

ISSUE #1

C.A.L.L. BULLETIN

SPRING 2023



Communes At Large Letter



YAD TABENKIN



International Communal
Studies Association (ICSA)



**INTENTIONAL
COMMUNITIES DESK**

Dear Readers,

A very warm welcome to the very first issue of the C.A.L.L. Bulletin. If you are looking to immerse yourself in the world of intentional communities, you've certainly come to the right place.



If the layout, the fonts, the content, or the smiling face above are in anyway familiar, that's because this 'new' publication is actually an amalgamation of two previously existing newsletters, which have graced the intentional communities stage for decades.

The first of these esteemed publications was the Bulletin, which had been meticulously edited twice a year by Ruth Sobol, on behalf of the International Communal Studies Association (ICSA)

C.A.L.L. is a slightly newer offering, having been published by the Intentional Communities Desk (ICD) since 1992, under the editorship, over most of those years, by yours truly.

It is an honour and a privilege to be able to continue in this tradition by bringing you, communal scholars, those living in community and those who are community curious, articles from around the world, reflecting the beauty, passion and diversity of community living.

And finally, I am excited to be the first one to invite our readers to take interest in our Call for Papers for the upcoming ICSA Virtual Conference taking place in January. The portal is now live on our website for accepting paper, workshop, panel and cultural event proposals for what should be a groundbreaking conference – the first truly global virtual intentional communities conference – taking place over multiple timezones in order to be more accessible for a wider audience, with a particular emphasis on encouraging more participation from the Global South. More details can be found on the next couple of pages.

You can send us your suggestions, corrections, contributions and retributions regarding the new C.A.L.L. Bulletin, to the email address below,

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CALL FOR PAPERS

ICSA VIRTUAL CONFERENCE 2024

BUILDING COMMUNITIES FOR GLOBAL SOCIAL CHANGE

Dates:

Monday 15th January

09:00-13:00 Europe (+1 GMT), 03:00-07:00 US Central Standard Time (-6 GMT), 13:30-17:30 India (+5:30 GMT), 19:00-23:00 Australia (+10 GMT)

Wednesday 17th January

14:00-18:00 Europe (+1 GMT), 08:00-12:00 US Central Standard Time (-6 GMT), 18:30-22:30 India (+5:30 GMT), 00:00-04:00 Australia (+10 GMT)

Friday 19th January

05:00-09:00 Europe (+1 GMT), 23:00-03:00 US Central Standard Time (-6 GMT), 09:30-13:30 India (+5:30 GMT), 14:00-18:00 Australia (+10 GMT)

Medium: Zoom

Proposal Deadline: 9th June 2023

Anticipated response date for proposal feedback / acceptance: 30th June 2023

Conference theme:

Building communities for global social change

The 21st century is a time of change and uncertainty. The pandemic forced us to think and act in unfamiliar ways to meet our individual and social needs. The climate crisis reminds us how dependent we are on the fine balance of nature. War and natural disasters displace millions of people each year. The age of digitalization tests our social and economic systems. The International Communal Studies Association 2024 virtual conference is dedicated to the roles intentional communities play in fostering social change around the globe.

In this conference, we provide arenas for in-depth discussions among researchers and academicians on topics of relevance. We also aim to provide networking opportunities for community members and practitioners. Particularly, it is the organizers' wish that many communities from the Global South will participate and contribute to enriching the conference's content.



With this in mind, we have chosen to organize the conference around two equally important parts: Academic/scholarly contributions and non-academic contributions focusing on community practice.

Academic contributions - We welcome papers, panels, workshops and cultural event proposals on the following topics:

1. Community as social change
 - a. Historical communities
 - b. Communities and movements that challenge mainstream power structures. Examples can be the movement of landless farmers in Brazil, the poor people's campaign, MOVE - the black power movement.
 - c. Communities and the environment: communities' contribution to sustainability transition
 - i. Topics can include community initiatives to reduce environmental footprint, degrowth, circular economy, transition towns among others.
 - d. Tackling issues of displacement - ways of accommodating refugees (as a result of conflict, loss of livelihood or the climate crisis) and tackling homelessness.
2. The practice of living in community
 - a. Aging, disability, identity in community.
 - b. Understanding conflict, tension and areas of disagreement in communities
 - c. Workshops on selected topics (for example, experiences from communities engaging with new practices such as going solar, growing their own food...etc.)
 - d. The way forward for communities
 - i. In the era of digitalization and pandemics, what role can communities play?
3. Methodologies for studying communities
 - a. Methodological discussions relevant for community studies. Topics such as creative ways of studying communities, reflections around the challenges and opportunities of existing methodologies for studying communities.
4. As always, we are happy to receive proposals on subjects unrelated to the conference theme, so long as they are relevant to the study of intentional communities.

Non-academic contributions - These sessions are typically workshops to teach participants about community practices, cultural events that might involve art, music poetry, storytelling, games, etc., or panels, where a small group of panelists discuss an issue of importance to intentional communities. If the session is meant to involve peer-



to-peer learning, get-to-know-each-other events, or other informal activities, it still must be moderated – typically by the person who is proposing the session.

1. Artistic contributions
 - a. Music, storytelling.
2. Community space - for communities to get to know each other and network. Examples of activities could be:
 - a. Quiz, bingo.
 - b. Games - write two truths and one lie about your community and let the others guess which ones are true and which one is a lie.
 - c. Space for World café
 - d. Practical space for peer-to-peer learning - Community members propose topics for chat. Some examples could be:
 - i. Going solar, growing food, non-violent communication
 - e. Break out rooms - Coffee house (time slot)

Please submit your proposal through the conference portal on ICSA's website:

<https://www.icsacommunity.org/call-for-papers>

Submission should be made electronically to limit word count.

Guidelines for academic contributions. Please include:

1. The title of your presentation,
2. An indication of whether it is a paper, panel, workshop, or cultural event,
3. The names and contact information of all presenters,
4. An abstract of up to 300 words, suitable for inclusion in the program book,
5. A 50-word biography of each presenter,

Guidelines for non-academic contributions. Please include:

1. Title of the session
2. An indication of whether this is a panel (typically 90 minutes, with two or three panelists), workshop (typically 60 minutes), or cultural event (typically 60 minutes).
3. The names and contact information of all presenters/moderators. (Keep in mind that the session must be moderated by someone, even if it is an informal peer-learning session or chance to chat)
4. A summary of the session that explains the purpose, content, and format of the session for inclusion in the program booklet.
5. A 50-word biography of each presenter/moderator.



Conference fees:

Conference Ticket for ICOSA members*:

Pay what you can - for individuals on a very low income
50 euros - for individuals on a professional income
100 euros - for sponsor

Conference Ticket plus new membership*:

Pay what you can - for individuals on a very low income
50 euros for individuals on a low income
100 euros for individuals on a professional income
200 euros for sponsor

Community Conference Ticket for ICOSA Organizational Members (Limited to 5 simultaneous zoom connections, unlimited participants on each connection):

100 euros - regular
250 euros - sponsor

Community Conference Ticket plus new organizational membership (Limited to 5 simultaneous zoom connections, unlimited participants on each connection):

200 euros - regular
500 euros - sponsor

Communities in the Global South that are willing to contribute a workshop or panel session receive both conference ticket and organizational membership gratis.

Communities that cannot afford to participate are invited to "pay what you can"

*ICOSA has a tradition of holding in-person conferences every three years, and we expect our next in-person conference to be in summer 2025. All memberships expire just before our in-person conference. Whether you purchased a membership at the time of our 2022 conference or purchase a new membership now, you will be invited to renew in the spring of 2025.



Join ICOSA, and get a subscription to Communities Magazine absolutely free

Complimentary one-year digital subscriptions are available to new subscribers of Communities Magazine. Promotion guaranteed for only the first 50 participants taking out an ICOSA membership. Both renewals and first-time members of ICOSA are eligible.



Twin Oaks Communities Conference



Twin Oaks Communities Conference: September 1 - 4 2023, Louisa Virginia USA

Communes, ecovillages, co-ops, and more! You are invited to join us for a weekend of workshops, networking, and discussions including social justice intersecting with community, sustainability, and decision-making, plus an awesome dance party. We welcome seekers and seasoned communitarians alike.

The 2023 Communities Conference will have at least 2 threads/themes. One thread explores starting new communities, and another examines diversity, equity, and inclusion

For more information and to register: communitiesconference.org



A Community of Communities

By Valerie, Twin Oaks

If variety is the spice of life, then life is good for community living in Louisa. In addition to Twin Oaks, there are several other intentional communities in the county.

How did these all arise? In early 1967, a supporter of the ideas of Twin Oaks donated the land we now live in - that is why we are located here. In the early 90's, we helped found Acorn, as a way of providing a communal living option for the 25 people on our Waiting List. In 2010, two ex-members founded Living Energy Farm, a fossil-fuel-free farm and community. And within



the last 5 years, Cambia has sprung up nearby as well. We're also connected with Little Flower, a Catholic Worker community that offers radical hospitality and does various anti-poverty, anti-military and anti-oppression activism*. All these communities are within 10 miles of us, and it makes for a great "community of communities".

The advantages of this inter-connected network are many. Most of the other communities chose to settle here due to proximity to Twin Oaks, in order to take advantage of the social and skill-sharing abilities due to that closeness.

We collectively engage in various cooperative activities, including both work and play. If one community needs a skilled person such as a conflict resolution facilitator, or someone with experience repairing a broken well-pump, they need only look as far as the next community over. In this way we provide mutual aid. We share the work of Acorn's Southern Exposure Seed Exchange business. We have developed a Labour Exchange Program amongst all the communities. It can be fun to spend time working at another community and sometimes very helpful to take a break from one's home community, for example following a relationship break-up or similar community stress.

This broader network also provides a larger social pool and increased options for inter-community friendships and relationships. One family was "bi-community" for a few years and eventually settled into the one community that they decided fit them both best. On major





community holidays, we provide communal shuttles and send people back-and-forth, so we can celebrate with each other without each person having to take their own vehicle.

And when it comes to membership, each community has its own unique commune "flavor." If a given visitor interested in communal living

isn't quite the right fit for one community, there are several similar-but-just-different-enough options nearby. It's also not uncommon for members to move back and forth between communities either as dual-members, or, if they realize they are better suited to another commune, to make a more permanent move over to that one, while still maintaining their existing friendships and connections.

We know that diversity is strength and we are grateful for these diverse communities that share this piece of earth with us:

Twin Oaks: An income-sharing, egalitarian ecovillage of 100 people supporting themselves on 500 acres.

Acorn: A consensus-based community sharing income generated from the sale of heirloom seeds.

Cambia: Focused on co-creating a culture of social sustainability and harmony that nourishes us as well as the earth.

Living Energy Farm (LEF): A zero-fossil-fuel education center developing sustainable technologies that are accessible to all, regardless of income.

Little Flower: A Catholic Worker homestead that practices hospitality and does resistance work around issues of militarism and social injustice.

**Several other communities nearby are in the forming stages, including one that is focused on providing an intentional community home specifically for Black americans, and one that is arising out of the Taize community tradition in France.*



Heartbeet Lifesharing Woodshop

Heartbeet Lifesharing is a 150 acre Camphill community in northern Vermont that is home to 38 community members who live in 5 homes and support one another in building up a thriving community.

The Heartbeet woodshop program currently includes 11 people. Their focus has been on creating joy with the products they make. Most products have been created for friends themselves to use, and gifts that they can offer to others. There have also been special orders such as Adirondack chairs and wheelchair accessible picnic tables. The woodshop also builds wooden frames that are used for the beautiful feltings made by the Heartbeet Arts and Crafts group.



A LOOK INSIDE THE WOODSHOP, by Bob Buchanan



As winter winds sweep through the Heartbeet community, creative activity in the community woodshop produces warmth and excitement for those inside the spacious shop. Filled with work benches and a wide variety of tools, the shop often holds a small gathering of friends and coworkers who talk, share ideas, and imagine. The site is always enlivened by friend effort, interest, and energy. Weekday mornings, guided by Jonathan Gilbert and Bob Buchanan, friends bring life to a wide variety of individually developed and designed projects they

sometimes spend weeks to design and create. For the holiday season many friends sanded and finished wooden ornaments that hung in their rooms or Christmas trees. This fall, several friends completed Adirondack chairs that became welcomed places to relax at the end of long days. Currently, several friends have used woodburning tools to etch nature scenes and personal pictures— soon to be gifts for friends and family members.

While projects have different sizes and shapes, most follow common positive learning pathways. Friends explore and expand their artistic energies as they design and build often original, always heartfelt, creations for their homes, friends and families. While frustrations and difficulties can accompany progress and delay finishing, friends, supported by Jonathan, Bob and an array of coworkers, are guided gently to experience such bumps and challenges as part of our everyday learning.

In these ways the woodshop joins Heartbeet's many other spaces and activities, where friends, supported by the steady, caring energies of community members, find new and meaningful ways to imagine, design, overcome difficulties, and learn and grow. Amid the winds of winter, the woodshop warms and connects the Heartbeet community.

Shiram Community

Shiram is a community in Tverskaya Oblast, Russia, situated in between Moscow and Saint-Petersburg.

I have been living in Shiram for more than 10 years. I was born in Moscow, and lived a normal family life - with my mother and father, my brother, and my grandmother. I went to school, got a higher education, worked and created my own family. I'd spent most of my life wondering "What is the purpose of my life?" and the subsequent changes in my life only began when I started looking for answers!

I met Tatiana Ginzburg, a transpersonal psychologist and spiritual seeker. I learned breathwork techniques, like Rebirthing, Holotropic Breathing from her and played a Transformational game, from the Findhorn community. And I heard from Tatiana about the many communities, communes, and ecovillages that exist in the world.

And I was fascinated to learn about people who gather and live together - What motivates them?



I traveled with Tatiana to visit Auroville, Damanhur, Lotan, Keuruu and Tamera, and I discovered that every community has a central idea, and that people come there to implement this idea because it is meaningful for them.

Thanks to my trips and communication with the inhabitants of these communes, with GenShi, the Master of the School of Game Masters, and Tatiana Ginzburg, I discovered for

myself the answer to my burning question "What is my life's purpose?" - to develop myself, become a perfect human and become the Enlightened One.

And at one of the New Year's seminars of the School of Game Masters, called "An Extraordinary Miracle", I and other participants of the seminar - almost the entire seminar - thought about the idea of creating a place where we may live and help each other to explore and develop ourselves.

We searched for a location and thought about how we would like to implement the idea? Before long we found a place between Moscow and St. Petersburg. It was a field in the forest, and next to the river Tvertsa, a beautifully pure place in nature, with a village nearby. We named our place Shiram, like the Temple of Shkola Igratechnikov.





In the first year, we met a local forester and he brought us a thousand fir-trees and we planted them around the field.

In the field, we implemented our projects: "House of Happiness" and "Build your Door".

We have built two Buckminster Fuller geodesic buildings - the visitors that have seen them call them our "extraterrestrial homes"

We have been interested in puzzles for a long time. We make them ourselves and organize exhibitions in different cities.

I received another academic degree - I became a psychologist, and defended my PhD in psychology.

But this is how I would describe us from an external perspective, but each element usually corresponds to the internal personal work of each of the active

participants. In every project we encounter difficulties, and in order to face these difficulties, to approach them intelligently - we can overcome them through overcoming oneself, this is what moves you to perfection.

I used to blame the world - that it was destined that I suffer. But I have now chosen to believe that "The World is One and Good!", and when faced with the "injustices" of the world, I remember that this is how I behave and this is how I treat others, and it's the world reacting to me.

Shiram became the cradle for inspiration and the creation of new projects. GenShi and Tatiana gave birth to a new idea, to create a place, like a restaurant, but without prices, with payment according to conscience, where you can talk with the Sage. Russian House#1 (www.russian-house1.com) is the name of this place, and a few years ago, Tatiana began to implement this idea in California on the Russian River. And this is also a project like Shiram. People who are looking for an answer to the question "What is the purpose of my life?" Come to SHIRAM in Russia or in the United States, and we will be happy to help you find out.



Nataliya Utkina

Shiram <http://shiram.daism.ru/en>

The World is One and Good!



Join ICSA, and get a subscription to Communities Magazine absolutely free

Since its founding in 1972, *Communities* magazine (gen-us.net/communities) has been a treasure trove of primary source material for Communal Studies scholars, and has also published case studies and broader analyses by some of those scholars themselves. It has also linked active, former, and future communitarians and the community-curious not only in North America (where it is based) but around the world, sharing stories, lessons, and perspectives about the challenges and rewards of cooperation.



Communities is now expanding its reach, thanks to generous support from several visionary benefactors.

Complimentary one-year digital subscriptions are available to **new subscribers** as incentives for supporting allied groups—including the International Communal Studies Association, as well as the Global Ecovillage Network's international hub and its regional networks and nodes—until all funded subscriptions are claimed.

Every *Communities* subscription includes complete current and back issue access, allowing online viewing and/or download of all issues (close to 200 now) in pdf form, spanning more than 50 years.

A comprehensive online index compiled by Lyman Tower Sargent (gen-us.net/communities-index), covering all back issue articles, contains each author name, article title, issue of publication, and page range. Newly added in March 2023, a separate online index compiled by Timothy Miller (gen-us.net/index-by-community) catalogs every intentional community ever described in *Communities*, with the issue/starting page number of each appearance they've made in the magazine.

Published quarterly, *Communities* continues in print as well as in pdf form. It welcomes submissions (gen-us.net/submit), donations (gen-us.net/donate/magazine), advertising (gen-us.net/advertising), and further benefactor support (gen-us.net/reach), as well as regular print and digital subscriptions (gen-us.net/subscribe).

We hope you'll check out *Communities*, and support ICSA in the process! The magazine welcomes your readership and involvement.

Chris Roth, Editor, *Communities* (editor@gen-us.net)

BECOME AN ICSA MEMBER NOW AT <https://www.icsacommunity.org/join-icsa>



Ananda Valley (the Valley of Bliss)

A vibrant, aspiring integrative development project and intentional community in central Portugal.

By *iishana (isabella) Johansson*

Ananda Valley is a settlement focused on spirituality and all-round regeneration (environmental, economic and social sustainability) and local development, with a vision of being a model for 21st century sustainable living. Ananda Valley is located in a gorgeous green valley in the center of Portugal near the Serra da Estrela Nature Reserve. Over the last few years we've transformed this lush but abandoned valley into a habitable place. Our land currently covers 50 hectares comprising of wild forests, a fresh river, several scattered ruins, small springs, wild fruit trees and also 11 hectares of certified organic agricultural land. Our village community land includes houses for volunteers and visitors - with several spaces for living, working and learning together.



We are a community living on the land of Ananda Valley, consisting of interns, monks and nuns of the Ananda Marga tradition, families, workers and visitors. We have different associations that have their basis at Ananda Valley. These are Ecoativo (environmental action), Artivos (art and culture), Amurt (humanitarian aid), Pequena Ilha Verde (kids and education) and PROUT (socio-economic think tank). Our community

follows the spirituality of Ananda Marga, so we host many activities such as yoga, meditation, mantra singing and philosophy sessions. The food we eat follows a vegetarian and sattvik diet. Sattvik means vegetarian, without eggs, mushrooms, garlic and onion, and we ask our visitors to avoid these items during their stay. Ananda Valley is an alcohol and drug free place. We all work together to actualize the best possible world, with everything we love within its structure. By interning with us, the intern will gain knowledge of

regenerative cultures and within that how we cultivate the land, forests, river, animals and humans that live and cross our path. Within the intern's specialized

field, we have short or long-term focuses and projects, where they can find and develop themselves, their vision and mission, their focus of study and at the same time contribute to the micro-society of Ananda Valley. Together we encourage a holistic life-long learning process in which we incorporate the experience of community life and socially impactful practices. Our interns develop and learn skills in their chosen fields and will also nurture their own personal development within the realm of regeneration (social, environmental, spiritual).

Will It Happen to Us?

By Anton Marks

Last summer I attended the wonderful triennial conference of the International Communal Studies Association (ICSA). The conference is an incredible opportunity to meet community scholars and community builders, and to physically visit a multitude of actual living communities. The conference took place in Denmark, and we managed to visit a dozen or so local communities on both the pre- and post-conference tours.

Spending a week immersed in the world of intentional communities, one can't help but recognise the existence of a rich variety of communities, whilst also distinguishing the patterns and trends that transcend geography.

In particular, the similarities I recognised from three very distinct communities, whose stories I re-encountered this summer, sent my mind racing in an attempt to understand the implications for my own community.

I didn't need to travel to Denmark to find out about the classic, rural kibbutz communities that dot the Israeli landscape that I call my home. I've spent decades as an observer, student, and teacher of the over 100 years of kibbutz existence. The story of how these once ideological bastions of socialist living have become less and less communal and more individualistic has been written about extensively elsewhere. But the ooh's and aah's of the Israeli contingent to the conference, when they perceived striking similarities to their own kibbutz experience in the communities that we visited, were striking.

Svanholm, the rural Danish community which we visited on the post-conference tour, is a well-established community that has also undergone a process of change, with a significant reduction in the income-sharing element, the timeframe of this process eerily occurring exactly in parallel to the privatisation process of the kibbutzim in Israel.

At the conference we also heard from old friends Ina Meyer-Stoll and Achim Ecker, who described what they perceive to be a painful transition that their community of ZEGG in Germany has undergone over the past 20 years. In this case, Ina and Achim shared with us the change that they have experienced in relation to the receding focus on strengthening interpersonal relationships in their community, as opposed to more attention being paid to the business side of things. They are currently questioning everything about what they have spent decades founding and building, and are actually asking themselves some really fundamental questions such as: Is ZEGG still striving to be an alternative to the surrounding society?

Which all brings me back to my community. I'm a member of Kibbutz Mishol, a full-income-sharing urban kibbutz of 150 people all living under one roof. We've been going for over 20 years, the oldest members have already turned 50, and the oldest kids are starting to leave the community. Unlike the classic kibbutz, our model is one of a one-generational community; we don't expect or necessarily even want our kids to continue living with us as members. The classic kibbutz depended on their kids to take over the work and financial burden of the kibbutz as the members grew old—to such an extent that they didn't even invest in pension plans. This decision came back to haunt them when their kids stopped coming back to the community, members switched to differential private incomes, and many seniors overnight found themselves unable to pay to put food on their tables.

My community is built in the image of its members—why would we be so arrogant to believe that this is how our kids, born into a community they didn't choose, want to live their lives? I'd love our kids to take the values which we are surrounding them with, and become agents of change in a world that is crying out for people with a sense of responsibility, maybe even establish their own kibbutz, but our assumption is that they'll probably move away from their parents and get a regular job and lead more conventional lives.

Our growth plan is based on guiding the young people that we work with, in the educational projects that we run all over the country, including a youth movement, encouraging them to build their own kibbutz communities, which will almost certainly look quite different from how we have set up ours. We have so far established five communities in this way, and the projection is for more.

Members of Kibbutz Mishol are growing old together. We will become an old people's home—a socialist old people's home, but an old people's home nevertheless. The last remaining members will turn off the lights of this incredible community, hopefully with few regrets.

So what haunts me so much from the stories that I'm hearing? These stories, old and new, describe communities that over time become less and less radical, more and more like the surrounding society? How can we prevent the same processes happening to us?

We're working on our interpersonal relationships, and trying to not supersede them with bylaws and standardisation—understanding that each individual is unique and autonomous in making decisions for themselves.

We're investing in our future with long-term financial planning, but also for our ongoing housing requirements, for our adult kids (not as future members, but we'll continue to be responsible for them as their parents!), and for the sustainability of all our educational projects in the inner cities up and down the country.

Could we be doing more to stave off what the cynics would say is the inevitable?

Of course!

Can we guarantee that we will still be the community that we are trying to be now, 20 years down the line?

No way!

Will we crawl over the line, run over the line, or even make it to the line at all, when the last elderly members declare the natural end of the community?

I have no idea!

Do I worry about what the future holds for us as a socially activist, full-income-sharing intentional community of educators?

Yes, I do. But I also recognise that what will be is purely in our own hands. It's incumbent upon us to learn from the experiences of others, but to also understand that nothing is destined just because it happened to someone else.



School of Intentioneering

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In our current era of interest in alternatives to the dominant culture, the School of Intentioneering (SoI) provides information on the traditions and cultural innovations lived in the parallel culture of intentional communities. Through promoting understanding of the history and development of this non-indigenous parallel culture, the School of Intentioneering supports those living in community and those interested in the lifestyle.

Links to all of the written material created for the School of Intentioneering are now assembled on the website: Intentioneers.net. This includes over 2,000 pages of material, totaling over one-million words! Half of that total is in *The Intentioneers' Bible*, currently available only as an Amazon Kindle ebook. Hopefully, a second edition will someday be available in print. While the ebook is not free, the other thousand pages of SoI material presenting different aspects of intentional community are free, either as downloadable PDF files or as blog-post articles.



- The School of Intentioneering presents an historical account of intentional communities, versus taking and exchanging in the dominant culture, by presenting these two, concurrent themes of human culture through the ages in *The Intentioneers' Bible*, summarized in the "Timeline of Communitarianism."
- Collectivize! Among the many rationalizations for intentional community is the need to counter neo-fascist organizing by being aware of how contemporary American fascism is developing in much the same way as did 20th century European fascism. The counterculture of gender-equal partnership in community is the needed alternative.
- The "cofamily" is the extension of the concept of the family beyond single-parents, nuclear families, and extended or blended families, to a model of family involving small affinity-groups or collectives of three-to-nine people with or without children, who are not all related biologically or by marriage, instead by commonalities and shared agreements among people living, working, and celebrating life together. The cofamily idea affirms mutual support among a group of adults and children in small communities, in large-group cohousing communities sharing private-property, or in large communal societies comprised of "nested cofamilies" sharing common-property.

Diggers & Dreamers

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN

News and updates from Diggers and Dreamers

The Diggers and Dreamers team have been busy as usual, poking their noses into any intentional community that doesn't lock their doors! They recently spent a few days at the UK's first purpose-built cohousing community, Springhill Cohousing, in Stroud. During that time they also took a detour to Whiteway Colony (with only 40% of the team briefly getting lost), which was founded in 1898 by Tolstoyans, and still has around sixty homes to this day. The team are now busy getting the word out about the upcoming [UK Communities Conference](#) (21-23 July).



Whiteway Colony, Stroud, England

Coming soon: *Urban Communal Living in Britain*, a Diggers and Dreamers Review

This soon-to-be-released book brings together articles submitted by people from a diverse range of urban community typologies. From squatters, to student co-ops, to commercial coliving, it showcases the incredible diversity and flourishing of communal living in urban settings. Readers will be treated to a mixture of personal accounts, how-tos and essays, along with a wealth of resources to inform and inspire. **Want to be notified of this book's publication?** Email penny@diggersanddreamers.org.uk with the subject line "Urban book notify me" to register your interest.



Call for contributions: UK Communities Conference, July 21-23 2023, Braziers

The 2022 UK Communities Conference brought together people from many UK intentional communities to celebrate communal living and discuss its benefits and challenges. The conference gave an overview of the UK communities scene, creating a space for communitarians, academics, and laypeople to seek insights into their way of life and the chance to change it.

This year, the conference moves from the why to the how, and asks: what skills are needed to do community well? The conference organisers invite contributors to the 2023 conference to explore the question of skill in the context of community, demonstrate skills shaped by or for community, and share knowledge that can support community life.

[Learn more here.](#)



A photo of a photo of the members of Whiteway Colony

BBC Sounds, Art and Ideas podcast: Anarchism and intentional communities, and the work of David Graeber

Diggers and Dreamers board member Kirsten Stevens-Wood joins a panel of experts to discuss David Graeber's influence on anarchist ideas, and how tenets of anarchism relate to communal living and intentional communities. [You can listen here](#) (please note you will need to sign in or register).

And finally...

- We recently deleted our 40,000 member-strong Facebook Group. It was just all getting a bit out of hand, to be honest. We are, however, continuing with our more modestly-sized [Facebook Page](#), where you can hear about our upcoming publications, news and events.
- After the runaway success of our [Utopia Teatowel](#), we're just not sure how we can do better. We may have peaked, but will be giving it another spin with a fresh design in the coming months. If you've been sitting on an ingenious community-related teatowel design, now's your time to shine! You can email your ideas to penny@diggersanddreamers.org.uk



Yad Tabenkin - the Research and Documentation Institute of the Kibbutz Movement.

Yad Tabenkin is a registered non-profit organization, in operation since 1972.

The institute has an archive; Research library; Research department; Publishing department and a Reference and Conferences Department

The main research topics are:

- The Labor settlement movement: Kibbutzim and Moshavim (History; sociology; economics; culture, gender, etc.)
- Youth movements in Israel and the Diaspora
- Conceptual, political and social aspects of the Israeli Labor movement
- Intentional communities in Israel and around world

The publishing house produces and publishes research books.

We hold **Seminars and conferences** on research, social and planning issues.

The library includes extensive sections dealing with the kibbutz; communes and intentional communities; Socialism; Israel; Zionism; and the youth movements.

The archives: Includes the archives of the collective settlement Labor movements; Youth Movements; Personalities; Associations and Organizations

- **Collection on communes from around the world** - including publications; newsletters; books, pamphlets, etc.
- **Personal archive of Prof. Yaakov Oved** - including correspondence; Information, conference programs, etc.

- **Archives of the Intentional Communities Desk (ICD)** - including correspondence and newsletters.

What's in the archive?

Written archival materials; images; posters; flags; video and audio.

Who is the archive for?

We are a public archive, open to anyone interested: researchers; students, members of kibbutzim, members of communities, members of youth movements and the general public.

How to reach us?

Send a request for a reference to:

eyun@yadtabenkin.org.il



Browse the archive's catalog on the Yad Tabenkin website at: yadtabenkin.org.il

It is now possible to conduct a search of our archives in English on our website

What service do we provide for those interested?

The archive team helps users retrieve what they are looking for.

Some of the archive materials already exist digitally.

What is the cost of the service?

The service is provided free of charge. Copies of documents that have not yet been scanned cost 1 Israeli Shekel per page

What does the future hold?

Continued digital scanning of the documents in the archive.



Home in My Heart

Trudi Brinkmann moves to Yeongwol, a Bruderhof community in South Korea, and finds a home there.

By Trudi Brinkmann, October 8, 2022 (Taken from The Plough Quarterly #33)

Somewhere in my first few months of learning Korean, I was listening to my usual grammar lessons when the speaker introduced an expression that I now often find myself inserting into English sentences - at least mentally.

When I see or hear something for the first time and I have a positive reaction to it, I can say in English, "I like it," whether it's music, clothing, food, or a place. In Korean, saying "I like [something]" indicates that I'm familiar with it already, and yes, I like it. A first sight of a pretty dress, a first listen to a hit song, a first view of a beautiful place, all merit the uniquely Korean expression, "It enters my heart." For those who read Korean: 마음에 들어요. For those who can't: *ma-eum-e dul-eoyo*.

Learning the Korean language is more than a self-inflicted mental challenge for me: I am privileged to be in South Korea, experiencing the beginnings of a small [Bruderhof community](#) of about twenty people ranging from five to eighty-five years old: foreigners and Koreans, families and singles. Initially, we lived in separate apartment buildings in the city of Taebaek. Earlier this year, we all moved to a countryside property in Yeongwol to better share a communal life and welcome visitors. With help from neighbors, we're learning which vegetables grow best, how much rain monsoons bring, how much one local rooster can crow, and more.

By now, days fly by quickly in Yeongwol, but they didn't at first. One April morning, I woke up to the sound of rain pattering on the carport roof below my window. I love that sound. April showers aren't assumed in Korea; springtime is a dry season complete with wildfires. Additionally, dust blowing in from China's vast deserts (not to mention the airborne import of "made in China" pollution) makes rain a welcome air purifier and fire extinguisher.

Raindrops spoke comfort but didn't wash away the nagging feeling that this wasn't home. I'm a nature lover, so the imposing mountains, the river, the big sky, should have grabbed my heart, but their charms had only gotten detached mental acknowledgement from me. Evening jogs lacked their usual pleasure: I missed having large apartment buildings nearby, the sound of a train pausing traffic, the brightly lit little storefronts, the small, easy-to-climb mountains, and the people - those I knew and those I didn't. I knew my new home had to take root in my heart at some point. I just needed time and a catalyst.

I got up to take a pre-breakfast walk in the pattering rain. I took a now-familiar route down the road, across the bridge, and back. Something happened. The white mist gently suspended near the tops of the dark gray-green mountains and the silver-highlighted river caught my heart. *Ma-eum-e dul-eoyo. It enters my heart.* I didn't know the place well yet and I wouldn't have thought a gray morning could have such bewitching beauty. But it did. Something clicked and my new home felt like, well, *home*.



Mountains surround the Bruderhof community in Yeongwol, South Korea.

Once more, the season pauses a moment, as if giving me a chance to catch up. Almost as if aware that their deep green summer look is getting old, the mountainside trees grab my attention again with autumnal brilliance. Yellows and oranges, dark pines and bright red maples match my memories of autumns in New York. With the spreading colors, my own sense of belonging is growing. The river, teeming with large birds (that everyone else can name), captivates me as much as each subtle sunset beyond the dusty blue mountains. At night, the stars seem closer than before.

My old home still holds a firm and special place in my heart, but it has moved over to share the space. I like this new home. It has entered my heart.

C -	CARING ABOUT EACH OTHER, CONCERNED FOR OUR COMMUNITY
O -	ON EACH ONE OF US WE HAVE TO GET ALONG, MAKE ADJUSTMENTS
M -	MICHAEL JACKSON SINGS "MAN IN THE MIRROR, ASKING HIM TO CHANGE HIS WAYS", WHAT ABOUT OUR WAYS
P -	PATIENCE WE SHOULD USE WITH ONE ANOTHER, LEARN TO LISTEN, EVEN WHEN FRUSTRATED
R -	RESPECT, GIVEN SO THAT WE CAN LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER
O -	ONCE WE DO THIS, OUR COMMUNITY CAN PROGRESS, HEAL
M -	MAKE TIME TO HEAR EACH OTHER EVEN WHEN FRUSTRATED, TRY PEACE NOT ANGER
I -	IN THIS WORLD WE OFTEN HAVE ISSUES AND PROBLEMS
S -	SOLUTIONS ARE NOT ALWAYS EASY
E -	EACH ONE OF US CAN TRY TO DO BETTER, BE BETTER.

So, Compromise. Love, Peace, Hope, THANK YOU, *Marilyn*

Taken from *Ganas Community Newsletter #941 - October 2022*



CALL FOR PAPERS



For the 50th Annual Conference of The Communal Studies Association October 5-7, 2023 - New Harmony, IN

“Communal Theory, Practice and Impact”

The deadline for submission of proposals is May 26, 2023

In 1974 a group of historic site curators and other scholars met in New Harmony to begin sharing information and best practices from the wide variety of US historic communal groups and the sites preserving their legacy. Over time the CSA grew to include scholars from a variety of disciplines as well as current practitioners of intentional community. As we gather for the 50th annual conference of the CSA, it is time to celebrate the body of work accumulated through research and practice and its impact. Papers presented in this year of celebration might focus on research done by communities, the influence of intentional communities on their locations and other communities, insights into human cooperative behavior, community influences on art and culture, or the economic impact of intentional communities and historic sites.

As always, we are also interested in proposals that concern any other topic about intentional communities. **Please feel free to submit proposal on any aspect of communalism or intentional communities.**

Established in 1814, New Harmony was the site of two attempts at utopia. Led by Father George Rapp, the Harmony Society pursued Christian perfection in preparation of what they believed was the imminent Second Coming of Jesus Christ. When the Harmony Society returned to Pennsylvania in 1824, the town became a haven for international scientists, scholars and educators who sought equality in communal living under the direction of Robert Owen

and William Maclure. Since 1985, the University of Southern Indiana has operated Historic New Harmony as a part of Outreach and Engagement, a department that works to complement the University's traditional role in public education. By preserving our utopian legacy, we inspire innovation and progressive thought through our programs & collections. Guided by our mission, we encourage visitors to this cultural town and connect USI and New Harmony as a living laboratory for ideas.

Please submit your proposals for individual papers or whole sessions via the website submission portal

(www.communalstudies.org/annual-conference).

Please include an abstract of 150 words maximum describing your presentation and/or session. Also, please include your biographical statement of 100 words maximum. For information please contact Program Chair Greg Brown, University of Southern Indiana, gwbrown@usi.edu. **All presenters will be notified of their acceptance by email by July 1, 2023.** A limited amount of financial support is available for graduate student assistance. If applicable, please indicate your interest with your on-line proposal submission. Successful applicants will be notified of financial support by email by August 2023.

The Communal Studies Association is an interdisciplinary organization for people living in intentional communities, historic site personnel and academics representing topics including history, anthropology, religious studies, sociology, political science, and others. The CSA's annual conference is often held at the site of an historic intentional community or other relevant venues. For more information about the organization, see our website www.communalstudies.org.



A Tour of urban kibbutzim, winter 2023

In the winter of 2023, Jonathan Dawson travelled to Israel to investigate whether the kibbutz model, both the classic model and the newer urban model, could be a template for building the resilience of marginalised communities in an era of growing disruption due to environmental collapse.

This is an initial draft summary of Jonathan's findings, which will be followed by a much longer, more detailed publication. Please send any feedback to dawsonjonathan35@gmail.com

A quip that was doing the rounds when I lived in Findhorn was that the venerable old ecovillage defied the laws of physics, in that the closer you got to it, the smaller it seemed to become. That is, while for admirers in far-flung places such as Tokyo and Rio de Janeiro the place has mythic qualities, for many of the locals in the surrounding countryside it can often appear as little more than a glorified caravan park with some funky eco-features.



Findhorn Ecovillage, Scotland

I had a similar feeling with the phenomenon of the urban kibbutzim, which took me on a self-directed research trip to Israel in early 2023. Many of those I met while there had never heard of the model and among those who had, most were surprised that something they considered so peripheral should have drawn my attention to the degree that I was prepared to make an extended visit to study it.

A little historical context is in order here. The conventional kibbutz model is widely recognised. In brief summary, from the last couple of decades of the nineteenth century onwards, Jews began to make the journey from their homes in Russia and Eastern Europe (later also from Western Europe, the Americas, and Middle Eastern Muslim countries) to Palestine where they established radically communal kibbutzim, characterised by direct democracy, the equal sharing of income and resources, rotation of work tasks and the collective raising of children. These communities flourished and played a critical role in the creation and defence of the Israeli state, with 'kibbutzniks'

disproportionately represented among the emerging nation's elite combat troops and parliamentarians.

From around the 1980s, the kibbutz star began to wane. The radical idealism of the early pioneers diluted as the boundaries of the state were secured and the emergence of a more individualistic *zeitgeist*, reflected in the widespread abandonment of the collective upbringing of children. Moreover, the shift to neo-liberal monetary economic policy in Israel proved disastrous to the cooperative agricultural and industrial sector, including the kibbutzim.

Consequently, by the early 1980s, their collective debt was estimated to be between \$5 and \$6 billion and the bail-out agreed with the banks and government led to a process of abandonment by a majority of kibbutzim of most of their radically egalitarian and communal features. Today's rural kibbutzim, for the most part, have the feel of comfortable, suburban, gated communities - still of distinctive interest for their residual communal features, but no longer providing a model of radical social transformation. There is currently an uptick in interest in conventional rural kibbutzim, with a waiting list of around 500 prospective members, but the attraction for newcomers is more associated with lifestyle choice than ideology.



Jonathan Dawson, Senior lecturer at Schumacher College

It is at this point that the model of the urban kibbutz enters the scene. These could scarcely be more different from their rural counterparts. They are, for the most part, embedded within marginalised urban communities and own few physical assets other than, occasionally, the residential properties that some of them have bought - which can be anything from a single flat to a block of flats. Their work and associated income derives not from agriculture but from various activities linked to education, social empowerment and other social services from which the neo-liberal state has been retreating for the last 40 years.

The urban kibbutzim vary considerably in size but are generally significantly smaller than their rural equivalents. The scene comprises several thousand urban communards, organised into small groups of around ten to fifteen people (called kvutzot). In many cases, an urban kibbutz comprises of several such kvutzot. Many urban kibbutzim, in turn, are networked into larger countrywide

structures, called movements. In addition, a small number of stand-alone communities also self-identify as urban kibbutzim.'

Immediately, we run across a key feature of these communities; namely, their heterogeneity and the resulting difficulty of making generalisations. A core impulse at work here is the desire to break what the urban communards experienced as the conformity - or 'majoritarian tyranny' as it is occasionally referred to - within the conventional kibbutz; an emphasis on autonomy over equality.



Urban Kibbutz Mishol in the North of Israel

Consequently, in place of the mass democratic structures that prevail in the rural kibbutz, where decisions are taken partly by professional managers and partly by majority voting of members in large general assemblies, the urban kibbutzim have developed a much more intimate and participatory governance model where decisions emerge from

discussions within and between the two scales of kibbutz and kvutzot. In principle, this is a strongly bottom-up model in which the position adopted by the kibbutz cannot be imposed on the kvutzot. The model is often referred to by urban kibbutzniks as 'dialogic communalism'.

Given that there are such sharp contrasts between the rural and urban models - in terms of history, scale, mission, income-generating strategies and governance - is it even appropriate to refer to them by the same designation - 'kibbutz'. I think it is useful for us to do so.

For both rural and urban kibbutzim, the Jewish youth groups (located both in Israel and the diaspora) have been a hugely important source of members. Many of those involved in the urban kibbutz movement have from the outset been consciously seeking to address what they perceive as being the weaknesses and failures of the conventional kibbutz model and indeed, a good number of them were brought up in rural kibbutzim.

Kibbutz scholar, James Horrox, points to the importance of the shared lineage between the two models: 'The evolution of these [urban] communities is

particularly interesting given that their creators draw explicitly from the social theories that arrived in Palestine from Central European Romantic-libertarian circles [in the early decades of the twentieth century].....Their libraries house thousands of books on the early Jewish labour movement.' (Horrox 2009). In this sense, the urban kibbutz can be seen as a conscious evolutionary adaptation of the original model. Both urban and rural kibbutznik locate their mission with reference to the Jewish concept, *Tikkun Olam*, meaning 'Repair the World'.

In the words of a manifesto created by one urban kibbutz, "Old model, new mission, with a modern pioneering zeal and a passion for social justice, young Israelis are re-imagining the kibbutz, planting scores of collectives in disadvantaged neighbourhoods across the country.' (Kraft 2019).

The question then arises as to the scale and impact of the activities of the urban kibbutzim. Could it be that while these communities do indeed represent an interesting evolutionary mutation of the genus 'intentional communities', they are of peripheral relevance to the evolution of the wider Israeli society? The data suggests that there may be something of greater import at play.

The Dror movement, for example, emerged from one of the largest youth movements in the country: Hanoar Haoved Vehalomed (Working and Studying Youth). It includes 1,300 trained educators in 16 communities on the social and economic periphery. According to its website, Dror activists 'live in the neighborhoods we serve, bridging gaps, solving local problems. Through our youth movement, schools, and local and national programming, we better the lives of 150,000 people every year'.



Members of Dror Israel Movement

When COVID-19 hit, Dror Israel responded by opening daycare centres for the children of doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers; keeping open its high schools for youth at risk; delivering groceries and medicines to homebound seniors and those in need; and providing online educational programmes for thousands of teens.

By no means all of these social activists live together in communes. However, the 15 residential Dror kibbutzim provide important hubs and focal points for the network's outreach work. All of the communards interviewed in the course of this research believed that the urban

kibbutzim act as important catalysts for community-building activities such as urban gardening, inclusion of people with special needs and multi-ethnic dialogue. A number pointed to important informal alliances forming between urban kibbutzim and local municipalities. In one case, that of Haifa, the city council asked members of the Dror youth group to form an urban kibbutz in a deprived neighbourhood in order to work with at-risk children.

We are potentially here in the territory of what Rebecca Solnit has called 'disaster collectivism', building on the concept of 'disaster capitalism' coined by Naomi Klein to describe the parasitic tendencies of corporations to exploit natural disasters for their own enrichment. Disaster collectivism, by contrast, alludes to what Solnit interprets as the natural tendency of communities to collaborate and engage in mutual aid when faced with adverse circumstance (Solnit 2018).

This perspective is reinforced by Servigne and Stevens who, looking to a future characterised by deep disruption conclude: 'Nobody can tell from what materials the social fabric of collapse will be compounded, but it is certain that mutual aid will play a considerable, not to say paramount, role' (Servigne and Stevens 2020, p. 152).

In the many rich conversations I had with urban communards during my time in Israel, a recurring metaphor to describe the terrain we were exploring was that of archipelagos of islands, most of which currently lie just below the surface of the water but which are assuming greater visibility and relevance as the water level drops.

The very least that can be said is that it is enormously cheering in an age characterised by high levels of cynicism, hedonism and despair to come across such committed and cheerful engagement for the common good. However, beyond this we may also be seeing the emergence of cells of community-level self-organisation that could be a source of resilience in the face of the disruptions that lie before us.

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- Solnit R. (2018). A Paradise Built in Hell

Jonathan Dawson is a sustainability educator, currently working as Head of Economics at Schumacher College in Devon. Until recently Jonathan was a long-term resident at the Findhorn ecovillage and is a former President of the Global Ecovillage Network.



The European Ecovillage Gathering is back in 2023!

Every year, GEN Europe invites hundreds of ecovillagers and explorers from across the world to a **celebration of regenerative community living**.

With hands-on workshops, inspiring speakers, music, movement, an ecovillage showcase and much more, everyone is welcome to join this embodied community experience from **12-17 July 2023**.

This year we'll be gathering in Nature Community, an ecovillage surrounded by pristine nature in Bavaria, Germany. Will you join us?

We hope to welcome participants and workshop-holders from allied movements to create a hub of co-creativity as we explore our theme of living together harmoniously in a changing world.

We're inviting... Transition Town hubs, Fridays for Future activists, solidarity economy practitioners, regenerative agriculturalists, Extinction Rebellion groups, guerrilla gardeners, peaceworkers, sustainable fashion advocates...and all people and movements working for a more peaceful, just, regenerative world.

The European Ecovillage Gathering is an essential festival for all those curious about regenerative community living. Join us from 12-17 July in Nature Community, Germany, for four days of workshops, connection, music, dancing, learning and celebration. Tickets are on sale now at ecovillagegathering.org, with discounts for youth, groups, and more.

Earthaven Ecovillage, near Asheville, North Carolina.

By Arjuna da Silva

December, 2022. It's Winter Solstice and a good many Earthaven folks will gather informally in the Village Center to give time and attention to the shifts of the season. After three decades of development (counting the first two years of pre-founding research into how and where to plant ourselves), we are a culture that has become adept at administrative coordination, systems and regimens we can follow so that most of us understand what is happening, and so that personnel can easily fill in for others. Our community of dedicated villagers have gotten really, really organized, and yet we still sense a long road ahead!



Early on, we designed roles and names for the areas of our development that would need special attention, using an earthy and reality-based vocabulary rather than words corporations use for official jobs. After almost thirty years of growth and change, we still depend on those indicators of the natural connection of work to life. We created four Orbs, dividing the community work into elemental categories, so that financial and labor exchange activities are

governed by the Water Orb, with an emphasis on the flow of currencies; the Weaver of the Water Orb is called the Waterbearer. We created an Air Orb to help us with intra-community communication and the interpersonal work of building our membership. The Air Orb is headed up by the Airspinner. Earthwork includes all levels of designing and implementing care of the land itself, including the Commons known as the Village Center and the majority of our non-residential forested site. The Earth

Orb's head is the Earthdelver, whose responsibilities encompass overseeing the planning and management of roads, springs and creeks,

storage of tools and equipment, and a host of details for maintaining a regenerative program. The Earthdelver has her hands full helping to keep track of all those efforts. Finally, the heart and soul—the basic meaning—of our existence, as well as the relationships we have with the world, including legal and organizational management, have been emphasized in the Fire Orb, headed up by the Firekeeper. A few years into our development, we realized

we were putting a fair amount of attention and value into the spiritual or ritual realms and decided to create a Spiritwalker Orb, though we decided not to elect a "Spiritwalker." Instead, inspired folks within the Orb keep track and promotes holiday and other celebrations, sometimes on request, as well as hosting conversations about how to improve an expanding multi-cultural spiritual atmosphere. Work we do for these Orbs and their offshoot, ad hoc teams is a way many of us earn our Leaps—our community service credits—which most of us have an annual commitment to

accumulate. Leaps are also traded for help with various personal projects, as well as quite a few healing arts sessions.



Our current Firekeeper has been thinking about the year just past, and offered this question in a note that caught my attention: "Sometimes I wonder if we're not leaving enough room for spontaneity and for new beauty to emerge." It's true. At our current level of development, with over a hundred people in various stages of commitment to the long-term vision, folks spend precious time tending their own and each other's physical projects, contributing to the community's needs, including a variety of administrative projects, while also needing to tend their

own homesites, nurture their personal and family relationships, and remember that they're *here, in the lap of Nature!* They seem to be doing it all—folks pretty much stay healthy and the friendliness and affection they feel is usually obvious. So maybe we're doing fine; maybe it's just my tendency to worry and look for problems that's holding sway here. It's obvious most folks know where we are and appreciate what a gift it is to be here.

So what is this more pressing need I feel for

a commitment to review and consider revising how we carry out our complex mission? In response to the Firekeeper's wondering, is my concern about the administrative complexity we've created

something that can actually be helped? In the face of the global disunity that keeps sliding towards disaster, I wonder if we could benefit by taking the time, seriously and without an agenda, to talk about the state of the world within which we're doing so much to learn and model potentially regenerative living. Or should we just keep going as we are: so far, so good?

Things look pretty grim for humanity in the big picture, so is our wisest direction to keep our focus more regional? It seems a more

extended connection to the natural, if less “intentional” communities in these mountains might be the best strategy for the coming decade. Can we engender and participate in enough regional spark to have a fairly uplifted time for the foreseeable future? These are the kinds of questions I wish we could begin taking up on a regular basis and in a very different way than we have learned to attend to smaller agendas—more like a kabbalistic tribe of meaning decoders than a litigating agency of decision-makers.

And yet, I am so grateful for what we have, even more so for having gotten the privilege of getting old in this story. It doesn't take much more than a deep, ranging conversation over tea with a community leader or a surprisingly upbeat suggestion for a refreshing adjustment in a meeting to remind me that we're still *in process*, while so many lovely people come here, alone or with their families, dreaming about creating something similar or perhaps about coming back to stay. We must be doing many things right!

P.S. For the record, much has been accomplished in 28-plus years. Eleven linked

residential neighborhoods, some full up and some just getting developed, span the landscape. Many on-site employment opportunities have morphed into regular, if part-time, paying jobs, and part-time is what seems to work best for folks still building, or gardening, or farming or tending their crafts. Culture's Edge and SOIL, our non-profit education team, has created a roster of introductory and engaging ways to connect with us, both on the ground and virtually, and a return to more in-depth and longer programs, from the traditional Permaculture Design Course to seasonal and longer-term internships and apprenticeships are in the offing again. I guess wherever we stop to



The author, in the early days of Earthaven, in front of her canvas geodesic dome, her first home on the land

assess ourselves, we can find limitations and celebrations. Meanwhile a walk through the landscape, crossing the pastures and paths of well-loved and tended chickens, sheep and cows, through neighborhoods of mixed architectural

design and ongoing new projects, past folks stopping to chat by a bridge or stream bed, or on long walks along hidden trails or ridge tops—any of these ordinary adventures is likely to restore faith in what we're up to and gratitude for how far we've been able to come.