

COMMUNITIES

Journal of Cooperative Living

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Summer 1997 (Issue #95)

SUSTAINABLE BUILDING & DESIGN

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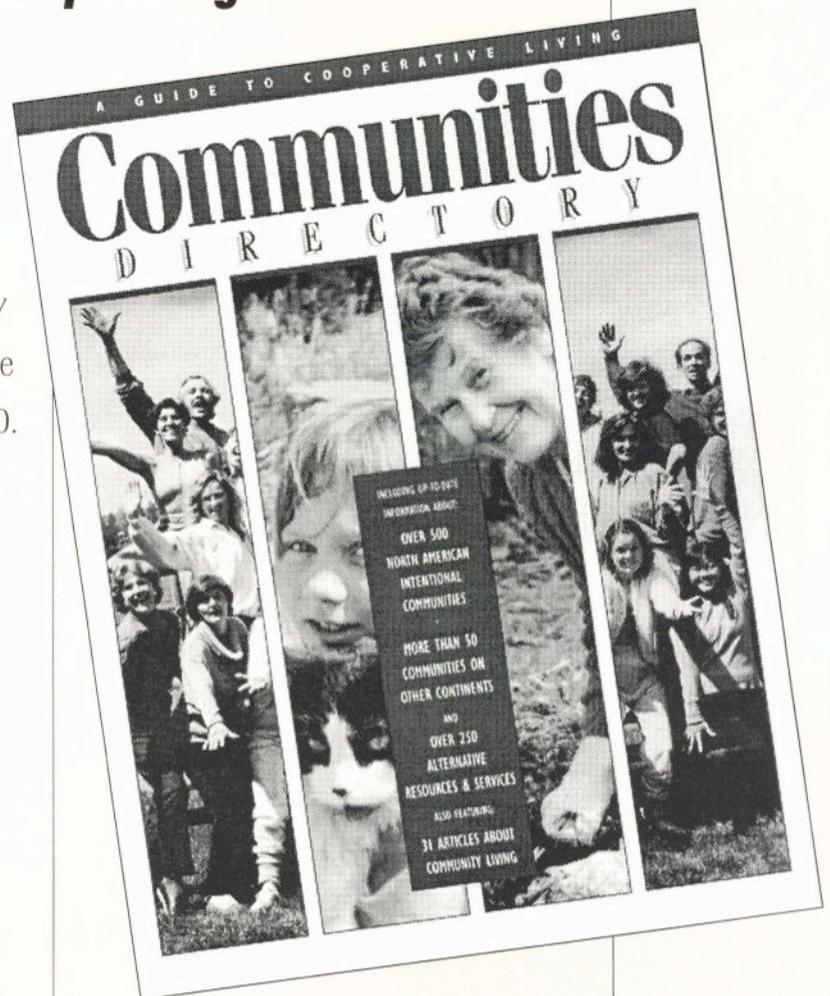
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See order form on page 75.



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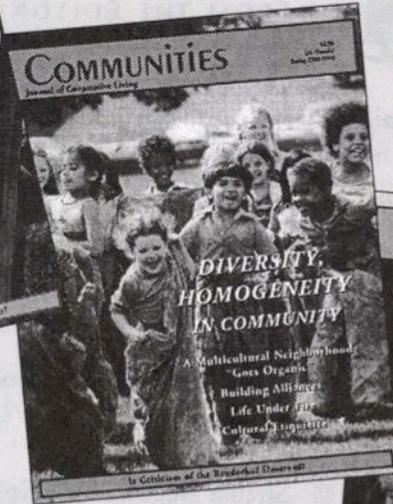
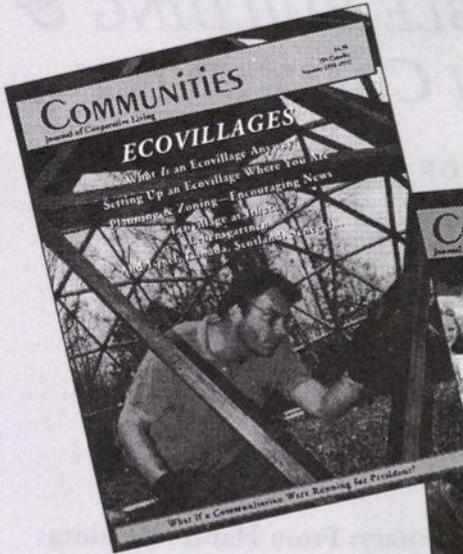
—Kirkpatrick Sale,

Author and Bioregionalist

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co-founder, Sirius Community



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#95

COMMUNITIES

Journal of
Cooperative
Living

95
Summer 1997



FEATURE FOCUS

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Diana Leafe Christian

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Sky House at SunRay
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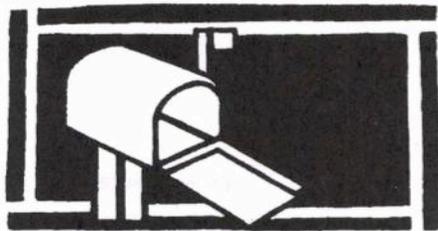
Photo, School of
Natural Living.

BACK COVER

Lois Sellers helps
build a house at
Renaissance
Community in
Massachusetts, 1981.

Photo by Dan Brown,
Laughing Bear
Photography.

LETTERS



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

More on Christian communities

Dear *Communities*:

I recently ordered and receive the back issue, "Christian Communities, Then and Now" (#92, Fall '96). Thank you!

While I realize your intention was not necessarily to be comprehensive, I would have liked to see an article about L'Abri, a Christian community founded in Switzerland by Dr. and Mrs. Francis A. Schaeffer. Branches of this community exist in several countries, even though Dr. Schaeffer died in the early '80s.

Also, there is the *Catholic Worker*—the movement as well the newspaper—founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, with settlements and farms in various locations.

If you do another issue in the future on this topic, please consider including articles on these communities.

Barbara Wheeler
Cedar Falls, Iowa

... And Jewish communities

Dear *Communities*:

Recently a reader inquired about Jewish communities. Though I am no expert, I do have some information on this topic, and I would appreciate any feedback or observations from others.

When one thinks of Jews and community, the Kibbutz movement immediately comes to mind. There are 269 *kibbutzim* in Israel, which are fully communal, both in production and consumption. Socialist Zionists founded most of these in the attempt to turn Jews from all over the world, many of whom were refugees, into workers and farmers. *Kibbutzim* also served as a vital system for defending the country and absorbing immigrants.

However, the experiences of Israeli and North American Jews have been radically different. While some valiant attempts have been made during the 20th century to form various types of Jewish intentional communities in North America, they have not endured over time. I do not believe that there is a lack of Jews who are interested in living communally; while no hard data is available, from what I have seen and heard, a large proportion of Jews are represented in non-Jewish intentional communities and cooperatives.

In my opinion, within the North American Jewish community, the Jewish *Havaurah* or "fellowship" movement most resembles the values on which many intentional communities are based. *Havaurah* members generally study, pray, and celebrate Judaism together, and while most do not live together, these groups are structured on cooperation and participatory democracy.

Additionally, a fascinating community, Moshav Noam Co-operative Housing Project, has emerged in Toronto. Members of a Reconstructionist synagogue, Darchei Noam, have turned a six-story building with 133 units into an "egalitarian, democratic, and co-operative environment," which "provide[s] accommodation for a mix of ethnicities, ages, family structures, and income levels." The members are 75 percent Jews and 25 percent non-Jews from Canada, as well as from Somalia, Ethiopia, Central America, and the Caribbean. Seventy percent of the housing units are subsidized based on income level, and five percent of the units are dedicated to people with physical disabilities.

There are other much smaller Jewish housing cooperatives in urban areas, though they are mostly focused on students. I have lived in Ofek Shalom, a 13-person co-op in Madison, Wisconsin, for three years. Our community tends to be about 50 percent students, with ages ranging from 18 to 32. I am also in the process of forming a Jewish housing cooperative in Philadelphia next year which would attract a more diverse group of people (see *Reach ad*, p. 72).

There is no reason for Jewish intentional communities *not* to exist. Because Jewish customs and traditions are so different from those of the majority Christian population in North America, these communities could provide a compelling opportunity for Jews to celebrate their own culture and heritage in a cooperative and supportive environment.

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COMMUNITIES

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Communities Editorial Policy

Communities is a forum for exploring intentional communities, cooperative living, and ways our readers can bring a sense of community into their daily lives. Contributors include people who live or have lived in community, and anyone with insights relevant to cooperative living.

Through fact, fiction, and opinion we try to offer fresh ideas about how to live cooperatively, how to solve problems peacefully, and how individual lives can be enhanced by living purposefully with others. We seek contributions that profile community living and why people choose it, descriptions of what's difficult and what works well, news about existing and forming communities, or articles that illuminate community experiences—past and present—offering insights into mainstream cultural issues.

We do not intend to promote one kind of community over another, and take no official position on a community's economic structure, political agenda, spiritual beliefs, environmental issues, or decision-making style. As long as submitted articles are related to the theme of community living, we will consider them for publication. However, we do not publish articles that 1) advocate violent practices, or 2) advocate that a community interferes with its members' right to leave.

Our aim is to be as balanced in our reporting as possible, and whenever we print an article critical of a particular community, we invite that community to respond with its own perspective.

Submissions Policy

To submit an article, please first request Writer's Guidelines: PO Box 169, Masonville CO 80541; 970-593-5615; communities@ic.org.

Advertising Policy

We accept paid advertising in *Communities* because our mission is to provide our readers with helpful and inspiring information—and because advertising revenues help pay the bills.

We hand-pick our advertisers, selecting only those whose products and services we believe will be helpful to people interested in community living, cooperation, and sustainability. We hope you find this service useful, and we encourage your feedback.

Communities Advertising, PO Box 169, Masonville CO 80541; 970-593-5615; e-mail: communities@ic.org

What is an "Intentional Community"?

An "intentional community" is a group of people who have chosen to live or work together in pursuit of a common ideal or vision. Most, though not all, share land or housing. Intentional communities come in all shapes and sizes, and display amazing diversity in their common values, which may be social, economic, spiritual, political, and/or ecological. Some are rural; some urban. Some live all in a single residence; some in separate households. Some raise children; some don't. Some are secular, some are spiritually based, and others are both. For all their variety though, the communities featured in our magazine hold a common commitment to living cooperatively, to solving problems nonviolently, and to sharing their experiences with others.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE



All the Numbers Are Up Subscriptions, Ad Revenues, Distributor Sales ... and Net Loss

IT'S TIME AGAIN for our annual check-up on the magazine's financial health. While all of the vital income signs are up, we also sustained artery-clogging increases in labor and printing costs, the net effect of which is a hemorrhaging of red ink. While we continue to be optimistic about the patient's progress, the blood loss—double the '95 drop—is worrisome.

The Fellowship has been publishing *Communities* for five years. In that time we've pumped life into a sick periodical, turning it into the exciting chronicle of cooperative living it is today. Our therapy, focused on beefing up quality while keeping subscription and advertising charges modest, has worked wonders. Since we assumed responsibility for the magazine's care in 1992, we've doubled subscriptions and newsstand sales, and tripled ad revenues. But we're still losing money.

While losses in the early years were anticipated, their continuation is problematic. For the most part, profits from the *Communities Directory* have underwritten all other FIC activities, including picking up the tab for magazine losses. Unfortunately, FIC is experiencing its own financial dyspepsia, and it's harder than ever to shore up magazine losses. Our ambitious outreach efforts have outrun our supply lines, and we're now scrambling to find new funding (preferring that to radical surgery on our overall program).

While there are probably always a few unwanted calories in production and circulation, we figure the road to robust health is not so much through weight loss as more aerobic sales activity. That is, if we just sold more ads and subscriptions everything would look great.

A Look at Our Charts

On the expense side, two numbers stand out. First, printing costs are up \$3,000. Some of this is extra copies—a necessary consequence of increased sales—and some is enhanced features—higher quality covers and tear-out subscription cards.

Second, labor has jumped \$10,000, a 50 percent increase from the prior year. Part of the story is an overdue pay increase for Diana Christian, our all-purpose Editor, who now gets \$1,000/month base salary instead of \$750/month. Another factor is paying Twin Oaks to produce a comprehensive index for the magazine (the work is about half done). Although we only have to index the back issues once, we still have to pay for it. We have also been doing more careful accounting of labor costs associated with circulation and order fulfillment (there is a certain amount of built-in fuzziness here, in that the FIC centers handle magazine, *Directory*, and general inquiries all mixed together—while we're confident of the totals, it's guesswork how much should be assigned to each category—and the assessments can make a *big* difference in the magazine's profitability).

In the end, of course, it's the FIC totals that matter most—not those of the magazine alone. Unfortunately, the FIC figures are worse than the magazine's, with a net operating loss of nearly \$49,000 in 1996.

How did it get so bad? Partly this is due to the elusiveness of tracking and managing expenses from decentralized operations, which delayed discovery. In fact,

we didn't get our first clear CAT scan (Catching Accounting Trouble) until last November. And while the loss sounds terrible (and it's certainly not good), it isn't as bleak as it appears.

Our inventory at the end of the year included 4,100 more copies of the *Directory* than we had at the start, and these will convert to about \$51,000 if we average selling them at 50 percent of the list price (which seems a safe projection given that we've sold every copy we've printed since 1990). Still, that's potential—not money in the bank.

What Are We (and You) Doing?

In the past year, we have consolidated office functions and are now running only two centers (Rutledge, Missouri and Louisa, Virginia) instead of the four we had in 1996 (we closed down operations in Deadwood, Oregon and Langley, Washington). This should reduce '97 labor and rent costs by about \$15,000 (and significantly improve our ability to monitor finances more closely). We have also increased the cover price of the *Directory* to \$25 (up from \$20), and have started accepting credit cards, which should increase direct sales and reduce the time spent tracking accounts receivable.

Because labor is a big portion of our budget, it's tempting to cut back there. But where? Everyone is either volunteering their time or accepting compensation well below market value. While the Fellowship was founded on heroic contributions by a dedicated few, that is not sustainable, and we need a broader level of support to continue operations. Cutting labor would be weight loss through amputation, not dieting.

With no significant fat to trim, we simply need to make more money. Initiatives under consideration include publishing a community building manual, and putting on weekend or week-long community events. We can also try to do more with what we already have—the magazine and *Directory*.

If you're reading this (and want to keep reading these pages in the future), now is the time to step up and make a difference. Consider entering a subscription for yourself or a friend (or extending an existing subscription), making a gift of the *Directory* to your local library, placing an ad in the magazine, talking to your favorite local bookstore about carrying our publications, or joining the Fellowship.

Your patient support is much needed to support the patient. Let's keep our joint project—bringing people and information together to explore cooperative living—alive and kicking.

Laird Sandhill

COMING IN FUTURE ISSUES

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

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

"The Best of Communities: Our 25th Anniversary Issue," Winter '97. Where *Communities* magazine & the communities movement have been, how we've fared, what we've learned from the journey. Guest Editors Laird Sandhill & Alex McGee. *Sandhill Farm*, Rt 1, Box 155, Rutledge, MO 63563; 816-883-5545; laird@ic.org.

"Our Relationship to Money," Spring '98. *Communities'* ongoing financial needs; attitudes in community about creating, having, & spending money; fundraising; security & retirement; socially conscious investing. Guest Editor Jeff Grossberg. 834 Franklin Ave., Santa Monica, CA 90403; 310-288-3522; jeff@ic.org.

Communities Magazine Financial Statement—1996

	Expenses
Printing	\$25,430
Postage	4,459
Telephone	3,500
Photocopying	3,588
Office	1,216
Advertising	2,227
Labor	30,601
	<hr/>
	\$71,021
	Income
Subscriptions	26,495
Single Issues	5,675
Distributor Sales	15,139
Advertising	8,731
Donations	1,386
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	\$57,426

**Net Communities
Magazine
Loss, 1996** (\$13,595)

Fellowship Financial Statement—1996

	Expenses
Directory	\$59,367
Magazine	71,021
Newsletter	443
Interest	3,131
General	40,760
	<hr/>
	\$174,722
	Income
Directory	59,571
Magazine	57,426
Membership Dues	6,723
Web Listings	605
Audio Tape Sales	572
Miscellaneous	838
	<hr/>
	\$125,735

**Net Fellowship
Loss for 1996** (\$48,987)

COMMUNITY GRAPEVINE



Great news from **River Farm Community** in Deming, Washington. Its members will be the first citizens' group to officially monitor a logging company that cuts timber on adjacent land upstream from them, thanks to a new Department of Natural Resources program, The Watershed Analysis Approach to Timber Harvest Management. For years this small group of environmental activists (20 members on 80 acres) has had to deal with the results of the company's logging practices, which have often affected the produce in the community's market garden business.

According to community member *Jeffrey Utter*, citizens' monitoring groups will not enforce the DNR's sustainability guidelines, but will determine after the fact if the logger cut at an appropriate distance from streams, on appropriate slopes, and so on, to prevent erosion and post-cutting herbicide runoff. In six to 10 years when the DNR reassesses logging contracts, if they find that required standards haven't been met, the DNR can choose to not renew a company's contract.

"The best thing to come out of this," says Jeffrey, "is that environmentalists and logging company officials finally got to sit

down and talk face to face. Our real goal, besides better logging practices, is to depolarize the attitudes of loggers and environmentalists alike."

And some sad news from the Pacific Northwest, which recently lost two long-time community activists. **John Affolter**, co-founder of **Puget Consumers Co-op** and **Teramanto Community** in Renton, Washington, passed away in March. "His commitment and discipline to carry out his vision was awesome," writes **Sharingwood Cohousing** member *Rob Sandelin* in the Spring '97 issue of *Community Resources*, the newsletter of the Northwest Intentional Communities Association (NICA). "He was persistent and undaunted by obstacles that would defeat most of us ... perhaps the greatest contribution John gave us was his spirit of cooperative action."

Communitarian **Howard Wechsler** was killed in an automobile accident on April 28. Cofounder of the forming community **Earth in Clover**, and more recently, a resident of **Finney Farm** in Sedro Woolley, Washington, Howard was also organizer of NICA's new program linking Pacific Northwest communities seeking members with people seeking communities to join.

We will miss them both.

Will Washington, D.C., soon be exposed to models of sustainable community living? Yes, if they keep an eye on **EcoVillage of Loudon County**, whose members just purchased an 180-acre farm in rural Virginia, 40 miles northwest of the capital. They plan to build two cohousing clusters of 25 units each, leaving the rest of their rolling woodlands as open space.

"We're excited about the potential of this community," says member *Grady O'Rear*. "The main thing we're trying to achieve is bringing together the ecological with the social—marrying our desire to live in a more balanced way with the environment with a community that's better designed to meet our social needs."

A stellar cast of sustainability professionals will help guide this task, including *Pliny Fisk* of the Center for Maximum Building Potential and *Amory Lovins* of the Rocky Mountain Institute. The community is fortunate in having enough investment capital for this ambitious task, through development loans from several members. "It makes a tremendous difference in our options," says Grady.

Abundant Dawn community celebrated their May 1 move onto their new land in Floyd County, Virginia—90 acres nestled in a bend of the Little River.

"It's a beautiful secluded piece of land that feels like it's going to really nurture us," says member *DiAnne Legendre*. In February members got an option to purchase the owner-financed property, which has a house and cabin, barn, and two root cellars. They're now working out right-of-way issues with neighbors, and expect to close on the land before the end of June.

"We're not going to do any major building or landscaping right away," says DiAnne. "For the first year we'll live in yurts and other temporary structures just to see how it feels." Members plan to use the time to explore, research and plan sustainable ways to develop the land.

Unfortunately not every forming community is able to secure their ideal land. Two forming communities, **Clearview**, near

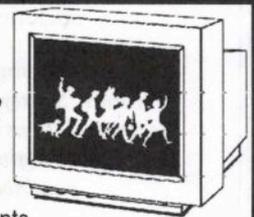
Help create the new culture.

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Special speakers (incl. Stan Dale & Geoph Kozeny), experiential community-building activities, music, art, good food (vegetarian), tent villages.

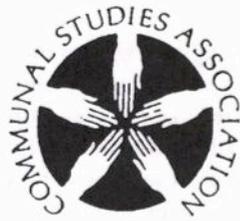
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Lake Champlain in upstate New York, and **Dripping Springs Wholistic Healing Center**, near Tucson, Arizona, recently dropped attempts to buy property because, among other reasons, they didn't have enough capital to handle the cost of rural land.

"What intentional communities really need these days," says Clearview co-founder *Patricia Greene*, "is a visionary funding organization that can lend land-purchase money to stable, financially responsible groups, so they can at least get their communities started."

"Some of the socially responsible investment funds need to be channelled in the direction of helping fund communities and centers of light," adds *Tom Greco*, co-founder of Dripping Springs. "These wouldn't have to be high-risk investments, because in most cases they'd be fully collateralized by the value of the land and the infrastructure."

Good idea. Do *you* know any people or organizations that might be interested in such ventures?

We can take heart, however, in the successes of long-lived communities, whose members demonstrate that community living can survive and thrive—for decades.

Songaia community near Bothell, Washington, and **Hearthaven** community in Kansas City, Missouri, for example, both celebrate tenth anniversaries this year.

A retreat and conference center, **Breitenbush Hot Springs**, in Detroit, Oregon; an Emissary-originated retreat and hot springs, **Glen Ivy**, in Corona, California; **Weslayan Christian Community** in Vashon Island, Washington; and bi-locational **Community Alternatives Society**, in urban Vancouver and rural British Columbia, all celebrate their 20th birthdays in 1997.

Yogaville, Satchitananda Ashram near Buckingham, Virginia, turns 30 this year, as does **Twin Oaks**, a rural egalitarian commune near Louisa, Virginia.

Mennonite **Reba Place Fellowship** in Evanston, Indiana; **New Meadow Run**, a Bruderhof community in Farmington, Pennsylvania; and the social activist **Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest** in Portland, Oregon all turn 40.

The urban student co-op, **Osterweil House** in Ann Arbor, Michigan, is now 50 years old. **Inter-Cooperative Council**, a network of 16 student co-op houses in Ann Arbor, and seven student co-op houses in Austin, Texas—as well as **Pumpkin Hollow Farm** in Caryville, New York—are all in their 60th year.

And the great-granddaddy of them all—the Quaker-sponsored **Penington Friends House in Greenwich Village**, New York (founded 1897)—celebrates 100 years of community living this year!

Congratulations!

For those of you interested in the variety of intentional communities worldwide—past and present—the **Sixth International Communal Studies Conference** will be held in Amsterdam July 7-9, 1998, focusing on historical utopian projects, present-day communes, ecological living, virtual communities, and more.

To submit a paper—*Saskia Poldervaart, University of Amsterdam, O.Z. Achterburgwal 237, 1012 DL Amsterdam, The Netherlands; 31-20-525-4405; fax, 31-20-525-2086; poldervaart@pscw.uva.nl*. Registration information—*Conference Office, University of Amsterdam, Spui 21, 1012 WX Amsterdam, The Netherlands; 31-20-525-4791; fax, 31-20-525-4799; congres@bdu.uva.nl; http://www.uva.nl/uwalaktueellcongres. Ω*

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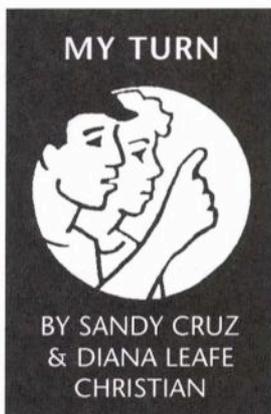
Bloom Where You're Planted!

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

AS THE MILLENNIUM DRAWS TO a close, many settlements around the globe have become unfriendly, unsustainable habitats for humans, as well as most other forms of life. Understandably, many of us are bailing out, abandoning cities filled with despair and suburbs that are culturally desolate. There is much inspiration to start over on undeveloped rural tracts of land, and to "do it right" this time.

We need many models of what "doing it right" looks like. However, let's consider this impulse to flee "civilization" from a demographic point of view. There are now about 6.5 billion people on our planet. We cannot all pick up and move to the country! Perhaps "doing it right" means re-doing what was not done right in the first place, rather than chopping up more land into small plots and disrupting more animals, plants, and ecosystems. Instead, we can create massive wilderness corridors in rural areas, and work towards keeping human settlement to areas *already* developed and disturbed.

Can people who live in urban settings (often formerly some of the finest farmland in the country) create a sustainable lifestyle, a harmonious form of community, and a diverse, vibrant culture? What a concept!



On one block in the suburbs of Davis, California, friends and neighbors came together to create N Street Cohousing. (This kind of project has variously been called "retrofit co-housing," "virtual cohousing," and "the urban cooperative block.") In 1979, two households combined the yards of their suburban tract homes by pulling up fences and replacing water-wasting lawns with low-maintenance permaculture gardens.

"You can't get houses much worse than ours," resident Kevin Wolf told Sandy.

"Flat roofs, no insulation, suburban landscaping where water drains into the streets instead of into the yards."

When Sandy spoke with Kevin in late 1995, N Street Cohousing had grown to 36 adults and 17 children in a dozen participating houses. The community's Common House (another tract house on N Street that community that members bought together) includes a community kitchen, workshop and

shared tools, car repair shop, greenhouse, chickens, sauna, office, computer, and rental rooms that generate extra community income. The community has evolved its sustainable physical infrastructure slowly, expanding and retrofitting the houses and yards incrementally as the residents could afford it, rather than incurring an insurmountable (and unsustainable) debt.

N Street did not purchase or develop virgin land or farmland, as do many newly forming communities. Nor did they build new dwellings with dwindling timber resources. It was truly a "where-we-live-now" project from the ground up. ▶

Sandy Cruz directs the High Altitude Permaculture Institute, where she gardens year-round at 9,200 feet, sponsors courses in sustainable living, and belongs to a community design team. Sandy can be reached at PO Box 238, Ward, CO 80481; 303-459-3494. Diana Christian is editor of Communities.

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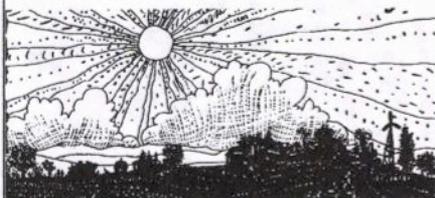
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We have settled in northeastern Missouri and are working closely with 22-year-old community, Sandhill Farm. We hope to buy land nearby and start building by spring.



Dancing Rabbit

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Kevin suggested that to create communities such as this, people might begin in low-income neighborhoods of mostly renters, where houses are relatively inexpensive and absentee landlords often willing to sell. Renters who see a vibrant community sprouting up all around them may be inspired to join in and buy their rental houses, too.

Creating the spirit of community among neighbors is enhanced by a physical layout that encourages “chance encounters” between people. This occurs more easily on a block where living rooms and kitchen porches face the backyards, and where neighbors have established common gardens and backyard paths. N Street Cohousing grew organically over time in a neighborhood where the houses and landscaping were typically unsustainable—but it didn’t seem to matter when it came to creating community together.

“We all really like each other,” he told me. “We will grow old together here.”

Other examples of neighbors creating community on the spot include the Imago community in Cincinnati; the Takoma Park, Maryland, neighborhood described by Olaf Egeberg in “Setting Up an Ecovillage Where You Are” (*Communities #91, Summer '96*); and the Los Angeles Eco-Village (*described in the same issue*).

This promising model can be equally applied to rural areas. We can transform abandoned farmhouses into central community houses and build smaller structures for family housing. By creating sustainable, perennial, productive agricultural systems on the land, we can reclaim the dying family farms and establish a thriving farm community culture once again.

Some communities have created non-farming communities on former farmland, integrating existing structures into their community plan. For example, in 1976 the residents of Tornvengsgarden (“Thorny Field Farm”) near Birkerød, Denmark, turned a thatched-roof farmhouse into their community building and built six small dwellings around a common courtyard. Twin Oaks in Virginia turned the old farmhouse on their

land into the community office.

Urban European communities which have retrofitted existing buildings include Jerngarden cohousing in Aarhus, Denmark, in which residents renovated an inner city junkyard and eight deteriorated row houses into a green oasis with a central park; UFA Fabrik in Berlin, where squatter/residents turned a '20s-era silent film studio into living spaces, performance studios and outdoor café; and Lebensgarten, in Steyerberg, Germany, where members transformed a WWII munitions factory and army barracks into a permaculturally designed Ökodorf (ecovillage). (*See “Our Life at Lebensgarten,” Communities #91, Summer '96*).

Examples abound in North America as well.

Cardiff Place cohousing in Victoria, British Columbia, turned a large house into six apartment units. Monterey Cohousing in Minneapolis transformed a three-story Georgian brick retirement home from the '20s into eight apartments and 6,000 feet of common space. Nomad Cohousing in Boulder, Colorado, is planning to retrofit part of the historic Nomad Theater building into its Common House. With the purchase of its land by the cohousing members the Nomad Theater will have the funds for a badly needed renovation, while community members have a prime location in downtown Boulder. On performance nights the Common House dining room will be used by theater-goers as a cafe. This is a prime example of what permaculture designers call “multiple functions for every element”—and all in all, a sustainable win-win situation!

How can we know whether we are enhancing the land we develop as a community? In permaculture terms, a good indicator of sustainability is whether a greater number and a greater diversity of plant and animal species inhabit the land after we settle there. At Nomad Cohousing, for example, what is now an urban parking lot will soon be lush with fruit trees and organic gardens and their associated birds and other animal life.

So rather than leaving it all behind to form community elsewhere, let’s transform

**Rather than leaving
it all behind to
form community
elsewhere, let’s
transform what
we’ve got!**

what we've already got. Let's find like-minded people wherever we are. Have you noticed? There are more and more of us all the time! Let's create shining examples of sustainable community living right in the midst of the blight and sprawl and alienation of mainstream culture. Community is contagious! Ω

RESOURCES FOR TRANSFORMING WHERE YOU LIVE

The Permaculture Activist, #33: "Cities and Their Regions"

The Permaculture Activist, #35: "Village Design"

Permaculture International Journal, #46: "Urban Permaculture"

These journals are available at \$5 each, postpaid. *The Permaculture Activist*, PO Box 1209, Black Mountain, NC 28711.

Kevin Wolf's articles on N Street Cohousing have appeared in *The Permaculture Activist*, May 1988 and November 1990. He can be reached at 724 N Street, Davis, CA 95616; e-mail: kjwolf@dcn.davis.ca.us.

How to Make a Forest Garden, by Patrick Whitefield
Permanent Publications, England, 1996

Shows how to establish a low-maintenance, food-producing, woodland garden on any scale.

URBAN Permaculture: A Practical Handbook for Sustainable Living, by David Watkins
Permanent Publications, England, 1993

A do-it-yourself permaculture design manual for city dwellers.

The McGee Street Foundation
PO Box 56756, Washington, DC 20040

Tips by Olaf Egeberg on organizing a neighborhood into a "virtual" community.

North American Wilderness Recovery Project

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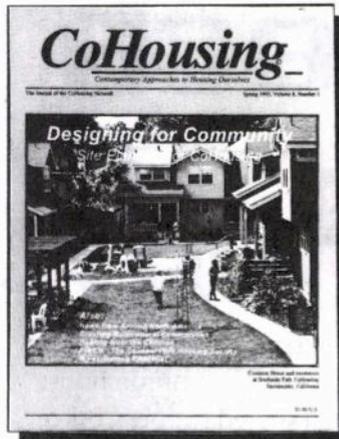
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Listening & Learning at Ganas

Instead of going to college, Margaret and her partner David Cooper Salamon are attending "the college of community," living as interns in various intentional communities.

After living at Abundant Dawn in rural Virginia, they moved to Ganas. They chose Ganas because of its location in New York City, the fact that it is large and successful, and its strong focus on communication and interpersonal relationships.

MOVING TO Ganas was like moving in with a large family. Approximately 70 people live in seven houses on several blocks in Staten Island. At first it was overwhelming! I was surrounded by people I didn't know and immersed in the complexities of relationships I didn't yet understand. It took time just to begin to learn everyone's names. It took much longer to begin to understand all these people, their connections with each other, and their various lifestyles.

Fourteen Ganas residents form Ganas' core group. An income-sharing group, these people meet daily to organize the community's businesses and give each other support and feedback. About half the community is quite committed to the group, and also works in Ganas' businesses, but don't share incomes. The rest of the members work in community businesses or elsewhere and range from people who simply live at Ganas and enjoy their good neighbors to those occasionally involved in the community's activities.

Ganas' houses sit on top of a high urban hill, surrounded by a lush growth of

trees and flowers. Five of their houses are clustered together on one block, with boardwalks connecting their adjacent backyards and gardens interspersed throughout. David and I moved into an attic room in an amiably warm house several blocks from the main group of Ganas' houses. I liked the distance.

It gave me time in the morning for my senses to wake up on my way to breakfast, and walking home at night gave me time to muse over my day or the evening's discussions. At night we could see the breathtaking lights of the Verrazano Bridge from the back porch of our house.

The Ganas houses appealed to me with their second-hand decor, gleaned from Ganas' recycled furniture, houseware, and clothing stores. The houses had all the used dishware, linens, furniture, appliances, and odds and ends you might need. The art of reusing household items, and the random collage of items with unknown histories scattered through the houses, held a certain charm for me. I loved the stories various Ganas members told us of how they had acquired and renovated their different houses and businesses.

I explored the surrounding neighborhood and enjoyed the inexpensive ferry ride to Manhattan. A cheap and enjoyable pastime during our stay at Ganas was to walk through New York neighborhoods and just look at everything or to sit in one spot and watch a world of various interesting people go by.

The community's "Everything Goes" shops impressed me as some of the most



unique and inexpensive second-hand stores I'd seen. Besides their furniture, clothing, and housewares stores they have an art gallery which sells more pricey antique items. Despite my admiration, however, I cringed at the idea of working in a retail store. It didn't fit my idea of what I wanted to get out of interning in a community. For example, I wanted to learn the skill of furniture refinishing, but unfortunately that wasn't needed. Instead, I became a merchandise processor, working with a Ganas member named David. Our job was to sort, clean, and prepare products for the stores. This initially did not excite me, nor did the regular eight-hour-a-day, five-days-a-week schedule. I decided to try it for one month.

I liked some aspects of the job. For example, David and I sorted enormous amounts of merchandise. By the end of every sort session there was a confusing pile of totally unidentifiable items that always made us laugh. It's amazing to see the stuff people acquire and collect! But by the end of the month I felt pretty discouraged by the monotony of the job, and decided to talk to the community about it. I felt their stores were a true gift to the surrounding neighborhoods and I did want to experience living with and working with the community. I told them what I liked and disliked about my job and how the situation might be better for me.

The community members responded nicely by reorganizing my work so I had a wide variety of jobs. I continued to sort used clothes but also experimented with making new items out of scraps of beautiful silk saris. I helped another member in the garden, and I did some painting around the houses. I also went on clothing and furniture pickups and did the inventory for newly acquired furniture.

I enjoyed the pickups the most. Jeff, Chris, myself, and Sarah the dog would squeeze ourselves into the truck cab and drive to the homes of people who were donating or selling some or all of their belongings to us. I enjoyed being inside other people's houses. I imagined the lifestyle and personal characteristics of each household from their choice of possessions (like an archaeological dig through knick-knacks)! By the end of our stay I finally

did get to work with furniture refinishing. Interestingly enough though, by that time I found little time to apply myself to it. My other jobs had become equally important and enjoyable.

Almost every day many members of Ganas met in the community dining room for breakfast and a group conversation about whatever was of immediate importance or interest. They also reconvened after work for dinner and more discussions. Sometimes the members gave each other feedback. These discussions often stimulated many thoughts and feelings in me.

Ganas members feel that the more people who participate in a conversation, the broader and more insightful the group's perspective will be. As they see it, no one point of view is completely accurate. Rather, that perspective is mixed with the person's history, feelings, status, and so on.

It's a challenge to really listen to and learn from each other's differences. By really hearing each other a person gets the broadest spectrum of opinion about the situation, and hopefully, comes to the most informed conclusion or solution.

Every topic at Ganas was always open to being discussed, negotiated, or changed. I sometimes didn't know where a specific conversation was going, because not only did they discuss various issues, but they also discussed how they were discussing those issues. This took some getting used to. Because of my uncertainty I was fairly quiet, afraid to say something that others might think irrelevant. Unfortunately my silence cost me. I often didn't learn from my misunderstandings or get clarity from another person's response or insights.

Co-founder Mildred Gordon wrote (in *Communities* #86, Spring '95) about Ganas' Feedback Learning experiment. She said the community "explores the possibility that self-chosen behavior changes are possible through an appropriate use of criticism, or 'performance feedback.'" She said that in conversations "daily personal interactions, especially those happening then and there in the group setting, are examined closely and related to the behavioral goals of the people involved." She also emphasized that community members try to learn to accept negative feedback as helpful. ➤

**Unfortunately
my silence
cost me.**



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At Ganas I found it difficult to manage my time well. I wanted to be involved in most everything going on in the community, yet I also valued my free time. I was so preoccupied with this issue, feeling torn between community activities and private time, that I was often neither truly present with Ganas nor with myself.

The conversations at Ganas often varied in intensity and joy. We shared a lot of good laughter and occasional outbursts of song. We'd sing wonderful Ganas originals: stories of various members' lives sung to the melodies of traditional showtunes. Sometimes dinner would be interrupted by the arrival of Julie, just back from a trip to the store for groceries. We'd all then get up from the table and create a human chain, passing a seemingly infinite amount of groceries from the street below up two flights of stairs to the pantry. What great community help!

During our stay Ganas bought an old hotel in the Catskill mountains of New York—several buildings with guest rooms, a large kitchen and dining area overlooking meadows, woods, and a pond—which they dreamed of renovating and turning into a conference center. David Cooper and I celebrated the purchase with Ganas, following a day of doubts, anxieties, and serious discussion. This marked the beginning of an unknown, a major change, but a dream Ganas members nevertheless desired to pursue together. Like many other members, we visited the new facility each weekend to help.

My participation in the hotel renovation really helped me grow closer to the Ganas family. I shared responsibility with Leela and Melissa in supervising the preparation and painting of doors, ceilings, and hallways. We made a good team, with complementary strengths and weaknesses. I tried to keep track continuously of which doors still needed spackling, caulking, sanding, a second coat, or a touch-up. A hotel has an infinite amount of doors! We accomplished a great deal with our "swarm" approach—20 or more people focusing on one activity, which resulted in rapid transformation! During this period I worked with and interacted with many more Ganas individuals and began to really feel close to some of them. I re-

ceived some of the best hugs of my life during this time! As David Cooper and I had been there from the start we felt very much a part of the new project and rejoiced with the community as the facility began to transform before our eyes. We and the other Ganas workers encouraged each other, thanked each other, and cheered each other on.

It seemed to me that Ganas had created a warm and secure environment with, as in most groups, largely imperfect individuals who are aware, to varying degrees, of the quirks they'd like to change about themselves. I experienced the strength that comes about when people support each other in their efforts to change and become happier individuals. They've created a rich and diverse family atmosphere because so much is shared.

Ganas also provoked in me many mixed emotions that are yet to be settled; however, I'm thankful for the stir. I learned a great deal from our stay there, especially the importance of good, clear communication. However, I didn't like everything about Ganas' lifestyle (for example, the eight-hour-daily weekly work routine, or the fact that they ate commercial rather than organically grown food), but I do understand to some degree why they made those choices. I initially found Ganas difficult to get used to and understand, but I feel that after several months I finally came to appreciate the community for being so richly and uniquely *itself*. Sometimes visitors came to Ganas and hated it. I believe they didn't give it a chance, because it takes time to really learn about and come to understand a community from its own point of view. I am very grateful that we stayed long enough that I had the opportunity to do this.

I consider Ganas part of my extended family. However, their lifestyle was not the only one for me. After an eight-month stay, David Cooper's and my desire to experience other new places, people, and interests spurred us to move on. Ω

Next time David Cooper Salamon will describe his experience at Ganas. He and Margaret are now working with Solar Survival Architecture in Taos, New Mexico, learning to build Earthships and strawbale homes.

***I received some
of the best
hugs of my life
during this
time!***

What Can Outsiders See That Community Members Can't?

OUR VERY DISTANCE FROM daily life in community, as academics and outsiders who report on responses to our 15-page Communities Questionnaire, may occasionally give us insights not readily available to insiders.

For example, several years ago, one of us (Mike) was part of a three-person research team that visited a community in the San Francisco Bay Area, which we'll call "Sequoia." In previous contacts the team had been impressed by individual Sequoians and with their community's accomplishments over the last 20 years. During this latest visit, which lasted several days, we found most Sequoians to be bright, talented, articulate, energetic, and dedicated to their ex-

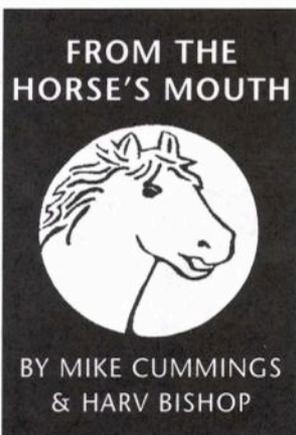
periment in polyfidelity (group marriages, with multiple sex partners and fidelity within the group). However, we were troubled by several aspects of the community— aspects its own members seemed unaware of.

First, the founder and leader, "Don," did virtually no work and was waited on continually by the other members, especially the women. Second, Don sometimes simply announced new policy, which, by Sequoia's official democratic standards,

should have been decided on by the whole group. Indeed, power, influence, attractiveness, and popularity seemed concentrated in Don's own multiple-partner group within Sequoia.

Next, despite talk of holistic health and ecology, the Sequoians consumed large quantities of junk food. Moreover, though a large portion of Sequoia's annual income was "dedicated to philanthropy," we could never get any substantial figures on actual philanthropic donations. Perhaps most peculiarly, the radical, egalitarian Sequoians, who had for years expressly criticized mainstream culture, had recently become large-scale computer entrepreneurs and great fans of capitalism, while denying any contradictions between their egalitarian communalism and their new pro-capitalist stance.

On the second day of our visit the Sequoians pressed us to find out whether we had become enthusiastic supporters of their system. When we replied that we were just getting acquainted with their system, Don and several followers became first cool, then brusque, and finally outright hostile to us. Don was especially irked by positive comments one of us made about Emissary communities. ►



Mike Cummings has a B.A. from Princeton and an M.A. and Ph.D. from Stanford in political science. He has published research on communal and utopian studies, and chairs the Political Science Department at the University of Colorado, Denver.

With an academic background in political science and journalism, Harv Bishop teaches environmental politics at the University of Colorado, Denver.

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Within weeks, in order to give the Sequoians an opportunity to correct any factual errors, we sent a draft of the article we were writing about them, in which we expressed a combination of admiration and misgiving. At the next Communal Studies Association conference, a group of leading Sequoians publically expressed their extreme displeasure with our draft article.

However, when Sequoia disbanded about two years later in a collective rejection of Don and his policies, some of its most forceful former members described their community, in retrospect, as having been "more or less your typical cult." These ex-Sequoians pled guilty to most of the community shortcomings that we had first brought to their attention.

In contrast with the Sequoian experience, most of the communities we have studied in our research (including those as diverse as The Farm in Tennessee, Sunrise Ranch in Colorado, Ananda Village in California, and New Meadow Run Bruderhof in Pennsylvania) have presented us with the opportunity to notice positive qualities that go largely unnoticed by the residents: ecological economics; innovative architecture; lively and creative children; conscientious attention to detail; high standards of work; friendliness toward one another and strangers alike; effective feedback mechanisms; and the virtual absence of social pathologies such as unemployment, crime, addiction, domestic violence, and suicide.

Members often express surprise when we remark upon these aspects of community living which they take for granted, but which most North Americans would view as utopian. "Do you really think so?" is a common communitarian reply, followed by, "I guess what we're most aware of is how far we still have to go." We have found modesty—along with frankness—to be common in intentional communities, especially in some of the most impressive ones.

We hope that because we have no vested interest in the communities we research, our outsiders' judgment may be taken more seriously by the outside world, including the media. In fact, we believe that one of our scholarly responsibilities is to serve as "fair witnesses" for communities unfairly or inaccurately characterized in the media. Ω

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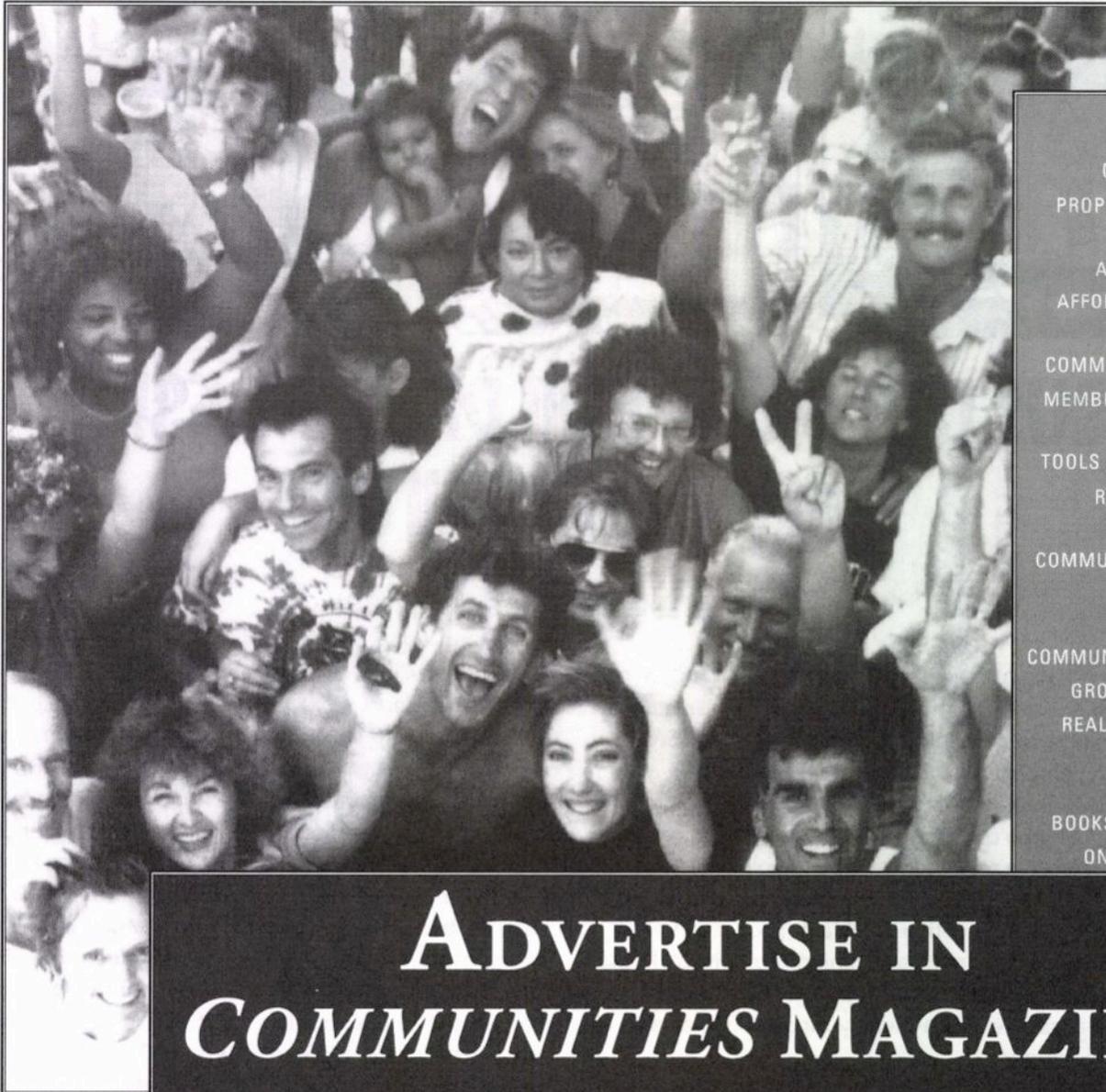
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BILLIE MIRACLE

SUSTAINABLE BUILDING & DESIGN IN COMMUNITY

FROM THE EDITOR • DIANA LEAFE CHRISTIAN

DOWN THE ROAD FROM WHERE I LIVE IN COLORADO, A group of communitarians are building a solar-heated post-and-beam Distribution Center for their CSA Farm. When completed it will have walls of strawbale and cob; natural earth plaster from local clays; a south-facing greenhouse; a *horno* oven; and an innovative walk-in cooler. The center will serve many functions: its cooler will keep crisp freshly picked produce; shareholders will pick up their weekly produce and buy other local farm products there; interns will use it as a kitchen and dining room; it will house classes and workshops; and it will serve, over decades to come, as an attractive, Earth-friendly model of sustainable building and design.

The structure fits my own home-grown definition of sustainable design: one that doesn't require exorbitant amounts of energy and materials to build, requires no or relatively little energy and materials to maintain, looks great, is healthy for its occupants, fosters convivial social interaction, and lasts for generations.

Increasing numbers of communitarians seem to be into this. Get any group of them together these days and what do you hear? "Sustainable" ... "Strawbale" ... "Natural materials" ... "Permaculture" ... "Ecovillage" ...

People are also paying attention to the notion that the physical layout of a site affects social interaction. This idea has been advocated by architect Christopher Alexander, who believes that buildings and town plans have archetypal forms that "feel" right to people and put them at their best, and Danish cohousing architects, who believe that how the site is designed and how buildings are situated on the land affect the degree of community spirit generated there.

So, with great pleasure we offer insights and experiences from various community builder/designers in this issue. *Liz*

Walker of EcoVillage at Ithaca and permaculturalists *Ben Haggard* and *Chuck Marsh* describe the importance of clustered housing and site design for social interaction, from community projects in upstate New York to the high desert Southwest and the deep woods of Appalachia. We learn from *Gregg Marchese* and *Jeff Clearwater* about natural building materials and methods—and natural building beauty—at sites in the Pacific Northwest and Eastern woodlands.

We go back in time, twice. *Bro. Zinzendorf* tells us how to rescue and reuse other people's antique outbuildings: some in his part of Pennsylvania were built as far back as 1755. And *Albert Bates* takes us on a leisurely stroll through the Oneida Mansion House (1848-1881), where we see how its founders used architecture to help foster polyfidelity ideals.

And lastly (well, first actually) is one of my all-time favorite articles, written by my good friend *Buzz Burrell*. Co-founder of a community in Colorado and owner-builder of several alternative houses, Buzz offers humor and no-nonsense advice on what we need to know to tackle an alternative building project. How not to spend too much money. How not to get taken. How not to experience a "year from hell." I wish I'd had this advice when our small community began our own natural building project. (Actually, I *did* have his advice but just didn't listen.)

Well, if you'll excuse me, I'm off down the road to learn how to apply natural earth plaster to the new Distribution Center. They told me to bring a bucket ... and to be sure to wear a bathing suit. (If you wonder why, check out the natural builder on page 24!)

Enjoy! Ω

Diana Leafe Christian is editor of Communities magazine.

A fool makes mistakes over and over. An intelligent person makes mistakes once, and learns from them. A wise person learns from other people's mistakes. —Anonymous

HOW NOT TO BUILD YOUR COMMUNITY HOME

by Buzz Burrell

I'VE BUILT A NUMBER OF houses in my time, including a stick-built, a rammed-earth block, and now, a pumicecrete house.

But the first house I ever built was a concrete slab that's still sitting in my front yard in western Colorado. After three months of drawing squiggly lines on graph paper all I got was a 20' x 24', 8-ton monolith. (Upon which, every muddy spring, neighborhood tots ride endless circles with their tricycles.) I've often thought of digging up the slab, but that would be expensive, and besides it's become something of a monument—a never-ceasing reminder to me of how not to build a house.

Communitarians and owner-builders are usually idealists, risk-takers, and self-actualizers. Communitarians often *are* owner-builders, building their own homes and community buildings, often choosing alternative construction methods. And while building one's own home or living in community is considered abnormal and risky, these are merely returns to practices that were utterly normal for most of human history.

There are good reasons for being so bold as to build your own alternative home. For one, the construction industry is rife with problems.

- *Environmental:* In Colorado, for example, houses account for 22 percent of the total energy use, and construction waste comprises 25 percent of landfills. Carbon-dioxide emissions from home heating contribute a substantial proportion of air pollution in the state.

- *Cost:* In Boulder, where I now live, the average yearly salary is \$25,000, which qualifies one for a mortgage of approximately \$70,000.



A well-meaning communitarian built this inexpensive dwelling 20 years ago in Dunmire Hollow community, with a living tree growing through the roof, and diagonal, diamond-shaped windows in the door. With no foundation, the wood has rotted, and wind swaying the tree has gradually pulled the house apart.

However, the median house price in Boulder is \$229,000.

• **Alienation:** The construction industry has separated itself from its roots: nowadays homeowners basically give up any connection to their dwellings or to the process of creating them. The homeowners' function has become that of "walking wallets," who, feeling anxiety tempered with hope, watch impotently as their future home is designed, planned, and constructed with little input from them—except for the requirement that they now work without interruption for the next 30 years.

Our homes and community buildings make important statements that reflect our values, lifestyles, and goals. However, to break from the current non-sustainable pattern of stick-built, non-energy-efficient, non-solar, "production" homes and embrace strawbale, adobe, or cob is not as simple as it seems. Knowing what is wrong with a system is easy; the hard part is knowing how to do what's right. The transition from the former to the latter is trickier than one might expect—as those of us who have spent decades making assorted mistakes can readily testify.

In this spirit I offer the following top ten list of the "best" mistakes—all taken from my own personal inventory of whoppers.

1. Exploding Budget: Your house or community building is going to cost much more than you think—a lot more. How can I say this, without having seen what you've planned? Simply because, almost without fail, this turns out to be the case. The result of running out of money is extreme stress, awkward half-finished buildings, and relatives who are suddenly poorer for having known you.

2. Expanding Timeframe: Learning how to do something new takes time. Bucking the system takes time. Whatever time you have estimated for building your new house is

almost assuredly too short. This can cause career crunches, more stress, more financial difficulties, and (it's happened) failed marriages. The first summer, your out-of-state friends are happy to stop by and beat a few nails into submission, but by the second season, you are bypassed in their July vacation plans.

Cost and time overruns can occur even with celebrated buildings, such as the residence/office of the Rocky Mountain Institute in Snowmass, Colorado. This innovative, curved double-rock wall structure—once featured on the cover of *Architectural Digest*—was owner-built by Amory



Lovins, a physicist who creates model energy-efficient programs, consults for major utility companies, and testifies before Congress. Here is a brilliant man doing extraordinary work—a man responsible for shifts in national energy policy—who was astonished to discover that the project was taking twice as long as expected, and was more than 50 percent over budget.

If this can happen to the world's smartest guy, it can happen to us.

3. Innocent Arrogance: Because most communitarians and alternative-structure owner-builders see the world from a different viewpoint than that of the mainstream, one that is often more broad, insightful, and holistic, we can be tricked into thinking we know more than the carpenter down the street with 30 years' experience.

Some friends of mine in a small community were elated about their

new building material—recycled-wood wall forms that, they assured everyone, "won't burn or rot, and create 'breathable' walls." Excited about being the first in their state to use this wonderful new product, and by their innovative ideas about creating a natural, nontoxic house, they dismissed the idea of hiring an experienced building crew. Instead they decided to build it themselves with the help of a farmer and former contractor who had brilliant ideas for cutting costs and saving time, who'd work partly for cash and partly for trade. "It'll cost a fraction of a conventional house," they enthused.

My friends and the farmer/builder spent weeks redesigning the house (the original design failed to make the walls support the roof loads) and incorporating the builder's new ideas. Construction was delayed weeks, even months at a time: waiting for the engineer, for the weather to clear up, for the farmer to finish planting. Months into the project my friends realized they couldn't afford the house as designed and totally revised the plan. Then more delays. A year and a half later these folks had a hole in the ground, a half-finished foundation, a nearly empty wallet, and a serious case of humility.

"Innocent arrogance" is tricky because it's so well intentioned. It causes us to ignore warnings, not heed advice, and in general not avail ourselves of helpful professional resources.

4. Too Good to Be True. There is no shortage of articles telling us how to "Build Your Home in the Woods for \$19.95." Believing these fables is the sure path to a rude awakening. If a new construction method is that inexpensive and that easy, most people would already be doing it. The building industry may be polluting the planet, but it's not stupid.

I know a successful, intelligent couple who moved to Colorado to live in a new community that had

Building your own home represents the largest single investment of money and time most people will make in their lifetimes. Without thorough preparation, owner-builders may encounter great frustration, delays, and even squander their money.

—Robert Sardinsky, Rocky Mountain Institute

advertised, “Build your dome home for \$50 a square foot.” In spite of suggestions that there could be more to this than met the eye, my friends pursued it. A year later they had a lovely dome home they’re completely happy with—at a cost of \$130 a square foot.

5. Apples to Apples. Houses *can* be built for very little money—if you don’t have to comply with code; if you don’t need a mortgage or fire insurance; if you get used materials; if you contribute a lot of free work, etc. When comparing building systems, suppliers, or results, beware the trap of not making a fair comparison. The straw bales for your walls may cost only \$400, but that doesn’t mean your completed strawbale house might not end up at \$100,000+. Furthermore, those inexpensive walls will probably require more expensive plumbing, electrical work, and finish treatments.

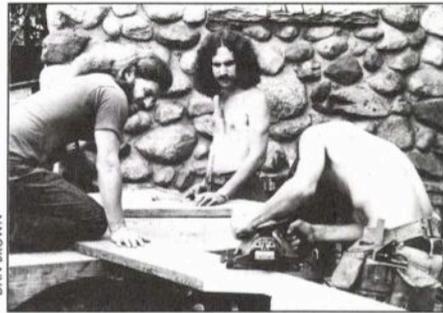
An architect friend who specializes in strawbale design and construction gets many queries from people who want him to design their strawbale house. When he says it will cost about \$100 a square foot, they’re shocked. “But what about that article in *Mother Earth News*?” they plead.

If you want all the amenities we’ve come to expect in a house, and you live in a county that enforces code, then an alternative house is going to cost you the same as—if not more than—a conventional one.

6. “Bluejeans and a Beard.” Please excuse the generalization, but I’ve noticed that if a woman owner-builder has no idea what she’s doing,

she will ask for advice. If a man has no idea what he’s doing, he will pretend to know. Thus, if the former encounters the latter, very bad advice may result.

Another friend is building a timberframed clay-straw house on a butte with a spectacular view in



western Colorado. She’d never built before, and asked a neighbor for advice. He convinced her to extend her greenhouse area across the entire front of the building (“It’ll only cost about \$800 more”) and told her how to angle the rafters for the roof. Now, many thousands of dollars later, she realizes that the greenhouse extension was several orders of magnitude more expensive than quoted, and her new roof has a pitch too low for the snow load at her elevation. “Don’t believe someone just because he knows *more* than you do,” she advises. “That still doesn’t mean he knows *enough*.”

7. New Age Prophets. If a person shares your philosophy, lifestyle, and vernacular, you will tend to follow his or her advice, even if the person has an unproven track record in building. However, your house won’t notice anyone’s philosophy. It will simply perform according to the laws of physics.

My same friend with the clay-straw project paid all travel expenses to bring a timberframe expert—an eloquent, even poetic, advocate of natural building—to Colorado to conduct a workshop in these arts. Halfway through the workshop she noticed there didn’t seem to be enough vertical posts to support a beam over a wide expanse.

“Er, what’s going to hold up the second floor?” she asked.

“It will become ... apparent,” sniffed the natural building guru.

Except that it never did, and in a few weeks the beam began to sag. An engineer gave my friend a series of consultations, instructing her to install posts at strategic load-bearing points. Good advice—at several hundred dollars a pop.

8. Cheap Labor. When the plan is good and the people know what they’re doing, buildings get built at amazing speeds. When workers are not experienced, things don’t get built at speeds equally amazing.

The first construction crew that the Rocky Mountain Institute used was a bevy of enthusiastic volunteer interns, attracted by Amory Lovins’ fame and the opportunity to work on one of the first passive-solar buildings in the country. But soon it became alarmingly clear that the Institute was spending more money *feeding* the free workers than if they had paid a professional crew full wages. The job was finished with professionals.

9. Rose-Colored Glasses. If your best and most trusted friend tells you it will cost \$100,000 to build your

proposed house, and a complete stranger says it will cost you \$70,000—you will tend to believe the complete stranger. Remarkable but true.

10. Owner Malfunction. When the stress gets too high and the bank account too low, the owner/builder might finally cave in under the weight of the unfamiliar. The project now is in serious trouble. It will probably still get done; it will still turn out surprisingly well, but only after “a year of living hell,” as the couple with the \$130 per s/f dome recently described it.

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY.

With the above in mind, here are five suggestions that can lead to homebuilder happiness.

1. Cost Plus. Take your best and most realistic estimate of costs, and then add 20 percent. That is about what your house will cost, and that is how much money you'd better have available. If you don't have that much money, then cut back on the house plans—now. Once under construction, cost-cutting is a very inelegant procedure that is painful, results in a clumsy finished product, and can initiate phone calls to lawyers. If you



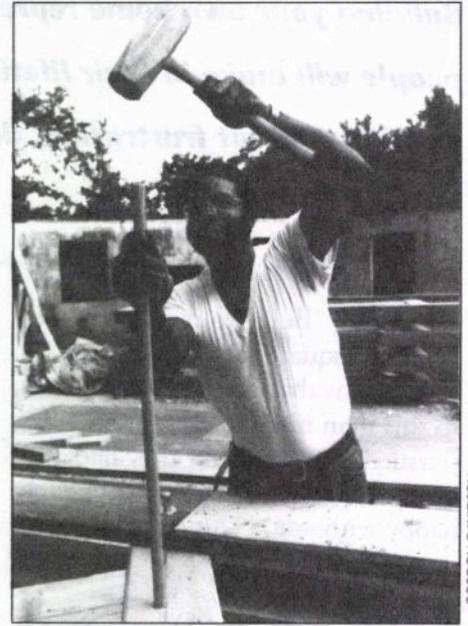
SIRIUS COMMUNITY

haven't yet done a thorough budget, then add 50 percent, maybe 100 percent to whatever you've been thinking. And then get right on that budget—it's a more important tool to you than all the power saws in the world.

2. Time Plus. The Time Multiplier is even bigger than the Cost Multiplier, so add 33 percent to your well-researched timetable. Interestingly, this ratio is uncannily accurate at any stage of the game: whether in the initial planning stages or laying down the carpet, the move-in date is always one-third farther away than you think. Again, if you have not done a realistic timetable then it's better to *double* the estimated time to completion. If you cannot afford to be off a paying job that long, or if winter is rapidly approaching, then the best time to make a new plan is *now*.

3. Make It Easy. Reinventing the wheel is hard work. Since building houses is hard enough already, take steps to make the process more reasonable:

- Listen to criticism; it may be the most helpful advice you ever get.
- Observe failures; they offer good information.
- Talk to your building code official before you do anything else. Listen to the official's concerns, and then address them.
- Make friends with experienced locals and find out who does what in your area.
- Visit completed projects of the type of alternative construction you wish to do.
- Learn something of standard commercial building practices. These will still be the basis of your project, no matter what progressive method you will be employing.
- If this is your first building project, don't be too ambitious. The solar-collecting, heat-storing, garbage-recycling, food-producing fish pond in the living room can wait till your next house.



GORDON DAVIDSON

4. Get Good People. You're not going to do it alone, so this is important:

- Consider hiring a builder who can manage all the technical aspects. You should decide the outcome; he or she can provide the means to get there.
- It's *nice*, but not essential, to have workers who share your philosophy. It *is* essential that your workers know how to do the work.
- It is imperative to have excellent communication with the people you work with, especially your main contractor.

5. You Are the Overall Manager. Understand this role, understand its implications and requirements, and then do a good job of it. It is not necessary for you to know how to calculate the mitre-angles on hip rafters, or the correct proportions of gypsum, sand, and water in the finish coat of stucco, unless you are truly building your own house by yourself (which is uncommon). It is only necessary for you to hire people who *do* know how to do these things. Owner-builders can get caught up in fun details, and sometimes don't do the really important but boring tasks. So don't forget to:

- Create a good budget, refine it,

and use it continually from start to finish.

- Hire, consult, or form some type of relationship with a qualified builder, mentor, or advisor.

- Perform adequate research and feasibility studies. Check people's references.

- Write and sign clear contracts with all your contractors.

- Set the best example you can—of happiness, honesty, excellence, humility, and courage.

Building your own home is much like having a child: it's an instant reality check on your self-image; it's a path of great pain and great joy; it's something that used to be easy but in today's world is quite tricky and expensive; and it's a process of incredible growth and learning. The practice of building our own homes is what this society needs to re-establish, not only for the sake of our environment, but for the sake of our souls.

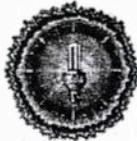
Without question, the world needs people like you, who are ready and willing to apply their personal philosophies to the real world. It can be done—you can physically manifest what your heart, spirit, and ideals envision—but not without a great deal of skill, energy, help, and intelligence. We must synthesize the home-building knowledge that exists now with the home-building knowledge that has come before: that is the future. Ω

Having never before built even a birdcage, Buzz Burrell constructed his first house (a canvas geodesic dome) in 1974. He recently finished a solar adobe house, is currently building a 5,300 sf house using pumicecrete, and is project manager for and member of the Geneva Community, a cohousing project on 176 acres north of Lyons, Colorado.

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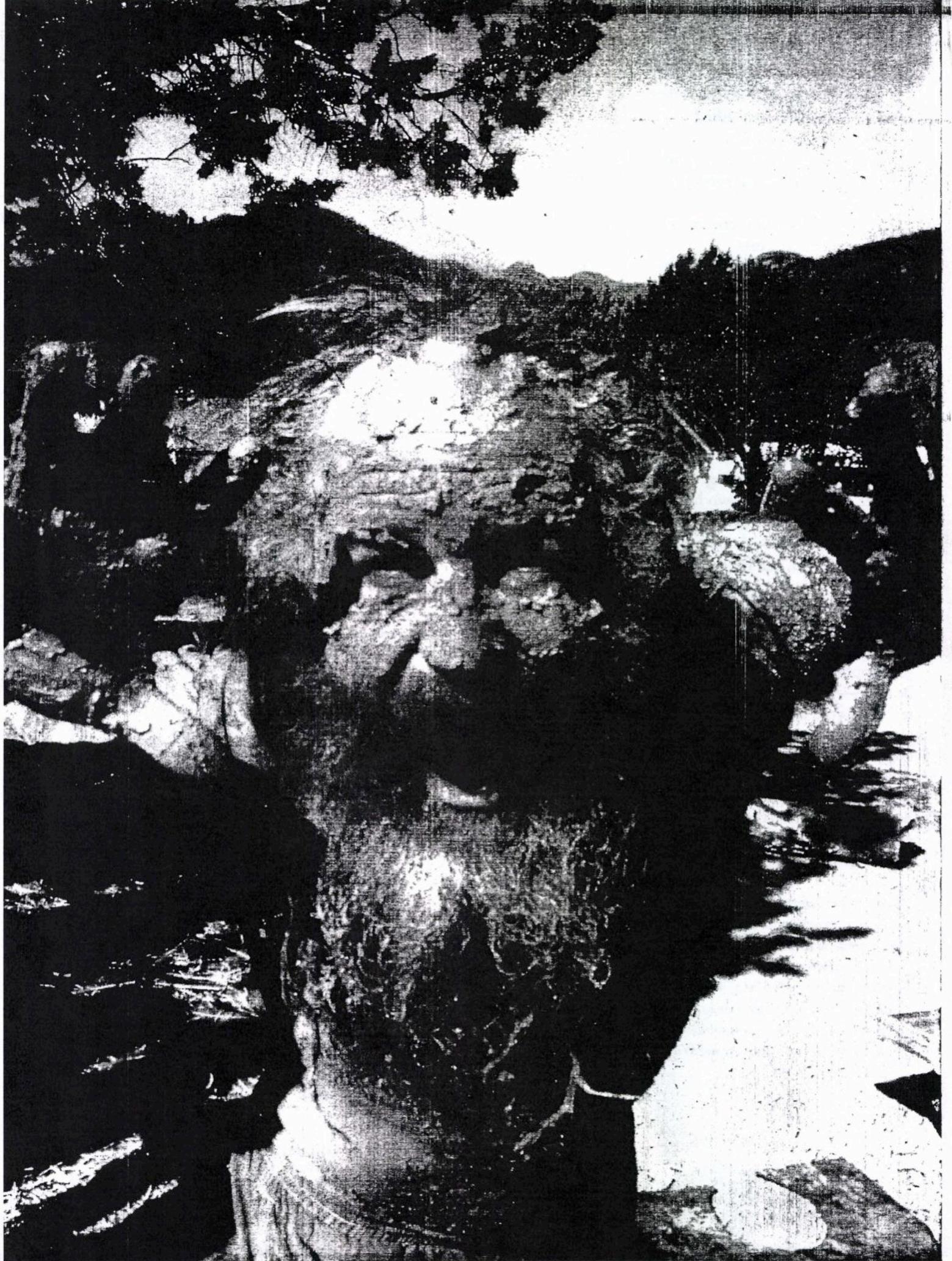


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Building with Nature, Earth, & Magic

by Gregg Marchese

IT'S A SCENE RIGHT OUT OF TOLKIEN. ELVES and gnomes must have come out of the mist to create these dwellings—curved cottages of tree poles and cedar shakes, sculpted earthen walls, convoluted stone foundations. Roofs curve and soar like fronds or bird wings; some are topped by grass or moss.

They rise like mushrooms in a 12-acre meadow on a ridge in northwest Washington, surrounded by a fir and cedar forest that looks west across the Skagit River Valley to Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains beyond. Amidst conifers, apple orchards, berry patches, and vegetable gardens, the structures in this Ecotopian fantasy world were not built by elves and dwarves at all, but by SunRay Kelley and various crews of volunteers and apprentices over the years. SunRay has lived on this land all his life, as has his father and grandfather before him. He, his wife Judy, and three teenagers form this small community, along with two other couples, a single man, two part-time apprentices, and some new folks starting up a yoga retreat and bed and breakfast. SunRay's School of

Natural Living is also here, where he conducts workshops on the art of natural building.

"Natural building is a matter of focusing," says SunRay. "We concentrate our energy on the task at hand—creating a home. We use the skill of envisioning, which is seeing the structure in our minds, commonly called 'design.' We break the mold of square boxes and are free to imagine, using nature—both the world around us and our own inner nature—as a model for unique, livable, and living homes that express our own souls and the soul of nature. We use the skill of creating, which means taking that vision and making it a solid reality in the physical world, commonly called 'building.' There's more to natural building than swinging a hammer," he grins, "though we do that too."

It began 23 years ago, with SunRay's first building, the Earth House: two stories of open floor plan below and a cathedral loft above, with two bedrooms like wings on either side and two attached greenhouses. The roof fans out from a high point and sweeps down in a smooth arc on all sides to short vertical walls, plastered outside with stucco and lined inside with cedar. All the timber framing was done with round, unmilled logs collected from windfalls in the forest. The roof/walls are of split cedar shakes, now growing a beard of rich, green moss. Earth House is abundant with artistic touches: a carved wooden door, stained glass throughout, a goddess-shaped

OPPOSITE

SunRay Kelley at work. Is there an Earth-building gnome in each of us?

Expenses, So Far, of Unfinished 1,200 sq/ft Strawbale Building



concrete pour	\$ 500	nine cubic yards
lumber milling	125	1,000 bd ft., delivered to mill
radiant floor heating		
tubing	100	250 ft. @ 40¢/ft.
headers	10	4-hole pipes
fittings	40	
gauge, piping	0	(found on site)
borrowed items	0	(tools, silicon, inserts, barb & hose clamp splice kit)
133 straw bales	200	@ \$1.50 per bale
septic system	1,200	tank, etc.
Torchdown sheeting	215	39' x 33' roll, @ \$40 each
torch attachment	60	
dome	100	
t & g planking	?	
roof bales	?	
electrical supplies	60	
foundation rock	0	free from local quarry, free labor (work/trade)
osb (oriented strand board)	80	
shake liner, 4 rolls	35	
5" Dacro screen	25 (?)	
sealants	15	
wire and clamps	10	
caulking	15	
6' Reflectix	15	
wood glue	5	
12 bags portland cement	90	
cable, clamps, buckle	10	
8' x 12" hardware cloth	15	
fiberglass base	45	
nails, screws	50	
chimney tile	200	
all labor	0	
on-site tools, equipment	0	
Total So Far:	\$3,250	

carved soapstone fireplace, and cast bronze hands lovingly holding up the rafters.

"I learned a lot from my first home," SunRay says. "Now I'd use more insulation, and better protect the wood in the greenhouse from rot. And I'd put the kitchen in the southeast instead of the northwest, for more lighting."

"These days I like strawbale, cob, and living roofs," he adds, "though I still love working with wood. Here in the Pacific Northwest we have some of the greatest building materials on Earth. The beautiful cedar, fir, and other woods are a blessing for our creating. We gratefully take from the forest what it offers, because I believe that the spirit of the wood wants to be taken by human hands and shaped into something new. It wants to be used so it can in a sense live again as beautiful and functioning parts of our homes or as sculpture. That's how we honor the wood and the forest."

Subsequent buildings include the four-story Sky House with its radiant floor woodshop and greenhouse,

Here all buildings exhibit an awareness of the four elements.

and a round yoga studio. The latter was constructed of 16 modular wall and roof panels pre-built in the shop, and features an embedded wood timber-framed and earth-sculpted, definitely feminine entryway, with diamond-shaped windows and pink plastered walls with mica flakes that sparkle in the light. The latest building project is a round timber-frame structure with a stone foundation, strawbale walls, and a "living" sod roof.

Costs for these buildings are hard to figure. Some of the materials—especially wood and clay—come from the site, while most of the labor has been provided by volunteers or workshop participants. A boom truck, dump truck, tractor, and power tools are already on site. There has also been some bartering for labor and materials. In natural building, materials are usually cheaper than in conventional building; however, projects may require more, or less, labor, depending on the material and the workers' skills. But labor generally requires fewer technical skills and tools. (*However, see "How Not to Build Your Community Home," p. 19.*)

Timber framing—the core of many structures here—is an ancient technique, native to Europe and Asia alike, for joining wood poles in the round, with logs not milled into dimensional lumber. Timber framing uses wood that is too small in diameter for saw logs, but which is strong and beautiful when used as round posts and beams. Joints are made by cutting saddle-shaped notches in

upright posts, in which joists and rafters are laid, or by carving holes in the underside of ridge beams where posts can be inserted. Gravity holds timber framing all together. Often ridge beams are curved to give the roof and overall house an organic shape; this beautifully utilizes curved logs usually considered worthless for milling.

Here all buildings exhibit an awareness of the four elements, in terms of their proportion, placement, and joining. Earth is honored with stone, mud, wood and straw; fire with fireplaces made of cob or soapstone or conventional brick. These use the Rumford design, with a shallow but tall fire area, where logs burn vertically and their heat is thrown back into the room. Water is present with radiant floor heating, with tubing set in concrete slabs or earthen floors of poured adobe. Air enters through porous strawbale and earthen walls that act as passive air-exchangers, warming fresh outside air in the winter and cooling it in the summer. Porous earthen plasters without concrete stucco are used in these buildings so the walls can still “breathe.” (Regrettably most codes for strawbale require concrete on the exterior, though the substitution of lime, gypsum, wheat paste, horse manure, cactus juice, or even Elmer’s Glue can make non-concrete earthen plasters quite durable against weather.)

Nature is ever the model. Rocks stay close to the ground, trees soar upright and branch out, floors are of earth, walls are of straw with earth plaster. Whenever possible elements are arranged as they are in nature—although sometimes rules are broken and the trickster emerges, such as an upside-down tree, its rootball whimsically poking up in the air.

Roofs can also be created in more healthy, beautiful, and sustainable ways than conventional metal roofs or asphalt shingles. The latest technique used here is a living roof that can grow grasses, wildflowers, or ground cover such as strawberries. After the framing was up and the rafters on, rough-cut 14" cedar planks were overlapped across the rafters. As the roof is curved and hollowed, these planks were able to bend and follow the curves easily. Then Torchdown, a rubbery sheeting coated on one side with a tar-like substance, was laid on. The tar was heated with a propane torch until gooey, then stuck to the planks. Other Torchdown sheets were overlapped until a waterproof membrane covered the entire roof. Then a grow medium of sod was thrown over the Torchdown. (Straw, soil, or wood chips can also be used.) Throw in grass, herb, or wildflower seeds. Just add rain, and watch it grow. A living roof like this provides insulation, natural beauty—and no loss of green growing area! Torchdown, the only non-organic material, costs \$40 for a 39" x 33' roll, and covers 100 square feet. It’s tear-proof, waterproof, and all but eternal when covered with earth. ►



PHOTOS, SCHOOL OF NATURAL LIVING

TOP

SunRay Kelley finished the timber framed Earth House with split cedar shakes and shingles, attached greenhouses, carved doors, stained glass, and cast bronze hands that hold up the rafters.

MIDDLE

This round yoga studio with its “Goddess” entryway is sculpted of cob, a mixture of clay, sand, soil, straw, and water.

BOTTOM

Strawbale is the newest alternative building technique in this community. Note the stone foundation.

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One of the best natural materials, and one regaining popularity in alternative building circles, is cob—an earthen mix of sand, clay, soil, straw, and water. These materials are combined on a tarp in optimum ratios depending on the desired use and quality of the soils on site. The materials are mixed by walking on them and blending them together until uniform. Then they are laid wet upon a stone or rubble foundation and built up slowly and methodically to form a monolithic wall. Cob can be sculpted into curves, set with bottles, or decorated with rocks and shells. It is durable when raised off the ground above the splash zone, overhung with ample eaves, and plastered on the exterior. Cob's great earthen mass keeps houses warm in winter and cool in summer. Its amazing acoustical qualities produce a soft, hushed interior. Cob is healthy to live in, dirt cheap, and a joy to behold. No wonder people around the world have been using cob for millennia.

Light is an important aspect of natural building, especially in the cloudy Northwest. All the houses here take advantage of southern exposures with windows or attached greenhouses. The glazing reveals beautiful views and keeps a connection with nature even indoors, helping occupants feel part of the landscape. Nature is invited in, enticing the residents outside.

This community values beautiful, healthy, natural structures that people feel good about building and living in. The stone, soil, trees, and straw in these buildings have used little energy in their processing, packaging, shipping, or production, and will return to the Earth without landfilling or causing pollution. Many are alternatives to products from a lumber industry that is destroying our forests and causing numerous problems with surface water, wildlife, air quality, and global warming. Straw is often burned as an agricultural waste, contributing to the greenhouse effect. However, as a building material straw is cheap, quick and easy to install, provides R-40 to R-50 insulation value, and, as it "breathes," allows good indoor air quality. Earth, the most common building material in the world, is cheap, healthy, durable, benign, and can be sculpted into beautiful shapes. And these materials contribute no harmful chemical contaminants to indoor air. But the most sacred aspect of buildings of these materials is how well and healthy the people feel who work and play within them—the heart of creating with nature.

Human beings are here to perceive the beauty of the natural world, and then express it through their hands, hearts, and minds. Our buildings can be works of art that blend in with and enhance the natural world, sheltering us as natural beings in a living world.

"The Earth is not dirty," SunRay often says, grinning through his typical end-of-day mask of dirt, hair tangled with straw, hands waving emphatically in mud-coated gestures. He must be some kind of magical creature ... an elf, dwarf, or gnome. Perhaps such an Earth-loving, home-building creature lives in every one of us, just waiting to come out. Ω

Gregg Marchese has served as an intern at the School of Natural Living.

Upcoming workshops at the School of Natural Living include Plastering, Strawbale Building, Timber Framing, and Cob. (See "Community Calendar," p. 68.) For more information about the school, 206-781-3525; e-mail: jkelley@ncia.com; 1356 Janicki Rd., Sedro Woolley, WA 98284.

Overnight accommodations are available at the community's bed and breakfast, 360-854-0413.



ZUNI MOUNTAIN SANCTUARY

From Habit to Habitat

by Ben Haggard

“SO WHERE ARE YOU PLANNING TO BUILD your house?”

“Over there.” Owl points to a rocky knoll, covered in pinyon, overlooking a broad valley behind the community house at Zuni Mountain Sanctuary (ZMS). We walk toward the site, climbing out of the grassy bottomland onto treed slopes. I scan the spot Owl has chosen as he describes the building to me. I understand why he’d want to be here: good solar access, privacy, views of the black lava flows of the Malpais, and a strong sense of place. I immediately hunt for a tactful way to dissuade him.

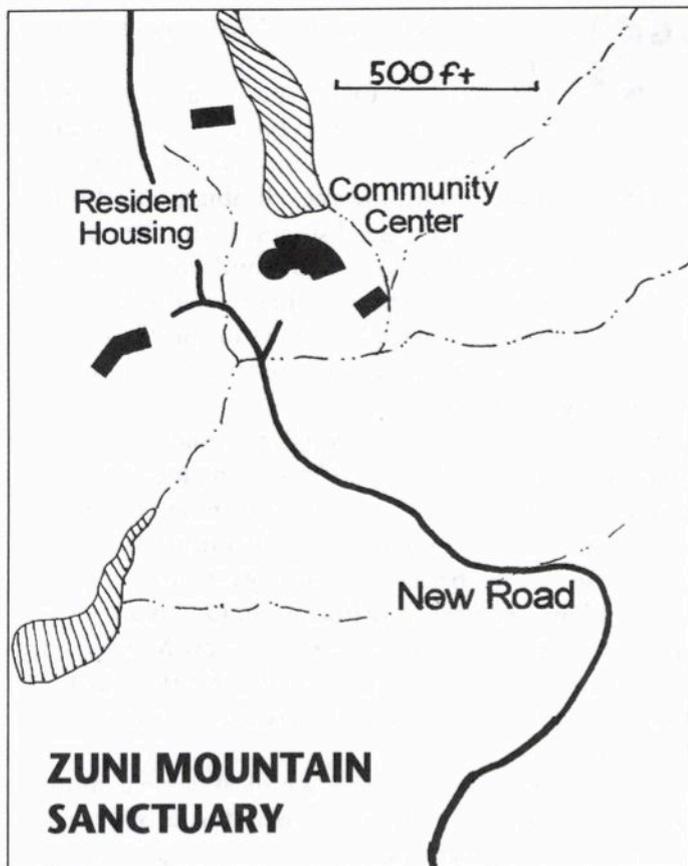
Owl walks purposefully through the golden October grass of central New Mexico. He has long legs, broad shoulders, reddish blond hair, beard turning grey, and wears a nondescript down vest and denim jeans. He’s a radical faerie, member of the flamboyant anti-assimilationist fringe of gay liberation. Owl is also a trained scientist, a gardener, a native New Mexican, and a former range management specialist for the BLM. Owl is a man who knows the landscape and knows what he wants.

I have been invited to ZMS, a radical faerie community, to help with a permaculture plan for its 300 acres. For several days I have walked arroyos, flat grasslands, ponds, and rolling slopes that back onto National Forest land in the heart of New Mexico’s Indian country. I have interviewed residents, learning their aspirations and assessing their understanding of the land and its limitations. Out of this research, some general insights have begun to form in my mind.

I practice permaculture, an ecological and ethical design system. Permaculture teaches that human communities, to be sustainable, must adapt themselves to the needs of the ecosystems they inhabit. As a permaculture designer, I see the site as my primary client. People belong on a site only if their presence supports regeneration of natural systems, creating more potential for life rather than less. The radical faeries approached me because they have a strong environmental ethic, and because I have personal experience working and living in intentional communities.

I ease into my conversation with Owl. I observe the strengths of his choice: it’s above the cold air drainage, out of the flood plain, and affords some protection from prevailing winds. I describe my feeling that this is a powerful place on the land. I mention that some communities choose to set aside such places as sacred and avoid building on them.

I then point out that one of the charms of this spot, part of what makes it feel so secluded, is the grove of pinyon trees crowding the proposed building site. These trees, especially those downslope and upwind, are volatile when dry and represent an extreme fire hazard in this



Community members have identified the most appropriate locations for clustered buildings, gardens, agroforestry, and sacred places. By listening to the land, they are beginning to practice regeneration.

drought-prone landscape. They virtually ensure the eventual destruction of any structure placed here. We search for evidence of fire and find plenty of burned out stumps from an event several decades ago. To cut the trees down would destroy part of the reason for being here in the first place. By helping Owl clearly see the problem, I act

I call the tendency to spread out the "urban refugee syndrome."

both as advocate for the prospective homebuilder and advocate for the site.

I go on to observe how far we are from the community center. He shrugs his shoulders—it won't be a problem for him. I sketch the potential access issues. First he must build the house, necessitating delivery of materials and water (for concrete). A remote location requires its own access road and, in this fragile ecosystem, even driving over the ground once leaves a permanent scar. Second, all houses are degenerative investments—they

require ongoing work and materials to maintain. They also require fuel. Even a well-designed solar home will need firewood or propane for backup heat during Zuni's subzero winters. In my experience, Owl's hope that his home be accessed only on foot is unrealistic.

Finally, having a home so far from the center makes life harder in an environment where life is already hard enough. Forgetting a notebook or necessary tool requires a long trek home, sometimes in difficult weather. I've noticed that in spread out communities, people simply adjust to not having what they need. The daily effort of getting from one place to another hampers residents' ability to do their work. Individuals and community suffer as workloads become overwhelming and maintenance of people and infrastructure is neglected. This is not a recipe for sustainability.

I call the tendency to spread out the "urban refugee syndrome." Urban and suburban people, afraid of the potential lack of privacy in villages and close-knit communities, scatter across the landscape looking for a place to hide. This only repeats in microcosm the worst mistakes of suburban development—destructive, repetitive sprawl. Networks of paths and roads proliferate, requiring maintenance, creating erosion scars, and disrupting wildlife. The costs of distributing water, energy, or wastes go up. Communication becomes more difficult. Often these siting decisions assume that residents will remain young and healthy forever.

I think Owl is finally persuaded when I ask him to imagine the 20 or more proposed homes at ZMS placed as isolated dwellings around the land. He sees that such a pattern would eliminate the most desirable open space of the community. Anywhere one walked would be someone's backyard. He agrees that clustered housing would allow optimal use of the best areas for building and maintain the integrity of the commons.

Since that conversation, ZMS has entered a community planning process. Residents have begun an in-depth study of permaculture. They have assessed their site, studying wind patterns, erosion patterns, evidence of past fires and floods. They know something about the history of the region, its soils, its plant and animal communities. From this base of information they are generating a master plan.

Zuni Mountain residents have identified the most appropriate locations for buildings, gardens, agroforestry, sacred places, wildlife corridors. They are listening to the land, allowing its potentials and liabilities to dictate the pattern of development. In this way they are beginning to practice regeneration. The concentration of human energy and capital, intelligently applied, has the potential to heal and revitalize an abused and degraded landscape. As the land heals, its

(continued on page 50)



Community members celebrate the seasons and the world of nature. Don Karp leads community children in a May Day festival.

Sirius: Becoming a Spiritual Ecovillage

by Jeff Clearwater

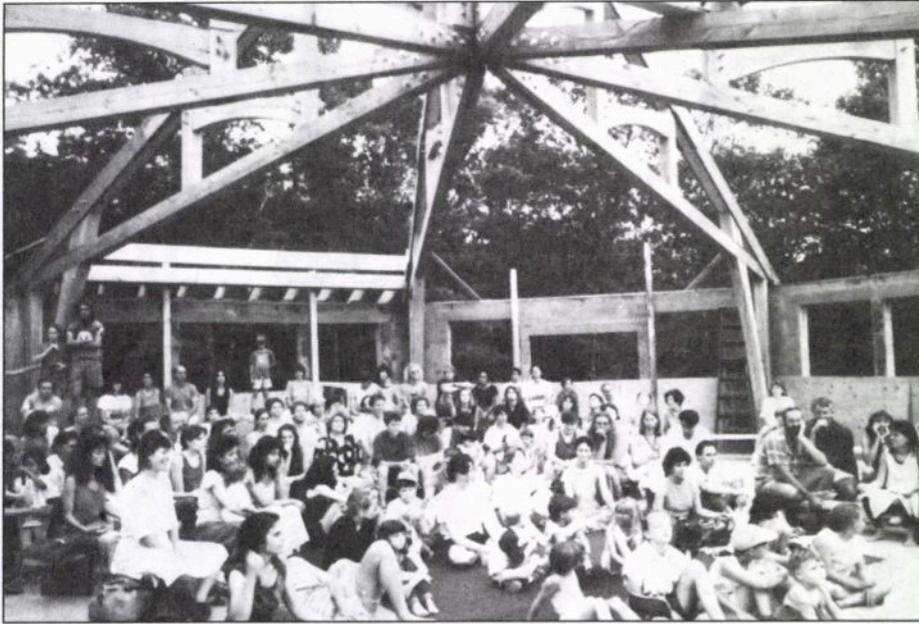
FULL SUN STREAMS THROUGH THE SECOND-floor windows of the newly christened Eco-Village Office, its brightness magnified by freshly fallen snow. Before closing the curtain, I see a work party below. My fellow communitarians are holding hands in a circle around a small tree marked for cutting. I reflect on the process that started many months ago with a similar circle around that tree. My colleagues meditate now in silence, thanking the tree one last time for all it has given, and explaining the need to remove it in order not to shade the solar greenhouse.

Founded on the same principles as the Findhorn community in Scotland, we believe that attuning to, understanding, and cooperating with the Nature Kingdoms—the Earth, the elements, the plants and animals on our land—is the spiritual foundation of ecological sustainability. In 1978 Sirius founders set out to build

what they termed a “Center of Light”: a community of spiritual renewal grounded in ecological living. Eighteen years later we see ourselves as a Center of Light and an aspiring ecovillage, researching spiritual and ecological principles and demonstrating what we’ve learned.

Sirius today is 24 adults, eight children, and a number of apprentices and interns living on 93 acres of hardwood forest in western Massachusetts. We are situated between the Quabbin Reservoir and the Connecticut River valley, nestled on the eastern hills of the Pioneer Valley.

Our primary activities include each member’s own personal spiritual growth; our outreach to the world through our guest programs and Conference Center; our work toward becoming a model ecovillage; and our newly formed School of Ecological Community Living. Our Guest Department brings like-minded groups from all over the world to conduct workshops and conferences



GORDON DAVIDSON

Sirius members and guests celebrate Interdependence Day under timber framed rafters of the Community Center.

on spiritually and personal growth, community building, and ecological sustainability.

We derive our income from community members' rents and dues, rental of conference facilities, and tuition from students of the School of Ecological Community Living. We began as an income-sharing community, but quickly found private incomes to be more suitable to our work. Some members work as staff for the community, some have home businesses, and some work at jobs outside Sirius.

Our land is shaped roughly like a square with most of the buildings clustered on five acres near, but not too near, the dirt frontage road. At the center of the cluster is

Not knowing where we would get all the funds to build these structures turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

the original farmhouse, now a library, food storage/distribution center, and meditation and meeting space. The Community Center and Phoenix House are located about 200 feet on either side of the farmhouse. Six other dwellings are nestled close by in the surrounding woods, including a solar-heated wood shop with apprentice quarters upstairs. A couple of yurts are off in the woods. An 80-foot plastic-covered greenhouse is just past our fruit orchard, a swimming pond nearby.

Sustainable development at Sirius begins with what we call the "attunement process." Whether it is clearing a sapling to make way for a clothesline or creating a long-term site plan, we attempt to attune with each other and the forces of nature until a consensus answer is apparent. We gather in a circle, hold hands, close our eyes. Some ask questions, such as, "What is the best for the All?" Some wait for impressions or visions to come; some simply get in touch with their truth. More often than not this process produces a common answer—often different than any of us had imagined. Sometimes consensus eludes us, which we take to mean that the subject should be revisited another time, or perhaps needs a different approach.

We have found that creating sustainable human relationships and communicating clearly are often more difficult than designing buildings or creating a site plan. Despite the difficulties, we proceed with a deep commitment to recognizing and honoring the highest in each other. We have also found that economical sustainability is as much of a challenge as renewable energy or sustainable food systems. By affirming abundance and treating work as "love in action"—a joyous service to others—we have survived and prospered.

"In the early days everyone emptied their pockets on the table for whatever we needed," remembers co-founder Bruce Davidson, who now directs our Building Department. "It often wasn't enough to make the land payment, but we went ahead anyway with our vision, including our plan for a 12,000-square-foot Community and Conference Center. Every time the money wasn't there we would just release our concerns and have faith that things were unfolding perfectly. Then we would get to work with what we *did* have in a spirit of thankfulness. Miraculous appearances of money saved us more than once. The down-payment for land came that way too: a \$30,000 gift that materialized practically overnight."

"Once we committed to building the Community Center," Bruce continues, "the process never stopped. We started with a small seed grant and now we have a beautiful building worth over a million dollars. Volunteer labor, recycled materials, and unexpected gifts seemed to show up at the right time."

The timber-framed, passive-solar Community Center is truly an inspiring structure in which to live and work. At its center is a 50-foot-diameter, two-story octagon

with large wings radiating to the east and slightly northwest. Our community dining room is on the first floor of the octagon, with a beautiful, spacious meeting room directly above it upstairs. This serves as our main conference facility, meditation space, meeting room, and drama and dance hall, accommodating up to 130 people. The two wings house a large commercial kitchen, offices, residential space for members, and accommodations for up to 24 guests. The center is heated with solar gain and wood heat with a gas backup system. The east wing also houses two composting toilets and utilizes a solar domestic hot water system.

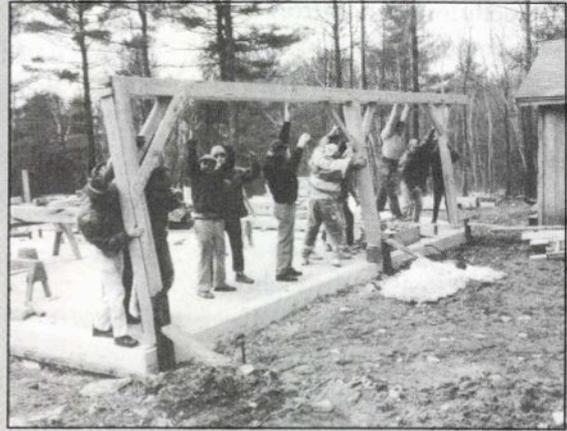
An 840-sq.-ft. attached solar greenhouse, still under construction, wraps around two sides of the octagon off the dining room. We hope to extend the dining area into the greenhouse, grow flowers, vegetable and herb starts, and perhaps one day raise tilapia in aquaculture tanks. When completed, the greenhouse will provide about 35 percent of the heating load of the center.

The 3,800-sq.-ft. Phoenix House (built on the site of a previous residence destroyed by fire) will house eight to 12 people, with apartments for single members and families, and space for overflow guests from the Conference Center. We call Phoenix House an "eco-residence" because all aspects of the design, including construction practices, building materials, energy, water, and waste systems, incorporate ecologically sustainable materials and processes.

Not knowing where we would get all the funds to build these structures turned out to be a blessing in disguise. It encouraged us to use locally available and affordable building materials, and to come up with designs based on those materials.

We inquired about the fate of wood from aging barns and soon we had enough lumber to complete the Community Center's east wing. We traded the labor required to remove unwanted trees from neighbors' property for the trees themselves. Ninety percent of the lumber in the Community Center came from neighborhood trees slated for disposal or firewood. By taking them to a local mill we kept the money in the local economy. Nearly 100 percent of the lumber in the Phoenix House is wood from within a 10-mile radius of our land.

We developed a unique timberframed, post and beam construction method that allows us to get the most out of this local lumber. Besides being beautiful, it creates super-insulated and quite inexpensive walls. We build hardwood post and beam frames from 7"-diameter lumber, then hang pine stud walls 9" wide around the exterior of the posts and beams. This results in exposed posts and beams on the inside, traditionally trussed and beautifully contrasted against white walls. The 9" walls use staggered-stud construction and horizontal runners on which to mount the exterior siding, thus minimizing



Sirius members and apprentices raise and post and beam wall for the Phoenix House.

Phoenix House: Specifications

EXISTING:

- Virtually 100 percent locally harvested and milled pine, oak, hickory, ash, maple, and black birch
- R-38 walls, R-44 ceilings
- Nine-inch thick walls with staggered stud and horizontal purling construction, cellulose and cotton insulation
- Passive solar design: 350 sq. ft. of south-facing glass, 1,250 cu. ft. of masonry thermal mass
- Active solar & wood radiant floor heating
- Active solar & wood domestic hot water
- Moldering compost toilets

PLANNED:

- Attached 215 sq. ft. solar greenhouse
- Photovoltaic and wind utility intertie & backup power system integrated into community-wide energy system: 1.2 KW Solar, 2.0 KW Wind, 14-day battery backup
- Super-efficient appliances
- Built-in solar oven

wood and reducing thermal loss. The wall cavities are filled with blown-in cellulose and cotton-batt insulation (made of ground-up jeans by a nearby manufacturer), and sided on the exterior with local pine. Thus we have R-40 walls and R-46 ceilings, all with ecologically benign materials.

Recycled and locally-milled wood can conjure up images of roughly built or haphazard design or construction. Not so at Sirius. In the Findhorn tradition we combine heartfelt craftsmanship and honoring the sacredness of all things, so our buildings emerge as works of art. We examine each post, each beam, each siding board, for the shape and direction of grain and for its aesthetic balance. From cutting to milling to carpentry, by the time a board is nailed in place it is known intimately. Bruce can tell you that this table and that bench and that door all come from the same tree. The Community Center, for example, has octagonal windows and pentagonal wooden



At Sirius Community, buildings are designed to use natural materials as well as to please the eye. Here, the Sirius retreat house.

doorknobs; even the tops of the doors form three facets of an octagon. All the wood is beautifully oiled and sanded.

What would we have done differently? In the winter our three compost toilets can get too cold and go anaerobic, which means they don't decompose as fast and tend to collect water. These Clivus Multrum-type toilets would have been better off enclosed in the heated envelope of the buildings. We also should have provided direct access to the outside for emptying them. We are excited to try out a new moldering toilet design in the Phoenix house and other new designs in future construction. Living with compost toilets is great but the systems have to be well fed with aeration and carbon-givers such as oak leaves and wood-planer shavings (not sawdust, which is too fine). User education is of utmost importance!

The Community Center and the Phoenix House were

(continued on page 51)

A Renewable Community-Sized Power-Generating System

Currently Sirius' seven residences, spread over about five acres, are all on the grid with separate electric meters to each building. Our challenge was to design a community-scale utility intertie and backup system that must do all of the following simultaneously:

- 1) Provide enough electric power to all seven structures to handle water pumping, refrigeration, and lighting needs during an extended power outage.
- 2) Balance system-component selection and location in order to minimize cost, maximize reliability, and match input to storage to load.
- 3) Feed power back to the utility company when an excess is generated by the wind generators or solar arrays.
- 4) Be capable of growing into a totally off-grid energy system when photovoltaic and wind-power prices come down and grid power prices go up, or when grid power becomes unreliable. Also be able to incorporate hydrogen technology as it becomes available.

After careful consideration and number-crunching, we designed a system with two power centers, one at the Community Center and one at the Phoenix House. These two systems will independently feed the other

houses closest to them. Power can be diverted from one system to the other as needed, but the systems will be able to operate independently. This dual-node approach results in increased reliability and balances the factors of energy efficiency, wire losses, and component costs.

Each system will center around a pair of Trace SW 4-KW inverters to convert DC power to 120/240 Volt AC power and feed excess power to the local grid. Each system will be fed by a solar array and a wind generator. The Community Center's system will initially rely on a 10-KW wind generator and a 1-KW solar array. The Phoenix House system will initially be fed by a 2-KW wind generator and a 1.2-KW solar array. The Community Center's system will be based on a 32-KW/hr battery bank and the Phoenix House on a 22-KW/hr pack. Each system will be able to charge the other system's batteries as needed before selling excess back to the utility, thereby resulting in a community-wide integrated system. Total system cost is estimated to be around \$54,000, including two donated wind generators. The system will supply the basic power needs of 24 adults and their families. Ω



This 1755 log house was moved in sections 85 miles from its original site. The roof is from an 18th century barn in the local area.

RECYCLING OLD BUILDINGS AT MAHANTONGO SPIRIT GARDEN

by Bro. Johannes Zinzendorf

RECYCLING OLD FARM buildings is a cheap and efficient way of supplying an intentional community with a variety of useful structures.

At Mahantongo Spirit Garden in the mountains of central Pennsylvania, we currently have 15 buildings. They include an outhouse, pig house, print shop, craft house, summer kitchen, one-room schoolhouse, chicken coop, smoke house, and a house for people. All are log or timber framed. All were originally built before 1920, most were built before 1850, and one was built in 1755.

Most were taken apart at their original sites and transported in pieces to our land for reassembly, mainly by the two of us who are here full time. And, without exception, every building was given to us, sometimes in exchange for a tax deduction, sometimes just for removing an unwanted building. It's amazing what people will do to get out of demolition.



PHOTOS, MAHANTONGO SPIRIT GARDEN

LEFT: *The timber framed print shop, originally a pig house built in 1800, was moved to the community in sections.*

RIGHT: *Recycled buildings can go up fast! This wagon shed, built around 1900, was moved to the community and its basic frame reassembled in one day.*

The buildings range in size from a four-by-four-foot tool shed to an 896-square-foot community building.

For us, it's been a conscious choice to seek out older buildings to reuse. The decision has been partly financial. After buying the land, we had no money for new construction. That's why we spent the first year and a half in the barn, the only existing building on the 63-acre site back in 1988.

Incidentally, that in itself led to much discussion among the local

retreat center for gay men centered around the idea of returning to the garden—in an archetypal, timeless, “Brigadoon” sense—so becoming modern ranchers just didn't make it. And since we were preserving many other folk traditions in our community, it made sense to preserve whatever log and hand-hewn timber frame buildings were still in the area.

Such work was something many local farmers were glad to see us do. As one neighbor said, pointing in disgust at the abandoned log house in which he was born and raised, “I

asked the fire department for years to burn that old thing down and they just refused.” So he, and others like him, are glad to get rid of such

“eyesores.” Many similar farm buildings are obsolete. A timber framed 14x28-foot pig house built to contain one to two dozen pigs is impractical on a factory farm that puts 500 pigs in one pole barn 300 feet long. So most of the old farm buildings in our area stand vacant until they fall down or are burned down. Yet they

are wonderful sources of wood, both for structural beams as well as lumber, and sometimes of windows, doors, and hardware as well. And, if logs or mortised and tenoned beams, they are usually quite easy to disassemble, move, and rebuild.

The 14x28-foot pig house, for example, could be rebuilt for its original purpose to house pigs, or chickens, or it could be adapted as a craft house, storage building, blacksmith shop, cabin, or some other use. Many farms have two dozen or more outbuildings that can be taken apart with crowbars and hammers, and moved with no more equipment than a long van or pickup truck and flatbed trailer.

The largest building we have moved intact was 14x22 feet. We had to hire a local farmer with two bulldozers to push it onto wooden skids and then onto his 24-foot flatbed trailer. Then it was hauled two miles to our site. My job was to push electric lines up and over the building as we moved slowly along the road. We unloaded the building onto wooden blocks until we could build a stone foundation to support it. The old wooden plank boards were rotted so we replaced them with newly sawn

Without exception, every building was given to us. It's amazing what people will do to get out of demolition.

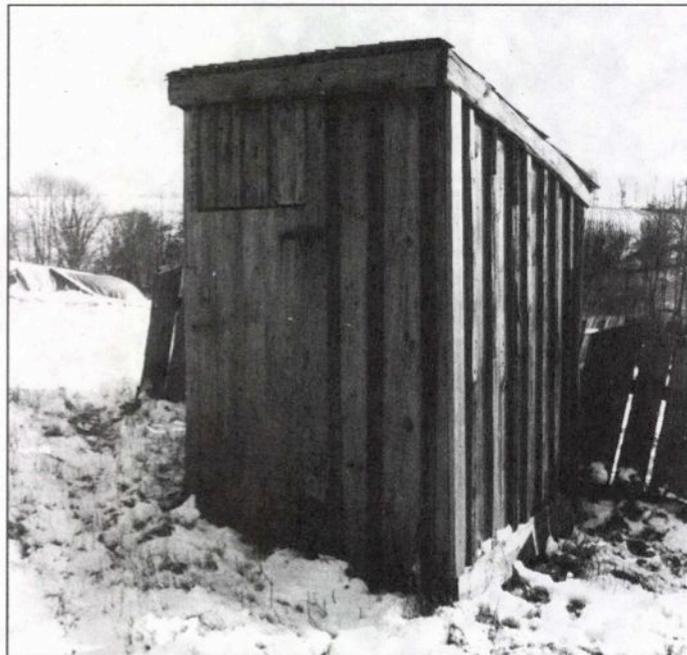
folk (we're never far from their minds) who would drive by Sunday afternoons after church, point at us and yell loudly, “They live in the barn!” So where else would we live? They sure weren't inviting us to their homes.

Besides the lack of money, our vision is to create a hermitage and



LEFT: Each of these buildings was dismantled at its original site and reassembled at the community. Left to right: chicken shed, summer kitchen, craft house, first house, outhouse.

RIGHT: This 4x4-foot tool shed was laid on its side in a flatbed trailer, driven six miles, and set back up.



boards up to 17 inches wide from the local saw mill. I installed windows using casings and frames taken from yet other buildings, and put on a simple, rolled asphalt roof. The total cost was less than \$500, including moving costs. The building now houses our letterpress print shop.

The most expensive building to date has been the *Gemeinhaus* (community house). It was donated to us but we had to pay a crane to load the logs onto a trailer and move them to the hermitage, a distance of 80 miles. Then we had to hire the crane for two more days to stack up the logs and, finally, the rafters. The crane work alone was almost \$2,000, but the house was originally built in 1755 so it was worth it. The building is now the jewel of our building collection.

Such opportunities through recycling old buildings are not restricted to our area. I've personally seen many such old structures throughout New England, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Delaware, Oregon, Alabama, Tennessee, and Texas.

Even if a building cannot be completely reused, it can be a good source of surplus lumber and beams that can be stored for future use.

Timber frame and log buildings are much easier to disassemble than balloon-frame structures from a later era, which are held together with nails, because the latter type of framing often shatters when taken apart, whereas I have dismantled 200-year-old frame buildings whose beams easily came loose once the wooden pegs were removed. Of course the roofs were in good shape and kept the framing dry, an important consideration.

Some farmers feel these old buildings are worthless until someone expresses an interest in them, and then they see dollar signs. Depending on the price and condition, a building for sale may still be a good value.

There are some important things to watch for. Sills, the bottom beams that lay on the foundation, are most prone to rot because they often remain damp for many years. Plates, the horizontal beams to which the rafters are attached, may also have rotted if the roof has not been kept in good shape. Nothing is worse than to accept a building only to find after the fact that it is useless, so a careful inspection beforehand is essential.

Both timber frame and log build-

ings can be quite energy efficient. Once a log house warms up, it stays warm for a lengthy period of time. In cold climates, timber frame buildings should have some kind of insulation between the support beams. Traditionally this was brick or stone but even straw, clay-straw, or wood shavings can be used.

As a community becomes known in the local area for removing old buildings, it can start coming out of the woodwork, as it were. One day I was out by the road when a local farmer drove up and asked if I wanted a one-room schoolhouse. How could I say no? And we were off again. Ω

Brother Johannes Zinzendorf co-founded Mahantongo Spirit Garden (formerly Christiansbrunn Kloster) in 1987, as a hermitage and retreat center for gay men. Mahantongo Spirit Garden, Rt. 1, Box 149, Pitman, PA 17964.



JILL TIEMAN

Earthaven founders harvest and use natural building materials from their site.

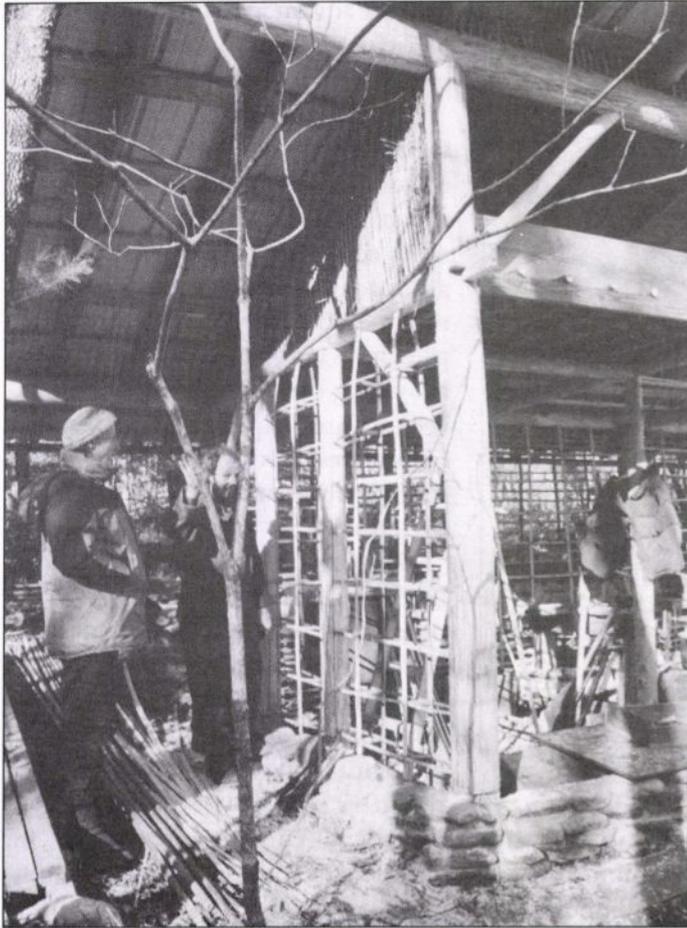
WHOLE- SYSTEMS DESIGN FOR EARTHAVEN VILLAGE

BY CHUCK MARSH

Earthaven Village is an aspiring permaculture-based eco-spiritual community in the mountains of western North Carolina. The founders envision passive solar homes made from local natural materials, living off the grid, growing most of their own food, and creating a viable local economy with jobs on site. They intend to restore the quality of their creeks and springs, and restore biodiversity and health to their forests. Through a nonprofit learning center they want to share their experiences and teach others how to create sustainable communities, focusing on permaculture and village design, Earth-friendly building systems, restoration ecology, ecological agriculture, the healing and creative arts, group process work, and "skills for a new tribal culture."

Here's how the Earthaven folks have used the principles of permaculture design to begin manifesting their dream.

ONCE WE HAD AGREED UPON A VISION, we needed to find land on which to create it. Permaculture—a design system for creating sustainable human settlements—kicked into action at Earthaven as soon as we began that search. We had to get



ALBERT BATES

The first structure built at Earthaven, a workshop site and temporary community center, is constructed of natural materials from the site, including a stone foundation, timber framed posts and beams, and walls of interlaced willow branches to be filled in with an earth and straw mixture.

clear about what we needed and why if we were to thread our way through the maze of real estate offerings that faced us. We inspected hundreds of properties; finally, after two years of looking for a suitable village site within an hour of Asheville, the hub city of the North Carolina mountains, 12 pioneers purchased 325 acres south of Black Mountain. It was not an ideal site, but the co-founders of Earthaven felt the property had the potential to be developed into a viable small village community.

The Earthaven land was attractive for a number of reasons. It shares common boundaries with two other intentional communities, Full Circle and Rosey Branch, whose members are supportive of our efforts. The presence of new settlers in an otherwise depopulating rural area helps us to integrate socially with long-time residents. We are not the first new faces on the block.

Located near Asheville/Black Mountain and connected to the Buncombe County metropolitan grid by local telephone service, mail, and good roads, our property nevertheless lies mostly within rural Rutherford County, not populous Buncombe. This means that we are gov-

erned by less stringent building and development ordinances, and that our tax rates are lower than they would be 100 yards farther north. This significantly lowers our cost of development and permits us greater flexibility in meeting our ecological aims.

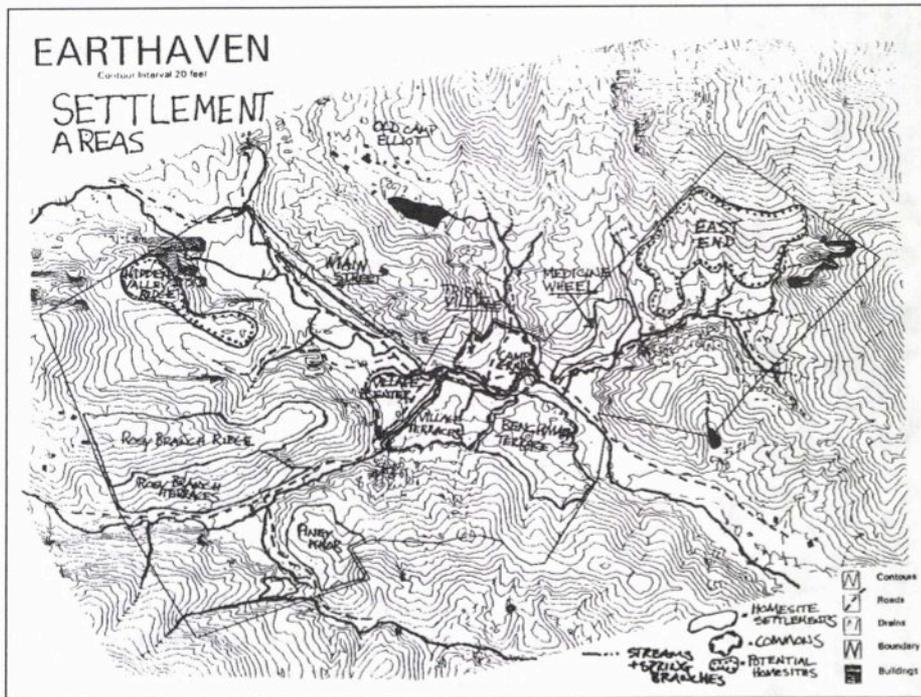
Abundant clean water was high on our list of determining factors in selecting land, and we are blessed with it: our rainfall averages around 60 inches per year and is fairly evenly spread through the seasons.

Another major consideration was the suitability of the land for agriculture. The terrain at Earthaven is quite complex and consists basically of three joined valleys with their attendant flood plains, bottom lands, lower terraced slopes, and steeper ridge slopes and tops. A relatively large portion of the land is usable.

Though uninhabited for the past two generations (over 55 years), the land we bought was once the site of a small farming community. Our oldest living neighbor has described fields of wheat, barley, and melons growing where now a young forest covers the land. A post office stood at the confluence of our two major creeks, so we know that settlement in the area was fairly dense. That population filled even the small side valleys—quite steep slopes appear to have been cultivated, with consequent loss of soils.

Before white settlers came to the mountains, local legend and archaeological evidence suggests the area had been the site of a native village, perhaps of the Catawba tribe. Early coach roads from the Piedmont up to Asheville went through our valley. These historical indicators point to reasonable prospects for subsistence living. Our once-fertile and well-watered valleys were chosen as homesteads by people who had only human and animal power to make their livings. We can also be confident that having lain fallow and in forest for the entire chemical agriculture period, our land has never been poisoned.

The choice of a forested rather than a cleared site committed us to "landscaping by removal." While we acquired timber resources, we have also assumed significant energy costs in developing the land. Our bottom lands and hillsides are currently in the secondary stages of forest succession (mature pines, black locust, yellow poplar and other pioneer tree species are nurturing younger saplings of the dominant hardwood species of our region—red and white oak, maple, beech, and hemlock—which over the next 20 years will replace them). Managing this succession will necessitate careful timber harvest as we clear land for dwellings and agriculture. Our intention is that through sensitive forestry and careful placement of the human elements, we can improve both the diversity and productivity of the land while leaving most of the forest cover intact.



Good permaculture design requires a contour map, this one created by aerial photography, a digitalized image, and professional cartographers. Contour intervals at 20 feet.

Ethics and Finance

Consistent with our ethics of self-reliance and our aim of demonstrating accessible alternatives to conventional development, we have chosen not to seek bank financing but instead to finance the project privately through the sale of leased site holdings and memberships, and the development of a member-owned investment cooperative, called Earthshares. While this decision has limited our development capital somewhat, it has also freed us to build the village as we choose, while learning to make the most of the human and natural resources that we do have. This process inherently fosters creative solutions, community- and self-empowerment, and the development of consciously interdependent relationships.

The Importance of Design

How well Earthaven succeeds in manifesting our vision of a new village culture will be determined by the quality of the work we do as both social and permaculture designers. Most community failures stem from inadequate design, either social or physical. Design takes time, but up-front investment in good design will more than pay for itself in the long-term health of the community and its members. Design and planning are highly complex disciplines that are most often relegated to professionals. This can be disempowering to those directly affected by the decisions. Community-based design and planning, on the other hand, while a much slower and occasionally frustrating process, has the

distinct advantage of investing the participants in an outcome that is more likely to meet their real needs.

The role of the Earthaven design team, led by myself and Peter Bane, editor of *The Permaculture Activist*, is to facilitate and guide the community's co-design process. Our main approach has been to train community members in permaculture principles and practices. We are also providing the community with our accumulated experience in permaculture design and planning, landscape analysis and assessment, and patterning.

Designing human settlements involves all the basic principles of permaculture. These include designing for redundancy, placement for beneficial relationships, multi-functional elements, the use of biological and locally available resources, and zone, sector, and slope analysis for energy conservation.

Community design also demands recognition of another very important principle—design for conviviality.

Conviviality and Privacy

Design for conviviality means optimizing the quality of human interactions. Among other things this involves balancing our need to connect with our need for privacy and personal space. Many of us have been so traumatized by the fast pace of modern life that we feel we need lots of space around us to protect us from a harsh and dangerous world. I find that one of the greatest challenges at Earthaven is to find ways to meet people's privacy needs while keeping our homesites compact and not sprawled all over the landscape. We have not yet reached consensus on how to achieve this most gracefully. However, we are experimenting with compact settlement and cooperative living in our campground and first neighborhood—what we call our neo-tribal village—as a means of extending our experience and transforming our attitudes.

Designing for conviviality also involves placing our access ways and buildings in patterns that allow for, and in fact encourage, quality human interactions as we go about our daily activities. In good design, conviviality happens spontaneously among the inhabitants of the settlement because the physical spaces are "tuned" to the wisdom of our bodies. Buildings create positive outdoor spaces; entrances are prominent and transitions are marked by gateways; paths meander and cross; places to

sit or to tarry are frequent, people feel safe to sleep in public or to make love in the woods. Permaculture design should nourish not only the Earth and our bodies, but also the individual's soul and the group soul.

Adaptive Design

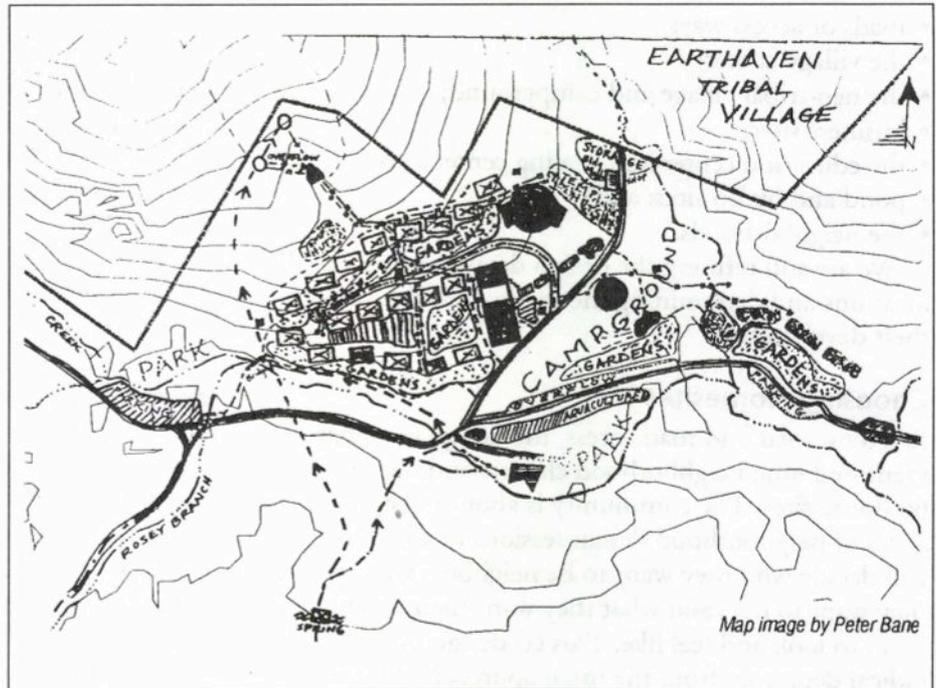
I have discovered over the years that good design has a complex and non-linear nature; it is truly an evolutionary, living process. It helps me to embrace the complexity and non-linear nature of the process. Once we begin to think ecologically, we discover many similarities between the way ecosystems function and the way the design process works. For example, we can model our energy dynamics after the feedback loops in ecosystems. After a project has been designed, it is inevitably changed during the building process in response to the needs of the moment and the real world (feedback). Upon completion the project is tested, observed, and undergoes redesign to improve its functioning within the environment (adaptation).

We have already experienced this in the building of huts. We set criteria for height of buildings at 12 feet, but then discovered that everyone wanted variances from the rule in order to build a second story on their buildings. Vertical design is of course more cost-efficient, as our members were telling us, so we modified the design of the guidelines to permit taller buildings. Feedback allowed us to improve the design.

Design: What We Have Done

Design and planning involve both logical and intuitive processes. There is an order to good planning which can be taught, and there is an art to the unfolding of landscape potentials which can perhaps only be suggested or demonstrated. Together the many steps in village planning should serve as tools and methodologies for meeting a community's goals.

Good maps are essential for good planning. Shortly after we purchased the Earthaven property we contracted for a boundary survey of the land and arranged with an aerial cartography firm to fly the land and generate high resolution aerial photographs for us. (Aerial photography work needs to be done in the winter or early spring before the trees leaf out and obscure the ground.) The photos were then digitized and with the help of permaculture friends and professional cartographers we



Plan of Earthaven's first village and gardens, near the campground.

developed a detailed contour map of the property.

While we were waiting for the map work to be completed, we spent many days walking the land and familiarizing ourselves with its complex terrain. On these land walks we identified springs and stream courses, flood plains, old roadbeds, plant communities, evidence of past land use, erosion gullies, agriculturally suitable lands, sacred or high Earth energy sites, usable and accessible slopes, pond sites, south-facing slopes, potential home and business sites, and possible choices for locating the village center. During this time, Peter and I gave several weekend workshops to community members on permaculture and brainstormed about the location and design of the village center.

Once we had the contour maps in hand, we ground-checked them for accuracy, made the necessary revisions, and got our mapmakers to correct the data. We now had a good quality map that would prove valuable throughout our planning work.

With a working map and the experience gained from several seasons of observation on the ground, we were ready for the next phase of site design: identifying and overlaying the key components of the village onto their most suitable locations. On the broad scale, these components were:

- sacred sites;
- land to remain in forest due to slope, aspect, or inaccessibility;
- agricultural or horticultural fields or terraces;
- orchard sites;

- roads or access ways;
- the village center;
- the neo-tribal village and campground;
- business sites;
- the education center and healing center sites;
- pond and hydro sites; and
- the neighborhoods.

We are still refining the design details of many of these locations and determining the methods and timing of their development.

Choosing Homesites

Based on solar and road access, the design team has identified nine neighborhood clusters and flagged nearly 60 house sites. The community is about to engage in a series of neighborhood design sessions in which members will decide who they want to be neighbors with, where they want to live, and what they want their neighborhood to look and feel like. This co-design process is a radical departure from the usual approach of having the lots laid out by the developer and just picking a site. For co-design to work, it will be incumbent on each member to stretch beyond her/his own self-interest, and to make decisions for the benefit of the greater whole.

Patterns of Settlement

As we have gone about the work of building Earthaven Village from the ground up, mostly with hand labor and simple tools, it has become apparent that we have been following the archetypal flow of human settlement from times past. The first order pattern is a temporary camp. The first year on the land we developed our campground with very primitive facilities and camped in tents. The second order pattern of settlement is to create fixed dwellings: simple huts and gardens in the forest. At the end of our first summer the first hut began to go up, even while its builders lived next to it in a tent. The third order pattern of human settlement is the growth of a hamlet of clustered houses. Our second year on the land has seen the beginning of what we call our neo-tribal village, located on the south facing slope adjacent to our campground. As larger and more permanent dwellings, workshops, and buildings for community functions, as well as more refined agricultural processes, are built, a village takes shape. This is the fourth order pattern in a sequence which extends through town, city, and metropolis. We expect to see the emergence of the village stage over the next year or two and to spend the next ten years or so elaborating it. We don't know what cities will look like in 21st-century America, but we don't foresee Earthaven reaching that order of magnitude. That's where things seem to be falling apart today. At Earthaven we hope to match the consciously chosen limit of our growth to the optimum carrying capacity of our land.

The Tribal Village

As noted above, Earthaven is developing a first cluster of small dwellings. The goal of this neo-tribal village, or hamlet within the village, is to experiment on a small scale with the Earth-friendly building techniques and compact settlement patterns that we hope will serve us in the development of our permanent homes and neighborhoods. The idea is to try many different systems by building small huts or bungalows with footprints of no more than 300 square feet, so that we can gain proficiency at using locally available and inexpensive natural materials including straw, clay, stone, and timber off our land. We have buildings going up using post-and-beam timber framing, pole beam, rough-cut green wood conventional framing, straw bale, clay/straw slip form, cob, wattle-and-daub, and earth-coupled clay floor construction methods. This summer we built a large capacity composting outhouse and are currently completing a central kitchen/dining and bath building to serve the hut dwellers so that none of the huts will require their own plumbing, kitchens, or bathrooms.

In the same way that permaculture first tested plants and garden systems, we are trying out lots of ideas, making numerous small mistakes, and learning from them so we don't repeat them on a larger and more costly scale.

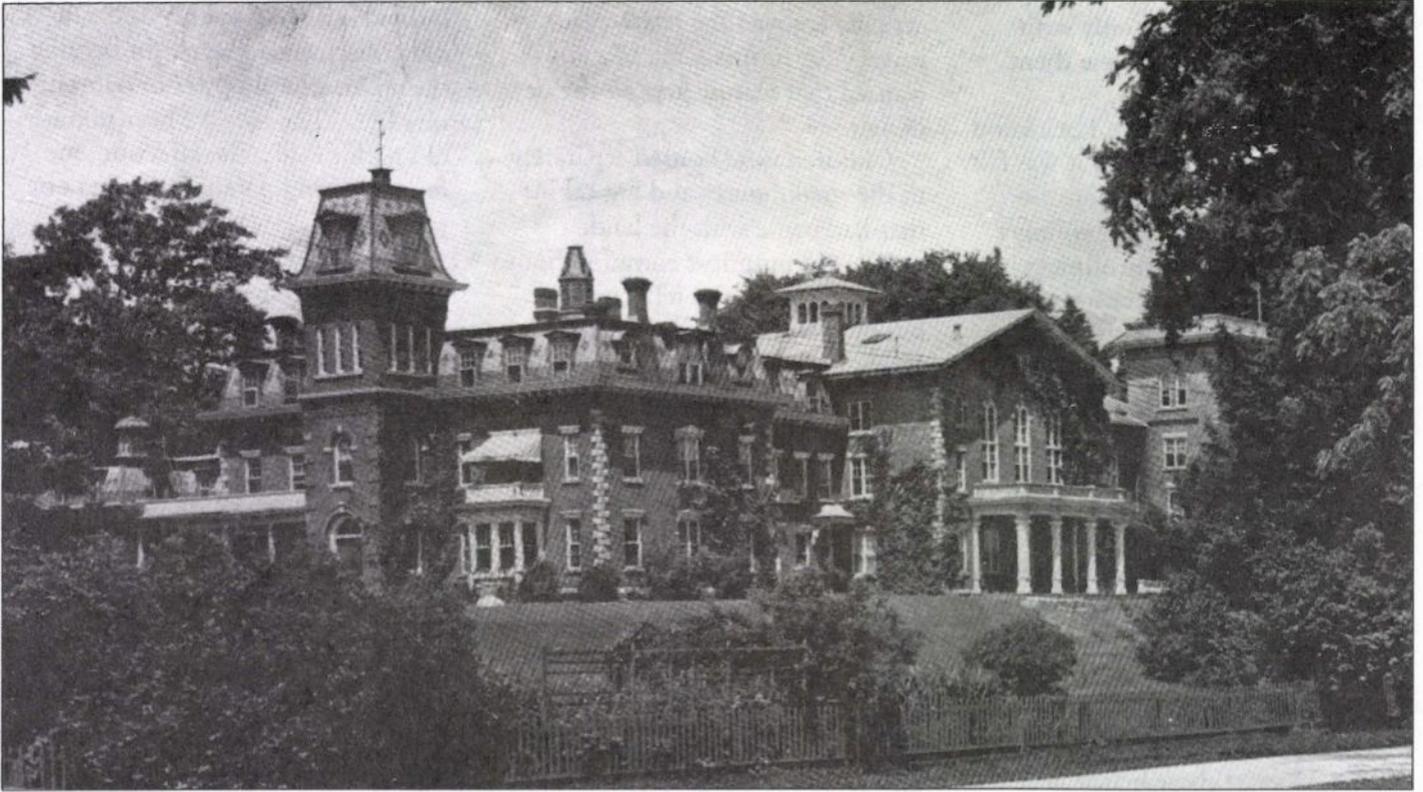
Another function of the neo-tribal village is to create ways for more community members to get to the land and have some infrastructure support while they build their permanent dwellings. We have established limited occupancy times in huts to encourage people to move on to building permanent dwellings, thus in time freeing up the huts for the next wave of village settlers. Ultimately we expect that the huts will convert to intern housing or lodging for guests or educational program participants, incorporating succession and multi-functionality into the design. The neo-tribal village, like Earthaven itself, is designed with enough flexibility to grow, change, and evolve over time to meet the community's changing needs.

Earthaven is very much a work in progress, a constantly evolving attempt to more deeply inoculate permaculture and ecovillage culture into our bioregion. We're working away in the belly of the beast of Western civilization to find our way home in the company of kindred yet diverse spirits. 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.

Chuck Marsh is a co-founder of Earthaven Village, a permaculture teacher, consultant, and designer, and a cultural evolutionary who thoroughly enjoys dancing and drumming.

For information on Earthaven: PO Box 1107, Black Mountain, NC 28711.



The Oneida Mansion House (1862-1878) was designed to foster the Oneida community's unique social experiments.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN & 'COMPLEX MARRIAGE' AT ONEIDA

by Albert Bates

IN HIS 1977 BOOK, *A PATTERN Language*, architect Christopher Alexander proposed that the structures of our built environments tend to affect our feelings for each other as we experience them. When I visited the Mansion House in upstate New York, home of the 19th century Oneida Community, I could see this vividly illustrated.

Over the course of its 33 years, from 1848 to 1881, the Oneidans evolved a distinctive philosophy towards architecture that paralleled their philosophy of life. Indeed, as observed by historian Janet White, their primary architectural statement, the Mansion House, reflected in its

own detail the community's birth, expansion, decline, and dissolution.

When the enigmatic and charismatic preacher John Humphrey Noyes moved to Oneida, New York, from Putney, Vermont, in 1848, he took with him a close community of some 50 followers, self-styled "Perfectionists," who wanted to take up the doctrine of the Apostles found in the biblical Book of Acts, sharing all things and giving to each as needed. All work was to be shared, all property joined together, and even marital and parental relationships were to be combined in a group process.

Oneida's system of "complex marriage" was one of America's first

polyfidelity experiments. All adult men and women considered themselves to be married and sexually available to one another. Childbirth was discouraged in the early years; it was delegated by committee in later years. Children of any birth parents were considered to be children of all, and were cared for from an early age by surrogate parents in the "children's department."

Noyes and his followers wanted to be rid of the nuclear family, not by expanding to multi-generational extended families, but by creating large, open relationships among peers. Noyes encouraged and expected all members to participate in

sexual encounters, but only with partners who would elevate them spiritually.

Oneida scholar Maren Lockwood Carden writes: "In general it was felt that older persons were more advanced in fellowship than younger ones. Thus in sexual encounters it was considered far better for young men and young women to associate with persons of 'mature character' and 'sound sense' who were well advanced in Perfectionism."

Close attachments to only one partner, called "special love," were not permitted. Birth control was accomplished by "male continence," or vigilant self-control. Continence, Noyes explained, "secures women from the curses of involuntary and undesirable procreation; and ... stops the drain of life on the part of man."

For 33 years these beliefs and practices influenced community architecture, and vice versa.

Within months of their arrival in New York, the original group began construction of the "Old Mansion House," a three-story wood building enclosing roughly 30 feet by 60 feet. The lower floors were divided into thirds, with kitchen, dining room, and root cellar on the first floor, and parlor, school room, and print shop on the second floor. The print shop transcribed meetings, published a newsletter, and printed books by Noyes.

The third floor of the Old Mansion House, called the "tent room," where curtains separated 10 or more compartments with double beds, was devoted to sleeping and sexual liaisons. The attic above was divided into two unpartitioned dormitories for members who did not engage in what came to be called "interviews" between members in the tent room.

Between 1849 and 1852 additional wings were added, which included a dozen bedrooms, some smaller tent rooms, and an even larger tent room. This may reflect that some Oneidans discovered they

actually enjoyed the relative lack of privacy for intimate matters and wanted that feature kept in the new design.

Children were housed separately, in the small houses and log cabins that had come with the land.

The community's common household tasks were also reflected in building design: the house had a single kitchen with one large bake oven, one large dining room, and one laundry. Washdays became weekly community festivals with vigorous philosophical debates, splashing good humor, even "a grand musical chorus."



Through John Humphrey Noyes' system of "complex marriage," the women of Oneida Community were married to all of the men.

The second floor of this first dwelling was dedicated almost entirely to a large, well-appointed parlor, with high ceilings and floor-to-ceiling windows to eastern and western views of unobstructed field and forest. Its south-facing French doors opened onto a veranda above a spectacular panorama. Here the Perfectionists gathered daily for discourses on Noyes' philosophy, organizational meetings, and "mutual self-criticism"—periodic structured gatherings in which the strengths and weaknesses of various

individuals were openly and candidly discussed. The parlor became the architectural center of community life. "The love we bear to our old parlor is like the affection one feels to a kind parent," recalled one member.

In contrast, private space was "fragile and transient," with individual private spaces often separated only by wire and curtains that could be pulled back on short notice to create other spaces. It was Noyes' intention to gradually eradicate people's separate lives entirely and replace them with one big family life and "an advanced morality."

Within two years the community swelled to 109 adults and needed more space. In 1859 members built a much larger Victorian brick and stone structure, the "New Mansion House." Buoyed by the financial success of their metal fabrication factory and patented animal traps, the Perfectionists were able to lavish upon their new construction many of the features they felt lacking in the earlier version.

In the New Mansion House, one enters into a wide reception hall adjoined by reception rooms to either side and a large central library to the rear, with more

collections of books in side rooms. Up a staircase to the second floor, one enters a second reception hall, flanked by display cases for gifts brought by visitors from all over the world. In the center of the second floor is the two-story Big Hall, with seating for 200, and another 100 in the third-floor balconies—more than twice that required for the entire community as it gathered for nightly meetings.

Children's Hour occurred often after supper, when those children selected for that evening's entertain-

ment paraded out into the Big Hall or into one of the upper sitting rooms to perform music, recitation, or dance and to interact with the adult community. A lower sitting room was used largely by the older members who preferred quiet discussion or reading to livelier entertainment.

Walking the corridors today one is immediately impressed with the transmission of sound in an era before radio and television. Bedroom corridors radiate from side doors and balconies of the Great Hall. With the Hall doors open, the sound of string quartets, dramatic readings, opera, and public discourse carried clearly down the corridors and over open transoms into the bedrooms. Here one could sit, knitting by candlelight, rocking, and listening to *Il Trovatore*, *HMS Pinafore*, or *Our American Cousin*.

Because the Big Hall lacked the intimacy of the beloved old parlor, the Oneida family attempted to recapture a sense of closeness by providing smaller though still spacious sitting rooms on either side of the first and second-floor reception areas. Since only a relatively small number of members could enter these rooms at one time, intimacy was gained at the expense of inclusion. (And in the Big Hall, inclusion at the expense of intimacy.) The new Mansion House had begun to speak to its more than 200 full-time residents, and to instill in them a sense of appropriate community scale.

In the new house, tent rooms and double bedrooms were eliminated, replaced by single bedrooms for most adults to sleep in, and larger "social purpose" rooms for intimate liaisons. Where in 1848 Noyes had conceded double bedrooms to members who had joined the community as married couples, in the 1862 Mansion House those distinctions were eliminated. Members were expected to have interviews in the social rooms for a period of time, then go off to private rooms to sleep. This was be-

cause the practice of male continence tended to encourage all-night lovemaking sessions (as the men's desire was not diminished), and if couples didn't show some restraint and go to sleep they'd be too tired for community tasks the following day. Social purpose rooms tended to be more lavishly furnished, while bedrooms were more spare, denoting the relative ranking the community assigned to collective and personal comforts.

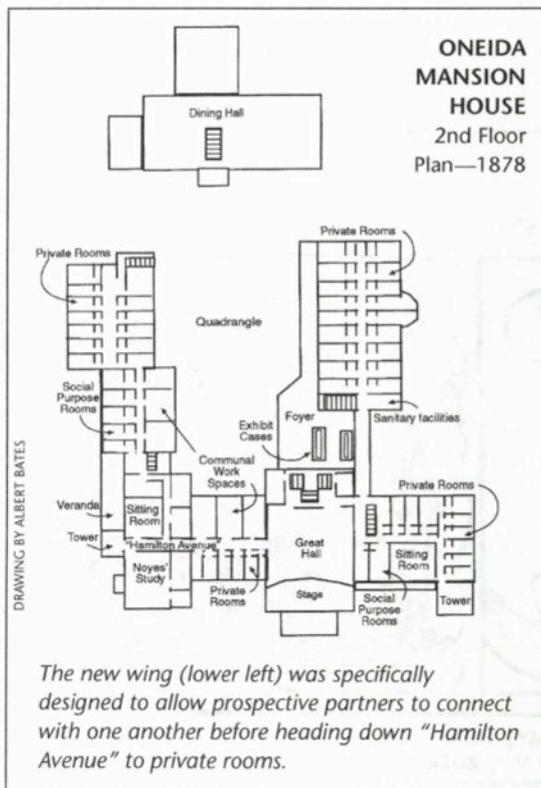
In 1869, seven years after completion of the New Mansion House, an L-shaped south wing was added which more than doubled the size

private study to the north, and down various corridors to bedrooms in one direction and workshops in another, the latter of which often drew in non-residents. An individual entering through the west entry or ascending this stair tower would thus come in sight of anyone occupying the South Sitting Room. In previous designs bedrooms had adjoined continuously occupied public spaces. At Hamilton Avenue they adjoined less conspicuous corridor spaces, broken up by jogs and wide landings, so one could not easily view all the bedroom doors.

Liaisons, which had become increasingly awkward to arrange as the community expanded, could now follow a more graceful pattern of social dance. People who were available for such encounters could gather in the South Sitting Room. Prospective partners could happen to pass by Hamilton Avenue's central stair landing, and see who was sitting within. Couples could leave the room, amble down a corridor, and enter a bedroom together with some degree of privacy. And the patriarch could, from his open study doors, take note of those partnerings considered unsuitable, or beam approvingly upon those that met community norms. Likewise, outside visitors and tradesmen passing

through this busy intersection might find in the allures of Hamilton Avenue a good excuse to linger and learn more of the Perfectionist community and its intriguing beliefs.

While organized (and transcribed and printed) mutual criticism sessions formed one mainstay of social order, there was a stiffer sanction, "Ultima Thule." This was theoretically reserved for "deviants," but in practice assigned to those



of the enclosed area. Many of the improvements added in 1869 and 1870 had to do with better heating, lighting, water and sanitation. However "Hamilton Avenue"—a complex of rooms and corridors radiating from the second floor landing in the busiest stairwell—was a distinct effort in social engineering.

At this landing one had a view into the South Sitting Room, through the open doors of Noyes'

It was Noyes' intention to gradually eradicate people's separate lives and replace them with one big family life.

unfortunate wives who joined the Perfectionists with their husbands but refused to adopt the community's sexual mores. After 1869 these women were segregated to the western third floor of the house where they spent most of their days. They did not come into contact with others in the dining room; their meals were brought to them. "Ultima Thule" was an architectural *cul de sac*, not on the route to anywhere else, and not in the social flow patterns of the community. Adding a Hamilton Avenue-style

complex on the second floor stair landing would have immediately improved the lives of these women, but that was not John Humphrey Noyes' intention. This was punishment. Conform or suffer.

When Noyes' strength began to falter with advancing age, a new generation of leadership ascended in hopes of salvaging the financially successful but increasingly uncertain family. Additional wings, opened in 1878, featured steam heat and newly devised flush toilets on each floor. The large central kitchen and dining

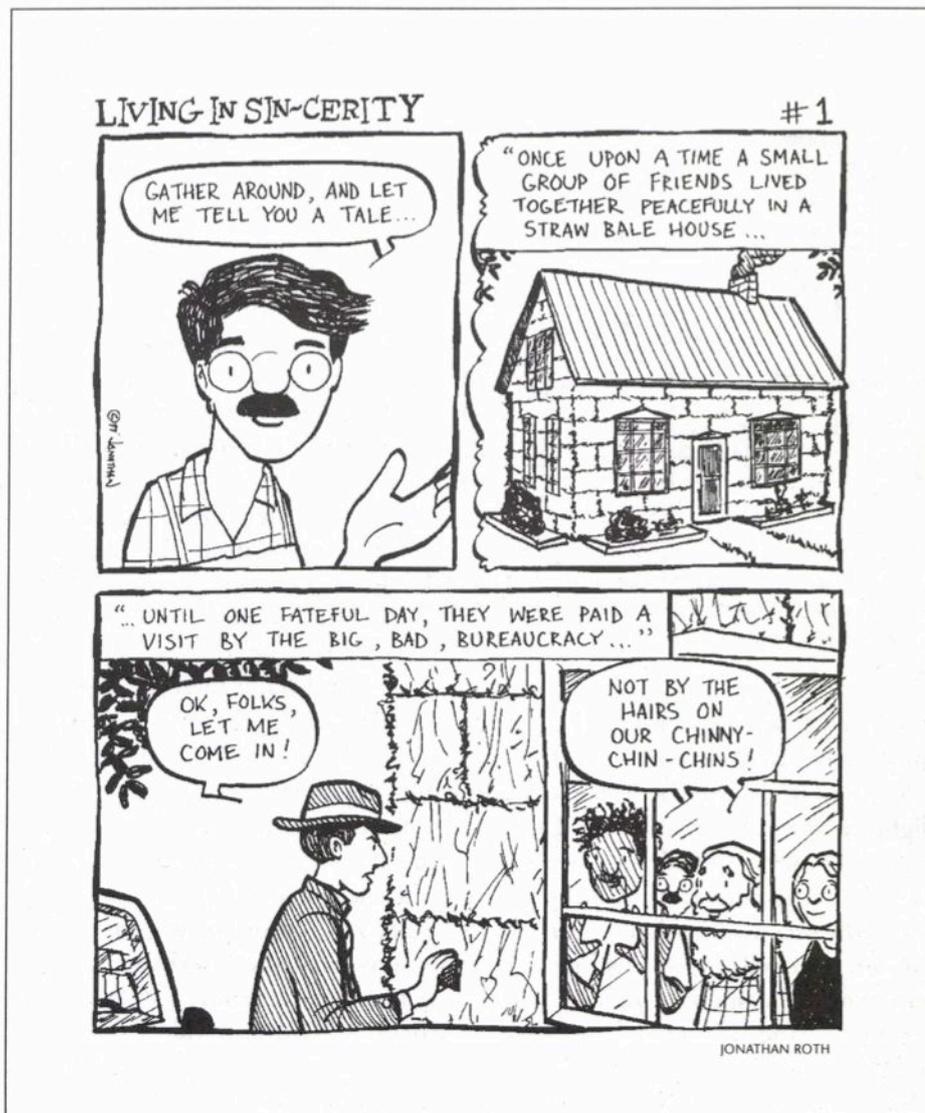
building even boasted a mechanical dishwasher. However, the new buildings held no tent rooms and very little random mixing space. If anything, the residential wings resembled Ultima Thule. Residents wanted this space precisely because, in a period of factionalism, disharmony, and schisms, they had no desire for increased social intercourse. These wings, designed and built by outside architects, and approved by the community, were distinctively un-Oneida-like. To compensate, those Oneidans who still sought the camaraderie of their waning fellowship began gathering in the "quadrangle"—that area of grass now enclosed by the three wings of the Mansion House and the Dining Hall. When social form became architectural emptiness, emptiness gave birth to form.

We humans, as patterns of vibrations intersecting with other patterns of vibrations, are without distinct boundaries and are continuously influenced by our surroundings. Unless we block off our sensations, we feel these influences in a variety of ways. Too little sunlight makes us pensive; too much makes us lethargic. We need a sense of the outdoors even when we are inside, shade and security when we are outdoors. We need private space and we need public interaction, needs which architecture and landscape design should address.

Fourth-century Rome (population one million) boasted 856 public baths, some serving more than 100 occupants at any given time. The baths were considered indispensable, not just for cleanliness, but for the social interactions they engendered. The Finnish sauna, Turkish and Japanese baths, the Russian *banya*, and the Native American sweat lodge serve much the same function: establishing public intimacy. And what is community if not public intimacy?

Public intimacy can be found in

(continued on p. 50)





PAMELA CARSON

EcoVillage residents try to keep their long-term vision in mind. Here, at a move-in ceremony for the first cohousing neighborhood.

ECOVILLAGE AT ITHACA

The Good News So Far

BY LIZ WALKER

The ultimate goal of EcoVillage at Ithaca is nothing less than to redesign the human habitat.

We are creating a model community of some 500 residents that will exemplify sustainable systems of living—systems that are not only practical in themselves, but replicable by others.

The completed project will demonstrate the feasibility of a design that meets basic human needs such as shelter, food production, energy, social interaction, work and recreation, while preserving natural ecosystems.

—MISSION STATEMENT, ECOVILLAGE AT ITHACA

THESE GOALS ARE NO SMALL POTATOES. IN fact, many would say they are grandiose. However, in the five and a half years I have worked as co-director for EcoVillage at Ithaca, I have found that keeping in mind the sunny vision of what we are striving for is crucial as we slog through the day-to-day realities to get there. To keep it all in perspective, I think of our mission statement as our 25–50-year plan, give or take a few decades.

In 1991 we started a grassroots organization by holding a five-day retreat. One hundred people camped on some donated land and played, worked and envisioned together. A year later we had scraped together \$400,000 in loans to buy a beautiful 176-acre parcel of land in the rolling hills of Ithaca, New York. Home to Cornell University and some of the most beautiful waterfalls and natural gorges in the country, Ithaca has a bumper sticker which states simply “Ithaca is Gorges.”

During the first year after we bought the land, we held four intensive land-use-planning forums in which over 100 people participated, many of them local architects, planners, ecologists, Cornell students and professors, and future residents. We agreed to use the natural features of the land to guide our decisions and came up with the following goals. We intend to:

- Conserve 80 percent of the land as agricultural open space, woods, and wetlands;
- Develop five pedestrian cohousing neighborhoods around a village green;
- Create organic gardens, orchards, and fishponds;

- Build passive solar, super-insulated housing;
- Recycle and re-use waste water, energy, and agricultural products;
- Create educational programs teaching about concepts of sustainable living.

So, you may ask, how is it all working out? Let me share some of the successes and lessons that have emerged since 1991, by looking at different goals of our mission statement.

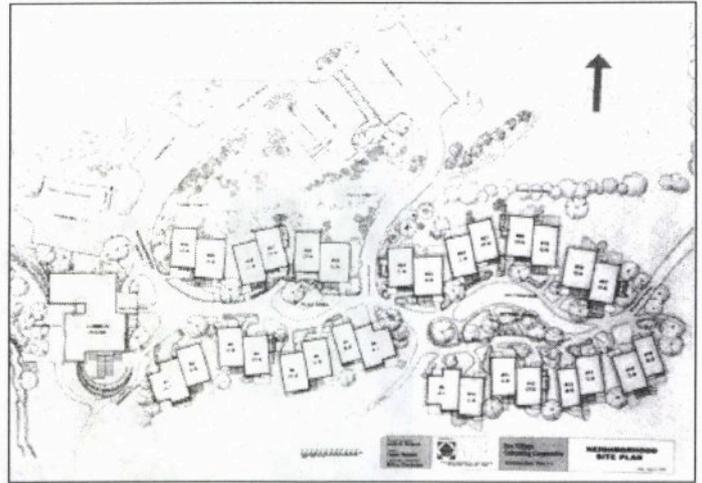
Food Production

Two of our young people, Jen and John Bokaer-Smith, created a beautiful three-acre organic farm on site, which functions as a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) farm. In a CSA, shareholders pay upfront costs in the spring for an ongoing share of the farm's organic produce, flowers, and herbs during the growing season. Jen and John feed several hundred people a week through the CSA and sales at the Ithaca Farmer's Market.

Lesson: It takes "burning souls" such as Jen and John, individuals who are passionately involved in various pieces of the vision, to make it happen.

Shelter/Energy

Our first cohousing neighborhood of 30 homes and a Common House is almost complete, and 22 families have moved in. The homes are super-insulated, double-wall construction, with passive solar features. Homes are tightly clustered duplexes which face a pedestrian street, allowing lots of opportunities for casual interaction.



The first neighborhood illustrates classic cohousing design—clustered housing, central commons and play area, and Common House.

Back-up space heating and domestic hot water are provided by two boilers, located in an energy center. Each group of eight homes is connected to an energy center through underground crawl spaces. Since the houses are airtight, it is important to keep all combustion in a separate location. This kind of group heating is very energy efficient.

Lesson: Design for flexibility. With plenty of cost overruns, we have chosen not to put in some pricey alternative energy features now, but we have designed to make it easy to retrofit later. For instance, the energy center boilers currently run on natural gas, but we hope

People, Not Buildings: About Our Fire

On November 16, 1996, a terrible fire raged through our first cohousing neighborhood. My family and I were there, as we live in one of the first occupied homes. That night we first spotted the fire and called the fire department, then watched helplessly as one home after another burst into flames. By the time the fire department arrived, the Common House started to smolder. It made me heartsick: This, the center of our community, was being destroyed in front of our eyes.

When we were evacuated half an hour later, I thought we had lost everything. You can imagine how wonderful it was to hear, several hours later, that the fire was contained and our home was fine. In fact, our community was extraordinarily lucky: Although the fire destroyed our Common House and eight homes under construction, no one was hurt, and none of the

occupied homes was burned. The fire apparently started from smoldering insulation that was inadvertently pumped into the walls of one unit.

In the midst of coping with insurance companies (we were well covered), finding housing for those whose homes were burned (several families rented rooms from people already on site), and even putting on a benefit for the eight fire departments who came to our rescue, our spirits remained high. We survived, and are basking in the knowledge that our community is strong indeed. We remember that people are far more important than buildings. We are in the process of rebuilding, and our community, having weathered this loss, is now doubly precious. —L.W.

Excerpted with permission from CoHousing, Winter '97. Quarterly, \$15/yr. PO Box 2584, Berkeley, CA 94702.

to replace that with methane from a projected biological waste treatment system in the future, or wood pellets from trees grown on our land. Having only four energy centers also makes it far easier and cheaper to retrofit. Likewise, our south-facing roofs are at the right sun-angle to receive solar panels. Once we pool the funds for a capital investment in solar panels, they can supply some of our hot water and/or electric needs.

Social Interaction

For years our group has functioned on overdrive mode, mostly interacting in meetings. Now that we're living here, we are discovering the joy of spontaneous interaction, based in part on our deliberate site design to foster such interactions along a pedestrian street. Last night I took out the compost. On the way back, I had conversations with five different sets of people, and posted a notice on our newly created community bulletin board. By the time I got back, 40 minutes later, my partner was ready to send out a posse. Cohousing design by its very nature makes it easy and fun to keep up friendships. While we wait for our Common House to be finished, we have a "floating Common House." Three nights a week, someone hosts a potluck and social hang-out time in their home, which is designated by a green light shining in the window.

Lesson: The basic cohousing model of a pedestrian street works beautifully. One can actually stimulate spontaneous interactions by site design.

On-site Work Opportunities

In our Common House we will have eight office spaces to be used by residents, including a couple who run a computer business, a computer programmer who telecommutes to his job in California, a therapist, an environmental educator, and an inventor. Other on-site workers include our resident CSA farmers; myself as part-time coordinator of the second cohousing neighborhood; a woman who has created her own part-time childcare, laundry, and house-cleaning business; and a man who has become the neighborhood carpenter.

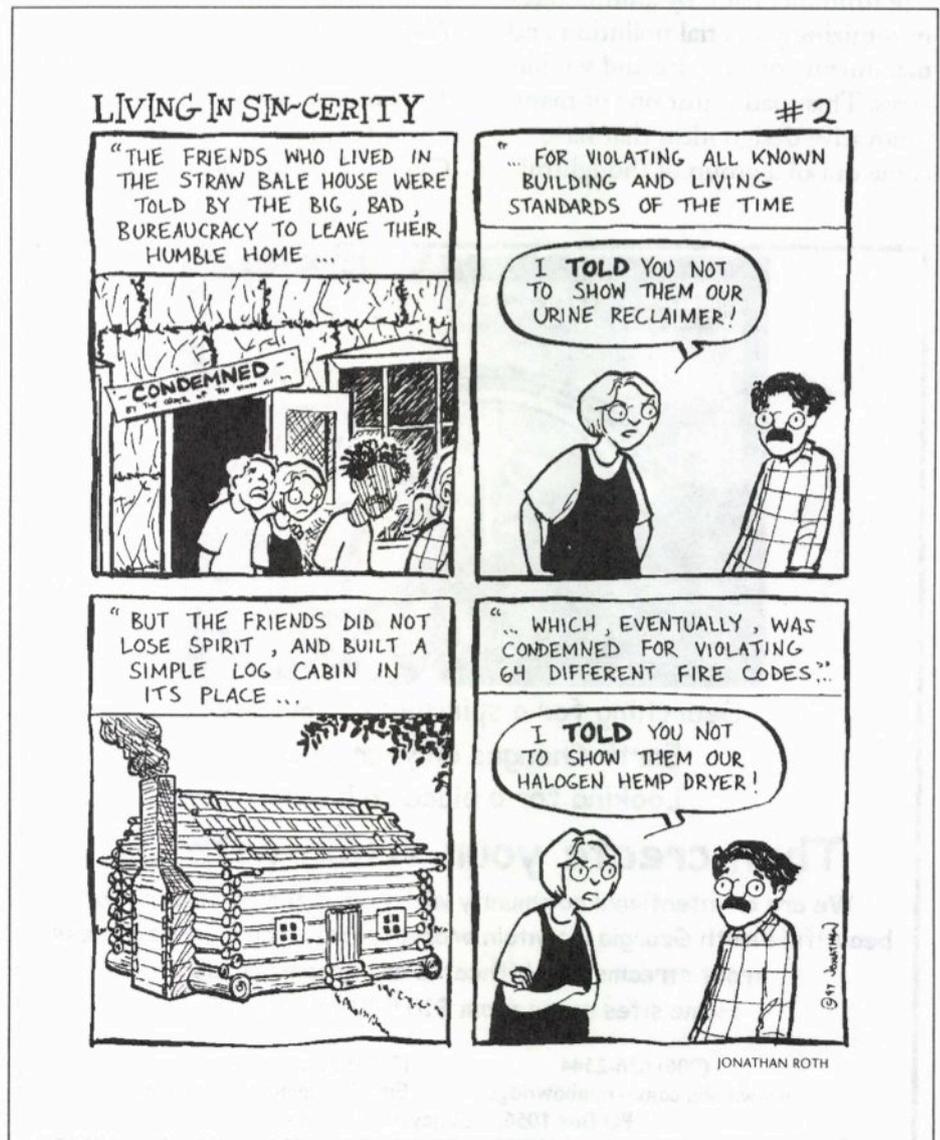
Lesson: On-site work not only minimizes transportation, but is profoundly satisfying. We hope that even more residents can create on-

site work as the project is further developed, with a visitor center, education and research center, orchards and vineyards, an expanded farm, and a Bed and Breakfast.

In conclusion, it is a long, hard haul to take on a big community project like this. It is also joyful, challenging, and profoundly satisfying. Such a community project requires persistence; a number of "burning souls"; a flexible, people-oriented design; and keeping an eye on the long-term vision. The results are worth it! Ω

Liz Walker is co-director and co-founder of EcoVillage at Ithaca, and she lives in its first cohousing neighborhood. She also serves as coordinator of the newly formed second cohousing group.

EcoVillage at Ithaca is seeking a full-time developer or development manager for the next phase of building. For information about EcoVillage, call 607-255-8276 or write: EVI, Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.



Zuni Mountain

(continued from p. 30)

capacity to support human community increases.

In ZMS's current draft plan, a single, short, easy to maintain road offers access to a tightly clustered village center surrounding agricultural fields and a spring-fed pond. This road gets good solar access, so it's less likely to be icy in winter and muddy in summer. It's on contour, so it can prevent erosion. It's just above the orchard, so runoff from the road surface can be used for irrigating trees. It's perpendicular to prevailing winds and the direction of greatest fire danger, so it's an ideal firebreak. And it leaves the majority of the property free from incursion by automobiles, minimizing potential pollution and maximizing open space and wildlife areas. This road is just one of many innovative design ideas that have come out of a group of thoughtful

residents working collaboratively on a process of integrative design.

People like Owl and the Zuni Mountain community give me hope. By joining efforts they are able to take on an ambitious and complex project that few could afford or have the experience to build as individuals. Their efforts will leave the land healthier than they found it. And they are generating a new culture, based on respect for and knowledge of the place they live and informed by a willingness to work together—with each other and with the Earth that sustains them. The model they build, its failures and successes, will teach everyone who comes in contact with it. Ω

Permaculture designer and consultant Ben Haggard lives and works in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He teaches at the Permaculture Drylands Institute and is author of Living Community—a Permaculture Case Study at Sol y Sombra.

Oneida

(continued from p. 46)

keyhole plazas and park trails, in street games and sacred dance, in sitting rooms and on benches by water fountains. The built environment works best when adapted to climates and social contexts, worst when out of balance with either.

What helped Oneida find itself as a polyfidelitous community was the restriction, through architecture, of private space, and the creation of space for intensive group interaction. What brought an end to the community after just 33 years was its over-reliance on its founder, the large scale of the experiment, the neglect of the natural love between bonded couples and between parent and child, and the earnest need we all have for privacy, rest, and a place to be alone. Ω

Albert Bates is an attorney, educator, and author who lives at The Farm community in Summertown, Tennessee. He serves as regional secretary for the Global Ecovillage Network and publishes a quarterly journal of sustainability, The Design Exchange.

The Oneida Community Mansion House offers lodging, dining, and custom catering for groups. 170 Kenwood Avenue, Oneida, NY 13421; 315-363-0745; fax, 315-363-6060.

Further Reading

Communal Love at Oneida: A Perfectionist Vision of Authority, Property, and Sexual Order, Richard DeMaria, (NY: Edwin Mellen, 1978).

Oneida: Utopian Community To Modern Corporation, Maren Lockwood Carden, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969).

Oneida Community, an Autobiography, 1851-1876, Constance Noyes Robertson (Syracuse University Press, 1970, 1981).

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Religion and Sexuality: The Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida Community, Lawrence Foster, (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1984).



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Sirius

(continued from p. 34)

built largely from the labor of over 110 apprentices over a 12-year period. Apprentices trade 35 hours of carpentry per week for room and board and the experience of living in community. Some have stayed on to become community members. Our apprentice program also provides opportunities to learn organic gardening and other community living skills. Our apprentices are an integral part of the "heartscape" of Sirius.

An important aspect of the design and building of the Eco-Village at Sirius is the newly founded School of Ecological Community Living. Both credit and non-credit programs, internships, and apprenticeships are now offered in sustainable building design and construction, organic gardening and permaculture design, ecological auditing, solar greenhouse design, solar/wind electric system design, hydrogen power systems, spiritual community living, and holistic health. We aspire to create a learning environment where the line between student and teacher largely disappears and we learn together by working and playing in the context of community.

We see Sirius as becoming a research, development, and demonstration site for appropriate technology and permaculture design. In the future we hope to demonstrate solar hydrogen energy systems, point-focusing and linear-focusing parabolic cogenerators, and other community-sized renewable energy systems.

AS WE PURSUE BUILDING AND installing the hardware of sustainable design, we continually look at the equally important "software" of human relations and community health. We are in the process of building a new Wellness Center to

provide a place for the healing arts and for nurturing our bodies and spirits. Our personnel committee is continually learning and growing and striving to provide us with community-building skills, communication skills, and conflict-resolution skills and services.

It is becoming clear that human relations are the basis for true sustainability. Healthy interpersonal and community relationships are harder to show off or fundraise for, but really are the foundations of our ability to do the rest. After 18 years of building an ecovillage we are learning that the greatest challenges come from examining whether our relationships and

personal paths are sustainable and nurturing to each other and to ourselves. If we can demonstrate *this* in the ecovillage movement, then we will have given the world—and ourselves—the basis for a sustainable and just culture. Ω

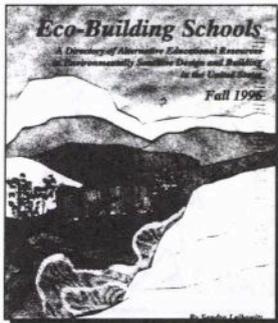
Jeff Clearwater is applying 18 years of experience in solar and appropriate technology design and community activism as Focalizer of The Eco-Village at Sirius, which also serves as the East Coast office of the Ecovillage Network of the Americas and the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN). Jeff also works as a consultant to newly forming and existing communities in integrated energy, water, and waste system design.



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Fountain Grove

"And every priest a Cupid be"

HE HAD BLAZING, PENETRATING eyes. A full, smoky beard descended from his pale, slender face. He was a songwriter, a social activist, a political commentator—a media star. Like a spiritual sommelier, he seemed to have tasted every theology, every belief ever conceived. In the rough and wild West, his attraction was charismatic and mystical, like Buddha's *bodhi* tree in a forest thick with evergreens. Thomas Lake Harris was English, American, a New Yorker, and a Californian. He fancied himself a preacher, writer, and poet, a friend of Longfellow, Poe, William James, and Horace Greeley. He was at various times a Universalist, a Spiritualist, a Swedenborgian.

He taught "Divine Respiration," and said that only through "spiritual sex" could humankind come close to God. He believed little fairies lived in the breasts of women.

After fitful attempts to start community in Wassaic and Brocton, New York, Harris and his followers in what he called the "Brotherhood of the New Life" decamped to Sonoma County, California in 1875. There they established Fountain Grove, a community on the lee of rolling

hills just north of Santa Rosa, named for a fountain the Brotherhood members built in a fragrant grove of eucalyptus. At its peak, Fountain Grove boasted dozens of members, thousands of acres of property, and production of high quality varietal wine, which Harris compared to a "substance of Divine and celestial energy," in

the rather stupendous amount of 70,000 gallons a year.

Harris' followers might have needed all of that wine for themselves, just to digest the mystical teachings of their leader. Harris taught a complex spiritual smorgasbord of beliefs and doctrines popular in the late 19th century, spiced by his own unusual additions.

He said, for example, that

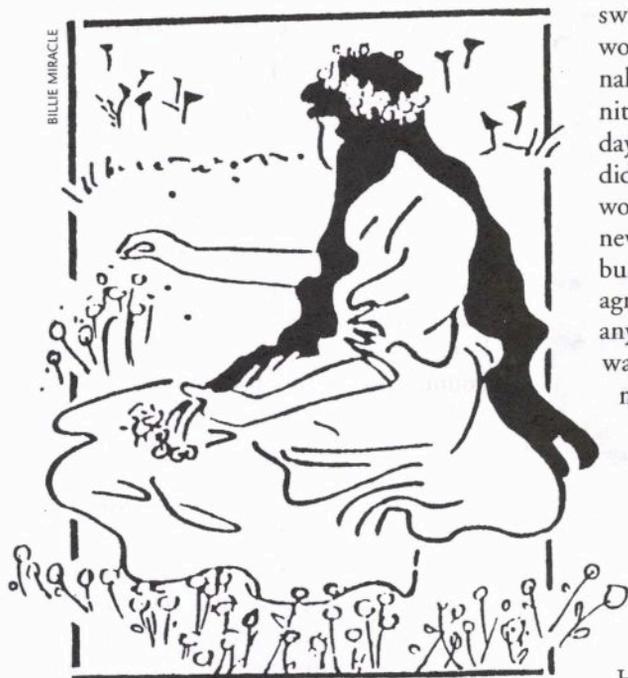
a series of revelations in 1857 had given him the message of "Respirationism," which was a kind of supernatural breathing enabling humankind to commune directly with God. Harris believed God to be both male and female, a "Twain-One Lord." He also taught that every human soul is paired with a spiritual counterpart—what we might today call a "soulmate"—and that the closest one can come to God was to consummate sexually with one's counterpart. The problem,

HISTORIC COMMUNITIES



BY STEVE BJERKLIE

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.



Harris described young women as "pure passion-roses."

however, was that there was no way to know who one's counterpart was until one, well ... consummated. Further complicating the situation: Harris advised that in all likelihood one's marriage partner is not one's counterpart, and so civil marriages should therefore be celibate.

Teachings such as these produced a lot of over-heated verse from Harris, whom one follower called "the glad new voice":

*Girls, my girls, pure passion-roses,
In you I have bled:
In you all my life reposes—
Bridal wreath and bed.*

Harris also sometimes painted the Fountain Grove community in words that could only be misinterpreted by outsiders:

*Here shall Hymen have his court,
And every priest a Cupid be,
Till golden babes are born to sport,
Where lift the waves of Mother-Glee,
Borne through this vast Pacific Sea.*

Actually, a lot less free-loving went on at Fountain Grove than Harris's theology and poetry encouraged or local gossip and rumor presumed. Producing 70,000 gallons of cabernet sauvignon, pinot noir, and zinfandel annually, plus a fair amount of brandy, required a lot of time, muscle, and

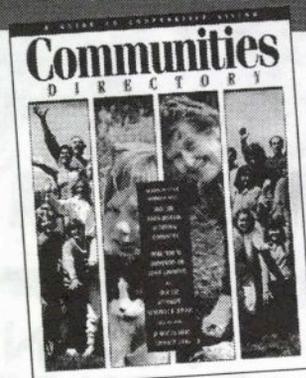
sweat. Fountain Grove's hard workers went back to the communal two-story familstere (community residence) exhausted after a day in the vineyards. Those who didn't tend to the grapes and wine worked just as hard producing a newspaper and constructing out-buildings for livestock and other agricultural ventures. And before any of these enterprises got underway, an elegant, commodious mansion designed in the Adams-Georgian style was built for Harris, his wife Emily (with whom Harris said he maintained a celibate relationship), and certain other elevated members of the Brotherhood.

Among his other talents, Harris had a gift for attracting wealthy investors, who made possible the land purchases and impressive construction at Fountain Grove. Though he preached

against the possession of private property for individual ends, he had no qualms about receiving large cash donations from outsiders. Some of Fountain Grove's members, too, brought wealth to the community. Two of Harris' early followers were Laurence Oliphant and his mother, Lady Oliphant, both English gentry. The younger had been, after adventuring in India and Russia and writing several novels and satires, a diplomatic adjutant to Lord Elgin, and was elected to Parliament in 1865. Two years later, however, he and his mother donated all their worldly possessions to Harris, whom they met in England.

Besides the Oliphants, other well-educated individuals searching for greater meaning in their lives were drawn to Harris's colorful theology. One of these, Kanaye Nagasawa, was a Japanese baron and samurai. He was also an architect and engineer, and designed and built a stout round barn at Fountain Grove, which still stands. But Nagasawa-san's greatest talent proved to be winemaking and grape farming, which he learned from Dr. J.S. Hyde, a Missouri horticulturalist who had joined the community, and Santa Rosa's famous Luther Burbank, who had not. Under the samurai winemaker (who was surely the first Asian-American viticulturalist in the

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US), Fountain Grove wines flourished, and some of the vintages were world class. The community's active print shop even published an illustrated journal, *The Fountain Grove Wine Press*, which may have been the first wine newsletter in America.

But someone of Harris' spirit and mien could not expect the industriousness of community members to distract outsiders from the community's odder aspects. In 1891 Harris invited Alzire Chevalier, a feisty and beautiful journalist, and her mother to Fountain Grove to stay at the community and prepare an article. One look at Ms. Chevalier, however, caused Harris to think he might have found his counterpart at last—well, he wanted to find out for sure, anyway. But Ms. Chevalier was rather less than interested in Harris' entreaties for a bout of "conjugal love," and the article she wrote for the *San Francisco Chronicle* described Fountain Grove in scathing, scandalous terms. Shortly, the hounds of media were barking at Harris' door.

By 1892 he left Sonoma County, with a new wife. He died in 1906 at the age of 83 without ever returning to the place he once called "this new Eden of the West," where "the mightier Muse enkindles now."

The Brotherhood of the New Life took over management of the large Fountain Grove property, but without its mystical center the body could not hold. Soon the last family loaded up a wagon and pulled away from the old, glorious vineyards and the lovely, shuttered mansion, which eventually came to be owned in total by Nagasawa-san. A Brotherhood believer to the last, he continued to make the "substance of Divine and celestial energy" from Fountain Grove grapes until his death in 1934. ☺

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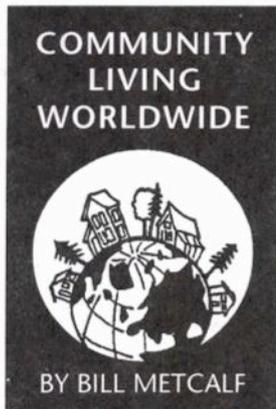
BILL METCALF

Riverside members and guests at Christmas dinner, 1996.

Riverside Community New Zealand

NOW IN ITS THIRD GENERATION, Riverside Community, located at the north end of New Zealand's South Island, is one of the longest-lived of the modern-era intentional communities.

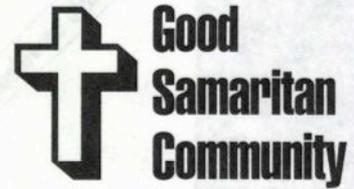
The 500-acre farming community was founded in 1941 on land donated by Hubert Holdaway and his wife, Marion. Hubert was a World War I veteran who had become a Christian pacifist; Riverside was created to provide a communal home and livelihood for Christian pacifists and social activists. At that time members had a shared income and common purse. Nowadays Riverside is no longer overtly Christian, although still pacifist and socially active. The common purse economy has also been modified slightly.



All land, houses, equipment, and vehicles are legally owned by The Riverside Community Trust Board, incorporated as a charitable trust. The trust, in turn, is held in common by all community members. A 150-head dairy herd and 50 acres of fruit orchards provide the community's main income. The community also operates woodworking and farm-equipment repair businesses. All but one member work in one of the community businesses, which now increasingly rely on hired outside labour as well. All earnings become the property of the group.

Each adult member receives housing plus a cash allowance. When the cost of living changes, members adjust their allowances accordingly. Older children are paid when they choose to do farm work.

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.



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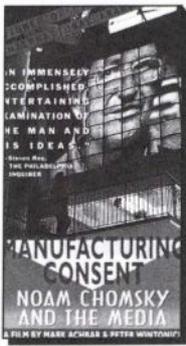
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Denver, CO 80218**

Riverside offers support to young people who may wish to move away; for example, the community provides grants for university or polytechnic school, as well as employment during school holidays.

Riverside members share the use of a limited number of vehicles. The community pays the cost when cars are used for medical or similar errands; when used for private purposes members pay a low mileage rate. The community takes care of all medical costs.

Each June Riverside members meet intensively for several days to review their achievements and make major decisions for the following year. At these meetings they can change their work areas and responsibilities, and discuss or alter the community's general direction. At weekly meetings members implement and monitor these decisions. All members, regardless of age, have equal rights and are expected to take part in community governance.

Riverside formerly made decisions by “a large majority,” but years ago changed to consensus. Members have recently modified this process so that one member cannot block a decision. Now, if someone cannot go along with a group decision, the matter “lies on the table” for two weeks. If, in that time, the objecting member cannot find someone to agree with him/her, that objection can no longer hold up the implementation of the proposal. This process has only been used once. Most practical decisions are left up to people working within various community operations, such as farming or the woodworking shop, provided the members remain within the budget and guidelines for each area. Riverside has never had a charismatic leader, a factor which many members believe has contributed to their communal health and longevity.

When their informal “human relations” system breaks down, they rely on formal mediation and conflict-resolution techniques, at times even calling in professional help.

The community eats dinner together twice a week, and gathers for special events such as Christmas, Founders' Day, and their Harvest Celebration. They have frequent working bees, games nights, theatrical skits, and solstice and birthday parties. I recently joined 80 Riverside members and guests for their annual Christmas

dinner, held in the dining and meeting hall, which was originally their church. The previous evening we had gathered to sing carols and exchange gifts. The strong ties of friendship and affection within this community are palpable.

To join Riverside, a prospective member visits for two weeks, then lives and works in the community during a probationary period of up to a year. If accepted into full membership, the new member either turns his or her private assets over to the community or places them in a trust for the duration of membership.

When leaving the community, a person who has been a member for at least three years is given money equal to 80 percent of his or her annual cash allowance, regardless of how much capital the person had contributed upon joining, or how long he or she had been a member.

Even though they have 24 children, Riverside has a decreasing and aging membership, with six of their 30 adults over 70. While members of all ages are respected and given worthwhile and productive roles, Riverside obviously needs newer and younger members, particularly given their economic base of farming.

Enduring social activists, Riverside members are involved in political issues such as Maori land rights, racial harmony, and anti-militarism. The community also offers home-stay facilities and support for alcoholics and ex-prisoners, who are offered farm work, rest, fresh air, and a chance to start life anew.

At 56 years of age, Riverside is a fascinating—and inspiring—communal group. Ω

NOTE: We preserve the spelling of our Commonwealth contributors.

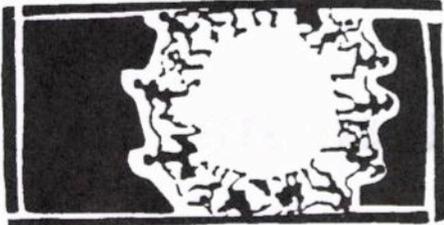
FOUR SEASONS WORTH OF COMMUNITY WISDOM

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

See p. 1 for details.



FEDERATION UPDATE



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

WASHING DISHES IS USUALLY pretty easy, right? Well, you've just run out of dish soap at the community you're visiting and you can't find where they keep their bulk supply. You have to put away the dishes but you don't know where the jar lids go, even after searching 10 drawers! You're just about to give the cutting board a good scrub when a member intervenes: "Hey, we don't put water on our cutting boards!" (The last community you visited insisted that all cutting boards be sanitized in the dishwasher.)

Visiting communities always involves a bit of culture shock. With that goes a sense that you can't do anything smoothly, a syndrome I call The Clumsies, and which I experienced recently on a three-month trip away from my Twin Oaks home to visit other communities.

Community members can easily forget how it feels to visit another community.

On a recent trip to Sandhill Farm, another Federation community in Missouri, I mentioned feeling visitor culture shock to a member, Stan. "Oh yes," he responded, "the last time I visited another community I swore I'd make more of an effort to be hospitable to visitors when I got home. But it only lasted a week."

So why can hospitality be so challenging in community?

One evening back at Twin Oaks, I find myself in the dining hall, considering which table to join. After a day of work

Revisiting Visitors

by Alex McGee

alone, would I rather catch up with some of my community mates, or take the chance that the new batch of visitors at another table might be good company? More often I find myself choosing to invest in the relationships I'm already building with community members. In passing visitors on the path or in our hammock workshop, I find myself task-oriented and focused inward—socially unavailable. If I slowed down, the visitor might ask me a question and I'd lose focus on my project. I make the excuse to myself that he or she

members as well as visitors have a weekly labor quota. But at many communities, everyone just pitches in. Visitors cannot easily understand the whole spectrum of work that may be required, such as, for example, that the peas must be picked before tomorrow's storm.

Furthermore, it can be difficult to gauge how much time to take off for play. At home in Twin Oaks I realize that visitors most often see me when I am working; they don't see the spontaneous afternoon bike ride or when I sleep late or take a class

Visiting communities always involves a bit of culture shock.

could always ask someone else. I rationalize that with so many members throughout the community interacting with visitors, these guests have probably been finding of plenty of buddies. Yet a nagging voice reminds me how I feel when visiting other communities.

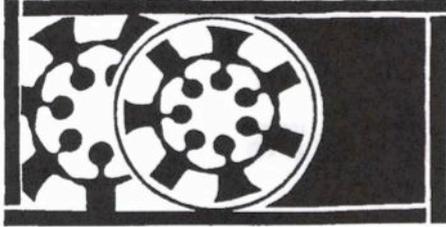
Another experience is the Who To Ask dilemma. A simple solution to the dilemma of putting away jar lids would be to ask a host member, right? And a member *is* sitting right nearby ... but you can't quite tell whether she is trying to rest with her child or whether she's in "work mode" and available to your question. In many communities, the "business" and "hang out" areas overlap, so the place members are relaxing may be the place where you have a question about a work matter. As a visitor, you may be oblivious to this distinction. Eventually, visitors and new members learn to ask how to ask.

When I visit other communities, I am often unsure about how to help or how much to help with community tasks. At Twin Oaks this is not a problem, because

in town. So it could appear that we work all the time here, giving visitors the impression that they must also.

Naturally, one settles in during one's visits to community and culture shock wears off. And we shouldn't forget the simple gifts of visiting community. On my last trip to Sandhill, I found the vistas especially charming and the fresh produce delicious, even though its members may have become accustomed to these delights. Conversely, from visitors to Twin Oaks I receive the gift of fresh perspective. They remark that our meetings are unusually open (even if I find them frustrating); the stars overhead especially bright (which I now take for granted); and how lucky we are not to have to drive to work (as I scurry, late, on my 10-minute walk to the hammock shop). Ω

Alex McGee previously lived in a Jesuit Volunteer Community. At Twin Oaks, she teaches yoga, cooks, weaves hammocks, helps operate the sewage treatment plant, and advocates community as an alternative lifestyle.



Directory Dilemma

by Elph Morgan

SHOULD WE PLAN THE NEXT EDITION of the *Communities Directory* for release in early 1999, or early 2000? This question arose in discussion over the winter months, and, though it sounds simple, has turned out to be a central question in the complex debate about the relationship between the Fellowship for Intentional Communities (FIC) and its flagship product.

The FIC released the first *Communities Directory* in 1990 and reprinted it twice. The second edition was released in

we look forward to committing ourselves full time to the work. Because there are two of us and working full time, we estimate that we could reduce the production time to only a year and a half, and, hopefully, keep the costs down through tighter management.

It's important to keep the financial picture in mind with the *Directory*. Not only is it expensive to produce, even with volunteers, but it is also the primary income producer for the FIC. Everything that the organization does is supported by profits

ties include hosting conferences introducing people to community, publishing new materials (such as a Community Building Manual), or soliciting radio talk show interviews that spur interest in communities and in buying our publications. Other ideas come and go, and we consider them all. With the organization's increasing debt, it is clear that though the *Directory* surely can cover its own costs, it can no longer finance everything else the FIC has undertaken.

To complicate the picture further, FIC is short on cash these days. Even with a fairly new *Directory*, we find ourselves not able to meet all of our current paid labor obligations. We've already had a hard look at cost containment, but the organization is not being extravagant. There's not much to cut.

The FIC is going through some growing pains right now, both financially and operationally. While the transition is awkward, and some of the changes hurt, our people are strong and flexible, and I am optimistic about our shaping the organization in such a way that it can be productive and carry out its mission.

It is into this environment that Jillian and I find ourselves bringing in the question of the next *Directory*. Should we get started as soon as possible, and bring out a solid money maker in early 1999, or should we wait a year, and have it ready at the dawn of the new millennium? Another year would give the FIC more time to reshape itself and adjust to its new financial reality. As I write this we lean toward the dawn, but the discussion continues. Ω

Elph Morgan is actively involved in community networking, with the FIC and other associated groups. His most practical goal is to change the world. Elph can be reached by e-mail at Dir2000@elph.org.

Everything that the Fellowship does is supported by profits from the *Communities Directory*.

April 1995 as a complete rework of the first book. It took about three years and many folks' time (some paid, some volunteer). We are now in the first reprint of that second *Directory*.

At the end of production for the 1995 edition, the core team that produced the book was really tired. All of us had other commitments in our lives, and the *Directory* had managed to eat more than its share of our time. As we wrapped up the details at our final meeting that cold day in Ann Arbor, one thing we all agreed upon was that the next managing team should be paid for their work, so they would be able to concentrate on the project full time.

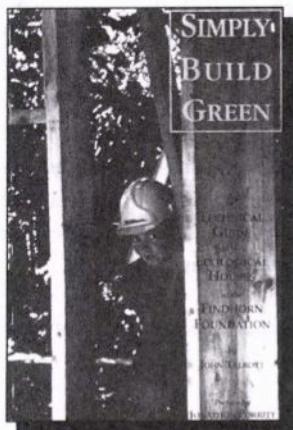
In 1996, Jillian Downey and Elph Morgan (that would be me) came forward as prospective managing editors of the next edition of the *Directory*. Jillian and I worked on the second edition and on the reprint in 1996. We both have sufficient backgrounds in publishing to know what we would be getting ourselves into, and

from the *Directory*. And because "everything that the organization does" has grown significantly in recent years, FIC has a \$50,000 debt remaining from production of the second edition, and will be looking to finance a \$100,000 budget to produce the third edition in 1999 (or is it 2000?).

Of course, no one in the FIC feels it's a wise move to have so many of our eggs in one basket as we do with the *Directory* income. Not surprisingly, we are taking a close look at other possible income sources. Among other things, we are eager to develop *Communities* magazine into a money-maker. (Are you subscribing? It helps!) While subscriptions have risen steadily in the past two years, black ink still eludes us. (*For a closer look at 1996 finances for both the FIC in general and the magazine in particular, see the Publisher's Note, p. 5.*)

We would like to increase the flow of FIC memberships, and would like to explore fundraising more seriously. Possibili-

REVIEWS



Simply Build Green

By John Talbott

Findhorn Press, 1993
Pb., 220 pgs. \$17.95
Available from Findhorn Press
The Park, Findhorn Forres
IV36 OTZ Scotland
E-mail: thierry@findhorn.org,
or <http://www.mcn.org/findhorn/press>

Reviewed by Ellie Sommer

AS ONE OF THE GRANDMOTHERS OF modern-era intentional communities, it's no surprise that the Findhorn Foundation continues to publish books which expand and enrich the available information on all aspects of community living.

Simply Build Green offers a comprehensive collection of advice for building ecologically friendly homes. Let me mention up front, though, that the book is written mostly for readers in the British Isles: its references and sources for building materials are almost exclusively in the United Kingdom, and the building techniques, while apropos for most of the northern hemisphere, are not particularly relevant to other climates. However, this does not outweigh the book's power to aid any homebuilder who wants to impact lightly and live healthfully.

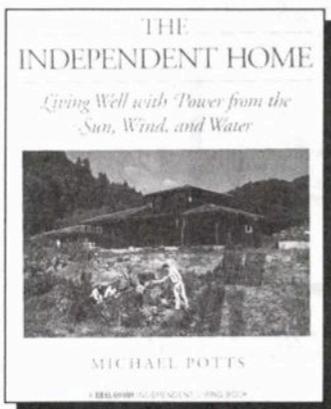
"We wanted the houses to be absolutely

state-of-the-art 'green,' employing the best methods and materials throughout in terms of energy, the environment, and health considerations," writes Talbott. Organized neatly and efficiently, *Simply Build Green* is divided into five sections, each one broken into subsections, so that once you peruse the entire book, it's a snap to relocate information relevant to your own building project.

Talbott's approach is refreshingly inclusive. Every section—whether about roofing materials, flooring products, or wall types—offers a background on and comparisons of the most commonly used alternative building materials, followed by a description of what happened when they were used at Findhorn. He is not shy about admitting mistakes, and part of the gift of this book is hearing about what can go wrong and why.

The narrative is generously accompanied by photos and, especially helpful, detailed drawings of various alternative building techniques.

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



The Independent Home

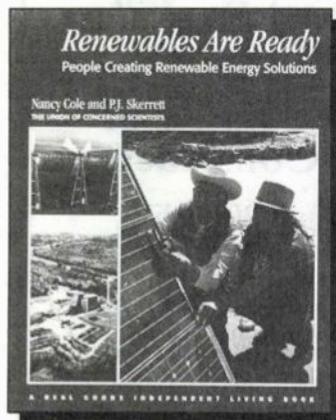
By Michael Potts

Chelsea Green Publishing, 1993
Pb., 300 pgs. \$19.95
Available from Chelsea Green Publishing
PO Box 428
White River Junction, VT 05001

Reviewed by Ellie Sommer

ONE GOAL IN SUSTAINABLE LIVING IS to get off the grid, and Michael Potts has written a definitive book on the subject.

This hefty tome, long on narrative and short on photographs and diagrams, is for the serious off-the-gridder! Part philosophy, part theory, and part home-building guide, *The Independent Home* is a book to read and digest slowly. It is not a how-to manual, although you will learn a variety of techniques and gather many ideas from the personal stories of people who are not plugged into their local power system. Says one off-the-gridder, "Besides being almost half a mile from power lines, I like the independence of renewable energy sources."



Renewables Are Ready: People Creating Renewable Energy Solutions

By Nancy Cole & P.J. Skerrett, the Union
of Concerned Scientists

Chelsea Green Publishing, 1995
Pb., 240 pgs. \$19.95
Available from Chelsea Green Publishing
PO Box 428
White River Junction, VT 05001

Reviewed by Ellie Sommer

THE AUTHORS OF *RENEWABLES ARE Ready* set out to create a comprehensive network of articles and information about renewable energy projects now in progress throughout the United States. "We needed," they write in the introduction, "to inspire and motivate other people to take up the work of changing this country's energy policies and practices." The resulting book offers an impressive look at a wide variety of photovoltaic, wind generator, and micro-hydro-power projects from Bangor, Maine, to Sacramento, California.

The authors have organized the information into five "strategies," each of which is explained through the experiences of

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The Last Straw is the quarterly news journal of the straw-bale construction revival. It is published by Out On Bale, (un)Ltd., in response to the need to share all the rapidly emerging developments from around the United States and the world involving straw-bale construction. The journal includes diverse articles about straw-bale construction projects and techniques, written by and about those who design and build them; research them; live in them...

...and just plain love them.

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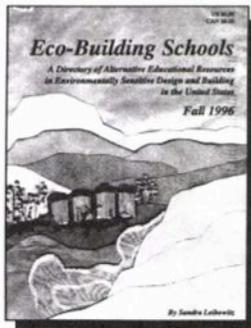
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email: thelaststraw@igc.apc.org
Web: <http://www.netchaos.com/tls>

grassroots, local-level renewable energy ventures. They also profile activists who have "courageously—and successfully—advanced renewable energy in their communities. . . ." And, of course, each project mentioned includes contact information.

The five strategies are: "Work in Partnership with Utilities," "Build Niche Markets," "Seek Creative Financing," "Change Energy Rules," and "Educate by Example." The first chapter consists of a hard-hitting discussion of the need for changes in way we consume energy in the United States.

Interestingly, the authors deemed it appropriate to mention renewable energy projects that were unsuccessful or that were terminated for lack of response, which gives readers the opportunity to reassess and possibly revamp the ideas in such projects.

While *Renewables Are Ready* is only minimally helpful for individual owner-builders, it offers much concrete, how-to information for readers who wish to initiate home-power generating projects in their intentional communities (or neighborhoods, or municipalities) and promote the use of clean, affordable, renewable energy sources.



Eco-Building Schools: Alternative Educational Resources in Environmentally Sensitive Design and Building

By Sandra Leibowitz

1996, 20-page booklet
\$7 ppd. (\$9 Canada)
(Multiple copies available.)

3220 "N" St. NW #218
Washington, DC 20007

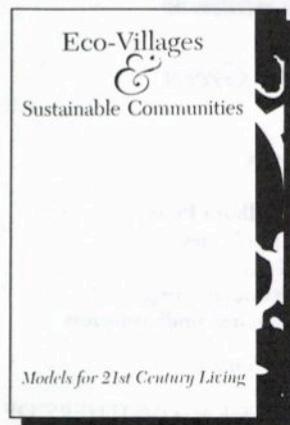
E-mail: sleibowitz@aaa.uoregon.edu

Reviewed by Diana Leafé Christian

SO WHERE DO WE LEARN ALTERNATIVE building skills? Look no further. This

must-have booklet is for anyone seeking to learn environmentally sound building and design—strawbale, cob, adobe, timber framing, ceramic domes, geodesic domes, passive solar design, photovoltaics/wind generators/micro-hydro systems, permaculture, constructed wetlands, low-fuel and solar cook stoves, *Baubiologie* principles . . . and more. Leibowitz provides a state-by-state survey of 36 different schools and programs in the United States that teach these skills; comparison charts of program content, educational setting and structure, and organizational framework and projects; and an overview survey of the philosophies, strengths, and opportunities of various schools and resources. This exceedingly helpful reference will soon appear, in part, on the Internet, at <http://www.ecodesign.org/edi>.

Diana Leafé Christian is editor of Communities magazine.



Eco-Villages & Sustainable Communities: Models for 21st Century Living

Edited by Jillian Conrad

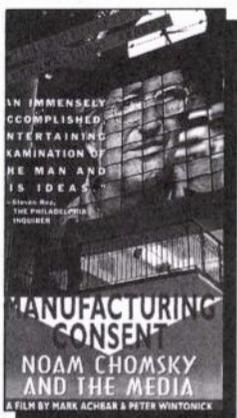
Findhorn Press, 1996
Pb., 100 pgs., \$11.95
Available from Findhorn Press
The Park, Findhorn Forres
IV36 OTZ Scotland
E-mail: thierry@findhorn.org
or <http://www.mcn.org/findhorn/press>

Reviewed by Ellie Sommer

THIS BOOKLET, THE PROCEEDINGS from the week-long "Eco-villages and Sustainable Communities: Models for the 21st Century" conference held at Findhorn in October 1995, is dense with material

about environmentally sound living ideas for the next millennium. Its collection of plenary speeches and workshop sessions offers compact lessons in the subject, which unfortunately are presented with tiny margins and packed pages of type.

However, once you begin reading, you'll discover compelling information about creating a sustainable lifestyle. It's easy to browse and choose the subjects and presenters who interest you. Short biographies and contact information are provided for each, including experts well-known in the field of sustainable communities, such as Peter Russell, Peter Dawkins, Helena Norberg-Hodge, Albert Bates, and Chris Hanson.



Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media

A film by Mark Achbar & Peter Wintonick,

Now Available in Double VHS Videocassettes

166 minutes, \$45 postpaid
What's Left, Box 18-A
Denver, CO 80218

Reviewed by Diana Leafe Christian

NOAM CHOMSKY HAS BEEN CALLED "arguably the most important intellectual alive today" by the *New York Times*. A renowned linguistics professor, he researches all sides of domestic and international news through foreign newspapers and journals, foreign radio and TV newscasts, and speeches and government announcements airmailed from colleagues worldwide. Chomsky has incisively criticized our economic, political, and social structures in general, and the policies of the United

States in particular. He judges a government that lies, violates people's rights, and runs "black operations," and a mass communication industry that manipulates, deceives, and imposes secrecy on government machinations so none of us can choose or oppose such policies.

What Chomsky is *for* (which will sound familiar to most communitarians) is citizens having a voice in policies that affect their lives, and individuals and communities networking together to inform and empower themselves—and our simply taking an interest in the well-being of others.

Manufacturing Consent is visually stimulating and entertaining, with footage of '50s-era documentaries interspersed with shots of Chomsky lecturing to college audiences or being interviewed on non-mainstream radio stations; or with voice-overs of Chomsky's views and footage of the issues or historical figures he's talking about—an impressive use of the medium to tell a serious story yet make it lively and engaging.

The filmmakers focus on how Chomsky, who is highly sought-after by journalists in almost every other western country, is not heard in the US. Mainstream media, we learn, taps only those prominent figures whose views are non-controversial, cover the rather narrow liberal-conservative continuum, and do not require an explanation, or evidence.

Chomsky, on the other hand, is given to such controversial statements as:

"Education is a system of imposed ignorance."

"The biggest international terrorist operations that we know of are run out of Washington."

"The 'best' political leaders are the ones that are lazy and corrupt."

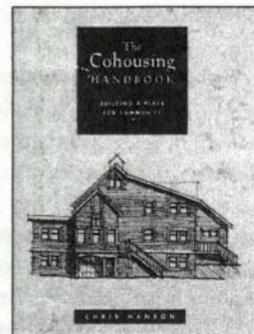
"If the Nuremberg laws were applied, every postwar American president would hang."

"There's no more morality in public affairs today, fundamentally, than in the time of Genghis Khan."

Chomsky yearns for real political choice, decrying "stage-managed" presidential elections, where candidates decide what to say on the bases of tests that determine what people most want to hear. "Somehow people don't see how profoundly contemptuous that is of democracy," he says.

He advocates that we inform ourselves

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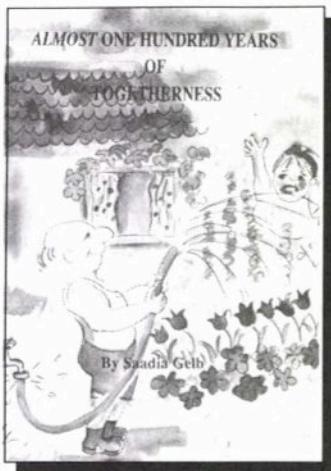
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(909) 925-6117

with alternative media; create participatory democracy in the workplace (footage of worker-owned co-ops and early *kibbutzim*); and forsake the status quo for a more cooperative, even "communitarian" way of life—a compelling message for us all, community member or not.

"The driving force of modern industrial civilization has been individual material gain, which is accepted as legitimate, even praiseworthy," he tells a college audience. "A society based on this principle ... 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, and the world is an infinite resource, and the world is an infinite garbage can.

"At this stage of history ... 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 ... there will be no destiny for anyone to control."

Highly recommended.



Almost One Hundred Years of Togetherness

By Saadia Gelb

Shmuel Press, 1996

Pb., 160 pgs., \$15

Available for \$17.50 postpaid:

Illana Goldstein

11908 Bargeate Court

Rockville, MD 20852

301-984-1470

Reviewed by Tree Bressen

THIS DELIGHTFUL LITTLE BOOK doesn't pretend to be a complete history of the kibbutz movement in Israel. Nor does it set out to explain each intricacy of Kibbutz Kfar Blum, the home of its author for nearly 50 years.

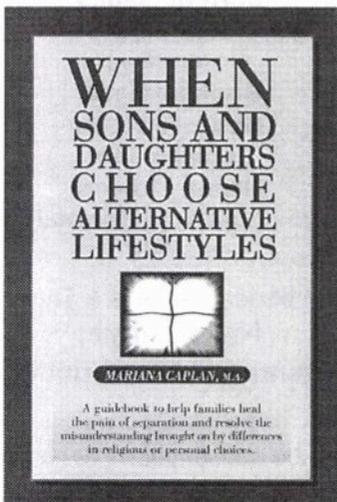
Instead, by offering tidbits and anecdotes and the occasional spicy statistic, Saadia Gelb (who describes himself as possibly "the only octogenarian barman this side of the Mississippi") offers an insightful sampling of kibbutz life past and present.

In the early days, pioneers drained the swamps, slept with rifles, and cleared rocks and thistles from fields by hand. Within a few decades, people were eating salads every day, though everyone still rose at 5 a.m. and a visiting volunteer noted that his fingernails were permanently dirty. After many long years of "draining, clearing, planting, building, pushing, [and] pulling," communities had been established that included factories, hotels, restaurants and tourists.

When Sons and Daughters Choose Alternative Lifestyles

by Mariana Caplan, M.A.

A long-awaited alternative to mainstream "cult" literature. Anybody living in community or participating in an alternative lifestyle will want to read this book and buy it for their families.

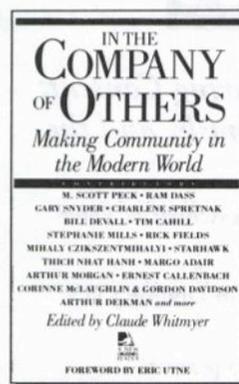


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ISBN: 0-934252-69-6



In the Company of Others: Making Community in the Modern World

Claude Whitmyer, Editor

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The author remarks, "Now everybody asks us how we knew to pick the most beautiful areas of the country for our kibbutzim!"

Quite a few of the experiences Gelb relates will ring true for some North American communitarians as well. For instance, the cultural clashes between those from different backgrounds. Thankless administrative jobs and distrust of outside "experts." The preference for being gullible and accepting human frailty. The occasional member who gripes endlessly, doesn't like to work, or just plain doesn't fit. Ongoing controversies on communalism v. individual ownership, idealism v. pragmatism, and how best to raise children. A community that is basically optimistic in spite of constant grumbling.

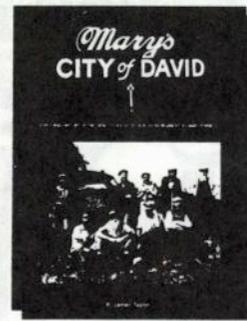
Other experiences are more particular to living in a country continually at war. Losing a young member to sniper shots. Cocking a rifle at a figure during night guard patrol only to realize it's a cactus. Sneaking in arms past the British. Yearning

for peace with their Arab neighbors.

As Kfar Blum ages, new questions arise. Is it acceptable to hire outside labor? Should the kibbutz buy television sets for families who have none? Shall the limited budget be spent on housing or machinery? Will being an industrial community introduce new values?

According to the kibbutz, there is no gossip, only "shared information." Gelb's shared information is an entertaining buffet, suitable both for experienced communitarians and anyone who'd enjoy an accessible introduction to kibbutz life. Originally printed for distribution at Kfar Blum's guest house and including charming illustrations on every page, lucky readers can now obtain copies without traveling all the way to Israel. If you don't have the good fortune to visit Gelb's beautiful homeland, this small volume of reflections may be the next best thing.

Tree Bressen manages the visitor program at Acorn Community in Virginia. Ω



Mary's City of David

A Pictorial History of the Israelite House of David as Reorganized by Mary Purnell
by R. James Taylor

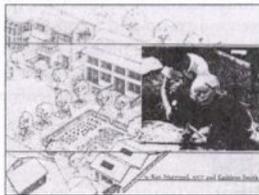
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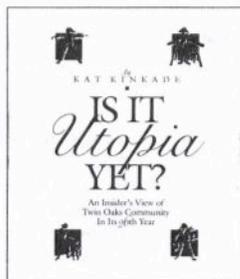


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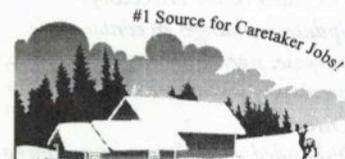
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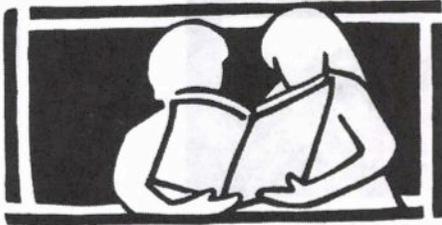
<http://www.well.com/user/eastwind/bookshlf.html>

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The Caretaker Gazette contains property caretaking/housesitting job openings, advice and information for property caretakers, housesitters & landowners. "If you ever wanted to learn more about property caretaking opportunities, have we got the newsletter for you: *The Caretaker Gazette*" concludes *Mother Earth News*. Published since 1983, subscribers receive 500+ property caretaking job opportunities each year, worldwide. Some estate management positions start at \$50,000/yr + benefits. Subscriptions start at \$24/yr. *The Caretaker Gazette*, 1845 Deane-I, Pullman WA 99163. (509)332-0806.
garydunn@pullman.com

COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY SUMMER '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!

I N D E X O F L I S T I N G S

NORTH AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ALABAMA
[n] Bear Tribe Medicine Society

ARIZONA
[n] WindTree Ranch

BRITISH COLUMBIA
[n] Morning Star Ridge Community
[u] Windsong Cohousing

CALIFORNIA
[u] Bay Leaf Cohousing
[d] Hale Byodo Corazon
[u] Monan's Rill
[u] Ojai Foundation
[u] Shared Living Resource Center

COLORADO
[n] Stone Grail Theatre Community

CONNECTICUT
[n] Arts & Humanities Cooperative

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
[u] CCNV: Community for Creative Non-Violence

ILLINOIS
[n] Acme Artists Cooperative
[n] Fiddler's Green

MASSACHUSETTS
[u] Potash Hill Community

MISSOURI
[u] East Wind
[n] Skyhouse Community

NEW YORK
[d] Red Road Farm

NORTH CAROLINA
[u] Earthaven

NOVA SCOTIA
[n] Gandhi Farm

OHIO
[d] Folkcorps

WISCONSIN
[u] Dreamtime Village

NORTH AMERICAN NEW LISTINGS

ACME ARTISTS COOPERATIVE

(Forming)
2418 W. Bloomingdale
Chicago, IL 60647
773-278-7677
nnwac@mcs.com

Chicago artists organized a 22-family community and are currently developing the construction drawings for the rehabilitation of a 40,000 square foot factory building. Common resources include a two story atrium garden space, a community room, kitchen, workshop, laundry, and roof deck garden. The average live/work space will be 1,400 square feet and the ownership has been structured as a limited equity cooperative. 4/97

ARTS & HUMANITIES COOPERATIVE

1210 Chapel Street
New Haven, CT 06515
203-758-6096

The Arts & Humanities Cooperative provides living and working space for artists, activists, and the ecologically conscious, as well as a number of programs and services for the local community designed to encourage people to think and explore new ideas. We are seeking people with like interests committed to working through the processes involved in communal living. Must like the company of children and be willing to be a part of a diverse racial, ethnic, gender, class, religious, sexual preference, age, physically able population. 4/97

BEAR TRIBE MEDICINE SOCIETY

3750-A Airport Boulevard #223
Mobile, AL 36608-1618
334-471-1373

The Bear Tribe is an intentional community of people working together for the common goal of understanding and healing ourselves, others, and the Earth. We conduct ongoing workshops and seminars and are currently seeking land to use as a home base. Write for newsletter or catalog. 4/97

FIDDLER'S GREEN

(Forming)
1018 Main Street #3
Evanston, IL 60202
847-328-1187
drbradshaw@nwu.edu
<http://smith.mmlc.nwu.edu/~daniel/fiddler/>

Our goals are to strive for environmental sustainability; create a safe and comfortable environment for people of any sex, race, religion, age, creed, or sexual orientation; escape consumerist culture; maintain respect for the natural world and all animals; and to be a "community of individuals." Our final goal is to prove that we can achieve our version of "the Good Life" without compromising our other goals. Our economic system is designed to pool our resources and most income while still encouraging individual initiative and reward (putting us somewhere between a co-op and a commune). We intend to move onto communal property by October 1998 to create a rural community somewhere near an active cultural center. Inquiries and comments are welcome. 4/97

GANDHI FARM

Brookfield Mines
Queens County, NS B0T 1X0
CANADA
hurdles@is2.dal.ca

We are a vegan community of eco-activists moving toward self-sufficiency. We do not use internal combustion engines or electricity, living in huts during the warm months and in the communal house in the winter. Smoking and distilled alcohol are not permitted. We are very interested in expansion, with at least 50 percent of our communal income going toward the purchase of more land. You can be a volunteer, a visitor, or a member, without having to pay. Members must share the products of their labor with the community and must follow veganism even off the property. If you are totally sympathetic to the vision of Gandhi Farm and wish to become a member, now is a great time to have a lot of say in our principles of formation. 3/97

MORNING STAR RIDGE COMMUNITY

G.4 C.17 RR #1
Winlaw, BC V0G 2J0
CANADA

250-355-2206 Morning Star Center
250-355-2585 Global Living Project

Founded in 1992 as a spiritual community, our intention is to be grounded on Spirit, Love, and Service, with the goal of offering an example of a sustainable life style, as well as being of service in the greater community and world. We are approximately 10 people in the winter and 25 in the summer months, situated on 160 acres of land. The community houses the "Morning Star Center" which focuses on exploring, experiencing, sharing, and teaching about community life, and the "Global Living Project," a project which works towards living equitably and harmoniously within the means of nature. Visitors are asked to call in advance. SASE requested. 3/97

SKYHOUSE COMMUNITY

Route 1 Box 156
Rutledge, MO 63563
816-883-5511/883-5553
skyhouse@devnull.net
<http://www.woodwind.com/dancing-rabbit/skyhouse/>

Skyhouse is the first subcommunity to form as part of the Dancing Rabbit Project, a truly sustainable rural ecovillage. Our seven members (including a baby) are a close-knit community which makes all decisions by consensus. We currently rent housing near our friends at Sandhill Farm. At present, we telecommute, do office work for the FIC, and practice more earthy means of support such as tempah making and teaching childbirth education classes. We'll move on to the land Dancing Rabbit purchases in 1997. We're very interested in visitors, so write, email, or give us a call! 4/97

STONE GRAIL THEATRE COMMUNITY

(Forming)
PO Box 270313
Fort Collins, CO 80527-0313

We are a vision-based intentional community of artists and craftspeople, healers, farmers, teachers, centered around Stone Grail Theatre (which offers year-long residential programs, conferences, and retreats). We value nonviolence; consensus decision-making; a strong desire for personal growth and self-responsibility; and respect for each other, for the earth and all living upon her. We seek creative, compassionate, courageous individuals with a strong spiritual center wishing to live a highly creative and spiritual life in peace, harmony and cooperation. 3/97

WINDTREE RANCH

RR 2 Box 1
Douglas, AZ 85607
phyohealth@aol.com

We are a nature/Goddess-centered Religious Order and Seminary, land-based on 1,200+ acres. There are limited openings for people whose goals are cooperative, enthusiastic work sharing and earth-gentle interaction between people and the planet. Lifestyle is earth-sustainable, deep ecological permaculture, Vegan, textile-free, with no drugs or other addictions interfering with the relationship between nature and human co-habitants. New residential members may include children. 4/97

NORTH AMERICAN UPDATES (PREVIOUS LISTINGS)

BAY LEAF COHOUSING

(formerly Vegan CoHousing Working Group)
(Forming)
PO Box 40684
San Francisco, CA 94140-0684
415-487-6335
bboyd@ccsf.cc.ca.us
<http://www.cohousing.org/specific/bayleaf/>

New name, location, contact info, and modified description. "Cohousing combines the safety and support of community and extensive common facilities with the privacy of your own self-contained home. Optional shared meals several times a week (in Bay Leaf, they'll be vegan, as our "highest common denominator"). Planning for 8-30 units, San Francisco or East Bay near BART. Target date: 2000. Frequent meetings, outreach, and social activities. E-mail for monthly updates of our progress." SASE requested. 3/97

CENV: COMMUNITY FOR CREATIVE NON-VIOLENCE

425 2nd Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Address clarification. 4/97

DREAMTIME VILLAGE

Route 1 Box 131
LaFarge, WI 54639
608-625-4619 (Office)
608-625-2412 (Hotel)
dtv@mwt.net
<http://net22.com/dreamtime/>

New address, phone, e-mail, and website. 4/97

EARTHAVEN

1025 Camp Elliott Road
Black Mountain, NC 28711
704-254-5613

Added phone number. 4/97

EAST WIND COMMUNITY

Tecumseh, MO 65760
visit@eastwind.org

New e-mail address. 4/97

MONAN'S RILL

Northern California
707-539-1622

New phone. 3/97

OJAI FOUNDATION

9739 Ojai-Santa Paula Road
Ojai, CA 93023
805-646-8343

New address and clarification of description. The Ojai Foundation should be considered a resource that offers educational programs and retreats, not a community. They are not looking for new members at this time. 4/97

POTASH HILL COMMUNITY

9 Frazier Lane
Cummington, MA 01026

New address. 1/97

SHARED LIVING RESOURCE CENTER

Parker Street Cooperative
2337 Parker Street #9
Berkeley, CA 94704

New address. 4/97

WINDSONG COHOUSING

#27 - 20543 - 96th Avenue
Langley, BC V1M 3W3
CANADA
604-882-5337 phone
604-882-9331 fax
acarpent@direct.ca

New phone and e-mail. 3/97

DISBANDED & BAD ADDRESSES

FOLKCORPS

(Formerly Futures, Inc.)
Dayton, OH

Disbanded due to the death of founder Jim Wyker. 12/96

HALE BYODO CORAZON

Los Angeles, CA

Disbanded. 2/97

RED ROAD FARM

Cairo, NY

Mail returned "attempted not known." 12/96

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

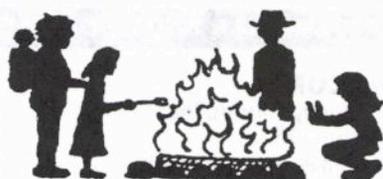
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Classifieds are for anything by, for, or related to communities and community living. Send for info on how to place an ad. Communities, PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541; phone/fax: 970-593-5615.

COMMUNITY LAND FOR SALE

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! Susan Larsen, 387 Fred Sutton Rd., Whittier, NC 28789; 704-586-8156.

PRIVATE TWO ACRE-ESTATE in lovely upcountry Maui, Hawaii. Custom designed, octagonal 3,200 sq. ft. home, 6 bedrms, hot tub, views. Second home: 3 bedrms, 1,500 sq. ft. vegetable gardens. Wheat grass business, fruit trees, \$559,000. 808-572-1560.

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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.

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BOOKS, VIDEOS, AUDIOTAPES 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 page: <http://www.well.com/user/eastwind/bookshlf.html>.



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

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email: LMM@lovemore.com website: www.lovemore.com
303/543-7540 (m-f 9-5 mtn time)

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.*

AUDIOTAPES ON FORMING COMMUNITY, from the 1995 Community Quest Conference. Tapes on Founders/Visionaries; Legal & Business Options; Decision-Making Options; Conflict Resolution; Ecological Sustainability; Facilitating Meetings; much more. Patch Adams, Corinne McLaughlin, Caroline Estes, Laird Sandhill, Geoph Kozeny, Stephan Brown, & more. Send for 34-tape list: *Community Quest, 3121 Water St., Colorado Springs, CO 80904; 719-442-1820.*

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scription (3/year) included with \$25 annual support of *Permaculture Drylands Institute, Dept. C, PO Box 156, Santa Fe, NM 87504; 505-983-0663.*

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INTEGRATED ECOVILLAGE DESIGN SERVICES. Are you building a new community or aspiring to make your existing community or homestead into a model of sustainability? Nineteen years' experience in community-oriented appropriate technology; solar design; solar, wind, and microhydro electric systems; water systems; compost toilets; greywater; and electric vehicles. Integrative whole-systems design approach for building, energy, water, and waste systems on a community scale. Pay travel and board and a reasonable design fee and I'll come visit and get you started on the right track. *Jeff Clearwater, Eco-Village Office, Sirius Community, 72 Baker Road, Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-1254; clrwtr@valinet.com.*

OPPORTUNITIES, SPECIAL OFFERS

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

PACIFIC HIGH SCHOOL REUNION, Los Gatos, California. Did you or someone you know spend time there? For information on August '97 reunion call *Robin Bloomgarden, 503-408-0481*

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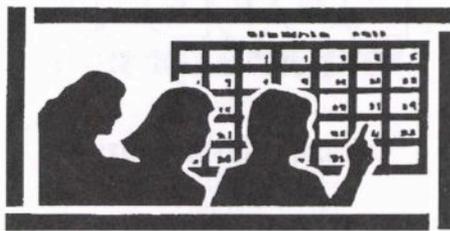
The World Wide Web is the dynamic and rapidly growing information exchange system of the Internet global computing network. Web browsers can easily access our Marketplace advertising page from multiple places in our intentional communities web site (and beyond).

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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. 75.

Jun 20-28 • Fundamentals of Permaculture

Summertown, Tennessee. Ecovillage Training Center. Peter Bane, Chuck Marsh, Patricia Allison, Andrew Goodheart Brown. \$600. *Ecovillage Training Center, PO Box 90, Summertown, TN 38483; 615-964-4324; fax, 615-964-0090; ecovillage@thefarm.org.*

Jun 23-29 • Strawbale Building

Sedro Woolley, Washington. Hands-on. \$450; \$195 wknd only. *SunRay School of Natural Living, 1356 Janicki Rd., Sedro Woolley, WA 98284; 206-781-3525; jkelley@ncia.com.*

Jun 27-29 • E.F. Schumacher Society 2nd Annual Decentralist Conference

Williamstown, Massachusetts. Local currencies, Microenterprise Loan Funds, co-ops, small town revitalization, community land trusts, more. \$275. *E.F. Schumacher Society, 140 Jug End Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230; 413-528-1737; efsociety@aol.com; http://members.aol.com/efssociety.*

Jul 1-7 • Annual Rainbow Gathering of the Tribes

Washington or Oregon, a national forest. Free week-long participant-created cooperative ecological village campsite. *Rainbow '97, PO Box 5577, Eugene, OR 97405.*

Jul 3-6 • Strawbale Workshop

Port Townsend, Washington. Matts Myhrmann, Judy Knox. *Spring and Michael Thomas, 360-385-7440.*

Jul 6-Aug 3 • Permaculture Apprenticeship & Fundamentals Course

Black Mountain, North Carolina. Culture's Edge at Earthen Village. Chuck Marsh, Peter Bane. Tuition, meals, camping. \$1,500; 4 wknds, \$450; 1 wknd, \$125. *Culture's Edge, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 704-298-2399; fax, 704-298-6441; earthen@circle.net.*

Jul 7-11 • Solar Home Design

Carbondale, Colorado. Solar Energy International. Design guidelines, weatherizing, insulation, construction, solar water heating, sunspaces/greenhouses, windows, earth-building technologies, more. *SEI, PO Box 715, Carbondale CO 81623; 970-963-8855; fax 970-963-8866; sci@solarenergy.org.*

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, 2-day trip Rocky Mtn. National Park. \$275; \$210, camping. *YouthSpirit International, 5569 NCR 29, Loveland, CO 80538; 970-679-4250.*

Jul 14-25 • Permaculture Design Course

Northern California. Bill Mollison, Scott Pittman. \$950. *834 W. California Way, Woodside, CA 94062; 415-365-2993; dblume@igc.apc.org.*

Jul 18-20 • Strawbale Workshop

Palmerston, Ontario, Canada. Hands-on. Matts Myhrmann, Judy Knox, David Eisenberg. *YMCA Environmental Learning Centre, RR1, St. Clements, Ontario, N0B 2M0, CANADA; 519-743-5201.*

Jul 18-Aug 3 • ZEGG Summer Camp

Belzig, Germany. Festival, projects, speakers, community living, art, music, games. *ZEGG, Rosa-Luxemburg-Str. 89, 14806 Belzig, GERMANY; 011-49-33841-59510; fax, 011-49-33841-5952; zeggpost@zegg.dinco.de.*

Jul 20-26 • Cob Cottage Building Basics

Shutesbury, Massachusetts. Sirius Community. Hands-on. Tuition, meals, budget accommodations. \$470. *Sirius, 72 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-1254; fax 413-259-1255.*

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, permaculture, sustainable forestry, more. 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.*

Jul 20-Aug 30 • Exploring Community Life

Slocan Valley, British Columbia. Live-in experience at Morning Star Ridge Community: shared living, common meals, communal work, sacred circles, spiritual practice, bi-weekly workshops, consensus decision making, conflict resolution, community economics. Sliding scale \$350-500/mo. *250-355-2206.*

Jul 21-Aug 1 • Wind Power

Carbondale, Colorado. Solar Energy International. Hands-on. Aerodynamics, generators, alternators, induction machines, site analysis, system sizing, energy storage, solar hybrids, more. *SEI, PO Box 715, Carbondale, CO 81623; 970-963-8855; fax 970-963-8866; sci@solarenergy.org.*

Jul 25-27 • Divine New Order Community Seminar

Sedona, Arizona. Structure and foundation of 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/sd/aquarian/.*

Jul 25-27 • Earthen Plastering

Sedro Woolley, Washington. Hands-on. *SunRay School of Natural Living, 1356 Janicki Rd., Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284; 206-781-3525; jkelley@ncia.com.*

Jul 31-Aug 3 • Findhorn Gathering

Shutesbury, Massachusetts. Sirius Community. Former Findhorn residents reconnect w/old friends. Entertainment, speakers, discussion, networking, meditation. \$150 (meals, lodging incl.). *Sirius, 72 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-1254; fax 413-259-1255.*

Aug 2-3 • The Natural Living Expo & NICA Communities Conference

Arlington, Washington. Simultaneous local intentional communities gathering (sponsored by Northwest Intentional Communities Association), and hands-on workshops in natural building, renewable energy, permaculture, organic farming/gardening, natural healing, etc. (sponsored by SunRay School of Natural Living). Music, entertainment. \$10. *14724 184th St. NE, Arlington, WA 98203; 360-435-857; or 360-854-0413; jkelley@nica.com.*

Aug 3-8 • Eco-Spirit Leadership Camp (For Youth 11-16)

Shutesbury, Massachusetts. Sirius Community. Relationships w/self, others, community, nature, & spirit. Sweat lodge, vision quest, building w/ cob, homesteading crafts, more. \$200. *Sirius, 72 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-1254; fax, 413-259-1255.*

Aug 3-Oct 26 • Exploring Community Life

Slocan Valley, British Columbia. See Jul 20-Aug 30.

Aug 4-5 • Photovoltaic Design & Installation

Carbondale, Colorado. Solar Energy International. Hands-on installation, typical applications, case-study examples, tours of PV residences. *SEI, PO Box 715, Carbondale, CO 81623; 970-963-8855; fax, 970-963-8866; sci@solarenergy.org.*

Aug 8-17 • Summer Camp '97, Network for a New Culture

Portland, Oregon. Speakers, networking, camping, vegetarian meals. *NFNW, PO Box 160, Forest Grove, OR 97116; 800-624-8445; NFNW@aol.com.*

Aug 9-10 • Intentional Communities Conference, SBAMUH

Athens, Ohio. Info for women interested in interning or residing at Susan B. Anthony Women's Land Trust, Ohio. *SBAMUH, PO Box 5853, Athens OH 45701; 614-448-7242.*

Aug 9-10 • Annual Garlic Festival, Love Israel Family

Arlington, Washington. Huge gathering w/music, juried crafts, food (& garlic!), children's activities, more. *Love Israel Family, 14724 184th St. NE, Arlington, WA 98203; 360-435-8577.*

Aug 15-17 • Straw Bale Barn Raising

Black Mountain, North Carolina. Culture's Edge at Earthaven Village. Hands-on. Tuition, meals, camping, \$125. *Culture's Edge, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 704-298-2399; fax, 704-298-6441; earthaven@circle.net.*

Aug 15-18 • Sustainability: From Vision to Practice

Shutesbury, Massachusetts. Eco-Village at Sirius Community. Presentations, panels, facilitated activities. Permaculture, appropriate technology, Eco-Village Network of the Americas. Albert Bates, Daniel Greenberg, Jeff Clearwater, more. \$150. *Eco-Village Office, Sirius Community, 72 Baker Rd., Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-125; clrwater@valinet.com; http://www.siriuscommunity.org/susconference.html.*

Aug 15-22 • Timber Framing

Sedro Woolley, Washington. Robert LaPorte, Steve Vessey. \$450; \$195 wknd only. *SunRay School of Natural Living, 1356 Janicki Rd., Sedro Woolley, WA 98284; 206-781-3525; jkelley@ncia.com.*

Aug 19-24 • Cob Cottage Building Basics

Shutesbury, Massachusetts. See Jul 20-26.

Aug 22-24 • Twin Oaks Women's Gathering

Louisa, Virginia. Celebrating women's knowledge, wisdom, humor, courage through creative and fun activities. Rustic accommodations, sliding scale. *Twin Oaks, 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa VA 23093; 540-894-5126.*

Aug 22-24 • Loving More, Annual Conference: West Coast

Santa Cruz, California. Mt. Madonna Center. Workshops, panels, networking. Polyfidelity, polyamory, more. Camping/dorm accommodations. \$195; \$250 after 7/16. *Loving More magazine, PO Box 4358, Boulder, CO 80306; 303-543-7540.*

Aug 29-31 • Harvest Festival at The Farm

Summertown, Tennessee. Workshops, displays—Farm history & community living, Eco-Village events, vegetarianism, renewable energy, permaculture, midwifery, alternative healing, arts & crafts, more. World Beat, rock n' roll all weekend. *PO Box 259, Summertown, TN 33483; 615-964-2590; totalvid@usit.net; www.thefarm.org.*

Aug 29-Sep 1 • Community Process

Black Mountain, North Carolina. Culture's Edge at Earthaven Village. Group and field skills for sustainable communities. \$125; per day, \$55. *Culture's Edge, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 704-298-2399; fax, 704-298-6441; earthaven@circle.net.*

Aug 29-Sep 1 • Twin Oaks Communities Conference

Louisa, Virginia Labor Day Weekend at Twin Oaks, for people living a community lifestyle and those who'd like to. Workshops, walks, camping, music, dancing stories, presentations of communities forming in the region. Sliding scale. *Twin Oaks, 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093; 540-894-5126.*

Aug 31-Sep 6 • Building with Cob

Sedro Woolley, Washington. Hands-on. Ianto Evans. \$450; \$195 wknd only. *SunRay School of Natural Living, 1356 Janicki Rd., Sedro Woolley, WA 98284; 206-781-3525; jkelley@ncia.com.*

Sep 5-7 • Strawbale Construction

Carbondale, Colorado. Solar Energy International. Hands-on. \$250. *SEI, PO Box 715, Carbondale, CO 81623; 970-963-8855; fax 970-963-8866; sci@solarenergy.org.*

Sep 5-7 • Living on Earth—In Spirit!

Black Mountain, North Carolina. Culture's Edge at Earthaven Village. Celebration of unity, practical inspiration: sustainable health, economics, gardening, music, more. *Culture's Edge, 1025 Camp Elliott Rd., Black Mountain, NC 28711; 704-298-2399; fax, 704-298-6441; earthaven@circle.net.*

Sep 5-7 • Permaculture Design Course/ Natural Building

Washington state. (Also wknds, 20-21, Oct 4-5, 18-19) *GreenFire Institute, 206-284-7470; Ted@balewolf.com.*

Sep 5-Dec 12 • Foundation Semester in Sustainable Living & Society

Southern New Hampshire. GeoCommons College Year. History, sciences, literature, philosophy, educational systems of human-Earth relations. Merriam Hill Center, w/visits to intentional communities (incl. Native American), wilderness camping. 12 credits, UNH. *Gaia Education-Outreach Institute, Derbyshire Farm, Temple, NH 03084; 603-654-6705; geo@ic.org; http://www.ic.org/geo.*

Sep 6-7 • The Basic Permaculture Design Course

Albuquerque, New Mexico. (Also wknds 20-21, Oct 4-5, 18-19.) Permaculture Drylands Institute. 72 hours in 4 weekends. \$495; 1 wknd, \$125. *PDI, PO Box 156, Santa Fe, NM 87504; 505-983-0663.*

Sep 7-13 • Organic Sculpted Roofs

Sedro Woolley, Washington. Hands-on. *SunRay School of Natural Living, 1356 Janicki Rd., Sedro Woolley, WA 98284; 206-781-3525; jkelley@ncia.com.*

Sep 12-14 • Loving More, Annual Conference: East Coast

Parkville, New York. See August 22.

Sep 12-14 • Natural House Building

Carbondale, Colorado. Solar Energy International. Full range of sustainable, low-cost, building systems, healthy building—clay, straw, wood & stone. \$250. *SEI, PO Box 715, Carbondale CO 81623; 970-963-8855; fax, 970-963-8866; sci@solarenergy.org.*

Sep 12-20 • Practicum in Permaculture Design

Summertown, Tennessee. (See June 20-28). Advanced principles of permaculture design. *Ecovillage Training Center, PO Box 90, Summertown, TN 38483; 615-964-4324; fax, 615-964-0090; ecovillage@thefarm.org.*

Sep 13-16 • Two Week Permaculture Design Course

Masonville, Colorado. Intensive residential program. Design work, hands-on projects, field trips, Earth-friendly buildings. \$750 before 8/15; \$800 after. *Sandy Cruz, High Altitude Permaculture Institute, Box 238, Ward, CO 80481; 303-459-3494.*

Sep 14-27 • Traditional Roof Thatching

Sedro Woolley, Washington. Hands-on. Ianto Evans. *SunRay School of Natural Living, 1356 Janicki*

Rd., Sedro Woolley, WA 98284; 206-781-3525; jkelley@ncia.com.

Sep 19-21 • National CoHousing Gathering

Seattle, Washington. National conference for cohousing enthusiasts, with speakers, panels, workshops on building and living in cohousing communities. Meeting for cohousing "burning souls" on Sept. 18. *Marci Malinowycz, Puget Ridge CoHousing, 206-763-2623; sodance@msn.com.*

Sep 27 • Solar Houses, Sustainable Energy Practices

Plymouth, Wisconsin. High Wind community builders & designers on cutting-edge technologies for energy-efficient construction. \$45; \$40, students; \$80, couples. *Plymouth Institute, W7136 County Rd. U, Plymouth, WI 53073; 414-964-1268.*

Sep 26-28 • Divine New Order Community Seminar

Sedona, Arizona. See Jul 25-27.

Oct 9-12 • "Communal Frontiers," Communal Studies Assn. 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. *CSA, PO Box 122, Amana, IA 52203; 319-622-6446; csa@netins.net; www.well.com/user/cmty/csa.*

Oct. 13-18 • Photovoltaic Design & Installation

Asheville, North Carolina. See Aug 4-5.

Oct 15-17 • CoHousing Developer Seminar

Lafayette (nr. Boulder), Colorado. For project managers, builders and developers interested in creating cohousing communities. Speakers Kathryn McCamant, Chuck Durrett, Chris Hanson, Jim Leach, Zev Paiss. *Support Financial Services, 3577 Nyland Way, Lafayette, CO 80026; 303-499-8189; zpaiss@aol.com.*

Oct 16-19 • Annual Meeting, Society for Utopian Studies

Memphis, Tennessee. Papers, panels, and intellectual interchange on utopianism, especially literary and experimental utopias, in a cooperative, convivial environment. *Prof. Jennifer Wagner, Dept. of English, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN 38152; 901-678-4329; jawagner@cc.memphis.edu.*

Oct 17-19 • Pandanaram Communities Convention

Pandanaram Settlement, Williams, Indiana. Open forum discussions on community-related topics, slide shows, videotapes. All are welcome. *812-388-5599.*

Oct 21-26 • Natl. Association of Housing Cooperatives Annual Conference

Montreal, Quebec. Speakers, workshops on all aspects of housing cooperatives, for members and residents, board members, and developers and other professionals who work with housing co-ops. *NAHC, 1614 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314; 703-549-5201*

Oct. 20-25 • Photovoltaic Design & Installation

Seattle, Washington. See Aug 4-5.

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 clearinghouse available to you, Reach reaches those who are seriously interested in community.

Please use the form on the last page of REACH to place an ad. Note: THE REACH DEADLINE FOR THE FALL 1997 ISSUE (OUT IN SEPTEMBER) IS JULY 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? 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, 31 School St, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370.

Listings for workshops, land, books, personals, etc. belong in the Classified Column, 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 non-violence, 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 in-

formation. *Acorn, 1259-CM7, 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.*

Earthlight Foundation, Western North Carolina. Seeking members, houses available for sale. *704-649-9628.*

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.*

EDGES, Athens, Ohio. Near Ohio University. A young community of seven adults and five children, growing to around 20. Still finishing six-room community house. Have old farmhouse, new log house, solar, wind and grid. 94-acre permaculture land trust. Gardens, pond. We try to balance personal autonomy with community. Eat dinner together, do work projects. Plans for a children's camp and an educational center. SASE for brochure to: *Edges, 10770 Hooper Ridge, Glouster, OH 45732; 614-448-2403.*

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 preparations 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.*

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 lifetime 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.*

L.A. ECO-VILLAGE, Los Angeles, California. Seek friendly, outgoing eco-co-op neighbors to demonstrate and share low-consumption, high-quality lifestyles in interesting, multi-cultural, high-visibility community. Potential for right livelihood; initially financially self-reliant. *Lois Arkin, 3551 White House Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90024; 213-738-1254; crsp@igc.apc.org.*

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 who 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: 706-636-2544; fax: 706-636-2546; e-mail: asaspinc@ellijay.com; WWW.ftsbn.com/~rainbowridge.*

RUSTY'S RETREAT, Felton, California. We are a small community 15 minutes drive from the resort town of Santa Cruz, located on the Pacific Ocean. Nestled among our 3.5 acres of virgin forest is our main eight-bedroom luxury home and a few individual cabins. We also support a number of portable dwellings and have areas for camping and recreational vehicles. Creating an atmosphere of companionship and support that empowers individuals to realize their unique potential is our main goal. Participation focuses around personal and spiritual growth. We offer long-term membership and short-term work exchange at \$7.00/hr. Please call or write: *Rusty Hartman, 408-335-4825; PO Box 1779, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.*

SANDHILL FARM, Rutledge, Missouri. Family-style community looking for new members to help build a caring, sustainable lifestyle, respectful of the earth and each other. We support ourselves growing and selling organic food (sorghum, honey, mustard, tempeh, garlic, horseradish) helping build the communities movement (we do administrative work for FIC) and having fun! We operate by consensus and hold group meetings twice weekly. We're active in local affairs, and are looking for people who want to raise children and awareness through joyful engaged living. We are six adult members, one teenager, two infants, and have recently joined energies with Dancing Rabbit—a forming community two miles away—aiming to build a sustainable ecovillage. Come be part of the excitement! *Sandhill Farm, Rt. 1, Box 155-C, Rutledge, MO 63563. 816-883-5543; sandhill@ic.org.*

Athens, Ohio. Intentional Community Conference for Women interested in interning or residing at the Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home, a wimmin's rural co-op and land trust on 151 acres with many scenic homesites available. August 9-10. Send for brochure: *SBAMUH, PO Box 5853, Athens, OH 45701; 614-448-7242; ad965@seorf.ohiou.edu.*

WOMANSHARE, Grants Pass, Oregon. Founded in 1974, WomanShare is a supportive, activist, artistic collective in a rural lesbian community. We have individual cabins, bath house, community center, and organic garden. We believe in consensus, harmony, ecological practices, and cultural diversity. We are open to new members, seasonal apprentices, and personal retreats. WomanShare is looking for members who are creative, cooperative, able to communicate feelings, willing to share in work, and community service... hard-working practical visionaries. *PO Box 681, Grants Pass OR 97527.*

COMMUNITIES FORMING

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.*

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 beginning April 1997. Include SASE to *Community, Box 1171, Moab, UT 84532.*

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 one or two 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. Intentional community is blossoming on 325 forested acres in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Asheville, NC. Seeking highly motivated, eco-spirited families and individuals—and especially children—of all sizes, shapes and colors. Wanted: builders, gardeners, meditators, musicians and other key professionals and ordinary folk. Consensus decision making, on-site educational programs, lots to

be done and to celebrate. Work exchange program. Send \$15 for "infopak" and newsletters to: *Earthaven, PO Box 1107, Black Mountain, NC 28711; 704-298-2711.*

EARTHSTAR, Colorado Rockies. Spiritually based community working to create a mountain sanctuary. Under the 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; 303-329-0113.*

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 Western Colorado mesa, wondrous 360 degree views. \$2 for Community Plan and 2 newsletters. *Jim Wetzel, Nancy Wood, PO Box 520, Paonia, CO 81428-0520; 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.*

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 sustainable logging for our building and firewood needs. We've developed solar and hydro alternative energy systems. We would like to have a community of families living here. Sharing gardens, homesteading, etc. There are lots of possibilities. Our vision is to share our place with people who are interested in learning with us how to live sustainably on the land, developing both our interdependence on each other and the land. We have a 2-bedroom cottage that is available for renting. We would like to have a family rent the cabin with the future hope of buying into one of the permanent homestead sites. We are also open to talking with people about different ways/ideas of building a community of families here on our farm.

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

SOLAR ENERGY INTERNATIONAL

— HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS —

Carbondale, Colorado

Solar Home Design July 7-11
Solar Cooking July 11-13
Micro-Hydro July 14 -18
Wind Power Jul.21-Aug. 1
PV Design & Install..... Aug. 4 -15
Advanced PV Aug. 18-29
Environmental Building. Wknds - Sept

Workshops outside Colorado

PV Design & Install - NC.....Oct. 13-18
PV Design & Install - WA.....Oct. 20-25
PV Design & Install - TX.....Nov.10-15



SEI

P.O. Box 715
Carbondale, CO 81623
(970) 963-8855 • fax (970) 963-8866
e-mail: sei@solarenergy.org

Robie and Gil, 1901 Dutyville Rd., Garberville, CA 95542; 707-986-7787.

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*

JEWISH HOUSING COOPERATIVE, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Forming in August 1997. Create a strong Jewish environment in an egalitarian, democratic community. Call *Laurie, 513-791-5093*, or write: *3649 Tiffany Ridge Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45241.*

CO-HOUSING AGRICULTURAL BASED COMMUNITY. Looking for a group of like-minded co-creators to help develop the community. As a group we will save historic houses from demolition, acquire the houses for free, dismantle, re-construct and restore. Alternative building methods are also a possibility. *Carla Cielo, 43 Chestnut Hill Place, Glen Ridge, NJ 07028; 201-743-7217.*

LOVELY LAKE COUNTY, California. Un-schooled, lots of kids, single parent, mostly vegetarian, diversity in ethnicity, language, race. Living in a small rented house on two acres. Networking with local community seekers to buy land here in 1998. Too much on the grid. Plan to live mostly off. Live with us for a month or longer. We'll get to know each other. Important values are: non-violence, fun, participation, respect. No big monetary commitment. No drugs, nicotine or alcohol. Few jobs, lots of opportunity. Small room available in house. Room for small RV in yard. Call *6:00 am to 8:00 am. Angela 707-279-0600.*

MEADOW CREEK CONSERVATION COALITION, Monterey, Tennessee. Situated in a beautiful, rural, wooded area of eastern middle Tennessee, 15 miles from college town. Independent households will form total community of 2,600 acres with development restrictions emphasizing conservation

and protection. Twenty miles of trails currently completed linking bluffs and creeks through hemlock, rhododendron, pine and hardwood forests. 800 acres still available at \$650-\$1,200/acre with a 25-acre minimum. Call or write for information: *Bob Lee, 250 McGee Lane, Cookeville, TN 38501; 615-451-2874, (Nursery), 615-268-2439 (Home).*

NAMASTE GREEN, Barnstead, New Hampshire. Permaculture school, naturist camping, polyloving relationships our spirituality. SASE *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.*

NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS. Womyn's community forming based on Radical Feminism, Luddism and the Goddess. SASE: *PO Box 813, Northampton, MA 01061.*

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA. We are an Austrian family with a one-year-old daughter, residing in California for half a year. We moved to the US to start a small cohousing project in Northern California, with a strong sense of community. Since we have a wide knowledge about alternative construction, we would like to build the houses ourselves, using contractors only as needed. We are looking for motivated and financially stable people, willing to invest many hours to improve life's quality by sharing it with others and building a more humane environment. It is important to us to find other families, so we can have shared childcare and also for the benefit of all chil-

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dren. Our dream would be to find members who share an interest in a research center on the interaction of construction methods, ecology, and human health. Our background: He—electrical engineering, alternative energy consultant for residential construction, fine woodwork; currently studying healthy construction. She—business administration, wide range of organizational/office experience. Our assets: professional woodshop, first-class and loaded computer, advanced PC skills, extensive library, our knowledge, enough cash to get started. Our interests: gardening, good and healthy food, nature and hiking, Aikido, true friendship. And naturally, we're just trying to be the best mom and dad a daughter can have! Call *Hannes* at 916-639-0742, or e-mail: *stein@oro.net*.

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA. We are looking for a family to join us in low-impact urban living within the diversity of the Bay Area. We have been living cooperatively for over 15 years. Our children are 5 and 8. We live in a large house (with a big back yard and garden) that currently has 3-4 rooms available in addition to an abundance of common space. We seek others who are politically progressive, enjoy cooking (prefer organic), are financially stable, and want to create a supportive and caring environment. *Anaya* or *Gary*, 510-547-8935.

PENROSE, COLORADO. 40-acre building sites, part of 160-acre parcel surrounded by public lands. Available to one or possibly two families with young children. Beautiful year-round creek with swimming holes runs through the property. Consensus decision-making, earth-friendly homes, natural power. 45 minutes from Colorado Springs. 55K. Qualified buyers only please. 719-372-9345.

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 2-5-acre lots, ranging from \$23,000-\$30,000, with share in 60 acres of common land. 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, business, 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 com-

munity. 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.

REJENNERATION, Jenner, California. Forming on five knolltop acres in an ecologically diverse coastal canyon with stunning views about one hour from Santa Rosa, CA. One house, some outbuildings and a garden have been built. We are looking for partners (\$10,000 min. down) to build (sweat equity) and live in the second, larger co-op household. Values include earth stewardship, earnest work, simplicity, and a respect for diversity. Shared meals. Call or write including some personal history and a SASE for date of next open house: Box 42, Jenner, CA 95450; 707-632-5458.

RICHMOND COHOUSING, Richmond Virginia. Organizing group is planning cohousing community for metro Richmond area. For more information call 804-231-2547.

SHARING FUTURES, LTD. and NOAH'S ARK 2, Near Austin, Texas. Establishing: plant, fish, animal, human shelters, greenhouses, cisterns, domes, yurts, teepees, earth-shelters; food, water, air purification/preservation systems. Goals: surviving drought, fire, heat, earth changes, social discontinuities. Participants: 7 (plus weekend workers, retreatants, visitors) short-term pessimists, long-term optimists, realists, idealists, naturalists. Facilities: house, out-buildings, well, utilities (electricity, water,) fences, 3-way access, tents, platforms, RV/campers, underground excavation. Solar/wind power site. Rustic peaceful views. Sandy soil, forests, pastures, fruit and nut trees, established 1905. One hour east of Austin. All welcome at the last minute. Bring your own food, amenities. 4001 Oakridge, Houston, TX 77009-5230; 713-863-0433. 1 0 3 3 6 0 . 2 4 7 6 @ c o m p u s e r v e . c o m, Quddusc@aol.com, http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/SHARING_FUTURES.

SOUTH OF BORDER COMMUNITY FORMING. Seeking members and primitive land south of U.S. Living simply and seeking spirit in nature. Priorities: spiritual practice, ecological lifestyle emphasizing low waste and recy-

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cling all materials, great communication between members, service to Latin American neighbors. *Christine Douglas, PO Box 60, Occidental, CA 95465; 707-874-2462.*

WALKING SKY RANCH, Mora, New Mexico. 45 acres of pasture land and 55 acres of ponderosa pines in northern New Mexico 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., straw bale building, 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.*

PEOPLE LOOKING

DANCER/TEACHER/ORGANIZER/TANTRIKA envisioning playful Art and Spirit nature-based community. Prefer West Coast states, balance of sun and rain. "Homeland" with artists/group meditators, dance/yoga studio, sacred temple, organic gardens and space for residential retreats in nature's splendor. Have skills, experience, laughter, some \$

... need co-creators ("sangham") and place. Children a plus. *Liz Faller, 220 Grove, Prescott, AZ 86301; 206-781-5634.*

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.*

HELP ME FIND MY HOME AND PEOPLE! Seeking a home in or near an intentional community. Top goal: to have my two children in a good alternative school, homeschooling cooperative, or...? We can do income sharing or be financially self-reliant. I have nine years experience as a masseuse, am trained in Wholistic Health, do tutoring and have homeschooled K-6. I have a serious love of children, a willingness to start a school or co-op, and have an extensive collection of educational material too numerous to mention! (Or can add to an existing school.) Our interests include: ecology, the arts, animal rights, camping, permaculture, dance and especially communication. We're a tightknit family wanting to share our lives with real neighbors. We have an opportunity this summer to visit potential homes. Please contact us soon if you know where we may fit with other alternative minded people. Urban or rural. Please write (include phone number): *Maggie, 991 Lomas Santa Fe, Box C102, Solana Beach, CA 92075.*

ON HOLISTIC PATH. Male, 30-year-old college grad seeking long-term environmentally good living situation. Sensitive to smoke and pesticides. Can pay for accommodations, but also is willing to work and fit into the community. Contact: *David Silverman, 12824 Caminito Olas, Del Mar, CA 92014.*

SEEKING TRULY SUSTAINABLE community and/or like-minded persons to develop same. Simpler living. No cars, pollution, ignorance. Focus on health, happiness, love, higher con-

sciousness. Hard work. *Bob Beach, c/o Gloria Duckworth, 21 Tomlin Cr., Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada L4C 7T4.*

WOMAN, 45, AND CANINE COMPANION want to make a home and a life, not just make a living. Looking for spiritually guided, ecologically minded people. Will consider long-term, maybe permanent commitment to right community. Have office work background, but would like to learn non-traditional or non-office work to contribute to goals and welfare of community. Need private living space (or share with one woman,) secure yard for dog. Willing to work for room, board, small but reasonable income. *Nancy Cobb, 11892 W. Breezy Point Drive, Monticello, IN 47960.*

RESOURCES

ALTERNATIVE EGALITARIAN COMMUNITIES welcome visitors/potential members. Live in the country with others who value equality, ecology and nonviolence. For our booklet, write: *Federation of Egalitarian Communities, East Wind, CM97, 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.*

INTERNSHIPS

RUSTY'S RETREAT, Felton, California. We have internships in all of our community functions this summer. Internships include room, board, and \$7/hr. Summer interns may subsequently apply for permanent membership. Please call or write: *Rusty Hartman, 408-335-4825, PO Box 1779, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.*

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#95

Sustainability ... and the Next Generation

EVEN IF WE DO MANAGE TO come up with some great working models of sustainability, they won't endure unless we learn how to pass the baton to the next generation.

In our culture it is widely believed that anyone physically mature enough to have a child is therefore qualified to be a good, or at least adequate, parent. Yet we have no schools for parenting, no operating manuals, no formal apprenticeships—no quality control. When we do become parents we are often ill equipped for the job, yet we're the ones who must figure out better ways to do it. We'd be more effective if we approached parenting collectively rather than in isolated nuclear families. Our greatest hope lies in coming together with peers and elders for support and feedback ... in extended families and communities.

Unfortunately the best parents tend to make the job look easy—so much so that much of their effort goes unnoticed. The behaviors that are most noticed, and thus most likely to be perpetuated, are those that get our attention, mostly the aggressive and dramatic behaviors, the ones with rough edges.

An effective peer support and feedback system highlights those rough edges, helps us brainstorm alternative approaches to childrearing, and provides the support and encouragement we each need to unlearn our old ineffective habits.

One of the most common shortcomings is to get so caught up in our efforts to make the world a better place that we

fail to put enough attention and energy into our children, a theme thoroughly explored in *Communities* #84, "Growing Up in Community." The norm in our society is to leave all the priority decisions to the biological parents. It's considered rude or improper to second-guess or even talk about another person's parenting style. What we need is to live among other parents whom we know and trust, those who can give us a broader base of experience to draw from, and who can offer constructive criticism without any judgmental accusations that as parents we are bad or wrong.

Another common pitfall: most parents try to protect their kids from making mistakes, yet "mistakes" are often the most powerful learning experiences a child can have. Sometimes a parent becomes so frustrated by how long a child takes to do something, or fears that the child will get a few

bruises or scrapes, that the parent takes over the project or finishes the task. As parents we need the patience to encourage our children to find their own answers. A community of parents can observe parenting styles from a broader perspective, and support individual parents in encouraging rather than controlling their children.

I was impressed by the approach to parenting at Zendik Farm, where children are fully engaged in the daily life of the community. Zendik kids come to all the community's daily planning meetings, spend a few hours a day doing "classroom" work, pitch in with all community work

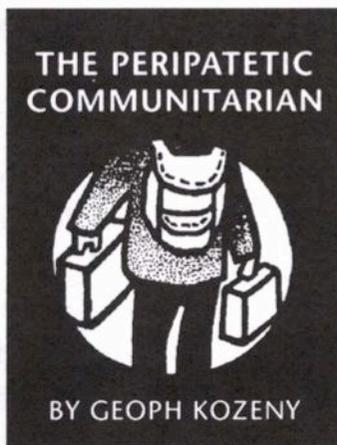
areas, and participate in discussions about philosophy, creativity, group dynamics, and even parenting. By the time children are 10, they know how to tend the animals, do basic carpentry and auto mechanics, plan and cook meals, and hold their own in conversations with adults.

Probably the most destructive pattern I've seen in communities, also prevalent in mainstream culture, is when parents hold too high a standard, expecting their children to be as experienced and able as adults. Mostly this parental behavior is well-intentioned—wanting children to be creative, productive, self-sufficient—yet the effect is that a child hears the repeated message, "You're not good enough." The result is the absolute opposite of what most parents intend, and such children can develop a damaging negative self-image that may last a lifetime. Instead, what kids need most is the sense that their parents respect and love them, and will listen to them. It's the community's responsibility to encourage its member parents in that direction.

To set a context for implementing such positive parenting strategies, we need to model humility—admitting our mistakes to our children and debunking the myth that we're always right. We also need to make all our information available to our children, rather than hiding all the tough stuff until we can come up with a finished, sanitized decision. If we want our children to learn to handle complicated decisions, they need to be in on the struggles.

It's no simple matter to overcome years of negative conditioning. However, having a clear view of a sustainable future will provide a solid foundation to build on, and a place to center ourselves when we've tripped up. Just the fact that we have these conversations about parenting will help raise our awareness and teach us to appreciate each small lesson learned about integrating the next generation. We need to make it a priority. Ω

Geoph Kozeny has lived in communities of one kind or another for 23 years. He has been on the road for nine 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.



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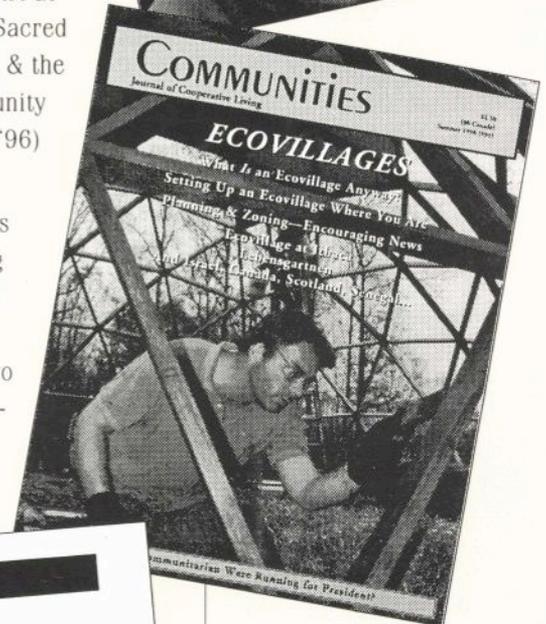
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