



COMMUNITY SERVICE

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COMMUNITY SERVICE NEWSLETTER is published six times a year by Community Service, Inc. Our purpose is to promote the small community as a basic social institution involving organic units of economic, social and spiritual development.

Community Made It Possible

by Peg and Ken Champney

This article is a chapter in an unpublished book called "Reaching New Heights Through Downward Mobility," edited by Dorothy Norvell Andersen, 1990. It is used with permission and is very slightly shortened for space requirements.

Downwardly mobile? Perhaps so, but upwardly rewarding!

A healthy diet, lower on the food chain, centered around garden vegetables.

No TV in the house, resulting in more time for self-initiated creative projects.

Better winter health after turning down the thermostat.

Learning how to repair cars, washing machines, lawnmowers, house wiring and plumbing, you name it.

Increased use of bicycles or feet for short trips: fun and good exercise.

Whole wheat bread, made at home.

Chores which have real meaning and importance for the children.

Homemade Christmas and birthday gifts.

Strengthened community ties through sharing of skills and tools. We rototill the neighbor's garden and give piano lessons to their six-year-old. Later their auto mechanic dad helps us with car repairs.

The list could go on.

Our family adventure in simple, "downwardly mobile" living began in 1965. We were: Ken and Peg Champney and children--Carl, 11; Becky, 9; Wendy, 7; and Heidi, 5--plus a 12-year-old foster son, Glen. During the next year we were joined by Glen's sister, Beth, and an adopted black baby, Jack. Beth lost her life in an auto accident, at age 18.

Ken was (and is) printer and co-owner/publisher of the local weekly newspaper, the Yellow Springs News; the job is very demanding and satisfying. Peg was equally busy bringing up the family and teaching in our neighborhood alternative school. Our home was, and still is, The Vale, an intentional community with five member families in 1965, eight now. While each family owns its own home, The Vale's 40 acres of woods, garden area, commons and home sites are held in a land trust. Ken had been a nonregistrant during the Korean war and, as a result, served 20 months of a five-year prison sentence in federal prison. Peg likewise

came from a pacifist background. She grew up in a Quaker family which took the peace testimony seriously. When we launched our simple living adventure, our primary motivation was to live on an income that resulted in owing no federal income "war" tax.

By 1965, we had been concerned for some time about paying our federal income tax, more than 50% of which was spent to finance past, present and future wars. We had tried including a note of protest along with our tax form, and, later, paying only the "peaceful" portion of the tax; the government's response to this was to take the unpaid portion plus interest from our bank account.

We remember a conversation about that time in our lives which went something like this:

Peg: "Perhaps we could live on an income low enough that we wouldn't owe a tax."

Ken (after some figuring, with his note in the taxpayer's manual): "That means we'd have to live on about \$5000 a year, and give the rest to charitable organizations." He thought that would end the conversation.

Peg: "I think we could do it."

And so we have done it--ever since. The dollar amounts have changed of course, along with inflation, but the basic plan has remained the same: we've spent for our living expenses the amount allowed tax-free by the Internal Revenue Service. Ken has carefully studied the tax manuals and taken advantage of whatever tax credits and deductions are available; and we've given substantial contributions to charitable organizations, often about 20-25% of our annual income.

As we carried out our simple living venture over the past 25 years we were helped along by a number of factors: determination, Ken's thorough study of the tax laws from year to year, and our own upbringing as children born during our country's Great Depression. But living in The Vale community has to be put at the top of the list, when we look for the enabling support system that made--and continues to make--our venture possible. From time to time we are asked to share about our life style, at Quaker gatherings and simple living workshops. During these

occasions someone in the audience will respond, "It's great what you're doing, but you have The Vale community to support you. We could never make it work in our living situation." And it's true. As we describe in the following pages various aspects of how we have carried out our lives at a no-federal-income-tax level, the positive role of The Vale will be mentioned repeatedly.

Growing our own vegetables had always been part of our life. Our simple living experiment only served to increase the scale, time- and space-wise. Our original goal had been to produce all our own fruits and vegetables. Over the years we have gone beyond that goal to the place where we've stopped buying meat and the garden is the mainstay of a vegetarian diet. We are convinced that we eat like kings and queens. Perhaps the conviction is strengthened by our exposure to all the information about the harmful effects of commercially grown food--exposed as it is to pesticides and preservatives.

The Vale provides land sufficient to the gardening needs of the people living here --for us about 1/4 acre. An interest in the land, in protecting it and increasing its fertility, and in growing food is a binding element among Vale members. Gardening has rarely been done as a group cooperative venture, but there is much mutual support through shared interest and exchange of tools, know-how and surplus food.

The routines and rhythms of the gardening year set a spiritual grounding to our lives. In January and February seeds are ordered, an act of faith when the ground is frozen and the temperatures frigid. Some time in March the soil can be worked. Early greens, onion sets, radishes and 7 or 8 pounds of pea seeds are planted, the peas in rows over a large proportion of the garden. In the meantime cabbage and broccoli and later tomato and pepper seeds are sown in an indoor seedbed under fluorescent lights. When their first two sets of leaves appear, they will be potted, hardened off gradually to sun and cold, and, at the proper time, planted in the garden. Tomato and pepper plants and corn seeds are planted midway between the pea rows in May, so that in June, when the peas are harvested, eaten or stowed in the freezer, and their vines wither, the second

crop of tomatoes, peppers and corn takes over the garden area. Later, a third crop, fall turnips, will occupy the same area. Popcorn, green, lima and soy beans, summer squash and a planting of winter butternut squash (which will be stored and eaten right through to early spring) are other major crops. Tomato canning--we aim to put up 100 or 200 quarts--is an August chore, as are corn and bean freezing. Further harvesting goes on during September and October.

Late fall is a time to revel in our November standby, green soup: blended cooked turnip or mustard greens combined with a thin white sauce. Kale is usually the latest crop to be harvested; it is still edible and quite delicious even after the mercury drops as low as 10 degrees.

As gardeners we make our share of mistakes and continue to learn, and of course we're always somewhat at the mercy of the weather. Ken studies the garden books and learns the important things like how high a pH count is ideal for which crops and what to do about it. When some friends donated old windows to us, we added a cold frame to the south side of our house, and learned how to extend the season for greens and tomatoes.

Our children growing up had mixed feelings about gardening and our diet. They definitely shared their parents' enthusiasm for the first fresh peas in June, for biting into tomatoes warm from the sun, for corn on the cob in August and homemade tomato soup in January. They weren't however, always thrilled about garden chores. (Even so, some of Peg's fondest memories are of gardening projects such as planting or hoeing involving the entire family.) Carl missed meat during his high school years and bought his own steaks. Jack preferred meat and potatoes to a vegetarian diet all his growing years. However, we judge the long-range effects on the children as positive: both in terms of their good health and of their enthusiasm for "our kind" of food. Eating our home-cooked garden meals is one of the high points for them when they visit over the holidays. Carl, Becky and Heidi have all done some gardening as adults.

A perfect companion to gardening is raising chickens. In addition to the obvious

advantage--the addition of protein-, vitamin- and mineral-rich eggs to our diet--there is the extra bonus of chicken manure for the garden. Our chicken yard is a compost heap. All of the garbage is thrown over the fence to the chickens. What they eat is an enriching addition to the feed we buy for them at the grain elevator. What they don't eat mixes with their droppings, with earth (chickens are great scratchers and mixers), and with the Champney straw substitute--newsprint strips, the byproduct of our folding machine. The mixture decomposes into a rich compost, which we spread on the garden each spring. All you need to get started raising chickens is a chicken house well enough constructed to keep out varmints and a small fenced-in yard attached.

Some questions for which chicken raisers need to find answers:

What will you do with the chickens after their egg production is no longer sufficient to be worth the money to put into feed? The advice in the poultry raisers' manuals is not to keep them past the first year. We've usually stretched that to 2 years. Are you willing at this point to kill and dress your chickens and eat their meat? We are; we compromise on our vegetarian scruples when the alternative seems so wasteful. And, let's face it, we enjoy chicken soup and chicken pie. The actual killing and dressing is not a favorite job, but Peg's country upbringing provided her with the necessary know-how.

Do you want to raise your hens from baby chicks, or buy them as laying pullets? We have followed the latter option until just this past year. The main difficulty is the need for a second house and yard space for the baby chicks if you have an already established laying flock; the old hens attack the young intruders if they share the same space. Advantages of starting with chicks are that they can be procured by mail-order, while it is getting more difficult in our area to find places to buy laying pullets; and that watching chicks grow is great fun. It's been a pleasure we've shared with our grandson who lives nearby.

One of the first things to be dropped when we opted for living on less was the plan to make an addition to our small home, a

3-bedroom, 1-story, 768-square-foot prefabricated house. Interestingly enough, while the children grumbled about some aspects of the simple life, they never complained about our limited living space. Four girls and a baby brother shared one bedroom for many years, while two older brothers occupied the adjoining bedroom. We shoehorned them in with the help of double- and triple-decker bunk beds.

Living in The Vale community was a great help and served as a safety valve. If our own walls seemed too confining, we could step out the door into the 40 acres including woods and fields, a commons area with play equipment and picnic tables, and six houses of congenial neighbors.

Growing up in The Vale our children felt welcomed and at home with all the neighbors. This meant that some rainy Saturdays Peg might find herself in charge of 7 or 8 children in a small space; the next day our house might be empty because the children congregated elsewhere. Adult companionship for Ken or Peg was always within walking distance, whether it took place as a few words exchanged while borrowing a teaspoon of baking powder, or at a potluck get-together. With very few exceptions, the now grown Vale children look back on growing up in this community as a pretty ideal situation.

There were, of course, challenges in living in a small house. At one period five of the seven children were taking music lessons. Finding a place to practice wasn't always easy. We can remember when the bedrooms, the living room and even the bathroom were utilized simultaneously as practice rooms in our Champney conservatory. Ken found space by pursuing hobbies which took place at home after the rest of the family was in bed. Since he is an amateur musician, the children learned early to sleep through noises like piano practicing. We like to think that our entire family learned many valuable skills about relating to other people, simply by being so many in such a small space.

Of course, by world standards our "small space" was a mansion.

When our old TV broke down, early in the days of our simple living experiment, we

decided not to fix or replace it. We feel that was about the wisest decision we ever made. Of course, sometimes our kids watched TV with friends at their homes. We're glad that, for the most part, our children were spared from TV violence and materialism. Perhaps we're even gladder that they and we were not caught up in the passive nature of TV watching. We were freed to pursue self-initiated, more creative pursuits. Ken has learned all kinds of do-it-yourself repairs, created a contract bridge bidding system and composed music in the after hours of a demanding job. Peg has had time to can, to freeze, to use creatively our garden produce, to sew, to teach in our Vale school, and to found a summer Quaker music camp.

Glen pursued his natural inclination toward taking everything apart and putting them back together to become a mechanical wizard. All of our grown children are creative cooks; the girls are good at sewing. And being able to take lessons and practice music as children, without the competing time demand of TV watching has paid off: music remains an important part of their adult lives. Wendy and her Swiss husband Matthias are professional string players; their string quartet gives concerts all over the world. Heidi is a gifted violin teacher and plays in professional orchestras. Carl is an old-time fiddler in demand by local square dance groups. Becky sings beautiful lullabies to her children.

Learning to be comfortable in a 60-degree house--or even at 55 or 50 degrees--is one of our simple living accomplishments. We are cool house enthusiasts: it's comfortable, we feel it's cut down on the occurrence and duration of winter colds, and it saves a huge chunk on fuel bills as well as on energy. However, this is one area of our life where we've been unable to convince children, other relatives, friends, neighbors. There is something about a warm house in winter which apparently strikes deep-down feelings of nurturing and care in most people; or perhaps it's simply that folks have allowed themselves to become accustomed to a warmer-than-necessary environment and it becomes a habit difficult to change. We turn up the heat when guests are expected.

In the meantime, we still recommend that others try it. If you're used to 75 degrees, try 72; if 72 is what you like, try 70 or 68 --and so on. There are all kinds of tricks involved in learning to be comfortable in a cooler house. One obvious one is wearing more clothes--layering is helpful, as is wool. Not every one is aware how important a warm cap is in keeping the entire body warm.

Exercise also makes a big difference. A brisk morning walk with the dog makes Peg's internal heater go to work. Ken has the perfect exercise contraption, a hand-operated grain grinder. Turning wheat berries into flour is hard, aerobic exercise, and Ken ends up peeling off several layers of sweaters as he grinds away. When Peg turns that freshly-ground whole wheat flour into bread, the result is one of the most delectable luxuries of the simple life. Still another method to get the body's internal heating mechanisms grinding out warmth is a cold bath.

The founding of our school in The Vale predates our simple living experiment by quite a few years, but the way we carried out the school fits in so well with simple living that it bears reporting.

The Vale Friends School was our alternative neighborhood school for children pre-school through 3rd grade. Although it was intended originally chiefly for the children living in The Vale, throughout its 35 years' existence it attracted a steady stream of children from the surrounding area--sometimes children with special needs which were not being met by other schools.

Teaching was done by Vale parents. It might be described as cooperative home-schooling, always on a volunteer basis. In this way we were spared one hassle which often plagues small alternative schools--how to afford a paid teacher. We feel that our children had the privilege of an excellent education in their early years without the usual high costs of private schooling, which would have been beyond our simple living budget.

One early motivation for starting our own school was that we lived two miles from town, and the normal school day plus bus trips at either end of it seemed too long

for small children. Our purpose soon grew beyond that. We came to envision an early school experience where community living was an integral part of each day's experience. The children helped make their lunches with the help of various adults among the participating families; they baked bread, made applesauce and cider; and other such projects. They became involved with neighborhood repair projects such as fixing bicycles and automobiles; made Christmas presents--woodcraft with one parent, sewing with another; they planned and carried out parties, plays and picnics for the entire Vale community.

Besides offering this community experience and the chance to relate to several adults in the neighborhood (the beginning of friendships which have lasted into adulthood), our school was small enough that it could truly individualize each child's learning experience. The academics--the 3 R's--were handled much as is done in a one-room schoolhouse, each child progressing at his or her own pace. Particular interests and talents were also encouraged and given a chance to grow and develop. Those Vale School children have grown into artists, engineers, computer programmers, skilled mechanics, musicians. In most cases, the budding interest and talent which later developed into these adult callings was noticed and encouraged in those early years of our school. Time was set aside in the school day for those mechanically inclined to take apart and reassemble old appliances, cars...the would-be musicians practiced their instruments during the day...the future artists were encouraged to experiment with paints and clay.

Because our family didn't wish to earn more money due to not wanting to pay a war tax, the volunteer teaching suited Peg's needs. She viewed the teaching as an exciting challenge, and a way of relating to a wider group of people than might have otherwise been possible.

When the Vale Friends School was laid down, Peg received as a retirement gift a totally unexpected but wonderful present from many of the parents who had sent their children to the school over the years--a trip to Switzerland to visit daughter Wendy and her husband Matthias who live in Zurich.

We learned to vacation on a shoestring budget: exchanging visits with relatives and friends; camping at state parks; attending Quaker events such as conferences, Yearly Meeting get-togethers and family camps. We have fond memories of packing our VW bus with camping gear, food and our kids plus one or two of their friends, and heading off for a weekend, or a 10-day summer vacation.

We swam and hiked the dunes around Lake Michigan, climbed mountains in New York state and New England, rented canoes and rowboats in Ohio parks. Our camping gear was of the simplest sort: two old-fashioned umbrella tents which we inherited from relatives, a camp cook kit, sleeping bags. Much of our food we prepared at home and took along, such as pancake and cocoa mixes, and the makings for sandwiches and soups.

I sometimes wonder in retrospect how we fit all of us and our camping gear into one vehicle. Sometimes the gear even included a diaper pail and potty chair! If tensions rose or tempers flared as we drove, we found a place along the road where kids could run off some steam before continuing on our way.

Perhaps one reason our budget vacations worked so well is that such simple activities as visiting friends, camping, and participating in Quaker gatherings are actually the most enjoyable type of recreation.

In order to keep our income tax-free we contribute a large chunk of our earnings to tax-deductible charitable organizations. Making the decisions about how much to give, and to which of the many worth-while undertakings needing financial support, has become an end-of-the-year ritual for us. We get pleasure out of this annual event in our lives. Our goal is to divide our contributions among the organizations working toward goals we share with them: peace, environmental concerns, social justice, aid to the suffering, education, community, and so on. Knowing someone personally involved in such activities often influences us to make a contribution to that particular organization.

We also lean in the direction of fewer but larger contributions, rather than a large number of smaller ones. Others may do it differently. Whatever the method of doing

it, we're convinced that contributing financially to such undertakings is an important part of bringing about the kind of world we want.

Ken's job as publisher-administrator-printer of the Yellow Springs News is extremely demanding but very satisfying. The weekly newspaper has played a positive role in making the town of Yellow Springs the unique and dynamic community it is. Readership is high and there are many letters to the editor, where a lively exchange of opinion occurs. For economic reasons, many weekly newspapers have gone out of business, or been purchased by large publishing chains, over the past few decades. Ken has pride in keeping the Yellow Springs News afloat and modestly flourishing through these times.

The Yellow Springs News also played a prominent role in our simple living adventure. Although the pay is relatively low, Ken has pioneered an outstanding health insurance plan for employees and their families. For our children, the family business also provided after-school and summer employment. They learned responsibilities and skills. All of the kids held jobs at the News, as janitors, typesetters, bookkeepers, press and folder operators, darkroom workers, and secretaries. The jobs also provided them with spending money for items which our tight budget would have otherwise denied them--food treats and clothing, and sometimes activities such as summer camps.

What began as merely living in a way to avoid war taxes has expanded for us into a way of life that is not only enjoyable, but which makes sense in many ways. We believe that simple living is healthy, psychologically beneficial, and perhaps--for ecological reasons--necessary on a large scale if the human race is to survive.



New Koinonia Child Development Center

A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

by *Bonny Stitt, Resident Partner*

It was Tuesday night, August 13, the night of the first parents' meeting at the new KCDC (Koinonia Child Development Center) building. All of the parents who would be sending their children to the program this year were asked to be in attendance that night, to meet the staff, visit the new facility, go over the policy handbook together, and register our children.

John and I would be sending our two daughters, 5 and 3 years old. I was eager to see how the completed and furnished building would look, what other parents would be in attendance, and what policies would be in effect this year.

Walking in the door of the new KCDC building was like walking into a child's fairyland. The colors, the lighting, the carpenting, the wide variety of toys and learning centers, the alternative circular design of the building--all combined to create an atmosphere of fun and creativity.

Outside, there were two large screened-in porches and a huge covered patio for rainy-day outdoor play. There were lots of beautiful wooden trikes and other wheel toys; there were several child-sized wooden easels; beyond the patio, there were four different playgrounds--one for each age group--with colorful new equipment to climb on and in, swing on, slide down, and play house in.

Yes, my daughters would have hours of fun here, I could tell. In fact, I thought I might like to sneak up here some evening when no one else was around and play with all of the new toys and equipment myself!

I realized a new KCDC building had been needed for a long time. Both the nursery and the preschool had been operating for years out of two Koinonia houses not designed with a child development center in mind.

The preschool and nursery had been sharing one kitchen and one cook, forcing the

teachers to cart food up and down the road in Koinonia Village daily. The fire marshal had asked for so many changes that much of the space in the nursery building had become almost unavailable for the children's use.

I knew this new building, complete with carpeting and air-conditioning, could only be a tremendous affirmation of the long-term staff, who'd been struggling for years to pull off a good program in the Georgia heat and in inadequate space. I also knew that the money, time, and energy put into creating this new facility represented Koinonia's deep interest in children, in their education and their emotional well-being.

What impressed me the most was a set of values which the center was obviously trying to communicate to both parents and children. It became increasingly obvious to me, as the evening wore on, that KCDC was attempting to embrace the teachings of Jesus, to break down the barriers of nation, sex, age, and race, and to reject violence on every level.

As I bicycled up to KCDC that night, I noticed that the sign at the outside entrance had on it a picture of a lion and a lamb lying down together, obviously symbolizing Isaiah's concept of the time when all violence on earth would be no more, even among the animals. Right inside the front entrance was a poster which had on it a quote from Dwight D. Eisenhower:

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies ...a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hope of its children."

No war toys were available, and there was a strict rule that none were to be permitted in the facility. In the policy handbook there was a commitment from the staff never to use loud abusive language or bodily punishment as disciplinary measures, but always to treat each child with love and respect.

Report On FIC Board Meeting At Lama October 27-29, 1991

by Alexis Willihnganz

This is a condensed report written by Ms Willihnganz for The Cooperator, the magazine of ICC (Intercooperative Council), a student co-op. It is used with permission.

On almost every wall in the building were pictures of children from around the world. There were dolls of different sexes, races, and nationalities available for the children's play. The child-sized wooden cupboards in the "home-living" play area were filled with small plastic replicas of food from many different countries. There was even respect for diversity reflected in meal plans: the handbook stated that a protein alternative would be provided for vegetarians at every meal at which meat was served.

When the teachers were introduced, I was delighted to notice that the nine were a mixture of young and old, male and female, African-American, European-American, and Guatemalan! I looked around at the group of 21 parents, representing the 35 children who would attend the center this year: they were African-American and European-American, from different economic back-grounds; some of the parents were local homeowners, and some partners or volunteers.

The meeting was opened with prayer, and there was an evident faith commitment on the part of the entire staff. On the final page of the handbook, there was a statement in bold type, which encompasses the KCDC vision:

Our values are rooted in the teachings of Jesus, and we strive to impart Christian values through teaching and activities and modeling peaceful ways of solving problems.

We are committed to racial reconciliation, sexual equality, nonviolence, building the self-esteem of each child, and conveying God's love for each child.

On the way home, I pondered all that I had seen and heard. As I thought of the impact these KCDC values could make on both children and parents, I felt a deep joy well up within me. I was very glad my children would be a part of the KCDC program this year!

Bonny and John Stitt are Resident Partners. They met here as volunteers in 1983, married beside our lake in spring of 1984, have two daughters, Mary Ellen (1986) and Jane (1988) and are expecting their third child this month.

The road up to Lama Foundation narrows as you climb, gravel turning to sand turning to steep ruts. From one window of my little Plymouth I see a wall of rock and brush. From the other, tops of trees are eye-level over the drop-off.

These aren't the hairy, spitting kind of llama, these are the spiritual, communitarian variety. They describe their community as "an oasis where people can rest and breathe and reconnect with what is essential." At an elevation of 8600 feet in the mountains of New Mexico, the wooded acres of Lama, with its rustic domes and dwellings, are definitely a quiet spot in the world. The Rio Grande Valley is a breathtaking theater stretched out below us; Lama itself is a still, wooded haven. For four days, this will be the site of the Board meeting for the Fellowship for Intentional Community.

The Fellowship is an organization of organizations. Besides Lama, their membership includes 72 other communities. The FIC serves a networking function, publishing a member newsletter and a Community Directory.

Semiannual Board meetings rotate among communities (the next one's at Celso in North Carolina). The FIC's most visible work is the Directory of Intentional Communities, a 300-page listing of communities, with articles on such topics as "The Tyranny of Structurelessness" and "Women in Community." Less tangible achievements include building trust among communities; increasing global awareness; and "modeling ecological options, opportunities for personal and community development, and methods for nurturing peaceful social interaction." These are people with a vision of a better world.

Some at this gathering have lived in community for decades, while the youngest

communitarians here are 7 and 9. Despite the differences, though, there are striking similarities to home--the newsprint agendas, the labyrinthine scheduling of discussions, the concerns of "hemispheric centrism."

There are also familiar discussions of values--power, responsibility. An evening discussion centers around the inclusive/exclusive nature of membership policies. And though I recognize the familiar seesaw between democracy and efficiency, idealism and grit, I also sense a difference here. People in this organization are in it for the long haul. Unlike ICC, FIC Board members measure their commitment to the organization not in terms of months, but years.

There's a spirit of both play and seriousness here. The FIC Board's evening session quickly becomes a discussion of vision, the future of the movement...if not of the species. "We are a living example that there's life in the universe," one member says, "and love and hope and all of that." There's talk of "rebalance," of "peaceful transformation," of "representing a point in the evolution of our species." One member identifies three issues in the formation of the new society: the tension between competition and cooperation; between standard of living and quality of life; and between linear and cyclic thinking. "In L.A.," one says, "I hear a lot about how we have to maintain a competitive edge to succeed in the world market. But, you know, we have to maintain a cooperative edge to survive as a species."

Press about intentional communities is becoming positive, and in the communities themselves there's a spirit of vision. The FIC is looking to '93 for its first Gathering, an intentional "Celebration of Community" to be held at The Evergreen State College near Seattle, Washington.

I leave buoyed up by one communitarian's mischievous prediction that "the meek are beginning to inherit the earth." No one in the FIC pretends to have all the answers, but there's something here--the dream of a new society. As individuals join into groups, momentum gathers. And in groups, ideas are translated to reality, building a world based on values that one member here described as "downright wise."

Socially Responsible Investor

by Sacha Millstone

What indicators can I look for in order to know when the U. S. has recovered from recession?



You will know for certain that the U. S. has recovered from a recession when the GDP (formerly GNP) shows an increase for two or three consecutive quarters, and when housing and auto sales show steady increases. However, from the standpoint of making investment decisions, this may not help much. The stock market will anticipate recovery long before recovery is here. By the time recovery is obvious, the stock market will have made a major move upward. For indications that a recovery is under way, keep an eye on employment trends. Do fewer companies announce layoffs? Keep an eye on business profits. Are they growing? Keep an eye on lending activity. Is it increasing? And keep an eye on real estate sales. Are they picking up?

What industries typically do well in times of economic trouble? During recovery?

In difficult economic times, companies that will experience "demand, no matter what" tend to do well. Healthcare, drug companies, and consumer staples like food and household product companies have done well over the past year. Examples of such companies that are socially responsible include: Merck, Church & Dwight, Johnson & Johnson, Sara Lee and Rubbermaid. You may want to consider looking at industries that do well in an economic recovery, such as finance, technology, equipment, retail and machinery. Examples of such stocks might include BankAmerica, Apple Computer, Liz Claiborne, The CML Group, Pitney Bowes, Volvo ADR and Wellman. These are companies whose earnings should accelerate in a recovery.

How can I find out if a company in which I already own stock meets my social screens?

If the company is big enough, you may be able to find information about it in books such as The Better World Investment Guide,

Investing With A Social Conscience, Good Money, and Everybody's Business. If it is a smaller company, it may be covered by research services such as Franklin Research and Development; Kinder, Lydenberg, Domini & Co.; or The Clean Yield. However, there are fees for subscribing to these services. You could write to various socially responsible mutual fund companies and request their annual reports. Those will list all of the stocks in their portfolio. If your stock is in their portfolio, it has passed that fund's social screens. Or you could ask a socially responsible investment advisor who should have all of these resources available. If the advisor is not aware of these resources, he or she is probably not well versed in socially responsible investing.

What segment of the recycling industry would be a good investment at this time?

Recycling presents exciting business opportunities. Plastics constitute 7% of America's garbage by weight and 20% by volume. Plastics are among the most valuable materials in the garbage pile, yet only 1% is currently being recycled. This number is expected to increase to 25% by the end of the decade as collection facilities expand, and as technology is developed to make recycling economical. Wellman Inc., the nation's largest recycler of plastic, manufactures goods such as fiberfill, carpeting, parking space bumpers, and tennis ball fuzz from plastic waste. Aluminum is the most valuable recyclable, as demand and supply are consistently strong. The process of recycling aluminum containers saves about 90% of the energy required to produce the same product from virgin materials. Imco Recycling is one example of a highly successful aluminum recycling firm. Orchids Paper Products makes a line of paper products from 100% recycled paper, using no chlorine bleach. Carlisle Plastics, a company that believes it is the leader in utilizing recycled materials, produces products such as clothes hangers and plastic containers that are recyclable.

Ms Millstone is a Vice President at Ferris, Baker Watts, in DC. She has been a specialist in socially responsible investing for nearly a decade. Address questions to her, Ferris, Baker Watts, Inc., 1720 Eye Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Readers Write

ABOUT OUR NEWSLETTER

We continue to appreciate your Newsletter. Enclosed is our membership renewal.

Connie is the board president of Main Street Anamosa, a group working to revitalize our downtown. The group has met with some success and I have been well impressed with the Main Street effort. Maybe I'll get Connie to submit an article to you about this experience.

I'm still in the legislature (running for State Senate in '92) and busy practicing law. Connie is in charge of the bed and breakfast but I help as I can. We've had guests from 41 states and find the folks very enjoyable.

Keep up the good work with Community Service.

*Andy McKean
Anamosa, IA*

Announcements

JOB OPENINGS WITH THE INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY ECONOMICS (ICE)

ICE helps communities develop the tools and institutions needed to regain control of their land, housing, capital and economic resources by providing technical assistance and financing to community land trusts and nonprofit housing development projects serving low and moderate income people.

Director of Community Investment oversees a \$12 million, nationwide Revolving Loan Fund; leads a 10-person team working with community-based borrowers and socially-motivated investors; represents ICE's perspective on capital and community economics in investment forums to government agencies. Three years experience in Community Investment, understanding of housing and community development, two years supervisory and organizational management experience.

Interns perform support functions; gain exposure and skills in community development. Internships: June 15, 1992-June 30, 1993. Computer experience; strong writing skills. Work with cooperative housing or business groups. Applications deadline 4/1/92.

Contact Lynn Benander, ICE, 57 School St.,
Springfield, MA 01105; 413-746-8660.

**WANTED: DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR FOR GRASS-
ROOTS LISTENING AND ORGANIZING A PROGRAM
OF RURAL SOUTHERN VOICE FOR PEACE (RSVP)**

RSVP's Grassroots Listening and Organizing Program provides organizing assistance, networking and training, primarily in the rural communities and small cities in the Southeastern U. S. We provide this support to groups working on justice, peace and environmental issues. We are located on the Celo Land Trust Community in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina.

Job Description: Work with board and staff to develop and implement funding plans including contributions, foundation grants and special events. Emphasis on developing grassroots donor base. Provide administrative assistance to program director and assist with organizing and training in the field.

Qualifications: Fundraising, administrative and organizing experience. Good writing and communication skills. Computer literacy.

Salary: Modest salary and good benefits.

Contact Herb Walters or David Grant, RSVP,
1898 Hannah Branch Road, Burnsville, NC
28714; 704-675-5933.



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Membership

Membership is a means of supporting and sharing the work of Community Service. The basic \$25 annual membership contribution includes a subscription to our bi-monthly NEWSLETTER and 10% off Community Service-published literature. Larger contributions are always needed, however, and smaller ones will be gladly accepted. Community Service is a nonprofit corporation which depends on contributions and the sale of literature to fund its work so that it can offer its services to those who need them. All contributions are appreciated, needed and tax-deductible. Due to added postage costs, overseas membership is \$30 in U.S. currency.

Have Your Friends Seen The Newsletter?

Please send the names and addresses of your friends who might enjoy receiving a sample NEWSLETTER and booklist. (If you wish specific issues sent, please send \$1 per copy.

Editor's Note

We welcome letters to the editor (under 300 words) and articles (700-2000 words) about any notable communities or people who are improving the quality of life in their communities. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you wish the article returned. The only compensation we can offer is the satisfaction of seeing your words in print and knowing you have helped spread encouraging and/or educational information.

Editor's Note #2

We occasionally exchange our mailing list with a group with similar purposes such as the Arthur Morgan School at Celo or Communities Magazine. If you do not wish us to give your name to anyone, please let us know.

Address Change

If there is an error on your mailing label, please send the old label and any corrections to us promptly. It increases our cost greatly if the Post Office notifies us of moves, not to mention that we like hearing from our members and friends!

Consultation

Community Service makes no set charge for formal or informal consultation. Customarily, we ask for a contribution at a rate equal to the client's hourly earnings.

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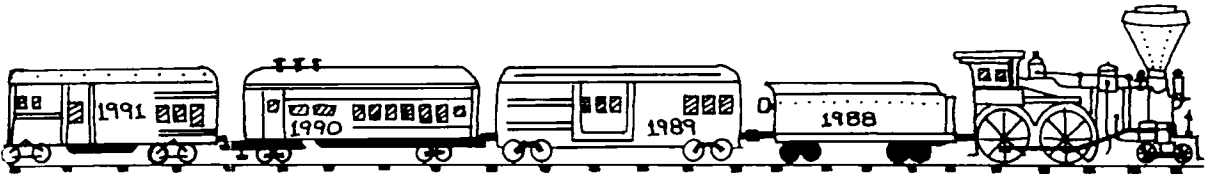


illustration by Erin Kalibat '88

You can tell when your Community Service membership expires by looking at the month and year in the upper left corner of your mailing label. Please renew your membership now if it has expired or will expire before 2/92. The minimum membership contribution is \$25 per year. We do not send individual reminders to renew.

Community Service, Inc.
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Yellow Springs, OH 45387

Address Correction Requested

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