

# COMMUNITIES

Journal of Cooperative Living

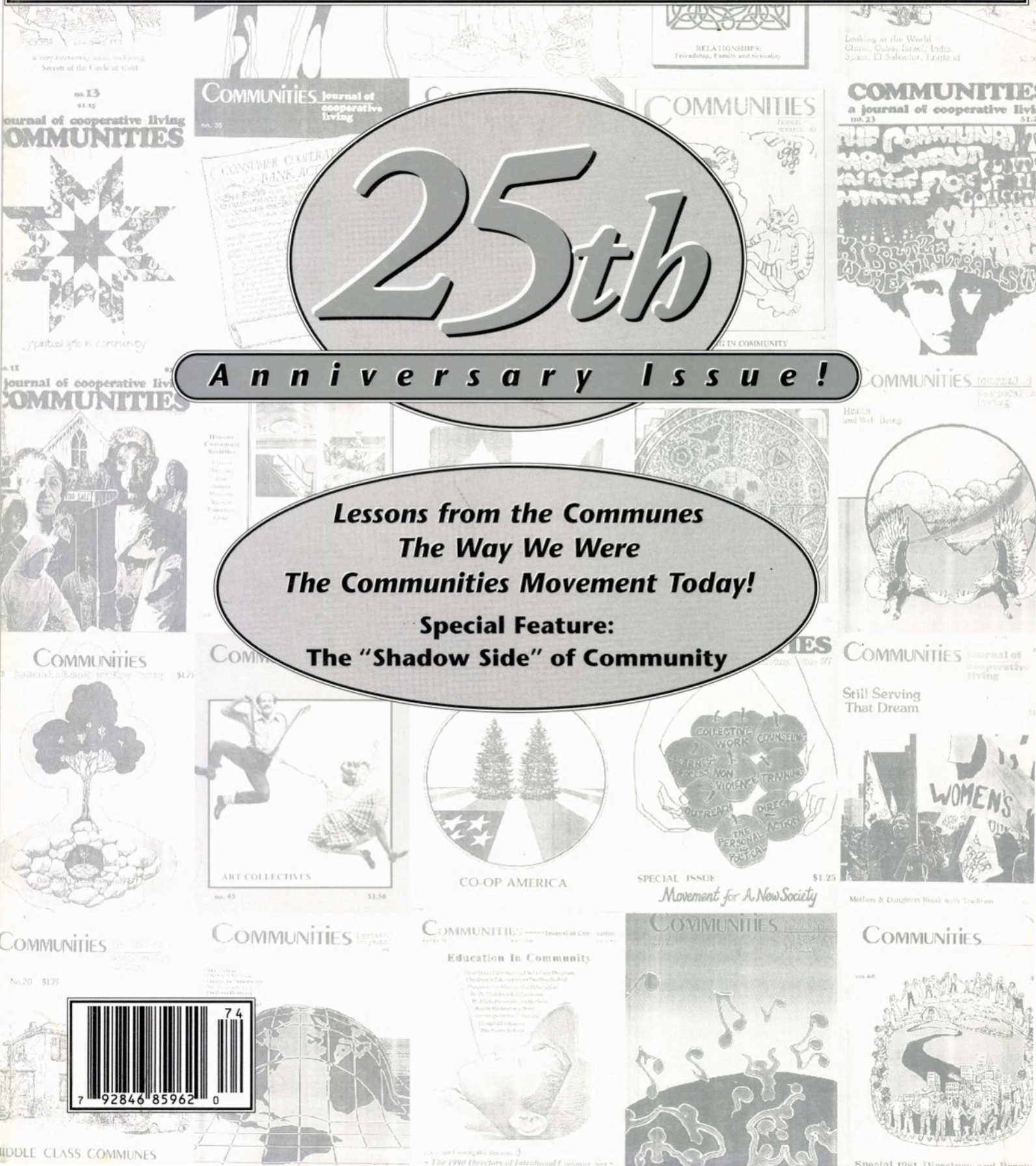
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 Winter 1997 (Issue #97)

# 25th

**Anniversary Issue!**

**Lessons from the Communes  
 The Way We Were  
 The Communities Movement Today!**

**Special Feature:  
 The "Shadow Side" of Community**



**A GUIDE TO COOPERATIVE LIVING**

# **Communities Directory**

**Now in a revised second printing.**

**Over 10,000 sold!**

Features 540 completely updated listings for communities in North America and 70 communities on other continents. The new *Directory* includes many communities that have formed since our first edition in 1990.

Listings includes contact information and a full description of each group.

Easy to use, it includes maps, cross-reference charts (sorted alphabetically and geographically), and an extensive index for finding communities by areas of interest.

Thirty-one feature articles cover various aspects and issues of cooperative living.

An alternative resources and services section has over 250 listings.

Published by the Fellowship for Intentional Community, a network of communitarians promoting communication and understanding about and among intentional communities.

*See order form on page 82.*



***"The most comprehensive  
and accurate reference book  
ever published on  
community living!"***

**—Kirkpatrick Sale,**

**Author and Bioregionalist**

# GANAS

an eighteen year old, New York City intentional community

**HAS EXPANDED INTO THE COUNTRY . . .**

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includes a well-furnished,  
quaint 55 room (& bath) hotel,

workshop facilities, a conference center, an outdoor concert area,  
campgrounds, a small disco, a large swimming pool, & 2 saunas.

## G.R.O.W. II

GROUP REALITIES OPEN WORKSHOPS

**WE HOPE TO DEVELOP A NEW COUNTRY COMMUNITY AT G.R.O.W. II  
to join with the existing Ganas Community in New York City.  
It will be necessary to grow from 80 adults to over 100 in the process.**

**G.R.O.W. II** gives us ongoing exposure to a much larger range of people, ideas and experiences. More varied work choices are also important. The idea is to host many interesting programs that can help us become better functioning individuals, while maintaining focus on our community vision of caring relationships, good daily dialogue, on-the-spot problem solving, and intelligent, interactive self-governing. All this adds up to an excellent quality of life that includes easy access to both country and city living, with excellent possibilities for enjoying the best of many worlds.

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and possibly to start their own new projects or workshops.

**ABOUT GANAS:** an intentional community located in Staten Island, 1/2-hour free ferry ride to downtown Manhattan. 7 comfortable, attractive, well-kept three-story residences, connected by lovely gardens & picturesque walkways, house about 40 members and about 35 residents, visitors and guests. Retail recycling businesses in five large, nearby commercial buildings support the community & provide varied, interesting work for about 50 of us. The rest of the people living at Ganas work in NYC and pay their expenses.

**EVERYONE AT GANAS is invited to participate in G.R.O.W. II.** We expect that most of the people who work in G.R.O.W. II will also want to be involved with the Ganas community in New York City in some way.



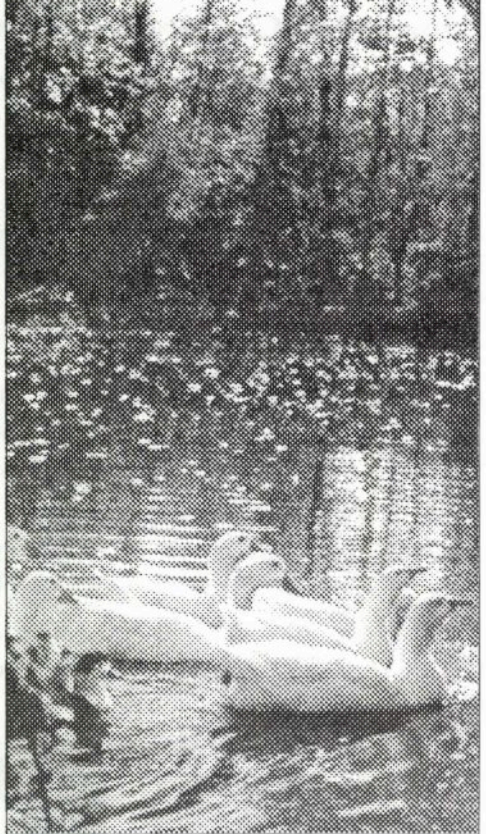
**ABOUT G.R.O.W. II:** Attractive rooms & private baths are available for 150 guests. Picturesque campgrounds surrounded by woods serve another 150. A very large concert ground and outdoor stage are still in development. Good conference facilities include meeting rooms and sound equipment. A small, charming disco and an indoor stage provide for entertainment. A 66 foot swimming pool, a spring-fed pond for rowing and fishing, two saunas, indoor exercise equipment, some sports facilities, and comfortable lounging space, both indoors & out, complete the picture for now.

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**Buffets include:** meats, poultry & fish, good salads, a range of vegetarian & vegan dishes, fresh fruits & vegetables, lots of desserts, as well as low calorie food or special diets for folks who want them. Our meal preparation has been called gourmet.

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If you care about good dialogue that is based on truth and goodwill (and want to learn how to do it better);  
If you think that cooperative economics can help to create saner, better functioning, healthier societies;  
If you believe that recycling is a pretty good way to earn a living; and if you really enjoy working productively (or learning how to);  
**IF SUCH THINGS FEEL TRUE FOR YOU . . . YOU ARE INVITED TO VISIT AND PERHAPS TO LIVE & WORK WITH US AT:**

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and a large pond  
in New York's  
historic  
Catskill  
Mountains



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# COMMUNITIES

Journal of Cooperative Living

## FRONT COVER

Design by  
Paul DeLapa.

## BACK COVER

Fourth of July parade  
at Ananda Village.

## FOCUS

### 25th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!

#### 20 FROM THE GUEST EDITORS

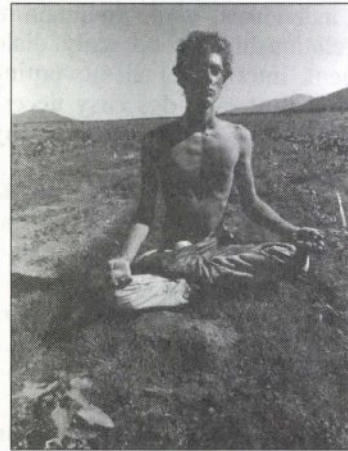
##### Hi Ho Silver Anniversary!

*Alex McGee & Laird Sandhill*

#### 22 Lessons from the Communes

Whether liberating, painful, or simply a wild ride, most folks *Deborah Altus* interviewed about life in the heyday of the communes described it as life-changing.

• **My Path to a Commune**—*Lucy Horton*



#### 30 “No Bad Vibes”

*David Perkins* takes us on a lively tour of famous and infamous communes in the Rocky Mountain Southwest, circa '65-'75, and shows us where long-time members are today and what they got out of life in the communes.

#### 36 Students' Stumbling Start-up Succeeds

*Joel Welty* recalls the heady days of organizing student co-op houses in the '50s, and what it taught him about diversity and democracy.

#### 39 The Way We Were

When *Paul Freundlich* was editor (1975–1984), *Communities* magazine not only focused on communes, but urban co-operatives and social-change organizations as well.

### 43 25 Years of *Communities*

A nostalgic journey through communities and community living in North America since 1972, as chronicled in the pages of *Communities*.  
*Laird Sandhill.*



### 52 The "Shadow Side" of Community: Denial and the Demise of Kerista

What really happened to this well-known polyfidelitous San Francisco community, and what can we learn from its mistakes? Long-time Kerista *Mitch Slomiak* offers insights.

- Advice for Community Seekers
- An Appeal to Communities Seeking New Members

### 59 What Price Community?

*Joyce Foote* explores the sensitive balance between our need for individual autonomy and the need for cooperation and give and take in communities.

## COLUMNS

5 PUBLISHER'S NOTE • LAIRD SANDHILL  
**Snapshot of a Moving Target:  
The Communities Movement**

12 FELLOWSHIP NEWS • AL ANDERSEN  
**Fellowship Roots: Where We've  
Been, Where We Might Go**

17 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES •  
LISA PAULSON  
**A Clash of Cultures: SpringLedge  
Ecovillage Project Foiled**

63 MY TURN • STEVEN WING  
**Annual Rainbow Gatherings  
Under Fire**

66 COMMUNITY LIVING WORLDWIDE •  
BILL METCALF  
**UFA-Fabrik:  
Berlin's Arts & Activist Commune**

84 PERIPATETIC COMMUNITARIAN •  
GEOPH KOZENY  
**Feelings About Feelings:  
25 Years Older ... 25 Years Wiser?**

## DEPARTMENTS

4 LETTERS

8 COMMUNITY  
GRAPEVINE

69 REVIEWS

74 DIRECTORY  
UPDATE

76 CLASSIFIEDS

78 REACH

# LETTERS



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

## Practical Help

Dear *Communities*:

We really appreciate your magazine here. It's a refreshing, forward-thinking, almost entrepreneurial publication, in that you show the great range of communities out there, offer practical insights about many wide-ranging aspects of community living, and turn abstract concepts about community into useful how-to advice. This was especially true of your issue on "Sustainable Building & Design" (#95, Summer '97.) Thank you.

**Father Seraphim**

Holy Protection Monastery  
Geneva, Nebraska

## Humor Appreciated

Dear *Communities*:

I noticed the anecdote in your "Food Fight!" article (Fall '97) about The Farm and the "gaseous emissions" of our soybeans. Well, if you don't cook 'em well enough, that's what happens! Stephen Gaskin [founder of *The Farm and its former spiritual leader*] used to say: "How do you tell the difference between a pessimist and an optimist? The pessimist smells beans and says, 'Oh oh, farts!' The optimist smells farts and says, 'Ahh, beans!'"

I also think that, despite the non-denominational stance in your story, you made the vegan case about as well as I've ever seen it. There are *so* many reasons to quit running our grains and beans through animals before eating them. However, at The Farm we always said that nothing dietary was worth getting uptight about, so

I thoroughly appreciated your humorous, mind-opening approach to the topic. One of Stephen's stories about the master Suzuki Roshi involved a Zen student who was particularly obnoxious and evangelistic about vegetarianism. So Suzuki Roshi invited the student out to dinner, ordered a big steak, and proceeded to devour it in front of him—the Zen master's way of illustrating the old saying, "What comes out of your mouth is more important than what goes in."

**Michael Traugot**

The Farm  
Summertown, Tennessee

## Please, No More Fiction

Dear *Communities*:

I greatly enjoy *Communities* magazine and find it very useful. However, I feel that the fiction story, "Food Fight!," in the Fall '97 issue on food ("*Breaking Bread in Community*") while well executed, was not a good idea for the magazine. I personally read *Communities* for real-world information on techniques, strategies, and lifestyles in other communities, as well as for more general information of use to intentional communities. As fiction, I don't feel "Food Fight!" was successful because it spent so much time imparting information. As fact, I don't feel it was successful because its being wrapped in fiction made the article longer, less direct, and less precise. I would have much preferred an article on food choices, and there appeared to be some excellent information in the story that could have been used for that instead.

While I enjoy fiction, there are many venues for it already, and I don't feel it furthers the goals of community-builders and members for *Communities* to become one of them. In my mind, the exception would be if an unusually skilled writer of short stories who was greatly experienced with community were to be able to write a piece that did not try to impart any information, but which revealed the very realistic emotional experience of one or more characters within a community, thus helping readers to frame ideas about personal emotional needs within community. Such a piece would, I expect, be extremely difficult to do well.

**Luc Reid**

Haddonfield, New Jersey

# COMMUNITIES

Journal of Cooperative Living

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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 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](mailto: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](mailto: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, 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



## Snapshot of a Moving Target: The Communities Movement

**E**VERY FEW YEARS, WE TAKE STOCK OF WHERE THE COMMUNITIES movement is, and where it seems to be moving. The last time we did this was spring 1995 when we released the current edition of the *Communities Directory*. This 25th Anniversary issue of *Communities* magazine seems a good time to do it again.

There has been brisk interest in information about community living this entire decade—with no apparent sign of letting up. Foremost, we've sold more than 31,000 copies of the *Directory* since it was first released in 1990. That's nearly four copies for every man, woman, and child living in the communities listed in the current edition. Either there's serious interest in community, or we're decorating a lot of coffee tables.

When the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) took over as publisher of *Communities* in 1992, we had about 900 subscribers. After four years of regular quarterly production we have brought that up to 1,500 and rising. Since initiating our Web site in early 1995, we've seen an explosion of interest in getting community information electronically. Within 18 months we were getting 3,000 visits to our Web site ([www.ic.org](http://www.ic.org)) each month, and traffic is now topping 4,000 per month.

The history of this magazine goes back to 1972—to the waning energy of the countercultural revolution of the '60s. Inspired by the cooperative promise of those heady days, the magazine tried to build a sustaining circulation focusing on North American back-to-the-land rural communes. When that didn't take off, the magazine expanded its focus to encompass cooperatives—both urban and rural—and the political arena.

Reaching beyond geography, there has always been some dabbling in international communities, leading up to an entire issue (#48) focused on groups outside North America in 1981. But strong connections abroad have been difficult to establish and harder to maintain. With the advent of the Information Age, there are signs that the electronic shrinking of time and distances will make a difference in international networking. We'll see.

Right from the beginning, the vision for this publication was to provide even-handed coverage of community activity, not promoting one style of group living over another (so long as the choices were not violent). Over the years it has been a strain on various groups who have shouldered the burden of having members contribute underpaid staff work to the magazine. Editorial integrity has been maintained throughout, yet it hasn't always been easy.

When Twin Oaks wanted a break from 12 years of carrying the magazine in

1984, it negotiated with Charles Betterton to take over editorial and business responsibilities. Charles had made the deal with financial backing from The Stelle Group, his home community. However, when the group learned that maintaining the magazine's editorial policy was part of the deal, and that they wouldn't be allowed to use it as a house organ to promote their own beliefs, they withdrew their money. Charles was left to scramble for support, all the while keeping the ecumenical flag flying. At great personal sacrifice, he held on until the FIC took over publishing duties in 1992.

## Overview Since 1972

A sampling of the last 25 years of the communities movement reveals a cornucopia of community movements, highlighting the incredible breadth of choice that has always characterized the movement. There is nothing monolithic about it. (There is an interesting parallel between this fluidity and the shifts in location of the editorial office of this magazine—starting out in Ohio, it moved to California, Oregon, Virginia, Connecticut, Illinois, Missouri, and now Colorado. It has been, pardon the expression, quite a trip.)

- Some income-sharing communities shifted to cooperative models where members fended for themselves economically—Sirius, The Farm, Sunrise Ranch, Koinonia, Dandelion, North Mountain.

- Some well-known communities dispersed: Limesaddle, Kerista, Aloe, Alcyone, Shiloh, Green Pastures, Rajneeshpuram, U & I, Downhill Farm, Walden Three, Frog Run Farm, Morningstar Ranch.

- Some disappeared below the horizon of public notice, often questioning their commitment to community—Renaissance, High Wind, Still Meadow, Greenfield Ranch, Mettanokit, May Valley Co-op, Eskdale, Laurel Hill, Ponderosa Village, Shenoa, Arcosanti.

- Some went through a stretch of keeping a low profile, and are now letting more of their community light shine from under the bushel—Light Morning, Sunrise Ranch, Miccosukee, Breitenbush, Lake Village, Raven Rocks.

- Some moved physically—Zendik, Appletree, Phoenix, Syntony, Love Israel Family, Kripalu.

- Some disappeared in violent tragedy—Jonestown in Guyana, Solar Temple in Switzerland, Branch Davidians in Waco, Heaven's Gate in California. Though not groups listed in our publications, the spectacular demise of these few charismatic communities strongly impacted the movement, and flavored public awareness of group living. Ironically, these groups were not interested in engaging with the communities movement while their members lived, yet the movement was unavoidably engaged in dealing with the aftermath of their deaths. It is the living who are left to explain how isolationist groups with unusual binding views can combine with an intolerant surrounding culture to build uncontainable pressures.

While not necessarily the moments anyone looks for, FBI stakeouts and mass suicides *are* opportunities for the

communities movement to publicize itself. Unfortunately, the movement has generally not been ready to “seize the time” (to call up a phrase from 25 years ago), and use the fleeting moment of widespread public attention to tell the story of a movement rich with hopeful choices of peaceful, cooperative living. It is our challenge to do better in the years ahead.

## Signs of the Times

Having said that, positive words about intentional community living is getting out to a wider audience. Probably nothing has done more in the '90s for improving awareness of community living than cohousing, which burst on the scene in the late '80s when Kathryn McCamant & Charles Durrett released their seminal work about this Danish import in the U.S. Today there are 28 cohousing communities occupied, 26 more under construction, and 100 groups in the forming stages. This segment of community living has worked hard to portray the concept of community in terms that the mainstream culture can more readily grasp—great neighborhood, safety, leveraged resources/shared amenities, and protection of owner equity.

While cohousing groups may be leading the way, there has been a marked increase in press coverage on other communities as well. Amazingly, Twin Oaks had separate major stories about it appear three times last summer: in the *New York Times Magazine*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Washington Times*. Follow-up from one of these led to FIC doing a one-hour radio interview on the Derek McGinty Show with National Public Radio.

## The Needs Ahead

What societal challenges will communities be grappling with in the years to come? The gap between rich and poor has been widening for decades now, and that means an increasing percentage will be struggling to make ends meet. While community living so far has largely been a choice of the educated middle class, we may see a shift ahead, as people work to develop models of community that include the urban working class.

Take cohousing, for example. While this fast-growing choice offers exciting options for people who can afford to buy their own homes (for many cohousing groups you need to be able to invest or borrow six figures in order to join), this will not be an entree for most people unless cohousing principles are applied to cooperative housing on a more modest scale. Some handful of cohousing groups are offering subsidized housing for people with limited incomes, and it will be interesting to see how much these prototypes are adopted by others.

A few years ago we started noticing increasing demand for information about community living for people suffering from Multiple Chemical Sensitivities (sometimes called Environmental Illness). It's clear that we're now reaping the harvest of years of chronic exposure to nasty chemicals in everyday life: from the formaldehyde in building materials, to perfumes and deodorants; from gas residue in LP and propane stoves, to spray



drift from herbicides and pesticides for lawn, garden, and farm. Undoubtedly, many suffering from MCS have not yet been diagnosed, and there will be increased demand for housing and living opportunities for those who live with this malady.

The good news is that many MCS patients make full or nearly full recoveries when they can secure safe housing; the bad news is that many don't figure out what they need until they're too disabled to be a fully contributing member of a community. They may be caught in a Catch-22 where they need the community in order to recover, but cannot contribute enough labor or money to meet community minimums ... until they recover. When we prepare for the next edition of the *Communities Directory*, we'll include specific information about MCS in our questionnaire.

As demand for community information goes up, so does the responsibility for the Fellowship to provide it in sophisticated formats. In its inaugural issue, *Communities* printed a Directory covering eight pages and 200 communities. That was it—and was considered pretty hot stuff at the time.

Today our 12th edition of the *Communities Directory* lists over 600 communities. The cross-reference charts alone run 20 pages, there are nine pages of maps, and the 16-page index is twice the size of the entire original *Directory*. We publish quarterly updates to the *Directory* listings as a regular feature of *Communities* magazine, and at our Web site we've installed a search engine which allows the user to investigate all 250 groups linked to our site. We maintain a central office and staff where people can get answers to their questions about community by phone, fax, or e-mail. There is always more to do.

### Putting Your Money Where Your Heart Is

Another movement need that has been exposed by the surge in new community starts and expansion of existing facilities has been a dearth of working capital. Most lending institutions don't know a community from a church (and some are both!), and struggle to analyze a business plan taking into account group dynamics and the commitment to pool resources. It looks messy, and lenders often shy away. Since community business is not big business (yet), it's no big deal to banks. It can, however, be a very big deal if it's your community that gets rejected.

FIC is steadily doing more to help package loans, matching groups with lenders. Our strengthening contacts include people—many of whom are living in communities themselves—who have money and would like to see it used to create cooperative alternatives, all the while earning interest. If you hanker to turn back that age-old admonition and either a borrower or a lender be, we encourage you to get in touch with us.

Coincident with the rise in community interest this decade has been a spate of folks putting out a shingle advertising their skills in group process and group consulting. This is a difficult field in which to get credentialed, so people are mostly building a clientele based on personal

recommendations and word of mouth. All of this is possible because communities today—both new groups and long-established ones—are more willing to reach out and ask for help when they get stuck. Some even ask for outside facilitation without being stuck, to sharpen the saw before it gets dull and everyone (including the saw) starts squeaking.

### Our Mission

Throughout its 25 years, *Communities* magazine has gone through a continual process of redefining its audience. Starting out with a fairly parochial focus on rural intentional communities, it has, by degrees, accepted a role of defining the relationship between intentional communities and the wider culture. Today, we see anything dealing with “community” in its broadest sense as our natural area of focus. While our roots are in intentional community, and we maintain a special connection to that small but powerful segment of society, we are increasingly looking to build bridges that will support steady traffic in ideas and people between cooperative alternatives and the mainstream culture. Communities are learning things about how to solve problems and build sustainable lives for which we believe there is a growing urgency and a growing audience.

The Fellowship has recently accepted a focus on “community” as the cornerstone of its vision, and we'll be carrying out that mission on the pages of this magazine into the 21st century. We invite you to join us.

Laird Sandhill

### COMING IN FUTURE ISSUES

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

“**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.

“**Summer Sustainability Issue**,” Summer '98. Sustainable buildings and design, permaculture, ecovillages. Guest Editor, Michael Lockman. 1623 S. King St., Seattle, WA 98144; 206-323-6567.

“**Political Activism in Community**,” Fall '98. How political and social activism informs, bonds, or disrupts community life; communities organized around activism; activists who find themselves creating community. Guest Editor, Vicki Metcalf. 401-B Paton, Charlottesville, VA 22903.

# COMMUNITY GRAPEVINE



The **Third Annual North American Cohousing Conference**, held September 19–21 at the University of Washington in Seattle, was a rousing success, with 180 participants from 51 cohousing groups from 16 states and four countries.

On Thursday the 18th, 60 cohousing activists gathered in the common house of Seattle's **Puget Ridge Cohousing**. In a consensus process (facilitated by *Caroline Estes* of **Alpha Farm** in Oregon) participants formed a **North American Cohousing** organization, which, among other projects, will give cohousing communities more visibility nationally, and serve as a clearinghouse for inquiries about cohousing. Throughout the following days conference participants donated several thousand dollars to kick

off the national organization.

On Friday the 19th, *Zev Paiss* of **Nomad Cohousing** in Boulder, Colorado, facilitated "Open Space Technology" (a method of brainstorming areas of special interest) to create the agenda for the rest of the event, producing 32 small group sessions held over the next two days. These were widely diverse, ranging in topics from Getting Started in CoHousing to Land Development, Children in Cohousing, Managing the Common House, Finding New Members, Advanced Meeting Facilitation, Sustainable Design, Deepening Relationships, Intentional Families, Pagan Cohousing, and Collaborating with Other Networking Organizations, such as the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC).

One participant from Synergy Cohousing in Florida remarked in the "Collaborating" workshop that she fondly thought of the FIC as "a wise parent of a successful cohousing child," according to *Michael McIntyre* of Sunward Cohousing in Ann Arbor.

"The small group sessions I attended were fabulous," reports *Rob Sandelin* of **Northwest Intentional Communities Association**. Many sessions and discussions continued through lunch and dinner, and small interest groups sprang up spontaneously throughout the weekend.

*Joani Blank* of Doyle Street Cohousing

in Emeryville, California, especially enjoyed "Urban Retrofits," in which participants revealed that retrofitting an existing building (Doyle Street, for example, is a former cement testing plant) is usually more expensive, not less, than constructing new buildings. The group also discussed how living in cohousing can make city living more enjoyable, with increased security and privacy, for example.

Speakers for plenary sessions on Saturday and Sunday mornings included *Kathryn McCamant* and *Chuck Durrett* of **Doyle Street Cohousing** (the architects who introduced cohousing to the US), *Don Lindemann* of **Sacramento Street Cohousing** in Berkeley, California (and editor of *Cohousing* magazine), *Rob Sandelin* of **Sharingwood Cohousing**, *Zev Paiss* of **Nomad Cohousing** (managing editor of *Cohousing* magazine and founder of **Rocky Mountain Cohousing Association**), and *Jim Leach* of Wonderland Hill Development Company. Plenary speakers reported on the current state of the cohousing movement (65 cohousing core groups with land, as compared with 16 two years ago); expectation of exponential growth for cohousing in the near future; how to make the cohousing development process easier for future groups; and "developer-initiated cohousing."

Sunday afternoon people took tours of



## Los Angeles Eco-Village Saved from Bulldozers

**Los Angeles Eco-Village**, the only public demonstration of a sustainable community-in-process in an inner city neighborhood in the US (and inspiration for an ecovillage experiment in St. Petersburg, Russia) was saved from School District bulldozers at the last minute. (See *Communities*, #90, Spring '96, & #91, Summer '96.) The reprieve was the result of hundreds of letters and phone calls from supporters worldwide—and the resultant political pressure from supportive L.A. government officials. The fourplex Eco-Village headquarters and its five-year-old organic garden, located at the corner of White House and Bimini Place, were scheduled to be razed to the ground by the Los Angeles Unified School District to make way for temporary classrooms for the adjacent K–2 school. The school district and the school board member with jurisdiction over this area had been unwilling to seriously consider the alternative plan recommended by the Eco-Villagers, which they considered faster and more cost-

effective. So the Eco-Village launched an intense campaign to change the officials' minds.

All summer Eco-Village residents, neighbors, friends, schoolchildren and their parents, officials of public agencies, and elected representatives (including City Councilwoman Jackie Goldberg, State Senator Richard Polanco, and Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin), along with Eco-Village's worldwide constituency, worked to persuade this particular school board member of the value of saving the Eco-Village corner.

Destroying the Eco-Village headquarters and its community garden would strip Eco-Villagers of the symbol of their efforts for the past five years, claimed several neighbors who had been using the corner for potlucks, meetings, and community gardening. Approximately \$750,000 in donated labor, services, and materials was at stake if the Eco-Village were to relocate as a result of the bulldozing. The corner community garden was not only a source of organic produce for several Eco-Villagers, but also served as an outdoor classroom in environmental education for the K-2 school next

several cohousing communities in Seattle and the surrounding area, including Winslow Cohousing, Puget Ridge Cohousing, Sharingwood Cohousing, Vashon Island Cohousing, and Songaia Collective.



**"Communal Frontiers,"** the annual **Communal Studies Association Conference**, was held at the Washington State Historical Society Museum in Tacoma, Washington, October 9–12, with scholars, communitarians, community museum curators, and others interested in communities. *Joe Peterson* (Guest Editor of our Fall '96 Christian Communities issue) led a pre-conference tour of '70s-era Christian communities around the Yakima, Washington, area. Participants also toured **Love Israel Ranch** in Arlington, **Vashon Island Cohousing**, **Winslow Cohousing** on Bainbridge Island, the **Hutterite Colony** near Spokane, and the site of **Home Colony**, a turn-of-the-century socialist community on Puget Sound.

Participants also enjoyed the museum's special exhibit prepared by CSA conference coordinator *Charles LeWarne* on Washington state communities: the historic communities **Home Colony** and **Equality**, and contemporary Winslow Cohousing, Love Israel Ranch, and the

**Hutterite Colony** near Spokane.

Presenters focused on how communities provide political, social, and economic "frontiers," including scholarly analyses of communities as widely divergent as **Elohim City** in the Ozarks, a contemporary militant white separatist group, to the '70s commune **Morningstar Ranch** in California, where *Lou Gottlieb* "deeded the land to God" and welcomed everyone.

Highlights of the conference included a benefit auction led by CSA president *Harvey Baker* of **Dunmire Hollow** in Tennessee, and a salmon bake on the **Puyallup Reservation**, with Puyallup singers, dancers, and drummers.

At the Awards Banquet *Sora Friedman* received an award for her paper on **Jersey Homesteads**, a historic New Deal community; *Charles LeWarne* received the Distinguished Scholar award for his work on Puget Sound communities; and the Distinguished Service award was presented to the **Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC)**, publishers of this magazine. *Caroline Estes* of **Alpha Farm** in Oregon accepted on behalf of the FIC.



**Twin Oaks** in rural Virginia (an egalitarian, income-sharing commune with 100 members on 460 acres) hosted their 30th

Anniversary reunion party on June 13–15, with over 100 guests from all over the country. Festivities included performances at a Friday night coffeehouse, dancing, nature hikes, swimming, an art show, display of the community's 30th Anniversary Quilt, a Women's Tea, and a live theatrical performance of *Walden Two* (B.F. Skinner's novel about a behaviorist community which inspired the founding of **Twin Oaks** in 1967).

In late August **Twin Oaks'** 14th annual **Women's Gathering** drew approximately 200 participants, who celebrated women's creativity through dances, poetry, songs, and a variety of stage performances. The campfire, mudpit, and riverfield were popular gathering places, and the workshops offered a wonderful blend of political, spiritual, and cultural insights, according to Twin Oaker *Valerie Renwick*.

Over Labor Day weekend about 250 people from the East Coast and nationwide attended **Twin Oaks'** 5th Annual **Communities Conference** (in this decade, as they hosted them in the '70s and '80s as well). Sponsored by the **Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC)** and the **Federation of Egalitarian Communities (FEC)**, conference workshops—"Our best ever," says Valerie—included Ecovillages, Permaculture, Community Networking on the Internet, and even Hacky Sack as a Model

door, a unique school/neighborhood partnership in inner city Los Angeles.

Supporters of the two-block Eco-Village told the school district that, since residents had organized themselves, neighbors now knew and trusted each other and worked together on conserving water and energy, composting, raising vegetables, mentoring children, reducing dependency on cars, and creating a local neighborhood economy. They also reported that the crime rate was down (the Eco-Village neighborhood is neutral territory for local gangs) and the K-2 school now had one of the lowest vandalism rates in all of Los Angeles.

"The California State Department of Education has recently created a curriculum outline for teaching children about sustainable communities," said *Lois Arkin*, founder of Eco-Village, "and the school district is about to bulldoze the only one in California."

"The district should be creating more school/neighborhood partnerships such as the one that Eco-Village was already demonstrating," urged supporters in letters, faxes, e-mail, phone calls, and public testimony.

In September, school board member David Tokofsky introduced a motion to the full school board to save the Eco-Village corner. Bowing to public pressure (and apparently getting the message), the school board member with jurisdiction over the neighborhood reversed her previous position, and even suggested that Eco-Village be allowed to buy the property it had rented for so long. Negotiations continue for the future of the Eco-Village corner; however, the bulldozing threat seems to have been laid to rest for the present.

The **L.A. Eco-Village** was founded in the wake of the 1992 Los Angeles riots in an attempt to promote cooperation among neighbors and demonstrate how to live sustainably in an urban setting. Before that children of different ethnicities didn't play together, everyone locked their doors, and people who'd lived across the street from each for 25 years had never met.

"Now we're a neighborhood learning how to be healthy and sustainable over the long term," says *Naomi Orr*, a 10-year resident. You can learn more about the LA Eco-Village on their Web Site: [alumni.caltech.edu/~mignon/laev.html](http://alumni.caltech.edu/~mignon/laev.html).

for Planetary Healing. Highlights included a benefit auction for the FIC which raised \$1,200, a “fabulous desert party” in the community center, and a combination barbecue, talent show, and party at their neighboring community, **Acorn**.



In September **Aprovecho Research Center** in Cottage Grove, Oregon, completed a strawbale lodge to house additional interns. Aprovecho, which demonstrates and promotes fuel-efficient stoves and solar cookers worldwide, is also developing as a demonstrate site. They're now accepting applications for 10-week internships in Appropriate Technology, Sustainable Forestry, and Organic Gardening.

80574 Hazelton Rd., Cottage Grove, OR 97424; 541-942-8198; apro@efn.org; www.efn.org/-apro.



The **Occidental Arts and Ecology Center** in Sonoma County, California, seeks a six-month office administration work-exchange staffer. An intentional community and a nonprofit educational organization teaching aspects of ecology, horticulture, the visual arts, and social justice activism, OAEC is a dozen members on 80 acres about 65 miles north of San Francisco. They're looking for someone to do program and clerical work, public relations and publicity, and assistance with fundraising efforts. Contact *Dave Henson*, OAEC, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA 95465; 707-874-1557; oaec@igc.apc.org.



**Holy Protection Gnostic Christian Monastery** in Geneva, Nebraska, is seeking land for a move to southern California. “We’re looking for a White Elephant,” says *Father Seraphim*, “a large, older nursing home, rooming house, retreat center, or hotel.” The six members of the Eastern Orthodox monastery have a successful business creating and marketing Byzantine icons, and now want to include retreat facilities as part of their community business.

Their land in south-central Nebraska is also for sale, and the monks would ide-

ally like another community to buy it. Their facilities include 14.5 acres of fields and woods, with a 14,000-sq.-ft. (no kidding) community building with kitchen, dining room, large meeting rooms, chapel, dorm, and shop; outbuildings—a 3,200-sq.-ft. shop, two barns, a garage, and two guest houses; and an organic garden.

Holy Protection Monastery, Rt. 1, Box 75, Geneva, NE 68381; 402-759-4952; MonksIcons@aol.com.



**Riverside Community**, an aspiring eco-village/cohousing community near Menomonie, Wisconsin, received a go-ahead from their township board on a zoning variance and plan to begin construction on their first cluster of homes this spring, according to member *Charlie Borden*. Their 240 forested acres includes wetlands, riverbottom, crop land, hillside pasture, and prairie. An old farmhouse will serve as their common house, for shared meals, meetings, a shop, and childcare. Four households live on or adjacent to the land now.

Organized as a cooperative, with members buying shares, Riverside has openings for 24 adults, plus children. To help defray land expenses they created a recreation/preservation associate membership—members who won't live in the community but who will have full access to the property for wilderness enjoyment. As owner-builders, they intend to cut costs by sharing construction, with various members specializing in different construction areas.

Riverside's core values include “living lightly on the land, and using its resources with care, guided by the principles of sustainable land use and humane treatment of animals.”



This fall **Sunward Cohousing** of Ann Arbor, Michigan, reached their goal of 40 member households. The new community is located on 20 acres just west of Ann Arbor, with forest, wetlands, and ponds. Construction, which began last May, is progressing well. Members expect to move in this summer.

“The myriad details, projects, conflicts, and decisions continue to challenge our

collective skills as we find ways to grow together,” reports Sunward member *Michael McIntyre*.



On October 1 members of **Dancing Rabbit** closed on their new property, 280 acres of rolling hills in rural northeastern Missouri, three miles from Sandhill Farm. Members paid for the land with loans from friends and families, and a loan from the Federation of Egalitarian Community's PEACH fund. (Skyhouse, a subcommunity of Dancing Rabbit, joined the FEC in the spring of '97.)

The Rabbits are creating a permaculture-designed land use plan, and will begin construction in the spring. Because of their relatively low land acquisition costs, they are able to offer memberships to people from all economic backgrounds. The group, which moved to Missouri in 1996, began their community journey in northern California four years ago.



Members of **Jupiter Hollow** (eight adults and four children living in seven houses) near Weston, West Virginia, face a dilemma common to many rural communities founded in the '70s. Newer members want to subdivide their 179 acres so each household can own their own house and land footprint, while some long-time members want to remain shareholders in the corporation that now owns all houses and land in common. Also, newer members who put money into the community, such as building or adding on to a house, want to get equity out again if they left.

The main issue is equity, and members' potential financial liability for each other. According to member *Kaia*, newer members point out that in their current arrangement, any members could theoretically be liable for creditor's liens against all other members. However, with privately owned individual houses and lots, one member's financial woes couldn't affect anyone else. A long-time member, *Bruce Kimmel*, points out that he and some other long-time members don't want to incur the costs and local government requirements of subdividing the land, and don't want to lose the ability to choose new members, which they can now do.

"We'll probably end up subdividing," says Kaia. "Maybe we could come up with a third option incorporating both views, creating a new entity that would include just a few houses as well as the common property."



Fifty-seven year old **Bryn Gweled Homesteads** in rural Bucks County, Pennsylvania just finished repaving all their roads—"a very expensive project"—according to member *Cathie Forman*.

She says the first Saturday of every month is community day—a work party in the morning (maintaining their large community center, organic garden, swimming pool, tennis courts, hiking trails, roads), a potluck supper in the late afternoon, and a business meeting in the evening. However Saturday, October 4 was also their annual Children's Talent Show, with approximately 20 kids singing, dancing, performing magic tricks, and displaying artwork. Kids and parents reported it a great success.

Bryn Gweled's 70 households collectively own their 240 acres, have 99-year leases on their two-acre plots, and own their houses outright. They make decisions by consensus and run their affairs through committees—Property and Utilities, Roads, Community Center, Children's Activities, Membership, Garden, and Health and Welfare. Their common purpose, says Cathie, is the desire to live in community and revere and enjoy their land.



**Ten Stones Community** near Burlington, Vermont, has just completed a constructed wetlands, one of the first in the state, according to member *Beth Comolli*. The wetlands will process sewage far more sustainably than the usual sewer or septic systems. Ten Stones, which began building its first houses in 1993, is organized around values of community, ecology (five households have built strawbale homes), and support for each others' personal and spiritual growth. Their 88 acres, home to

13 households, includes woodlands, a meadow, a pond, and community gardens.



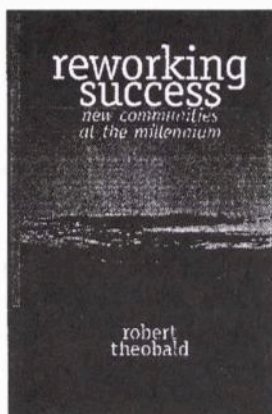
A two-minute clip about **Ecovillage at Ithaca** in Ithaca, New York, aired nationwide on CNN TV's "Earth Matters" program in early October.

"Many of the residents here say they came for both the sense of shared community and the natural living," said the narrator, over footage of the first of several cohousing communities in the ecovillage project and some of its 90 residents. Later in the clip: "This retired surgeon from St. Louis, Missouri, thinks that communal living is good for his health."

"This seemed to be an ideal preventative-medicine type of lifestyle: less stress, healthier environment," declared ecovillage resident *Bill Webber*.

The narrator ended with, "The community, residents say, may be a model for the new neighborhoods of the 21st century."

Right on, CNN. Ω



## REWORKING SUCCESS New Communities at the Millenium

Robert Theobald

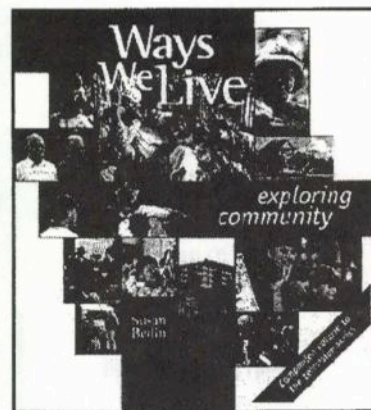
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Susan Berlin



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A publication of the Fellowship for Intentional Community.

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## Fellowship Roots

*Where We've Been; Where We Might Go*

*The Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) is a nonprofit community network organization that publishes this magazine and the Communities Directory.*

**T**HIS YEAR, THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY of the Fellowship for Intentional Community, is also the anniversary of events—nearly 50 years ago—which launched its forerunner organization, the Fellowship of Intentional Communities.

Those of us who gathered at the Community Service, Inc. organization in Yellow Springs, Ohio, in the late 1940s were profoundly affected by World War II, a global tragedy that forced many of us to question the very foundations of the “civilized” world. Most of those present at those initial meetings were men who had refused to be conscripted into military service. My personal refusal had landed me in prison. Others had spent time in Civilian Public Service camps.

Because of the war, we had all become interested in what were then called “cooperative communities.” We saw them as a means to build a more humane and

equitable society from the grass roots. This meant alternative ways of making a living. For instance, Macedonia Community in Clarkesville, Georgia, was making and selling educational toys. Our hope was that we could develop an entire alternative economy of trading among cooperative communities. So our initial name for the organization was “Inter-Community Exchange.” It was only after a year or two that we realized the main thing we had to exchange was fellowship.

Another factor in arriving at the name Fellowship of Intentional Communities (substituting “intentional” for “cooperative”) was the need to imply commitment. The original FIC made its decisions by what is now called “consensus.” In doing so, we relied on our common commitment to help build the foundations for a more humane and equitable global society. While each of us had arrived at this commitment by a unique personal sequence of events and choices, we all held a similar vision.

In my case, I was deeply affected by many hours of reading and meditation in prison, where, being assigned to the Education Department, I was allowed the



*Al and Dorothy Andersen live in a forming community in Eugene, Oregon. They are active in the Environmental and Social Concerns Committee of the Eugene Friends Meeting and in their own social-action vehicle, the Tom Paine Institute. For information about Al's latest book and the Andersen's other writings, see their Web site: <http://csf.colorado.edu/sustainable-justice>.*

latitude to prepare for and conduct discussion classes in philosophy and psychology. I also had ready access to the prison library. The soul-searching that this made possible made it clear to me that I had done the right thing in refusing conscription. Yet I knew I had been privileged to sit out the war in prison while my friends, and millions of others, were killing and dying. My best friend, for instance, was killed at Pearl Harbor. Readers who didn't experience the global turmoil at the time would probably have difficulty picturing the tragic and disruptive social climate which prevailed.

It is important to understand that those of us who refused to participate in "the war effort" could not escape complex moral dilemmas. The military dictatorships in Germany, Italy, and Japan were, after all, a genuine threat to what was left of civilized society. While I believe that moral dilemmas are an inevitable part of lives of free choice—where a choice by one of us may impact the subsequent options open to all of us—perhaps we can live so that they don't build to the life-wrenching level presented to the world during the first half of this century.

For me, the challenge which emerged from this realization was to work at the most fundamental levels of society so as to "take away the occasion for war," as George Fox, the founder of Quakerism, put it.

Soon after my release from prison, our small family of three headed for Yellow Springs, Ohio, to renew my acquaintance with Arthur Morgan (founder of Community Service, Inc.), to experience living in a small community, and to help Arthur and Griscom Morgan's work at Community Service, Inc. While doing research in the communities movement I had come across descriptions of the scattered and struggling "cooperative" communities, so I suggested that Community Service host representatives to a gathering in Yellow Springs following its annual Small Community Conference.

As you can see, these beginnings of

what has become the intentional communities movement didn't just emerge without many years of struggle, dialogue, and long meetings.

WHILE THINGS DEVELOPED MORE OR less smoothly during the first 10 years of the FIC, we reached a crisis in 1958 when, during a meeting at Pendle Hill community, the Society of Brothers (the Bruderhof communities) sent word that they would no longer participate. Some of those present at that meeting were Norman and Betty Polster (*Bryn Gweled*), Staughton Lynd (*University Settlement*), Bob Luitweiler (*Woolmandale*), Marion Hoyt and Dan Wilson (*Pendle Hill*), Art Harvey (*Fallsington*), Harold Winchester (*Gould Farm*), Gris Morgan (*The Vale*), David Gale (*Nonviolent Direct Action*), Dick Falkenstein and Olga and Bob Pinkston (*Koinonia*), and Kenneth Balsey, Steve Guthrie, and myself (*Tanguy Homesteads*).

The Bruderhof gave as their reason that they were only incidentally committed to community—their main commitment was to the Christian way of life they were called to.

A major factor in this estrangement may have been the feeling, on the part of one participant especially, that the Bruderhof was draining other communities of their leadership. Practically the entire leadership from Macedonia had moved to Bruderhof communities during those 10 years. And it was a great loss to Celo community when Doug and Ruby Moody, Dick and Lois Ann Domer, and Wendell and Pepper Hinkey also made the move. I didn't share those feelings. I saw no indication that there had been any coercion involved in these moves. Basically, the Society of Brothers offered a life of deeper commitment, and people who wanted that responded.

In fact, I was saddened by the Bruderhof's departure from the FIC, having worked so closely with Art Wiser (one of those who had moved from Macedonia to the Bruderhof) and other Bruderhof members who had played significant roles

**Profoundly affected by the global tragedy of World War II, we had become interested in what were then called "cooperative communities."**

## Lost Valley Educational Center



### An Intentional Community and Learning Center for Sustainable Living Skills

#### 1st Annual Lost Valley Permaculture Reunion October 3-6

A gathering of permaculture enthusiasts from throughout the region to work on projects together, learn from each other, and have fun.

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**Deborah Riverbend**  
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**Elk, WA 99009**  
**509-292-0502**

in developing the Fellowship over those first 10 years. I felt like I was losing contact with friends.

IN THE REORGANIZATION THAT FOLLOWED, I took on the role of Chair, and Griscom Morgan became the Treasurer. Together, we set about trying to inspire a revival of the communities movement, compensating not only for the departure of the Bruderhof, but also for the fading memory of the crisis atmosphere that characterized the war years, and the fact that member communities were putting so much energy into internal challenges that little was left for "the movement." In the 1959 FIC Yearbook, I wrote an article, "The Future of FIC," designed to evoke contributions from all interested parties regarding the future of the movement. Here are selected excerpts:

- *Have we, perhaps, been thinking of community as too closely associated with particular socio-economic-geographic structure?*
- *To what extent can "community" be structured, and to what extent is it hindered by formal organization?*
- *Is it possible that there are organizations in our [more general] society which contribute significantly to "community" in that they provide a means for members to have significant involvement in community in a way which otherwise would be extremely difficult?*

... *It was suggested at Pendle Hill that the concept of service was a significant part of the concept of community, the implication being that one finds community to the extent that one works with others in unselfishly meeting some felt need. For isn't community a spiritual rather than an organizational entity? Like friendship, it implies a quality of relationship; an acceptance of one another as ends, and not as mere means to one's ends, rejoicing together in shared accomplishments and comforting one another in shared tragedies...*

This quotation emphasizes the importance of *depth of commitment* in building community. Among the active participants in today's FIC, the importance of common commitment is well recognized. It is essential in making the consensus decision-making process work. And the consensus process, in turn, is essential for constantly applying "reality checks" on both the nature and depth of the common commitment. Difficulty in reaching consensus is often a sign of slippage in agreement about common commitment.



Dan Questenberry, Harvey Baker, and Laird Sandhill prepare to cut the cake for the 10th anniversary celebration of today's FIC.

MUCH OF THE discussion at the Spring '97 FIC Board Meeting at Edenvale, British Columbia, centered around formulating a mission statement and a vision statement.

I see today's FIC at a crossroads similar to that faced by the earlier FIC 40 years ago. In each case, the issue arose after a decade of working together. In each case, the issue became one of clarifying, or reformulating, the basic "common commitment" that makes consensus work and that makes community work.

The earlier FIC never fully met the challenge. We stated it, and made some progress, but not enough to sustain the organization. Thus, despite many and persistent efforts on the part of several of us, that earlier FIC gradually sank into non-existence.

In looking through my records of the earlier FIC, I found a draft statement by a few of us from Tanguy Homesteads dated 1961. Here are excerpts:

*We who write this owe you an explanation for the dearth of news about the Fellowship of Intentional Communities. The fact is that FIC has finally been laid to rest. If anyone is interested in reviving it we will be glad to discuss the matter with them. The surplus funds were turned over to the Homer Morris Fund and we have the files in our possession. [Later this fund was called the*



*Community Education Service Council, which has subsequently become the Community Business Loan Fund operated by the current Fellowship—a curious instance of the child becoming the father to the man.]*

*Why has this been done? Because we who have been trying to revive FIC have been unsuccessful in our attempts. We have failed to raise the banner which could recruit the necessary interest and participation. Our problems were not financial. We got sufficient response from interested individuals, but we felt that we were representing the communities movement to be something which it wasn't. We had hoped for more participation and unity from member communities, but it just didn't come. We saw the communities movement as confused, and we were unable to find a way out of the confusion.*

*When the Society of Brothers withdrew from FIC, there were those who felt FIC should be allowed to quietly die. But some felt that something precious would be lost thereby. We still feel that something precious is being lost, but we don't see how to make progress through FIC. Therefore, we admit our failure, and we welcome anyone who might see the light of day to move in. However, judging from the sparse participation in the last FIC national conference at Bryn Gweled in 1960, we don't really expect any such thing to happen. The sparse participation at this last conference, plus the failure of those responsible to follow up, convinced us that FIC has reached a peaceful end.*

IN 1987 A SMALL GROUP OF COMMUNITARIANS picked up where the original FIC left off and created the Fellowship for Intentional Community. And at the board meeting in British Columbia last spring, we celebrated its tenth anniversary. I have no fears that this anniversary will lead to another laying aside. The movement today is far too vigorous, and the present FIC, not being composed of representatives of member communities, can proceed without participation from communities as such. In fact, I am delighted with the manner in which the present FIC is proceeding,

and with the dedication of its leadership.

However, I believe that today's FIC is at a turning point somewhat comparable to the one we faced four decades ago. And I believe that now, as then, the key is the adequacy of the common commitment among the members of FIC. If the nature of that commitment is permitted to remain unclear, or falls short of the challenge that modern civilization poses, then there will be little reason for its existence beyond helping people get into pleasant living situations in which minimal commitment is required.

What degree of commitment, and of what kind, am I implying? At that board meeting I suggested that the membership of every organization with any appreciable power in today's world should be required to commit themselves to justice, in the sense of simple

fairness, toward all sentient beings whom they impact by their actions. All over the world injustice is endemic, with the rich getting super-rich and all others sinking deeper into poverty and insecurity, especially in countries being invaded by multinational corporations looking for the cheapest sweat-shop labor they can find.

As I see it, if the FIC is to serve as a moral force in relation to today's societal crisis, its vision statement must include a world in the which governments are comprised of members who share this commitment. Such a widespread commitment to justice as a minimum would not eliminate all moral dilemmas, but it would assure that dilemmas didn't reach the point where, as during the last two World Wars, every practical option would inflict unacceptable injustice.

Most people within the FIC would agree that its mission statement must include promoting a sense of neighborliness. This implies simple sharing ("I'm all out of wheat; can you spare some until I get to town?"). It implies alertness to each other's emergency needs ("I hear Mary is ill; is someone looking after her?"). It implies "carrying" a friend, a neighbor, over a period of years at times, especially at the end of his or her earthly life. It implies all those characteristics of "community" at its healing best, to

**I believe that today's FIC is at a turning point somewhat comparable to the one we faced 40 years ago.**



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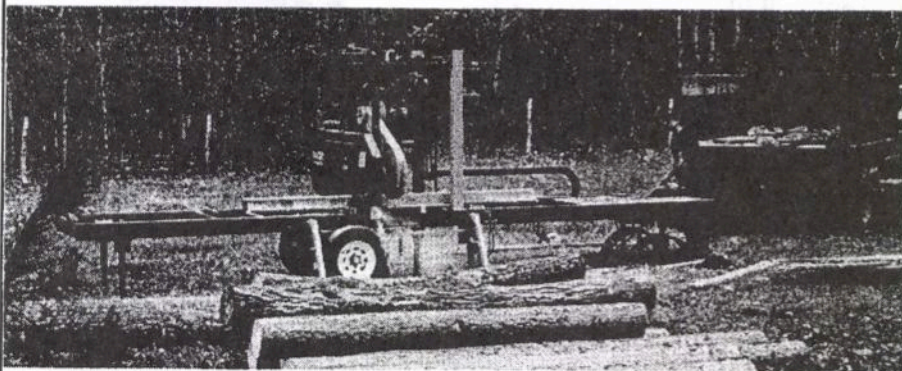
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which I sense a deep commitment on the part of the FIC leadership.

So, what is there to worry about? Perhaps nothing. But I urge participants in the FIC not to neglect “the outside world,” and the injustice that is rampant there. It was rightly said at Edenville that the kind of closeness and inter-connectedness inherent in intentional community necessarily enlivens one’s sense of fairness and justice. I agree. I suggest that is so because such inter-connectedness assures constant feedback regarding the impact we are having on one another.

***I urge participants in the FIC not to neglect “the outside world,” and the injustice rampant there.***

As we all know, it is easy to overlook the impact on people from whom we get no feedback. More specifically, it is possible to be a compassionate, caring neighbor to fellow community members, and at the same time neglect the issues of sustainable justice in relation to the outside world. Without feedback about the consequences of our actions on others, our moral senses have no basis for functioning. Today’s global economy is full of breakdown in significant feedback regarding the impact on those far removed from local actions. The most callous CEO can be quite considerate of members of *his* family and *his* community. That’s why, it seems to me, it’s important to think globally as we act locally. Today, global thinking must include an understanding of the global marketplace and the loose cannons operating there.

Finally, this analysis suggests an answer to another question raised at the Spring '97 board meeting: What kindred spirits outside the intentional communities movement should we be in community with? I suggest that these include any group working for economic and social justice, from the local level to the global. These are our spiritual neighbors with whom we can have a common vision, a common mission designed to achieve that vision, and a common *commitment* designed to implement that mission in the form of concrete action. Ω

# A Clash of Cultures

## SpringLedge Ecovillage Project Foiled

**T**HE ATMOSPHERE IN OUR SMALL Wisconsin town hall bristled with hostility. Nearly 100 residents jammed the monthly meeting which ordinarily attracts only a dozen or so old-timers. This was heavy stuff: once again the Plymouth Institute (the educational affiliate of High Wind community), was encroaching on comfortable, entrenched local belief systems. We were seeking approval for establishing an ecovillage, and the troops had been mustered to stamp out any such insurrection.

At one point a man jumped up and glared at our little band of eight: "I'm going to ask you straight out," he shouted, "Are you Communists? Because what you're proposing is a commune!" Later, a woman came up to us and said: "I'm wishing with all my heart for you to fail, and I'm going to make sure you do."

Following this and subsequent Mitchell Township meetings, a rash of headlines in neighboring newspapers enlivened the summer of 1996: "Road to Sustainable Living Blocked"; "A Messy Political Environment"; "Ecovillage Put On Hold."

Around the town of Mitchell, a rural oasis of green meadows, woodland, and rolling hills 55 miles north of Milwaukee, traditional dairy farms are dwindling as

new immigrants from Chicago, Milwaukee, and elsewhere buy up the land.

When we bought land here in 1970 there was little development, but over the decades we've watched farmland turn into house lots and septic fields. Where we used to hike and see deer grazing, there are now driveways and horse farms. It's happening all across North America—the typical process where natural systems are devolving into sprawl.

Someone with capital buys up a farm or sizable tract of land and becomes a developer, breaking up the land into lots to sell, and cutting down trees and leveling odd bumps in the terrain to put in roads and utilities. The new buyers then build houses, drill individual wells, and often reestablish their urban lifestyles in the countryside,

with manicured lawns and architectural designs and construction technologies that are heavy on energy consumption. Through this process thousands of acres have been taken over and forests thinned, endangering wildlife. Septic fields threaten the water table. While the developer reaps profits and moves on, one more act of degradation is added to the spreading environmental crisis.

Some 20 years ago we and a small group of friends created the High Wind community, which now occupies 148 acres.



*Lisa and Belden Paulson cofounded High Wind community in 1980, and through the Plymouth Institute, formed in 1992, work to educate people locally and nationally about sustainability issues through classes, workshops, and writings.*

*Plymouth Institute, W7122 County Rd. U, Plymouth, WI 53073; 414-528-8488; bhplhp@mail.tcbi.com.*

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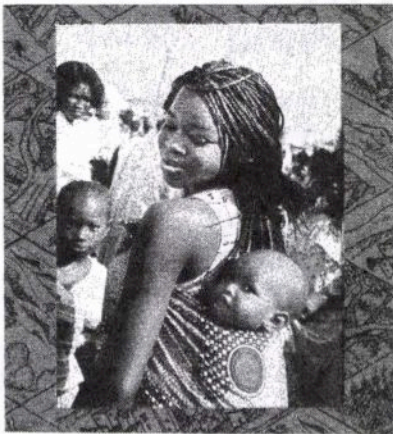
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High Wind includes a 20-acre organic farm, solar homes, a conference and retreat center, and a land-use plan that stewards natural resources.

For nearly 10 years, first as the High Wind Association, and more recently as Plymouth Institute, a revolving core of us have held a strong commitment to identify some of the unhealthy trends we've seen unfolding around us. Many of the ideas, teachings, solutions, and concrete models for more sustainable living that we've introduced have met with enthusiasm and appreciation—both from the thousands who have visited our center and from those who know us through writings.

Four years ago a small group of us bought 144 acres adjacent to High Wind, the Silver Springs property. One of the last intact ecological systems in the county, it has hardwood and evergreen forests, kettles and moraines carved by a glacier 15,000 years ago, and an intricate network of trout ponds fed by myriad springs. We converted the property's 75-seat restaurant and four modern cedar chalets into a learning center and housing for workshop participants.

The land includes a high ridge with a 15-acre meadow on one side, superb forests, and a south slope that looks out to spectacular views 20 miles away. Several of us associated with High Wind, along with an eminent architect and "living machine" waste-treatment consultant, worked for two years designing the modestly scaled SpringLedge Ecovillage. Septic systems would be eliminated by constructing a half-acre wetlands area, where liquid human waste from each house would be converted naturally to clean water through full-circle biological processes.

We allocated 70 of the 144 acres for this project, but by clustering the 21 homesites in the scrub along the ridge, our plan kept wild all the forest area and also preserved the open meadow, except for the constructed-wetlands marsh, which actually promised to enhance the plant and wildlife. Residents would agree to an ecological covenant that establishes the legal/financial/technical framework of this

budding community. They would own their own homesites and a share of the commons through a land condominium legal instrument, and a homeowners' association would become the governing body. Participants would agree to an architectural review committee made up of residents and a representative from Plymouth Institute which would promote state-of-the-art building technologies, including energy-efficient, clustered houses sharing wells and powered and heated by wind and sun.

SpringLedge would become part of our stewardship effort for the whole valley, which is rimmed by the ecovillage site on the north ridge and by High Wind land on a plateau on the south side of the valley, with the bountiful water resources and a CSA farm snuggled below.

Our intention included a small telecommunications center so that ecovillage residents and others could share computers and advanced hardware, thus offering potential for home-based jobs. Residents could buy fresh, chemical-free produce from the CSA farm (which now feeds 300 shareholder families) and fresh fish from the aquaculture operation. The ecovillage would provide building sites for the inevitable push of people leaving cities, thus forestalling haphazard, unplanned development, while demonstrating that development can be sustainable. Furthermore, the economics of the project would pay off the costly mortgage we'd incurred, provide some surplus funds for our educational work, and show that conscious land use can be economically viable.

Having researched and drawn in the best environmental and technical information from around the country, in the spring of '96 the SpringLedge project was poised for launch. As a first step to delineating building sites for a handful of potential ecovillagers already lined up and eager to buy in, we began to lay out the driveway that would wind carefully through the spectacular upland of the Silver Springs property.

Over and over we walked the land with the road builder, making sure his bulldozer avoided any major growth—keeping both

***"I'm going to ask you straight out," he shouted, "Are you Communists? Because what you're proposing is a commune!"***



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the homesites and road in open meadow and low scrub areas. We planned to hold the magnificent hardwood stands and pine forest as wild greenspace to be owned in common and enjoyed by all residents.

Then suddenly we were stopped in our tracks. Our immediate neighbors—most of whom have moved to the country and built in Mitchell only in the last two to seven years—saw arrival of the bulldozer as the first sign of action. Alarmed, they mobilized and packed the town hall to protest vehemently when we presented our plan in June.

The Town Board, mainly farmers, had great difficulty with SpringLedge's proposed clustered housing and biological waste treatment. Even though licensing of our waste-water system belonged to Wisconsin State jurisdiction, not the local Town Board, we heard vociferous complaints that our constructed wetland would create a cesspool which the town would eventually have to clean up. In essence, the whole idea of the ecovillage suggested innovation and change—very difficult to digest in this conservative environment.

Another line of opposition, more subtle but better organized, came from the urban refugees, living all over the county in one to five-acre lots. These new migrants tend to be more sophisticated than the older farming community. They came to the country for its "quality of life" and, once settled in, resist any other newcomers.

We'd thought it enough to focus on the environmentalists' concerns. But farmers and newcomers alike were afraid: of increased density (a maximum of 21 homes on half-acre sites), lowered property values, and potential crime (one or two of the buildings were slated for several families—thus "affordable housing," which might bring low-income folks). We discovered too late that all the "good" environmental language we use routinely in our circles was an anathema, not only to the entrenched farmers but also to the newly arrived city types who now had their paradise and wanted to lock the gates against anyone else who might alter the rural tranquility they'd purchased. The "land condominium" legal instrument we proposed was an unknown concept that only conjured up images of high-rise buildings. Even the term "environmental" was a hot potato.

The upshot was, the Town Board re-

jected the ecovillage, preferring widely spaced lots and individual septic systems. SpringLedge was formally turned down. Furthermore, the town of Mitchell placed a moratorium on all land development until a new ordinance is created and approved.

The avid press coverage, though fairly sympathetic to us, fanned the controversy and pointed up how fear of change can translate into anger. The media covered all

**The media attention stimulated new thinking about ecovillages far beyond what would have happened had SpringLedge actually been built.**

the meetings, and regularly sought interviews with us. Front-page articles provided a tremendous amount of information about the concept of ecovillages, solar buildings such as those in the High Wind community, and the need for careful land-use to curtail the disastrous trend toward irreversible sprawl and destruction of woodland, wildlife, and farmland. An editorial in the *Sheboygan Press* concluded: "The earth-friendly ecovillage proposed ... is the type of development the Town of Mitchell and other communities should encourage."

The media attention stimulated discussion throughout our county and state, and even nationally, fostering new thinking about ecovillages far beyond what would have happened had SpringLedge actually been built. The brouhaha even triggered the town of Mitchell to undertake a land-use study—maybe one of our lasting contributions.

In retrospect we realize that we could hardly have wished for a better platform from which to disseminate our ideas about sustainability. In our microcosmic situation we've seen how cultural groups can stand at very different stages of "eco-consciousness," how almost inevitably they clash, and how futile it is for one to make the other wrong.

The response to our project was a huge surprise to us, and in succeeding months gave rise to some fascinating and illuminating realizations about how we naively expected a community steeped in comfortably conservative traditions to accept revo-

lutionary, if very practical, ideas from a maverick group accustomed to living on the edge. In the past we had deliberately avoided engaging in the local political scene, but now have been thrust into this final arena of activity, "where the rubber hits the road."

The town's moratorium on building also precipitated an immediate crisis for us, as we lack the resources to continue covering the mortgage without selling ecovillage sites. The Silver Springs property is now on the market. We hope to find a buyer who is not a conventional developer rushing to chop down trees and build a subdivision. Who knows, maybe the buyer will love and respect this land and choose to work with us?

In the meantime we are proceeding to build a modified ecovillage on High Wind land—a smaller community incorporating a number of the innovations planned for SpringLedge. If any *Communities* readers share these concerns about sustainability, are looking for a place to build and settle, and would like to join us in this work, please let us know! Ω

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*Anniversary Issue!*

FROM THE GUEST EDITORS • ALEX MCGEE & LAIRD SANDHILL

## Hi Ho Silver Anniversary!

**W**E OFFER THIS ISSUE AS A CELEBRATION OF THE PEOPLE, HOURS, AND DREAMS THAT HAVE created *Communities* magazine over the last 25 years. The magazine's history spans from the tail end of the hippies' heyday to the robust surge of community interest in the '90s—with the comparative desert of the "me generation" in between.

*Communities* burst on the scene in 1972 as the inspired spawn of seven activist collectives, merging three young publications into one. There were high hopes of rallying folks across the continent to the clarion call of cooperative living, but it never quite worked out that way. The high tide of the 1965–1975 era was ebbing, and people drifted on to other things.

THERE WERE SOME STRONG YEARS IN THE LATE '70S AND EARLY '80s when the magazine was published by the Community Publication Cooperative, headed by Paul Freundlich, Melissa Wenig, Chip Coffman, and Chris Collins. They expanded the focus from rural communes to urban cooperatives, offering provocative articles and interviews that were relevant to a wider audience.

Still, the '80s were a slow time for intentional communities. New community starts were down, many groups had empty rooms, and a lot of co-ops folded. By the end of the

decade, *Communities* magazine went dormant. Then the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) came on the scene and published the 1990/91 Directory of Intentional Communities as its first project, just as interest in community was picking up again. With profits from the *Directory*, FIC breathed new life into the magazine. Since 1994 *Communities* has been published as a regular quarterly. Though the magazine has never turned a profit, the Fellowship has been inspired by echoes of the call first sounded in 1972, enthusiastically trying its hand at bringing the practice and spirit of

community to the widest possible audience.

It's been a roller coaster ride for both the communities movement and this publication, and you'll find this issue replete with images and stories, capturing the up-and-down fortunes of communities and the people who built them.

We offer a trio of pieces that showcase the communities movement back when the ink was still wet on our first issue. David Perkins reviews communes in the Rocky Mountain Southwest during 1965–1975—the epicenter of alternative living at the time (p. 30).

Two years ago Deborah Altus and Tim Miller received federal funding to research communities existing during the 1965–1975 decade, and interview members who lived there. (We're not kidding; they got paid to do this.) After a year of accumulating more frequent flyer miles than a migrating goose, Deborah became the world's expert on what happened back then. Luckily, she's a friend of ours and consented to supplying the amazing overview you'll find ahead (p. 22).

The third piece is a vignette from Lucy Horton who, inspired by the taste of communal living, hitchhiked to communities all over the U.S. collecting recipes, and authored the classic natural foods cookbook, *Country Commune Cooking* (p. 24).

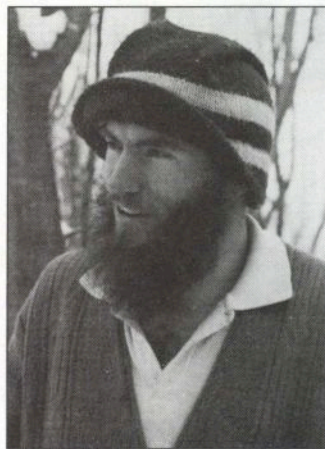
One of the interesting questions about community living is the extent to which alternative culture shapes the wider culture and vice versa. For a look at some of the deeper roots of community, Al Andersen cites the devastating impact of World War II, and the motivation it provided the group which founded the original FIC in the late 1940s. Hoping that communities could provide a sturdy platform for building a culture based on economic and social justice (thereby “removing the occasion for war”), he hopes that the current FIC will align itself with the same vision, and bring more resilience to the task (p. 12).

At about the same time that Al was getting together with folks in southern Ohio to start the FIC, Joel Welty was in northern Ohio, seeking an alternative to the racial prejudice and anti-democracy attitudes of the times. He found it in student co-op living, and helped start the Oberlin Student Cooperative Association, which flourishes today (p. 36).

In addition to many remarkable births, the last 25 years has seen some



Alex McGee 25 years ago



Laird Sandhill 25 years ago

notable communities flounder and die. Perhaps none was better known or more closely watched than Kerista—the birthplace of polyfidelity and for many years a beacon for the hip culture of San Francisco. Mitch Slomiak chronicles the unraveling of Kerista and its collapse in 1991. As a member for the community's last 11 years, he offers a poignant account of his personal journey from inspiration to disillusion, and stops along the

way. Older and wiser, he offers readers a handful of hard-earned nuggets about how to remove the rose-colored glasses when viewing a community as a prospective home (p. 52).

Communities exist within the fabric of society, not apart from it. We exchange goods, pay taxes, publish magazines, and are the subject of one another's writing. We offer inspiration and receive it in return. Joyce Foote—who was born into one community and helped found another—explores the carefully wrought balance between personal freedom and responsibilities to one another when living in community. The desire for community, after all, is about seeing what we can do together (p. 59).

And if you're curious about the evolution of the magazine, you'll find a this-is-your-life timeline tracing highlights, selected excerpts, and graphics from the pages of *Communities* past (p. 43), and reminiscences from Paul Freundlich about his tenure as editor (p. 39).

As with any issue of *Communities*, there are questions left unaddressed, communities left unrepresented, and stories left untold. As usual, only a sampling was possible, but hopefully it will supply a glimpse of the sweet promise of living in community and getting to the other side of our competitive conditioning. Ω



Laird and Alex today.

Laird Sandhill has lived at Sandhill Farm for 23 years (he's named after the community, not vice-versa), and working with the Fellowship for Intentional Community for 10 years. Alex McGee was a member of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in Des Moines for a year, then moved into Kody's Beacon Hill House in Seattle before settling at Twin Oaks, her home since 1994.

Alex and Laird wish to thank Twin Oaks community, which hosted them and graciously provided computer equipment and desk space. And special thanks to Sandhill, for allowing Laird to report late for the sorghum harvest.



*Lila commune, 1970.*  
PHOTO: DAVID OSTROFF



# LESSONS — FROM THE — COMMUNES

BY DEBORAH ALTUS

**I**N THE FALL OF 1995 I EMBARKED UPON AN amazing adventure. My job description—if “job” can come remotely close to what I did—was to travel around the United States and interview as many people as I could who lived communally from 1965-1975. Believe it or not, this venture was supported by the federal government in the form of a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The grant was obtained by Tim Miller, a University of Kansas communal scholar. We call this effort the “’60s Communes Project,” because popular culture has dubbed the period from 1965-1975 “the Sixties.”

From Florida to California, Vermont to Alaska, I interviewed hundreds of people. Despite the notion that all ’60s communes crashed and burned soon after they started, I visited 77 currently active intentional communities in 27

states that were originally formed during the Sixties. Tim and his students visited a dozen more communities in six more states. And, to the surprise of many, we didn’t come close to exhausting our list.

The stories we heard were of every type: unbearably sad, hilariously funny, zany, mysterious, sweet, or a combination. But what these stories shared, almost universally, was a sense of power. The people I interviewed recounted experiences that were life-changing. Regardless of the length of time people had lived communally, or how long the community had existed, they typically described the experience as “mind-blowing” or “Earth-shattering.” And whether or not a personal story was positive or negative, just about all of our interviewees classified their groups as successful, even if the community had lasted less than a year. In some cases, we received

## WHAT IS A “COMMUNE”?

IN THE ’60S AND ’70S, A “COMMUNE” USUALLY MEANT a group of people living together who rejected mainstream values and sought a different way of life, or followers of a spiritual teacher who lived and worshipped together. Today the term “commune” is often used interchangeably with “intentional community” (in our opinion, erroneously), and often has negative connotations: “lazy hippies,” “a ‘cult,’” and so on.

Some believe “commune” is more accurately an economic term, describing intentional communities in which members share incomes and a common

purpose (as compared to communities in which members hold finances individually).

Others use the terms “commune” and “communal” to denote a more intense form of community than “community” or “intentional community”—one in which members are close emotionally, like an intentional family, regardless of whether they share incomes.

Deborah and Tim chose the term “commune” deliberately for the wide variety of intentional communities they studied, as that was the term many, if not most, such groups used in the ’60s and ’70s. —Ed.



LUCY HORTON

Frog Run Farm, 1974

journals, book-length manuscripts, and photographs from people who, 30+ years after the fact, were eager to share stories from communal experiences that had lasted only a few months.

To me, the most remarkable and wonderful aspect of my year on the road was the warmth and love with which I was showered at every stop. Total strangers took me into their homes, fed me, housed me, and told me intimate details of their lives. Save the brief inconvenience of locking myself out of a rental car on a rainy day in an exclusive Philadelphia suburb after interviewing Mother Divine, I didn't have a single bad experience in the thousands of miles I traveled. In fact, I often found people so eager to talk and share their stories that occasionally they

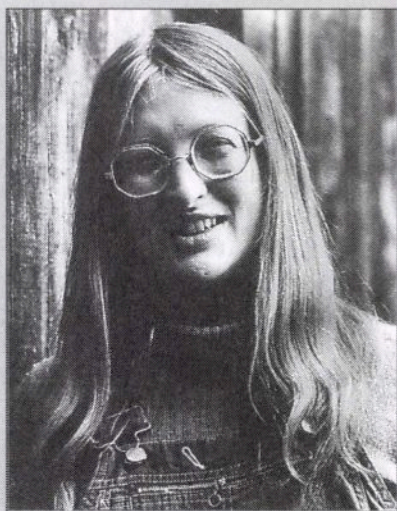
hunted me down rather than the other way around.

While Tim and I got to talk with many of the well-known figures of the era, we discovered early on that gurus, leaders, and other high-profile community members were often difficult to interview. Typically they communicated a "party line" and sometimes wouldn't veer from their group's canned statements. On the other hand, we got wonderfully detailed, frank, and revealing portraits of communal life from "rank and file" members of such communities. What emerged were portraits of committed, energetic young people who had eagerly discarded the con-

ventions of previous generations to seek a better way of life. For some this search was liberating and enlightening; for others it was painful and destructive. Still others simply had lots of fun along the way.

My year of travel treated me to a view of our country that is probably foreign to most. While many communes in the '60s stood out colorfully in their local areas, those that survive today have often toned down their presence so much that it would be difficult to find them without some serious sleuthing. I spent much of my year on winding, bumpy dirt roads with no signs, searching for teepees and domes cleverly camouflaged from unwelcome drop-ins.

Now 30 years older and wiser, many commune



Lucy Horton in 1972, after writing *County Commune Cooking*.

## MY PATH TO A COMMUNE

by Lucy Horton

IN 1970, I WAS AN UNFORMED, CONFUSED 25-year-old, living alone in a tenement in Manhattan. I worked as a waitress, which even in my distracted state I knew was a dead-end job, and dabbled in the usual psychedelics.

Finally I pulled myself together enough to leave this unwholesome scene. I had few skills and, true to the spirit of the age, had been questioning all values of my upbringing, but

nothing in the previous year had helped me to form new ones. I visited some old friends whom I thought of as mature, journalist Robert Houriet and his wife Mary. I had worked for them as a baby-sitter when I was in college, and in the years since we had stayed in touch. Robert had quit a high-pressure job as an editor at the *Camden Courier-Post*, and the family had moved to northern Vermont, where they were living with their two children in a converted chicken coop.

I hitchhiked for the first time in my life outside the bus stop in Newport, Vermont, a blue-collar town near the

members feel burned by the media and exhausted by throngs of visitors and looky-loos. Today, they jealously guard their privacy and carefully monitor the comings and goings of outsiders. Partly as a result of this tendency to keep a low profile, and partly due to careful work establishing good local relations, communities continuing from the '60s era are often unknown to the mainstream culture. But survive they did.

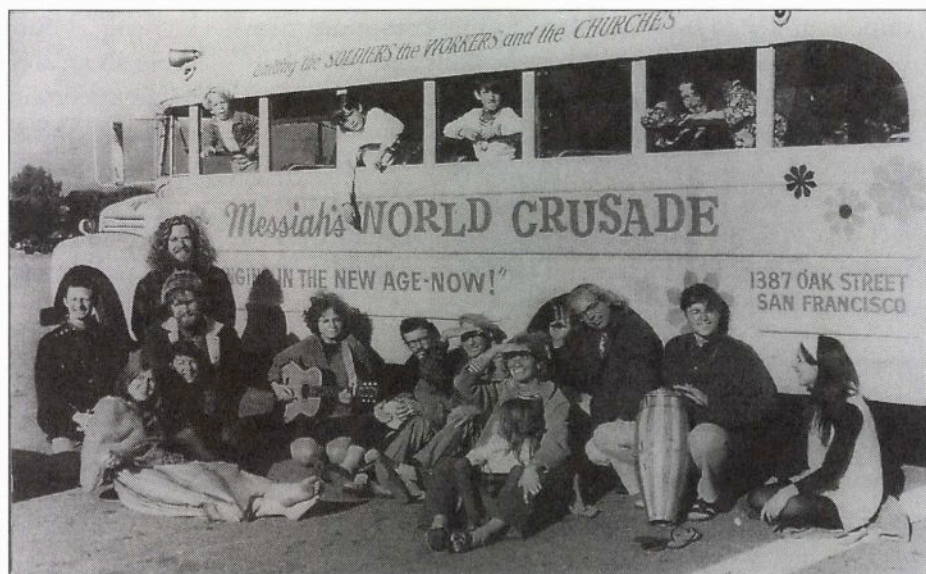
Most of our interviewees speculated about why some groups endured while others blew up or faded away. Many pointed out that they had never seen their communes as long-term living situations. They had only been created for the moment, for as long as that moment lasted. But for other communards, finding a way to maintain a lifestyle that they had grown to love was important.

Several claimed that having a common community building for meetings or shared meals had been a critical factor in the group's survival. Similarly, the practice of dividing large communities into smaller, more meaningful and intimate subgroups was a survival mechanism mentioned by some. For instance, Twin Oaks houses its 100 members in seven residences, each of which has some autonomy to establish its own identity and norms around group interactions, level of noise and cleanliness, and so on—all of which offers a measure of family-style hominess. Shannon Farm, also a large community, has

Canadian border. Two high school boys in an old beater gave me a ride to the Houriets' cabin, 10 miles away. This act of trust, unthinkable in New York, was perhaps the very first step in my journey of spiritual rebirth.

I was amazed to discover that Robert, who had always been clean-shaven and worn a baggy suit, had grown an Abe Lincoln beard, wore bib overalls, and fit thoroughly into the rural scene.

In fact, he was totally transformed—by the powerful experience of visiting over 50 communes all around the country for the previous year. When I arrived he was franti-



One World Family Commune, late 1960s

divided its land into clusters so that each household is clustered with five or six other households, allowing people with similar interests or lifestyles to form a little neighborhood. At the same time, Shannon does not have a major community center and some members worry that the community has lost its closeness without a common place to hold group activities.

Home births were credited by others as providing the glue that kept their communities together. *Spiritual Midwifery*, the pioneering book by Ina May Gaskin of The Farm, was requisite reading in many communes and births were often attended by large groups of community members.

Still others listed group process skills as the most

cally arranging his notes for *Getting Back Together*, the book he was writing on the experience. (*The New York Times* later called it, "The first full account of revolutionary lifestyles radically altering American society.") Mary, previously a graduate student, had emerged as the complete Country Person, who gardened, foraged, and watched her baby son run around naked in the sun.

I loved the spot where they lived, at the junction of two maple-lined dirt roads next to a cascading brook. But the experience of living in a family who had opened themselves to the idea of community

was even more healing. We took some acid on a day in early October when the fall color was peaking. We experienced the goodness of Nature in a really visceral way together, the first genuine spiritual experience I'd had as a so-called adult, and after that it seemed obvious to me that I should stay.

Robert, as it happened, needed someone to type the second draft of his manuscript. I was so highly motivated to stay in Vermont with the Houriets that I checked a typing manual out of the Newport library and taught myself to type in a week.

continued ►

important key to survival. Many former commune members bemoaned their lack of process skills and wished they had known then what they know now about consensus decision making, facilitation, mediation, and co-counseling. The Grassroots and Dandelion Collective in Syracuse, New York, credits its 25-year survival to the fact that early on it sent members to the Movement for a New Society in Philadelphia to take part in group process trainings offered there.

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**Regardless of the length of time people had lived communally, they typically described the experience as “mind-blowing.”**

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Tim and I were surprised to learn of the number of Christian groups still in existence from the '60s era. For example, Jesus People USA continues a thriving ministry in urban Chicago, with some 400 people living in the community's high-rise hotel. While some people feel that communes must be physically set apart from the competing forces of capitalist society in order to survive, the Jesus People manage to continue full economic communalism in the midst of all the enticements of a huge metropolitan area. For the most part though, I found that traditional religious groups often prefer to distance themselves from their secular counterparts—and vice versa. In fact, it was not unusual to find a religious and a secular community located in the same area without either

knowing about the other. When asked if they knew anything about the secular commune down the road, one religious community answered, “They're just a bunch of nudists.” And when I queried the secular group, none of them even knew that the religious community existed.

Despite the lack of interaction, I didn't find major lifestyle differences between religious and secular communities. In fact, these groups seem to have much more in common than they have differences. Consider the following community, for example: With a large farm, complete with an organic garden, large greenhouse, and barn full of animals, they're interested in sustainable agriculture, explore new methods of farming, and have put some of their land into a wildlife preserve. They are fully income-sharing and take all their meals in common. They've named their Earth-stewardship program the “Earth-Kinship Program” to emphasize their relationship with, rather than over, the Earth. The coordinator of this program runs the cleanest, best-managed recycling program I've seen. They operate a Center for Peace; several members have been arrested for civil disobedience. One household of members lives in a farmhouse in order to be closer to the land.

The community I'm describing is not a hip-era commune, but a convent of Roman Catholic nuns. I asked one of the nuns if she saw any parallels between the youth rebellion of the 1960s and what was happening in the Roman Catholic Church during the time of Vatican II. She responded that it was not two separate events but all part of the same movement. While young people were experimenting with new ways of living in the '60s, religious men and women were also trying out new ways of

**MY PATH TO A COMMUNE** *(cont.)*

The work lasted into early February. It got cold. Very cold. Sometimes as cold at night inside the converted chicken-coop as it was outside. It was one of those classic Vermont winters when the snow came early and never melted. The greater our hardships grew, the more I loved them. I felt almost like an animal, adapted to my surroundings.

When the job ended and Robert was about to depart for New York to work with his editor, I knew I couldn't stay, as I had no money and no way to contribute to household survival. Robert knew I had thought

about writing a cookbook, since I loved to cook and had found country living culinarily inspiring.

“Why don't you write a commune cookbook?” he asked. “They do great things with food in the communes. I was really impressed when I visited them.”

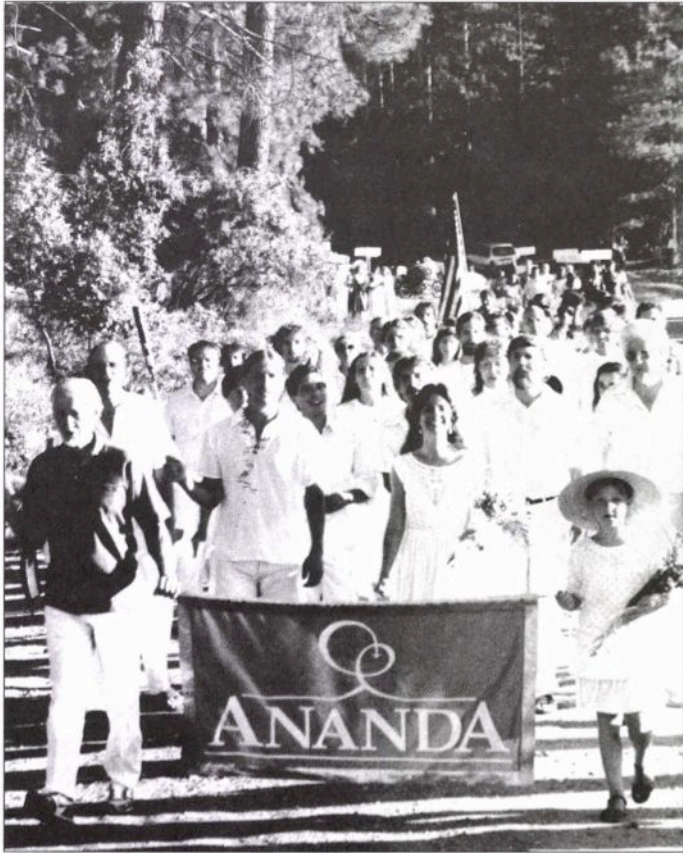
At first the idea seemed too far-fetched. I had never learned to drive and I had no money.

“Hitchhike!” he said. “I hitchhiked and it worked out great!”

Of course, Robert was over six feet tall and a man, I was five-foot-four and a woman, but the idea began to grow and eventually became an

obsession, like Joan of Arc and her voices. I have since learned that I never accomplish anything notable unless it becomes an obsession, so this worked in my favor.

Instead of trying to get an advance from a publisher, it seemed simpler to me to just do the work first. Distasteful though it was, I went back to New York City, stayed with my baffled parents while I got temporary work, and three months later set out on my own journey to the communes of America. I flew as far as Denver and began hitchhiking in Boulder, where after waiting for five minutes at a popular spot I got a ride



Fourth of July Parade at Ananda Village

dressing, worship, and daily life. The graveyard at the convent described above offers an interesting example of these changes. The gravestones are on two levels, with the Mother Superiors buried on the top level at the front and the other Sisters buried on the lower level. For the past

30 years, however, there are no longer any Mother Superiors to be buried on the top tier, as everyone is just a Sister and buried on the same level.

Such efforts at egalitarianism were very much a part of the '60s communes as well, and many women I interviewed repeatedly told me how empowering communal living has been for them. Interestingly, however, the photos from the '60s that we have collected largely show women, often wearing granny dresses, engaged in traditional tasks such as cooking and tending the children, while the men are sawing wood or working in the fields.

Many communities worked hard at forging a new path, especially with regard to gender roles, and some drew inspiration from an earlier era. We frequently ran across people who said that they had eagerly read accounts of 19th-century communities and were trying to emulate a particular group or practice about which they had read. One interesting group that fit this mold was Equitable Farm, started by Liselotte Glozer and her husband in Mendocino, California, in the early '70s. Equitable Farm was based on the 19th-century economic philosopher Josiah Warren's ideas about time and labor. While Equitable Farm didn't last long, a couple of its members went on to Missouri to start Garden of Joy Blues, one of the more colorful hip-era communes in the Missouri Ozarks. Still wedded to Josiah Warren's ideas, they tried to get by as much as possible by bartering and rarely used money. As with some 19th-century communities, a fire that destroyed their farmhouse put an end to Garden of Joy Blues' dreams of helping model a more equitable world.

It turns out that fire has shaped the future of many

to San Francisco. It went like that for the next five months, one golden experience of generosity segueing into another. ...

In the end, I succeeded in compiling a cookbook, learning about a whole new world of natural foods cooking as I went. *Country Commune Cooking* was published a year later (Coward-McCann and Geoghegan, 1972).

Like Robert, my attraction to communal living was strengthened by seeing the communal way of life in action in the course of visiting some 35 communes. The year after I returned, I put part of the money from

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**The greater our hardships grew, the more I loved them.**

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the sale of the book into a piece of land that Robert had located in East Charleston, Vermont. Thus Robert and Mary and I were founding members of Frog Run Farm, where I lived for 13 years until we dissolved the community by mutual agreement.

Though dispersed, many of us are still close. In fact, my life partner

Howard is another Frog. A Frog Run Farm cat, Grips, still lives with us. Though almost twenty, Grips' Frog values are still intact—purr a lot and groove on life. Ω

*Lucy Horton and her husband now live in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where Lucy does freelance photography and market research.*

*Country Commune Cooking (Coward-McCann and Geoghegan, New York, 1972) and Getting Back Together (Coward-McCann and Geoghegan, 1969) now out of print, are occasionally available in used bookstores.*



*Alpha Farm celebrates 25 years in 1997*

communities. Some members, for example, felt that Tolstoy Farm, near Spokane, Washington, was never the same after a fire destroyed the community building known as the Hart House. In addition to problems with natural disasters, many communities had great difficulty establishing a stable economy. Groups that did survive were often helped by trust funds, parents with deep pockets, the occasional benefactor, or a cottage industry that paid off, such as Twin Oaks' hammock business.

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### **Many groups shifted from being fully income-sharing to having cooperative economics, with individuals retaining their own income.**

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Some people I spoke with remembered not having enough food, or having the same food over and over again. Many commented on repetitious diets that were occasionally supplemented by government commodities. One former member of the Lila commune in northern New Mexico told me that people were so poor and malnourished there that their hair started to fall out. Eventually everyone was too tired and ill to work and Lila fell apart. And while communal diets were often hard for adults to handle in those days, what many members found impossible to tolerate was their children not getting their needs met. Watching children go without adequate food and clothing often prompted a quick and early exodus from '60s communes.

Others told of arranged marriages and marriage swaps that had horrific consequences. They warned that as

much as they might agree with the philosophy of open marriage, its practice was often hugely disruptive to group cohesion. Still others questioned whether it was possible to maintain pair bonds in a communal situation.

Another issue common to many '60s-era groups was the problem of jerry-built housing and ineffective sanitation systems. While many dwellings were certainly attractive from an aesthetic standpoint, officials weren't pleased to find groups of people living in VW buses, tipis, or tents, and sometimes, as at Morningstar and Wheeler's Ranch in northern California, without remotely adequate la-

trines. If a group wasn't done in by bouts of hepatitis, then the county red-tagging to evict residents from substandard dwellings may have pulled the plug. Several communities from that era still live in fear of red-tagging. As the Lake Village Community in Kalamazoo, Michigan, can testify, their fears may be justified. Lake Village lost most of its members last year after local officials, prompted by an angry ex-resident, condemned most of their buildings.

Many people we interviewed warned that it was impossible to sustain full economic communalism. We were presented with repeated examples of groups that shifted from being fully income-sharing to having cooperative economics, with individuals retaining their own income while paying dues or a set fee to the community. The Farm, for example, abandoned its economic communalism in the early '80s, although a small group known as the Second Foundation continues to pool incomes. Similarly, we encountered many groups that have gradually offered their members more privacy and private property over the years. At Black Oak Ranch in northern California, one of the Hog Farm's properties, residents live out fairly private lives in their own dwellings—quite a change from the early days of the Hog Farm. Indeed, the practice of members doing everything together at the same time and place seems difficult for communities to maintain. The community clothes room, once a common sight at many '60s communes, is now the exception rather than the rule.

Overall, the biggest threat to community survival that we heard about dealt with land ownership. We heard countless stories of lawsuits and irreparable schisms created by disagreements over who owned the land. Many times, communal land was put into one person's name. That arrangement often worked fine until members decided to leave and wanted to get their equity out. When

they discovered they couldn't, all hell would break loose.

Mel and Lois Leasure learned the hard way about the importance of clarifying group land ownership. They were part of Cooperative Homesteads in suburban Detroit, Michigan, a community that succumbed to individual members' desires to gain financially from the soaring land prices in that area. Mel and Lois were extremely frustrated watching their intentional community be destroyed by what they saw as greedy, selfish impulses among some members, so they started a new community in Virginia called Common Ground. Like many communities trying to avoid land ownership problems, Common Ground has established a land trust (so no individual member can sell any land and make a profit), thereby protecting itself from the fate that befell Cooperative Homesteads and dozens of other communities.

While recognizing that we don't have anything close to a random sample of '60s-era communes, Tim and I were struck by the fact that almost all the former commune members we interviewed continue to live a "communitarian" lifestyle. Malon Wilkus is a perfect example. He lived at East Wind in the '70s and played instrumental roles in getting the community's nut butter business established and setting up the Federation of Egalitarian Communities. In developing the nut butter

business, Malon learned so much about worker-owned businesses that when he left East Wind, he started American Capital Strategies, a firm that helps employees become owners of their own companies. We could tell you dozens more stories like Malon's but, on the flip side, we would be hard pressed to come up with an example of someone living at odds with their communal past. Our experience flies in the face of the popular culture's view that most '60s hippies sold out to become movers and shakers in capitalist society.

One of the most important aspects of our project is to document the lessons learned a generation ago. Today's communities can benefit enormously by studying these lessons and learning, say, how to set up a work-sharing system, how to structure land ownership, or how to run effective group meetings. While the hippies had little to guide their search but their own energy and desires, people seeking community today have a range of information to build on—including a wealth of people who have nearly three decades of communal experience already under their belt. Ω

*Deborah Altus lives, loves, works, and plays in Lawrence, Kansas, where she stays active in the co-op movement and remains a student of community.*

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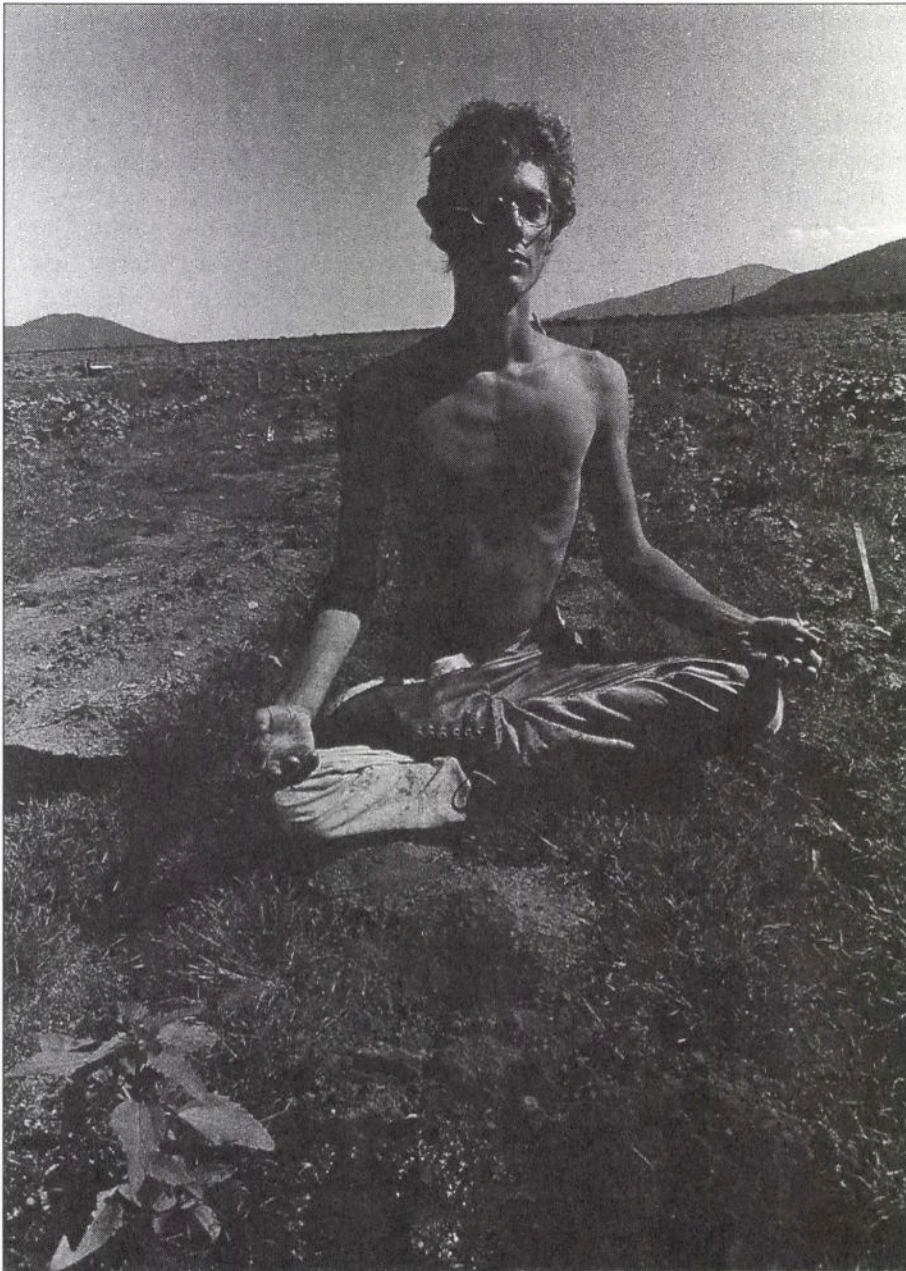
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Word was out through the hip underground. THIS was the place.

**B**ESIDES BEING THE BIRTHPLACE of the atomic bomb and the home of the world's best green chile, the Rocky Mountain Southwest boasts another claim to fame. For over a decade (roughly 1965 to 1975), the region was the center of the "hip" universe, the birthplace of the '60s-era rural commune.

The first commune was established here before the media ever coined the term "hippie." They arrived in wildly painted buses and beat-up junkers of every variety. Visionary artists, desperadoes, Ivy Leaguers, political radicals, bohemians and beatniks, all "dropping out" of what they perceived to be a society gone mad and "dropping in" to the promised land. As one early commune founder stated: "We were going to build a brave new world. Our goal was to rebuild the economic, social, and spiritual structures of man from the bottom up."

They gave their new communities names like Drop City, Libre, New Buffalo, the Lama Foundation, The Red Rockers, the Anonymous Artists of America, the Medical Opera, Ortiviz Farm, Lila, Lorien, Reality Construction Company, the Hog Farm, the Magic Tortoise, Morningstar, Manera Nueva, Towapa, Archuletaville, and Daddy Dave's Love Commune (where the only rule was: "No Bad Vibes").

These communes embraced the ideas of back-to-basics, voluntary simplicity, and escape from the dehumanizing industrial world.

The sun-drenched mesas and the pristine high mountain valleys of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado seemed ideal for this new enterprise. The unlimited sense of space would uplift the spirit and encourage personal growth and freedom. The local Hispanic communities were, for the most part, open and helpful. The relative lack of population decreased the odds of being "hassled." Indeed, the local saying went: "There's no law south of the

## 'NO BAD VIBES'

*Communes in the Rocky Mountain Southwest, '65-'75*

BY DAVID PERKINS



Arkansas River.” It was almost another country.

For all their gullibility and naiveté, the new communards proved to be remarkably quick learners. While most communes opted for tipis and traditional adobe structures, others sought to use modern technology to their advantage.

Drop City, arguably America's first hippie commune, pursued the budding science of geodesics pioneered by futurist Buckminster “One World” Fuller. In 1965, a motley crew of poets, radical bohemians, and artists decided to build their “community of the future” on a six-acre windswept goat pasture on the outskirts of Trinidad, Colorado. Using Fuller's geometric formulas, and with the guiding hand of technomaven Steve Baer, the “Droppers” set about constructing an elaborate compound of geodesic structures. The domes were paneled with car tops which the Droppers chopped out of junkyard wrecks.

As a point of principle (and necessity), the Droppers were scroungers extraordinaire. Part of their mission was to demonstrate how cheap, aesthetic housing could be built using only the waste generated by affluent America. The locals referred to the place as “Dump City.”

To keep food on the communal table, the Droppers also became experts at scavenging the dumpsters behind the Safeway store for damaged produce. Their occasional efforts to receive public assistance turned into rancorous encounters at the food stamp office where they were told: “You have no *right* to be poor!”

Peter Rabbit, a lanky man with a sort of Gary Cooper cragginess and a mischievous twinkle in his eye, describes the early days at Drop City: “We had a total open-door policy. Everyone was invited to come and contribute and learn. It was all about freedom and with that freedom came the responsibility to pull your own

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## “A life somewhere between Disney and Deuteronomy.”

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weight. We had an old medical human skeleton hanging at the gate with a sign around its neck saying: ‘I did not wash my dish.’”

Drop City life was a continuous free-form happening. These “Drop-pings” were a series of theatrical performances, musical events, and wild light shows all fueled by illegal substances and constantly “teetering on the brink of pure insanity.” As the

heading east on a train, fell asleep and rolled out of a boxcar on Drop City's doorstep. He was, of course, welcomed with open arms. It was obviously a case of “the cosmic forces” at work.

In their role as “*commune*-icators,” the Droppers learned how to play the media like a fiddle. The place swarmed with TV crews and reporters. The Droppers were masters of



DAVID OSTROFF

The sun-drenched mesas and pristine high mountain valleys of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado seemed ideal for hippie communes. Lila Commune, northern New Mexico, 1970.

Droppers saw it, this state of “healthy tension” provided the spontaneity necessary for a truly creative existence. Peter Rabbit says: “Life was not separated from Art, life *was* Art!”

The word was out through the hip underground. Literally thousands of the committed and the idly curious flocked to the notorious goat pasture. To the Droppers, they were all somehow *meant* to be there. One time a beat-up looking hippie hobo wandered in. The hippie had been

the put-on. National media coverage increased the visitor flow. The second wave, however, brought with it some characters who sorely tested the Droppers tolerance. Hard drug users, teenage runaways, military deserters (the Vietnam war was raging at the time), and certifiable wackos appeared in increasing numbers. According to Rabbit: “The place was becoming like the underground railroad. At one point, the FBI would show up at the gate every morning holding

up photos saying, 'Have you seen this person?'"

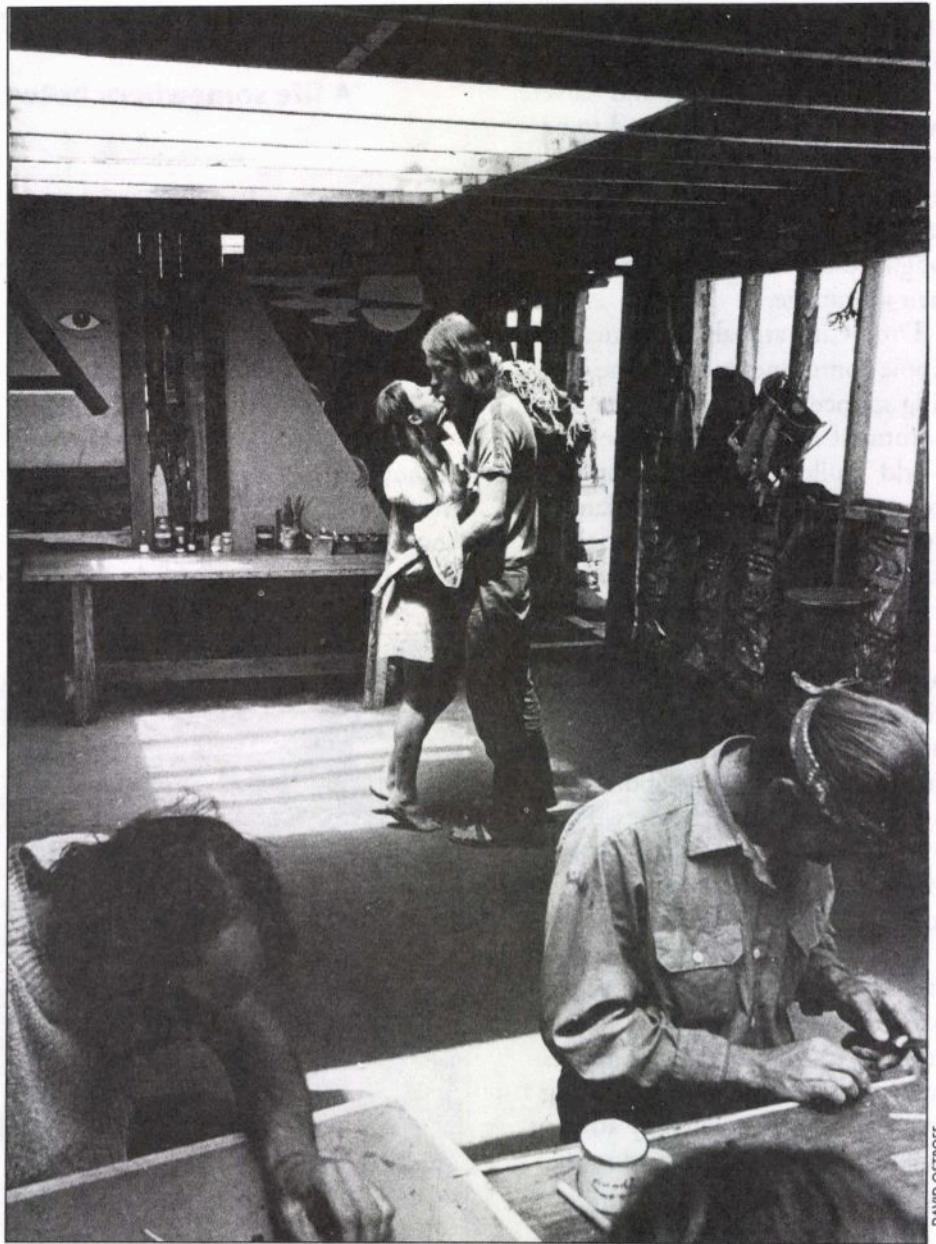
So what really brought on the demise of Drop City? Rabbit says: "Basically I think Drop City went down because it was a flawed form, a 'type' of commune like Morningstar, New Buffalo, Reality Construction Company. We were too idealistic, expected too much of human beings. We really thought we could 'fix' the larger society."

It was back to the drawing board. Peter Rabbit and his wife Judy hooked up with New York artists Dean and Linda Fleming and started the search for another piece of land. They would learn from their mistakes.

The Flemings had gravitated to the Drop City scene in 1967. Both were tired of the big city rat race and were looking for a serene environment to make their art and a community of like-minded people.

Their plan quickly found fruition. The ideal piece of land was located near Gardner, Colorado—a 360 acre plot, bordering on the National Forest in the 8,000–9,000 ft. elevation zone. The views were drop-dead gorgeous. The new community would be called Libre (meaning "free" in Spanish.) The land (\$35 per acre) was largely paid for by hippie benefactor/rock musician/communard Rick Klein. Rick had inherited a substantial sum of Pittsburgh steel money and wanted to put it to good use. He had no desire to live at Libre or control its affairs in any way. At roughly the same time, Rick also bought the land for the New Buffalo commune in Arroyo Hondo, New Mexico, and contributed substantially to several other communal efforts.

Dean Fleming, now 62, was a Korean War veteran and self-described former Bohemian and Beatnik. According to Dean: "All of us at that time, the founders of the major communes, thought that the complete life would have to include Nature ... my poet friend Max



Feinstein at New Buffalo, Steve Durkee at Lama (a spiritually-oriented community near San Cristobal, New Mexico), and of course the Libre group." Dean's current mate and fellow Libroid, Sibylla Wallenborn, echoes these sentiments: "Every day is an endless sense of possibility. God is visible here."

After their Drop City experience, the Libre founders decided that there would be no communal building to encourage transients and "crashers." All members upon acceptance by the council would build their own houses and be responsible for their

own food and finances. No more dressing from the communal closet and no more giant pots of inedible lentils.

The communalists drawn to Libre were nearly all artists of one type or another: painters, sculptors, jewelers, weavers, potters, writers, poets, musicians. All wanted to live in a dynamic community but needed a quiet space and introspective time to work. The general rule (and about the only rule) was that all houses must be built out of sight, or at least a respectful distance, from one another. As Dean says: "Building your

own house was a sort of test of one's ability to mobilize resources. It weeded out the slackers and the hangers-on."

Libre was set up as a nonprofit corporation with the members as board members. Technically each member does not own his or her own house, but rather each person owns an equal share of all the houses and the land.

Although hundreds of people from all over the world have visited Libre annually, the open-door policy of Drop City and other communes has not been encouraged. As one author of a commune book noted: "Libre has all the friendliness of a western gunslinger town."

The early 1970s saw a number of other communal living arrangements pop up in the broad Huerfano Valley of southern Colorado. An article in *Denver Magazine* entitled *The Valley of the Communes: Slouching Back from Bethlehem*, described the scene as: "a life somewhere between Disney and Deuteronomy."

The Red Rockers commune consisted of a massive 60 ft. geodesic dome which was inhabited by a hard-core group of 20-30 children and adults. Known as the Hollywood commune, because several of the founding members were the sons and daughters of parents in the entertainment business, the Red Rockers became the venue for a series of outrageously raucous cabarets, poetry readings, rock shows, and theatrical performances.

Living together in one space and sharing virtually everything, the Red Rockers became known for their high-octane encounter group sessions and general ongoing psychodrama. Eventually their group love affair cooled down and the majority of the original members drifted on to other pursuits. Recently, the current residents of the land (after a protracted legal dispute) agreed to compensate the original founders, thus putting the land into private ownership.

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## No more dressing from the communal closet and no more giant pots of inedible lentils.

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The Medical Opera, another California-based group, brought their urban commune of medical professionals to the Huerfano. They delivered the babies, buried the dead, and cured the sick on their "freelance life-saving mission." They were the driving force behind the establishment of La Clinica, the valley's first health care facility.

America, or Triple A, were another loose-knit group of musicians and artists. For several years the Triple A was *the* rockin' band in southern Colorado. The members owned the land collectively and built their own houses. Again, the original members eventually moved on and were replaced by other people with more varied interests.



*The Fowler house at Libre, near Gardner, Colorado, 1965.*

The Ortiviz Farm drew from the talent pool of the New Mexico communes. It was the Colorado communards' first serious attempt at large-scale farming. In general, the New Mexico communes were more politically radical and agriculture-based than their Colorado counterparts, who were more artistically oriented. For several years, the hard-working Ortiviz farmers provided the communes with organic produce and dairy products.

The Anonymous Artists of

On the New Mexico side of the border, New Buffalo was probably the most well known. The epitome of the hard-core hippie commune, it served as the model for the commune scenes in the movie *Easy Rider*. It was one of actor Dennis Hopper's favorite haunts. Known for its militant attitude and back-to-the-land basics, New Buffalo was a media focal point and drew hordes of visitors. Between all the interruptions and general hubbub, the Buffaloes managed to build a magnificent traditional

adobe complex. Eventually warring factions developed between the builder/agriculturalists and the spiritualists and the resulting “bad vibes” drove *everybody* off. Today, Rick and Terry Klein run New Buffalo as a neat and tidy bed and breakfast decorated with hippie memorabilia. The sign at the gate reads, “Please: No drugs or alcohol.”

Morningstar, known as “the Dog Patch of the Communes” came with the dust and was gone with the wind. With no running water or electricity, many of the early communes simply succumbed to health-related problems.

Reality Construction Company was a radical offshoot of New Buffalo. The Reality people delighted in



Dean Fleming's dome at Libre, near Gardner.

making and building with adobe bricks. After the commune dispersed, other hippies came and carted away the entire structure. Since the building had been built in the shape of an Indian Thunderbird, a bird impression was left in the Earth. Several years later the Thunderbird was sighted from a NASA satellite. The NASA folks sent out a team of scientists to investigate the “new” and mysterious archaeological finding.

The Lama Foundation continues as a non-sectarian spiritually oriented

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**“The kids turned out to be bright, creative, interesting, and full of life.”**

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community. Those wishing to live and work there for varying periods of time pay for the privilege. The Hog Farmers, famous for their organizational skills at the Woodstock Festival, were the nomads of the communes. They still maintain a home base near Peñasco. Known for their colorful buses and road-warrior attitude, some of the Hog Farmers now run emergency services vehicles for the mountain communities. Others are active with bull goose Hog

Farmer Wavy Gravy, in running the Camp Winnarainbow circus camp for children and adults.

So how are we to assess this “decade of glory”? Juana Bordas, a “graduate” of the Libre community, moved on to become president of the Hispana Leadership Institute. Juana says: “Everything I do involves building

community, finding common ground among people, and using it as a basis for action. The most important human attribute for community building is tolerance ... stretching the rubber band, as I call it. That's what the communal experience taught me.”

Peter Rabbit and his long-time companion and fellow poet, Anne MacNaughton, are now active in the poetry and arts scene in Taos. “On the communes, building was our only ritual,” says Peter. “While every-

one is working together the energy is centered ... there is a fantastic high spirit. But after the building is done comes a time of dissolution. There's no focus for the group energy.”

In the realm of sexual politics, the free-wheeling mores of the hippies was an assault on traditional ideas of monogamy. One of the communal pioneers stated: “Of the maybe 500 couples I know that came through the commune scene, I can only think of three that are still together with their original mates.”

The true test of the communes' success would have to be the children. As ex-communard Peggy Abbot-Hathaway said: “The kids turned out to be bright, creative, interesting, and full of life. It's almost as if being exposed to all the wildness back then de-mystified that way of life for them. They don't seem particularly interested in it now.”

Dean Fleming notes: “We always treated the children with enormous respect and they've made us all proud. They are incredibly confident and they're strong from running around these mountains.” Commune visitors have frequently remarked on the unusually “good rapport” that the kids have with adults.

Today the first wave of commune kids are scattered around the world in various colleges, art schools, and culinary institutes. Many went into health care professions and the building trades. Some are professional models, computer wizards, musicians, teachers, or environmentalists. Some have moved back to their communal neighborhoods because they couldn't find a better place to raise their own children. Others landed good-paying jobs in high-tech

BRIAN ORR, SPIRIT MAGAZINE

industries and aren't planning on moving back anytime soon.

As for the adult communards, it's rare to hear many regrets from either those who stayed or those who left. Many describe their commune glory days in similar terms: "It was the greatest learning experience in my life!" Of those who left, many were reluctantly pulled away by the monetary demands of raising a family. Those who stayed eventually took jobs building houses, teaching in the schools, working at the hospital, planting trees, and running various small businesses. And, of course, the artists (several of national stature) continue to crank out their art.

Dean Fleming, still painting at Libre as it approaches its 30th anniversary says: "This has all been a magnificent experiment. Just because some communities didn't last doesn't mean they failed. To me it's the most tremendous success I could imagine. It's about taking responsibility for every detail of your life. What it could mean to anyone else, I don't know. This way of life does attract madness, but it also attracts excellence." Ω

*Excerpted with permission from Spirit magazine. The original, longer version of this article appeared in the Spring, 1996 issue of Spirit, available for \$4.00. Spirit, PO Box 346, Dept. B, Walsenburg, CO 81089; 719-738-2832. Subscriptions for this quarterly are \$23 (includes four back issues).*

*David Perkins is a freelance writer and commune veteran who lives in the Libre community, near Gardner, Colorado, and in Santa Fe, New Mexico.*



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# STUDENTS' STUMBLING START-UP SUCCEEDS

BY JOEL WELTY



JILLIAN DOWNEY

*Michigan Socialist House, Ann Arbor, 1991. One of 20 co-op dwellings in the Inter-Cooperative Council, started by university students in 1932.*

**T**HE FIRST MEAL WE COOKED AT THE OBERLIN Student Cooperative Association (OSCA) was nearly a disaster. We began cooking a huge ham a day early, and the volunteer cooks turned off the stove overnight. At least they thought they did. We had not yet discovered that when the stove was off the handle was horizontal, but it was also horizontal when it was on full blast.

That ham cooked furiously all night long. Luckily, it was so large, moist, and fat that it didn't burn, but it was the most thoroughly tenderized ham we ever saw. We served it as ham soup. Everyone agreed it was not only delicious but a great beginning for our co-op community cuisine.

The year before, in 1950, Oberlin College had begun demolishing the many cozy old houses where groups of 30 to 50 students had lived and shared meals. The college replaced the houses with newly built dining halls and giant dorms for 300 or more students. Three women living in one of the old houses decided they could save it if they could turn it into a student housing co-op.

I learned the hard way how difficult it is to set up a new community, as a member of the initial five-person organizing group for OSCA. We didn't think of ourselves as founders, but flounders. The women had turned for help to the local consumer co-op and to a group of students from the University of Michigan already living in a co-op. OSCA leased the house from Oberlin College, and 40 women lived there, with 40 men living in nearby college-run houses joining them for meals. Creating community among students was incidental as our goal. Nevertheless, that's what we did.

We realized we'd have to incorporate, though we had no clear idea just why that was a good idea. That meant we needed a lawyer. We trooped into the College administration office and asked, "How do we get a lawyer?" Without saying a word, the administrator reached into his desk, pulled out the phone book, and opened it to the listing of attorneys. What a revelation! So that's how you find a lawyer! We picked one off the list and, with his help, incorporated our student co-op.

We succeeded in spite of ourselves. The first semester we cut our room and board costs to half that charged by the college for dorm living. We promptly expanded into a second house the next year.

While this may sound rather ordinary now, keep in mind that at that time, our living together in self-created community was quite unusual. The world, including the United States, was divided by hatreds. For example, I

grew up hearing my minister make derogatory comments about African Americans. My Sunday school teacher was anti-Semitic, and this was typical of churches at the time. People seemed anxious to find reasons for hating each other, and race, ethnicity, religion, and politics all seemed sufficient for the purpose. The malevolence of the times made me feel I had unaccountably been born into a barbarous, primitive society.

I was grateful to discover co-ops. In contrast to the world I saw around me, the basic attitudes in our co-op community were refreshing. I did not hear racist statements among my co-op friends. While we were predominantly WASPs, a few members were Jewish or African Americans. We seemed to attract people who had already given up the prejudices which were common at that time. We welcomed newcomers, and had many religions and political views among our members, as well as a score of foreign students.

Such diversity brought strength and vigor to our community. Because we were diverse, we could always find someone who knew how to do whatever work was needed. If we had all been "preppy" students from affluent families with servants, would we have known how to cook and clean? In actuality, we taught each other the skills that other co-op members had not been raised with. If we had adhered to the customs of our culture at the time, we would have denied access to Blacks and Jews, and would have divided tasks by gender. A basic tenet of the Rochdale Co-op Principles is that anyone is free to join. (See box.) Thus we had many more fascinating conversations and a stronger core of co-op workers than we otherwise would have had.

We also practiced grassroots democracy. In the '40s and '50s democracy was not everywhere the system of

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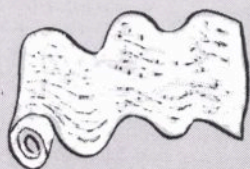
## WE DIDN'T THINK OF OURSELVES AS FOUNDERS BUT AS FLOUNDERERS.

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choice. Socialism was the fashionable philosophy among American academics, although they often didn't agree on what the term meant. There were plenty of socialist models at the time: the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the English Labor Party, the Nazis (National Socialist German Workers Party), and various other socialist parties worldwide. Many American leaders, such as Charles Lindbergh and Joseph Kennedy, considered Mussolini



*Minnie's Cooperative House, ICC, Ann Arbor.*



### Co-ops: The Rochdale Weavers' Gift

In 1844 a group of weavers in Rochdale, England created a self-help organization in which each member owned an equal part of the weaving business. They came up with six principles of self-governance, now known as the Rochdale Principles.

1. Open, voluntary membership, with no religious, political, gender, or other requirement for joining.
2. Democratic, participatory decision-making: "one member, one vote."
3. Limited return on capital investments.
4. Nonprofit service.
5. Continued education for the members about co-ops and how they work.
6. Cooperation with other co-ops.

A seventh principle—independence from any political or partisan issues—was later contributed by Robert Owen.

and Hitler's methods as just what America needed. Against this background, the democracy I saw in the co-ops was inspiring.

It was a time when certain intellectuals, including some professors at Oberlin, believed that the Depression was proof that democracy didn't work, since Hitler's Germany had had full employment at the same time (in German arms factories)! But we were using democracy in the co-ops, so we knew first-hand that it worked.

During World War II the U.S. government had initiated centralized planning. This meant that one person or group decided what would happen in the rest of the organization, city, or country. I recall magazine articles noting that the amount of ammunition we had generated through centralized planning equaled the wealth needed to build a university in every major city or provide universal healthcare, or some such statistic. Why not continue the effective centralized planning during peacetime, it asked?

Amidst this move toward centralized control, it was refreshing to live in cooperatives, which encouraged decentralized self-governance. When we organized our student co-op community we didn't look to any central

authority for permission. We did it all ourselves, for our own benefit, in our own way.

Today many forms of co-ops have proliferated—from student co-ops to worker-owned co-ops, agricultural co-ops, buying co-ops, housing co-ops, food co-ops, baby-sitting co-ops, and more. Diversity, democracy, equity, self-help, and self-responsibility are the core values of the co-op movement. These values have often been accepted by other institutions, including national governments, that previously rejected them.

Co-ops can be found in both industrialized and developing countries, in urban and rural settings, with members ranging from students to the elderly, for short-term or long-term needs. Co-ops officially listed with the International Cooperative Alliance in 1994 totaled an astounding 720,000,000 members.

OSCA, the co-op student community at Oberlin College, now provides food and/or dorms for more than 500 students. During a recent visit I observed a board meeting of the OSCA officers and was impressed with their communication skills and high level of interaction. I hope this results from a heritage of accumulated knowledge passed down from students in my day. The Oberlin administration is so enchanted with the co-op idea that it is planning to offer special training for students considering careers in co-op management.

My own career path was fixed by my experience in helping organize and operate the Oberlin student co-op community—my greatest educational experience. The wider culture also appears to be learning something from co-ops about how to treat people ethically. Co-ops, it seems, have much to teach us all. Ω

*Joel Welty is Executive Director of the Michigan Alliance of Cooperatives. He is author of Welty's Book of Procedures for Meetings, Boards, Committees, and Officers, and Sylviron, a novel about a community in the future.*

## LIVING IN SINCERITY

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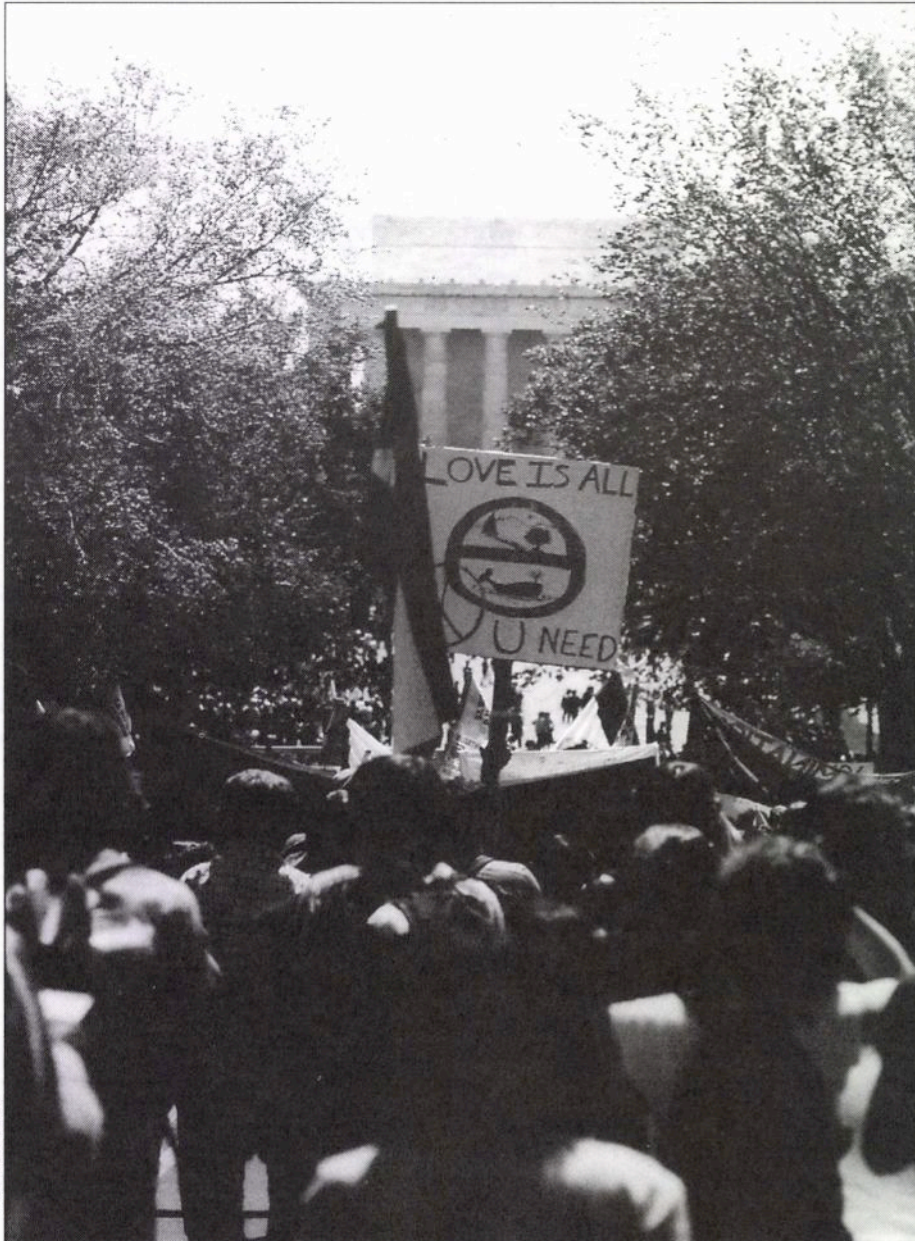
BUILDING COMPOSTING TOILETS FOR URANUS

FOSTERING DIVERSITY AMONG CLONES

HOW TO CHOOSE DROIDS WITH SECRET REBEL PLANS HIDDEN IN THEM

\* EXPANDED ASTROLOGY SECTION \*





*“Community” didn’t just mean intentional communities ...*

**T**WO DECADES AGO IN NEW Haven, my common points of reference included the local food co-op; the network of communal houses, daycare centers, and schools in the area; the Advocate Press; the Women’s Liberation Center, and so on. As people lived and worked within this alternative community, the places through which we knew each other constructed a matrix that overlay the physical environment, and became our dominant reality.

Had we maps, these organizations would have been the points of interest, much as an overlay of historic New Haven might have been significant for others. Later I went through a similar mapping process regionally, then nationally. Although New Haven remained compelling and demanding, I had talked the National Institute of Mental Health into a large grant to document and develop our alternative organizations there. As Project Director of Training for Urban Alternatives, I was curious about the sustainability of our design and I began connecting our work to cooperative and communitarian development nationally.

I found myself asking, “Twin Oaks ... How does it connect with the Philadelphia Life Center? What is the impact of cooperatives and worker ownership? What about the West Coast and Northwest? I must visit those places.”

A communities conference at Twin Oaks in the summer of ’74 led me to other gatherings. At one, I volunteered to guest-edit an issue of *Communities*, on the theme of urban experimentation. It was well received, and I guest-edited a second issue. By 1975 I had become one of the principle editor/publishers of *Communities* magazine. (By the late ’70s our organization, Community Publications Cooperative, consisted

PAUL FREUNDLICH

*Political organizing and community living—part of the same activist movement.*

# THE WAY WE WERE

*Editing Communities, 1975–1984*

BY PAUL FREUNDLICH

of Chris Collins and myself in New Haven, and Chip Coffman and Mikki Wenig at Twin Oaks.).

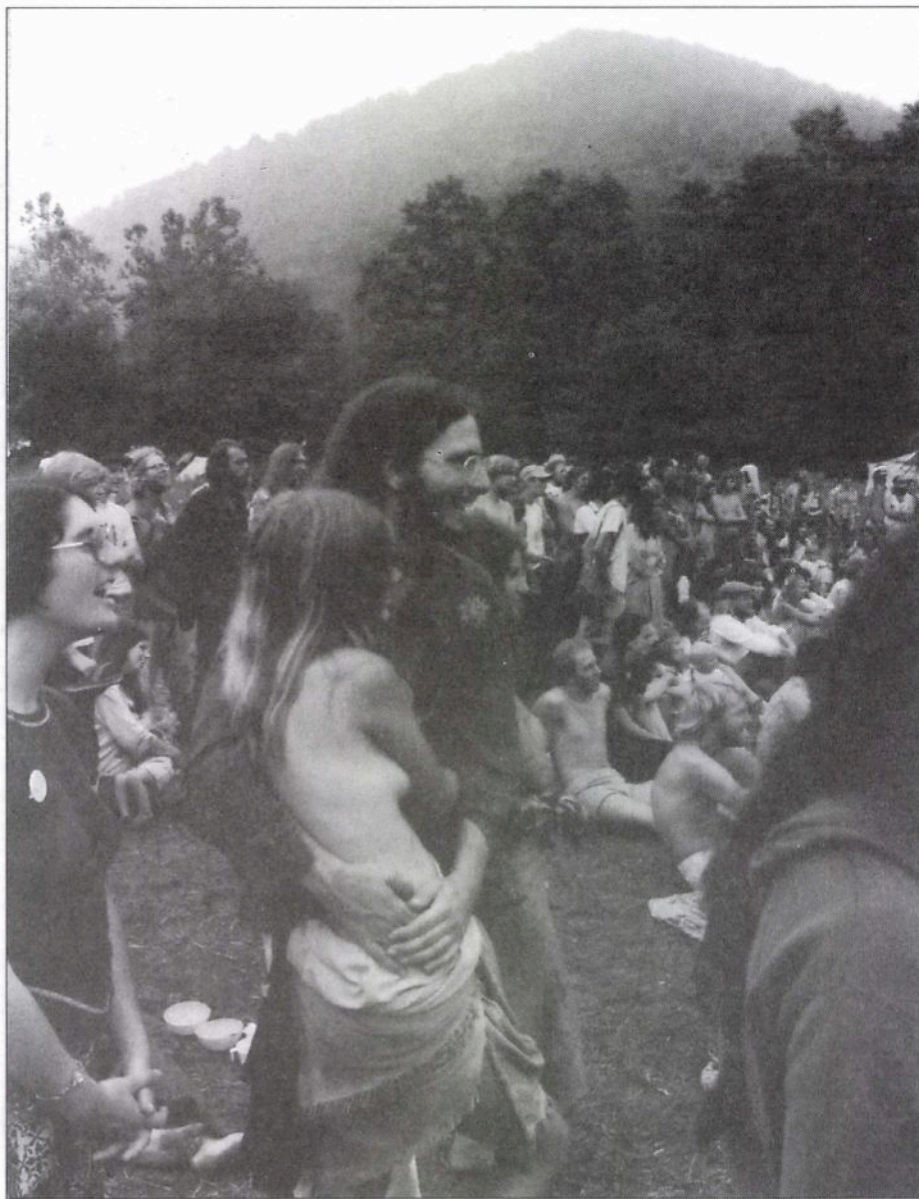
In the summer of '75, another editor, and I mapped out a trip to make the connections between various kinds of cooperatives, alternative organizations, and intentional communities. Up to DC to visit David Morris at the Institute for Local Self-Reliance. Then on to Baltimore to meet with Elizabeth McAllister at the radical Christian community that she and the Berrigan brothers founded. As we piloted our craft toward the far horizon of cooperation and freedom, what's amazing is how steadfastly we hewed to the main trip. In the summer of 1977 I made another major trip for the magazine that was somewhere between adventure and necessity.

Gradually, a national network of cooperative institutions and related movements grew in my mind. I kept thinking there must be some wonderful way to state the whole thing. If people could just see it whole, how could they resist?

Decentralization of our editorial team might be fine, but we lacked the contacts to verify the legitimacy of material which was submitted, much less to solicit new material from communities. Also, I wanted the magazine to have an overall synthesis of how all these cooperative experiments fit together.

A few years later I traveled to China with a group of alternative energy and appropriate technology practitioners. The issue which I put together the following spring (#48, 1981) had a long section on China, as well as material covering visits and speculations related to Cuba, Israel, El Salvador, Spain, India, and England. It was an exciting issue graphically, and I think it effectively caught the contradictions as well as the potential for mutual learning across the cultural divide.

In 1979 we published an ambitious and comprehensive *Guide to*



PAUL FREUNDLICH

*Cooperative Alternatives (Communities #38/39)*. The introduction said, in part:

... *The question for the '70s has been "How to live lives which support rather than contradict our spiritual and political quest? How in the face of complexity and confusion to follow the light of our truth into a new age?"*

... *In little pockets of community around the continent, people have been redefining how we make our lives together. We call them food co-ops, childcare co-ops, block organizing, intentional communities, ashrams, collectives, communes, centers of healing for women and men; we could as well call them classrooms.*

My involvement during these years was both as a participant and an observer. In an earlier incarnation as a documentary filmmaker, I had been an interested observer. When I innovated community institutions in New Haven, I had been a participant. Now, my credentials as a participant/observer meant that *Communities* was an inside publication.

With *Communities*, there was never a question that accountability outweighed some ideal of journalistic diligence. We were there to share what could be useful, without destroying lives. We weren't about to mislead, so if the other editors or myself had sufficient qualms about

the veracity and integrity of a submitted article, we didn't run it.

The analysis which I was developing in the magazine sought to offer three themes:

- That there was a communitarian, environmentally sensitive culture and lifestyle that offered the best structure possible for life on this planet. It might be new in some particulars, but it was rich in a history which transcended divisions of class, race, and geography.

- A recognition that there were deep contradictions and oppressions in the mainstream of our country, as well as tremendous economic vitality, and erratic commitment to liberty.

- That cooperatives, employee ownership, and more participatory styles of management could lead to a democratization of capitalism, resulting in a synthesis more consistent with community.

I hoped through *Communities* that the mix of people organizing cooperatively in so many ways—politics, businesses, services, housing, health care—would provide a practical framework. And further, that the personal and political would inform each other in the magazine, not with the weight of cumbersome and often ill-fitting ideologies, but leavened with humor.

ONE EVENING we were working on an issue of *Communities*, and the theme was spirituality. I was doing paste-up and the production manager was at the typesetter. Good old, down-to-earth Chris Collins called out in frustration, "Paul, do I have to capitalize 'light' when it comes in the middle of a sentence?"

"I think that's a worker control issue," I responded. "Use your judgment."

At its worst, new age mythology is like silly putty; shaped to fit our dreams. Unless fired in the kiln of reality, it doesn't hold up very well. The line which divided the new age from manipulative projections often



Paul Freundlich, 1978

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**"The real reason I wanted you on my radio show," Abbie Hoffman said, "was that I read your stuff for years in *Communities* magazine."**

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blurred. I tried to draw a distinction in the pages of our magazine between communitarian and cooperative ventures that developed out of a shared vision, and those that employed many of the same symbols for other purposes.

Within the breadth of the communities movement, some started from a political place, others from religion, but the shimmering mirage of the Emerald City lay ahead for all. For example, Abode of the Message, a Sufi community in upstate New York, once began an article: "As a spiritual community, we ... only wish to ... realize Heaven on Earth." What are you going to do with folks

like that? A prize bunch of idealists for sure.

At its extreme, there were community aspirations turned bitterly cruel, and none so terrible as The People's Temple in Jonestown, Guyana. Here is an excerpt from my editorial in *Communities* #36 (1979).

*It was quite a Thanksgiving week here on the North American continent. Beginning with the murder of Congressman Ryan, through the enlarging scale of the suicide, to the puzzled response of the media: beware the heavy trippers, and the one-truth, ya gotta believe, abandon hopelessness all ye who enter here.*

*Rosalyn Carter was interviewed. She was unable to understand the relationship between her fundamentalist creed which teaches that life-is-sin and salvation-lies-in-the-next-world, and a revivalist cult crazy enough to take it seriously.*

*Another TV interviewee was a past member of the cult. She and her husband sitting in their living room: "Several years ago we went through a ceremony," she said. "Jim [Jones] kept hinting about death and the next world. After we drank the wine, we were all waiting ... but Jim laughed and said it was just a test." And she looked into the camera: "But I was ready to go. I just thought, 'Thank God, it's over.'"*

*Those who joined the People's Temple in its migration from Ohio to California to Guyana didn't start there either. The People's Temple found its membership among the contradictions, confusions, and poverty which exist in the midst of plenty: people who were conditioned to jive, hustle, and dodge the failure they knew to be their inalienable right.*

*Were they any worse off investing their lives in a cult? The People's Temple offered a way out of hopelessness, costing only the freedom which was a glut on the market.*

*This is not an apologia for Jim Jones or The People's Temple. Murder is awful and the decisions which were taken for*

the children out of a Greek tragedy ...

Hitler and his coterie also took cyanide at the end of their hopes. The Nazis in their Berlin bunker also preached *Gotterdammerung* for the German people. If their last act had taken place in a giant sports stadium, with suitable reinforcement (exhortations, peer pressure, armed guards, and no exit) that suicide toll might have been in the hundreds of thousands. Might it not have been said of them, "Yes, they were coerced, but they made their choices long before?"

If the communities movement rests on rationality, love and trust, hard work, and playfulness of vision—where does that leave folks who have been driven nuts by society, who see work as

oppression, love and trust as jive, and whose playfulness is getting back some of their own?

As high as the quality of *Communities* magazine was, we never licked the economic problems of running a small publication. There were horrendous amounts of volunteer time, and a cash infusion from sales of the 1979 *Guide to Cooperative Alternatives*, but someone was going to have to develop a marketing strategy.

The one I evolved was a tad circuitous. I founded Co-op America as a national distribution system linking producers and consumers. *Communities* published the first two *Co-op America Catalogs*, and the magazine was marketed through the catalog.

Co-op America became a success, but it never boosted the sales of our magazine to the extent I had hoped. It also took me away from both my community in New Haven and from my work on *Communities*. The Twin Oaks contingent had already gone on to explore other life choices. Chris Collins carried on valiantly and we eventually found Charles Betterton in Illinois to take on the publishing responsibilities in 1984.

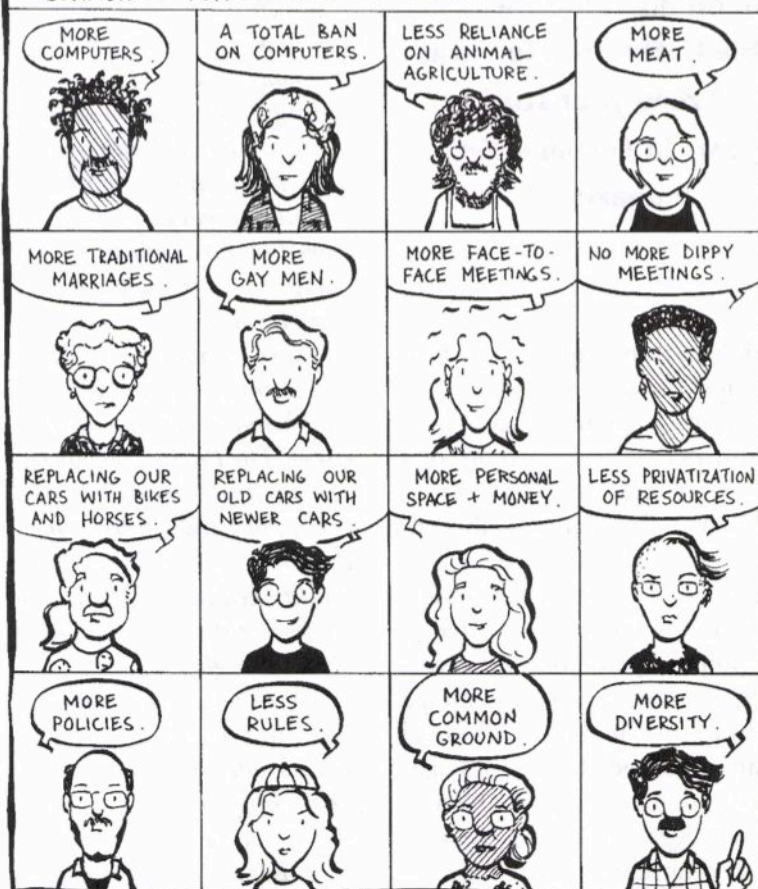
In the mid-'80s, when I was Executive Director of Co-op America, Abbie Hoffman interviewed me on his radio show. At the end Abbie took me aside. "The real reason I wanted you on my show," he said, "was that I read your stuff for years in *Communities* magazine." During the many years when he was on the run and in hiding, he found *Communities* the only legitimate national voice of the decentralized, grassroots movement for which he had risked so much.

Or, as I wrote years ago for the back cover of the magazine:  
*Human beings concerned about planet,  
 How to be human together  
 in small enough groupings  
 to mean anything  
 to each other  
 large enough to survive,  
 Women and men  
 respecting personhood, sharing insights  
 urban, rural touching  
 of the universe,  
 Prepared to build  
 political, social, economic, ethical models  
 toward spiritual growth,  
 Please,  
 make contact. Ω*

Paul Freundlich is President of the Fair Trade Foundation and serves on the Board of Directors of the CERES Coalition, Co-op America, and the International Labor Rights Fund. A former Peace Corps filmmaker, he recently produced documentary videos on sustainable forestry, socially responsible investment, and community health care. He edits the *Dance New England Newsletter* and just completed a novel.

## LIVING IN SINCERITY

MEMBERS WERE ASKED: WHAT'S THE ONE THING THAT CAN ASSURE SINCERITY WILL THRIVE AS A UNIQUE COMMUNITY FOR ANOTHER 25 YEARS?



"MORE CARTOONS BY" JOHNNY 1997

# 25 YEARS OF COMMUNITIES

IT HAS BEEN AN INSPIRING AND MADDENING STRUGGLE, FIGURING OUT HOW TO HIGHLIGHT all that has been covered in the 96 issues of *Communities* published since 1972. In the end we settled on the nearly impossible job of condensing it into an eight-page montage—a dozen issues per page.

We are offering a taste, a glimpse of the last 25 years, which does two things at once—samples the communities movement over the years, and samples the movement of *Communities* over the same span. While, as the song says, “Where we’re going ain’t the same as where we’ve been,” cooperative living in the next millennium will surely be built on the foundations laid by the previous generation. We invite you to turn the page and take a peek at where we’ve been—if you’re inspired to look more fully, we’ve bound a revealing four-page Back Issue Index into the centerfold of this issue which tells how to get unexpurgated copies of any issue we’ve ever published.

The first issue contained an eight-page Directory, listing 201 groups. Our current *Communities Directory* describes over 600 communities in 180 pages. Only 23 groups are listed in both. No one working on the magazine today was there at the beginning. Collectively, we’ve come a long way.

Today there’s a rich mixture of new opportunities in cooperative living—examples include electronic networking, ecovillages, and emerging awareness of environmental illness—blended with old issues dressed up for the ’90s—as cartoonist Jonathan Roth illustrates at left. In the montage you’ll find that certain themes have been with us since the beginning: leadership, financing, cooperative education, the role of art, group process, and the limits of therapy. Underneath the vision and behind the romance, some day-to-day challenges are ever with us, like dogs, dirty dishes, and decibels at dances.

In selecting the excerpts we faced excruciating choices of what to include. What follows is a smörgåsbord of inspiration, vulnerability, insight, and humor. We have taken the liberty of editing some passages to enhance pithiness and readability (and to get as many pieces on a page as possible).

Throughout, we’ve been careful to preserve the meaning and flavor from the original.

Take your time and enjoy it. We did. —Laird Sandhill

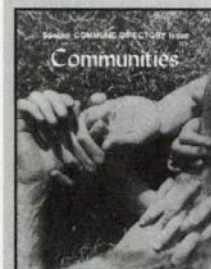
## LIVING IN SINCERITY



This Jonathan Roth cartoon first appeared in issue #85, p. 37.

1972

COMMUNITIES  
THROUGH  
THE  
YEARS



#1 December 1972

- A bimonthly, printed on newsprint. Cover price was \$1.
- Features the 1st "Communities Directory," "Reach," & "Grapevine"—all still regulars today.
- Workers Unite (at a distance)! The magazine's editorial work done in CA, business operations in VA, printing & circulation in OH, layout in RI, and marketing in MI.

**COMMUNITIES AS WE CONCEIVE IT IS A UNIQUE MAGAZINE**—describing and discussing communes, co-ops, and collectives; concepts, ideologies, and theories dealing with our efforts to build a better world, a peaceful one in which all people will be able to live happy, productive lives without exploiting others. Throughout our nation, people concerned with radically changing their lives are shifting their emphasis from communes to community. It will be our intent to encourage this movement, helping community become a viable alternative and thereby a solution to the problems of society. *Communities* will be a forum for the exchange of experiences, feelings, and ideas between people and groups interested in new communities.

#1, Dec 1972, editorial, inside front cover

**I FOUND ALL THE LAND IN NEW YORK**

City excellent for farming. No pesticides or artificial fertilizers have been used anywhere. The soil has been protected from erosion by a heavy concrete mulch. In general the natives are unfriendly and very uncivilized and might pose a threat to a potential commune.

#3, Spring, 1973, letter from Art Pitch, p. 17

**FEW PEOPLE REALIZE HOW INEXPENSIVELY YOU CAN LIVE** in the country. When I saw my first issue of *Mother Earth News*, I tried building a permanent hot air balloon kept aloft by heat from a manure burning furnace. Unfortunately, we were attacked by a pileated woodpecker, which pretty well deflated our plan. We almost gave up when an idea hit us—if that woodpecker ruined our home, we'd move into his.

#6, Jan 1974, "I Think that I Shall Never See a Home as Lovely as My Tree" spoof on *Mother Earth News* by Cole Sekvy, p. 31

• **CONCENTRATE ON BUILDING. USING HAND TOOLS, YOU** should be able to build a 9x9 log cabin in one year.

• Don't be tempted to put in a big garden. Keep it small and strive for quality. The garden is a stranger. You don't know the soil, animals, pests, etc. Next year replant the successful crops. Plan to live off the grocery stores the first year.

- Stay away from all animals the first year—except cats, as they eat mice and cost little.
- Bees are good the first year. Little care or expense.
- Get friendly with the neighbors. Their aid is priceless.

#8, May 1974, homesteading advice from Richard Fahey of the Christian Homesteading Movement, p. 30

**MARY AND I WERE IN THE GARDEN**

planting swiss chard. She looked up from her hoeing and said, "Well, the way I see it, there's some things you can eat, and some things you can't." I had to admit she had a point. We were discussing the role

of the artist in community.

#10, Nov 1974, "Art and Work in Community" by Pam Bricker, p. 4

**IT'S AN EVENING AT EAST WIND AND THE PHONE RINGS.**

Otis answers it, and no one is there. He hangs up, and the phone rings and rings with the same result. The answer to the mystery—the caller must be at the only pay phone (which is broken) in Gainesville. Will comes up with the brilliant remedy to our dilemma: tell the other party that if they want to be picked up in Gainesville to let the phone ring three times and hang up. And it works!

#12, Jan 1975, *Helpful Hints* column, p. 44

**AFTER TWO YEARS, GROUPS OF 20 OR MORE PEOPLE ARE**

more likely to still be active than smaller ones; spiritual groups more likely than secular; and anarchist hippie groups are less likely to be still going than non-anarchist hippie groups.

#12, Jan 1975, *Social Science* column, by David Ruth, p. 53

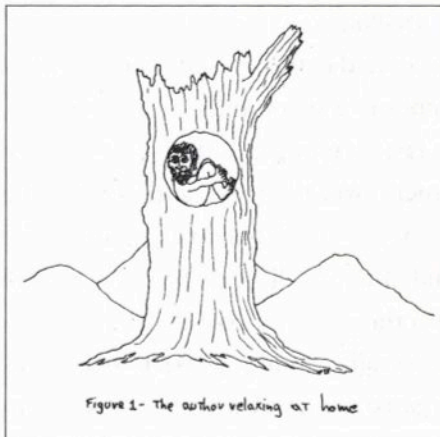
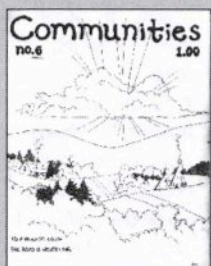


Figure 1- The author relaxing at home

**1973**

**#4 Summer 1973**

• Stephen Gaskin (The Farm) and Brother Jud Presmont (Kerista) first appear.



**1974**

**#7 March 1974**

• Too Many Cooks: the ill-fated attempt to operate from five sites is dropped. Only LimeSaddle (CA) and Twin Oaks (VA) stay involved.  
• The 2nd "Communities Directory" lists 257 groups.

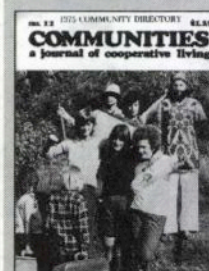
**#8 May 1974**

• *Communities* acquires the subtitle "Journal of Cooperative Living."

**#9 July 1974**

• Gender Police: "co" replaces third person singular when the gender is unknown.

**1975**



**#12 January 1975**

• David Ruth inaugurates his "Social Science" column, reflecting on the sociology of community living. It will run through issue #39.  
• The 3rd "Directory" lists 260 communities. Cover price goes to \$1.25.

**REAL COOPERATION COMES NOT THROUGH MERELY** agreeing to carry out some project together, but with the joy, the feeling of togetherness: because in that feeling there is not obstinacy of personal ideation, personal opinion. When the thing to be done—the plan, the concept, the ideological utopia—assumes primary importance, then there is no real cooperation. Then it is only the idea that is binding us together; and if one idea can bind us together, another idea can divide us.

#13, Mar 1975, quote by J Krishnamurti, p. 12

**POWER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN** people are universal and inescapable. The fact is that there is a scarcity of things that people want and those who control the resources have power over those who do not. This is true whether the resources are tangible, like land and money, or intangible, like affection, attention, and prestige. Some scarcities (money, for instance) are artificial and can be done away with by good social design; others, like prestige, cannot. As long as there is scarcity, there is power.

#18, Jan 1976, "Power & the Utopian Assumption," by Kat Kinkade, p. 10

**PEOPLE CAN WORK TOGETHER AND LIVE TOGETHER WITH-**out much conception of community—they just know it feels better than how they were living and working before. We need to learn what we *can* do before possibly knowing what we *should* do. *Being* in community is our politics.

#19, Mar 1976, editorial by Paul Freundlich, inside front cover

**SOME AMOUNT OF CONFLICT OVER HOUSEWORK IS** part of life in communal households. Housework becomes an issue for three reasons. First, it's hard to find two individuals who are in complete agreement about what consti-

tutes acceptable cleanliness and neatness. Second, men often come from living situations where cleaning is considered women's work, and may not adjust immediately to equal sharing of chores. Third, members who are not fully aware of their own resentful feelings may express these feelings indirectly by resisting chores.

#20, May 1976 "How to Get the Dishes Washed" by Eric Raimy, p. 26

**MANY A COUNTRY COMMUNE HAS** been saved from total apathy and disorganization by a cow which demanded to be fed and milked on schedule, every day.

#22, Sep 1976, "Structure & 'Structure'—Law & 'Law'" by Jud Jerome, p. 20

**ONE OVERARCHING REASON WHY** people become dissatisfied with communes, including the spiritual groups, is that members begin taking for granted the progress that has been made in the dominant sharing area, and the focus shifts to the group's failure to share in the other areas. We notice the ways we are not being ecologically conscious, or developing family-like feelings, and we lament our not having a firm ideological sense of what we are doing. Furthermore, because we do not have a widely shared ideology, we disagree among ourselves as to how important each of the areas of sharing are.

#23, Nov 1976, "The Commune Movement in the Middle 1970s" by David Ruth, pp. 24–25

**"THE LAST FEW YEARS HAVE BEEN A REALLY INTERESTING** learning experience," a woman said at a recent community conference. "Now I'm ready for something that works."

#24, Jan 1977, "Introducing This Issue" by Paul Freundlich, p. 1



## 1976

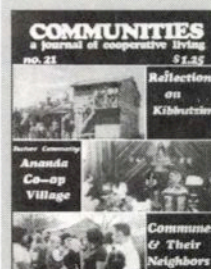


**#14 May 1975**  
• Breaking out of black & white—the cover sports blue ink on yellow paper.

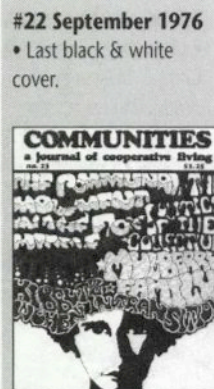
**#17 November 1975**  
• The distinctive Peignot logotype makes its debut—we still use it today, affectionately referring to it as "pignose."  
• Printing and layout follows the remnants of LimeSaddle north to OR.

**#18 January 1976**  
• First two-color cover.  
• The 4th "Directory" lists 90 groups.

**#19 March 1976**  
• Paul Freundlich puts in his first appearance as an author and editor, signaling the increased focus on urban activities.  
• Architect Ken Norwood describes the Urban Cooperative Block, two decades before including it in his '95 book *Rebuilding Community in America*.



**#21 July 1976**  
• Chip Coffman of Twin Oaks appears as editor for the first time.



**#22 September 1976**  
• Last black & white cover.

**#23 November 1976**  
• Melissa Wenig edits an issue, her first of many.  
**#24 January 1977**  
• The 5th "Directory" lists 98 communities.

**THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I THOUGHT THAT THE FAILURE** of a small commune didn't damage the movement as a whole, because the people from a group that didn't make it could always go and join a stabler group. Their experience would be of value, and their sorrow would have mellowed them. I thought this because I read that people excluded from the Rappite group happily went and joined the Mormons. I figured the same would happen to us, and this is not entirely wrong. East Wind currently has three members, for example, who came and joined us after a heart-breaking failure of another commune. However, most of the core members who watch their group crumble under them lose interest in community entirely and do not even consider trying again. Individuals among them quite often, ironically, consider trying to start over, with themselves as the core. I cannot report any success stories coming from such beginnings.

#25, Mar 1977, "Please Don't Start a Commune in 1977" by Kat Kinkade, p. 6

**MOVEMENT FOR A NEW SOCIETY, WHICH GREW OUT OF** (some) anti-war concerns for more integrated lives, now has almost six years of experience as a network of support groups which combine the personal, the political, the communal. Our members consider *training*—for everything from facilitating meetings to planning nonviolent action campaigns—and *personal change* to be basic and necessary to the creation of a decentralist, egalitarian society.

#27, Jul 1977, "Are We Moving Towards a New Society?" by Cynthia Arvio, p. 1

**THE FIRST YEAR COMMUNITIES WAS ORGANIZED AND EXECUTED** through a communications system called the Network Letters. Each group would write a letter with suggested decisions on the entire range of concerns and copies were sent out

to everyone. In the early stages, when everybody was corresponding regularly, there was a deluge of letters, perhaps 10 letters a week of two to nine pages each. The letters would begin with comments like "Help, I'm drowning in letters!" or "I spent all day yesterday figuring out what has been said by the letters of the past week." Groups would answer half of the many points raised by others, and skip the rest. Replies to the same point of discussion would cross in the mail. "It's like conversing with a tape recorder that always answers your previous question."

#31, Mar 1978 "In Retrospect" by Chip Coffman, p. 33

**IT WAS THE CULT OF MILITANT AMATEURISM** that got to me, because not only was it a denial of the validity of my training, but it's like locking yourself up hopelessly forever in servitude. It was dumb, just dumb. But it was a strong message in the movement. It said, "Thou shalt not

be slick, thou shalt not do the things that seem to have power because then that would separate you from your less powerful sisters." Carried to its logical conclusion, it insisted that you became lame, pregnant, ugly, fat, and poor.

#33, Jul 1978, Virginia Blaisdell in an interview with Melissa Wenig, p. 8

**ACCESS TO THE CAPITAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** through the Co-op Bank is no cure-all for the problems of co-ops in the U.S. The opportunities for unparalleled growth may also bring with them considerable problems. Many newer co-ops, and some of the older ones whose primary emphasis has been on participation and community, have been reared on Schumacher and the Club of Rome's "Report on the Limits of Growth." They see availability of capital and technical assistance for growth as anathema. Growth to them raises specters of power and control.

#35, Nov 1978 "Report: The Bank" by Bill Lundberg, p. 32



1978

**#25 March 1977**

- Layout & printing move to the Advocate Press in New Haven CT.

**#27 July 1977**

- Focus on Movement for a New Society and its seminal work in group process.

**#29 November 1977**

- Chris Collins joins Paul, Chip, & Melissa on the production team, completing the most stable & dynamic relationship of the early years. They will work together for the next 24 issues.



**#30 January 1978**

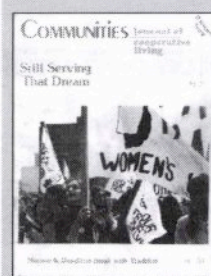
- Co-produced with *Green Revolution*, this 6th "Directory" lists 110 communities and features a cross-reference chart—the inspiration for the charts in the current *Directory*.
- Interview with Roger Ulrich, a behavioral psychologist who rejected animal testing and tried to apply Skinnerian principles to building community in MI.

**#32 May 1978**

- Focus on Federation of Egalitarian Communities (FEC).



1979



**#34 September 1978**

- First use of duotone photograph on the cover.

**#36 January 1979**

- Cover price goes up to \$1.50.



**AT THE CENTER OF THE MONDRAGON IN SPAIN IS THE** Labor Bank, which is the key to the cooperative complex. In American terms, the Labor Bank is both a Community Development Credit Union and a Community Development Corporation. In the 20 years of growth from one cooperative to 65 cooperatives, only one has ever failed. The Guipuzcoa province, which contains the city of Mondragon, has one of the highest population densities in Europe, and yet it now has essentially full employment.

#39, Aug 1979, "The Industrial Cooperative Association" by Steven Dawson, p. 32

**WE REALIZED THAT COOPERATION** was the powerful antidote to the alienation that people felt from each other due to their competitive, sexist, racist, ageist training and behavior. To live cooperatively, people must be granted equal rights. Further, it is necessary that there be enough of what everyone needs (shelter, food, human affection) since scarcity is the major stimulus for competitive behavior. Scarcity is the result of a few people's competitive greed and is unnecessary. A fair distribution of what is needed will follow in a cooperative situation if there are no power plays, no rescues, and no lies.

#43, Apr 1980, "Cooperation and Radical Psychiatry" by Claude Steiner, pp. 29-30

**WHEN THE NEW WAVE CO-OPS DISCOVERED THE CONCEPT** of democratic management in the early and mid-'70s and began to apply it to their businesses, they failed to define or understand either of the words "democratic" or "management." "Democratic" meant that everyone had to decide everything regardless of their knowledge, skill, or special interests, and "management" was equated with an oppressive individual or group of individuals who had to be structurally eliminated. The resulting struc-

ture, or lack thereof, could better be described as "anarchic mismanagement."

#44, Jun 1980, "Decisionmaking: Structure & Strategy" by Lynn MacDonald, p. 20

**RECENTLY THE NEW YORK TIMES RAN "STOCK HIPPIE** Story #7." It tells how a young couple promised each other in the late '60s they would never grow old. Now they find themselves living in the suburbs, as dull and successful as their parents. How sad and yet somehow satisfying: another burnt-out generation. Those who have given up on purposeful, playful lives can relax, knowing it was inevitable.

I wish they would publish my story: In the late '60s there was a relatively straight and successful couple who wished for nothing more than to live happily ever after. They looked at the changes of the '60s with curiosity, but generally felt above them. If they were getting a bit out of shape, wasn't that maturity?

Well, this couple didn't get what they expected either. They went through profound changes—separated and divorced, touched by the Women's movement and the war, redefined community and careers. A dozen years later, they remain friends and share parenting. Speaking as one half of that ex-couple, speaking out of the communal and cooperative experience of a decade: it hasn't been easy, but it certainly isn't dull.

Maybe no one gets what they expect. The difference seems to be that the other couple is bored by their fate—my friends and I are not. The difference is that though we've each tried it both ways, they don't seem aware of the same options. Perhaps that's because of another obvious difference: The Times prints their story and Communities prints ours.

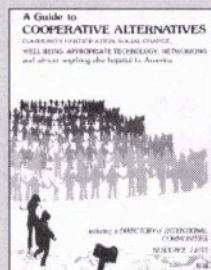
#46, Dec 1980 "Introducing This Issue" by Paul Freundlich, p. 2



PAUL FREUNDLICH

Circa 1979 meeting at Sirius Community to create the New England Network of Light. At left is Corinne McLaughlin, with Gordon Davidson next to her. At right is Medicine Story.

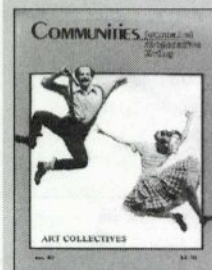
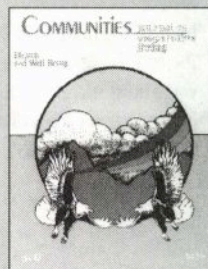
**1980**



**#38 May 1979**  
 • Appears as 184-page book, *A Guide to Cooperative Alternatives*. \$5.95 cover price. 12,000 copies were printed, with 7,000 selling the first year. Included was the 7th "Directory," describing 81 groups on 18 pages. Money earned from this helped substantially with magazine finances, but did little to boost circulation. This was the magnum opus of the Melissa, Paul, Chip, Chris years.

**#39 August 1979**  
 • Looks at the Hutterites, the largest long-standing communal societies in North America.  
**#40 October 1979**  
 • First in-depth discussion of Community Development Corporations.

**#41 December 1979**  
 • Corinne McLaughlin & Gordon Davidson first author a piece.



**#46 December 1980**  
 • The 8th "Directory" lists 116 communities.

**1981**

**#47 February 1981**  
 • Geoph Kozeny first writes about—what else—networking.  
**#48 April 1981**  
 • Cover price rises to \$2.00.  
 • Survey of cooperative activity outside North America.

**WE MUST LEARN FROM NONVIOLENT** conflict waging. The only good chance for successful transformation in this country is along nonviolent lines. I see no hope for a violent revolution primarily because, if the environmentalists are to be believed, the margin of life on this planet is shrinking. The old model for revolution—huge amounts of destruction, leveling of property, and building of new structures—doesn't make sense. What we need is a metaphor of birth rather than a metaphor of destruction.

#49, Jun 1981, "Social Change: Three Perspectives" from a talk by George Lakey, edited by Melissa Wenig, p. 21

**PART OF EVERYONE'S VISION OF COMMUNITY** is to have the difficult life experiences and transitions of birthing, old age, illness, and death transformed from lonely and demeaning trials into joyous, richly meaningful occasions shared fully and without sacrifice by a loving support group.

At Twin Oaks we realized a lot of this vision with the very special life and death of Seth Arginteanu, who lived with us for four years before succumbing to cancer. His unusual openness and courage allowed many of us to participate intimately with him as he defined his needs and got support. Thus, our experience of Seth's life and death included, along with the grief, a solemn joy and celebration of "death as the final stage of growth." #50, Oct 1981, "A Death in Our Family: Seth" by Melissa Wenig, p. 18

**HERE IS AN OBSERVATION THAT DISTURBS ME. MANY PEOPLE** who join communities have fallen in love with a particular member. They join because of the budding relationship. When the budding relationship wilts, they bud out. Building a communal culture upon such a shaky foundation as infatuation is ill-ad-



This 1983 photo of Grace Parker (Marketing Director for Calvert Social Investment Funds) and daughter was used as the cover of issue #60.

vised. Sex can create a mess of the beauty of communal living.

#52, Feb 1982, "Alternatives to Terminal Consciousness" by Gordi Roberts, p. 44

**THE LATEST RAGE ON THE PATH TO IRE** Consciousness. Posture Three: The Frantic Tantrum Mantra. Lie on your back, flailing your arms and legs and shouting the mantra, "No-o-o-o" at the top of your lungs. The vibrational quality of the word "No" really helps to clear the air—not to mention the apartment building. When you feel you are about to collapse with exhaustion, tighten the muscles and *hold your breath*. This is an ancient practice and it works! How do you think Krishna turned blue?

#53, Apr 1982, "Tantrum Yoga" by Swami Beyondananda, p. 53

**TEN YEARS LATER WE CAN LOOK BACK** and appreciate where we have been and how we have grown. We know so much more about how a society could unfold. Our examples are many and peer out through the thousands of pages of the first 55 issues of *Communities*. Feminism, equality, income sharing, collective business practice, collective decision making, communal lifestyle are not just buzz words; they are working models. And for most of us, "community" as both a place and a way of being remains a cornerstone to our hopes for a better world.

#56, Dec 1982, "Editorial: A Challenge for the Next Decade of Communities" by Melissa Wenig, p. 2

**WHEN THE BIGGEST CORPORATIONS OF AMERICA PUT ONE** third of their advertising budget not just into selling a product but into selling us on the whole concept of our economic system, you know that capitalism is a falling god.

#60, Oct 1983, "Gatherings '83: Consumer Cooperative Alliance Institute" from a talk by Frances Moore Lappé, p. 18

## 1982

## 1983

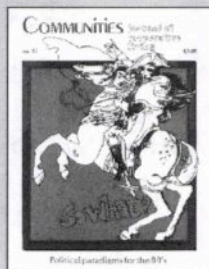
### #49 June 1981

- First three-color cover.
- Subscriptions edge up to \$10/year.



### #50 October 1981

- One of the most powerful issues ever, focuses on death & dying.



### #54 June 1982

- Co-op America first mentioned. The brain-child of Paul Freundlich, it was an attempt to broaden the financial base for the magazine. In the end, Co-op America was a huge success ... but generated only a handful of new subscribers.

### #55 October 1982

- As the magazine focused more on cooperatives, community development, and workplace democracy, the subtitle changed to "Journal of Cooperation."
- First article about computers appears.

### #56 December 1982

- *Communities* is 10 years old.
- The 9th "Directory" lists 159 groups.

### #57 February 1983

- Explores community in science fiction.



### #58 April 1983

- 4-color ads used on the inside cover, promoting Co-op America.

### #59 July 1983

- Features computers and their appropriate application in community.

**SHOCKED FRIENDS HAVE BEEN TELL-**ing me lately of people they know in the spiritual movement who don't have it together. Immediately, memories flooded me of spiritual people I have known who struck me as, frankly, unbalanced.

How many of these people are on the path for other than spiritual reasons? How many are using "spirit" to cover up deeper personal problems and conflicts? How many of them relate to spirit superficially to gain an identity or, for that matter, a relationship to a community that they can't achieve with other people?

People who have had rough "pasts" often look for a new, better family. They are often attracted to communities. But some are injured people who need help.

God may be a miracle, but the spiritual path isn't. It's work. It includes a hard look at our total selves. Do we avoid relationships to people by insisting on the purity of our relationship to God? Do we leave a troubled home life, blossom in a spiritual hothouse like Findhorn, then wilt when we leave because what supported us was external and not internal? Are we brave enough to confront people? Are we astute enough to recognize the problems? Do we offer the right kind of help, or assume a good dose of meditation will cure everybody? What can we do to turn spiritual frauds into spiritual flowers?

#65, Winter 1984, "Spiritual Fraud" by Irwin Zucker, pp. 3-5

**HOW DOES AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM DEAL WITH THE** fundamental paradox that a cooperative must compete in order to survive? It is not enough to promote cooperation as altruism—helping others for the good of mankind. It is necessary to explore the relationship between cooperation and



competition. How do you deal with different motivations? People may cooperate with others to exploit people, compete more effectively, and promote one's self-interest.

#65, Winter 1984, "Education for Cooperation" by Kathryn Hansman-Spice, p. 33

**THE POPULAR MOVEMENT FOR LIB-**eration now stirring throughout Latin America is grounded in thousands of organizations called base communities. A typical base community consists of a handful of people who live near one another, share common problems, know each other well, teach, depend on, and support each other, and who therefore develop common goals for liberation and common methods of struggle. Since struggle deepens the bond of commitment to one's own base, neither armed might nor infiltration can

prevail in the face of so pervasive and powerful a movement for change.

#66, Spring 1985, "Communities of Conversation" by Leroy Moore, p. 37

**APRIL FOOL'S DAY, 1985. I CLOSE AND LOCK THE DOOR** of my office for the last time, turn in my key, and head down the road, looking for community. It's a long road leading, at last, up a winding gravel drive, through an open gate and up to the door. The sign burned into the weathered wood says, "Please walk in."

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

#70, Spring 1986, "Looking for Community" by Jim Allen, p. 45

**1984**

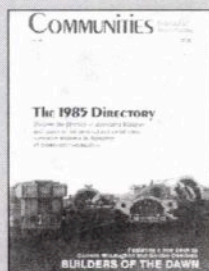
**1985**

**1986**



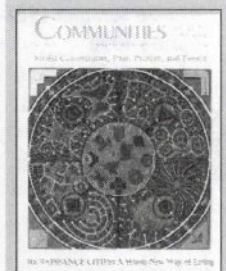
**#61 Winter 1983**  
• Switch to being a quarterly.

**#62 Spring 1984**  
• Cover price edges up to \$2.50.  
**#63 Summer 1984**  
• Twin Oaks has had enough, and puts out a plea for a new publisher.  
**#65 Winter 1984**  
• Melissa Wenig edits her last issue.



**#66 Spring 1985**  
• Charles Betterton edits his first issue, and Twin Oaks drops out of publishing.  
• The 10th "Directory," listing 110 communities.  
• 4-issue subscription now costs \$12.  
**#67 Summer 1985**  
• Cover price goes up to \$3.  
• Feature article about Scott Peck and his Foundation for Community Encouragement.

**#68 Fall 1985**  
• Don Pitzer edits issue on historic communities and the lessons to be learned from them—this issue sells out quickly.  
**#69 Winter 1985**  
• For the second time, the focus is international groups.



**#71/72 Summer/Fall 1986**  
• Double issue on model communities and renaissance cities.

COMMUNITIES NEED TO TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT THEIR active selectors and observe whether they work for or against what the community thinks it wants. Potential members should take an equally close look and examine whether they are being led astray by trivial and accidental clues that do not really represent the community's goals.

In these days of diet consciousness, for example, food is a major selector. A vegetarian community will not get meat-eating members, nor will vegetarians join a community that pays no attention to their preferences. Before lightly choosing either of these paths, a community should ask itself "Is food preference really a basis on which we want to exclude potential members?" If not, flexibility may be in order.

#73, Winter 1987, "Selectors: Decisive Factors in Recruitment & Turnover" by Kat Kinkade, p. 16

ONE CAN GO FURTHER IN STATING THAT THE MIDDLE-CLASS communal house lives easily within the urban context and does not share the traditional utopian "back to the land" dream. Thus, this household movement varies markedly from the utopian tradition in America. These people are striving to stay within mainstream urban society and are not interested in "leaving" or making radical changes in society. They are creating an option for living more happily and efficiently in a contemporary urban setting.

#74, Summer 1987, "The Urban Middle-Class Communal Movement" by Louis E. Durham, p. 4

WE'VE TRIED HARD TO PRESENT THE INFORMATION IN THE most useful ways possible. We've been listening for years to what people want to know about community, and have attempted to address those concerns and questions in ways that are both informative and easy to use. This includes maps; cross-reference charts; alphabetized descriptions; and even lists of

who's disbanded, who's changed their name, and who didn't answer our inquiries. We've created an extensive index for tracking down groups by area of focus. And if we still didn't get it quite right, there's a form on the last page for letting us know how to do it better the next time.

#77/78, Winter 1990, *The 1990/91 Directory of Intentional Communities*, from the "Welcome," p. 3

THERE ARE FOUR REASONS FOR HOME sharing: first, it uses existing housing stock—it is very expensive to build new housing. Second, it conserves the neighborhood. When you have a neighborhood in which older people live alone and are unable to keep up their houses, the neighborhood declines and deteriorates. Third, it avoids institutionalization; and fourth, it eliminates loneliness. That is the rationale. Home sharing is

not for everyone, but it is a very viable option for many, many older people, particularly women. It is an alternative to a retirement home.

#82, Spring 1994, "Intergenerational Home Sharing" by Maggie Kuhn, p. 45

WHEN I FIRST GOT INVOLVED WITH COHOUSING, WHENEVER people asked if cohousing was a form of intentional community I quickly said it definitely was not! I wanted to prevent cohousing from being equated in people's minds with communes and the widely held prejudices against and misinformation about them. Since then, in numerous discussions with members of cohousing "core groups" all over North America, it has slowly become clear that the overriding motivation to live in cohousing is the desire for more contact and connection with others. So, by definition, cohousing projects are certainly "intentional" and certainly "communities."

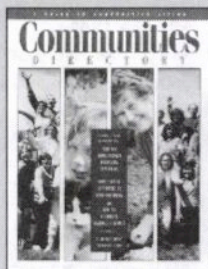
#83 Summer 1994, "Cohousing and the Wider Communities Movement" by Bill "Zev" Paiss, p. 13



## 1987-1990

### #74-76 Summer 1987-Spring 1990

- Energy & funding falters; publishing slips geometrically—#74 takes six months to come out; #75 takes one year; #76 takes two years.



### #77/78 Winter 1990-Spring 1991

- FIC steps in to publish the blockbuster *Directory of Intentional Communities* in 1990, listing 425 communities. This is the

## 1991

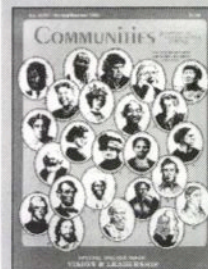
## 1992

11th and last Directory printed as part of subscription fulfillment.

### #79 Winter 1992

- FIC becomes sole publisher.
- Jonathan Roth's cartoon is on cover and his work becomes a regular feature.
- Switch from newsprint to white recycled bond on inside pages.
- "Directory Update" becomes a regular column.

## 1993



## 1994

### #80/81 Spring/Summer 1993

- Geoph Kozeny's "Peripetetic Communitarian" column debuts.
- Subtitle reverts to "Journal of Cooperative Living."

### #82 Spring 1994

- Regular quarterly production begins afresh.

### #83 Summer 1994

- Diana Christian becomes Editor and Lance Scott takes over layout & design.



### #84 Fall 1994

- Corinne McLaughlin inaugurates "Community Spirit in Politics," which will run for 8 issues.

**MANY OF OUR COMMUNITIES ARE JUST NOW REACHING** that sobering age when we start to question our immortality. The founders are aging, as are many long-time members. Meanwhile, there is a surge of interest in the communities movement among younger people, who see this lifestyle as a partial solution to the multiple crises facing our world. The “founder’s dilemma” is the creative tension between affirming the original intent of a community, while at the same time being deeply responsive to the need for growth, flexibility, fresh air.

#85, Winter 1994, “The Founder’s Dilemma: Lessons from Arden Village” by Joyce Foote, p. 47

**IN THE EMOTIONALLY DEVASTATING** abortion debate, Search for Common Ground brought together pro-life and pro-choice advocates, and instead of debating exactly when life begins, they explored where there might be common ground. Both sides found they wanted to prevent unwanted pregnancies and promote conscious conception. Both sides wanted to make adoption more easily available, reduce infant mortality rates, and promote women’s and children’s rights and male responsibility.

#86, Spring 1995, “Consensus-Based Approaches to Conflict” by Corinne McLaughlin, p. 14

**UNCHECKED AUTHORITY BREEDS PASSIVE-AGGRESSION** IN devoted followers with alarming consistency. How many adoring, obedient, willing puppets does it take to weaken a leader? There are simply too many people willing to submit without reason or oppose without understanding what they’re against.

#88, Fall 1995, “Benevolent Dictators in Community?” by Mildred Gordon in dialogue with Kat Kinkade, p. 30

**EVEN BEYOND THE WORLD OF INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY** people often want a bill of health for a given group: is it a “cult,” or is it okay? But the very fact that such a question is widely asked

means that a judgment has been rendered before the evidence has been heard. I wish, impossibly, that we could somehow simply quit using the term “cult” altogether. The fundamental problem here is that the word doesn’t communicate any clear, focused concept, but rather simply indicates a prejudgment of disapproval.

#88, Fall 1995, “Intentional Communities & ‘Cults’” by Tim Miller, p. 31



COSIMA

#89, Winter 1995, “Retiring to the Good Life” by Stephen Gaskin, p. 62

**AS AN EXERCISE, PRETEND YOU ARE FROM ANOTHER** planet and you want examples of typical human beings for your photo album. Having never heard of racism, you’d probably pick someone who represents the majority of the people on the planet: an Asian woman.

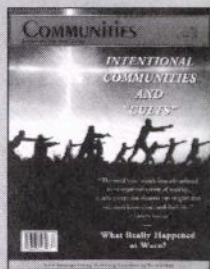
#90, Spring 1996, “Cultural Etiquette: A Guide for the Well-Intentioned” by Amoja Three Rivers, p. 45

**SOME CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES ARE SO UNINTERESTED** in or distrustful of other intentional communities that they decline being listed in *Communities Directory*. While these folks certainly live in a community lifestyle, they identify far more strongly with the rightness of their beliefs and missions than with being an intentional community as such.

#92, Fall 1996, “What You Need to Know About Christian Communities” by Joe Peterson, p. 25 Ω

1995

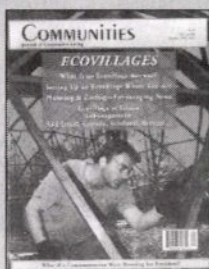
- #85 Winter 1994
  - Communities incorporates *Growing Community Newsletter*.
  - Paul Freundlich comes back to guest edit this issue.
- #86 Spring 1995
  - Paul DeLapa guest edits & begins designing the covers.
  - Distributors demand we start using bar codes ... or else.



- #88 Fall 1995
  - Investigative reporting with Albert Bates’ “Whatever Happened at Waco?”

1996

- #91 Summer 1996
  - Focus on ecovillages sells great, and we begin devoting summer issue to aspects of sustainable living.

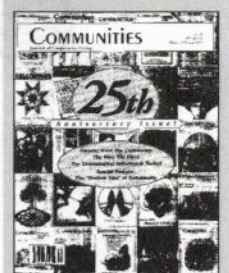


1997

- #93 Winter 1996
  - Harder to kill than kudzu: we revive “Community Grapevine” after an absence of 30 issues!
  - Bill Metcalf in Australia begins “Community Living Worldwide” column.
- #94 Spring 1997
  - Steve Bjerklie initiates “Historic Communities” column.



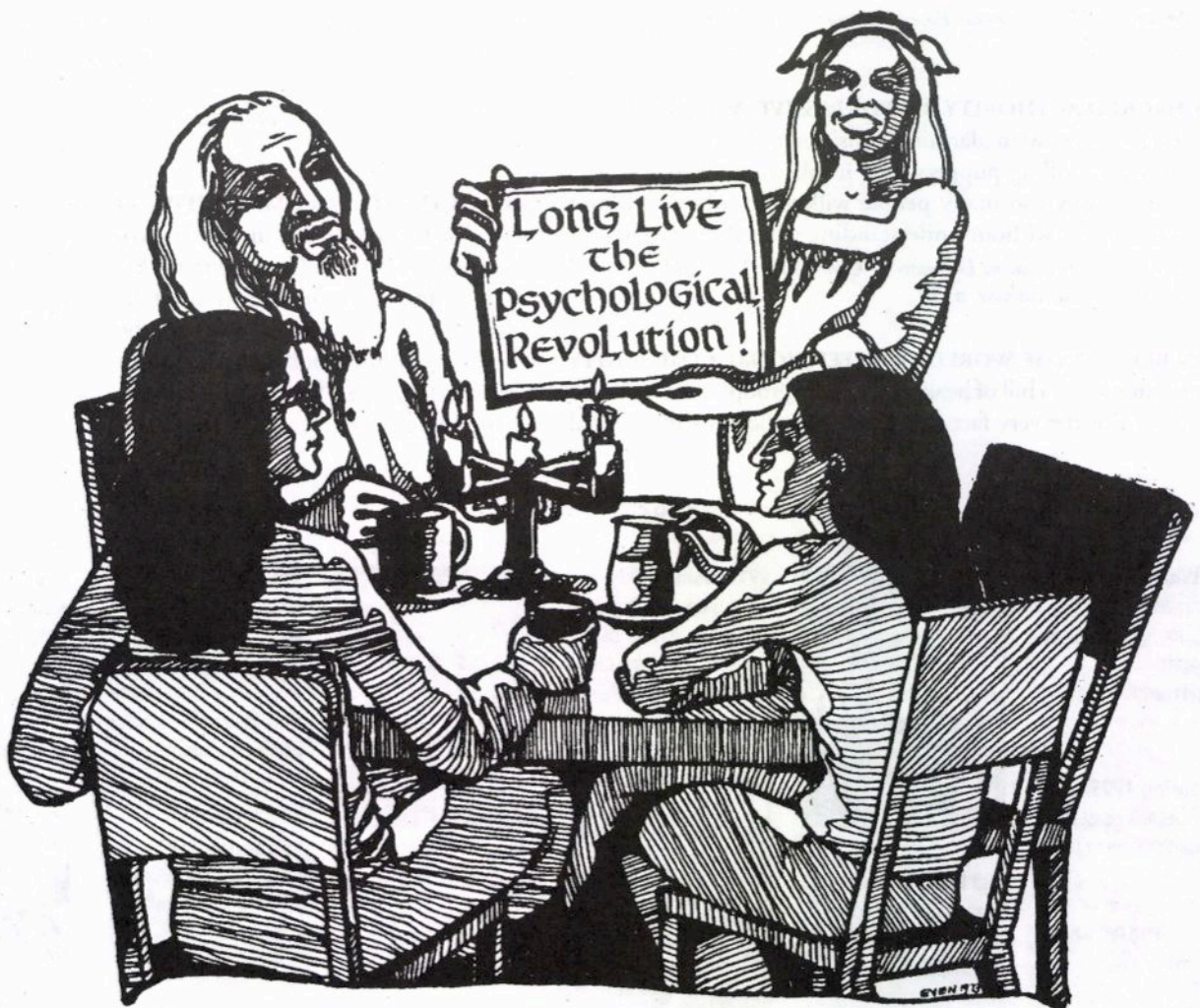
- #96 Fall 1997
  - Cover price edges up to \$5.50.
  - Paid subscribers reach 1500. Ω



# THE 'SHADOW SIDE' OF COMMUNITY

*Denial and the Demise of Kerista*

BY MITCH SLOMIAK



**I**N NOVEMBER 1991 KERISTA COMMUNITY SELF-destructed. The community had been founded 20 years earlier and I had been a member for its last 11 years. I was saddened, astonished, shocked, dismayed, confused, angry, grieving, perplexed ... and relieved. As I've tried to learn the lessons of this experiment and make sense of my involvement, I invariably turn my attention to a significant and often disturbing arena—the shadow side of community.

Put simply, the “shadow side” (a term from Jungian psychology) refers to the set of behaviors and attitudes in each of us which are hidden, covert, secret, unconscious, or destructive. A group of people can unknowingly create a “group shadow,” which can take on a life of its own and overwhelm them if not consciously experienced and integrated. As I look back on the shadow side of my former community, I realize that, over time, it eroded the idealism, desire for personal growth, excitement, and spirit of adventure that initially drew me to Kerista.

It's tempting to shy away from discussing the specifics of our community's shadow. Yet, I'm convinced that the only way to incorporate a group's shadow is to fully acknowledge it. How did I move from the satisfaction of joining a community that appeared to match all of my convictions, hopes, dreams, ideals, and desires, to an awareness—many years later—of a shadow side that embodied the worst of covert power-craving?

And, why did I stay until the very end?

IN THE SUMMER OF 1980, WHEN I WAS STILL IN COLLEGE in the East, I visited Kerista in California. They had described themselves as engaged in an experimental lifestyle that included group marriage (they coined the term “polyfidelity”), shared parenting, shared finances, a Gestalt-style group growth process, and a utopian plan for improving life worldwide by replicating their model of community.

I found the Keristans sociable and easy to talk to. I felt right at home in their San Francisco apartments and flats. Vibrant and attractive homemade paintings, drawings, and batiks adorned the walls. Their shelves bulged with books and records. Their friendliness, ease, and upbeat demeanor matched their description of living lives of “depression-free beautiful joy 24 hours a day.” I wanted to be closer to this hippie paradise.

My first correspondence and social contacts with Keristans felt overwhelmingly positive. I had discovered a resonant community that not only shared my interest in changing the world, but had also developed an extremely appealing lifestyle. I was impressed with how the Gestalt group encounters challenged people and provided insight. Although I was fearful about discussing Kerista with my family, and also doubted whether the community would accept me as a member, I forged ahead. During my senior

year of college I started a discussion group, the Holistic Lifestyle Exploration Circle; read all the literature I could about Kerista; and corresponded with most of the members. When I asked about problem areas in the community I received reassurance, coherent explanations, and occasional gentle confrontation when I expressed doubts.

Many of my close friends and, particularly, my mother had expressed significant concerns. I assured them that I had thoroughly investigated Kerista and found it to be

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## ***I wanted to be closer to this hippie paradise.***

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strongly based on equality, democratic decision making, and personal freedom. My friends pointed out that Jake, the charismatic founder, possessed the deep booming voice, personal charisma, and flowing gray hair and beard often associated with the guru caricature. (*The author has not used real names. —Ed.*) I told them I had not observed any special privileges, coercion, or domination by Jake during my visit. The members had assured me he was not their leader.

I believed I was approaching Kerista with my eyes wide open. I believed tremendous personal growth lay in store for me. I was satisfied with my past two years of exploration and was ready to settle in, find my family, and enjoy my new life.

AS I PREPARED TO JOIN KERISTA, I FOUND IT IRONIC that my mother and some of my friends thought that I was joining a “cult.” Rather than witnessing domination of the group by a guru, I had witnessed a profound level of shared leadership. On my first full day in the community, I was asked at dinner to describe my thoughts on the day. As I began to share this ironic observation I blurted out the word “cult.” But before I could continue my thought Jake interrupted. “Cult! He studied us for two years and he thinks we're a cult! He has no business being in our family, much less in the community.”

When I tried to explain that I had more to say and was actually trying to express the opposite opinion, several people told me I was being defensive. I stopped and listened to their input. It seemed that everyone jumped into the conversation, many in an aggressive manner. A few of my new friends theorized that I had said the word “cult” because I was something of a mama's boy and was not thinking as an independent adult. Others were



certain that it was because I was stupid, or a stuck-up Ivy League guy who couldn't appreciate their community. As I reflected on the input I felt that it had, indeed, pierced my surface persona and hit on one of the areas in which I needed to grow. I wanted to think more independently as an adult and not be strongly swayed by the fears of friends and relatives (and particularly my mother!).

Only my deepest intuitive self was aware that on this first day I had observed and supported one of the strongest aspects of the community's shadow—the use of the confrontational Gestalt process to induce conformity among members. In fact, I fit the membership profile even better than I hoped on my first full day as a Keristan—I gave the input of my friends about my thoughts more serious credence than I gave to my *actual* thoughts. Not only did I overlook some rather obvious

signs of the group shadow, I couldn't conceive that such a shadow might exist!

Regardless, I loved my first years in the community. My artistic expression flourished. My 16 new friendships were warm and exciting, and there was a steady stream of interesting people in our lives. I gave presentations about our way of life to college classes and wrote articles and poems regularly for *The Utopian Classroom* and *The Node*, Kerista's two magazines.

And my love life was outstanding. I was quickly invited to be a part of a small group marriage, Jubilee, with Zena and Lora, two attractive and bright women, and Lars, a warm and intelligent man. We were together for nearly two years, though at times other folks joined our group for short periods and then left.

There was considerable interpersonal drama in the community, usually concentrated in Purple Submarine, a group marriage of 13 people. The four of us in Jubilee were calmer and easier. We discussed the rough edges of our personalities as they emerged and were generally adept at suggesting techniques for each other to work on ourselves. I genuinely loved my lovers, Lora and

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### ***My love life was outstanding.***

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Zena (as well as Lars), and so my experience was consistent with Kerista's strict polyfidelitous ideology—all three relationships were indeed primary and equal (but not the same).

After two years Jubilee merged with Purple Submarine which, at that point, encompassed all but two people in the community. While I was excited to be closer to these delicious new women and great guys, I felt less

## **ADVICE TO COMMUNITY SEEKERS**

I continue to firmly believe that intentional community addresses many significant needs and problems in our troubled society. Communities can be healthy and adept at achieving balance between the needs of the individual and those of

the group. It is vital that individuals full of the excitement and romance of community make wise choices about long-term commitment. Research and reading about community living are important, but the most important experience prior to joining a community will be conversations and observation. Although utmost respect is required as you ask questions about potentially sensitive areas in the community, community seekers must engage in

well-considered dialogue with as many members as possible and freely express any concerns before committing to join. Here is a beginning list of questions (in no particular order) to ask your new friends:

- What are the key problems and dilemmas that you face in your community?
- What methods do you use to resolve conflict in the group?
- How does your group make decisions?



comfortable in the Purple Submarine. Several members had a confrontational style during group encounters. In Jubilee we were often patient during our Gestalt sessions and gave each other space to discuss our feelings and ponder the input they were receiving, but Gestalt sessions within Purple Submarine had a rapid-fire quality that became rabid at times. Passionately upset by each other's character flaws, we tirelessly tried to penetrate the defensive armors we erected to deflect painful truths about ourselves. Or so it seemed at the time. Gestalt sessions generally lasted for hours and sometimes for most of a day or night.

Jake habitually dominated group conversations. He exuded tremendous confidence and vacillated between considerable wit and jollity or intense disapproval and scorn. He didn't have an outside job or defined internal work role. Instead, as "chief theoretician" he spent his time reading, hanging out, and working on essays, tracts, and other writing projects that described the direction and merits of our utopian vision.

Despite our commitment to equality, we all tended to flow with Jake's style. We considered him an intellectual genius whose message needed to be heard. We managed to fit his role within our vision of equality by agreeing that each of us had our own areas of strength and that each of these areas was fundamentally equal. My feelings alternated between appreciating Jake's brilliance and his role in founding the community and displeasure and anxiety about his intensely negative comments during Gestalt encounters. Living with him was a significant challenge for me.

The community's relatively small \$100,000-per-year home services business would go through dramatic changes from 1985–1987. Our unplanned growth began when we opened a computer services branch (desktop publishing and database consulting). Our business, which first increased to \$300,000 in sales annually, was



to become \$800,000 by 1986—and by 1987, \$3 million! What this meant was that many of us (and eventually all of us except Jake and a handful of newer members) spent more and more time at our jobs and less time enjoying our relationships, processing emotions and feelings, and just hanging out.

AFTER FIVE YEARS IN KERISTA I WAS FAR TOO ENCHANTED by the theatricality and exhilaration of our lives to see a need to soul-search or examine any background discomforts. I had certainly observed many aspects of our shadow, such as the group's deferral to Jake and other assertive members in our Gestalt sessions and in making important decisions. It was also clear that despite our claims of an "intention of lifetime involvement" in group marriages, our divorce rate was much higher than the

- Can people freely leave your community without being dismissed, punished, or scorned? What types of economic agreements are in place for this situation? Is contact between current and ex-members discouraged in any way?
- Have long-term members (more than one year) left your community? If so, why? Can they be contacted as references?
- How are sexual relationships viewed in your community? Are sex and

relationships a private matter, left to the individuals primarily involved? Does a member need the group's blessing (or permission) to either sleep with someone or not sleep with someone other than his or her recognized partner(s)? How much involvement does the group have in each other's love lives?

After such discussions, spend time by yourself and reflect on the following questions:

- Did the members seem to

answer your questions freely? Were they evasive, defensive, or hostile at any point?

- Did you feel respected by and comfortable with these people in your discussions?
- After talking with them, do you have a coherent picture of the shadow issues that they experience in their community? How do they handle them? —Mitch Slomiak



didn't agree with the input given. The outside observer might have suggested that we develop better listening skills and more patience so people could grow at their own pace. The observer would certainly have noticed that Jake did a disservice to the community by taking up so much space in our conversations, and that we did him a disservice by not standing up to him and giving him an opportunity to grow emotionally.

Yet, in the mid-1980s Kerista was a thriving community. Many new members had joined and our economic enterprises were showing signs of tremendous potential. A stable core group had been together for over 10 years. Academics were studying the community and lending credibility to many of our innovations. Kerista appeared to be a community with a powerful destiny.

American average in the '70s and '80s. We actually did question some of our apparent contradictions and went through some heavy sessions bemoaning our lack of total shared leadership and our inability to hold group marriages together. We generally blamed these problems on the experimental nature of our lifestyle and the character flaws of our members. Our remedy was to work harder on ourselves (in later years it would be to work harder on our businesses) and tough our way through as many Gestalts and group breakups as it took to emerge as true utopians.

The proverbial impartial outside observer might have reached quite a different conclusion. Although we sometimes had one-to-one conversations to more calmly discuss personality weaknesses, in group Gestalts all we ever seemed to do was push harder and harder if someone

Excitement about our growth in members and finances contributed to a feeling that our most far-reaching utopian plans couldn't help but succeed. Our problems seemed few and trivial, our victories abundant. I dismissed awareness of any shadow lurking in the back of my mind as the paranoia of my conditioning.

Kerista's shining light would overcome any darkness.

IN THE MID-1980S SEVERAL OF OUR MEMBERS FACED emotional crises that were made worse by some of our group dynamics. Gina, the sweet and lovely mother of one of our two girls, never emerged from her post-partum blues after giving birth. She became seriously depressed. Though we were deeply and genuinely concerned for her, the only therapy we knew how to offer was to "Gestalt" her when she said things that were

## AN APPEAL TO COMMUNITIES SEEKING NEW MEMBERS

If a person expresses a serious interest in joining you, you must fully disclose your issues and problems as well as your history of issues and problems. Dirty laundry is not necessary to air to the general public, but is absolutely vital for someone contemplating a commitment to you. If you are not willing to disclose these things then:

- You risk doing great harm to a person innocently checking out your scene.

- You run a greater risk of accepting someone who doesn't really fit—new members have to be able to accept the shadow as well as the good.

- You degrade your group dynamics by collaborating on unethical behavior.

I urge all of us in community to live our lives with integrity. We *can* be shining examples to the world.

—Mitch Slomiak

uncomfortable for us to hear. Gina had some experience as a psychological nurse and wanted professional therapy or medication. However, our psychological model held that if a person could not benefit through our Gestalt process it meant that he or she must not really identify with our community. Gina had to argue strenuously for professional treatment and undergo many group encounters before receiving our blessing to get outside help.

When our business operations reached \$3 million in sales in 1987, and no limit in sight, all but one person with an outside job began to work full-time for our computer company. The average work week for most of us expanded from 36 hours before 1985 to 50 hours in the 1985–1987 surge, then to 70 or more hours weekly for the next four years. The larger our business grew, the harder Jake pushed, and the less relevant his years of small business experience seemed. His role had become primarily one of brainstorming and informally reviewing our finances. Due to the communal ownership structure of our business, all decisions made by our managers were subject to challenge by the membership as a whole. In practice, most of the community trusted our management team (consisting of six members). Yet, on frequent occasions we would limp home after a draining 12–14 hours in the office only to be confronted by Jake.

One of our fundamental social agreements in Kerista was to be totally accountable for our actions and words and to be honest with each other at all times. As the years went by our personal growth and encounter sessions stultified into predictable castigation exercises. This presented a terrible dilemma. I knew that I was increasingly dissatisfied with the way we conducted our lives. Yet, I was convinced (based on countless observations over the years) that if I expressed my distaste as strongly as I sometimes felt it, I would quickly find myself the target of all the group's pent-up frustration with the same situation. Most likely I would end up voluntarily withdrawing to end the verbal assault—or be expelled from the community. I was so emotionally invested in my friendships, sexual relationships, and the business that I could not bring myself to lay it all on the line. I learned to numb my emotions, rationalize the flaws, and internalize my discomforts.

The utopian vision of Kerista was the beacon that initially drew us all together and helped motivate us to withstand the rigors of the psycho-social frontier. As my life became more unbalanced during these years of runaway business growth and stalled psychological development, the vision grew dim. It was difficult to fill my long days and evenings with financial concerns and my nights



with anxieties about our encounter sessions and still believe we were the shining light of hope for humanity.

Late one evening in 1991, as some of us sat around and recuperated from another day in the computer salt mines, one of the long-term members came to some of us in private after a tearful encounter with Jake. "I can't do this anymore," she whispered. She was on the verge of leaving the community to establish a gentler and saner life for herself. She was saddened and sobered at the thought of not being with us. Normally her statement would result in immediate expulsion, yet we listened with breaking hearts. No one could speak. One of the women shouted that this situation was absurd and that if we were interested in justice then we would finally hold Jake to the same standards the rest of us lived by. He would either have to harmonize with us or leave the

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***Our problems seemed few and trivial, our victories abundant.***

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community. And that's exactly how the end came about.

After he was vociferously challenged by a few of the women, Jake spent several hours trying to enlist the support of anyone else he could find. In years past, when under duress, Jake would find one or more people in the community to support his position and then he and they would counterattack. This time everyone opposed him. Jake withdrew from the Purple Submarine family but stayed in Kerista. He left the community a week after

this revolution, declaring that none of us understood what Kerista was all about anymore.

A few days later we observed our annual Thanksgiving festivities, then agreed to meet weekly as a community to discuss our future together. At the first meeting one of our more assertive members made an appeal to disband the community on the grounds that we were all so hurt, confused, and resentful from years of stress and hypocrisy that we needed to break our patterns with each other and make a fresh start. After very little discussion she called

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***"I can't do this anymore,"  
she whispered.***

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for a vote on her proposal. We reacted to this strong appeal by a charismatic member in the typical compliant Keristan fashion. We agreed unanimously ... and dissolved the community effective December 31, 1991.

THE KERISTA COMMUNITY WAS INTENDED AS A Utopian experiment, attempting to learn "just how close groups of humans can become." Looking deeply into the shadow of Kerista, what can we learn to make our communities more viable?

**The Equality Trap:** Communities often operate on the assumption that all members possess equal amounts of power. Members can then feel uncomfortable about any differences in power that arise, and often choose to downplay those differences in order to maintain the "politically correct" belief that all members are equal in all respects. Carolyn R. Shaffer and Kristen Anundsen, who identified the "Equality Trap" in *Creating Community Anywhere* (Tarcher-Putnam, 1994) observe that problems can arise when the gap between egalitarian ideals and community reality becomes big enough to create resentment or disillusionment among community members. Our community's failure to live up to our exaggerated claims of equality eroded the spirit of our members. And, in the end, when Jake's power position was squarely challenged and he withdrew, our resentment, disillusionment, and habit of going along with voices of authority sealed the fate of the community.

**The Harmony Trap:** For most of my years in Kerista, members rarely admitted to harsh emotions outside of our Gestalt sessions. We assumed, and told the world, that we were an unusually harmonious community. However, the ferocity with which we vented frustration and rage in Gestalt sessions belied this image. Shaffer and

Anundsen's "Harmony Trap" in communities was certainly true of us—our built-up emotions triggered depression and withdrawal among some long-term members, and ultimately hastened our death as a community. Declarations of communal peace, love, and harmony rang increasingly hollow over the years. The illusion of harmony was replaced by a gradual, then sudden, realization of how divisive and manipulative we had actually become.

**Power-Seeking:** One of my good friends who'd left Kerista five years before the end identified what he called "the invisible empire." Why would bright, attractive, seemingly confident men and women tolerate and support Jake's excesses for so many years? Simply stated, we gravitated toward Jake in order to be at the center of authority in the community—a part of the power structure "empire."

**Peer Pressure:** I have realized with some ironic amusement that our adopting a Gestalt process was the equivalent of building the first hammer. A hammer is a magnificent tool for pounding nails, and since the first series of problems faced by Kerista resembled "nails," the Gestalt "hammer" became our all-purpose tool. We assumed it could fix anything. We used it on the "bolt" problems that appeared next in our lives. Pounding down bolts wasn't entirely satisfactory, but our Gestalt hammer still seemed to handle the problem. But when we attempted to repair the windows of our spirit with a hammer, all we got was broken glass.

Had we filled in our toolbox with group silence and receptivity so that individuals could speak their hearts, or used mediation to help resolve disputes or ritual to help us through painful experiences, or even traditional therapy to guide us through individual crises, we could have built a more enduring foundation for our community. With the Gestalt process as our only tool, we evolved a fear-based environment. Conformity became our primary survival mechanism. As we nurtured our community shadow with fear and the resultant build-up of unexpressed feelings and emotions, we neglected to nurture our hearts. This is perhaps the greatest tragedy of the Kerista experience—at the very moment of our potential liberation and healing, we could not sustain the will and compassion that had been "hammered" out of us. We no longer had the will to survive as a community. Ω

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*Mitch Slomiak has been involved in intentional community and alternative relationships for 15 years and now lives with two wonderful partners (and two great cats) in the San Francisco Bay Area. They are planning an eclectic residential community.*



*Being clear about the healthy interplay between freedom and cooperation makes us more effective in the service of both.*

## WHAT PRICE COMMUNITY?

*Exploring the Edge Between  
Freedom and Cooperation*

BY JOYCE FOOTE

“I WAS LOOKING AT YOUR picture album this afternoon and there are faces I don’t recognize.”

Alan has been with us for nearly a year now and has been to enough potlucks, music nights, and the like, to know most of the folks who settled here at Light Morning, or just down the road.

“Will you take me through the album?” he asks.

And so, with supper dishes done, we let the pictures carry us back a couple of decades, back to when our dreams were just hunches, yet strong enough even then to get us to drop everything, spend our last collective nickel on a piece of beautiful mountain land, and come out here together—virtual strangers holding a common vision of how things could be. Penniless, but all heart, we lived several years in tents, ate what we could grow, and took care of our many visitors as best we could.

The pictures are of gatherings, large and small, lots of people, lots of food, buildings going up, music making, the old sweat lodge, great gardens, a sunrise service on the hill. We got pretty good at all this. And year upon year, layer upon layer, we built community.

Community. People learning to live side by side and have it work out well for everyone. This seems so natural, yet the skills required to pull it off (cooperation, commitment, compromise) run so counter to the cultural tide that even we who have chosen to devote our lives to learning these skills sometimes find ourselves being apologetic about their implications.

For we, as a culture, are in the heyday of “individual freedom” and “personal autonomy.” We bristle at control. Anything that dares to tamper with our freedom is highly suspect and quickly run out of town.

So when we advocate something as seemingly confining as compromise or consensus, we are pitting a very different set of values against a mighty

adversary, and we shrink in confusion from any direct confrontation.

My contention here is that were we clear about the healthy interplay between freedom and cooperation, we would be far more effective in the service of both.

Freedom *is* precious. It is a crucial ingredient in a whole and healthy life. To have it revered culturally is a true blessing. I have been where it is not, and I literally kissed the ground when I stepped off the plane that brought me home.

But frankly, I think this reverence has gotten a bit out of hand.

We speak as though personal freedom were our primary value, freedom at any cost. In practice, however, we compromise it daily—every time we move on over to the right side of the road, for instance; or come home in time to fix dinner for our family; or welcome a surprise visitor at the door.

We know, despite all the talk, that there are values we rank at least as high as personal freedom and we willingly (“freely,” one might say) make the trade-off. Laying aside our freedom comes as naturally to us as exercising it. We just don’t usually think of it in those terms.

And so the myth of freedom above all else remains intact, largely unquestioned as a value. It’s a concept that has served us well in the past, offering a measure of protection from various abuses of power.

But the pendulum, in its classic swing between personal autonomy and cooperation, has taken us a little too far from the balance point.

People sense this. They feel the loss of family, of extended family, of home and hearth. From marriage to global politics, a lot of damage has been done in the name of freedom, and our culture is beginning to question whether we might not have missed a turn somewhere along the road. Something important is missing and we want it back.

Intentional communities are feel-

ing this shift, this turning of the tide. Folks are arriving at our doors looking for extended family. Many of them sense that our culture’s blind love affair with freedom has run amok and that something they’re craving lies well over on our side of the fulcrum. These people are attracted to the synergistic potential of



Joyce Foote today

community, the deep fellowship and genuine mutual caring. They want to know if they can get this—and if there’s a price.

Price? What price? Our own ambivalence trips us up here. As products of our freedom-loving culture, we are uncomfortable tinkering with something so sacrosanct as personal autonomy. But this is no time to get apologetic about what we’re up to. Community (like family, marriage, or any other relationship) can, and often does, challenge and temper personal freedom.

Light Morning, for instance, is a “common table” community, meaning that we share our meals together, much as a traditional family does. This is wonderful for keeping in touch with each other. I can hear how Kent and Ron helped Tom get his solar system working again. Or see the new colors Marlene is using in her baskets. Or try Jonathan’s latest bread. The riches are endless.

But common table also implies a

high degree of interdependence. Common kitchen. Communal gardens. Shared work. When I go off to the beach for a week, I impact the rest of the people here. They fill in for me as I do for them. I choose to home school my daughter, and they are affected. If Ron decides to spend more time income-making, the rest of us feel it. There’s very little that we do, in fact, that doesn’t impact the others in some way.

So there’s no getting around it. Cooperation and compromise, learning to bend for one another—these are so much at the heart of what community is all about that to shy away from their implications for fear of treading on the sacred ground of personal freedom only clouds the picture. Community is an expression of a cohesive energy, a centripetal force, while freedom is inherently expansive. Both sides of this freedom/cohesion continuum have their gifts and their undesirable extremes. Unbridled personal autonomy, for instance, brings self-absorption and anarchy, while submissiveness invites control, oppression, and tyranny.

But closer in to the center point lie the gifts. On one side we find personal strength and independent initiative, and on the other sits a correspondingly beautiful force for which this culture has fewer names. It’s a feminine energy, a bending, binding energy, and it serves as the cornerstone of true cooperation, of empathy, and of all acts of kindness and caring. Out of this force we build our bonds. Our need to enter into relationship, to love and be loved, to be responsive to others, to join forces in a common effort, these are as strong in us as our need for independence, and every bit as valuable.

There is a tension here as we seek the balance between the two. We feel it. We sense how the colors change within us as we notice how easily the word “bond,” with all its warm, maternal connotations, can turn into

“bondage.” The fear of being swallowed up (like its counterpart, the fear of being abandoned) is ancient and well-founded. But it is also crippling. We need to become intimately familiar with the forces at play here, as winds are to a skilled sea-captain, and come to fear neither. True freedom depends on it.

---

**Folks arrive at our doors looking for extended family. They want to know if they can get this—and if there's a price.**

---

So when folks arrive at our communal gates looking for a possible antidote to the incompleteness in their lives, it is important that we be clear.

Community is, in essence, a bundle of trade-offs, a give and take. We lay aside a certain measure of autonomy in exchange for a certain measure of interaction and caring.

The question, therefore, is not whether community (or marriage, family, relationship, and so on) tempers personal freedom. It certainly does.

The relevant consideration—and one that we need to be able to help people examine objectively—is how much freedom does one want to trade for *how much* mutual caring and support? There are communities designed to match any comfort level, from very little traded to dangerously much.

But this wide range of options is valuable only if folks are fully aware of the issues involved and their implications. To the extent that we are still queasy about this business of

trading freedom for fellowship, we are likely to unintentionally withhold perspectives that would be valuable in the making of informed and appropriate choices.

This will not be helpful. In our misguided attempt to be overly protective of the concepts of freedom and individual choice, we will help to create and perpetuate the very blind spots that undermine them both.

AS I WRITE I HEAR FAINT BELLS telling me that lunch will be ready in 15 minutes. Here, then, is where the rubber meets the road, where my individual freedom encounters its challenge. Do I want to stop what I'm doing and trek on up to join the others for a meal? Not at all. Do I have to? No. But will I? Yes.

Yes, because I highly value our shared mealtimes. Someone may have a story to tell or a dream or problem to explore. Several neighbors are there, having come to help us build our new community shelter.

It would be no big thing if I missed lunch. But I know that I would also be missing an opportunity to strengthen something I hold dear and for which I am apparently willing to make a good many day-to-day sacrifices.

It's been a long haul getting to clarity on this one. That young woman that I was in those pictures certainly had no idea how difficult it would be at times, how confusing. We muddle through the challenges and learn as we go.

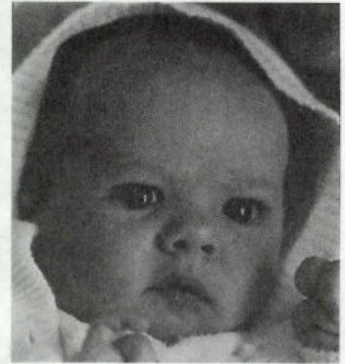
But she knew, as others who are now coming to community also know, that independence is an inherently lonely affair without its cohesive, yielding counterpart. So she made the deal that suits her. Ω

*Joyce Foote grew up in Arden, an old, lovely, loose-knit intentional community of several hundred families. In the early '70s she co-founded Light Morning, a small, extended family-style community in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.*

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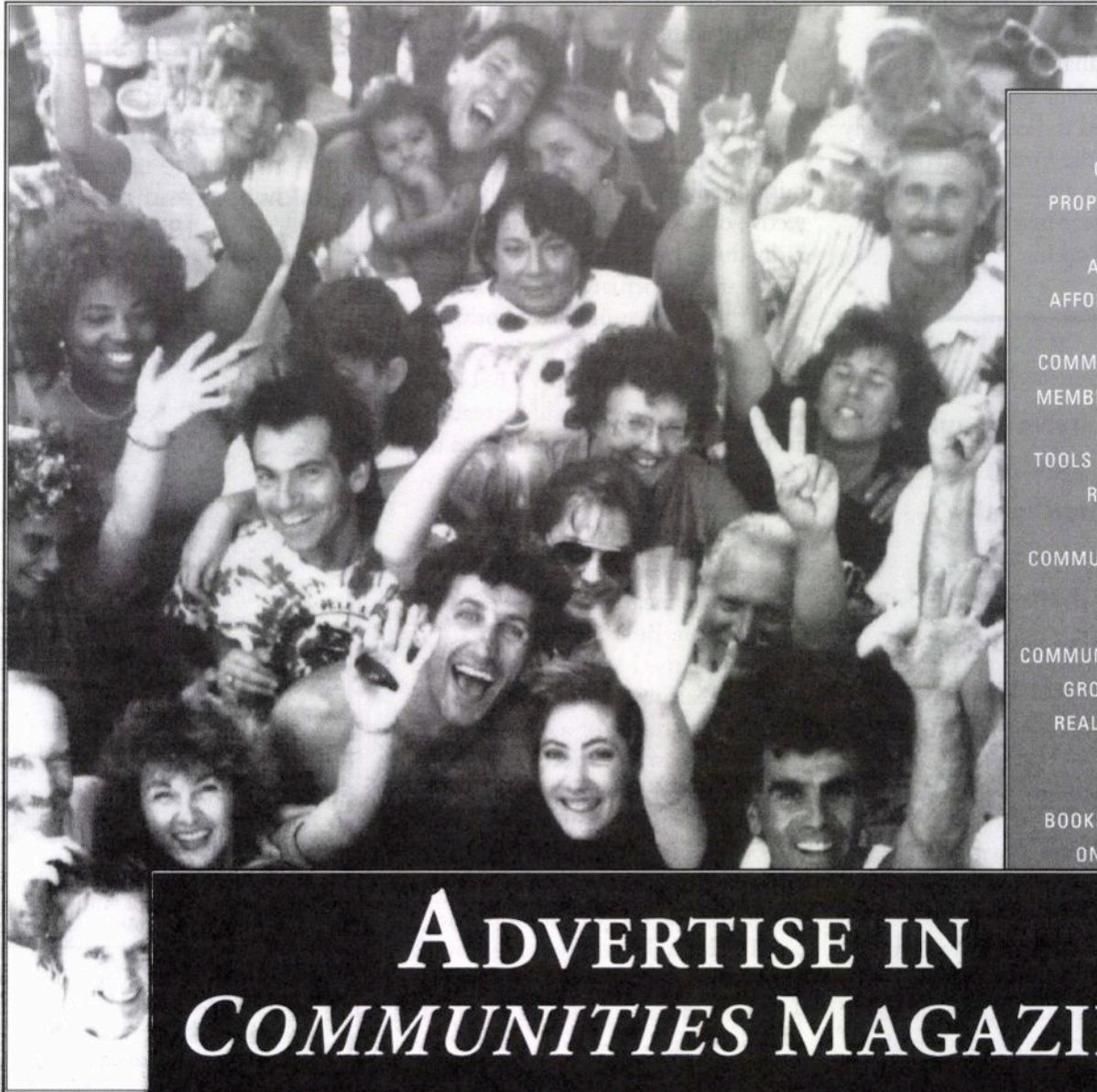
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# Annual Rainbow Gathering Under Fire

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**F**OR 16 YEARS I'VE BEEN ATTENDING Rainbow Gatherings. Like an intentional community, the worldwide Rainbow movement offers a surrogate family for folks who never had one: not a nuclear family, but the extended family of aunts and uncles and nieces and nephews and elders—which, I believe, is our birthright. Rainbow Gatherings large and small are a healing re-creation of the ancient values of community with one another and love for Mother Earth, free of charge and open to all.

But because we gather publicly in the National Forests, the federal government—under Bill Clinton as well as George Bush—is doing its best to shut us down.

The Rainbow Family of Living Light has been creating its neo-tribal villages in the "Cathedral of Nature" since 1972. This past July, 22,000 people attended the Rainbow Tribe's 26th Annual World Peace and Healing Gathering in Ochoco National

Forest, Oregon, a three-mile hike into the woods. The participants were of all ages, races and sexes, coming together from North America's various subcultures and countercultures and from mainstream America itself, and many visitors from around the world.

Mainstream media love to report how picturesque and atavistic they find us "aging hippies" and "wannabe Indians;" however, the alternative, progressive, and New Age press rarely acknowledge our existence. No one seems to realize what a powerful social and spiritual movement we have become, with the exception of the multi-agency police force that roadblocks and patrols

nearly every gathering.

Law enforcement experts claim the Rainbow Family is a "cult." But the term "cult" implies at least a uniformity of belief. The Rainbow vision is all-inclusive: if you have a bellybutton, you're Family. Once a year, all the spiritual, social, and political "tribes" of the human spectrum are invited to re-affirm their essential unity with a big Family Reunion. Welcome Home!

The central focus of the annual Rainbow Gathering is the Silence on July 4th, during which thousands converge in a



*Stephen Wing is the Recycling Coordinator at New Leaf Distributing Co.; author of Four-Wheeler & Two-Legged, a book of poems; and a long-time Rainbow Gathering enthusiast.*

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circle to meditate and pray for world peace and healing. The other major focus is the cleanup afterward, an equally spiritual undertaking. The "Annual" has spawned dozens of smaller regional gatherings, local potlucks, and drum circles in most U.S. cities, and similar movements in Mexico, Canada, and every continent except Antarctica.

Not that all is utopia in Rainbowland. We have all the standard family squabbles and dysfunctions. The steady influx of new people (who are mostly young), is a continual challenge. The shortage of older people willing to share their wisdom and experience is a continual frustration. But lately we've seen Coming-of-Age and Croning ceremonies and other signs that we're evolving. With the blessing of the Great Spirit and Mother Earth, we've so far been spared the catastrophe of growing faster than we can evolve.

Three times over 26 years, the U.S. Forest Service has amended its "non-commercial group use" regulations to shut us down. Twice the Rainbow Family has challenged these rules as unconstitutional in federal court, and won. As of August 1995, the third revision of rule 36 CFR 251 & 261 requires a signed permit for any assembly of 75 or more "participants or spectators" in the National Forest.

We do not sign a permit to gather. Like many Native American nations before us, we've learned the hard way that a single

person's signature can be used to manipulate the rest of the tribe. Though perhaps not yet a legitimate tribe, the Rainbow Family is what it claims to be: a leaderless society of equals, a consensus democracy. No one can speak for—or sign for—the Family as a whole except a consensus of the Rainbow Family Tribal Council during the week of July 1-7 when we're together on the land. And, no one is bound

by that consensus in any way. The fact that we consistently keep our gatherings safe, healthy and well-fed, and leave our sites cleaner than the rangers require, is a testimony to the power of individual responsibility and voluntary cooperation, not rules and guns. These are the "family values" we teach our kids.

Even more important, "public assembly" is not a crime; it is our constitutional right. Under the

new rule, every citizen's First Amendment rights of peaceable assembly, association, worship, and expression become privileges, to be denied or withdrawn at the discretion of our public servants. And if we can't exercise our rights in the most remote place we can find in our publicly-owned forests, then where can we?

So far enforcement has targeted the regional gatherings, such as the 1996 Katuah Summer Solstice gathering in North Carolina, alleged to have reached a total of 79 people. I was one of five people present at that event charged with the brand-new crime of "public assembly without a per-

**No one seems to realize what a powerful social and spiritual movement we have become, except the police that roadblock and patrol nearly every gathering.**

## How to Attend a Rainbow Gathering

More information about the Rainbow Family Gatherings and local events is available c/o the *Rainbow Guide*, PO Box 29446, St. Louis, MO 63126; via alt.gathering.rainbow, a UseNet newsgroup; or on the Web at <http://www.welcomehome.org/rainbow/html>. These projects are the work of volunteers who speak for no one but themselves.

Please call or write Forest Service Chief Mike Dumbeck: 202-205-1661, fax 205-1145; Attorney General Janet Reno: 202-514-2001, fax 514-4371; Asst. Secretary of Agriculture Jim Lyons: 202-720-3076, fax 720-4732; White House Domestic Aide Bruce Reed: 202-456-5571, fax 456-7028.

mit" in Federal Court in Asheville, facing up to six months in jail and a \$5,000 fine for a less-than-misdemeanor offense. My charges were dropped, but my co-defendants were convicted on Halloween day 1996; a year later they're still waiting for their appeal to be heard. Two others charged at an August '96 regional event in Pennsylvania are still awaiting a court date. At both the Missouri '96 and Oregon '97

***We consistently keep our gatherings safe, healthy and well-fed, and leave our sites cleaner than the Rangers require.***

"Annuals," the rangers issued a sham permit to avoid a large-scale confrontation—though their own rule clearly states that the permit-signer must be appointed by the group, and in both cases the "group" formally objected.

At the 1997 Solstice gathering, the Katuah tribe gathered under the threat of bodily removal from the woods as soon as we reached 75 people. But as the magic number approached, perhaps because of the pending appeal, the rangers simply stopped counting. Or maybe they've embarrassed themselves thoroughly enough in the past year's various court actions to genuinely rethink this latest regulatory power-grab. At least a hundred people held hands in our Solstice circle without a badge in sight.

Speaking for no one but myself, I invite you to come experience a Rainbow event the next chance you get. None of the rumors, none of the press, nothing I can say is a substitute for being there. And if the prospect of violating a federal regulation makes you hesitate, I suggest you call or fax a few of your public servants to protest this prior restraint on your liberties.

If even a glimpse of utopia itself wouldn't move you, consider the legal precedent created if these regulations are upheld by the courts. When we or our grandchildren really need our right to assemble, whether in the path of the last old-growth timber sale in the National Forest or on the steps of the Capitol, what are the odds that a "permit" will be granted by the powers that be? Ω

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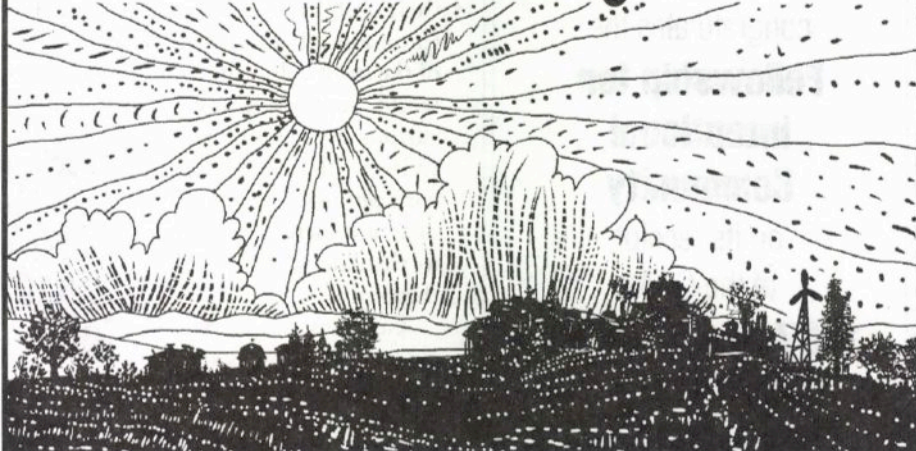
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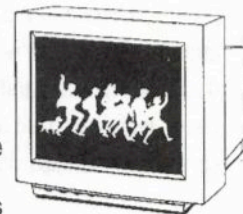
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## UFA-Fabrik

### Berlin's Arts & Activist Commune

**C**ROWDED INTO A SMALL, DISUSED industrial area of Berlin, Germany, UFA-Fabrik's bright psychedelic facades and buildings, along with their mini-farm and sustainable technology, present a stark contrast to their drab industrial locale. UFA-Fabrik (pronounced "OO-fah-fa-BREEK") is one of the most colourful communities in the world, supporting itself mostly through various entertainment activities, blending culture with politics. "In one hour of action there is more reality than in a year of talking," they say.

Germany has many fascinating communes and intentional communities such as the polyamorous ZEGG, permacultural Lebensgarten, and the almost 1,000 members of the seven German Catholic *kibbutzim* known as Integrierte Gemeinde. But UFA-Fabrik, at least partially because it is one of the oldest and is located in the heart of a major city, is probably the most interesting.

I first visited UFA-Fabrik in 1993, and again in 1995, where I spent several days learning more about their communal life.

#### Silent Film Studio to Artists' Commune

In 1972 several people formed a small urban commune in West Berlin with the idealistic intention of sharing their lives, work, and culture. Besides living together, they worked collectively, mainly renovating buildings. As they grew, they rented

an old factory building, establishing *Fabrik für Kultur, Sport und Handwerk* (Factory for Culture, Sport, and Handicrafts), one of the first organizations in modern Berlin where people could share their skills and ideas through workshops and personal contacts. They also started Berlin's first food co-op, selling organic produce.

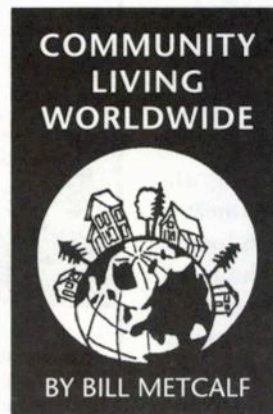
During World War I, the German government established a silent film studio,

Universal Film AG (universal film company), known simply as "UFA." During the 1920s, UFA Studio produced such cinematic classics as Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* and Murnau's *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*. During World War II, UFA produced Nazi propaganda films. The heavily-bombed film studio reopened in 1950, then closed in the early '70s. Because of its Nazi connections, many Berliners simply

wanted to demolish the buildings. The four-acre site, with its many buildings and facilities—and its chequered history—lay abandoned, awaiting demolition.

In 1979, when *Fabrik für Kultur, Sport und Handwerk* learned that the old UFA studio was about to be demolished, about 100 communards and supporters peacefully occupied the site. "Squatting" on the site was their only way to obtain such a large block of land (and buildings) within the crowded and then-politically tense city of West Berlin.

Instead of barricading the UFA site, the group opened the grounds, welcoming neighbours, visitors, and media, thereby



*You can read more about UFA-Fabrik and fourteen other communal groups from around the world in Bill Metcalf's Shared Visions, Shared Lives: Communal Living Around the Globe, Forres, UK: Findhorn Press, 1996. Bill lives in Australia.*

creating a festival atmosphere. They demonstrated their utopian visions through creative arts—the now famous UFA-Fabrik Circus. They opened a cafe and organised open-air musical shows and concerts. Because of their openness and the fun atmosphere they created, the new community was surprisingly well received by neighbours and the conservative German media.

*Fabrik für Kultur, Sport und Handwerk's* public image and good work within what they saw as the "cultural desert" of Berlin's Tempelhof district was so positive that politicians could neither ignore nor evict them. By this time they had taken the name UFA-Fabrik (UFA Factory). Their motto was: "We do not just talk about our problems, we solve them, even if it takes a bit longer."

The UFA buildings were semi-derelict, without heat or electricity, but community members quickly created simple living spaces. Fearing forced eviction, they patrolled the site 24 hours a day. This shared experience of fear and persecution, of patrolling their perimeter fence alongside the deep, dark canal in the pre-dawn quiet, brought the group together, establishing strong bonds of interdependence.

After some time, the UFA-Fabrik squatters applied to West Berlin City Council and, because of their good public image, were granted a three-month, renewable lease. Although this did not provide the security which UFA-Fabrik had sought, members proceeded to renovate the old buildings. They continued negotiating with the Council and campaigning publicly, until they were recently granted a 33-year lease, although at higher rent.

### UFA-Fabrik Today

Thirty-four adults and 16 children live communally in UFA-Fabrik. All members work on site for one of their businesses. They maintain a common purse, and share cars and other resources. Another 100 people work in the community but live elsewhere. Commune members and those who only work there eat all their main meals together. Those who work in each project area make relevant decisions for that project, while major decisions that

affect the whole community are made by all members. They do not vote in such meetings, but rather depend upon their intimate, long-term knowledge of each other to facilitate consensus decisions.

UFA-Fabrik members believe they should be creative and critical thinkers in all areas of work and life. They do not follow any one religious or political philosophy, agreeing only to work and live together amicably, productively, and joyfully, as a "free" commune devoted to theatre and arts, as well as to good education, healthy food, natural health care, and social security. Without any overriding dogma, members are mainly bound together through their shared activities. New members must be unanimously accepted by all members. They need not contribute any money, but must promise to work for the collective good, and share the common purse. Lately

**Devoted to theatre and arts, members agree only to work and live together amicably.**

UFA-Fabrik's mode of communal living has been changing, however, with members now enjoying more private space and greater financial independence.

When UFA-Fabrik started to employ outsiders, their simple economic life changed, and they had

to separate their communal common purse from the finances of their businesses. UFA-Fabrik is registered as a Charitable Trust, to facilitate taxation and legal interactions with the government. About a third of their income derives from organising cultural activities. They stage these in one of their two theatres: a 200-seat cinema and a 400-seat theatre-in-the-round, for live performances, dances, and other social and cultural activities, often organised through their International Cultural Centre.

The second third of the community's income derives from their samba band, *Terra Brasilis*; their world-famous UFA-Fabrik Circus; and from their Children's Circus School. UFA-Fabrik Circus depends on human talent rather than on exploiting animals, and involves audience participation rather than having them remain "cultural consumers." Each year, about 200,000 people are entertained by their circus, samba band, and cultural events.

The rest of UFA-Fabrik's income derives from more prosaic businesses. For example, *Vollkorn Bäckerei* (folk bakery)

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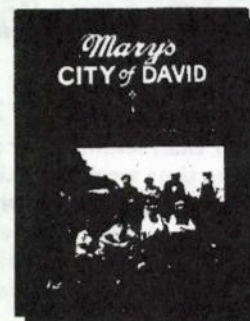
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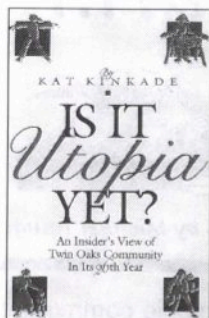
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produces over 3000 loaves of bread weekly, as well as cakes and desserts. Their *Naturkostladen* shop sells everything from bread and pastry produced on site to organic fruit and vegetables, candles, teas, and health foods. Café Olé, seating about 100, is popular with local workers, tourists, and people attending the community's cultural events.

Berlin Free School at UFA-Fabrik teaches about 30 community and neighbourhood children. The community provides a small animal farm where the children look after pigs, ponies, ducks, and other animals.

UFA-Fabrik has "greened" this old industrial site by planting gardens, trees, and lawns between its formerly dreary buildings. Their sod-covered flat roofs provide insulation and reduce dust while giving the buildings an attractive, organic character. Psychedelic murals cover many walls. Cars are banned, and the community's streets are user-friendly, popular places to hang out.

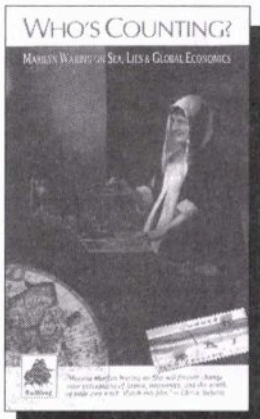
UFA-Fabrik has two highly efficient, gas-fired co-generation plants, meeting all the community's water and space heating requirements and 80 percent of their electrical needs. They have a small wind generator and other innovative, sustainable technologies. Water, collected from street run-off, is purified through constructed wetlands (reed beds) on site and used for flushing toilets and irrigating sod roofs. Future plans call for solar hot water panels and a bio-gas system. Ecological projects such as these are important, as the community wishes to demonstrate how living in a large city can be environmentally sensitive, as well as comfortable and attractive.

UFA-Fabrik members enjoy a rich, diverse lifestyle, with a variety of cultural activities and worthwhile employment. They could not live half as well in the crowded and expensive city of Berlin if they were not living communally.

Prior to 1989, UFA-Fabrik was a well known part of cultural life in politically isolated West Berlin, as the community symbolised free thought and creativity. But since German reunification, it has become a less important part of a much larger city and country. Hence, the community is having to re-forge its identity and purpose within this new political reality. Ω

PLEASE NOTE: we preserve the spelling of our Commonwealth authors.

# REVIEWS



## *Who's Counting?* *Marilyn Waring on Sex, Lies and Global Economics*

A film by Terre Nash

National Film Board of Canada  
94 minute videotape  
Available for \$34.95 & \$5 S+H, from:  
Bullfrog Films  
Box 149, Oley, PA 19547  
610-779-8226 bullfrog@igc.org

*Reviewed by Helen Forsey*

COMMUNITARIANS WHO HAVE CHOSEN simpler cooperative lifestyles instead of the corporate-driven rat-race are sometimes accused of being escapist, of hiding away from the "real world." It's often hard to find a comprehensive alternative analysis that supports our choices and relates them to global reality.

Now Canada's National Film Board has made a film about that global reality (also available as a videotape), as seen through the eyes of a feisty feminist author, goat-farmer, and ex-member of the New Zealand Parliament. *Who's Counting: Marilyn Waring on Sex, Lies and Global Economics* is a devastating critique of mainstream economics and the public assumptions that support it.

Marilyn Waring has a handle on a lot

of what's wrong with the world, and some novel ideas about how to start setting it right. Elected to the New Zealand Parliament at age 22, Waring was a key player nine years later in making that country a nuclear-free zone. In the process, she acquired quite an education in the realities of economics and politics. *Who's Counting* provides an excellent introduction not only to Waring's ideas but also to her style of activism.

At her best, Waring is one of the liveliest speakers I've ever heard—articulate, irreverent, and compelling. She also has an uncanny ability to put complex information into easily opened packages. The video takes full advantage of those skills, and also provides fascinating background on how Waring got to be the way she is.

The controversial New Zealander is best known for her pointed criticisms of mainstream economic analyses, which ignore the environment, subsistence production, and women's work. Waring ridicules a system that counts oil spills and wars as contributors to economic growth, while child-rearing, housekeeping, and conservation are deemed valueless. Her kind of thinking will be balm to individuals and communities who are working to develop human-scale economic alternatives that respect and affirm what is truly valuable in human society and in nature.

While a video about global economics could be deadly boring, this one is anything but, with gorgeous scenes from Waring's rural New Zealand constituency, vignettes of poor women's lives in a Philippine village, and strikingly artistic images of New York's urban jungle. As Waring leads us through a labyrinth of ideas and examples, we view action, contrasts, and stunning camera work.

This is a long video, and at several points I had trouble absorbing the quantity of material. But it is well worth hanging in for (perhaps with an intermission). The ideas are clear, radical, and down-to-earth—relevant both locally and globally. Waring and Nash manage to link ordinary people's everyday concerns about families, communities and the environment to the political manoeuvrings of the power-brokers on the global stage, in ways that are validating and inspiring. If knowledge is power, *Who's Counting* is an empowering gift.

*Helen Forsey is a writer and activist who lives communally in Ontario's Ottawa Valley.*

## COMMUNITY TOOLS

Resources on Communitarian Values & History  
and for  
Community Design, Management  
and Education



A. Allen Butcher

### Tools for Building Community:

Books • Articles • Periodicals • Pamphlets  
Videos • Slide Shows • Audio Tapes  
Conferences • Workshops • Learning Activities  
Conferences • Classes • Courses • Degrees

## *Community Tools:* *Resources on Communitarian* *Values and History and for* *Community Design,* *Management, and Education*

By A. Allen Butcher

Fourth World Services, 1995  
Booklet, 43 pp.

Available from:  
Fourth World Services  
PO Box 1666  
Denver, CO 80201

*Reviewed by Scott Shuker*

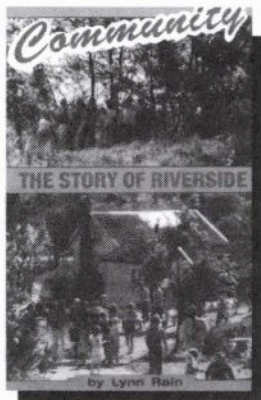
LONG-TIME COMMUNITARIAN ALLEN Butcher's latest booklet, *Community Tools*, is a useful compendium of resources about intentional communities, spiced with short articles and charts on community values, history, design, and management.

Butcher analyzes and categorizes communities, and offers as many perspectives and analyses of community as anyone could want. He offers definitions of "community," "communitarianism," "circumstantial community," and "intentional community." He offers a whole page of the many ways you can classify communities ("Technical Descriptions" include "alternative technology center, holistic health community, back-to-the-land community, ecovillage, and cohousing community"; "Political Descriptions" include "egalitarian community, feminist community, secular community, activist community," and so on). He touches on concepts relating to community such as scale, intent, and social change. His innovative "Classifications of Communitarianism" chart illustrates the wide variety of choices communities have made: geographically, politically, economically, sociologically,

and spiritually. His fascinating four-page timeline about historical communities dates back to 800 B.C.E., highlighting the more memorable groups.

The resource listings are comprehensive: books, pamphlets, videos, slide shows, audiotapes, consultants, workshops, conferences, and classes. These are grouped by categories, which include ecovillages; community land trusts; spiritual communities; alternative child care, polyfidelity and group marriage; meeting process, facilitation & conflict resolution, and many more. *Community Tools* does miss some items, though; for example, under "Legal Resources" there is no mention of "Legal Options for Intentional Communities," a long article (which Butcher co-authored) in the 1995 *Communities Directory*.

While I found *Community Tools* somewhat academic in tone (and visually rather bland), I nevertheless recommend this feast of analyses and resource listings as a valuable reference work for anyone interested in community.



## *Community: The Story of Riverside*

By Lynn Rain

Riverside Trust Board, 1991

Pb., 217 pp.

Available for \$18 US, from:

Lynn Rain  
Box 35, Albany  
New Zealand

*Reviewed by Scott Shuker*

THE ROOTS OF RIVERSIDE, A 54-member community in rural New Zealand, lie in its early ideals of cooperation and nonviolence. The community was founded in 1941 by a small group of

Christian pacifists who opposed fighting in World War II. Conscientious Objectors were not tolerated in wartime New Zealand, and many of its founders and early members spent time in government detention camps for refusing to fight. Riverside became a haven for war resisters seeking to put their Christian ideals into practice. The early members prayed for peace, worked as farmers in their apple orchard and dairy businesses, and raised families. Many actively protested the war on the streets of the nearby town, which further alienated them from their neighbors. Yet Riverside members' faith and hard work sustained them long after the war ended. Stories from those early community days are a testament to their courage and tenacity.

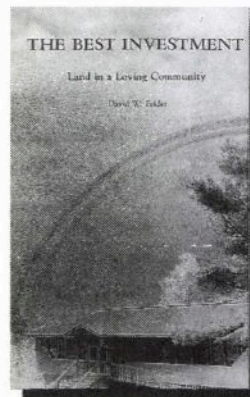
A significant shift in the focus of the community occurred in the 1970s, when the aging population had difficulty attracting younger members. After much heated discussion, and objection from the oldest of the old-timers, the community shifted from a strict Christian focus (which required that members be a Methodist pacifists, or at least Christian pacifists) to admitting a wider spectrum of people. These included non-religious members and practitioners of various Eastern spiritual paths, or no spiritual path—baby-boomers seeking a more cooperative lifestyle. While Riverside no longer described itself as a "Christian community," its commitment to peace and social justice remained strong. For example, they provided support for many young members who protested the Vietnam war. This core belief in peace and nonviolence has continued into the '90s and remains a sustaining force.

Rain brings readers into the experience of making a long-lived community—formation and organizational structure, farming businesses, interpersonal relationships and social life, children, spirituality—through personal accounts from longtime members. I was struck by their deep honesty about community life, about what works and what doesn't work. There were many parallels to my own community experience.

I wouldn't call the book provocative reading. It was straightforward and fairly dry, as biographies tend to be, and included even the most mundane events of Riverside's history. I found myself scan-

ning through the details. Yet, the frankness and lack of pretentiousness of *Community: The Story of Riverside* makes it a worthwhile read. Rain gets down to the real nitty-gritty.

*Scott Shuker is a member of Lama Foundation community in New Mexico.*



## *The Best Investment: Land in a Loving Community*

By David W. Felder

Wellington Press, 1983

Pb, 164 pgs.

Available for \$14.95 and \$2.50 S+H from:

9601-30 Miccosukee Road  
Tallahassee, FL 32308  
904-878-0522 or 800-231-1638

*Reviewed by Ellie Sommer*

DAVID FELDER'S CLASSIC BOOK ON community is as much a philosophical ramble as it is a primer for creating a communal lifestyle. From the nuts and bolts of buying land and building community homes to the diplomacy and interpersonal skills of governing and getting along, Felder has an opinion or an experience on all aspects of community.

Fifteen years after publication the book still holds up well, with the exception of sections on land prices and zoning and building regulations. It's a humbling experience to realize just how much has changed. The rights to build on one-acre lots at Felder's Misty Hills Land Co-op could be purchased for a \$2,700 buy-in. The good old days! Felder now calculates that the same deal in today's market would be about \$10,000. While one might be hard-pressed these days to finish off a house for under



\$20,000, Felder says it still can be done. Some of the increased expenses are related to tighter building codes instituted following Hurricane Andrew, which left a good part of Florida looking like a pile of kindling.

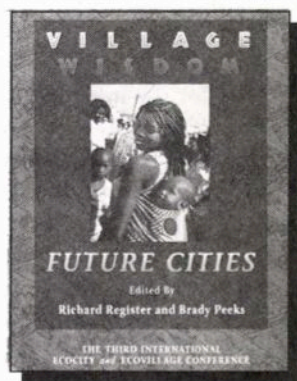
"Misty Hills," you see, is a pseudonym for Miccosukee Land Co-op, a 24-year old community nestled in north central Florida. (When Felder published the book in 1983, the community was less willing to reveal itself to the world.) No vacant building sites remain at Miccosukee, but two kindred communities have sprouted nearby: Sunrise, where everyone is committed to using solar energy, and Green Acres, an 11-acre fledgling community. Miccosukee itself has expanded from 240 to 319 acres.

Felder teaches at Florida A&M University and is the developer of a system of more than 80 conflict resolution scenarios called Peace Games. He is the author of several other books, including *How to Work for Peace*. His interest in peaceful living is apparent in his insightful yet practical approach to community, an approach that blends the traditional and simple with modern technology. While *The Best Investment* stresses a simple lifestyle unfettered by many of society's frustrations and obstacles, he is not advocating a rustic back-to-the-land escape from the world. This balance makes *The Best Investment* a continuing legacy, for those living in community and those contemplating forming a new one. For community veterans, it is a reminder of the commitments and sharing that a community fosters. The hints on governing and the enduring relevance of the covenants and restrictions stand the test of time. For those now embarking on the community path, *The Best Investment* offers the secrets and strategies of someone who has been there—a sort of behind the scenes tour of the whys and what-fors.

I must admit to wishing for a little more detail the first time I read it. However, as our own community group gathered its energy, I realized that too much direction could be counterproductive. In the end, I came to understand the benefits of Felder's presentation: by showing the reader a picture of community life, seasoned with some appropriate specifics, he has shown us the path without telling how exactly to walk it. I can't think of a more perfect way

to begin or to continue a journey in community living.

David Felder can be reached at [www.peacegames.com](http://www.peacegames.com) and [peacegames@aol.com](mailto:peacegames@aol.com).



### *Village Wisdom: Future Cities*

Richard Register and Brady Peeks,  
Editors

EcoCity Builders, 1997

Pb., 227 pp. \$15.95

Available from:

EcoCity Builders  
5427 Telegraph Ave W2  
Oakland, CA 94609

Reviewed by Ellie Sommer

IF YOU WERE NOT ONE OF THE THOUSAND or so people who attended The Third International Ecocity and Ecovillage Conference in Senegal in 1996, you can still enjoy and learn from the experience through *Village Wisdom*, a comprehensive "proceedings" from the conference. As you immerse yourself in the transcribed lectures from the conference, you may find, as I did, an overpowering sense of optimism about the future of our planet.

This is a book that offers solutions; a book that explores innovative ideas from around the world; a book that symbolizes cooperation between diverse cultures, between city and village, between the progress of technology and the wisdom of traditions.

In the preface, editor Richard Register tells us that as with the previous two Ecocity conferences, "we came to honor one another's efforts to honor the Earth, its people, and all attempts to build our communities in balance with nature."

By choosing Senegal, and specifically the village of Yoff, the conveners hoped to

"share the best efforts from around our home planet in a place where the ideas could be reinforced by powerful personal experiences." Register acknowledges that they succeeded.

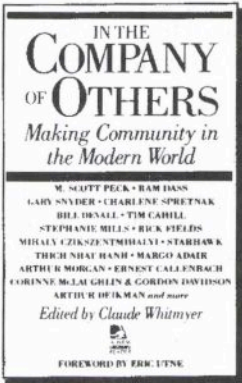
Chapter Five of the book is an overview of what the conferees experienced during their stay in Yoff. "The traditional village population of Yoff invited most of the conference participants into their homes, providing a rare opportunity to share in the villagers' daily lives," write Joan Bokaer and Serigne Mbaye Diene, official conveners.

As you read through the book, you discover that Yoff is not a wealthy city, at least not in terms of financial well-being. It is, however, a city rich in other resources and wisdom—wisdom that ecocity proponents believe can form the basis of a new vision for urban life.

Ecocities are the promise of the future. Those who now struggle to bring this concept into awareness strongly believe that it is this planet's only hope for survival. These pioneers are not limited to ecological activists. The presenters and attendees at the Third International Ecocity Conference represented an impressive collection of government, academic, and grassroots activists, planners, designers, and experts from all over the world, each with a shared vision of a future where humans live in concert with our habitat, not in conflict with it.

And while Yoff, Senegal, and the particular problems of African villages and cities served as a focus and foundation for the concepts presented during the five-day conference, challenges and solutions from other countries were presented including, but not limited to, Italy, Russia, Brazil, Sweden, and the United States.

The book is organized by topic, much as the conference was. Each topic contains the partial transcripts of the presenters, and the editors apologize for this abridged version, citing the length and the challenges of translations. Removed from the excitement and color of the live event, proceedings from this conference could have been dry and flat, but they aren't. I believe the editors of *Village Wisdom* did exceptionally well in creating a multi-dimensional experience for readers, even though the readers cannot experience the cross-dialogue, the small-group sharing, the



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

Claude Whitmyer, Editor

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**The Last Straw**

*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...

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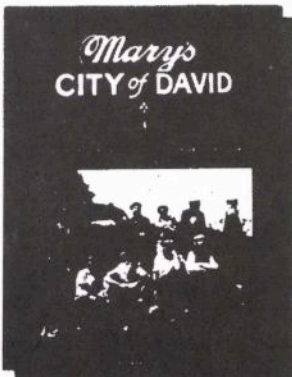
Published in February, May, August and November. Subscriptions are \$28/year for US addresses, \$33/year for Canadian addresses, \$43/year for other international addresses. (All fees to be paid in US funds in postal money order, bank draft or US bank check. Thanks!)

Address all inquiries and subscriptions to:  
**The Last Straw Journal**  
P.O. Box 42000, Tucson, AZ 85733-2000  
phone: (520) 882-3848  
email: <thelaststraw@igc.apc.org>  
Web: <http://www.netchaos.com/tls>

questions, and the actual adventure of being there.

Perhaps the interest generated by this book will encourage others to attend future conferences and partake of the actual experience. And if not, at least it will hopefully imprint the importance of a global effort to sustain a lifestyle on this planet that will ensure generations of health and harmony for the inhabitants. We have the technological tools—and we can relearn the traditional wisdom—to design that work. The question is do we have the will?

*Ellie Sommer edits manuscripts and ghost-writes professionally. She and her husband, Paul, are members of Woodbine Community in Florida.*



***Mary's City of David:  
A Pictorial History of the  
Israelite House of David as  
Reorganized by Mary Purnell***

By R. James Taylor

Mary's City of David, 1996  
Hb., 182 pp., 11" x 14"  
Available for \$56.18 postpaid, from:  
Mary's City of David  
PO Box 187  
Benton Harbor, MI 49023  
616-925-1601

*Reviewed by Diana Leafe Christian*

SOCIALLY PROGRESSIVE COMMUNAL longhairs with radical spiritual beliefs and guidance from nonphysical sources—in 1903?

You'll find it all in this deluxe gift book with text and 250 vintage photos, which tells the story—sometimes fraught with drama—of two radical

Christian communities in Benton Harbor, Michigan: the Israelite House of David from 1903 through the 1920s, and its 1930-to-present descendent, Mary's City of David.

Both communities sprung from a sect who believed the Second Coming would offer eternal life on Earth, physically as well as spiritually, and that their leaders were Messengers with Divine guidance. Begun in England in 1792, the sect had thousands of followers worldwide in the 1800s and early 1900s. Community members, like other sect believers, were celibate, often vegetarian, and never cut their hair.

In 1903 the sect's Messengers, the Americans Benjamin and Mary Purnell, received donated money and properties to begin a community of believers in Benton Harbor. The Israelite House of David was successful from the beginning. Calling the faithful worldwide to join them, and pooling resources, they soon had farms, businesses, increasing wealth, and, by 1916, a thousand members. One remarkable 1905 photo shows a long line of people with suitcases stretching back from Benton Harbor's main street to a wharf in the distance—85 believers from Australia just arrived to join the community.

Over the next 25 years the community thrived, generating good press, high praise, and lots of wonderful photos. Truly ahead of their time, members opened a vegetarian restaurant, and later, built an amusement park. They honored women: Mary Purnell and others were prominent in the decision making. They sponsored two traveling jazz bands—the Syncopet Serenaders—and a traveling baseball team. My favorite photo is a 1913 shot of 11 bearded smiling young men in baseball uniforms, lovely waist-length hair streaming in the wind.

But in 1927, in a sensational trial and appeal that made international news, the Purnells, who legally owned all community property, were sued by a group of dissatisfied former members for Benjamin's alleged sexual and fiscal misconduct—an attempt to declare his church fraudulent and get financial reimbursement from community coffers. Thirteen women testified against "King" Benjamin; 200 supporters testified to his impeccable character. Bitterly divided, one faction claimed Benjamin had debauched and

swindled members; the other claimed that their leaders were cruelly defamed out of jealousy, spite, and greed. (Any of this sound familiar?) Distraught parents rose in the courtroom and publicly disowned their daughters for making such claims. The court declared Benjamin guilty of conducting a fraudulent religion for financial gain, however the Purnells' appeal reversed the decision in 1929. Benjamin died 11 days later.

Mary Purnell, then 68, who had always been well loved, dissolved the corporation and reimbursed community funds to each faction on a prorated basis. In 1930 she and 217 members who had never doubted Benjamin's honor began a new community two blocks away.

Mary's City of David, as it was called, thrived as well, with Mary's boarding house, then Mary's Restaurant, Mary's Hotel, Mary's Retreat Center, and the King David Hospital. New members joined in the '30s and '40s—sometimes whole extended families *en masse*. Mary Purnell continued to receive Messages; she predicted England's freedom from Nazi invasion, and global warming, among other events. She led her flock until her death in 1953 at the age of 91.

*Mary's City of David* is a fascinating chronicle, especially for historic community buffs, although its style—a rolling cadence, full of praise and devotion—takes getting used to. It's not an objective, journalistic narrative by any means, but a fond remembrance, especially of Mary Purnell, in prose and vintage photos. The author often doesn't define terms or describe events fully; I suspect he created the book primarily for friends of the community who already know what happened. But once I stopped expecting a linear narrative, I enjoyed the community story immensely.

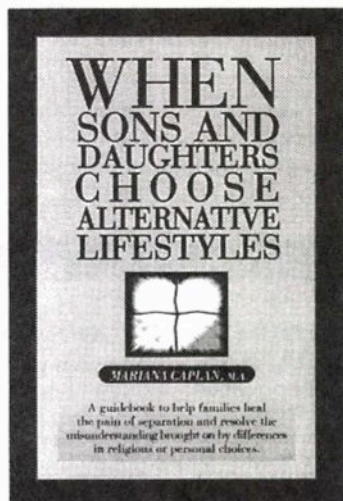
Mary's City of David still exists in Benton Harbor. Its members (address above) welcome inquiries.

*Diana Leaf Christian is Editor of Communities magazine.*

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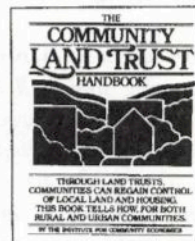
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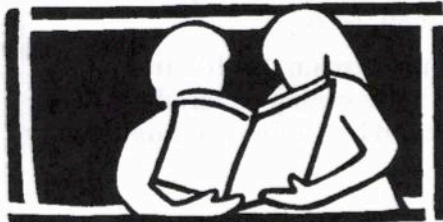
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<http://www.well.com/user/eastwind/bookshlf.html>

# COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY WINTER '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, email fic@ic.org, or call 660-883-5545. Thank you!*

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

### NORTH AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

#### COLORADO

[d] Positive College

#### HAWAII

[n] Malu 'Aina

#### IDAHO

[d] Grandma's Place

#### ILLINOIS

[u] Fiddler's Green

#### IOWA

[n] Greenhaven

#### MICHIGAN

[u] Sunward Cohousing of Ann Arbor

#### MISSOURI

[n] Columbia CoHousing

[u] Dancing Rabbit

#### TENNESSEE

[u] Dunmire Hollow Community

#### VIRGINIA

[u] Abundant Dawn

[n] Charlottesville Cohousing Association

[u] Innisfree Village

### INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

#### NETHERLANDS

[n] Elim

## NORTH AMERICAN NEW LISTINGS

### CHARLOTTESVILLE COHOUSING ASSOCIATION

113 Elkhorn Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
804-963-4688/961-9402

gfifer@pen.k12.va.us  
<http://monticello.avenue.gen.va.us/>  
Community/Agencies/Cohousing/

Our cohousing plan includes individually owned, autonomous private homes and extensive common facilities—including a common house with cooking/dining area. Our design will emphasize encouragement of community interaction, pedestrian access, and clustering of structures to maximize open space. Our proposed neighborhood has a vision statement which includes openness to diversity and connections, balance of independence and inter-dependence, consensus decision making, sharing of resources and skills, cooperative problem solving, supportive environment for children, and environmental responsibility. We are singles, couples, families with children who have no common ideology other than the desire for a more workable, sociable, and fun home environment. 10/97

### COLUMBIA COHOUSING

(Forming)  
c/o Sunnyside  
5316 Godas Circle  
Columbia, MO 65202  
573-814-4632  
cgoodman@mail.coin.missouri.edu

The group is currently 15 adults and 9 children who have been meeting regularly since October '96 with the intention of forming a CoHousing community where small, privately owned homes are clustered to facilitate sharing and social interaction. In such a community, we feel more connected to other people, less emotionally dependent on our most intimate family, and more committed to things beyond ourselves. We believe Columbia is an ideal location for such a community, being a university town with a very progressive population. We hope to be building by spring of '99. 10/97

### GREENHAVEN

(Forming)  
1217 Locust Street  
West Des Moines, IA 50265-4450  
515-279-3004

We are starting an egalitarian community with an environmental focus, intending to grow to about 30 people. Currently there are three full time members with openings for more. Our present setting is urban, but we hope to move to 80 acres of land and start building next spring. We're interested in self-sufficiency through farming and agriculture, alternative building materials, and sustainable energy sources. 10/97

### MALU 'AINA

PO Box AB  
Kurtistown, HI 96760  
808-966-7622

Malu 'Aina (land of peace) is the Hawaiian name given to the Center for Non-Violent Education and Action, located ten miles south of the city of Hilo on the island of Hawaii. We are a spiritually-based rural community dedicated to a nuclear-free Pacific and world built on a foundation of justice. Formed in 1980, Malu 'Aina now has 2 cabins, a farm building, and a main meeting/dining hall. We grow a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, and gourds both to share freely with people in need and to support the work of justice and peace. We seek a deeper understanding of nonviolence as a way of life, and we are for beating swords into plowshares, not the other way around. 9/97

## DISBANDED & BAD ADDRESSES

### GRANDMA'S PLACE, INC.

Coeur d'Alene, ID

Disbanded. 9/97

### POSITIVE COLLEGE

Boulder, CO

Mail returned to sender. 7/97

**NORTH AMERICAN UPDATES  
(PREVIOUS LISTINGS)**

**ABUNDANT DAWN**

Route 3 Box 51D  
Floyd, VA 24091  
540-745-5853

New address, phone, and community description. "We have moved onto 90 acres of land with a rent-to-buy agreement. We are near the town of Floyd, with beautiful river frontage and lots of woods. Abundant Dawn is currently composed of two subcommunities, Tekiah and Dayspring Circle." SASE requested. 10/97

**DANCING RABBIT**

Route 1 Box 156  
Rutledge, MO 63563  
660-883-5511/883-5553  
dancing-rabbit@ic.org  
<http://www.dancingrabbit.org>

New Web address and area code. "We now own 280 acres of beautiful rolling hills, fields, and woods and are ready to start building a town in spring '98. Our car is powered on biodiesel made of used fast-food fryer oil, we grow most of our own food, and we've set up solar- and wind-powered energy systems. Contact us if you'd like to help build a radically sustainable rural ecovillage!" SASE requested. 10/97

**DUNMIRE HOLLOW COMMUNITY**

2017 Dunmire Hollow Road  
Waynesboro, TN 38485  
931-722-3078/722-9201/722-5096

Same location, but new address and area code. 10/97

**FIDDLER'S GREEN**

(Forming)  
1018 Main Street #3  
Evanston, IL 60202  
elf@nwu.edu  
<http://pubweb.acns.nwu.edu/~dbr812/fiddler>

Correct email (printed incorrectly in Issue #95) and new Web address. 10/97

**INNISFREE VILLAGE**

5505 Walnut Level Rd.  
Crozet, VA 22932  
804-823-5400/823-5027  
innisfree@internetmci.com

New street and email address. 9/97

**SUNWARD COHOUSING OF ANN ARBOR**

(Forming)  
1416 Hill Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
313-930-6425  
sunward-info@umich.edu  
<http://www.ic.org/sunward/>

New street address. 10/97

**INTERNATIONAL NEW LISTINGS**

**ELIM**

Berweg 7  
RA Doorn, 3941  
NETHERLANDS  
0343-417064  
0343-415355 (fax)  
elim@worldaccess.nl  
<http://www.wxs.nl/~elim>

The community Elim provides for their own livelihood through full-time and part-time jobs, and consists right now of six adults and five children. Most of the income comes from the running of a technical illustration and design bureau. Community-members live with a common purse, from which all costs are paid: rent, cars, holidays, pocket money, etc. From the circle of friends of the community, the evangelical church Elim came into being in 1985. This church has three meetings each week. One tries, both in the community and in the church, to put into practice living with God in everyday life. In addition, there are ongoing contacts with Christians in Third World countries—mainly India—both with western missionaries, and with native believers. Eight years ago, Elim initiated a community-movement of at present 35 Dutch communities. There is a work-group, a magazine, a study course and an annual conference. With our life we hope people do discover that it is possible to live in peace and happiness through the lifegiving and transforming power of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Come and visit us! 9/97

**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



**CONSTRUCTION HAS BEGUN!  
RESERVE YOUR HOMESITE TODAY!**

We invite you to explore the community of Tierra Nueva Cohousing on the Central California Coast near San Luis Obispo. We welcome visitors to our business meetings and social gatherings and can arrange for overnight lodging. Call today for an information packet.

**(805) 546-6708**

[www.fox.net/~washley/tierra](http://www.fox.net/~washley/tierra)

# CLASSIFIEDS



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

## COMMUNITY PROPERTY FOR SALE

**WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA**—120 acres secluded mountain woodlands one hour east of Pittsburgh. Two ponds, running brook, meadow, plus two homes built by a student of Frank Lloyd Wright. This beautiful land is seeking mature soulmates with the energy, vision, and financial capacity to forge a spiritually rooted artists/artisans community and/or retreat center embracing honest communication, compassion, and joy. Please call Connie: 412-687-6156.

**ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY** in California's Sierra Foothills needs new owners, ideas, and energy to enter 21st century. 92 acres, lake, residential and community buildings, gardens. 23-year history of community living, gatherings, and benefits for environmental and political causes. Bob, Box 224, Vallecito CA 95251; 509-773-3899.

**ECOLOGICAL PARADISE IN FRANCE.** 168 hectares of land in the heart of the French countryside, situated equidistant between Poitiers and Limoges. 3-storey turn-of-the-century chateau, fully renovated, with converted outbuildings including large kitchen, dining room, and superb 165-square-meter seminar/meditation room, plus wooden house village, all in an idyllic natural setting comprising beautiful park land, meadows, vegetable garden, duck pond, 24ha of forest and small winding river. The estate has its own water supply and ecological sewerage purification plant. Additional outbuildings provide scope for further renovation and development. Home to many rare species of butterflies and birds, and currently the residence of an international spiritual community of around one hundred people, this is an ideal location for intentional community living. Contact: Silvia Rosenbeiger, Le Domaine du Fan, F-87360 Verneuil Moustiers; tel. (0033) 5-55 68 25 30; fax (0033) 5-55 60 14 56; e-mail: energywell@mail.netsource.fr. Also <http://members.aol.com/energywell/welcome.html>.

## HOUSE TO SHARE

**ROOMATES WANTED** to share quiet home in the woods next to a cave and a small creek. Drug-free vegetarians; prefer another woman or a couple. \$195 to \$395 per month plus utilities. Marlene Gilbert, Rt. 1, Box 265, St. Joe, AR 72675; 870-449-5042.

## SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS, APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY

**NATURAL MENSTRUATION.** Many Moons (TM) washable menstrual pads; The Keeper (TM) reusable menstrual cup; dioxin-free disposable pads/tampons. Healthier choices for your body and the environment. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Free brochure: 1-800-916-4444.

**SOLAR ELECTRIC PANELS** \$5 per watt! All alternative energy equipment. Best names and prices in the industry. Mendocino Solar Service, 42451 Road 409, Mendocino, CA 95460; 800-981-0369.

**ELEGANT HEMP TWINE BAGS,** \$25. Specify handles (handbag) or straps (used as shoulderbag or backpack). See bags: <http://www.thefarm.org/business/>, or write 67, The Farm, Summertown, TN 38483.

**"SUNNY JOHN" COMPOSING TOILET.** Unique solar-moldering composting toilet in small outbuilding works by heat convection, thermal mass, and good design—not expensive moving parts. (And smells fine.) Build for several hundred bucks, use no water, reap compost for generations. Plans, \$20 postpaid. John Cruickshank, Going Concerns, 5569 NCR 29, Loveland, CO 80538; [hobbitthouse@compuserve.com](mailto:hobbitthouse@compuserve.com).

## BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

**LOVE BOOKS? LOVE KIDS?** Exciting home-based business opportunity. Earn cash and free children's books. Ask for free brochure and information packet. 800-396-6758. e-mail: [books4kids@earthlink.net](mailto:books4kids@earthlink.net); Web site: <http://www.caro.net/~joespa/ad021.htm>.

## INTERNSHIPS

**INTERN FOR BUILDING PROJECTS.** Small fledgling community seeks someone with rudimentary carpentry skills for help with alternative building methods and permaculture projects in exchange for short-term room, board, small stipend. Straw-clay walls, natural plaster, multi-function garden projects, etc. Opportunities for work/study exchanges at nearby CSA farm in neighboring community. For information packet: PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541; 970-593-5615.

## CONSULTANTS: SUSTAINABILITY, COMMUNITY

**ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITY DESIGN IS NO ACCIDENT.** It's no easy task either! From facilitated Visioning to participatory Site Analysis and Master Planning to ecological wastewater systems and Site Design, Native Harvest Design can help make the challenge of community design more fun, less hassle, and much more achievable! Dave Jacke, Native Harvest Designs, PO Box 148, Leverett, MA 01054; 413-548-8899; e-mail: [djnative@valinet.com](mailto:djnative@valinet.com).

## CLASSES, WORKSHOPS

**DIVINE NEW ORDER COMMUNITY** weekend seminar. Learn about the structure and foundation of a successful community. Bi-monthly seminars. Next dates: Jan 30–Feb 1, Mar 27–29. 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](mailto:acc@sedona.net); <http://www.sedona.net/sd/aquarian/>.

**DYNAMIC FACILITATION:** Tools for Positive Organizational Growth. Feb 14–21, Findhorn Foundation, Forres, Scotland. Led by Betty Didcock, long-time facilitator/consensus trainer. Individuals £395 (approx. US\$670), corporate £495 (approx. US\$840); price includes room and board. Accommodations Secretary, Findhorn Foundation, Cluny Hill College, Forres, IV 36 ORD, Scotland; e-mail: [accommodations@findhorn.org](mailto:accommodations@findhorn.org); Web page: [www.gaia.org/findhorn/](http://www.gaia.org/findhorn/).

## BOOKS, VIDEOS, AUDIOTAPES ON COMMUNITY

**"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](mailto:nosmoke@otw.com).

**EMPOWERMENT RESOURCES** for personal growth, social change, and ecology. Over 220 good books (most discounted 20–30%) and over 370 links on empowerment. 301-408-2041; <http://www.empowermentresources.com/>.

**COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY:** "The most comprehensive and accurate reference book ever pub-

lished on community living!"—Kirkpatrick Sale. 540 listings for North American communities and 70 worldwide, plus many communities formed since 1990 edition, with contact information and a full description of each. Maps, cross-reference charts, extensive index for finding communities by areas of interest, 31 feature articles on various aspects of cooperative living. Published by Fellowship for Intentional Community, publishers of *Communities* magazine. Pb., 440 pgs. \$30 postpaid. *Communities* Directory, 138 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093; 540-894-5126; fic@ic.org.

## MAGAZINES, NEWSLETTERS

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

**ICH & EUROTOPIA:** Living in Community. European quarterly magazine about community living-ecovillages, cohousing, communes, and more, in Europe and worldwide. German language. *Ich & Eurotopia*, Postfach 520 222, Postamt Kaulsdorf 3, 12592 Berlin, GERMANY.

**PERMACULTURE DRYLANDS JOURNAL.** Ideas, issues, information on sustainable living through natural systems. Postpaid sample issue \$5. Subscription (3/year) included with \$25 annual support of *Permaculture Drylands Institute*. Dept. C, PO Box 156, Santa Fe, NM 87504; 505-938-0663.

## COMMUNITY PERSONALS

**STRONG, PASSIONATE, OPEN-MINDED** woman wanted for primary relationship within community. I am 50, non-religious Jew, living in a ZEGG-inspired intentional community. Interests include global change, deep emotional processing, healing intimacy within primary partnership, green technologies, free-form music and dance, art appreciation. Healthy kids OK. Those who are offended by off-the-wall humor and puns need not apply. *Bill Cerf*, POB 44110, Tucson, AZ 85733; e-mail: bilcerf@azstarnet.com.

**ORGANIC FARMER** seeks woman for prosperous farming, abundant life, and loving partnership. I'm passionately anti-war and wish to contribute to positive change. I'm open-minded, imaginative, experimental, communicative, and interested in the ecovillage concept. I like to travel. Write *Chris Greene*, 392 Vittum Hill Road, Ctr. Sandwich, NH 03227. Call 603-284-7088.

**SINGLE FATHER, 47**, of three-year-old son. Unconventional, health conscious, idealist, naturalist. 20-year resident of beautiful, uniquely secluded rural Kentucky property. Seeking 1) understanding, mature woman for long-term relationship, ideally mother of young child(ren). 2) Sharing home with single parent or parents. 3) Others interested in helping form a holistic, cooperative community. Home, PO Box 22513, Louisville, KY 40252-0513.

**SEEKING LIKE-MINDED** believer/achievers with practical interests, ideas, and skills. Share efforts, benefits, responsibilities, and resources in 12-acre homestead in Pocono Mountains. I'm aware, trustworthy, creative, self-reliant. No smoke/drugs, 36, perfectly healthy. Interests: truth, fitness, natural botanicals, emergency preparedness business, organic open-pollinated/permaculture, and every hard-to-find resource for long-term sustainability (power equipment, large raised beds). Valuable goals: prepare today for tomorrow. Call to inquire today. Contact *Steve*, Box 97, Freeland, PA 18224; 717-443-9222.

**CONCERNED SINGLES** links compatible, socially conscious singles who care about peace, social justice, racism, gender equity, the environment, personal growth. Nationwide/International. All ages. Since 1984. Free sample: Box 444, Lenoxdale, MA 01242, or <http://www.concernedsingles.com>, or 413-445-6309.

## TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY EVENTS!

NAME OF EVENT \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF SPONSOR OR HOST \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT PERSON \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE THIS FORM COMPLETED \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/TOWN \_\_\_\_\_

STATE/PROV \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP/POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PROPOSED DATES OF EVENT \_\_\_\_\_

- Check here if dates are firm.
- Check here if dates are tentative, and give alternative dates being considered.
- Check here if you would like information from us on other events scheduled for the dates you have listed.

**Deadline:** 3-6 months before event. Please enclose information describing the event(s) that you wish to have listed.

Please mail to: **Community Calendar**  
PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541

*Want to live a five minute walk from downtown?*

*Next to a beautiful 50-acre park?*

*Near hiking/biking trails along a river?*

**You can!**

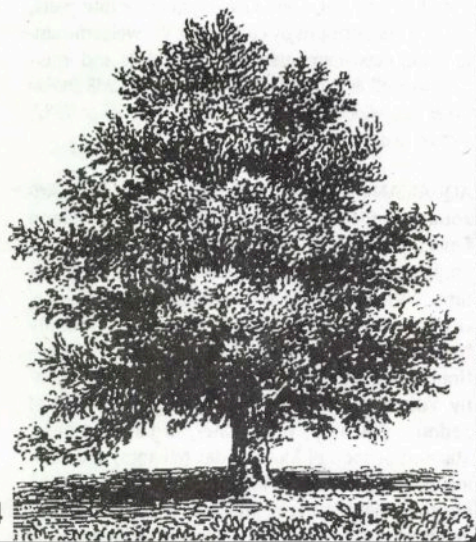
**Martinez Park  
CoHousing  
in Ft. Collins, CO  
(to be built in 1998)**

**34 homes, 1-4 bedrooms  
\$110,000-240,000**

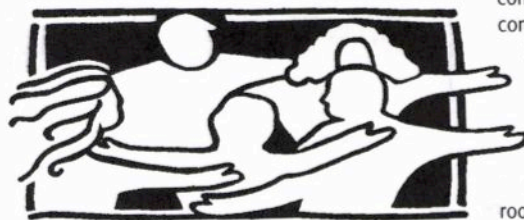
**Actively seeking new  
members.**

**Call now!**

**Laurie Bayless (970) 482-6034**



# 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 SPRING 1998 ISSUE (OUT IN MARCH) IS JANUARY 12!***

*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; phone: 413-625-0077.***

*May I suggest that the best way to get a larger response is to put address and phone/fax (and e-mail if you have it.) Listings for workshops, land, books, personals, etc. belong in the classified ads, so please contact editor Diana Christian.*

## COMMUNITIES WITH OPENINGS

**ACORN, Mineral, Virginia.** Seeking Gardeners! We are looking for enthusiastic folks with initiative to help with our Community Supported Agriculture program and growing food for ourselves. We have one acre planted that includes vegetables, flowers, herbs, raised beds for greens, and an experimental garden. Our egalitarian, income-sharing community of 20 has been learning to live and love together for four years, making our decisions by consensus. We welcome visitors and new members with varied skills and interests, as well as agricultural. *Acorn, 1259-CM8 Indian Creek Rd., Mineral, VA 23117; 540-894-0595 or 0582; e-mail: acorn@ic.org.*

**AQUARIAN CONCEPTS COMMUNITY, Sedona, Arizona.** Founded by **Gabriel of Sedona and Niann Emerson Chase** in 1986, with the Mandate of the Bright and Morning Star. Currently 100 members full-time. We love children. International flavor. Planetary Divine Administration. God-centered community based on teachings of *The URANTIA Book* and *Continuing Fifth Epochal Revelation—The Cosmic Family Volumes* as transmitted through Gabriel of Sedona. Clean air, pure water, organic gardens. Starseed Schools of Melchizedek (all ages) and healing environment which includes morontian counseling and other alternative practices. Gabriel of Sedona and the Bright and Morning Star Band with the vocal

CD "Holy City," and Future Studios with art, acting and video productions. **Planetary Service Industries**, including light construction, stone masonry, landscaping, cleaning and maintenance, teepees and yurts, computer services, elder home care. Serious spiritual commitment required to be a full community member. Lesser student commitment also available. *PO Box 3946, W. Sedona, AZ 86340; 520-204-1206.*

**CARDIFF PLACE COHOUSING COMMUNITY, Victoria, B.C.** In vibrant neighborhood, one mile from beach, parks and downtown. One bedroom, first floor condo (720 sf.) **One of six in heritage building** (common areas on main floor.) 21 adults and 7 children live in inter-generational community of 17 households. Three common dinners/wk., business by consensus, and process meetings. One block from elementary school and daycare, on bus route to downtown, community college and Univ. of Victoria. Pet allowed. S.Cdn. Printed info available. By owner: *250-388-0902.*

**COHOUSING COMMUNITY, Bend, Oregon.** Lots for sale in active intentional cohousing community of environmentally sensitive homes. Includes common house, pond and grounds. High desert climate, near ski and wilderness areas. Request info from: *Dietland Johnson, 2575 NE Community Lane, Bend, OR 97701 or call: 541-388-0689 or 541-389-1514.*

**CONFLUENCE, Vallecito, California.** We are 23 years old. Originally founded as rafting/kayak school near the Stanislaus River. We evolved into a community of people living simply and sharing environmental, social and political values with many gatherings and benefits. Now as we approach the 21st century, we are faced with new challenges and opportunities. We always need new energy and ideas. *POB 224, Vallecito, CA 95251; 509-773-3899.*

**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.*

**ECOVILLAGE OF LOUDOUN COUNTY, Virginia.** Imagine living on 180 acres of beautiful rolling land with mature trees, incredible vistas, several streams and easy access to the Potomac. Think about living in a convenient location whether working in Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia, Frederick, Maryland

with a five minute trip to the train line, bus and major roadways. Enjoy a dynamic community where you know your neighbors yet are afforded the balance of privacy. Become part of this unique community that combines the principles of an ecovillage and cohousing community. Find out more about EcoVillage by e-mailing (*ecovill@aol.com*) or calling *Grady O'Rear 301-662-4646.*

**GANAS, Staten Island, New York, G.R.O.W. II (Group Realities Open Workshops), Parkville, New York.** Ganas, a NYC intentional community, has added a new conference center and workshop facility on 72 beautiful acres in NY state's Catskill Mountains. The newly renovated property includes a small hotel with 55 attractive double rooms and baths, some dorms, good meeting space, a disco, a rec room, two saunas, a swimming pool, a boating and fishing pond, a large campground and an outdoor concert area. Ganas started in 1980 and grew from six people (all still here) to about 80 adults of all ages, philosophies and ethnicity. Only 14 share all their resources; another 35-40 participate in decision-making and most Ganas activities. The remaining 25-30 live in the seven NYC residences, work in the four retail-resale businesses and the houses, or work in the city and pay their expenses. Almost everyone helps out in the new country project. Talking together daily makes it possible to solve problems in dialogue, as they come up, and to aim at learning to decide things together wisely with love, truth, and interactive intelligence. Goals include becoming individually autonomous, collectively cooperative and closely bonded with each other. G.R.O.W. II, the new country project, will add fitness, personal growth, and cultural opportunities to our lives. The NYC stores are also expanding and more help is needed in both places. Long and short term visitors and new members are welcome. Write: *135 Corson Ave., Staten Island, NY 10301; 718-720-5378; fax: 718-448-6842; e-mail: ganas@well.com.*

**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.*

**INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY, Occidental, California.** 65 miles north of San Francisco. Community seeks partners, couple to share 80 acres, organic gardens. Large down payment, reasonable mortgage. Call *707-874-1999* or send e-mail: *partners@strathmoor.com.*

**JOLLY RANCHERS, Seattle, Washington.** We are a small (three core members, guests, two dogs and several cats) family-style community on an urban site with two houses that both need work (but are quite liveable unless you're Leona Helmsly!) Our long term goal is to move to a more pastoral setting somewhere in the northwest. We believe that the U.S. of A. is one broken down, alienated place to be, and that small groups of dynamic individuals might be able to hold back the dimming of the light. We spend some of our time working out communication strategies which are honest, direct and kind. We also eat, sleep, work



and play. We are looking for prospective members who are committed to consensus, money sharing, right livelihood, sustainability, intimacy, and fun. Irreverent sense of humor a plus. Call or write for information: *Jolly Ranchers, 2711 S. Elmwood Pl., Seattle, WA 98144; 206-322-8071.*

**L.A. ECO-VILLAGE, Los Angeles, California.** In process, near downtown. We seek friendly, outgoing eco-co-op knowledgeable neighbors. Auto-less folks preferred who want to demonstrate and share low consumption, high-quality lifestyles in an interesting, multi-cultural, high-visibility community. Spanish or Korean-speaking helpful. Lots of potential for right livelihood, but must be initially financially self-reliant. Call or write: *Lois Arkin, 3551 White House Place, Los Angeles, CA 90024; 213-738-1254; e-mail: crsp@igc.apc.org.*

**RACHANA RETREAT, Redmond, Washington.** New members wanted! Intentional Community based on win/win paradigm. Redmond/Seattle area, country setting, ozonated pool and hot tub. *425-868-4159.*

**SANDHILL FARM, Rutledge, Missouri.** Family-style, income-sharing, egalitarian 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 by having fun! We grow most of our own food and value the energy put into that process. We operate by consensus and hold group meetings twice weekly. We are looking for people who value simple living, are self-motivated, conscientious, self-aware, and willing to follow through with conflict resolution. Having a sense of humor and a joy for living are big pluses. We have recently joined energies with Dancing Rabbit (a community two miles away aiming to build a sustainable ecovillage.) We are six adult members, and three children. Come be part of the excitement! *Sandhill Farm, Rt. 1, Box 155-C, Rutledge, MO 63563; 660-883-5543; sandhill@ic.org*

**SANDY BAR RANCH, Orleans, California.** Northern California land-based community seeking new members! We are a collective of fun-loving, hard workers creating a sustainable, living/working alternative in the Klamath mountains. We run several businesses including educational workshops and cabin rentals, and are designing a garden area along permacultural principles. We are seeking people interested in collective living and permaculture, with experience in general maintenance, gardening, hotel management and marketing. Good communication, self-motivation and a sense of humor are essential. Contact us at: *POB 347, Orleans, CA 95556; tel: 916-627-3379; e-mail: sandybar@earthlink.net.*

**TERRA NOVA, Columbia, Missouri.** Earth-friendly lifestyle in university town. Large garden, close-in location (easy to walk, bike, or bus), recycling, sharing resources. Consensus decision-making, conflict resolution, developing deeper relationships. Kids OK. Feminist perspective, welcome diversity in sexual orientation, race, cultural background, age. No smoking, no drugs. *1404 Gary, Columbia, MO 65203; 573-443-5253; e-mail: terranovac@aol.com.*

**TRILLIUM COMMUNITY LAND TRUST, Siskiyou Mountains.** Seeking individuals, couples and families to join as shareholders, resident members or renters. Trillium, founded in 1976, is 82 acres of wild river canyon, organic gardens, meadows, ponds, various cabins, workspaces, community house, and ridgetop wilderness views. We are a handful of educators, artists and activists; land stewards rebuilding our intentional community and inviting responsible, like-minded and like-hearted vegetarian folks who share our vision and goals. Join us in hosting workshops, retreats, gatherings and a university residential program. One hour from Ashland and Southern Oregon University. Live in harmony with the seasons, with spirit and with each other to build a beautiful and better world for all. Please contact us at: *PO Box 1330, Jacksonville, OR 97530; <deep@mind.net>.*

**TWIN OAKS, Louisa, Virginia.** After seven years, Twin Oaks is finally looking for new members! We no longer have a Waiting List, and we are very interested in welcoming more visitors and members. There's a wide variety of work and activities available to people, including milking cows, woodworking, making tofu, cooking and baking, office and administrative work, weaving hammocks and much more! Some of our social activities include a weekly round-singing group, a juggling class, a knitting circle, yoga and meditation opportunities. Twin Oaks Community is an egalitarian, income-sharing eco-village of 100 people living on 450 acres of land in central Virginia. Our values include cooperation, non-violence, ecological awareness and participatory government. Contact us for our free visitor information packet. *Twin Oaks, 138-R Twin Oaks Rd, Louisa, VA, 23093; 540-894-5126; <twincoaks@ic.org>, <www.twincoaks.org>.*

**WIMMIN'S RURAL CO-OP, Athens, Ohio.** Seeks more residential staff, short or long term. Rural land trust on 151 acres only 20 minutes from Ohio University, Hocking College and other intentional communities. SASE: *Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home, PO Box 5853, Athens, OH 45701; ad965@seorf.ohiou.edu.*

**WYGELIA, Adamstown, Maryland.** We are located on 65 wooded acres in Frederick County, Maryland, 40 miles north of Washington, D.C. and 6 miles south of Frederick, Maryland. What we offer: large existing

house with unfinished first floor and well-equipped workshop. Space to build a second residence. A broad range of skills and experience, including fabric arts, upholstery, engineering, wood shop, machine shop, forge and foundry. Opportunity to be in near the beginning. We are prepared to take you seriously as a contributing member. We are caring and sensitive, accomplished at Co-counseling, willing to train people. Who we seek: sensitive, caring people with serious intention to live in community. Artists, craftspeople, engineers, inventors. People willing to learn. Please no drop-ins, call or write to arrange a visit. *John Ditman, Wygelia, 2919 Monocacy Bottom Rd., Adamstown, MD 21710; 301-831-8280.*

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**CHICAGO/ELGIN, Illinois.** Vintage hippie-anarchists ISO visionary philosopher-daredevils for intimate egalitarian relationships in a communal setting. We seek creative, free-spirited experimenters independent personalities, co-creators, to plunge forward into whatever areas of human interconnectedness we imagine together. We share a magnificent level of connection. We hold our circle open to others capable and desirable of joining our beautiful, experimental dance. *847-622-3693.*

**DANCING RABBIT, Rutledge, Missouri.** Highly motivated, community and ecologically minded, and experienced group is looking for individuals, families and communities to help create the ideal rural ecovillage. We're starting construction on our 280 beautiful, rolling acres in northeast Missouri. Dancing Rabbit will be a large community with many different subcommunities that interact socially and economically. Our goal is to build a small town that is

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Communities Magazine, December 1997

Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Actual no. copies of issue #96 (Fall 1997)
1. Total number of copies (net press run)	5,030	5,203
2. Pd or requested circulation (dealers)	2,718	3,205
3. Pd or requested mail subscriptions	1,554	1,485
4. Total pd or requested circulation (2+3)	4,272	4,690
5. Free distribution (unpaid samples)	0	0
6. Total distribution (4+5)	4,272	4,690
7. Copies not distributed	295	503
8. Returns from dealers	463	10
9. Total (6+7+8)	5,030	5,203
10. Percent pd or requested circulation	100%	100%

*Linda Sandhill*

Business Manager, October 1, 1997

truly sustainable and socially responsible. DR's first subcommunity, Skyhouse (an FEC community of five adults and one child,) has a close working relationship with Sandhill Farm, a 23-year-old egalitarian community nearby. We are especially interested in existing community groups joining us. We've got the ideas, the energy, and the land, all we need is you! Contact us now to arrange a visit. RR 1, Box 156, Rutledge, MO 63563; 660-883-5511 or [dancing-rabbit@ic.org](mailto:dancing-rabbit@ic.org); [www.dancingrabbit.org](http://www.dancingrabbit.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; 704-298-2399.*

**EARTHEN SPIRITUALITY PROJECT, Reserve, New Mexico.** In Gila Wilderness of New Mexico. Individual or couple wanted for co-caretakership of remote ecological sanctuary and Anasazi spiritual site. Ritual guardianship and wildlands restoration, seven river crossings from the nearest road. Seasonal work, trades, or long-term residency in Pleistocene paradise. *Jes Hardin, Earthen Spirituality Project, POB 509, Reserve, NM 87830.*

**EDEN RANCH, Paonia, Colorado.** Forming community seeking members desiring rural, spiritual environment, sharing labor and resources on biodynamic, permaculture 65-acre farm. Help plan your future! Bring your home business, or work in nearby small towns. Future community business envisioned. Ecovillage concepts leading toward ultimate self-sustainability. Diversity in thought and age, consensus decision-making results from mutual respect and trust. Maximum 15 families. Approximately \$25,000 (flexible terms available,) plus cost of building your earth-friendly home. Located on Western Colorado mesa, wondrous 360 degree views. \$2 for Community Plan and newsletter. *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.*

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.** Homeschool family with seven year old. Developing our homestead, organic fruit and nut tree orchard on Mattole River. Worked extensively on land/stream restoration, sustainable logging for building and firewood. Developed solar/hydro energy systems. Would like community of families sharing gardens, homesteading, etc. Many possibilities. Our vision is to share our place with people interested in learning to live sustainably, developing interdependence on each other and the land. Two-bedroom cottage available for homeschool family with future hope of buying into

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**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.** Full chakra intimacy, permaculture activism, cluster cohousing, investors of time/resources/vision. *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. Our spirituality is inclusive, believing that all religions and philosophies contribute in some way to a greater purpose of the whole. Spirituality as a way of life, as a way to realize our true selves, individually and as a group, to be an example of right living to the world, is our design. We are primarily interested in attracting polysexual (gay/bisexual) individuals oriented toward a polyamorous lifestyle with tribal overtones. Contact us for more information. *Nasalam, Rt. 3, Box 332, Fair Grove, MO 65648; 417-759-7854, e-mail: [nasalam@aol.com](mailto:nasalam@aol.com). Internet: [member.aol.com/nasalam/](http://member.aol.com/nasalam/).*

**NEW ENGLAND COMMUNITY** forming emphasizing mutual support, strong community involvement, environmental responsibility, sustainability, flexible housing and living situations, jobs within the community, creativity, appropriate technology, involvement with the surrounding world and cooperation. Seeking potential collaborators/planners or members. Persons of all races, creeds, sexual orientations welcome. Rural location in southern Vermont or on the Atlantic Coast within two hours of one or more major cities and not far from a fair-sized town. Contact: *Luc Reid, 213 Kings Hwy., E. Haddonfield, NJ 08033; 609-429-1141; fax 609-429-6162; [community@accessdatabase.com](mailto:community@accessdatabase.com); <http://www.accessdatabase.com/community>.*

**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 with share in 60 acres of common land ranging from \$23,000-\$30,000. Plans for community building and sauna. An educational arts facility including large stone house equipped for group dining, and three workshop/studio buildings is also for sale to community members. Our vision is to establish harmony, cooperation, creativity and reciprocity of support. We value relationships, 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 community. Call: *Neel or Deborah, 413-634-0181 or send SASE to Neel Webber, 9 Frazier Lane, Cummington, MA 01026.*

**REDWOOD, Los Gatos, California.** Forming a small cooperative community (10-15 people) to provide an extended family for our children and ourselves. Located 20 minutes from Silicon Valley or Santa Cruz, the property is 10 acres with large house, shop, pool, sauna, hot tub, orchards, redwood grove and large organic garden space. Share vegetarian meals in common kitchen. Interests include: yoga, singing, clothing optional lifestyle, drumming, high-technology, spiritual exploration, children and living simply. Shareas 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; 713-863-0433.*

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http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/SHARING  
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**WINDTREE RANCH, Douglas, Arizona.** Earth spirituality, eco-centered life, non-profit intentional community on 1227 acres of remote, off-grid, off-road, 4WD access, unspoiled foothills at comfortable 5200', health conscious, toxin-free, naturist, inter-generational, holistic, poly-sexual, Radical Honesty for sustainable relationships, serving Mother Earth through simplicity, stewardship and hard work (physical, emotional, and spiritual). *WindTree Ranch, RR 2, Box 1, Douglas, AZ; 520-678-5186; e-mail: WindTreeRh@aol.com.*

## PEOPLE LOOKING

**EARTH-CONSCIOUS PRODUCTION ARTIST** and daughter seeking meaningful way to live. Strong desktop publishing skills and own system but not much money. Compassionate, caring and ready to make a difference! Willing to relocate and be involved. Phone: *Peg 425-483-6546; e-mail: bonegrph@gte.net.*

**DWM, 49, ENTJ,** egalitarian loyal polyamorist, Libertarian intellectual, omnivorous aware responsible computer professional, ethical humanist atheist, (com)passionate, sensual. Is into: prosperity, massage, sci-fi, chocolate, sailing, laughter, theater, personal and spiritual growth. Seeking like-minded individuals and couples with broad interests that are independent yet cooperative minded, adventurous and liberated for a polyfidelitous group. *Rich, PO Box 1295, Madison, WI 53701.*

**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.*

**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.*

**ISOLATED, PERSECUTED ACTIVIST** (shot at, windows broken, etc.) seeks rural sanctuary. Disabled but self-sufficient. I have lived in wall tent year round for four years til driven out. Cannot tolerate pesticides or herbicides. Can offer \$150/month for rent of tent space. Write: *D.R., Box 382, Ellicott Station, Buffalo, NY 14203.*

**SEEKING POSITION AS HOUSEKEEPER, MANAGER** or caretaker in community or other situation. Straight, semi-disabled (not unable) man, 48—excellent cook; do housework, laundry, mending, marketing, errands, etc. Great with kids—diapers to high school. Cannot do heavy physical work but can care for pets, livestock, most outside chores. Skilled in carpentry, plumbing, electrical, welding, appliance repair, maintenance, etc. Much experience with garden produce, fruit trees, berries, herbs. Experience in marketing produce, working with public, sales. Can teach cooking classes, other instructional courses. Much business and supervisory experience. Great planner/organizer. Prefer country setting where winters aren't too cold. My monthly fee depends on the amount of work to be done, living quarters, "outside" income-making opportunities, etc. However, you will be surprised at how cheaply I work. Self-insured for your liability protection. *James Mason, Rt. 2, Box 2274, Cassville, MO 65625; 417-847-2464.*

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## INTERNS WANTED

**MAHANTONGO SPIRIT GARDEN, Pitman, Pennsylvania.** Internships in pantheist, non-Christian, spiritual retreat center for gay men in central Pennsylvania. Room and board in exchange for work in garden, orchard, building projects. Write: *Brother Johannes, M.S.G., Pitman, PA 17964.*

**SUNRISE RANCH, Loveland, Colorado.** We are offering learning programs for interns 18 and older. Spend a season at our intentional community—a "living university." Train in one or two of the following areas: biodynamic gardening, permaculture, village maintenance, food service, and conferencing. Room, board, and a small stipend offered. Gain valuable life skills including effective communication and spiritual expression. Learning is experiential with regular teaching sessions with a team of inspiring mentors. Three to six-month commitment. May–October. Call: *970-679-4226*, or write *Personnel, Sunrise Ranch, 5569 North County Rd. 29, Loveland, CO 80538.*

**INTERN FOR BUILDING PROJECTS.** Small fledgling community seeks someone with rudimentary carpentry skills for help with alternative building methods and permaculture projects in exchange for short-term room, board, small stipend. Straw-clay walls, natural plaster, etc. Opportunities for work/study exchanges at nearby CSA farm, biodynamic garden at neighboring community. For information packet: *PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541; 970-593-5615.*

## RESOURCES

**ALTERNATIVE EGALITARIAN COMMUNITIES** welcome visitors/potential members. Live in the country with others who value equality, ecology, and nonviolence. For our booklet, send \$3 to *Federation of Egalitarian Communities, East Wind, CM98, Tecumseh, MO 65760*, or call *417-679-4682.*

**COMMUNITY SEEKERS' NETWORK OF NEW ENGLAND.** For joining, starting, and learning about intentional communities via: trips, meetings, and "Many to Many" style newsletter. *CSN/NE c/o 15 Marcus Rd., Sharon, MA 02067; 617-784-4297.*

**INTERESTED IN JOINING A BRUDERHOF COMMUNITY?** We'll put you in touch with former members of the Hutterian Brethren/Bruderhof. *Peregrine Foundation, PO Box 460141, San Francisco, CA 94146; 415-821-2090.*

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## PERIPETETIC COMMUNITARIAN

(continued from p. 84)

constructively, we remain at choice about how we do that. For example, we can choose to be upset by critical feedback, or to be excited that we are getting new information. This is easy to say, but hugely challenging to live.

In my own life I have successfully reprogrammed some learned emotional habits, such as a fear of Black people based on prejudices. It took an effort to see that the truth underlying my fear was not that African Americans were bad, but that I had been hanging around and absorbing other people's beliefs and fears about them. I consciously chose to replace that early-programmed belief with one that served me better—to trust and accept Black people—a belief that aligned well with my worldview. And once the judgments stopped, the fears faded quickly.

This powerful new insight also carries dangers—it may become “politically correct” to pretend we have already resolved our core emotional issues, and to treat others who react “emotionally” as unevolved or self-indulgent. This same trap caught us in the '70s, and I hope we can transcend it this time around.

To be effective, we need to learn to accept “imperfect” behaviors in our friends, but let them know their behavior looks ineffective and counterproductive. We can then ask if they'd be willing to work on changing that attitude and behavior; however, we must base our interactions on a foundation of respect, understanding, trust, and hope. To make that kind of change, we must believe that changing our habits is possible ... and necessary. Ω

*Geoph Kozeny has lived in communities of one kind or another for 24 years. He has been on the road for 10 years visiting communities of all stripes—getting involved in the daily routine of each group, asking about their visions and realities, taking photos, and giving slide shows about the diversity and vitality of the communities movement.*



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# Feelings About Feelings ...

## *25 Years Older ... 25 Years Wiser?*

**M**Y BELIEFS ABOUT FEELINGS—WHAT they are, and how to deal with them effectively—have changed drastically over the past quarter of a century.

In the early 1970s, at about the time *Communities* magazine got its start, I was having my first experiences living “intentionally” in a cooperative household. I remember how easy it was then to envision a brighter future, one that would be actualized through creating an alternative culture. I was pleasantly surprised to find that my housemates and I were amazingly good at sharing the chores and coming up with workable everyday decisions. Yet at the time, we were remarkably inexperienced and naive about working with our emotions.

To start with—as was the cultural norm at the time for a bunch of young, fairly well-educated white kids—most of us were not even in touch with our feelings. I had learned, as a boy growing up in the Midwest, to not express feelings ... to be stoic and “tough it out” when others showed signs of being overwhelmed by emotion. If people in our group became emotional, the standard approach was to calm them down, reassure them that we could solve whatever problem was upsetting them, and help them find a logical and reasonable solution.

Fortunately, we avoided the emotionally charged issues enough that our lives were fairly harmonious. Unfortunately, we often created band-aid solutions that addressed the immediate problems but left the underlying causes unidentified and unchanged. Feelings were repressed, stewing beneath the surface until the next big explosion.

Enter the “Human Potential Movement.” By the late ’70s, exciting advances in psychology and sociology crept into the counterculture. Most groups I knew had come to the conclusion that “You need to get out of your head

and deal with your underlying emotions.” In retrospect, I see that belief as a big step forward—but one that was still terribly inexperienced and naive.

Usually, in trying to work with our emotions we’d get even more stuck than before. In our former “logical” days, we at least had the luxury of some defined parameters and processes to fall back on. When “logical” was

the rule, the person or faction with the most articulate and persuasive argument usually carried the day, and the decisions were fairly straightforward. Once we were committed to working with our feelings, however, the folks who came off as the most sincere, the most “right-brained,” became the most influential.

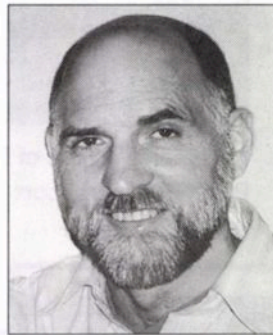
During that period, our greatest challenge was that feelings became equated with “truth,” and the individual became the unquestioned authority on identifying and interpreting his or her own feelings. I think this is ultimately where that responsibility lies; however, our tendency is to look into our emotions only deep enough to find an answer we are comfortable with. Often we don’t get down to the real underlying issues.

In studying communities, I see that ever so slowly a new theory is emerging—that feelings are a product of our beliefs, and are valuable entry points into exploring our deepest selves. However, feelings are not “truth” in essence; rather they are true and accurate reports that something is

going on at our core. Mistaking a feeling for a truth is like confusing a photo of a smiling child with the physical reality of *being* that child.

This insight has powerful implications: We are always at choice about what we feel, and what we do with those feelings. If we experience a deep emotion, such as anger, we may not see a way to change that experience in the moment, but if we believe it can and should be expressed

*(continued on page 83)*



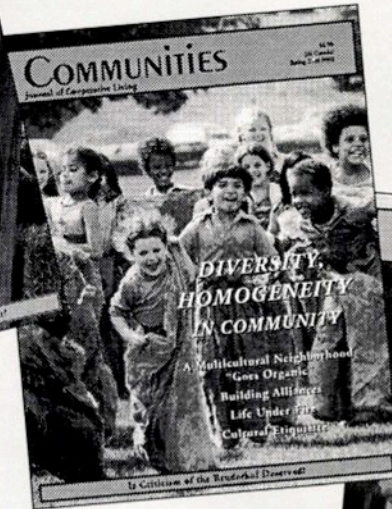
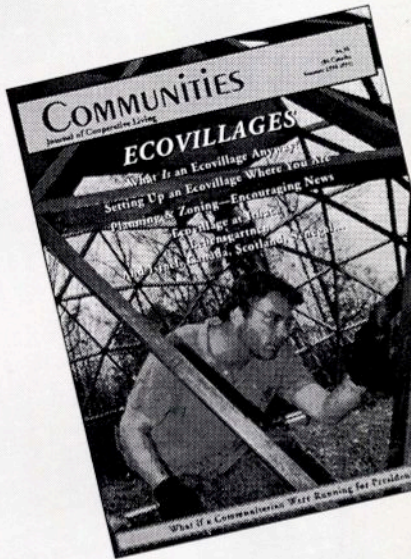
BY GEOPH KOZENY

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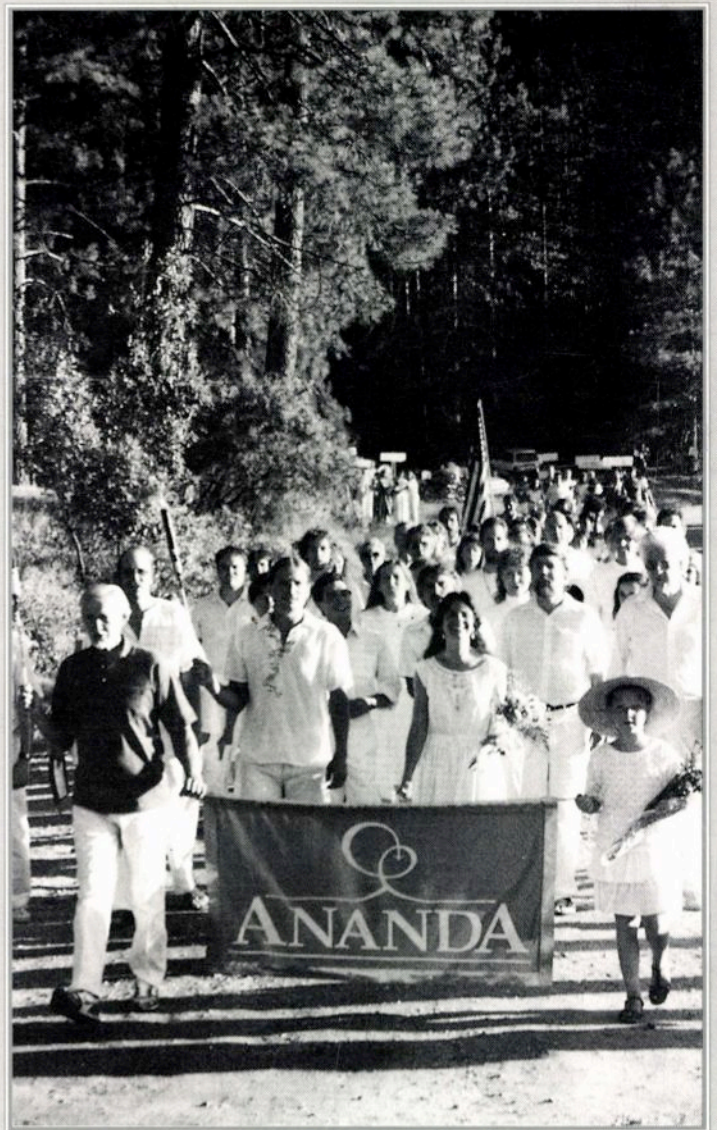
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"It will be our intention  
to encourage the communities  
movement, helping community  
become a viable alternative  
and thereby a solution  
to the problems of society."

—Communities magazine's first issue,  
December 1972

"Regardless of the length of time  
someone lived communally,  
or how long the community existed,  
the experience was typically  
described as "mind-blowing"  
or "Earth-shattering."

—Deborah Altus, '60s Communes  
Project, 1997



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