building, vacation cabins for part timers. Sail, paddle, ski, skate, swim, sled, hike, spelunk, climb rock cliffs, climb nearby High Peaks, be gloriously outdoors. (Sailors especially welcome!) Frontage on main road for businesses, fertile soil for organic gardens. Eventually small retreat/re-creation center, campground. We try to follow joy, focus on solutions, consult inner guidance, communicate honestly, love as unconditionally as possible. Seeking emotionally mature, financially stable pioneers. \$10,000 minimum land share, sweat equity possible. Only 1 hour from Burlington, VT, 1.5 hrs. Montreal, Albany. Send \$3 for info: Clearview, PO Box 391, Westport, NY 12993.

DANCING RABBIT, Rutledge, Missouri. We are a group of highly motivated, community minded and experienced adults who are looking for individuals and groups to join us in creating the ideal rural ecovillage. Our goal is to build a small town that is truly sustainable and socially responsible. We would like to make DR a large community with many different sub-communities that interact socially and economically. Dancing Rabbit has moved to northeast Missouri and is working closely with Sandhill Farm, a 22-year-old FEC community. We plan to buy land within 1 or 2 miles of Sandhill soon. We're especially interesting in existing community groups joining us. We've got the energy, the ideas and the money, all we need is you! Contact us now to arrange a visit

and see our new baby! RR 1, Box 156, Rutledge, MO 63563 or dancing-rabbit@ic.org.

EARTHAVEN, Black Mountain, North Carolina. Meditators, permaculturists, celebrators, alternative builders, artists, and musicians unite! Site holdings and resident memberships available in small-village-scale project on 340 forested acres in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Families with children welcome. For "Infopak" and six month subscription to newsletter, send \$15. Earthaven, PO Box 1107, Black Mountain, NC 28711; 704-683-1992.

EARTHSTAR, Colorado Rockies. Spiritually-based community working to create a mountain sanctuary. Under guidance of an inner Council of Light, we will be building a largely self-sustaining, organic permaculture, greenhoused, off-the-grid community as preparation for a planetary vibratory shift. We are growing out of a city healing center focused on shamanic, transmutational healing. We invite all who want to take and hold their position in the one sacred circle of light to contact us. LightQuest, 560 Holly #10, Denver, CO 80224; 303-727-7919.

EDEN RANCH, Paonia, Colorado. Seeking core members desiring rural, spiritual environment, sharing labor and resources on biodynamic, permaculture 65-acre farm. Your own home business or work in nearby towns. Ecovillage concepts leading toward ultimate self-sustainability. Diversity in thought and age, consensus decision making results from mutual respect and trust. Several community businesses possible, help plan your future! Maximum 15 families. Approximately \$20,000 land share, plus cost of building your earth-friendly home. Local housing available while building. Located on West-

ern Colorado mesa, wondrous 360 degree views. \$2 for Community Plan and 2 newsletters. Jim Wetzel, Nancy Wood, PO Box 520, Paonia, CO 81428; 970-835-8905.

EDEN VILLAGE COMMUNITY, Mendocino County, California. How to build an eco-village. Sustainable living, shared stewardship, natural way of life, alternative education, natural healing environment, egalitarianism, finding your people, starting a new world. Some of this should interest you. Prospectus \$3. Eden Village, POB 849, Glen Ellen, CA 95442.

FARUK CREEK FARM, Sunshine Coast, B.C., Canada. A new community forming on 42 acres of remote property (water-access only) about three hours from downtown Vancouver. We are surrounded by hundreds of acres of forest, and lie on a calm channel which leads to open ocean. We are interested in living well but living a more simple, sustainable, alternative lifestyle. The community is intended to be inclusive, tolerant, intergenerational, and viable for generations. We are looking for innovative, productive people to invest in, build, own, live at, and operate individual homes and businesses. Every individual or family is expected to be individually sustainable, although there will be joint community facilities and ventures. Join at the beginning and help decide how it works! 604-883-2637.

GARBERVILLE, CALIFORNIA. We are a homeschool family with 5-year-old. We have been developing our homestead and organic fruit and nut tree orchard on the Mattole River in northern California. We have also worked extensively on land and stream restoration. We do sus-

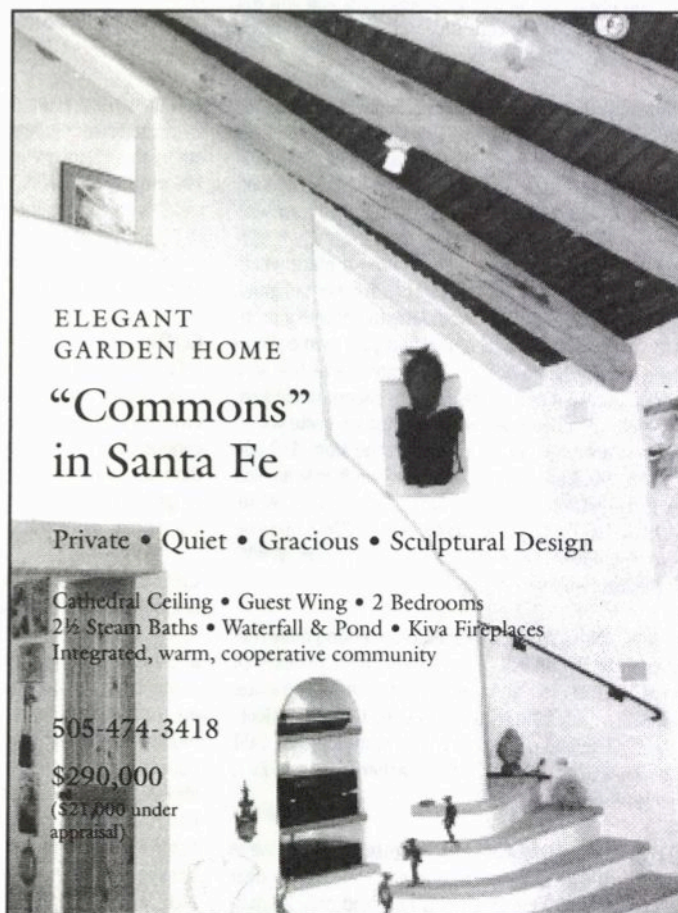
Good Samaritan Community

Forming an "all things in common" Christian community based on Acts 2:4 and Acts 2:44. Our mission is to care for handicapped children and provide a retirement home for the elderly that is both Christ-centered and Christ-led. Open to potential members who make a lifetime commitment as well as to workers who come for a season to care for the children and the elderly.

The working of the Holy Spirit in a community of brotherly love brings glory to God and righteousness, peace and joy to its members.

Located in rural Washington state, the Good Samaritan community will be as self-sufficient as possible, with large gardens and livestock to provide both food and activities for its residents. Our peaceful, picturesque location will assist in healing the body, soul, and spirit of all who come here.

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HILLSBORO, WISCONSIN. Ecologically minded community forming on 110 acres in the ancient hills and valleys of southwestern Wisconsin. Quiet area with natural spring, Amish neighbors, rock outcroppings, fertile soil. Possibilities include: communal garden, maple syrup, fruit/nut orchards, retreat/education center, shared meals, and activities. Join us in designing and establishing a community of people living lightly on the land. *Barb Schieffer, Rte. 3, Box 6B, Hillsboro, WI 54634. 608-528-4432; e-mail: billbarb@mwt.net.*

NAMASTE GREEN, Barnstead, New Hampshire. Permaculture school, naturist camping, polyloving relationships our spirituality. SASE to 373 Peacham Rd., Center Barnstead, NH 03225; 603-776-7776.

NASALAM, Fair Grove, Missouri. This erotic spiritual community is being built on sacred land in the Ozark

Plateau of SW Missouri. We are vegan, substance-free, and dedicated to following a simple lifestyle that is easy on the land and respectful of all its creatures. As an established spiritual organization, we have our own set of beliefs and practices, patterned on traditional paganism combined with the esotericism of the western mystery tradition, but we are open to residents following any spiritual path that is non-aggressive and compatible with the community. We are primarily interested in attracting polysexual (gay/bisexual) individuals oriented toward a polyamorous lifestyle with strong tribal overtones. Please write for more information. *Nasalam, Rt. 3, Box 332, Fair Grove, MO 65648; 417-759-7854.*

PORTLAND, OREGON. Seeking one or two individuals or couple, for shared household/potential community in the Portland Metro-area. We have urban and rural property to share. Prefer those who are well educated in the humanities and are financially secure. Write *John at 2630 NW Cornell Rd., Portland, OR 97210; 503-222-0169.*

POTASH HILL COMMUNITY, Cummington, Massachusetts. On 115 acres of woods and pastures in Western Mass., 25 miles west of Northampton, a five-college town. 13 privately owned two to five acre lots with share in 60 acres of common land ranging from \$23,000-\$30,000. Plans for community building and sauna. An educational arts facility including large stone house equipped for group dining, and three workshop/studio buildings is also for sale to community members. Our vision is to establish harmony, cooperation, creativity, and reciprocity of support. We value relationships, busi-

ness, the arts, natural healing, education, gardening, celebration, and fun. We foresee a community of independent thinkers with the initiative to take responsibility for shaping their lives and their community. Call: *Neel or Deborah, 413-634-0181 or send SASE to Neel Webber, 9 Frazier Lane, Cummington, MA 01026.*

REDWOOD, Los Gatos, California. Forming a small cooperative community, (10-15 people) to provide an extended family for our children and ourselves. Located 20 minutes from Silicon Valley or Santa Cruz, the property is 10 acres with large house, shop, pool, sauna, hot tub, orchards, redwood grove, and large organic garden space. Share vegetarian meals in common kitchen. Interests include: yoga, singing, clothing-optional lifestyle, drumming, high-technology, spiritual exploration, children, and living simply. Shares in community may be purchased or rented. *24010 Summit Road, Los Gatos, CA 95030; 408-353-5543.*

SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE, MEXICO. Mexico's 6,000' central plateau offers year round growing, mild sunny climate. Near historic San Miguel de Allende. Established artist now building four passive solar, two bedroom units on 40 acres with river frontage and good well/ground water in beautiful canyon. Need spiritually minded, creative energy people who want to make 'the good life' a reality on this permaculturalist 'dream' location for community. \$1 for info. *Rick Welland, APDO, 595, SMA, GTO, 37700, MEXICO.*

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ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/SHARING_FUTURES.

SOUTH OF BORDER COMMUNITY FORMING. Seeking members and primitive land south of U.S. Living simply and seeking God in nature. Priorities: spiritual practice, ecological lifestyle emphasizing low waste and recycling all materials, great communication between members, service to Latin American neighbors. *Christine Douglas, PO Box 60, Occidental, CA 95465.*

WALKING SKY RANCH, near Mora, northern New Mexico. 45 acres of pasture land and 55 acres of ponderosa pines is the setting for a ranch house, stables, barn, three ponds, stream, and "acequia." We would like to share this heavenly spot with a small community of three other families/singles, and share permaculture gardens, orchards, etc., strawbale buildings, horses, and the silent beauty of the land. There are two wells with abundant pristine soft water. One-acre deeded building site with the rest of the land and buildings owned jointly. Call Michael, 505-984-1248; e-mail: leelamah@aol.com.

WESTWOOD COHOUSING COMMUNITY, Asheville, North Carolina. Privacy and community. Work space and living space. High bandwidth communications and nearby park and pool. Central community building with dance floor and great kitchen. Optional shared suppers, gardens, office equipment, safe play areas. Radiant floor heat. Cooperative intergenerational neighborhood with 24 townhouses on 4+ wooded acres, in town. Several dwellings for sale, 2-4 bedrooms plus work space, \$126,000 and up. Construction '97. *Westwood Cohousing Community, PO Box 16116, Asheville, NC 28816; 704-232-1110; http://www.automatrix.com/bak/westwood.html.*

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work or combination. Need elementary education. I just want to live and have a lot to offer. *Jeanette, 4343-A Parks Ave., La Mesa, CA 91941.*

TRACKER (TOM BROWN) STUDENT seeks people interested in forming primitive intentional community based on earth spirituality, practice of wilderness skills, and respect for all living things. *Steven McCullum, 622 Robinwood Lane, Apt. 3, Hopkins, MN 55305.*

WALDORF SCHOOL TEACHER from Maine traveling summer 1997—MA, NH, VT, NY, PA, VA, NC, and TN. Researching intentional communities expressing sustainable and/or cooperative lifestyles for networking and slide/lecture series. Rural and urban. If your community is open to a visit, contact: *Patty Kelley, PO Box 506, Bar Harbor, ME 04609; 207-288-2572.*

ties, East Wind, CM92, Tecumseh, MO 65760, or call 417-679-4682. Free (\$3 appreciated).

INTERESTED IN JOINING A BRUDERHOF COMMUNITY? We'll put you in touch with former members of the Hutterian Brethren/Bruderhof. *Peregrine Foundation, PO Box 460141, San Francisco, CA 94146; 415-821-2090.*

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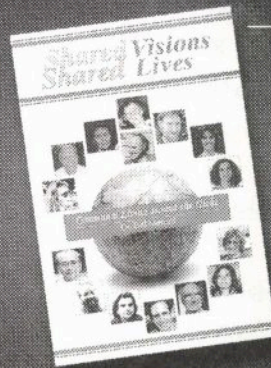
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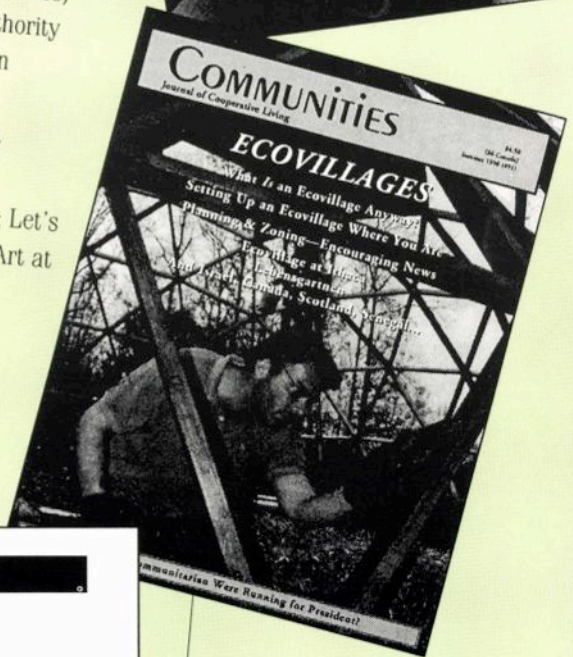
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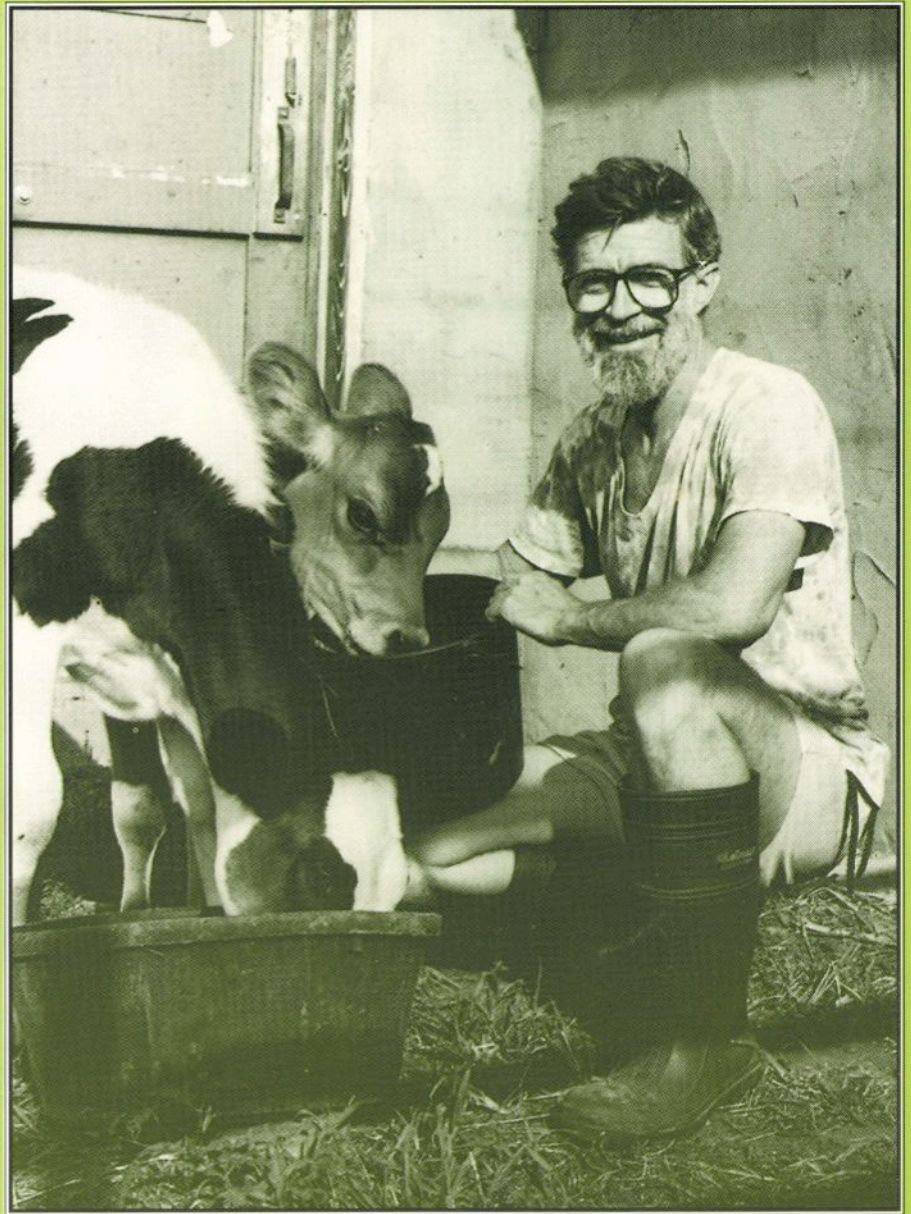
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