

MAIZE

A LESBIAN COUNTRY MAGAZINE

SPRING 1992



MAIZE IS BY AND FOR LESBIANS

MAIZE invites Lesbians to contribute articles, graphics, photos, interviews, letters, comments, news of Lesbians on the land. Cassette taped interviews and discussions are accepted for transcription. Transcriptions will be returned for editing. Editing on any piece will be done only in cooperation with the author. If you wish to have your work returned, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Please note if the work you send has been submitted or published elsewhere. *Please include a biographical note.*

Letters to the editor may be published in full or in part, unless specified "not for publication". Names will be used unless you request your name withheld, as well as place of residence.

The contents of MAIZE do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the editor. Debate is encouraged. Editor: Lee Lanning

We will run free announcements of particular interest to country Lesbians and free classified ads by Lesbians especially for country Lesbians. Display ads: \$10 (4½h x 3½w)

This issue typed and laid out by Lee Lanning, Serafina, New Mexico
Apologies for the erratic behavior of my typewriter this time!
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CONTENTS

ON THE LAND	4
MOURNING MUSIC	María 10
JOURNEY TO RIVERLAND	Linda and Jeri 11
HALFWAY HOME	Juana Maria Paz 13
WHOSE ROOTS?	Nett Hart 15
ONE THING I'VE LEARNED...	Susan Wiseheart 16
GOING LIKE SIXTY	Jean Mountaingrove 18
WHERE DOES OUR TIME AND ENERGY GO ANYWAY?	Jae Haggard 20
THE HIGH COST OF SIMPLE LIVING	Kathe Kirkbride 22
PROPOSAL FOR COUNTRY LESBIAN STORE	Rebecca Clark 24
UNLEARNING ABLEISM	Debby Earthdaughter 26
SAFER PRODUCTS LIST	Debby Earthdaughter 27
LETTERS	29
REVIEWS	33
COUNTRY CONNECTIONS	34
ANNOUNCEMENTS	35

ILLUSTRATIONS

Jenna Weston	cover, 8, 30
J. Demeter	3
Debby Earthdaughter	7
Mau Blossom	9, 27
Rainbow	11
zana	13, 23
Jae Haggard	15
Siné Anahita	16
maryanne	18
Jean Mountaingrove	19
Shoney Sien	28



J. Demeter
Ava, Missouri

ON THE LAND

IN HONOR OF 10 YEARS OF SILVER CIRCLE

Silver Circle
Silver disk
Silver slip of land
Formed from love
Formed from wisdom
Formed from wimin's hands

Silver Circle
Silver disk
Silver slip of land
Teaching wimin another way
Showing what she can

Silver Circle
Silver disk
Silver slip of land

Teaching growing
Wisdom flowing
Silver slip of land

Ayla Heartsong
1st crescent moon 9992
Written at Gail and Gwen's
Holly Springs, Mississippi

LUNA CIRCLE FARM

GAYS MILLS, WISCONSIN

We are starting onions, this week (3 Feb 9992) since Candlemas has passed. Our 'new' greenhouse, a lean-to built on the back of the house last fall, has been in the 70's on sunny days even when it's 15' outside.

Gertrude-Girl, canine friend, is making the transition from life at Silver Circle (too hot for her long hair) to Wisconsin rather well! Last week she manifested herself a puppy playmate, so now we are a two dog farm.

We are still open to apprentices joining us for summer and fall, and other land wimin and road travelers are always welcome to visit.

In Sister Spirit,
Tricia and Ayla

SUSAN B. ANTHONY MEMORIAL UNREST HOME

SOUTHEAST OHIO

In the fall of 1991 SBAMUH celebrated its 12th anniversary on 150 beautiful acres in Appalachian Ohio. Each day we rejoice that our gorgeous valley will be land entrusted to women in perpetuity.

The women of SBAMUH include 2 residents and 2 residents-in-process, ages 40-66. There are also non-resident members. Work projects and land pleasures are shared by all. Major decisions are made by concensus of residents with input from others. We seek a balance between individual freedom and the welfare of the community as a whole. SBAMUH is taking the necessary legal steps to become an Ohio non-profit land trust.

Members are involved in feminist and lesbian activism, peace and justice issues, conservation, recreation and above all, desire safe, congenial living space for women. All our members support themselves with off-the-land employment or pensions. However, we believe that on-the-land income is possible if women are resourceful and energetic. Truck gardening, hydroponics, crafts, a pet cemetery, bed and breakfast are feasible. The community is ready to lend initial support to a beginning project. We do not, at this time, share incomes or cars community-wide.

The remodelled, century-old 2-story farmhouse is heated by natural gas from our own well. It has 3 bedrooms, 2 full baths, wood-burning fireplace, spring water, plus outside solar shower and composting toilet. Women could build their own dwelling, bring in a mobile home, convert an outbuilding or share the farmhouse. The terrain is uneven with valleys and steep ridges. Accessibility is problematic.

The Campground

SBAMUH has developed a scenic, secluded women's campground, equipped with sink and running water, gas stove and refrigerator, solar-heated shower, campfire circle, wooded hiking trails; parking lot; and a ½ acre pond for swimming.

Our climate is temperate, rarely below zero or above 90' with abundant rainfall. Fruit trees, grape vines, vegetable and flower gardens thrive. The sunsets and the stars are breathtaking.

The Challenge

At women's events we hear the cry-- *Where are our women's communities?* and *Are there any old dykes' homes out there?* Many women are looking for an ideal community, already established, successfully operating, ready to meet all their needs. There will be no Sun City developed with feminist values.

We must begin the task of building these communities now. We believe-- *We are the ones we've been waiting for.* Waiting for others to do it could mean waiting forever.

Pioneering a women's community may be the most challenging and rewarding experience of a lifetime.

The Susan B. Anthony Memorial Unrest Home invites you to consider living at SBAMUH. Getting to know each other well is essential for sound community building. Letter exchanges, phone calls and taped cassettes are a beginning. Campers are welcome; work exchange can be arranged. With advance planning, limited lodging in the farmhouse guest room is possible. We also travel frequently and welcome an invitation from interested women for face-to-face conversation.

Consider supporting SBAMUH. You can encourage the continuing development of this women's land by becoming a non-resident member of SBAMUH, sharing our activities, land use and friendship.

from the flyer

SBAMUH, 13423 Howard Rd., Millfield OH 45761

SPIRAL WIMMIN'S LAND TRUST

MONTICELLO, KENTUCKY

Tucked in my last copy of MAIZE was a hand written note from Lee asking for a Spiral update. Then, as I read "On the Land" I noticed Gail (Silver Circle) had written in her blurb that 7 Spiral wimmin had attended Thanksgiving festivities at Merrill Mushroom's in Tennessee. Nothing like a little peer pressure to get things rolling. Thanks Lee and Gail for the nudge!

A lot has happened since I last wrote to MAIZE. For those of you who have never heard of Spiraland, we're located in south central KY in the foothills of the Cumberland Mountains. Our 250 acres is a valley nestled by three tall, wide ridges. There is adjoining wimmin's land at the top of one of the ridges. It's exciting that spring is here; the wildflowers are magnificent and plentiful.

Spiral has had a few wimmin come and go and one leave and return. We now have a total of 6 wimmin seriously committed to Spiral and two additional wimmin are residents exploring membership.

We continue building and building and building. There were no livable structures on the land when we purchased Her in 1980. There are now four houses in various stages of completion. We have appreciated the many visitors who have come through and given generously of their muscle or encouragement. We're always open to discussing work exchange. The weekend of May 15 will be a work weekend at Jes, Kate and Loret's new house, so if you're near enough to make it over to south central KY, let us know. We'd be glad to have the help.

Lee asked what was the secret of our success. I guess I'd have to say (this is ONE opinion) that we've just kept at it. We're all so different there is really nothing to do but learn at least to accept the differences if not appreciate them. Agreeing to disagree seems to me to be one key.

The financial structure of our land trust is that each womyn pays equally in the cost of the land, either monthly or in a lump sum. We call this our non-refundable land trust fee. We established this primarily to secure the land and show a physical plane commitment to caring for this small portion of the Mother. It seemed to us that if Spiral had to pay back each womyn who left, She would never become solvent. From my own personal experience, there have been times I would have thrown in the bandanna had I not so much invested. This does have its negative side if one allows herself to get caught up in thinking she's stuck. But the non-refundable land trust fee does encourage wimmin to work out their differences, or as I said before at least to agree to disagree.

We're interested in forming some kind of Southeast lesbians on land network. (We're not really limiting the scope of this to the southeast but distance does make things harder.) Ideas are, putting out some kind of news bulletin or round robin letter in which we'd discuss the news and talk about problem solving, etc. Also it'd be nice to have an annual gathering of some sort as well as work exchanges. Other ideas are opportunities for travel between communities and alternative living arrangements when wimmin need a break from their current situations. The possibilities are limitless.

Finally, I'd like to respond to Jae Haggard's article (MAIZE'S last issue) on a crafts womyn's network. The crafts wimmin at Spiral would especially like to see the creation of a crafts catalog by lesbians on land. Four wimmin at Spiral are actively doing drafts and we have recently taken over a crafts store in Monticello (but that's another story). We'd like to be kept posted on what's happening.

We love to have visitors at Spiral, come see us. Please write or call ahead so we can make plans.

Jes Ryn

H.C. 72 Box 94-A, Monticello KY 42633
606-348-7913

FULL MOON ENTERPRISES

HOPLAND, CALIFORNIA

We are a 560 acre, separatist piece of womyn's land. Located two hours north of San Francisco. The land is individually owned. We do not have communal living or a communal house. We all live in separate dwellings and share only responsibilities to the land.

Currently we have four residents on the main part of the property. Helen, the land owner lives and works in San Francisco. She's only able to share the ranch with us on the weekends. Jonas and Kathie work outside the ranch and also raise exotic birds, and take care of the majority of animals which include cattle, horses, chickens, pot-bellied pig, dogs, cats, etc...Marya, our newest resident takes care of the lower half of the land.

We do have numerous native wildlife, over two hundred species of bird, we have seen one bobcat, bear sitings, cougar sitings, coyote and more. None of which have ever threatened us or any livestock.

We are not alcohol free, sugar free, caffeine free or vegetarian. The only thing we will not tolerate is violence.

At present we are open to camping, womyn's gatherings, and exchanging information. We do ask that if you'd like to visit that prior arrangements be made. You need to come totally prepared for taking care of yourselves. Including: cooking, camping equipment and basic survival. Animals are allowed upon approval and we have rules regarding their behavior. We also request a \$5.00 per person donation or one hour work trade. Again we are separatist and only boy children under 10 may visit. We do not have ELECTRICITY anywhere on the land. So if the intense darkness makes you uncomfortable, this would be a hard place for you to visit. The land is open for your discovery, but since it is a working ranch residents rarely have time for *tourism*. We do not want to sound rude, but it's important to understand how limited our time for our projects and their completion truly is. Also we would appreciate you not entering residents dwellings without permission.

For the future we are planning a new cabin for visiting womyn, also expansion on our camping facilities. More gatherings and more ideas are on the horizon.

You may contact us at 707-744-1648 or Kathie 707-744-1190. (POBox 416, Hopland CA 95449) 7/92

Moonshadow Ranch

Mikaya (Ann) and Maggie live on the northwest end of Full Moon Enterprises. Mikaya raises organic pork, and they are busy with new plans of their own. Mikaya is studying to become a Shaman, Maggie is a massage therapist and a yoga instructor. They too have visitation available. Contact them at 744-1093.

Thank you for your interest in us.
Welcome and come and visit.
(From the flyer)

CABBAGE LANE

WOLF CREEK, OREGON

Cabbage Lane is beautiful forested wimmin's land in S.W. Oregon. It has a very rich history. It is the first wimmin's land formed in southern Oregon. Nestled within a lush, rugged and majikal canyon, owls, deer, bobcats, snakes and other wild creatures share this land with the lesbians here.

The land was originally bought about 22 years ago by 4 hippies--2 wimmin and 2 men. Everyone came out, as lots of folks were doing. The land was soon divided, by oral agreement, with the lesbians living on 60 acres of it, called Cabbage Lane and the gay men living on the upper 20 acres, called Lilac Ridge. Because of zoning regulations the 2 lands could not legally be divided, so both Cabbage Lane and Lilac Ridge share the same deed. The dream of the wimmin living there, then and later, was that one day all 80 acres would be wimmin's land. IT LOOKS LIKE THAT DREAM MAY SOON COME TRUE!

The names of 2 of the men and 3 of the wimmin from the early days have remained on the deed. The men "own" 1/4 share of the 80 acres. Over the years they have refused to give up their share of the deed even tho they and other gay men haven't lived there in years. About 2 months ago they contacted us and told us that they want to sell their quarter share for \$20,000. If we weren't willing or able to raise the money they wanted to sell the 80 acres on the open market and receive their quarter share that way.

We have had 2 Cabbage Lane meetings since then. We all agreed that we want Cabbage Lane to continue as Lesbian Land, and as land that is protected from over-development and logging. Wimmin we've talked to within the Southern Oregon lesbian community feel similarly.

Zarod, one of the wimmin whose name is on the deed and who was at both meetings, told us that she and the other wimmin on the deed want to be off the deed. They have been wanting to be off since leaving 15 years ago. None of them want money for their shares.

At the meeting we also all agreed that Cabbage Lane should be held by a land trust and NOT by private ownership.

LIFE ON LAND



PRE-PLUMBING RITUAL -
INVOCATION OF THE
WATER GODDESSES

Debby Earthdaughter
Tucson, Arizona

We are looking into the possibility of coming under the umbrella of the Oregon Woman's Land Trust and/or forming our own land trust.

Cabbage Lane has been wimmin's land for about 20 years now. We are asking wimmin to help support her continuation as wimmin's land. Our goal is to raise the needed money by August 1, '92. Please send Cabbage Lane a donation of \$1000, \$500, \$100, \$50, \$25 or whatever you can afford. Contact us about the possibility of making a tax-deductible donation. By donating your money, helping us fund-raise or spreading the word about Cabbage Lane, you become a partner in preserving a safe, secluded visionary place for lesbians and other wimmin. If you would like to receive quarterly updated information we ask \$2-\$15 per year for our Cabbage Lane newsletter.

For more information or to send donations or newsletter requests, write to Cabbage Lane, POBox 143, Wolf Creek, OR 97497

Lesbianly,
robin Earth

7/92
7

OWL FARM

DAYS CREEK, OREGON

A new year, the return of the light, new beginnings. In recent days I have been reading a book about community, how we can create them, what the stages are in getting to true community, what we have to do to maintain a genuine community once we've gotten there. It has helped me understand what we of OWL have been struggling with for, what is for me, two years now. As the number of wimmin who live at OWL has grown, the sense of being in community has grown too. Womyn excited by an alternative, by the vision of wimmin working and living together, growing food, growing ourselves. Such willingness, such enthusiasm present, how can we fail? But soon, the elephant walks into the living room, the struggles begin, the wounds we carry from our past are re-opened, mistrust and division occur, and the image of community is gone. The challenge to live harmoniously is difficult, never-ending and exhausting.

But wait, there's hope in all this, it isn't time to give up yet. The fact that there are 7 wimmin living at OWL who have lived together for one whole year is an important step for OWL. Three of these wimmin have lived together for 3 years on OWL, which bodes well. Slowly, like the gentle deer who come closer to us as each season passes, knowing that we will not harm them, we womyn slowly



WICCA CURLS UP IN ONE OF

MY BASKETS

Jenna Weston
Ava, Missouri

reach through our individual pain, through our past hurts, and attempt to trust, attempt to understand, try again to see who we each are essentially and honor that person.

I have understood that there are skills that we must gain to create true community--the first being to respect each other for the unique individual we each are. Inherent in that is the recognition of our differences, and a celebration of those differences. I believe that our diversity is the source of our strength, for open wimmin's land is the epitome of diversity.

As the year turns, and we look to beginning anew, I see the wimmin of OWL Farm and OWL Trust pulling together to create genuine community. This does not mean a community that does not struggle or have conflict, but one that moves from a place of love and respect, through the struggles so that OWL can continue to be the visionary spot on the earth she was meant to be. With the coming of the light I see us all standing at the beginning of a journey that will allow us individually and collectively to reach our fullest potential and to become our most Amazing selves.

NiAodagain

LAND MAINTENANCE

Lots of work getting done. We've initiated a work day each week where as many residents as possible are present. This has helped us immensely in getting our long-term projects completed. (Thank you NiAodagain, for this brilliant idea.) The land now has a permanent woodshed for each permanent structure. We've re-worked the trenching at the back of the main house and have laid new leech pipes in the draining system, all of which will hopefully prevent the seasonal flooding that has occurred in the past in the main house kitchen. The road has had its seasonal coat of gravel and some fine ditching done by Ursula the Strong-backed One and other wimmin. Thanks to all of us for the hard work. The barn will be dismantled this spring and the salvagable materials recycled for other projects.

Wyrda

from the newsletter
OWL, POBox 1692, Roseburg OR 97470



Mau Blossom
Doniphan, Missouri

WHITE ROCKS HOMELAND

WILLCOX, ARIZONA

Early January

The winter progresses along with not too much being accomplished except for a lot of walking on this beautiful land. I didn't get my structure completed before it got cold but I was lucky to find a cabin on the ranch to live in a few miles from my home.

The reality of how wild this land is hit hard today with the finding of the body of my much loved dog, Crystal, who was killed in a fight with a coyote; so I'm in mourning.

The garden that I planted in the fall still grows giving me greens whenever I visit there. All the gardens will have to be dug out completely and the soil replaced as it is mostly rock with a little soil between them and then total clay about six inches from the surface.

I'm getting to know my neighbors, an unusual assortment of people. I'm not feeling the isolation I feared.

Earth
PO Box 231
Willcox, AZ 85644

NEW MEXICO WOMEN'S LAND TRUST

TESUQUE, NEW MEXICO

We are happy to announce that the New Mexico Women's Land Trust has been granted a tax exemption by the IRS as a 501-c-3 publicly supported charitable and educational organization. Since we made our successful application to the IRS within 15 months of our incorporation date, the effective date for our 501-c-3 status is the date of our incorporation in March 1990. Your donations to the Land Trust--both present and past--will be considered tax-deductible charitable contributions for income tax purposes.

Since we now have both a signed purchase agreement to buy Arf Women's Land and tax exempt status, our highest priority is to raise the remaining \$77,000 we need to acquire the land.

We have only 7 months left to raise this money and now is the time we need all our supporters to make the extra effort it will take. We've been working for two years now and we're really excited to have accomplished as much as we have with your help. We have created our land trust organization and acquired tax-exempt status for it; we have developed an up-to-date mailing list of 750; we have raised \$30,000; we have raised the profile of Arf Women's Land to the point where our residential structures are full year 'round and we even have a waiting list. We really believe in the power of women united to create change--we know we can accomplish our goals if we work together. Let us know your ideas --we can all help each other brainstorm and fundraise. And thanks to all of you who have helped us for the past two years.

We are planning to borrow from individuals some of the money needed to secure Arf. We are forming a loan pool in which all of our investors will share a first mortgage position. The investment will be secured by the land which is valued at around \$250,000. We are offering an interest rate of 9% for a ten year loan--this is more than twice the rate currently being paid for a savings account. Write for more detailed information if you are willing to loan us money.

Pelican and Sunflower
from the newsletter
NMWLT, POBox 707, Tesuque, NM 87574

MOURNING MUSIC

By María
Reedsport, Oregon

I wake each morning, now, to the music of chain saws and heavy machinery hauling logs, no trees, down the hill next to my country home.

The day I moved in a machine came and made a road out of the wooded path just above my new house (new to me). I asked the landlord, the owner of this old school house, why this was being done.

"Oh, they're just going to do some logging 'up there'." He said, pointing to Henderson Peak towering over my yard, as if he could not understand why I might be interested in such trivial information.

I put curtains up over the three huge windows in my bedroom that look out into these woods after waking one morning as a logging truck drove by close enough to wave.

The hills and mountains that surround my home have all been stripped; last year, or the one before. I look at them in evening light and morning mist rejoicing with each remaining tree (mostly oak, maple and alder) and every evidence of new growth. I walked the wooded path above my home glad to see few fir, and looking forward to more time in these woods come spring and less mud.

This year I want to see the beauty around me. This year I wanted to leave this rage in me against violence and destruction to see the compassion, kindness and beauty instead. This year I did not want to hear the screaming machines and grieving trees... This year, I am determined, will be the year I leave my grief and screaming, to feel the joy in me.

This morning I woke to the music of chain saws killing trees right next to me; close enough to wave.

Tonight I will put a tape of women's healing music in my tape player so I can turn it on as soon as I wake up.

Tomorrow morning I will play lesbian music at maximum volume before I get up, then I will do it again every morning this week.

Tomorrow and tomorrow morning I will awake to healing lesbian music, and on Sunday maybe I will hear the birds sing again. On Sunday the men leave their machines and stay home with their families. Maybe, Sunday morning I will awake to the music of birds singing... maybe, if they haven't left...

This year I want to see the beauty; feel the joy in me...

Maybe, if they haven't left...

1/13/92

María: This is an excerpt from my journal; a prose poem? It's reflective of a somewhat different way of looking at the world that has been cropping up lately in my writer's group. It's about a slightly different slant on surviving country living today.

I am a 52 year old grandmother and country lesbian working in a rural community on the coast of Oregon as a Medical Social Worker. Although I have recently moved to this old school house, I have lived on the land in Oregon since 1984. I drive two to four hours (one way!) once every three weeks to share my writing with the Southern Oregon Women Writer's Group, Gourmet Eating Society, and Chorus.

I have just completed my first book (still looking for a publisher), have written articles printed in Womyn's Press and LesCon, and poetry published in Womyn's Press. I have recently sent my first short story to a main-stream women's magazine. I write to keep myself sane. I don't know if it's working.

JOURNEY TO RIVERLAND

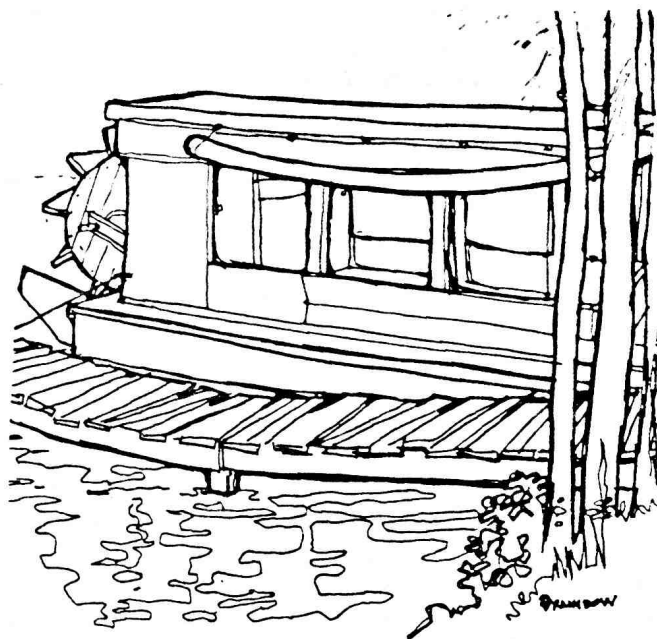
By Linda and Jeri
Riverland
Beaver, Oregon

What if we got so sick and tired of patriarchy and its violent oppression of women that we finally said, "That's it! I'm out of here!" What would we do? Where would we go?

Here's what two of us did. In the fall of 1990 we bought a piece of land with house, outbuildings, and a river on the central Oregon coast and established Riverland, an intentional rural artist community for women. Our dream is for this land to be a community where women are living a full, joyful, and creative life free from the toxic, addictive, dangerous environment of patriarchy and that it be a place where women are constantly learning and re-learning who we are, what we know, what we feel, what we want, and how to heal ourselves in a wholistic way.

We advertised and hoped to attract other women who were loving, trusting, and self-governing, and who were also connected to their own creativity and spirituality. Instead, our many visitors didn't seem quite ready to disengage from the patriarchal hooks of job security, college degrees, homes and mortgages, family and friends, consumerism, addictions, and scarcity of time. We were surprised and disappointed that so few women chose to make the break. But then we realized what major changes it had taken for us to make the journey to Riverland, and this is what we want to share.

Seventeen years in the Unitarian Church allowed me, Linda, a freedom to explore my spirituality unencumbered by prescribed creeds and doctrines. Over the years, women's support groups and feminist theology discussions within the church opened up new areas of personal discovery and empowerment leading to an even more openness to hear women's voices. I stopped reading male authors altogether. Also, a renewed interest in creating art elevated my self-esteem. I was painting. I liked what I was painting and I didn't particularly care what anyone else thought. *That was empowering.*



Rainbow
St. Augustine, Florida

In 1985, a twenty-year marriage ended and I came out as a lesbian. A year later I met Jeri who introduced me to the metaphysics of letting go. That was a big one for me. I learned to let go of most of the material possessions I had accumulated over the years. I learned to let go of bad work environments and career choices. I learned to let go of obsolete friends and family ties that bind. I also began reading Shirley MacLaine, Lynn Andrews, and Starhawk--authors who really stretched me spiritually and left me totally open to anything. I even moved from the city I had lived in and loved for over twenty years. At the time, I didn't really know *what* I was leaving, only that I was moving to a small town of 6,000, something I'd never experienced nor would have even considered before.

For me, Jeri, a series of events began in 1984 which led me into metaphysics and away from my rigid fundamentalist background. The concepts of personal power and choice gave me the gift of spiritual adventure and led to my leaving Portland, Oregon to begin life in a small coastal town. By late 1985, I found myself in a business bankruptcy and a crumbling relationship,

which for many women would be devastating, but somehow these "letting go" events provided me with an exciting chance to begin again with new ideas on how I might live my life differently.

During this time I met Linda, an artist, who helped me find the courage to enroll in my first drawing class, which was a terrifying thought at age 43. This discovery of my creative self was one of the most wonderful, empowering surprises of my life! It opened me up to even more possibilities of what my new life could be.

In early 1987 we both heard Sonia Johnson speak and then read her book, *Going Out of Our Minds; The Metaphysics of Liberation*, which, for us, named patriarchy and its institutions--schools, churches, government, television, newspapers, and economics--as the oppressor of women. Click! As long as we were participating in these institutions, we were enabling and supporting patriarchy. What a devastating and overwhelming realization. We could either be discouraged by this new knowledge or we could do something to change this dynamic.

For starters, we stopped listening to men--we turned off the television. We stopped reading the newspapers. We took up our own space walking down the sidewalk. We waited in lines for women checkers at the grocery store. We stopped contributing time and money to male-dominated organizations. We stopped voting. We stopped lobbying and writing letters to the same old boys in power.

It was really no surprise that we now had more energy for ourselves and our sisters. We began listening to women--writers and musicians. We supported women-owned businesses. We bought women's art. We began to give our attention and energy to women and began to honor and love all women, including the ones we couldn't always agree with. By diverting our attention and energy from men and male values, we saw that we could bring about positive change in our own lives. Was there more we could do to change our environment?

Each of us had also discovered independently how empowering creativity could be and we wanted to share this idea with

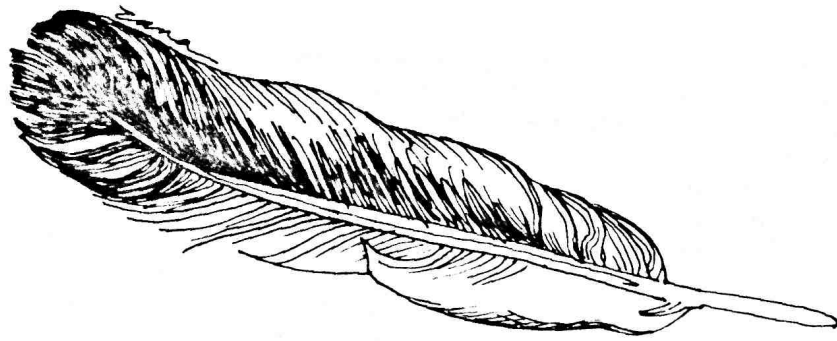
others. We founded Community Arts Project, a non-profit organization to promote community experience of the arts, in Seaside, Oregon in 1988. The following year we opened a community art center and attracted a lot of people, mostly women and children seeking to renew or explore their creativity, through the many workshops, exhibits, and non-juried shows we offered. Our experiences there confirmed the importance that creativity has in all our lives.

In the spring of 1990, Sonia Johnson touched our lives again--in a big way--this time at a workshop, "Breaking Up with Patriarchy Instead of Each Other." This workshop helped remind us that, even though we had created a better environment for ourselves through the art center, violence against women was still active and well around us, even in our small town. Two women had been raped and murdered within three months of each other--one was 88, the other 15.

It was time to move on, time for more big changes, time to let go again. Over the next few months Linda quit her job, sold her house in Portland, and we put our house in Seaside up for sale, closed the art center, and started looking for land. When we found it, we bought the land in the name of Community Arts Project to take advantage of the non-profit status, avoid private ownership, and to continue our commitment to creativity.

This first year has been full of exciting times as we have played and worked with the dozens of women who have spent time at Riverland. We've torn down old structures and replaced them with new, private living spaces. We've taken old pasture land and are joyfully planting organic herb and vegetable gardens, as well as fruit and nut orchards. We've cleared out years of debris and neglect and are creating a haven for ourselves. It's a lot like our lives, this purging of the old and obsolete and choosing a healthy new way to be.

So, it didn't just happen as easily as we thought it would, and yes, it will take time to build our community of women, our new family. In the meantime, we're living our dream now. After all, what else would we want to be doing with our lives?



zana
tucson, arizona

HALFWAY HOME

A JOURNEY TOWARD COMMUNITY

By Juana Maria Paz
Louisa, Virginia

We're halfway through three years of school my daughter Mary Ann needed when we returned from Puerto Rico. Before that, she did home school for two years. That was great but she wanted an English speaking school and that's expensive in Puerto Rico. We had to come back here to get it free. I didn't want to get a job, a car, and an apartment to be in a place I didn't want to be, the American mainstream. So Twin Oaks intentional community suited both our interests. Initially I resisted the move. I was willing to accept problems and contradictions to live in the birthplace of my ancestors. (I was born in New York City.) Mary Ann has a year and a half of high school left and it's not too soon for me to start asking, "What's next?" I need to see a life beyond Twin Oaks. What I want is womyn's land. (My book, *The La Luz Journal* describes my womyn's land experiences in 1978 and 1979. It's been excerpted in MAIZE and in the *Lesbian Land* anthology.)

The place I live at is a real community in that it was formed as a full commune, an intentional community based on the values of sharing, cooperation and egalitarianism. It offers work and housing to members, a private room in a large to smaller dormitory-like residence, in exchange for about 45 hours of labor per week. Members and our children get food, clothing, a monthly allowance of \$46.50 for adults and older kids. Younger kids get less. We have

no bills and health coverage starts after six months. No womyn's land that I know of offers that. If I had money I'd buy a cabin in the woods and I'm not sure how anybody else would fit into that, except as friends and neighbors, the way we've always made community.

I had a very difficult membership process here, although it's okay now. I wrote an article accusing Twin Oaks of power abuse that appeared in the April 1991 issue of *Off Our Backs* feminist newspaper. I almost got thrown out and I'm not sure how that relates to my journey toward womyn's land except that I'm not there yet.

I can't see the forest for the trees as I search for meaning in my experiences and my responses. I want to learn how to create and sustain a land based economically self-sufficient womyn's community that is culturally diverse and lesbian identified, also child-friendly. Where does Twin Oaks fit in? I don't want a replica of Twin Oaks, for lesbians only. I want more housing and economic options, cluster housing for self-chosen family units and singles, and cabins in the woods, not just dormitories. I want women to have small private businesses as well as shared communal work. And I don't want any secret veto of new people by full members who can't be voted on again ourselves. This model of member selection won't work for lesbian/feminists who are vigilant about power issues.

The book *Lesbian Ethics; Toward New Value* by Sarah Lucia Hoagland challenges values often equated with community-- duty, submission, self-sacrifice, vulnerability. I'd like to travel to womyn's lands and do workshops on *Values and Community*, maybe start having regular womyn's land conferences. From my vantage point at Twin Oaks community, established in 1967, which has about 75 adults and 10 kids, that's economically comfortable (we make the hammocks Pier I Imports sells) which is mostly straight, white and middle class, I feel isolated and overwhelmed by the question of how to get from here to there. Do womyn want to visit Twin Oaks and explore it as a model for us? What do womyn already on land need and what do the rest of us need to be ready to join you? What will our decision-making process be and on what basis will we evaluate people and situations? Are our feelings, choices and assumptions open to challenge or is it up to whoever gets there first, stays longest and holds out for what they want? Are land trusts a good model or do women need the protection of legal ownership? If so, how many of us can do that?

I've been personally affected in a number of ways. I've readjusted to life in the states and am protected from economic hardship. Mary Ann drives now (the community has a fleet of about a dozen vehicles), she's happy in school and we've made peace with Twin Oaks. It may yet prove to our advantage to stay after Mary Ann finishes high school. We have friends, we like our living situation and feel settled here. Being a lesbian of color feminist writer in a mixed gender straight white organization, especially after the controversial article when I was still new enough to be rejected for membership, has taken its toll. A friend confided recently that she is attracted to me as a lover and I was thunderstruck even though I've felt her affection for me. It occurs to me that I am an attractive, desirable woman and I used to know that. This sensibility is one of the last things to come back after my membership ordeal. I lost my voice for a while, too. I came to a place where I could not speak to people who could not listen and I needed a new form of language.

(Few people in Puerto Rico speak fluent English and my Spanish is minimal so I'd already had a year of not talking much.) I pushed myself in ballet and aerobics until my feelings were in my body. Then I moved through them. Sometimes I feel things everywhere, not pain, just physical sensation. I can push myself now in ways I couldn't before and I started mixing art forms. A friend let me down recently and I went into the studio (really the shop where hammock chairs are made) and did my ballet lesson on videotape while listening to Ann Reed's "Road of the Heart" tape. (POBox 13251 Dinkytown Station, Minneapolis MN 55414.)

I'm tired of speaking out about power issues and saying that as full members we can do things that cause others discomfort and emotional pain but are protected from veto. I'm not sure how much I want to speak out in general although I do participate in meetings and write on the public bulletin board. This ambivalence about being ourselves in the patriarchy is part of the impulse toward womyn's lands, which are no utopia, either. Since we don't have institutions yet I hope we can learn and adopt selectively from others.

Anyone interested in Twin Oaks should write the Outreach Office here. I want to dialogue with womyn about lesbian land. I need to see myself as part of the lesbian land movement. How can my being here help us? In a recent MAIZE article a lesbian land womyn wondered "What they do at the bigger mixed communes". If we needed to know this one of us is here to figure it out.

I think lesbians mean something different from Twin Oaks when we say "community" but I don't think we know yet how much we need to be communal and what we need to be private. Anyone interested in a Lesbian Land Gathering to discuss all this? I'll help work on it. Can any Lesbian Land be the site for it? Let me hear from anyone interested in these ideas/issues.

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December 26, 1991

WHOSE ROOTS?

By Nett Hart
Foreston, Minnesota

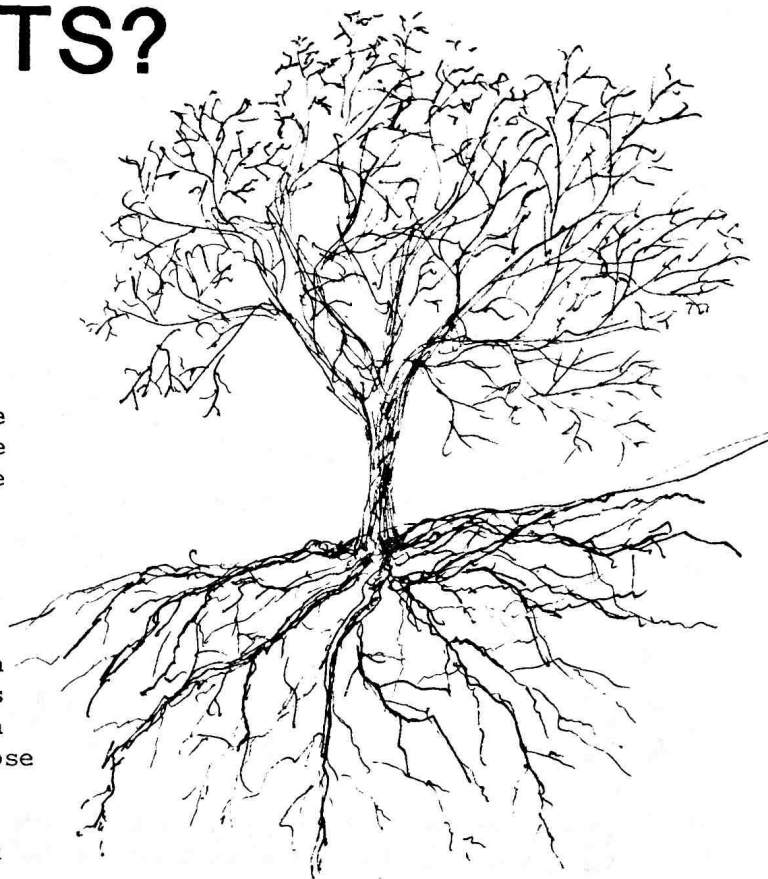
We live in the country. We work with our hands. We grow our own food. We live as we dream. We come to the land because we hold this idea that this is where we can settle into ourselves, here is where we be whole. Here is where the self is nourished because the roots have soil.

Roots. Any gardener understands the importance. The roots are the literal lifeline connecting the showier leaves and blossoms and fruits to the elements of water and nutrient. Without roots in the soil we are like hydroponic tomatoes forced a diet of someone else's design and proportions, unable to pick and choose and regulate our intake. Returning to the land, for we all know we *came* from "the land", is making choices about what we bring into our lives.

And we use the metaphor of roots. We say we are putting down roots as a commitment to be in a place, explore the range of what can be experienced from within a specific location. We speak of being rooted, of having that sense of stability and flexibility within ourselves that allows greater tolerance of climatic changes. We speak of finding our roots, of knowing where we come from and what nourishes our being.

Roots hold us to place but they are dynamic. To explore our need for roots and the ways we are rooted is not to find some old shit and stick to it. The ground around us is fertile because it offers a variety of elements; too much of any will weaken us. The roots I want to grow are broad and resourceful.

The roots I am growing are my own. If roots are about tradition it is important to me that I do not sentimentalize past experiences and connections that were painful in order to have a personal lineage and herstory. The traditions I need relate me to the cycle of change around me, to the sprouting



Jae Haggard
Serafina, New Mexico

of new things but also old things in new places. What keeps me sucking up unwanted particles, unbalancing myself, is forgetting roots are about making choices.

Roots are from my own being, my ability to interact with the environment. There is no point grafting on the roots of someone else's tradition, playing at being native or druid or something I am not. Respecting myself, I respect the traditions--and the choices within that tradition--of others. There are many ways to be on the land, to have roots, and every culture has a time when the earth was honored as lifegiver, a tradition of living in balance.

Roots are about growth. The bigger the plant, the bigger the need for roots both to stabilize the expansion and to nourish it. The big selves we become on the land need roots of depth and breadth. Sometimes when it seems we're leaning on our hoe, what we're doing is sinking in.



Sine Anahita
McLeansville, North Carolina

ONE THING I'VE LEARNED SINCE MOVING TO THE COUNTRY

By Susan Wiseheart
Drury, Missouri

Gardening is still as physically challenging, bliss invoking, and satisfying as in the city. Here, my life depends on it. I place myself in a tending position with the plants, creating interdependence. Hauling manure, making compost, bucking hay bales, mulching, weeding, watering are ordinary events in my daily life. On one of my jobs as well as at home, I plant, prick out, grow out, tie up, and harvest. Cleaning seed and keeping it cool and dry takes up hours of my time.

As a child, I was enthralled with *The Secret Garden*, and with neighbor's gardens. I loved the names of flowers. Forget-Me-Not. Snap Dragon. Larkspur. No one in my family gardened much, though. My mother put in bedding plants and cared for plantings already in place at the houses we lived in. She loved her small

tomato and pepper gardens, but she wasn't what I'd call a devoted gardener. Neither was anyone else in my biological family.

I never knew I could do it. I'd lug home stacks of gardening books from the library, scan them, then get overwhelmed at the complexity of it. I had no mentors. I longed to live in totally wild places with plants growing completely in their own way, without interference from humans. At the same time, I was enchanted by the charged sweetness of the scenes in *The Secret Garden* where the children tended the burgeoning plants, freeing the choked sprouts from overgrown weeds, loosening the soil to give them room.

As an adult, I followed the lead of my ex-husband in the mid to late sixties. He wanted the garden. I did it with him, but it was his project and I felt removed from it, despite doing much of the work.

Later, after I was out and living with Tess for many years in the city, I was the one who wanted earth work. Once,

we agreed to go in on a garden down the street with several friends, then found it impossible to go away from our own place to another to keep it in order. All of us had too much going on in our lives. We let it go.

At our own house, I tried to squeeze in a few hours a week between work, child-care, community organizing, cooking, cleaning, and softball playing to plant a handful of herbs, vegetables and wildflowers. Jenna helped me figure it out and gave me plants. The times I spent out there in the yard were deeply nourishing, but I always felt pressure to be doing something else, could never let myself sink into it and be with it.

When I moved into the same house with Terri, I became part owner of a garden that was famous in our community. First it was Emily's and one year it was Linda and Marge's and then it was Elizabeth and Terri's. I'd paid it many visits before I moved there. Cats I knew well were buried in it.

The first year, I scattered amethyst and rose quartz around the borders. We tilled, planted, tended and loved it. Terri was a good teacher, with her many years of experience, so I learned a lot, but I still didn't fully understand the rhythms. I'd be surprised when Terri would bring in bowls of harvest. Was it time to do that already? I was too distracted by city life, work schedules, other events. And I still lacked confidence that I was doing it "right".

After that, Terri took on the major responsibility for the garden. I helped during the times of intense work and paid half the costs. I'd go on weeding binges when necessary, and felt deep satisfaction during the few hours a week I spent out there. I grew a few herbs at one end, blocked off from the rest of the garden by huge red raspberry bushes Terri brought from her mother's farm. When I was working with the lavender, sage and thyme, I would let my longing for country life suffuse me, though I often felt hopeless about getting out of the city.

Now that I'm in a place where gardens fill my week, I am gaining certainty. I am still a complete novice compared to Terri, Linda, Jo, Jenna, Denslow and Vinnie. I haven't applied myself in the ways any of them have to becoming a gardener.

It is slower for me. I pay close attention to how each of the others does it, taking cues and leads from all of them, and information seeps in. I feel fortunate to have such excellent inspiring teachers. It's hard for me to incorporate my lessons, though, and to get over my feelings that other people can do it, but I can't.

Still, I am pleased to be in charge of the garlic at Hawk Hill Ranch. I draw on what I've learned from my friends and on my job at Elixir Farm. It is a delight to have a good harvest, to get next year's bed planted and mulched, to know without asking anyone what needs to be done to prepare it. This is my third year doing garlic. I know something about it.

There is nothing more satisfying than spending hours among the plants and soil and rocks and insects, digging, touching green. I am more serious about it, here in the country, than ever before. And I have more fun and find more enjoyment in it. I stop thinking in the garden. Repetitive movements and physical contact with the plants lull me into a trance. I become a sponge, taking in all the energies, sights, sounds, smells, and feels of the heated earth and her creatures. Hawks and buzzards fly high overhead. Songbirds flit nearby. The buzz of insects surges and recedes. The plants weave and sway in their dance. I am one with it.

Susan: After 48 years of city life in Michigan and more than a decade of scheming and dreaming, belonging to land groups, and supporting rural land trusts, Susan Wiseheart finally moved to the country in 1989. She lives on Hawk Hill Community Land Trust, in the Missouri Ozarks, along with her lover Terri, her pals Denslow and Linda, many animals and, soon, Lorraine. She works off the land for many hours a week, some of it on nearby Elixir Farm. The wonderful Ozarks Lesbian community inspires her. The only regrets she has about leaving the city center around missing both her dear friends who still live there and the racial, ethnic and cultural diversity.

Editor's note: We are pleased to have Susan as a regular columnist in MAIZE. Look for "One Thing I've Learned..." in upcoming issues!

GOING LIKE SIXTY

By Jean Mountaingrove
Sunny Valley, Oregon

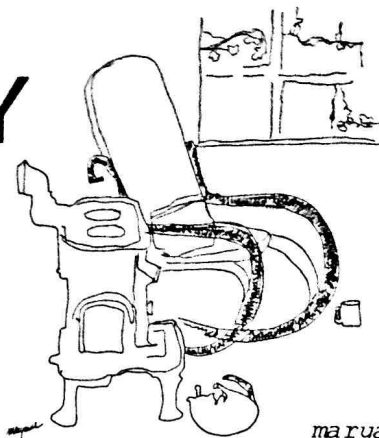
With the Spring's blessing I may be able to have my first hot shower of 1992. Since November my bathing has been either at my city friends' homes or simple sponge baths beside my wood stove.

Two years ago dyke friends mounted a bulky coil of black plastic pipe on a plywood platform and maneuvered the whole thing to the top of my attached-greenhouse roof. I then wound a layer of clear plastic sheeting over the coil and stapled it to the plywood platform. With lots of help from visitors, friends and my house-building daughter some straight forward plumbing brought both hot and cold water to my indoor greenhouse shower, and incidentally to my kitchen.

Since hot water rises, the cold line from the holding tank went first to the kitchen faucet, then to the greenhouse shower and finally connected to the bottom of the black plastic coil. When the sun heats the black plastic, hot water rises in the coil and waits there for a faucet to be opened. Then hot water descends down the plastic pipe into the greenhouse, and comes out the shower head, or through the line to the kitchen and into my sink.

For 19 of the 21 years I have lived in the forested mountains of southern Oregon, I have had no indoor running water (or tub or shower or toilet, of course). I liked to surprise my city visitors who asked about running water with "Yes, I have running water and I run out to get it."

The water on this land where I have lived for more than 13 years comes from a spring on public land up on the mountain. This spring runs day and night, 365 days a year: never known to go dry in 50 years. Until we installed two 1500 gallon holding tanks on our own land, I gardened with



maryanne
miami, florida

drip irrigation--that was the rate of flow in August and September until the Fall rains came in October. During these months I collected water overnight in 5 gallon pails and carried water to our 15 baby fruit trees.

All that changed 5 years ago when the pipe from the spring was connected to the holding tanks and pipes were laid from the tanks to each building and each garden, and to the outhouse and the composting area. Eleven faucets and all of them outdoors!

I had plenty of running water and pressure of 35 psi (pounds per square inch). Over the summer I could even-out the water supply fairly well because of the reserve in those tanks. However the drouth of the past 5 years has still made conservation essential in the late summer.

During those pre-plumbing years, a length of garden hose gave a good volume of hot water for bathing--until sundown. And sometimes I hung a commercial portable shower (a plastic bag, clear on the front and black on the back, with a short hose and nozzle at the bottom) from a post on the high corner of the porch. ("High corner" because everyplace on this mountainside slopes). This was a convenient place to shower when a woman stood on the ground below the porch.

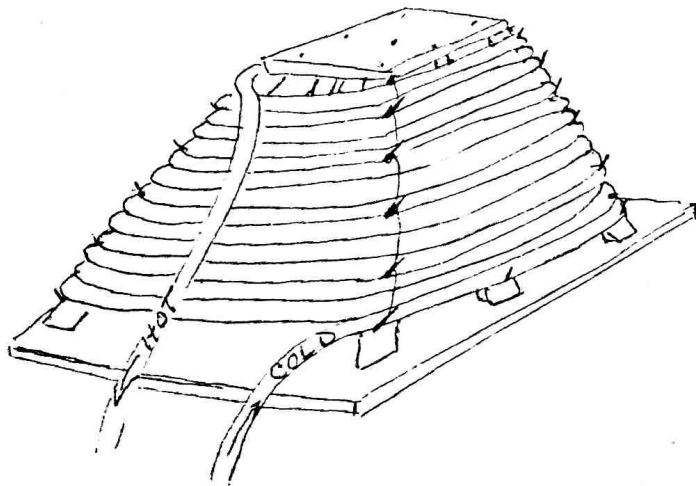
That was it for bathing until my country friend sent me a diagram for the black plastic pipe hot water heating beehive.

Ah! The sweet pleasure of washing my hair with my back straight! No more dripping water all over the kitchen counter and floor! Ah the sweet soothing hot water in the small of my tired back on a summer evening after a day in the gardens.

And finally, hot water from a faucet in my kitchen sink! Often in the summer the water is so hot I must add cold water-- which now came out of a faucet too. For weeks I entertained myself by dumping dish water in the sink, watching it drain and then running to the back window to watch it flow magically out of the drain pipe onto the flowers under the apple tree. It works! It works!

With all this encouraging success I went on to another thrill: a second black pipe beehive atop the separate bathhouse. The secondhand bathtub had sat undampened in its private 8 x 12 wood cabin next to the Circle garden for 8 years. Gradually it had been installed, plumbed, and then lovingly tiled by my housebuilding daughter. But nary a drop of water to wet the grandmama longlegs or the lizards and spiders who found their way into that gleaming white trap.

Last summer a team of variously talented, experienced and neophyte dykes helped raise another plastic pipe water-heating beehive contraption to the sunny roof



Select a piece of plywood or make a flat surface large enough to build the support for your plastic pipe. The supports are 2" x 2" which form a cone anchored to a flat board at the top.

above the tub. New problems to be solved, of course: a different slope to the roof, considerable warp to the plywood platform which must be leveled. And eventually the joints where the lengths of pipe were joined developed leaks when the sun went down and the pipe cooled and contracted. Oh well, the leaking water drained into the iris bed and the tub drained onto the asparagus. Nothing is wasted in this system, I muse.

I am looking forward to a lovely warm tub bath soon and as I lie relaxed in the water, admiring the tiling job, looking at the iris through the large windows, I expect to dream up some more schemes for enlisting the help of sister Sun in improving my country life.

c Jean Mountaingrove 1992

Jean: I chose "Going Like Sixty" for the title of writings I plan to share with you in MAIZE this year. 1992 is my 66th year, so whatever I will be doing, I'll be "going like sixty". I hope you'll come along.

Editor's note: We are pleased to have Jean as a regular columnist in MAIZE. Look for "Going Like Sixty" in upcoming issues!

The base is covered in a reflective surface. I used discarded aluminum sheets from the local newspaper office. Coil the black plastic pipe from the bottom, starting about 3" up the support. Drive in a nail for the first round and then one every 3 rounds to support the pipe. When finished, wrap wire around each nail to the next above it. When the pipe won't flex around the cone easily, lead the top round down to your plumbing connection. When you began, you left enough pipe to connect to your water source--I hope. It works best not to have any joints in the coils on the cone. When this coiled cone of pipe is securely in place where gravity will fill your hot water pipes (and it must be level) wrap the cone in clear plastic to retain the heat which will be very hot in a sunny location on a sunny day.

WHERE DOES OUR TIME AND ENERGY GO ANYWAY?

By Jae Haggard
Serafina, New Mexico

Minnesota, Oregon, Missouri, Vermont, Alberta, New Mexico, Arkansas. It doesn't matter where we Lesbians settle on land, or when. Choosing to live on land means choosing to deal with thousands of tasks all saying "do me"--some expected, some that crop up out of nowhere. These are the real demanding ones. Details of these constant do-nows vary from land to land, season to season. The given--we all have them. All the time.

I wonder when I go to other lands. Wimmin wonder when they come to land where I live. Why is that stack of wood not put away? Why are these tools not sharpened? Why aren't the scraps from building hauled away yet? How can they leave that leak in the ceiling? House sure could use paint. I wonder why they don't fix that cracked window. What are they doing with all their time? Sound familiar?

What do we do with our time, our money, on land? Why are there so many things waiting to be done? Because it's the nature of "the beastie". Land, buildings, animals, roads all take maintenance and care. Most wimmin are also trying to build some kind of new structure. Most work on or off land to get money. Most are still learning some or all of the skills needed. We all have relationships to attend. We wait for the money to do the next step. Or, if there's money, there's not necessarily time or energy.

A few weeks ago after 10 intense months with hardly a break, we figured maybe we could slow down a bit for the winter. We made lists--a land essential--of all the things that can wait til spring, can wait til February, can't wait at all. This last short-as-we-could-make-it list in hand, we head out to cap the water line to the garden before it freezes. Replacing the leaking valve in the main

line could be a messy and touchy job, but of course it's never a case of "just that". If we replace the valve, there's a patched tee next to it that could give out any time, and we need another house shut-off up the line a couple feet. Doesn't make sense to replace one part without doing it all--they're in the same four foot stretch. Ah, we think. Let's do it all in the spring, when it's nice out. Warm you know. Too cold now to trust the pipe glue to set up properly--might have to wait days til it's warm enough. Besides we're tired and don't want to do such a big-deal job now.

A brainstorm. Cut the line below the valve and cap it off for the winter. Don't need garden water til spring. Will cut the line there anyway to replace the valve. Oh joy, a maybe two hour job to dig and cap. Doesn't that sound dandy?

Doesn't it always. Ten days later the line is done, all the new parts in place and not leaking. Ten days later we have water in the house again. Ten days and countless hours and two 45-minute-one-way trips to town for parts, when we knew we had *everything* we could need on hand. At least without water, there's no worry about the drains freezing up--they do every year. Sound familiar?

Specifics of the water line soap opera don't matter. It's just so typical that a quick and simple seeming task turns into a life-work nightmare. That's country living. Of course, getting by without water isn't too bad especially for a few days. I can say that because we always keep full water jugs on hand. And, we have no animals.

However we do, make that *did*, have a pressure cooker. We love it. Make a big pot or two of beans every week--over two years now we've done that. No water day #4. Bean Day. KaBoom. It's almost clichéd--you worry about pressure cookers blowing up but they don't. Scratch that. They do. And we now have the in-home test that proves that pinto bean

plaster is indeed permanent, indestructable, as well as wash-proof. Every square inch of our big 20 x 20 kitchen is covered with bean glob or mist--ceiling, walls, floor, cabinets, counters, wood stove, clean dishes in the drainer, counter utensils, and my back, head to toe. The cover has gone right through the ceiling leaving a cover-with-handle shaped hole in the ceiling. Can we pass it off as modern Dyke sculpture? The entire stove top has gone through the counter hole into the beany-pots below.

Since it's not on any list, this must be one of the unexpecteds, the demanding ones that come out of nowhere. Ever tried to wash every inch of a large room with 2 gallons of water? Another country trait--ingenuity with a strong blend of perseverance. Also helpful to repaint the entire kitchen. Sound familiar?

A few days later a letter came from friends on land in Arkansas. Their truck had been stuck in mud four days. Hard to get to work that way. We can imagine all the attempts to get it out. The accelerator cable is broken in the other truck. The eaves trough's plugged up and water has leaked into the house. In those four days, a government form is due in town so a check can be issued. Meantime the just-got-it-after-years-without phone has stopped working. Their list goes on but you get the idea. The form is late for obvious reasons. The check is denied. Not getting expected money can be a very big deal on land. It takes days and two trips to town to convince the powers-that-be to hand over the check. It takes more days, much hasseling, and more trips to town to get the county to haul gravel. Sound familiar?

Their letter reminds me of the nine years I lived with a lover in the country in northern Minnesota. In December it was ice storms, in January feet of snow, in March inches of mud. At these times we walked in carrying everything including water for us and the animals. Most of the time we could get as far as our driveway, a 500 foot walk. Others we parked down the hill a quarter mile. If you have animals it becomes a full-time job for a group. Wish we always had a group around. One of the cows has pink-eye. To town for the iodine powder. The first-calf heifer is due. It's our

first too. We don't know what to look for, how to gauge the hollow in the cow's side that says the calf has dropped. We watch for days, and nights. While we're at work in town, the calf comes--it's too big and strangles. We die a little too. The neighbor dog just killed three of our chickens. Deal with that. The six-month calves are gone, right through the fence. Two days and seven miles later they turn up. Meantime the cow has kicked her way out of her shed and is across the road with the neighbor's bull. Then the cat gets distemper. Feed her with an eye-dropper every hour. She pulls through. Fleas on the dogs don't seem a very big deal anymore. Sound familiar?

We stayed with friends in Missouri a couple of weeks before moving to this land. It was June. Their life? A partial list: A huge garden that grows most all their year's vegies. Reroofing part of the barn. Building a tack room. Digging the foundation for a cabin--in rock, by hand. Building a wood shed. Fencing in acres of pasture for the horses, new fence. Meantime one of the horses develops a tumor and tramples one of the Dykes. Physical recovery is slow enough. The emotional trauma goes a lot deeper. And what to do with the horse? One works out part-time, the other is a craftswommon trying to get ready for the festivals. The house needs painting, the toilet needs to be replaced. They have two very long lists taped to the fridge. Do Now. Do Then. Sound familiar?

Seasons change. Dykes come and go from land. Lesbians stay on the land. It doesn't matter who, or when, or where. Life on land is always full. There is never a bottom to the list. We're lucky if we can get down to just one list. It's a hassle. It's frustrating; exhausting.

Yet, it's the life we choose--consciously and wholeheartedly. It's a life that's brim-full of satisfaction, connection, endless learning--skills, understanding, relating, making do, just plain living. It's a life that gives us a great deal of say about how we live. I wouldn't trade this life for anything. I smile when I see the look that tells me visitors are wondering what we do with our time. And I enjoy the occasional dull moment. Sound familiar?

THE HIGH COST OF SIMPLE LIVING

By Kathe Kirkbride
Ribera, New Mexico

Before we moved to the country we used to have to fight traffic on the freeways, rush about to get the groceries bought, the laundry done and the lawn mowed on the precious weekend hours, and schedule play time around the work hours. We did all of this just for that check at the end of the week. What a rat race. Unfortunately, country living has its own type of rodent competition and the turns in the maze are sharper and much less predictable than the ones we were used to in the city. Not only that, but there isn't anyone to hand you a paycheck just for showing up somewhere on time.

We moved onto our place in June and by October we were ready to start looking for some income. Our plan was to test market 2 woodworking ideas and have a supply ready for the holiday season. Two dykes in Santa Fe had opened a gift shop in what seemed the ideal location to snare the bleary-eyed tourist and snatch their superfluous dollars. Thus, we had the perfect outlet for our wares. We madly made boxes and toy airplanes and put them on consignment in the shop. Unfortunately for us and our friends at the shop, this year the Santa Fe merchants harvested less than 10% of the dollars they were accustomed to. So, the likely plan was to get our stuff in more than one store. We found another which promptly went out of business after three weeks and we had to go collect our wares.

While we were waiting for the flood of orders for our test items to arrive, we had to broaden our base somewhat and search out some carpentry jobs. Through word of mouth (the dyke network) we got a call to bid on building a fence to hide a propane tank (the neighbors were complaining) and adding a step to an existing deck. We got the job and were told that the fence was urgent. Plans were made to do the work of the day after Thanksgiving.

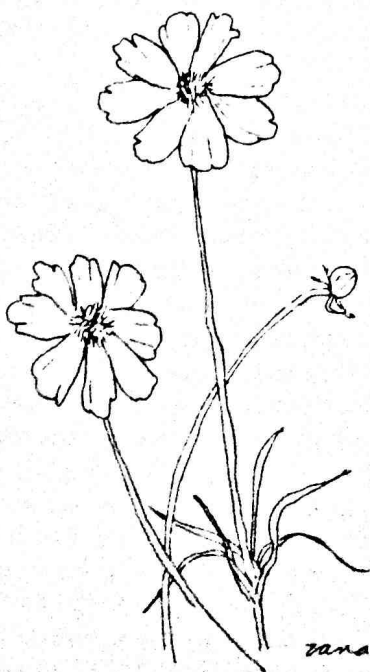
The day arrived and we took the truck into town to get the materials and headed to the job site. The customer lived in the hills outside of Santa Fe and we were not able to get within 2 miles of her house with the two-wheel drive truck because of the icy and snowy roads. Now what? It hadn't snowed for weeks and waiting a day or so was not going to make an appreciable difference. We knew that we were eventually going to have to get a four-wheel drive, but we sure didn't want to have to do it when we didn't have much money coming in. But what else were we to do if we wanted to work? We drove to the Ford dealership and traded the truck in on a used four-wheel drive.

We transferred the fencing materials to the new truck and drove back to the job site (our savings account depleted by \$1000) to leave a note saying we would be back on Sunday come Hell or high water. On Saturday it snowed like crazy and on Sunday we could not get up there even with four-wheel drive. Off to Pep Boys to get chains and, \$40 poorer, we finally arrive to build a fence in a snowstorm. Three hours later and with a check in hand for \$50 we head home, wet and cold, and \$990 in the hole.

While we were waiting for all the calls to build fences in snowstorms, and since nothing much was coming in from the shop in town, I thought it might serve some purpose to hit the other gift shops and see if they were interested in our stuff. I loaded the boxes and planes into a box and walked up and down the streets of downtown Santa Fe. Everywhere I went it was the same story, "We already have everything we need for Christmas and business is really slow." The only offer I had was from a bearded refugee from Haight-Ashbury who was selling beads on a corner. He was willing to trade some of his beads for one of my boxes. Such a deal! We commiserated for a few minutes and then I trudged on. He at least wasn't wearing out shoe leather getting turned down.

The holidays were now upon us and we were due in South Dakota for Christmas with Bev's family. We decided to take the new truck in case we ran into bad weather. While we were there we cooked up the idea of buying some antique chairs and tables that needed repair and refinishing with the idea of selling them at the Santa Fe flea market in the Spring. We found plenty of inexpensive and motley looking candidates and loaded the truck with 14 chairs, 4 tables, an old trunk and a bunch of odds and ends and left for home. We now had a \$285 investment in what looked like candidates for the dump.

Bev started working on the "treasures" from South Dakota and I was left to get creative about how to bring in some immediate dollars. I lettered a flyer, made copies, and drove through the expensive rural neighborhoods of Santa Fe putting the flyers in the mailboxes. The flyers said something to the effect that we were willing to do just about anything that wasn't illegal for not many dollars per hour and listed our phone number. The only call we got from the flyers was from the post office saying that we had committed a Federal Offense and that we were not to put flyers in mailboxes under penalty of death, torture, or worse. So much for that idea!



zana
zana
tucson, arizona

Well, if I couldn't put flyers in mailboxes, I would give them directly to people. While Bev was busy doing something else in town, I stood outside the local health food store during the 5:00-6:00 rush in 20 degree weather handing out flyers to patrons as they left the store with groceries that I was soon not going to be able to buy. I did get one call to shovel snow and do some minor repairs. That call netted me \$40, blisters, and a sore back. This 43 year old woman was not going to last long with too many jobs like this one.

While at the local Italian food restaurant using the restroom I noticed that the door handle was broken. I suggested to the owner that if she needed anyone to do repairs, like fixing the bathroom door, that I was available. She agreed to have me fix the doorknob and Bev and I were now ahead one pizza on the deal. We forced ourselves to wait a week so that the anticipation of the pizza would make the treat last longer.

Last week a neighbor brought over a wooden potty chair that needed a new seat and a mirror that needed a new oval frame. Unfortunately, in order to make these two items I needed to edge join some boards and I didn't have a jointer. For weeks I had been deliberating long and hard about the kind of items I could craft without a planer and a jointer. The list was not very long and now I couldn't even make a potty seat and a frame. Thanks to the miracle of VISA cards, we now have those two final tools to make the shop complete. Now \$800 further in the hole, I collected the whopping sum of \$25 which allowed us to get groceries when the checking account was bare. It only took about 7 hours to earn that \$25, but cash talks loudly and it sure beats the heck out of shoveling snow for 2 hours.

This making a living in the country is sure expensive and right now we are so far in the hole that we can't see over the top. But, we keep plugging along hoping that the Spring will be better than the Winter. Of course, looking out the windows at the beautiful mesa and seeing bunnies hopping around helps us to keep it all in perspective.

PROPOSAL FOR COUNTRY LESBIAN STORE AND MAIL ORDER PROJECT

By Rebecca Clark
Honor, Michigan

To all lesbians living on the land and interested in becoming more economically self sufficient.

I am Rebecca Clark and I am interested in creating a store whereby lesbians living on the land could send their products/art to be sold. Setting up the store would be the first stage. The second stage would be to create a mail order business based on the goods in the store.

WHERE WILL THE STORE BE?

At Labrys wilderness resort in Honor, Michigan. The "boathouse" once used to store boats is now our tool and supply shed. This building, once fixed up will be the home of the store. The resort is located in the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore on the northwest shore of Lake Michigan. Labrys has between 250 and 300 wimmin visit a year. This is an excellent start for attracting customers. And you know how word of mouth works in the lesbian community. Plus Labrys is only two hours away from the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, and three hours from Grand Rapids and Lansing, both having a large lesbian population. Eventually we could set our store up at Michigan, and do other festivals around the country.

GETTING OFF THE GROUND

This proposal will concentrate mainly on the first stage, setting up the store. It's important to create a viable business before undertaking the more expensive mail order stage or even before we start doing festivals. The store needs a name. It also needs wimmin to make things for it. How do you get started? Decide what art/product you or your land group will make.

Send a sample of it to Rebecca. It can even be in its rough stage. If it seems suitable for this project you will send the goods to the store and try to keep up with the demand. The pricing will be entirely up to you (I'll say more on pricing later in proposal). Each item will have to be priced and include your code #. The bookkeeping could be a nightmare so I want to simplify it by giving each individual or group a number. This number will be used on sales slips and in the sales ledger. I'm contemplating an entry fee. A one time charge to help with start-up costs, operating expenses and advertising. It will be minimal, around \$50. Also to get started I'd like a short bio about yourself or your land project. These could be attractively displayed with your product or put on the wall around the store.

HOW THE STORE WILL WORK

Each individual or land project is responsible for keeping the store stocked. Since distance is a factor, I will have to notify everyone regarding inventory status. I will take 10% of gross sales to help pay expenses of doing business and pay for clerking and bookkeeping. I will be responsible for keeping regular store hours, making all sales, keeping a clean store and doing all the bookkeeping necessary. Checks will be written to participants each month. 10% is considerably lower than a gallery's 30% and not enough to cover us each going into business for ourselves. But that's the glory of collectives, we can share the expense and do it for less. I feel that this is crucial. We must keep our costs low. We owe Labrys' success to low prices

and simple services. I'd like all lesbians involved in the store project to try to keep their costs low as well. If your goods are already priced and these prices cannot absorb the 10% you will have to adjust your price accordingly. I do not want to get into wholesaling. This is a patriarchal concept and simply drives prices up. I also don't want to start this project with real high expectations. Please come to this project committed and positive.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Any lesbian(s)/womyn who consider themselves living on the land. The reason for this project is to help wimmin on the land become self-sufficient and to provide all lesbians/wimmin with products and art that are needed in our communities at a reasonable price. I am not going to be picky about this one. It's up to each lesbian.
What do we need?

I've been wracking my brain for products that I regularly need but don't have the time to make myself or that I hate to buy from the male system because they pollute the world, are inferior or just don't meet my needs. Here is my list, please add to it:

- *all soaps
- *all foods
- *toiletries
- *woven goods (placemats, rugs, blankets)
- *herbs
- *flour grinders
- *spinners(yarn)
- *shoe makers
- *clothing
- *mushroom growers
- *juicemakers
- *pottery
- *toolmakers
- *menstrual pads/sponges
- *tea makers
- *publishers
- *artists of any dimension

If you received a copy of this proposal, it's time to get to work. If you know any lesbian who should have a copy of this proposal please pass a copy on to her. I am in the process of writing a Lesbian Natural Resources grant to help fix up the building that will house the store. Even if I don't get the grant, I'll start this project. It just may take me a little longer. July 1, 1992 is my goal for opening up the store. It's peak time at Labrys and I would hate to miss a summer. A year from then we'll be ready to go to Michigan and other festivals. Also start work on the mail order stage. I don't want to rush things, but I do want to keep moving on this idea. Your input is crucial at this point. I will publish updates

through MAIZE. This whole idea came from Jae Haggard's article in MAIZE #31. Any questions can be directed to me, Rebecca Clark, Rt. 1, Box 257, Honor MI 49640.

TO MARKET TO MARKET LAND DYKE WARES UPDATE

By Jae Haggard
Serafina, New Mexico

Rebecca adds: she'll gladly be the "clearinghouse" for ideas and connections. Send her marketing ideas, ideas for "needed" products, other thoughts. Are you willing to take other Land Dyke wares to a festival or craft fair? Do you have wares you'd like another Dyke to sell for you? Send all information and ideas to Rebecca. She'll copy and mail to other interested Dykes. Do you want to receive copies? Send your name to Rebecca. Some SASEs or money for ongoing postage is helpful.

I'll also do updates for MAIZE.

I'm thrilled with Rebecca's well thought-out low-commission ideas for selling our Land Dyke crafts and art at their resort. The focus on *needed* items is fitting. The \$50 start-up fee although hard for many of us to come by distributes the start-up expenses and helps bring together wim really committed to participating. It's about what it often costs to get a table at a weekend event. I hope we can figure out a way to reimburse low-income wim some part of that \$50. A 10% commission to keep prices and overhead low is incredibly fair. Rebecca is a fitting addition to our herstory of wimmin handling each others wares. I also find her energy contagious.

Here in New Mexico we at Serafina are joining with Kathe and Bev at Maricasa in a Wimifest booth over Memorial weekend--called LANDYKE CRAFTS (acceptance pending). At least two additional land dykes are also sending us wares to display. We'll sell Red River menstrual pads, crocheted LesBean bags, MAIZE, as well as hand-crafted wooden toys, puzzles, boxes and cutting boards. If you want us to sell your wares, let me know (c/o MAIZE). We hope to expand the number of Lesbian lands participating each year. And we'll definitely be sending our wares to Rebecca.

UNLEARNING ABLEISM

SOME BEGINNINGS

By Debby Earthdaughter
Tucson, Arizona

You can be a part of unlearning ableism and creating disability access. Just like white women work on anti-racism together rather than asking women of color to teach them everything, here's how you can work on unlearning ableism:

- **Read the work of women with disabilities
- **Find out what needs done to make yourself, your home, groups you're in, events you are part of to be more accessible.
- **Work to start making these changes.
- **Invite others to join you in this work.
- **Start anti-ableism groups.
- **Confront individual and institutional ableism when you encounter it.
- **Start accessibility committees for groups/events.
- **Hire women with disabilities as access consultants.
- **Make good use of your able-bodied privilege by asking a woman if there's work you can do, or form a group that provides work energy. Do this not as charity, but to share your privilege--each woman deserves to live as well as any other. This also creates a system that will be there for you if you become disabled.
- **Create sliding scales for events and services.
- **Create ways to redistribute money, goods and services.

When you get frustrated, don't blame it on women with disabilities. Realize we have a lot of ableism to undo in ourselves/society. That work needs to be done whether individual women with disabilities exist or not. Direct your frustration/anger at the patriarchal system that ableism is a part of.

Don't take care of us. Or say you are making something accessible so an individual woman can come. Or not do the work because you don't know any women with disabilities/none have come to event/group. Create access for all women.

Don't offer advice on healing. Accept us as we are rather than trying to fix us--create access for us as we are.

If you want women to have greater access to healing resources you can create accessible libraries, accessible and sliding scale bodywork, herbalists, support groups, spiritual groups, community events.

Work on creating access to the clean air, clean water, healthy food, safe communities that are healthy for all of us.

Don't assume that having a disability means we aren't working on our own emotional stuff. Or that a change in our disability/illness is proof of our healing.

If you have info you really want to share and are already a disability ally, you could say, I know you probably know a lot already, but I have healing info that I'd be glad to share if you like.

Don't say "you don't look disabled." Realize there are hidden disabilities.

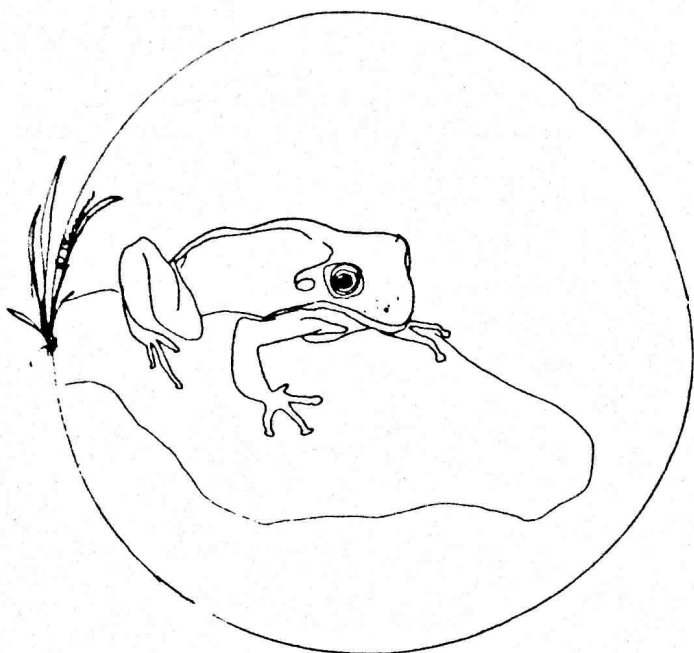
Realize there are degrees of disability. A woman may use a wheelchair all the time, use it most of the time but walk short distances or walk for exercise, or may use a chair only when fatigued. If you see a woman walking who you've seen in a chair don't say she was "faking".

Recognize fatigue as something real. Respect women's limits.

Recognize that a mobility aid can be like part of a woman's body. So don't move her mobility aid, lean on her chair, use her chair/cane. If you think a woman might like a push in her chair, ask her if she does.

SAFER PRODUCTS LIST

By Debby Earthdaughter
Tucson, Arizona



Mau Blossom
Doniphan, Missouri

Don't expect us to be sweet, perfect, courageous, patient, more spiritually evolved. Accept us as real people. Realize that oppression doesn't bring out the best in anyone. Work to stop that oppression, but don't expect women with disabilities to be grateful--it is work for all of us to do. Don't ignore access work because you don't like individual women with disabilities.

Don't tell us about how you'd just die if you couldn't jog or see anymore. Don't say that someone is better off dead because she had so many physical problems. We work to accept ourselves as we are and create a satisfying way to live. Our biggest obstacles aren't our disabilities--they are the oppression of people with disabilities. When someone is depressed and thinks of/commits suicide it is often because the oppression they are experiencing is too much. Work to remove that oppression rather than blame the unhappy individual or pity her for her condition.

Get to know us as complex individuals with many facets. Get to know us because we have something in common, not to learn about ableism or show you are anti-ableist. If you are already doing anti-ableism work yourself, then you have the opportunity to approach us as the individuals we are, and to make all our lives richer.

These products are free of fragrances and other toxins. Using them makes it possible for people who are chemically sensitive to be around you and not get sick from the chemicals that are in most products. Using them is an important part of making events accessible to people with chemical sensitivity.

For chemically sensitive people, exposure to chemicals doesn't just cause sneezing or a runny nose. Reactions include congestion, sinus infections, nausea, dizziness, severe headaches, joint pain, stomach upsets, memory loss, confusion, and mood swings. Reactions can last for days.

Wearing a mask can help reduce reactions, but does not screen out all chemicals. Wearing a mask also often makes it harder for a person to speak or get enough air. Masks are temporary solutions to reduce reactions. They are not a substitute for cleaner air.

Using fragrance-free, non-toxic products is also healthier for you and the rest of the planet.

You may find other products that are OK too--look to see that they are fragrance-free. Sometimes things labeled unscented contain a fragrance and then another masking fragrance to take away the smell but double the chemicals!

It's important that they are also free of natural scents--even scents from natural flowers, herbs, etc. are chemicals and can make someone sick who is already overloaded with toxins. When our air and water aren't so overloaded with chemicals as we reduce pollution, then people probably won't get sick from chemicals anymore and we can use these things again. For now, it's important to reduce chemicals in the air in each way we can.

SOAPS

Dr. Bronner's Baby-Castille liquid or bar (unscented)

Dr. Bronner's Almond soap, liquid or bar
Sirena Coconut Soap (unscented)
Simple Soap

The Chef's Soap
Conti Castille Soap
The Body Shop Pure Castille Soap
baking soda--sprinkle on washcloth

SHAMPOOS

Granny's Rich & Radiant (conditioner
also available)
Dr. Bronner's Baby Castille liquid
can be used as shampoo
All Ways Indian Hemp Shampoo
Body Shop Unscented Shampoo
Real Aloe Vera Shampoo--unscented
Baking soda--make paste, rub into
wet hair, rinse well

DETERGENTS

Granny's Old Fashioned, Regular and
Power Plus
Allen's Detergent
Country Safe Unscented
Baking Soda ($\frac{1}{2}$ c. per load)
(Unscented Tide, Cheer, Greenmark,
etc. still have chemicals that are
harmful. And no fabric softeners--
nasty chemicals.)

LOTIONS

Almond Oil or Olive Oil, with no scents
added
Body Shop Aloe Vera Moisturizer
Nature's Plus Vitamin E Cream
Skin Trip Unscented Moisturizing Cream
Granny's Old Fashioned Moisture Guard

DEODORANTS

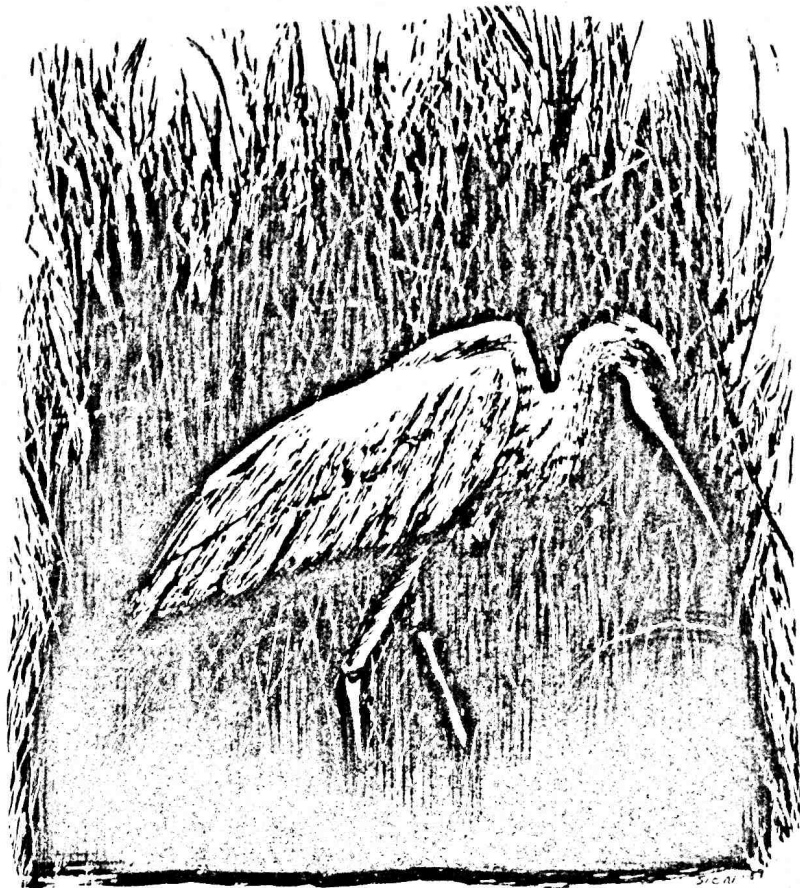
Almay
Nature de France--unscented type
Tom's--unscented type
Or rub baking soda, lemon juice, clay
under your arms

SUNSCREEN

Mill Creek Paba-free Lotion (fragrance-
free)

TO REMOVE THE SMELL OF SCENT, FABRIC SOFTENERS FROM CLOTHES:

Soak the clothes overnight in water
with vinegar added. Rinse. Then soak
overnight in water with baking soda added.
Rinse. Repeat for stubborn chemicals.
Leaving them hang outside for a while
after doing the soaks also helps.



Shoney Sien
Santa Cruz, California

SMOKE: Wash yourself and clothes after
exposure to cigarette smoke, fires or
incense.

PET DANDER: Wash yourself and clothes after
exposure to pet dander.

AVAILABILITY: Coops and health food stores
carry some of these products. By mail:
NEEDS, 527 Charles Ave. 12A, Syracuse NY,
13209

ECOLOGY BOX, 425 E. Washington #202,
Ann Arbor MI 48104

HOME CLEANING: Debra Lynn Dadd's *Nontoxic,
Natural and Earthwise* is a good source
for nontoxic alternatives you can make
at home or order. It's in the public
library.

QUESTIONS? Write me c/o Sister Homelands
on Earth, POBox 5385, Tucson, AZ 85703.

Debby: I'm a chemically sensitive woman
who wants to move onto Saguaroland
before more pesticide exposures.

LETTERS

Dear Jackie, (a response to Jackie's letter in the winter issue of MAIZE)
Certainly I would be out of my depth to address the recovery process especially regarding incest. However, like many women, I can claim to be a survivor of the patriarchy. I have read many of the books you've mentioned, especially Sonia Johnson, and I also find myself continually "considering ideas about patriarchy, freedom and integrity..."

What captured my interest about your predicament stems from my observation that you're the same age I was when I first moved to a rural area with the intention of living on women's land. I'm now 46, back in an urban environment and materially speaking, no closer to my goal than I was 19 years ago. However, along the way, I may have profited from experiences. These experiences pivot around the failure to succeed at establishing womens' land communities due primarily to poverty.

Your anger and despair are naturally a logical consequence of the struggle you are experiencing. And, I cannot offer reassurances that it will soon be any different. What I can give is a possible insight that is gleaned from the attempts myself and others have made to create alternatives for women since you want to "find out what wimmin are doing on their journeys out of the patriarchal abyss."

The most important quality you possess is a belief in your "womon sisters". If that belief remains intact, you are then capable of devoting your energies to the constructive pursuit of mutual support. The value of your unshakable belief in sisters is invaluable and will remain the basis of all future unity.

The historical (herstorical) perspective is equally valuable to avoid burn out. Scarcity is an artificial construct of patriarchal greed. Sonia Johnson would have us jump off the building in the faith that others will reach out to catch our fall. I imagine this concept cannot apply to those who fall through the social safety net. Consequently, many sisters simply can't

afford to let go until they have funds for women they "love, see eye to eye with" and with whom they can create a community. With cart and horse analogy, I would suggest that a parachute helps break the fall. So, what color is our collective parachute?

It is the color of spiritual bonding. It's 1992(9992) and you're 27 and appear to me to be before your time as I was in 1974. That is, your beliefs are as difficult to fulfill now as mine were then. Still, there are significant indicators that within the historical context of patriarchal dissolution, we are finally at the beginning of the end. I believe that we may all suffer a great deal because of collapsing systems. Yet, the situation is ripe for women to bond in such a way as to create a permanent sense of their own sustainable culture. Much of the beginnings of this phenomenon will revolve around the prospects of actual "gift giving". Beyond filling our essential needs to feed, clothe and shelter ourselves, the strength and resilience necessary spiritually to progress towards the goal of transisting from patriarchal values to those of the female centered cultures will begin to take place.

Patience, yes, that is what I would urge you to cultivate. Remember, it is one of the classic virtues that built the matriarchies of the distant past. So, it is that we will begin to return. An exodus way, in a journey inward. We, also, seek the inner life in one another.

You are doing exactly what you need to do. I am also trying to create work I can do from home. In remaining on the cutting edge of one's creative energies, we can remain uplifted in these difficult times. Depression often goes hand in hand with isolation. The bonding we seek with other women is the way out/in and promises that no matter how much we must struggle in the years ahead, our unity will be unbroken. Economic shackles cannot be forged that will separate us again.

A closing thought: The Uranus/Neptune conjunction which occurs in Spring 1992 creates upheaval that dissolves old structures to make room for the new, i.e. governments. Matriarchal structures will be brought back to life as these planets

come together in their 172 year cycle of revolutionary change. These changes will reverberate with our physical body and mind as well as in society.

Stay strong...

Kenna Hicks
San Francisco, Calif.

P.S. Gift enclosed: "Civilization of the Goddess", some herstorical perspective.

Dear MAIZE,

Well, it's over. Through "creative interpretation" of our contract with the elderly owner, her family has sold the farm to some man with more money than we have. They gave us two weeks notice.

We're trying not to be angry at them-- it seems that the Mother has other plans for us.

Thank you for being there.

Blessings,
Lin and Debbie
Moon & Stars Farm

Dear Lee,

Enclosed is info on two urgent issues:
1) our rights to choose our method of health care and the many of us who will become desperately ill without our herbs and supplements, including myself (the Nutrition, Labeling and Education Act will result in herbs and supplements being strictly regulated)**2) Toxic dumping in desert regions--it has been going on for some time. For example, EIDER, the wimmin's land for environmentally ill dykes, is located downwind of the infamous Nevada nuclear test site. Another example, the area north of Santa Fe in New Mexico (Los Alamos) is a nuclear cesspool. Other examples abound. To help avoid such places dykes should look at a map and note areas labeled as "Marine Corps Base", "test site" "gunnery range", etc. (My Rand McNally Road Atlas shows such places.) Then check weather maps for airflow (downwind) and direction of water flow (to avoid toxic drinking water). Dykes should also check out types of factories/manufacturing that is "upwind" and "upriver" of them--lots of them use cadmium (i.e. metal plating) and toxic fluids (i.e. dry cleaners); also pesticides on farms



Jenna Weston
Ava, Missouri

upriver, etc. Uranium mines in desert areas, too!

The irony of course being that escaping the patriarchy ain't easy, but somehow we must try or die.

Sincerely,
Enid Lumley

**Note that this lemon can be turned into lemonade--growing herbs and connecting with sources in Canada and Mexico for Dyke's health needs can become a "cottage industry". Get ready!

There's not enough room to print the info on these issues in entirety--if you'd like a copy of what Enid sent MAIZE, send SASE.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE READERS OF MAIZE

My name is Lynn Hicks and I own and live on and work a farm in Chatham County North Carolina, called Full Circle Farm. The farm and work of my partner, Yahoo, and myself were written up in an interview in MAIZE in the Summer issue, 9991. A major change has occurred in my life since that article. On Aug. 12 of last year, Yahoo was involved in a tragic hiking accident in the mountains of California which took her life. Part of the reason for writing this letter is to publicly thank the many women in the Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill community for their support during that time and since. There have been dozens of women coming out to the farm to visit, bring food, help with the farm work, bring their Love and most appreciated warm, strong hugs, and share memories and tears with me. Women in the community also helped me create (or I helped them) a most wonderful and healing memorial service and shared meal that followed. Visits, shared food, massages, and farm work have continued for the last six months, the worst six months of my life made bearable by the Love and actions of the women of this community. The women of Bold Moon Farm and Spiraland have also visited and shared much healing energy. Also much appreciated have been contributions in Yahoo's memory to help me meet the financial obligations of keeping the farm without Yahoo's income. I cannot begin to tell you how valuable this support has been. I wish I could communicate to you how wonderful it is to be a part of such a supportive community, even though I live far out in the country and seldom participate in happenings. I could go on forever with my appreciation but there is another reason I'm writing this letter.

Since before buying this land three years ago, Yahoo and I had a dream of creating a community. Since her death, my desire for this has increased for obvious financial and social reasons, but also because my above mentioned love of community has been tapped in a way that will not be turned off until it is created. I have 100 acres here: 20 acres of farm land, some pasture, most of the rest in woods healing from being cut for timber about 10 years ago (luckily tall

hardwoods were left and it was not "slashed and burned"), a pond, a large old farm house, outbuildings, goats, chickens, dogs and cats. Plenty for several women to share!!! And only an hour from North Durham, 35 minutes from Chapel Hill!!! Also, I've already established a Market Garden business which supports me in my simple lifestyle (but not all of the mortgage) and can be expanded. I dream of a community where we can live together close to and in harmony with our Mother Earth, sharing resources, creating our own "family" or "tribe", taking care of ourselves and each other as we age or otherwise need care, and developing a lesbian culture apart from the patriarchy as much as we can. I have only a few real bottom lines: that the land be held in common and not be divided (preferably at some point be incorporated as a land trust to keep it in perpetuity as women's land); that it remain organic, that it be structured with at least some community identity, not just a good neighborhood; and that residents have some commitment to becoming non-consumers of the patriarchy.

I know from reading MAIZE that there are other women out there with similar interests. If my property, location, situation and dreams sound interesting to any of you: 1) Let's communicate and discuss these ideas and others. 2) Right now I'm looking for an apprentice (apprentices) to help on the farm this year, which could be an opportunity to try it out. 3) I'd like to set up regular work (and play and be in the country) weekends (or weekdays), which could also be a chance to try it out, or could just be some time in the country for city girls. And 4) of course I'm open to having visits from women who would like to check it out.

So, if you're interested, write me a letter, give me a call, let's get together.

And, again, my dear sisters in The Triangle, Bold Moon and Spiral, THANK YOU!! You've helped me survive. I LOVE YOU!!!

Love,

Lynn

Lynn Hicks, Full Circle Farm
Rt. 1, Box 427, Silk Hope
Siler City NC 27344

919-742-5959

Dear MAIZE,

I had some responses to the latest issue of MAIZE. (#31)

With respect to "Receiving Bodywork", I think all of zana's suggestions are well-taken, but I wanted to add a few thoughts of my own: I am EXTREMELY sensitive to many forms of healing and I have found that healers of all kinds just don't believe how sensitive until after they've worked with me a long time, by which point it's usually too late because I'm fed up and they've been doing more harm than good. So I'm learning to pare down what I allow others to do to and/or for me. I make sure I know my limits and assert them and don't feel guilty if the worker disagrees or doubts me. Luckily I now am working with a woman who's very tuned in to this sort of thing. Our first two sessions we did a few minutes of verbal checking in, describing what I was there for, etc., and then she worked on my body for about 5 minutes! I felt fine but she said she thought that was about all my body could handle right then. She said she thought I should come in once every 6 to 8 weeks, not more often than that, because it would take that long for my body to absorb the changes. I was sort of skeptical and thought she was too cautious, but went along and now I think she's really right! The third visit, she worked on me for 30-45 minutes, saying I'd probably be a little tired after and should take it easy that evening. We were both surprised at how long she'd worked on me, but we both felt that this time I was up to it. I slept almost all day for the next several days! One of the things she'd been doing was work on my neck, to release blockages in my wrists, and for days after the session, my thumb would spasm and wiggle without my intention--and I feel much improvement over the past 6 weeks or so since that treatment. So I guess that what I'm saying is that sometimes less is better. Sometimes you need to ease yourself into things, respect your limits and the body's timetable, which may be not at all what your busy mind prefers. Another woman was giving me a massage a few months ago and she wanted to rotate my ankle. I found that what she was doing was too painful, and told her to ease up. She

claims she was barely touching my foot, but I KNOW what I know about what my body can take and I told her to be more gentle anyway. It turned out to be a basically good session, though perhaps somewhat too heavy because I was not just sleepy, but totally flattened by it afterwards.

I think that although hardly anyone is probably as sensitive as I am to this stuff, that the point remains valid--if you feel bad afterwards, do it less. Maybe two short sessions rather than one long one, or a gentler form of pressure. I have a friend who does a lot of very heavy physical labor and she likes really hard massages. But I also know that the neurological effect of gentle skin pressure and stroking can trigger very deep relaxation, sometimes even more than "deep muscle" work. The key is to train yourself to know it's safe to relax out of the tension or habitual position, as well as to show you a new way.

I don't believe in chiropractic. I believe that the kind of bodywork that repositions bones without retraining muscles is the equivalent of opening your body with a can opener. Ultimately it's destructive, a warfare method rather than release. I know that not all chiropractors do this kind of work and that what I've just said will be very controversial, but why are so many people expected to go get cracked and re-cracked in exactly the same way week after week for the rest of their lives? Is this like getting a fix? I know lots of wimmin who swear by chiropractors so I'm not about to launch a campaign against the profession, but thought my opinion could be valuable to air as well.

Another thing about bodywork, and healing in general, is, I hope, obvious, but I still have to remind myself: whatever got you tense or injured isn't likely to go away unless you get rid of the cause. If you go for "healing" and expect that you won't make any changes in your life outside the sessions, forget it. Yeah, flukes do happen and sometimes a problem is just a pure accident and you get fixed and that's the end of it, but not often...

I get the feeling that I could go on and on spouting my opinions on the "healing arts" so instead I'll just make one last comment. I think that the existence

of healing "crises" is real, and that sometimes it's valid to go through them on the way to something else. But I don't believe in the machismo of thinking all painful effects are healing crises, and it's important to be able to distinguish whether what you're going through is a cleanse or if it's just new trouble. There are lots of things that indicate this, but the simplest way to tell is to ask yourself/your client if you/they feel better after the reaction than you/she felt before the treatment. If you feel worse or just the same, it isn't getting you anywhere.

In response to the comments in the disability suggestions, I'd love it if wimmin would stop going out of their way to say that EI access is "very difficult". It doesn't add anything I can think of to the effort to make the access happen. I mean, wimmin raise money for paying interpreters, and they don't find it necessary to say "creating access for Deaf wimmin is very costly". (Actually, lots do, but not as part of their guidelines). It might be more helpful to say that "Access for people with EI is very important, and therefore we urge everyone to cooperate." And then go on to explain the intricacies of what that cooperation would entail.

I would also like to read more discussion and less resignation re: working animals and religious scentedness. My religious practice has included candles since infancy and I can no longer use them and so have had to adjust. I'm sure spirit understands!! What is the point of some of these practices, and how can wimmin care about THAT and EACH OTHER at least as much as about the methods? I'm not saying that no one should ever smudge, etc., but I think that the way EI wimmin are always the ones expected to "compromise" (i.e. be excluded) is very suspicious indeed! Lots like how dykes are supposed to "compromise" to "fit in" in some contexts...It's always the more radical and/or less privileged groups who cede their rights in coalitions. Something to think about, eh?

Thanks for making MAIZE happen...

In sisterhood,

Jodi

Great Barrington, Mass.

REVIEWS

By Lee Lanning

WILD WITCHES DON'T GET THE BLUES
Astrology, Rituals and Healing
By Ffiona Morgan 1991 \$14.95
Daughters of the Moon Publishing
Box 357, Rio Nido CA 95471

Although I am not a "real" witch and do not do much in the way of ritual, books like these help keep me awake to magic, to the ways we do interact with spirit, with the earth, with the universe.

Ffiona's book is unique in that it covers astrology as well as more traditional "witchy" areas. Her info was helpful to me in sorting out some of the astrology terms and concepts I'd never really understood. She has a section on lunar magic and good explanations of what it means when someone says, "Oh, of course, it's because the moon's in pisces today!" There's lots of rituals, and a bit on crystals and healing. Best of all are her stories accompanying each astrological sign, each sacred time of the year--some of the stories are true, some are fantasy; they all bring the information closer and make magic seem more possible.

ARIADNE'S THREAD
A Workbook of Goddess Magic
By Shekhinah Mountainwater
Crossing Press 1991 \$14.95

Shekhinah's book grew from her correspondence course on the mysteries of the goddess. It is amazingly thorough and really nicely written. She has a gentle, loving approach; she points out that following Ariadne's thread (or being a witch) is a "path of the heart", a passionate calling, not detached or sedate. Her passionate path is evident in her book.

Shekhinah's work is creative: "I am not a strict traditionalist myself, and often find that I work magic in a more improvisational style" (p.261). She questions all patriarchal, all hierarchical forms, returning always to the circle, the circle of women. She encourages us to work in groups, for "community is the ultimate healing, and magical community is the best of all" (p.360).

COUNTRY CONNECTIONS

By Lee Lanning

MAIZE receives many requests for land information, dykes wanting to know where they can camp, visit, work or live. I respond as best I can. Finally I'm starting a regular feature in MAIZE where all lands seeking visitors, workers, apprentices, community members or whatever, can be listed. (As well as gatherings or workshops taking place on Lesbian land.) The list that follows I made up from the last two issues of MAIZE and other printed sources. Please send any changes, additions or deletions by June 1 for the summer issue. Get as specific as you like. There are a lot of dykes seeking land-living right now, so let's let them know where we are!

ADOBELAND, 12150 W. Calle Seneca,
Tucson, AZ 85743
camping

ARCO IRIS, HC 70, Box 17, Ponca AR
72670-9620

ARF/New Mexico Women's Land Trust,
POBox 707, Tesuque NM 87574
camping

CABBAGE LANE, PO Box 143, Wolf Creek,
OR 97497

DOE FARM/ Wisconsin Women's Land Coop
Rt. 2 Box 42, Norwalk WI 54648
camping, lodging, memberships
seeking summer caretaker

FULL CIRCLE FARM, Rt.1 Box 427 Silk Hope,
Siler City NC 27344 919-742-5959
community members, apprentice

FULL MOON ENTERPRISES, PO Box 416,
Hopland CA 95449 707-744-1648
camping
MOONSHADOW RANCH 707-744-1093

HOWL (Help Open Women's Land) POBox 242,
Winooski VT 05404

LUNA CIRCLE FARM, Rt.1 Box 1200,
Soldier's Grove WI 54655
apprentice/worker/partners
visitors

OUTLAND, PO Box 130, Serafina NM 87569
Remote Lesbian Spirit Community seeking
residents committed to self-sufficient
living based in Lesbian culture.
Pet-free, alcohol-and-drug-free.

OWL FARM/ Oregon Women's Land Trust
POBox 1692, Roseburg OR 97470

RIVERLAND, POBox 156, Beaver OR 97108
community members

SISTER HOMELANDS ON EARTH (SHE)
POBox 5285, Tucson AZ 85703
Saguaro Sisterland, 12101 W. Calle
Madera, Tucson AZ 85743
White Rocks Homeland, POBox 231,
Willcox, AZ 85644

SPIRALAND/ Spiral Wimmin's Land Trust,
H.C. 72, Box 94-A, Monticello KY 42633
visitors, work exchange

SUSAN B. ANTHONY MEMORIAL UNREST HOME,
13423 Howard Rd. Millfield OH 45761
community members, campers

THE WEB, c/o Word Weavers, POBox 8742,
Minneapolis MN 55408 (1 1/2 hours from
city) camping

Here are a few tips for visitors to
Lesbian Land:

The visitor calls or writes in advance
and arrives somewhere near when she said
she would.

She comes prepared to care for herself
totally, or makes specific arrangements
with the land.

She doesn't presume anything; she
asks what is appropriate in the way of
food, money, pets, phone use, scents,
smoking, chemical use and anything else
that affects the wimmin on the land.

She respects the land, leaving every-
thing the way she found it.

She comes ready and willing to enter
into the life of the land, to pitch in
on work projects as well as cooking and
dishes, unless other arrangements have
been made.

She communicates what she is seeking
from the wimmin on the land and what
she has to offer.

She knows that lesbians on land
are not likely to have more resources
than she--no more time, energy, love,
strength, money.

She respects the life the land dykes
are creating, living as they do during
the visit.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINGLE MOM with eight year old son want to live with another single mom or in a women's community that allows kids. Can relocate anywhere in the U.S. as long as it is rural! Snow, 3283 Kirk Rd, #7, Lake Worth FL 33461

2 BED, 1 BATH condo in Lake Worth, Florida pool, air cond, loc. near beach, parks, Jr. college, good schools. Sale or rent \$475/month. Snow, 3283 Kirk Rd #7, Lake Worth, FL 33461

LOOKING FOR PARTNERS/APPRENTICES/VISITORS for organic, communal, consensus wimmins vegetable farm. We are very flexible about terms, etc. SASE to Luna Circle Farm, Rt.1 Box 1200, Soldier's Grove, WI 54655

LAND FOR SALE: 80 acres of pinon and juniper covered northern New Mexico land. \$1500-2000/acre. Will sell all or part (20 acres or more). Low down payment, will carry contract. Located near Santa Fe and lots of dykes. For more info contact Kathe and Bev at Maricasa, Box 426, Ribera NM 87560

THIRD ANNUAL DYKE ART RETREAT ENCAMPMENT (DARE) July 26-August 1, 1992 at Rootworks. Six days of creative work in a lesbian supportive environment. For visual artists. Send SASE for further information to DARE 2000 King Mountain Trail, Sunny Valley OR 97497

ACREAGE FOR SALE: 200 down, 150/month, 5-8 acres on Beaver Lake in NW Arkansas, near Fayetteville. Lots of dykes nearby. Land has gentle slope and some flat. Or, 18 acres 600 down, 180/month. Prefer Lesbians for neighbors. Silver Crone, 509 W. Spring St. Fayetteville AR 72701

WOMEN AND RECOVERY: A new monthly newsletter for women in all aspects of recovery and professionals providing women's services. Sample issues are \$1. Twelve issues, \$18 plus \$4 postage. Women to Women Communications, POBox 161775, Cupertino CA 95016

GERMAN SHEPHERD PUPS: Country womyn owned and raised, different colors, \$250 and up. OFA parents. Send SASE to Avalon Valley, Rt.1, Box 195A, Hillsboro WI 54634. Wanted: Schutzhund Trainer for possible partnership.

ESTO NO TIENE NOMBRE, revista de lesbianas latinas en miami, is a fresh and creative forum for the latina lesbian experience with a Miami twist. Published quarterly, this magazine features reviews, poetry, short stories, international interviews, intellectual lesbian dialogue, news, crossword puzzles, and orgasms. To subscribe send \$10 if in the U.S. and \$15 for international subs. Esto No Tiene Nombre, 4700 NW 7 St. #463, Miami FL 33126

THE COMPREHENSIVE INDEX TO WOMANSPiRiT magazine, 1974-1984. \$13 includes postage. All back issues are also available, some original, some photocopy. Write for info: WomanSpirit, 2000 King Mtn Trail, Sunny Valley OR 97497

RED RIVER MENSTRUAL PADS, all cotton, washable, comfortable, absorbent. Made by Land Dykes. Write for brochure: Red River, POBox 130, Serafina, NM 87569

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS: "Down to Earth: A Lesbian Tradition in Gardening. Why do you garden? Send essays, poems, stories, narratives, line drawings, black and white photos with SASE by August 1, 1992 to HerBooks, POBox 7467, Santa Cruz CA 95061

PRODYKETIONS AND SAGE MOVE to Canberra. The new address is POBox 396, Dickson Act. 2602, Australia. Please note the change if it interests you as mail is no longer being forwarded from Port Macquarie. Thanks.

GOLDEN THREADS CELEBRATION, June 26-28 Provincetown MA. Golden Threads is a worldwide social network of Lesbian women over 50, and women who are interested in older women. For info please contact Christine Burton, Golden Threads, POBox 3177, Burlington VT 05401-0031

\$3.50

NUMBER 32