

MAIZE

A LESBIAN COUNTRY MAGAZINE

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Nett 94

Nett Hart

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MAIZE IS BY AND FOR LESBIANS

MAIZE invites Lesbians to contribute articles, graphics, photos, interviews, letter, comments, news of Lesbians on the land. Cassette taped interviews, discussions and articles 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Letters to the editor may be published in full or in part, unless specified "not for publication".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

MAIZE 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)

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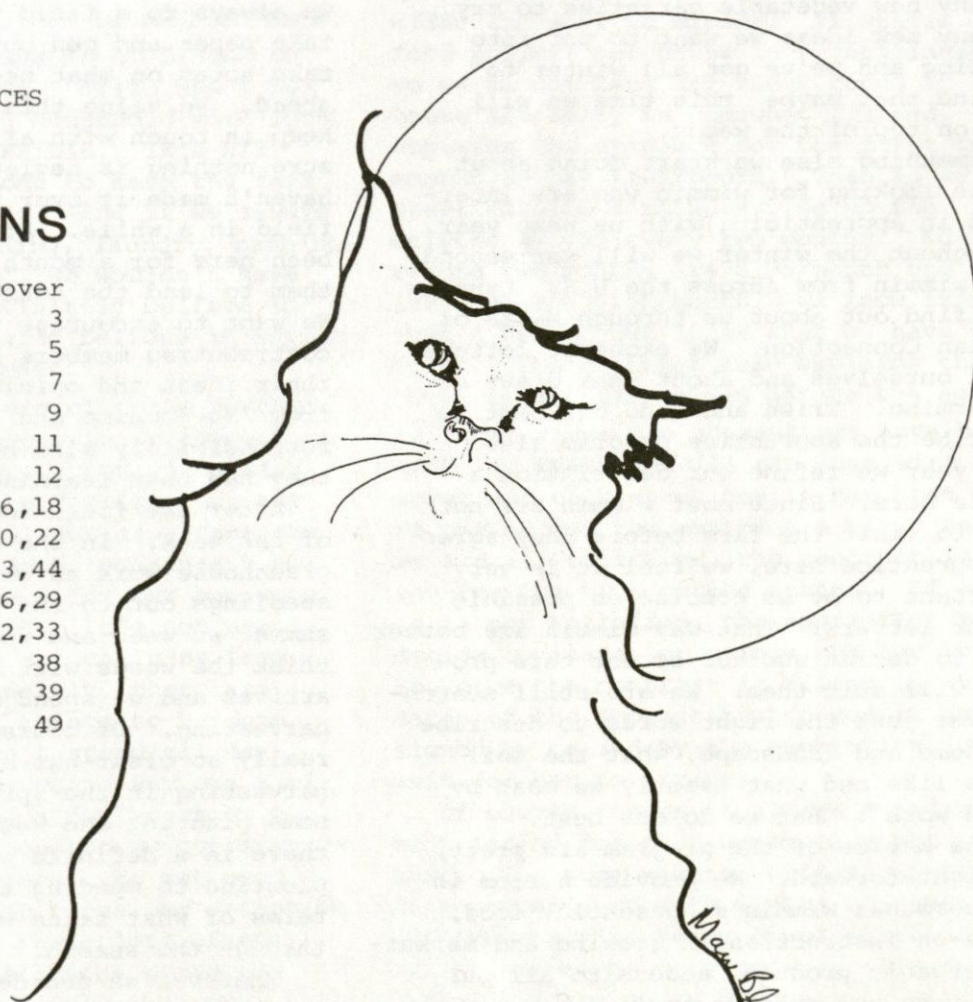
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Mau Blossom
Doniphan, Missouri

WIMMIN FARMING WITH WIMMIN

LUNA CIRCLE FARM'S APPRENTICE PROGRAM

By Claire
Luna Circle Farm
S.Grove, Wisconsin

Here it is December again. Trish and I are just cleaning up from last year's farming season and are enjoying taking it easy for a while. We are catching up on our reading, weaving and knitting. And we're watching the mail for all the seed catalogues that start coming in about this time. We are already anxious to start planning for next year. There are so many new vegetable varieties to try, so many new ideas we want to put into practice and we've got all winter to imagine that maybe this time we will keep on top of the weeds.

Something else we start doing about now is looking for wimmin who are interested in apprenticing with us next year. Throughout the winter we will correspond with wimmin from across the U.S. Usually they find out about us through MAIZE or Lesbian Connection. We exchange letters about ourselves and about what draws us to farming. Trish and I do our best to describe the apprentice program also. Each year we refine our description a little more. Since most wimmin are not able to visit the farm before they agree to apprentice here, we feel it is very important to be as precise as possible in our letters. That way wimmin are better able to decide whether or not this program will suit them. We are still searching for just the right words to describe our home and landscape, what the soil feels like and what exactly we mean by "hard work". But we do our best.

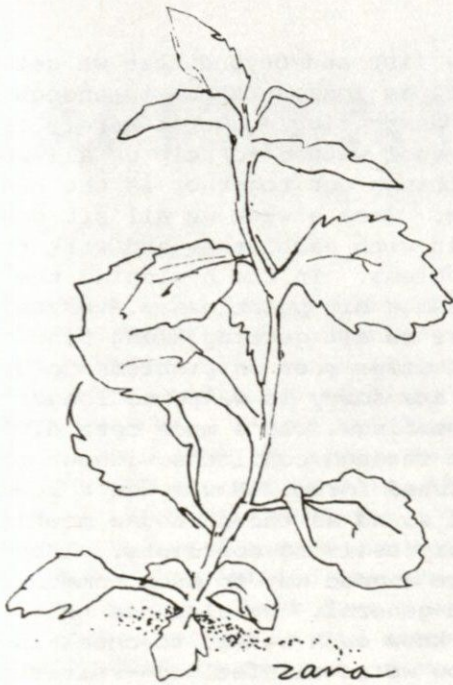
The basics of the program are pretty straight-forward. We provide a room in our communal wimmin's household, food, hands-on instruction in growing and marketing organic produce, access to all our resources and records on farming, and a small monthly stipend. We also provide some instruction in rural self-sufficiency

skills, such as cutting wood and preserving food. In exchange we expect apprentices to work five days a week on the farm, as well as 1 or 2 Saturday markets per month from July to October. Wimmin are also expected to participate in the community responsibilities of cooking and cleaning. The program runs from May to October; and we usually look for two wimmin to come for the full six months. We are also open to the possibility of having a third woman come for either all or part of that time.

Our days start at 7:00am. Monday morning we always do a field tour first thing. We take paper and pen out to the field and take notes on what needs doing in the week ahead. We value this walk as a way to keep in touch with all the crops. Making sure nothing is neglected just because we haven't made it over to that section of the field in a while. After apprentices have been here for a month or so, we will ask them to lead the tour and take the notes. We want to encourage them to be active, contributing members of the farm, offering their ideas and opinions. Our apprentices from '94--Denise and Linda--said that this responsibility also helped to really set all they had been learning.

After the field tour we begin the work of the week. In the spring we do a lot of greenhouse work as well as transplanting seedlings out to the fields. Then in early summer we weed and weed. Just when we think the weeds will never let up, August arrives and we spend most of our time harvesting. Of course, the season is not really so clear-cut as that. We do some harvesting in the spring and we still do some planting and weeding in the fall. But there is a definite progression from planting to weeding to harvesting in terms of what takes most of our time through the season.

Whatever we decide to do for the day, we get an hour lunch break at around noon, and we quit for the night by 6:00pm. Every one except the cook, anyway. Whoever is



zana
tucson, arizona

cooking that night comes in at 5:00pm to shower and start dinner. Trish and I believe in incorporating household work into the day as much as possible. It's all work that has to be done to keep the farm and the community going. And if we always did the cooking, cleaning, laundry, canning, etc in our "free time", we wouldn't have any free time. We definitely believe in working hard; but we also believe in making sure we have time to rest.

That brings me to one of those concepts that's hard to get across in writing--hard work. Farming involves a lot of bending over, and staying there for long periods of time. After all, plants grow from the soil and the soil is down underneath our feet. It's not uncommon for our backs to hurt after a day's work. It's not uncommon that our hands get calluses from holding tools. Fortunately, there are always many different things to be done on the farm, so we won't spend all day in any one position or using any one tool. But still we may spend a few hours on a task. As the season goes on we get stronger and build up endurance. We get used to hard work and we can focus our attention on the beautiful sun, the colors of the wildflowers, or the delicious cucumbers we picked for a snack. It's true the work is hard and long, especially at the beginning. It's important that wimmin

know that before they come here. Trish and I hope that the apprentices eventually feel the rewards of the work more than they feel the blisters. After all, the blisters will soon disappear and the sore muscles will be soothed, but the food that we grow and put away and the strength that we build will support us all year.

After we've exchanged a couple of letters with wimmin, explaining all I've just talked about and more, we will telephone wimmin who are serious about coming here. We like to be able to hear the woman's voice and chat a bit. We'll also clear up any lingering questions. Then we will send a contract. This contract is not exactly a legal and binding document; but it is a serious agreement. It does not contain any new information. It's basically just a summary of what we have already discussed in our letters. It outlines the exchange again: what we offer and what we expect. It states our food policy: our house is vegetarian/vegan, so we do not have any flesh foods in the house and dairy is somewhat limited. It explains the stipend: for the first two months we pay \$100/month. Then as we start earning more money, we up the stipend by \$25 every two months. So the second two months are \$125/month and the last two are \$150/month. We know it's just a token, but it is what we have to offer. The contract also explains that there is a trial period before the agreement is firm: after the apprentices have been here two weeks we will sit down with each woman and talk about how it has been going. We may adjust the contract a bit. And when we are all satisfied, the contract is binding for the time period stated. If any of us is not satisfied, the apprentice may decide to leave, or we may ask her to leave. So, once the contract is filled in with the dates of the apprenticeship and it has been signed by us and by the apprentice...we wait for her to arrive.

Of course, there is always an adjustment period for each woman once she is here. For some wimmin, this is their first experience with living communally. Or maybe they've never lived rurally before, or maybe they've never lived with so little money before. As with any new living/working situation there's a lot to get acquainted with in the first

few weeks. Our house is old and run down. Our stove and refrigerator are twice my age. Our furniture is mix and match, gathered from family, friends and auctions. The plumbing is not so good, but the outhouse works fine. There aren't many neighbors or much traffic. The fields roll over the hills and into the valleys and the woods follow right along side. It takes some time for each woman to settle in.

More so than any of the other things a woman settles into here, food seems to be the most difficult to get used to. Most of the wimmin who come here are from either towns or cities where the supermarket provides all manner of food throughout the year. That is not the case here. We do buy grains, oils, spices and some other staples from the market; but we try to rely on our garden for the bulk of our diet. Unfortunately, when the apprentices arrive in May, the root cellar is almost empty and there is not much coming from the fields yet. We may have some spinach or lettuce, but that's about it. So we eat a lot of canned tomatoes, carrots, beets, potatoes, dry beans and grains. It doesn't sound like much, but we've learned to be creative. As the summer goes on we delight in pea season, the first broccoli, an abundance of spinach and on and on. Eventually we forget the lean springtime. For some wimmin it is difficult to adjust to eating so closely with the seasons. And understandably so. Seasonal food differences are barely detectable in the supermarket, where food comes in from climates across the world. There is not nearly as much choice when you are tied to what can be grown in your own backyard or even your own state.

So every year this issue seems to come up. Every year we try to be more clear in our letters exactly what to expect in terms of food. It's a difficult issue to work through because food is so important to all of us. We all have our own ideas about it and our own needs. Trish and I have decided to set some basic guidelines that we are unwilling to bend (such as being a vegetarian/vegan household) and beyond that we try to compromise as a community. The one guiding factor that we must keep in mind is the budget. We only have so much money for food and no more. So we all make sure that the staples are on the

grocery list and beyond that we get what we want, as long as there is enough money. It sounds so simple but it rarely is.

One tool we use to help us all work these things out together is the house meeting. Once a week we all sit down to check in with each other and work through any problems. In the beginning the meetings seem a bit pointless...everything is okay, we're all getting along fine. But as the summer goes on problems do arise, and we are sorry if we're no longer having house meetings. It's much more difficult to work through conflicts without that established forum. Now I don't mean to make it sound as though house meetings are only for resolving conflicts. They're not. They are a good way to keep communication open in general. We also use that time to get to know each other, to check in with how we're all feeling--spiritually, emotionally and physically--to take care of setting the cooking rotation for the next week, to plan a special gathering, etc. Once house meetings are established as comfortable community time, they can also be used for working through problems and concerns. It does take some effort to make house meetings work; but with some time they can be wonderful.

In October, the days get shorter, the work gets lighter and the apprentices start preparing to leave. Before they go, we again sit down with each woman individually and talk about what we thought of the season. Wimmin give us their ideas about what could make the program better. More responsibilities for the apprentices and more time to work alone are two of the suggestions Linda and Denise gave. We thank them for their good energy and good work.

In the end we hope that wimmin leave here with the knowledge and experience they need to start farming on their own. They may only want to grow food for themselves or they may want to start a CSA or a market farm. Whatever they choose to do, they'll take a little piece of this Wisconsin clay with them. And they carry on the tradition of wimmin working with the soil.

For more information about our program please send SASE to Luna Circle Farm Rt.1 Box 1200, Soldier's Grove, WI 54655

APPRENTICE PROGRAM

By Denise and Linda
Luna Circle Farm

My partner and I were looking for an apprentice program at an organic farm, and when we found that we could learn from womyn and especially lesbians we were very excited. Tricia and Claire are extremely knowledgeable, always searching for new and better ways of doing things and teach without condescension. They are very patient and answer our hundreds of questions with detailed answers.

We work three ten-hour days a week and for several months in mid summer go to market in Madison two out of every three Saturdays to sell to the public. The work days are long and full but the jobs are varied enough not to be too tiresome. Mondays we begin with a field tour of the three fields, assessing what needs to be done that week--seeding, mowing, tilling, harvesting, etc. Fridays consistently are given to harvesting for Saturday's market.

The first part of the summer we spent most days transplanting in the greenhouse or into the ground and some weeding, tilling, and harvesting. The middle of the summer we tried to keep up with the almost overwhelming task of weeding as well as harvesting on Fridays. The latter part of the summer we have been harvesting and washing the vegetables.

Throughout the summer we have eaten extremely well; I'm not sure that there is anything tastier than sugar snap peas right off the vine or charry tomatoes warm from the greenhouse. We have alternated cooking dinners all summer--we each cook once a week and I feel certain that we are in the top five best places to eat gourmet organic, vegan food in the state!

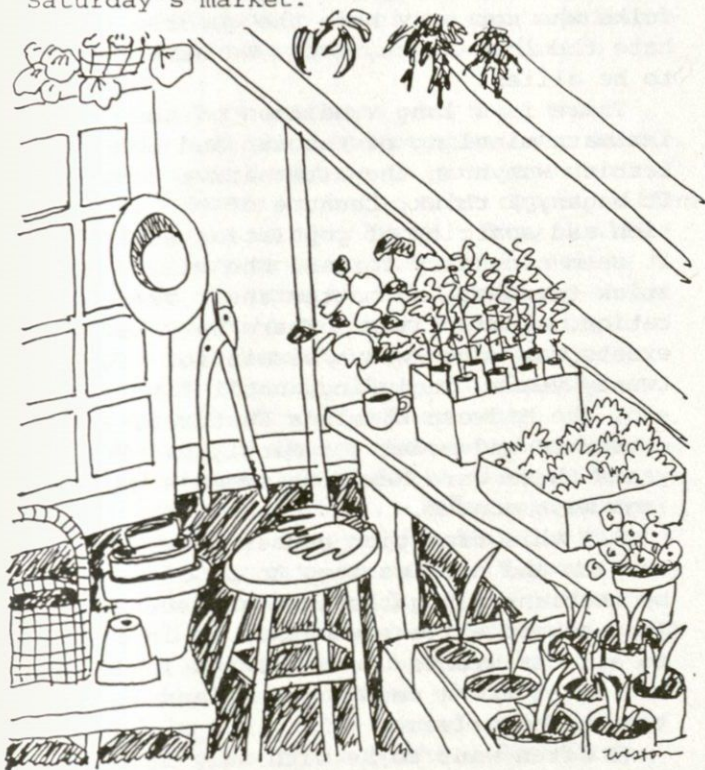
We've enjoyed the communal living; we watch movies together and usually have interesting and often inspiring dinner conversations. One afternoon a week we all clean the house.

Tricia and Claire are flexible in arranging and changing work days and we have enjoyed the free time on our days off, occasionally having long weekends to spend in Bayfield, Madison and even a week at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. We've been able to pursue our hobbies of swimming, bicycling, canoeing, weaving and motorcycle mechanics on our days off.

We have gotten experience working on a farm that sells to a Farmer's Market, and has a Community Supported Agriculture program with the Womyn's community in Madison. We've also learned the skills of drying and canning vegetables.

We believe the apprentice program is an excellent hands-on way to learn organic farming. We have gained much useful knowledge that will help us start our own farm or garden on our land in the near future.

We are glad that Tricia and Claire are sharing their knowledge of organic farming with other womyn and hope that more programs such as this will happen in the future.



Jennifer Weston
Ava, Missouri

ONE THING I'VE LEARNED SINCE MOVING TO THE COUNTRY

By Susan Wiseheart
Hawk Hill
Drury, Missouri

Lesbian space is as precious and hard to come by as it was in the city. I crave it just as much. One of the reasons I moved to the country was in hopes of finding that life enhancing space more often than in the close confines of the city. I wanted to have hours and days go by when I saw only dykes. Sometimes I do, but still not often enough.

When I lived in the city, I was part of a largely Lesbian organization. We held regular events and we could count on the fingers of one hand the number of non-Lesbian women who attended. There were a few straight allies, bisexuals (they didn't call themselves that then) and what we called "shakeys", women who weren't quite sure, who hung around with us and loved that Lesbian energy. Even there, when productions were billed "for Lesbians," we caught grief from both Lesbians and non-Lesbians, all of whom were used to our "for women" policy.

I helped establish that policy, because I saw the organization as one which might enable women to come out. They would hang around with almost all Lesbians, see how we were, perhaps fall in love, and the Lesbian population would grow. It worked, too. I can think of several present-day dykes who started out in the non-Lesbian category. Of course, I can also think of a straight (bisexual?) woman who started out a dyke and broke our hearts by leaving us for a man.

In the city, I was more removed from non-Lesbian women emotionally than I am here. Though I spent time with many at work and loved more than a few, I could always escape to my community when I left work, and my community was Lesbian. There were those few exceptions in it, true. Still, the understandings were Lesbian and the non-Lesbians accepted that as a condition for them getting the good energy that came from being a part of it.

Here in the country, non-Lesbian women are part of my community more than they ever were in the city. I am expected to accept and be with them as a matter of course and to live with their straight assumptions about life and how it should be. We Lesbians are appreciated, but our culture is not as clearly prevailing in my community life as it was in the city. On our own land, yes. In the larger community, no.

This area is renowned for its "alternative" community. It was one of the centers of the hippie back-to-the-land movement in the early seventies. Those old hippies are still around (some of them are Lesbians) and younger alternative types are attracted here because of the already present population. So the Lesbian community lives in the midst of and is part of the alternative community. The mainstream community surrounding us includes some Religious Right Extremist folks who not only hate the queers, they hate the long-hairs, too. We have reasons to be allies.

There is a long tradition of the intimate mingling of Lesbian and non-Lesbian womyn in the alternative community. It began, I think, because of the isolation and sparcity of population making it seem necessary for all the wimmin to stick together, no matter their identification, at all times. There have been events for women/womyn/wimmin for over twenty years, including, until five years ago, the Midwest Wimmin's Festival, a precursor to and model for Michigan. For years there were New Moon womyn's gatherings most months.

All this tradition causes many womyn, Lesbian and non-Lesbian, to be offended by Lesbian-only gatherings and events. They expect all the womyn to be invited to all the events, to be always included, and don't see a need for Lesbians to spend time by ourselves.

I often want to be with only Lesbians, who are committed to womyn, to ourselves and each other, in a manner in which no

non-Lesbian woman ever is. There are ways we Lesbians trust each other, expectations we have that don't go unmet. That level of trust is just not possible with non-Lesbian women, much as we might like it to be. Lesbians are oppressed by straight culture. Non-Lesbians are not oppressed by Lesbian culture.

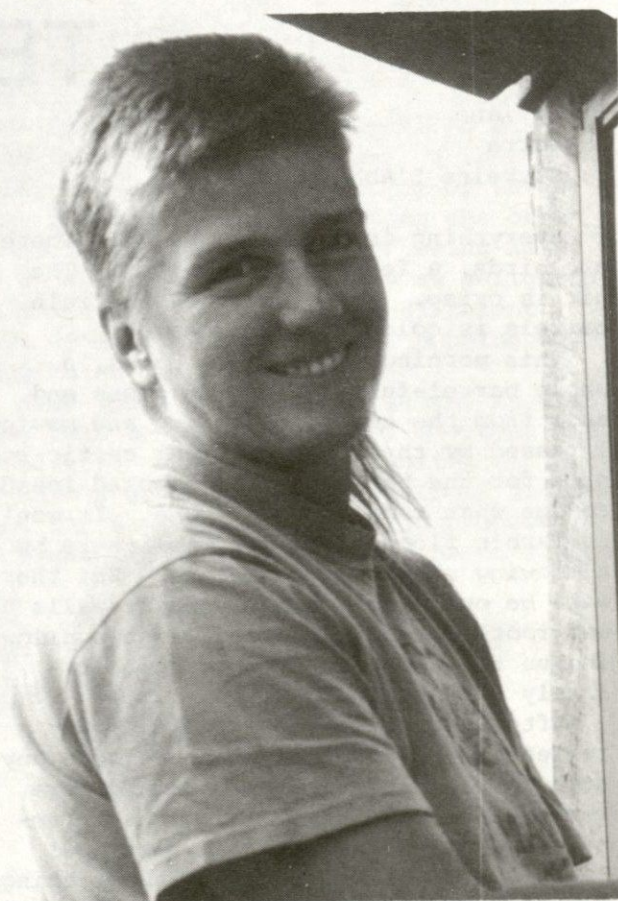
Still, there are hurt feelings and everyone gets riled up when we talk about Lesbian events. There are always questions about who can come and who can't and can't we make exceptions for so and so. There is subtle manipulation to keep events intended to be Lesbian from ending up that way. Non-Lesbian women sometimes seem to *feel* oppressed by Lesbians, despite the fact that the world is controlled by heterosexual institutions and understandings.

Don't get me wrong, there are non-Lesbian women around here I truly love. I enjoy spending time with them when the occasions arise. We have interests and experiences in common. Many are actively working on homophobia, after prodding from Lesbians over the years. I've missed out on the background, being a newcomer, so I don't know what it's taken, but I'm sure it hasn't been easy. Many have reached the appreciation level on the repulsion-tolerance-acceptance-appreciation continuum.

Still, there are some who deny the oppression and the heterosexism, who like to perceive us Lesbians as just another variety of human with the same opportunities and advantages as they have. They don't understand why we want time to ourselves and neither do some of the Lesbians, who, though they don't get into apologizing for males and expecting them to be invited to every event, do get defensive on the behalf of non-Lesbian womyn.

Deep down, I always know non-Lesbian women will never be as fully present for other womyn as Lesbians. It's impossible because there is always the deep intimacy and energy they give to men. It hurts my feelings, no matter how I try to prevent it and shied from it, when incidents occur where that becomes once again evident.

It is definitely not as good for my emotional health to be around non-Lesbians as it is to be with Lesbians. Something different happens in Lesbian space that doesn't happen in mixed groups. We give



Path Star

Photo by Jae Haggard

each other a far more nourishing level of support and understanding. More than that, Linda points out, we are doing something evolutionary, meeting together. What we come up with in groups of Lesbians impacts the world, starting with ourselves and spreading out.

That is why I long for more time in groups of dykes and why, despite resistance from non-Lesbian women and at least a few Lesbians, I plan to keep on pushing for it to happen.

Susan: I live in the Missouri Ozarks and am planning a series of gatherings called Dyke Talk. I wonder if situations similar to what I've described occur in the neighborhoods of other Lesbian Lands. Is it simply country living that gets in the way of Lesbian events, or is there more to it than that? What is it about Lesbian Space that is unique and special? What does it do for us? What is its nature? (Thanks to Jenna, Linda and Judith for working on this with me.)

TERRA

By Viviane
Terra
St.Seine L'Abbaye, France

Everything is intensely still. There are birds, a few, still chirping. The air is crisp. The water from the rain barrels is cold but still bearable.

This morning I washed my socks, a whole barrel-full heavy with grass and soil from the summer's digging and mowing. I passed by the "thermes" (our celtic-roman name for the bathhouse) and looked inside to see what remains to be done. It won't be marble floors yet, nor will there be a flowing shower of hot water. But there will be our glorious newly built walls and roof and woodstove and windows allowing us to take a hot sponge down in a lovely warm cabin.

After a stop in the pyramid (our toilettes), I wondered if there were any strawberries left. There are and more coming! I feel like telling the strawberry plants, "Hey! You can rest now! Fall is coming! Go to sleep sweet things!" Transplanted just this year and they act as if they've always been here.

October 94 is nearly here and in this first year over 60 womyn have come to Terra for a day, three days, three weeks. As I take the box full of photographs taken since last October, I see Terra's herstory evolving with different womyn, playing, building, discussing, cooking, resting, enjoying each other. We planted trees last November in -10degree weather. All the trees have blossomed. And we will plant more this year as we turn this agricultural plateau into womyn's environments of forests and gardens. Some womyn climbed down wells, or dug out century-old cellars so we can keep our food and have cold drinks. We learned how to mix and apply different kinds of mortar to crumbling walls, we put up roofs. We bathed in the source of "the seashell" 5 minutes away and discovered medieval washing places, "lavoirs" where old womyn still go and where we have begun to go. We learned, thanks to the historical diggings into archives of one woman that womyn held the lands around here in medieval times. This has inspired me to

want to research and write up a herstory of the womyn in this region up to and including the creation of Terra.

And in the midst of all this we talked... There is so much to discover about ourselves and each other! What I love so much about being on womyn's land is being able to live things out and then talk about it. The other way around keeps things on a dream, or unreal level with no substance to work with. Now I feel that, at last! Life as I longed to live it, experiment it, discover it, is here in full color!

The discussions that impressed me the most so far have been: different ways of living together, ways of giving, exchanging and surviving vs the money system, womyn's well-being and the environment question, the "bubble gum syndrome", friendships and love between us. The guiding question for me in all of these talks is: what do I want to live?

For this issue, I'd like to briefly share some of my thoughts from discussions concerning ways of living together. Some womyn who came have been living in collectives and so there were quite a few talks about this since those of us who are participating regularly in the creation of Terra (whether living here permanently or not) do not function as a collective. So the question was: what do you all do?

I suggested taking our gardens as a way to illustrate how we do things. This can then be applied to everything else we do. We have four gardens so far (two of us live here permanently for the moment and you needn't live here to be able to have one). So each woman has her garden and checks with the others to see if the choice of her space is ok. Sometimes that has had to be re-discussed because after saying "Yes, it's ok", one of us felt too hemmed in or whatever. Then, each woman plants what she wishes to plant, how she wants to and decides if she wants to invite others to share in the planting, or harvest. This gives each one of us a lot of freedom of movement, of choices. And this means I get to SEE, literally, the way each woman is different, her way of seeing things, doing things. I can truly enjoy the other womyn because I see them. These different ways of being

disappear in a collective. It's the same for food and cooking: each woman has her food space and decides when she wants to eat, what, and if she wants to invite others (or accept an invite) to eat.

For me, an invitation is the exact opposite of feeling obliged to participate or being expected to participate (as it is in a family or collective/group situation). So basically, each woman tries to keep aware of her own needs and tend to her needs. Whether we are 2 or 20 this is how we live. I find that everything becomes clearer this way. I must trust another woman to find or ask for what she needs. I don't have to guess (or I try to keep myself from guessing). And I am responsible for my needs and

will not resent (or must remember not to resent) others for not having guessed and taken care of my needs! Plus there are the invitations! Invitations for breakfast, to make a ladder, to take a walk, to have a talk. The joy of inviting, the surprise, the wanting the other to be there, the pleasure of being asked to be with her. I find this as delightful as in being able to see the different ways of each woman evolving, popping up, surprising me!

Some womyn have also delighted in what they felt to be a freedom of movement and discovery. Others found it difficult not to have a group as a guide. It is difficult for some to invite, or to propose to do something or to accept not being invited

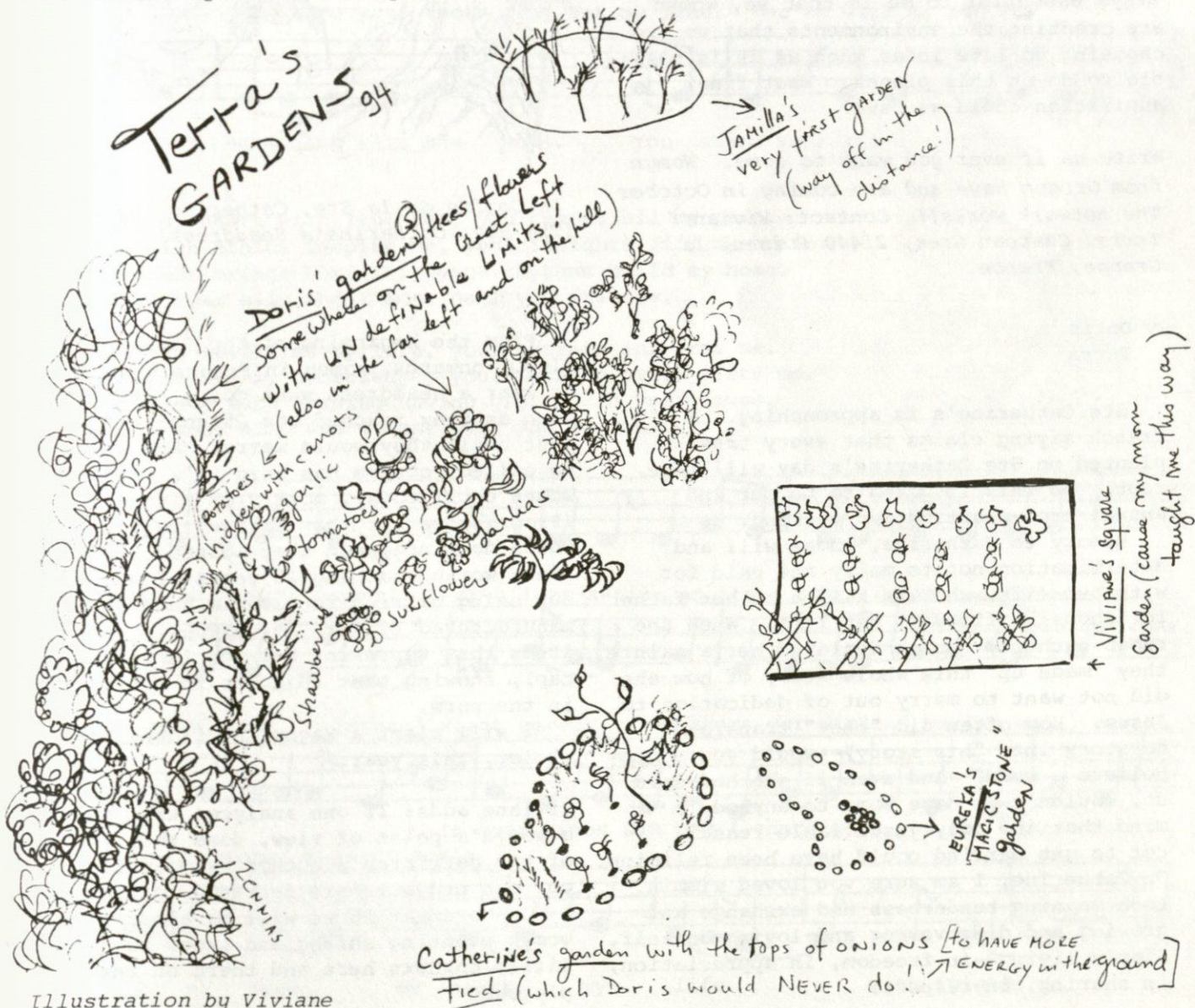


Illustration by Viviane

with the other two who have gone off under that tree to have breakfast. Some felt left out, and waited for "group" activities to happen which they did because someone proposed a fire circle, or percussion, or a meeting to check out things. It is fun and exactly what some are looking for, and difficult and questioning for others who are looking for something else, perhaps. In any case, I feel that womyn are giving our selves choices whether it be living as a collective or living together as individuals (no name for this!), what seems precious to me in the creation of all our womyn's lands are the choices we are creating. We can examine, evaluate, yes, use our precious judgement to see what each one thinks about each choice. What stays essential to me is that we, womyn are creating the environments that we are choosing to live in as much as it is possible to do on this planet. What finer aspiration could we have?

Write us if ever you want to come. Womyn from Oregon have and are coming in October. The network works!! Contact: Viviane/Terra, Chateau Gres, 21440 Poiseul la Grange, France.

By Doris
Terra

Ste.Catherine's is approaching. A french saying claims that every tree planted on Ste.Catherine's day will take root. So this is going to be our 2nd annual tree-planting day/weekend.

Memory to Catherine, whose will and determination not to marry she paid for with her life, who was killed by her father for choosing freedom, her life. When the roman catholic church declared her a sainte, they "made up" this whole story of how she did not want to marry out of dedication to Jesus. How often did "they" transform herstory into "his story"--would you believe a word? And even if she had said so, wouldn't it have come to anybody's mind that the only justifiable reason not to get married could have been religion. Oh Catherine, I am sure you loved wimmin. Love meaning tenderness and exchange and growing and discovering and loving oneself. Simply living--in freedom, in appreciation, in sharing, in respect.



La Coiffe de la Ste. Catherine by Doris
(The Ste. Catherine's Headdress)

From the beginning of the Renaissance (1600) onwards, women in France were obliged to wear a headdress when going outside as soon as they reached age 25(unmarried), just until they would marry. And this, so called, custom has held it's grip on women until today, mostly in little villages. (Progressive city has learned to ignore, which does not mean they learned to question. Every woman reaching 25 years of age without being married receives a headdress, manufactured by her "colleagues", carrying items that represent her job (a fantasy cap), showing that this one is not quite in the norm.

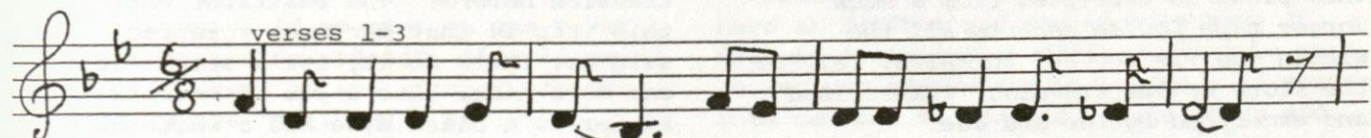
I will plant a Magnolia, flowering violet, this year.

Viviane adds: If one analyzes this from a womyn's point of view, does this refusal of the patriarch's authority mean that our own projects are destined to flourish?

On November 25 we will be about 10-15 womyn planting shrubs and trees to make little corners here and there on the plateau.

FRIENDS

By Jae Haggard
Outland
Serafina, New Mexico



1. I wake-up in the morning to the mu-sic you share with me.



Do my daily tasks to your thots that set me free. You're with me for the



sunrise, your harmonies till the soil. You share your all & I must call u friends.

2. You fill my heart with laughter, you temper all my pain.
Your Lesbian ethics inspire me, your insights fill my brain.
Your sadness brings humility, your rhythms build my home.
You share your all, and I must call you friends.

3. Your loving reaffirms my life, your courage inspires me.
Your values are my conscience, your Lesbian pride lifts me.
I go to sleep each evening having gloried in your lives.
You share your all, and I must call you friends.

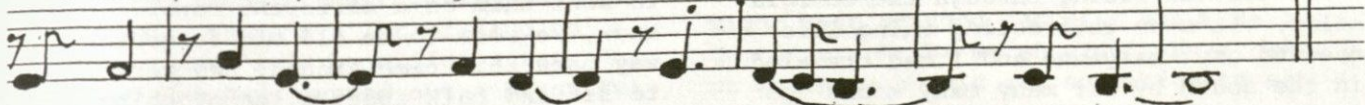


4. We share our happy moments, ex-hil-er-a-tion at its best. Share our torment



and our pain, our lovers' first caress. We share our wimins' caring soul, our

hopes
& fears, dreams, tears & goals.



You fill my home, my heart, my life with friends.

VISITING LESBIAN LAND

By Louise Griffin
Something Special
Miami, Florida

This piece is excerpted from a much longer tape Louise sent to all the wimmin she visited and to MAIZE, telling the story of her travels. Transcribed and excerpted by Lee and Jae.

My name is Louise Griffin. My partner and lover for the past 31 years is maryanne. Together we run *Something Special, A Lesbian Venture*, an underground vegetarian food space for wimmin only. Each year we close *Something Special* for approximately one month to take a vacation. Many years we've spent the vacation here doing things that needed to be done but couldn't get done while we were open. This year we decided to take a car trip and a camping trip--tent camping we were interested in. And we wanted to visit the Lesbian lands and campgrounds that were available to us in this part of the world.

We had a good time. We had a hell of a good time. As a matter of fact some of our fears were simply that--fears. Some of our expectations were simply that--expectations. We met a lot of wonderful Lesbians, a lot of wonderful wimmin. We found ourselves in some interesting places. And we really do know that we are truly everywhere. We found Lesbians everywhere we went and that was wonderful.

We started out the first part of August. We closed *Something Special*, we got in the car, we loaded her for bear, and we took off. We were really happy to be on vacation this year; it's been one heck of a year not only for us but for a lot of our friends, our friends' families, and our own families. So it was really a pleasure to be on vacation, to be zipping across the southern part of the United States with my honey and me and Kay Gardner singing in the background.

It was fun riding through the Georgia hills. It's an interesting thing life does to us. maryanne and I had traveled in the south by car many many moons ago coming back to Miami from Texas. A lot of things happened. maryanne promised

that she would never travel through the south of the United States again because she would not allow folks to do what she felt they so unfairly did to us when we traveled before. The beautiful part about this trip is that maryanne relented. She said ok, let's do it, let's travel it one more time. Let's see if America is any kinder to a black dyke and a white dyke together.

We arrived in Thomasville, Georgia at about six o'clock that evening. Thomasville is familiar territory to me--that's where my mother was raised. That's where my great grandma, a fine woman, was raised and lived. That's where I went many many summers as a little girl to stay with my aunt, and to be with other members of my family. So it was good being in Thomasville again. Everything was different in Thomasville, just as everything is different everywhere. The grand house that I used to be so awed at is a simple little white house. We had a great time there; we only stayed a couple days because our real intent there was just to rest a bit and travel on. We wanted to get to see more Lezzies. We wanted to get to see more dykes. But I sure am thankful to all the goddesses who made it possible that we could spend some time in Thomasville together. As far as whether the folks in America were ready for a black dyke and a white dyke--well, they looked at us a little strangely. But then maryanne noted it was my hair that they were looking at so strangely. Isn't that interesting? Hair, hair, hair.

In the car again, loaded for bear, on our way to see Pat and Joyce in Dahlonega, Georgia, at *Swiftwaters* on the Etowah. The finest place a lezzie could be in Georgia. Joyce and Pat had been expecting us; we tooted our horn, they came out. Pat is busy at work on the beautiful cabins. This is our second time at *Swiftwaters* on the Etowah. This is the second time we've met Pat and Joyce. This time we're going to meet them on a different level. I don't know, we seem to be old old friends from way back this time around. We were able to sit and talk about a lot of things.

So we go on to the campground, we pitch our tent. The night was beautiful. The

"citidads" started singing just as night started falling. It was absolutely beautiful; it was an orchestration, can you imagine, of insects singing. Their hearts were really into it. I recorded it. You would not believe how glorious they are. I call them "citydykes" in the trees in Georgia. That's my way of affectionately recognizing all the wimmin we had left at home. Joyce told us that on the first day you hear the "citidads", that 93 days afterwards, would be the first frost. We listened to the "citidads", we talked.

You know there's so many things one can think of to talk about. Pets. One of the things I've thought on pets is that something is dreadfully wrong when we try to take animals in, declaw them, dehair them, de-everything-we-can to them, and we call them our pets. I think that something really is cruel about that. However, I also think eating them is cruel. I got a chance to learn this trip about pets, talking to a wommon about the significance of her pet to her. She'd lost a lover--her lover had made a transformation. This wommon said that if it were not for the dogs she had around her, she thinks she would have committed suicide. You know, it's very easy to talk in a vacuum, then experience causes you to say nothing. I want to find beauty in everything, and there is beauty in everything, it's just that I can't always find it.

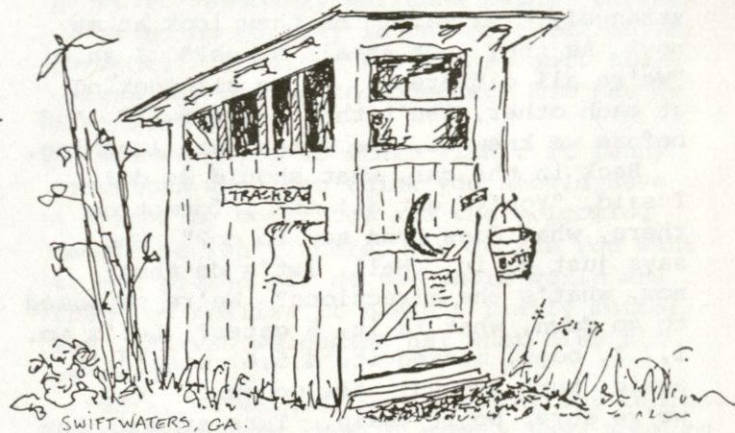
The stars came out, the "citidads" continued to sing. After sitting and talking a while, maryanne did a few sketches, I threw the I Ching. The stars were out; The stars look so much brighter when there's no electric light. They're right there--you swear you can just put your hand up in the sky and pull down a whole bunch of them.

It was good to be sleeping on the ground again. maryanne and I are avid tenters. I've always had the idea I wanted to sleep in every state in the United States on the ground. I had this goal about peeing in every state too, at one time. There's so much to do in life!

The land there at Swiftwaters is beautiful land...there's a lot of land to walk in...there's 22 beautiful acres. Joyce and Pat have carved out a beautiful oasis for wimmin. As I said to many of my sisters that I visited this

summer, you all have a lot. We live on a lot. Our lot is a simple lot of 50x150 feet. What is Lesbian land anyway? We don't own this land, you know. And when I say we I speak right now of me and maryanne. And when I say we I speak of everyone. We don't own the land, you know. We don't.

Time passes swiftly as we're sitting here at Swiftwaters and we only have 30 days to do this in. We'll wanna make sure we can get everywhere we can go. If you're into camping or tenting, visit Joyce and Pat at Swiftwaters at Dhlonega. They also have cabins and a bed and breakfast. They fixed us an incredible breakfast of blueberry pancakes the morning we left. Pat's going to send me some Indian river cane; it's indigenous to the land there. I plan to plant it here at Something Special.



We're traveling to Siler City, North Carolina, to meet a woman by the name of Lynn, and to be with her on her farm, Full Circle Farm. "Did you call Lynn, maryanne?" "Oh my goodness gracious, no, I best call her. The next phone."

We called Lynn, no answer, Lynn's machine came on. Was there panic? Of course there was no panic. We're going to Lesbian land. Besides, what is Lesbian land? We know that where ever we go and where there are Lesbians we will be welcome. That's Lesbian land.

We called Lynn again, no answer. Should we panic? No, but maybe we should--Lynn doesn't know us, we don't know her. Lynn might have changed her mind about having us there. Maybe we shouldn't have come, or maybe we should get something to eat. We're in Siler City now--let's go to a fast food place.

We go in, all of the women rush to the front of the counter, looked at us. I don't know if they were shocked, surprised, or what. They're looking at us; maryanne and I are looking at them. We're all women. We're looking at each other. They looked and they looked and finally it dawned on me what they were looking at, again--hair, hair, hair. I asked the young woman, "Have you ever worn dreads before?" "Oh, yes, I've worn braids before. I wore them and then I got tired of them and I took them out." And I said these are not braids, they're dreads. She said, "Dread?" I said "Yes, dreads."

The other young woman came up. She said, "You are not from here." I said, "No, we're not from here. You're not from here either, are you?" She said no. I said, "Where are you from?" She said, "I am from Nicaragua... Here I am different and they look at me strangely." I said, "As they look at me now? As they look at all of us?" I said, "We're all different. We're all looking at each other, isn't that wonderful?" And before we knew it, the women were laughing.

Back in the car, what should we do? I said, "You've got all the information there, what does Lynn say to do?" She says just go in. Well, let's do that; now, what's the directions? We're supposed to go down, what is it, 5 gates? Let's go. 1,2,3, oops, missed it. 4,5,6, missed it again, turn around. Are we sure? Yes, we're sure. Do it again. Turn around. One more time. Three's a charm.

What if she isn't there, what should we do? What if it isn't her place? Where are we? We're looking for Lesbian land and we're going to find it. We know Lesbian land exists. She's here, she's here. This is it, turn...there's the house.

Indeed there was the house, a magnificent farmhouse, and there are the dogs. Well, I'm not one to flaunt my behind at barking dogs even if their tails are wagging, so I tooted the horn. Coming out of the door is one woman, another dog and some cats. We introduced ourselves, and I said, "Are we welcome?" The woman said, "Yes, indeed, come in."

I told Lynn I was really interested in camping. She said, "You may do that if you like, or if you want to spend the night in a bed tonight, do that." maryanne looked at me. I could tell by the glint in her eye that she really wanted to

spend a night in a bed. So I acquiesce. I mean, I wouldn't mind spending a night in a bed either. We sat at the dining room table and we talked, talked way into the night. Isn't it interesting no matter where we go we Lesbians seem to have the same kind of characteristics? We love gathering around the table, sitting and talking. We talked and we talked.



Full Circle Farm
maryanne

Full Circle Farm. Can you believe organically grown shitake mushrooms, comfrey, asian pears and apples and grapes? 100 acres of incredible land Lynn lives on. The fire circle needed to be mowed; we did that together, that was fun. Lynn walked the land with us, showed us little things. Like the crystals in the meadow--I had never seen that before, I was intrigued by this. I had to pick up some of those rocks. The rocks felt good to me. I knew I was bringing these rocks back to Lesbian land. What is Lesbian land, Louise, in Miami? We talked.

The red fox. Lynn had come upon an ill fox, at some earlier time. In the process of being where the fox was, she let the fox be where she was. Eventually the fox made her transformation. Her carcass was still there. Eventually nature took away her flesh and away the hair. And there was simply a skeleton left there. Not in a neat little pile, but a pile that was stretched as tho the body that had been attached to the skeleton had relaxed easy back into the land. We examined the bones and each one of us took a bone.

Back at the house, before I knew it I was rubbing echinacea on Ginger's butt. Ginger is a ginger dog, Magic is a black dog. These are some of the pets of Lynn. On pets I spoke. She asked, "Have you no pets around you?" I said, "Pets, no, but around us there must be 2 jillion cats and some possums." This is on a simple piece of 50 x 150. But we do not consider these animals our pets. We have an understanding with all the cats who are here. I tell them simply, "When I came, you were here. Your mother was here. I spoke with your mother; she was taking care of herself then. She asked if I would share some of my food with her. I did. I was willing to. She made sure that certain varmints did not come close to us. She left, she left you here. I am not your mother. I am not a mother."

Our agreement with the cats is we will purchase one bag of cat food when it runs out, and that's usually once every month. We will share it with you all. Other than that, whatever food that 's been left that is prepared for Something Special and the women who eat here, we will share with you. "We will not throw any of this food away. You are more than welcome to it. You may invite all the cats in the neighborhood--they have done that--to share it with you." We have no pets. "Are they allowed in the house?" Allowance is a funny word. When the doors are open, there's one that comes like a bat out of hell running through the house, and that one is the grandmother of them all. Then we have to find her and drag her butt out. Then we open the other door, another goes through the house. So are they allowed in the house? What is allowance? Am I allowed on the land with the animals? Are they allowed on the land with me? Anyway, our agreement with the cats here is after they have been given all this that we can give them in terms of food and they still want something else, they must hunt for what they want. I refuse to keep animals. I am an animal. I refuse to do it. However, I cannot stop them from coming themselves.

We slept that night a good night's sleep. I could tell, again, I was on Lesbian land. Although I don't know what Lesbian land is, I felt I was on Lesbian land. The next morning the rains came again. I never got a chance to lay

on the ground and sleep there. The rains came and came and came, and we could not help Lynn fix the side of the house. So, we're on our way again. We embrace each other. I promise Lynn I'll send her avocados. Lynn promises she'll send me elephant garlic. Should you ever get to Siler City, please, even if you haven't planned to go to Siler City, go see Lynn at Full Circle Farm.

maryanne and I are very happy today as we travel on to Intouch, near Kent's Store, Virginia. We arrive finally at Intouch. What beautiful gates; the wooden sculptures, how nice they are. We start into the land; everything is quiet, and a bit eerie to us. Night is coming. We see no one. I blow the horn, no one comes. We wait, no one shows up. We begin to wonder if we've stumbled upon a Lesbian ghost village. We wait. Suddenly maryanne said, "Louise, we're going to stay in one of these cabins tonight." I said, "Well, maryanne, these cabins may belong to someone. How can we do that?"

Are we going to stay? Isn't it funny sometimes when you think you should have a welcoming committee and the welcoming committee isn't there, you decide you want to get pissed off at the whole world and then you realize it doesn't really matter. The land was welcoming us, what else did we need?

Well, we walked, we looked at the cabins. I listened this time, I didn't have much to say, although that's very unusual for me. I listened to maryanne. maryanne said, "No, not this cabin." "Why not this cabin?" "Someone stays here." "How can you tell?" "Because the cat just came from there." "Ok,ok, what about this cabin?" "No, not this cabin." "How come?" "Someone's living there." "But I don't see anyone there now, how do you know?" "There's an ice chest there on the side of the cabin." "I see." "Here is the cabin," she said, "We're going to stay in tonight." And the cabin said Mary's Cabin. And maryanne said, "We're going to stay in Mary's cabin." And so we did. We opened the door, Mary welcomed us. What a beautiful cabin.

Just imagine going someplace you're not sure of in the dark of the night and finding a cabin. maryanne said, "Mary welcomes us, Louise, trust me." Whenever maryanne says trust me, you know what, something in me does it.



Intouch, VA.

marianne

We awakened very early, watched the light come through the trees, then maryanne said, "I'm going to find out where the bathroom is, I'm going to find out where everything is, I'm going to find out if there's any life on Lesbian land, Intouch. This was morning time now, we'd safely come through the night, so everything was ok. There was an outhouse in the woods, absolutely beautiful, there was an outdoor shower, cold and hot. Everything wheelchair accessible. We found out later there was a stage, a place where wimmin took their RV's, a campground. This is the land where the Virginia Women's Music Festival is held each year. The woman who has created this, not one woman, a lot of women, but the woman whose vision this must have been, in cahoots with other wimmin, her name is Janet. We had a chance to meet her. We met Sun, the caretaker... she came into the cabin and we sat and we talked and we sat and we talked.

We met the women. You know, I don't know whether to call those barriers, but certain things happen between us. I find that conversation around food poses a particular problem if one has not accepted the idea that perhaps built on our physiology we should be eating differently than we are eating now. That's a very cautious way of me talking about being a vegetarian. I have to do that because I know no other way to approach this subject and still not create barriers between me and my sisters. The women invited us to Janet's birthday party. We asked if it would be ok if we came after they had finished eating. So, we met some really fine wimmin, wimmin who had put a lot of energy, fenergy, as I like to call it, and work and muscle and sweat

into creating land so that other wimmin such as myself could come and be and visit them. You know, little thoughts kept going through my head, "What exactly is Lesbian land?" Lesbian land: why would a woman have such a vision, where she would want so many wimmin around her?

We decided we would mow the fire circle. maryanne decided she would stack a fire. We had one hell of a fire ring that night. All of us wimmin together. The fire ring moved to a drumming circle, the drumming circle moved to a place where women were playing the guitar. I played the harmonica a bit, maryanne played the drums. We looked at each other, we talked of who we were, they told us who they were. We made incredible music and we knew that we were Lesbians together. And you know what? The cabin we stayed in, that cabin was Mary's cabin, and that was Janet's mother. Her mother had made her transformation, and Janet had taken the money her mother had left her and helped create the cabin, Mary's Cabin.

We're on our way out of here in the morning. We start down the circle, down around the bend again. We're homebound now, we're happy about it. Thanks alot Lesbian friends, thanks alot Lesbian sisters, thanks alot wimmin for a wonderful vacation. I still ask, what is Lesbian land? I guess I'll ponder that for a while but in the meantime, I like what I saw, I like where we were. If you ever get down Miami way, come and see us. We're at 7762 northwest 14th Court. You don't even have to call if you don't wanna, but if you wanna, 696-8826. We'll be here, Something Special, me and maryanne. Thanks, friends.

MAKING FAMILY

By Hawk Madrone
Fly Away Home
Myrtle Creek, Oregon

The heavy frosts have come early this year and the wooly caterpillars look especially fat. Muphin's long, fluffy coat feels thicker than ever and the deciduous trees have shorn themselves of any leafy excess that would add to a snowy winter's weight. I wonder if we'll have a winter like we had six years ago, the year Muphin came to me as a youthful pup, the winter we had more snow than we had ever had before. Not an easy winter, not an always happy one. But an important one for me to remember.

Snow had begun falling during a late December night that year, as I had sensed it would when I went out to pee just before going up to bed. When I awoke the next morning, the snow scenes out my bedroom windows made me so cheerful, the child in me delighted by the simple change of weather. The white blanket was at least four inches thick on the ground, heavy on the trees, bending down many of the smaller ones near the path to the out-house. When I passed them I wrapped my gloved hand around their trunks and shook them vigorously, releasing them from their snowburden. Most of them gladly rose from their weary bowing, but a few were permanently bent.

The snow was such a wonder, changing what I had grown used to seeing, and thus not seeing, into a magical presence of white webs of leafless maple branches, corridors of fir leaning toward each other to make a canopy over the paths, and a pristine aura of cleanliness over all. The heavy snow released me from the heaviness of responsibilities, the weariness from all the work of maintaining this home. The snow slowed my pace--quite literally, in fact, as my big warm boots trudged through the night sky's gift, resistant to my step, and I was pulled to look around me, to even stop and just gaze wide-eyed at a trick of nature worked on a tree bough or a yet-standing dead flower stalk.

Something about a snow swells the love in me and lets it come skipping out toward

all that invites my attention. Muphin was the first I snowed my love on that morning, as she lay her fifteen pounds on my chest for a vigorous belly rub. "You are the best gift," I told her, kissing her with a loud smack on her tousled head. She was, and continues to be, such a treasure, such a delight; in the seven months since she had come to be with me she kept my heart turned to joy no matter what other, sad, feelings may have come calling. I was so grateful for the gift of her, felt extravagantly rewarded for all my care of Ladydog as she aged and died, for my waiting until that tending was completed before I brought this new canine companion to my life.

Muphin was fascinated with the snow, played with me as I went to feed the hens. She plowed muzzle-first into the drifts, searching out the odors beneath the frozen blanket. The snow balled up into hard marbles on her long chest hair and short legs. She seemed glad for me to remove as much of the balls as I could, then she finished the job by standing beside the woodstove and licking them away as they melted.

The snowing continued for five days and because it had become even colder, it was accumulating more, melting less during the day. The trees, thickly covered, were so spectacularly beautiful. I began to sense the power in the snow as well: the weight of it had the potential to pull down trees, collapse roofs, snap large branches, make paths invisible and walking a major physical feat. With at least a foot of snow on our steep road neither Bethroot nor I would be able to drive our cars up some parts of the hill. So except for the big ancient pickup's indomitable capacity to push past most anything in an emergency, we were snowed in. And I did not mind that, actually. I had a wanting to withdraw, to disappear into quiet peaceful solitude, at least as much as I could get of that with Bethroot and me, her dog and Muphin, and the four cats all cramped together in the house.

A few days later the soft pattering on the roof was no longer snow falling--it was the snow melting just a bit, en-

couraged by a light rain. Bethroot and I and the dogs took a walk down toward the west side as far as the spring, marvelling in the snow scene. The snow was as deep as Muphin was tall so she soon asked to be carried when she had enough of bunny-hopping her way along the path. As we walked Bethroot and I talked about the workshop we had agreed to present at the *Lesbian Family Conference* in Portland later in the winter. We knew we wanted to inspire other Lesbians with our story, be an example of successfully transforming from a troubled lovership to a harmonious land partnership, and we wanted to give wimmin a taste of the magic we create on this land, the goddess-love that guides us through the seasons of the land and of our lives. We had each begun to search through our journals looking for material to share about the 12 years of partnering we had thus far been doing here. Alas, we were each finding so much of the sorrow and pain those years had held. We asked ourselves, and each other, what of our experience we wanted to share, what was important. Dared we be so vulnerable as

to include the pain we caused each other, past and current? Could we present ourselves truthfully without that?

We each continued to puzzle with this in the following weeks, slowly weaving a tapestry that would show us in our many guises. I was particularly aided in this process by a lesson inadvertently learned with Muphin one beautiful February day. I remember the sun was so bright and warm in a sometimes clear blue, sometimes billowy white-clouded sky. I thought surely Muphin and I must go out for a walk in such fair weather, give myself some fresh air and exercise and a break from the tedium of hand-copying excerpts from my journals for the upcoming workshop, to flesh out the basic script Bethroot was writing. She had gone to town that day so except for me the land was peopleless and quiet. Muphin and I set out for the barn first as it had been so long since I'd walked in that direction and I wanted to see what state the over-a-half-century-old barn was in after all the heavy snow, which by then was melting quickly from the house roof. I discovered that the barn continued



to look much like it had for years: the roof rafters barely hanging on in some places, shingles missing here and there. The hand-hewn boards of the siding retained the orange-brown beauty of their natural aging, accented by the winter wet.

I didn't stay down there long. Muphin was reluctant to turn around so soon, but I had noticed a few of the hens strolling nearby and I wanted her out of their way, not yet sure I could trust her behavior with them. But at least we were walking and she got excited as we headed up the path, which I needed to climb slowly in my heavy coat and boots. Suddenly she took off, and paid no attention at all to my command to come back. Soon I heard hens squawking and I ran up the steep hill as best I could, yelling on the way, "No! Muphin, Muphin, No!!" But she was beyond any attempt to control her, and within seconds had a chicken chased all the way back down to the bottom of the garden. I was after them as fast as I could go down the brushy hillside; could soon make out that Muphin had grabbed the hen in her mouth and was shaking her as the hen screamed. With my rage full-blown I yelled at Muphin my loudest "NO!!" Something must have snapped back into place then because she dropped the hen, looked up at me and backed off from her prey as I ran toward her. The hen lay in the snow, alive but silent. Muphin distanced herself further and watched as I picked up the hen and held her to my chest. There were lots of feathers on the snow, red-gold against the white. I quickly searched for any injury and discovered to my horror that a large patch of skin had been torn from the bird's back, exposing fat and muscle, the wound oozing a little blood and other fluid. I don't know which felt worse: my sadness at the hen's suffering, or my horror at Muphin for what she had done. I stood there for a few minutes to catch my breath, comforting the hen, staring in shock at Muphin. I stepped angrily toward her, and she backed away. But she was right behind me when I got to the bottom garden gate, so I used one hand to grab her, smacked her nose and vigorously pushed her away from me and the hen with a scolding: "Bad dog!"

We all came through the garden to the house then and I set about to care for

the hen. I doused the large wound with St. Joan's Wort oil, and forced some down her throat as well. She stayed quiet through this treatment, either grateful for the rescue and my care or too traumatized to protest. I put some rags into a cardboard box and placed the chicken inside, just room enough for her to lie comfortably, and with a sense of enclosure and safety. I covered the box with a screen and weighted it with hammers, placed a cloth over the screen to give her dark seclusion. I figured it would not be good for her to be with the other hens and she needed to be warmer than the drafty hen house could provide on a winter night.

I think I must have been in some shock myself because, although I was exhausted, I went back outside to repair the dog door in the fence up by the main gate. One of its cords had broken some time before and the door hung askew, making it possible for Muphin to get out if she wandered near there and saw a hen on the lane, and that wild instinct to chase and kill overcame her again. I'd been meaning to fix the door, but hadn't gotten around to it, thinking the hens weren't venturing out into the snow that much yet, and I guess hoping Muphin could be trusted to do them no harm. As I went out the door I angrily told Muphin to stay where she was sitting beside the woodbin. She knew my mood, did not follow me--probably the first time since we'd been together that I had left the house without her. I fixed the door quickly and returned to the house, giving up my original intention for a longer walk for fear of leaving the hen untended. I didn't think either the dogs or cats would be able to remove the screen, but I did not want to risk any further ugly scenes, and I wanted to assure the hen of a quiet rest. I disturbed her only a little when I sprinkled goldenseal powder into and all around the oozing hole in her back.

Muphin had gone into the living room but then came closer when I sat crying on a stool near the workbench, where I'd relocated the hen's box. By now my tears were from both anger and sadness, which grew to a dragging grief at feeling so estranged from Muphin. I talked to her through my sobbing: "Do you have any idea how awful it feels to be distanced from you? Without you as my trusted friend I



Jean Mountaingrove

feel so alone." More crying. She watched and listened, unmoving. I sternly talked about how it is that she cannot be in this family and be a wild dog too; that with this love, this security, this home, there come responsibilities. She had to learn that there are restrictions on her freedom, some fetters in this life. There are shoulds and shouldn'ts in the way we live here, and respect must be given to all of us. "You are not allowed to harm another creature in this family."

I went into the inner circle of the house then, sat on my meditation pillow before the altar and cried some more. Muphin came and lay beside me, snuggled her head against my knee. No doubt she trusted I would not harm her there: when I sit on this pillow I become my calmest, and perhaps wisest, self. Eventually my tears were replaced by deep breathing and I could empty myself of the anger, settle into the exhaustion of my body, and play back to myself the hard lecture I had given to Muphin. As I listened to my words I realized that what I had said to her applies to all of us, Bethroot and myself included. "With this love and this security, this home, there come responsibilities," I had instructed Muphin. And surely that same code applied to us two Lesbians who do reap love and lots of security by sharing this home. Yes,

there had often been misery between us, but we were also growing more accepting of each other, and each bore a gratitude for the other's companionship in the keeping of this temple, the working of this land. Longevity alone gave evidence of our bonding, the depth and sureness of our commitment. We were indeed creating family, making it up out of our real experience with each other. And that included anger and resentments, impatience and frustration many, too many, days. We were each bonded to this land and to each other and to the vision we had created and nurtured together of *Fly Away Home*. Clearly we had to go to the conference with the intention to share the unhappy side of this family too, because that was part of our truth, a part that pushed each of us to constantly renew, and thus deepen and enliven, our choice to continue to create the beauty that we had together.

I cared for the hen diligently, made a four-foot square pen for her, with a screen on top and covered with cloths. I placed food and water and a nesting box inside, and soon she was eating and drinking, and standing or sitting on top of the box. The goldenseal had caked a solid crust over the big hole so there was no further bleeding or loss of other fluid, and no evidence of infection. When I saw her stand and fluff out her wings I knew the danger had passed and within a week from the awful event she was back with the flock. Muphin and I mended too, our playful loving returned, our bonding deepened through adversity.

I wish I could say that Muphin never again bothered the hens, and that Bethroot and I have lived happily ever after, like the fairy tales go. But there were more chases and injuries until Muphin finally understood what adaptation of her temperament was required of her, and there have been some awful scenes between Bethroot and me since that workshop where we bravely told our multiple truths. She and I have separate houses now, where each of us can let our spirits fly, and to which we can gladly invite each other for company sought, rather than endured. We still have much to learn about making friendship, much to invent about making family. We have been together here for eighteen years and some days now I feel hopeful, like we are just getting started.

GOING LIKE SIXTY

LIVING WITHOUT 911

By Jean Mountaingrove
Rootworks
Sunny Valley, Oregon

Do you have a phone?

Do you realize what a difference that can make in your life?

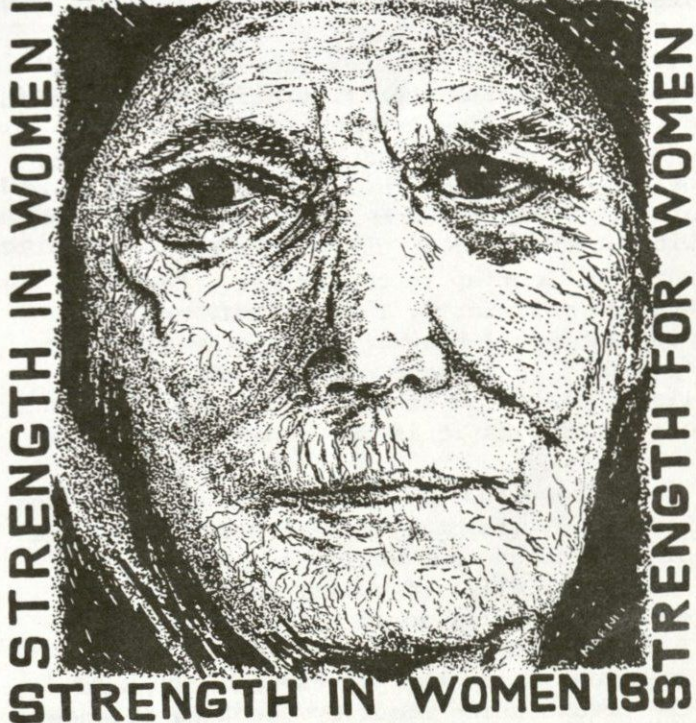
I have lived without a phone for 24 years and I rather like it this way. Years ago I checked out the feasibility of phone service: \$5000 to bury the line one mile from my nearest neighbor. No thanks. Then last year friends who are concerned about my "isolation" urged me to explore the cellular phone option. The salesman came promptly. Unsuccessful in getting reception anywhere, he even climbed up the mountain to the property line. Nothing came over the 3000 foot mountain between Rootworks and town.

For urgent messages, I rely on my citizens band radio (CB) in my kitchen, not in my truck. I check in with my family in nearby Wolf Creek every day, morning and night--unless one of us forgets. So far my emergencies have always occurred when someone was present to help. I am aware that it may not always be so.

When I am working here alone, I remind myself to "go slow" up the ladder onto the roof, to "be careful" as I push the plywood sheet up the ladder ahead of me. "Watch where you step", I say in rattle-snake weather (above 90 degrees). "Stay in the center of the road, and don't vary your speed," I caution when snow is deep or the shoulder is soft after heavy rain. "Stop when you're tired" I remember as I try to finish cutting the boards for tomorrow's project. Alone, I can stay focused on what I need to do to avoid accidents, to feel safe here without 911.

Well, yes, occasionally I tense up when I notice that a motor has stopped on the

STRENGTH IN WOMEN IS STRENGTH FOR WOMEN



Marnee Kennedy
Millfield, Ohio

upper road. After 16 years here, my ears are so tuned to the sounds of uphill driving--shifting gears, sound fading around the turn, coming loud again as the car goes on--that I notice any break in this familiar pattern. I fear that someone will dump trash over the roadside, as happened several years ago. A stove, a washer and dryer lie askew, white in the forest where they catch my eye and my ire as I walk. If I am outdoors when the motor stops, if the tailgate clangs, I rush up the trail shouting, "No dumping! No dumping!" I am always too late to see the truck, but so far there has been no more trash dumped on this section of the road.

And yes, occasionally at night, I am afraid. No. Really I am alert when that familiar pattern is interrupted. I listen for the motor to start up and go on. I lie very still, candle out, and watch for headlights on my ceiling, as happens when a car drives in at night along the only road to enter and leave this land. Then I wait, imagining how I would defend myself and how I would call for help on the CB. But it has never happened in these 16 years so I have never had the flood of adrenaline that comes with real and present fear.

I am surprised that I am so strong when strangers drive in: ones looking for their missing dog, the sheriff tracing an abandoned auto, the service person looking for directions, the real estate agent who is lost, or the car full of fundamentalist missionaries. I feel, I know, THIS IS MY TERRITORY. Without thinking about it I am bold, walking right up to the driver. "Hello. What do you want?", I say firmly and pleasantly. I know I wouldn't be so sure of myself on someone else's land. I believe this sense of territory is part of our nature, as it is for other animals.

If I ever do get a telephone at Rootworks how would life be different here? I am one of the things that would be changed! I would make a lot of calls, mostly local ones so the bill would not be enormous. I would call the Extension Service with questions about the plants and soil, and the credit union about my checking balance. I would call all over town to find the lowest price on whatever I need to buy. I would call my friends, of course, the ones with telephones. We would arrange to share rides, or meet in town, or go there or come here for supper. I would be busy on the phone every day with questions or making arrangements. I would use it as another way to distract myself from things I am reluctant to do. And I have plenty of ways to do that already.

I would also listen for the phone to ring. If it were in another building and I had a message machine, I would often go there to see if I had any messages. I would listen to them, think about them, and wonder when I should return the calls. Are you noticing my lack of discipline and restraint? I know it. I could be a phone junkie.

For my guests and tenants, no telephone means that they can center down in the quietness of the forest, take long naps anytime, experience uninterrupted times to write or paint, or have long conversations. They can choose when to connect with family or responsibilities, find out what arrangements they truly want to make. It means that mother or father cannot call with upsetting news or demands. It also means they must drive 20 minutes and 5 miles to check in with friends or to whisper loving messages to their darling via the public pay phone. And it means they must write to me of their plans well in advance or take their chances with my absence or what is for dinner.

For me it means most of the above, and more. When I wake each morning, I know that this day, each hour, holds the possibility of a visitor, a welcome surprise in my secluded life on this mountain. Therefore, I know I must attend to the really essential things first as I cannot predict when a car will drive in with a new friend, or an old one. I must be ready to put down my saw, rake, pen or frying pan to find out what brings this woman to my door. Our explorations of who we are and what this meeting can mean in our lives are joyful journeys for me. Uninterrupted by the telephone's ring, we can go deep and then deeper with our listening and sharing.

These visitors and my mail are my connection to the world of us two-leggeds, as Chris calls them. Opening my mail, when I get to the box 2 miles away, is exciting. I find books, magazines and letters from friends far away. Some I have never met. I need time to consider how best to respond to news of their lives, to requests for help or advice. Not off the top of my head as I pick up a ringing telephone but from a place in my heart. Letters give me that time--to sleep on it, to scribble a draft and revise it. Or just to write as if we were sitting here together at my kitchen table, talking on into the evening. That is best, but letters are next, and the phone is last of all.

I think the telephone may come to Rootworks at last, if I last till I must have that way to reach and be reached, when I can no longer go out to parties and meetings where news and hugs are given. Or when I no longer feel safe without 911.

The Wimmin's Festival with a Difference
We walk the walk

COMMUNITY BUILDING FESTIVAL

SUSAN B. ANTHONY MEMORIAL UNREST HOME WOMEN'S LAND TRUST
P.O. Box 5853, Athens, Ohio 45701 614-448-2509

PROGRAM July 16-24, 1994 GENERAL INFORMATION

We have designed a week of educational activities and recreation that creates a Festival with lasting dividends. Led by an experienced builder and an experienced educator, we will carry out carpentry tasks and building processes on wimmin's dwellings and other structures for the Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home (SBAMUH) community land. Each morning demonstrations on techniques necessary for that day's building will be followed by actual work.

After lunch, guided by an experienced educator, all of us will participate in group discussion, role playing and other learning activities focusing on Feminist and Lesbian issues and problems as they relate to community, small or large, whether intentional living group or activist organization.

By Diann Bowoman
With input from Marnee, Mary & Jan
Susan B. Anthony Memorial Unrest Home
Millfield, Ohio

During the planning stages last winter, the four residents of SBAMUH identified different goals in having a community building week. These included: providing more housing on wimmin's land; teaching and learning about community life, her-story, theory and skills; sharing each others' company for meals, conversation, recreation and relaxation on the land; and, teaching and learning construction skills. After much discussion some of us thought this might be too heavy a schedule for only one week, but three of us were unwilling to give up any of the ideas we had generated. On we went.

Kate from Spiral accepted the responsibility of hands-on building skills instruction at the house site and consulting on the house design before the week began. Complicating her job and our whole undertaking, the final decision on the home's style, construction method and ground breaking date were not settled at the time the event planning must be done. We had no idea what stage Marnee and Diann's "house" would be in my mid-July, the week we chose for our project. We couldn't tell Kate or prospective attendees what skills they would be teaching or learning.

Juana agreed to mold and facilitate the educational portion. She shared her ideas about topics, resources and presentation styles with us by letter from mid-winter until the affair itself. A couple of us sent feedback and offered our input as well.

For organizing purposes and actually implementing the week's activities, we divided the responsibilities into several parts: advertising, informational sheets and responding to inquiries; working with Juana to develop the educational program; food planning and meal preparation; coordinating with Kate safety needs and organizing, gathering or borrowing tools and equipment; preparing a couple of back-up projects in case of too many workers or a hold-up on the house for some reason; and, finalizing house plans, consulting with Kate on design possibilities, allocating tasks for sharing with attendees and obtaining needed construction materials. We created some outlines of what needed to be done in these categories and offered a lot of the information for additional input. Much of the actual work was shared in twos or threes, but some was done mainly by one individual or another.

The sliding scale fee was based on an estimate of the actual cost per womyn. The low end covered food and instructor's stipends and travel fees, while the high end included our suggested camping donation for a stay of the same length.



*Carpentry Instructor
Kate Ellison of Spiral
Expounding*

Photo by Mary M. Morgan

The building week was open to lesbians and lesbian-friendly feminist women as are most events at SBAMUH, though most of our guests identify as lesbian. Invitations to attend went out in our Spring newsletter, with responses to general inquiries about our community or camping and as free and paid advertising in lesbian and feminist publications, mostly in Ohio and nearby states and some national. Wimmin sent for more information; we replied with a Building Week fact sheet, a camping flier and a SBAMUH brochure. Of those requests we got a couple of reservations and several letters asking about work exchange or letting us know they were very interested but unable to get the time off work or had no money to attend at this time.

As the time grew near we wondered if we had been unrealistic in expecting the week to pay for itself. Mid-June we decided to go ahead with it even though it appeared we'd have a small group. During the planning stages we had discussed work exchange and ruled it out; we wanted to have all participants share in the workload, not create another class situation.

We considered cutting the fee by offering scholarships and economizing on food costs, even though most of the food was already ordered. It didn't seem fair to offer scholarships now--some had already paid

and others who might have been very interested in the gathering might not have even contacted us after seeing the listed fee. However, responding to the half dozen letters just referred to, we asked them to pay as much of their food costs as possible but not to stay away for lack of funds. We were only able to make this offer because of the generous financial support we got this year from our SBAMUH members and friends nationally.

Friday and Saturday residents welcomed travel-weary, but eager wimmin with hugs, introductions, campground orientation and directions about where to set up their gear. After a little rest, the 11 of us spent some time outlining the week, choosing the job tasks we preferred, checking on campground do's and don'ts and getting briefly acquainted. Then we jumped into a whirlwind of activity.

A few of us shared morning stretching warm-ups and most of us breakfasted together. Daily at this time Juana offered a thoughtful selection of resources which usually dovetailed with the discussion topic the group had chosen for our afternoon gatherings.

Next the building crew set off for the house site; here Kate spent time carefully breaking the process of each day's 3-4 hour shift into understandable components.

After detailing the skill to be learned; familiarizing us with the tools we would use; outlining safety procedures and verbally visualizing the end result, she patiently answered questions and we started. When there were too many "cooks in the kitchen", Tory guided a second crew in a different area and task.

We all had varied skill levels, but mostly we were in the beginner class. During the week we: vented a roof with an electric drill, stapler and screening; ran electrical wiring through stud walls; insulated walls and ceilings; installed a vapor barrier; measured sections of $\frac{1}{4}$ " plywood and cut them with a circular saw; attached the wall and ceiling panels on the interior; and hammered girders and joists into place for a ground floor.

A couple of those not building ran errands, took pictures and provided cool drinks for the workers. The call of the midday triangle announced lunch and ended the day's instruction-construction. The gang retreated for a hasty refreshing clean-up and a hearty meal. With only time for a short nap or a quick dip in the pond, we reconvened at about 2 pm for our workshop.

Sometimes we took turns reading the selections aloud. The group wanted to discuss more subjects than we had time or energy for, so Juana tried to consolidate and we touched on quite a few of them. These included: our definitions of and experiences with community; economics; ethics; differences; methods of sharing our resources, asking specifically for what we needed and offering aloud what we had to give; how our cultural environments have shaped us, what can be used and what must be unlearned; what information to share with the larger feminist and lesbian network, mixed alternative communities and generally in the world; brainstorming our visions of lesbian community and values and suggestions for implementing them; and others as well. We also spent a portion of this time evaluating our activities, schedule and feelings as the week went on.

After a couple of hours to ourselves, most of us shared dinner and socializing. Several evenings a program or singing around the campfire followed. The fun and excitement of acquainting ourselves with each others' lives, trading ideas and working together was intense. Mid-week

the cook (yours truly) took our day's dialog to heart and announced she needed a day out of the kitchen and off meal-planning. There was lots of cooperation and additionally most non-residents decided they needed an off-land break and made an impromptu decision to check out the town.

At the close of the program we celebrated our accomplishments and friendship in the house shell, dancing up a storm until the moon came up. Saying good-bye was hard, even though most of us were exhausted. One thing we considered at our closing circle was a ten(?) year reunion; it would be interesting to see where the others had taken their lives over the intervening period.

Looking back at what we had discussed and discovered together about the process of the week is enlightening. In the promotional material the residents had stressed that this was an integrated event; our written expectation was that all attendees, within their individual health parameters, would participate in actual building work, the educational and discussion groups and daily maintenance tasks. Individual interests or desires aside, it became evident to some of us through feedback and observation that we had overplanned timewise for the circumstances.

Each day was scheduled from dawn to dinner with the couple hours free time often spent on maintenance tasks, recovery time from building or transitioning from something running late. Though the evening program was optional, most of us didn't want to miss sharing with our new acquaintances or shaping the next day's possibilities. There wasn't a break to cool off and relax sore muscles after the physical labor of building, time for reading and formulating ideas from workshop resources, a space for reflecting on yesterday's discussion or a chance for spontaneous interpersonal relationships and networking on a daily basis. Non-residents were also dealing with the camping situation: hard ground for sleeping, solar shower, outhouse, unshaded tent sites and not much privacy.

In a larger gathering it would not have been a big deal if individually we had skipped out once or twice for some quiet reading time or a hike in the woods,

but with a small group many of us felt more pressure to attend regardless of how we felt or our personal time clock. There was a strong sense of group responsibility; we each wanted to carry our share of the load as well as not miss anything. We attempted to address this within the circle, but as the week progressed we got a bit bogged down on it and took up part of our educational time with this topic along with suggestions and trials of joint solutions. As some wimmin had done all along, the rest of us eventually did what we were able or comfortable with even if it meant missing a joint activity we wanted to attend.

Initially reviewing the week there was some disappointment on many of our parts, resident and non-resident alike, that this was not a "perfect" event or our part was not appreciated. From my current perspective, I can see we made a great step in the wimmin's community movement at SBAMUH that week. We all learned a lot--some of us different lessons from the same situations. Theory and practice are not identical; they take a lot of interpersonal work and one way to learn is to do. We did!

Mary added a laundry list of comments and I agreed with her perspectives and am sharing those pluses:

"We coped well with starts and stops. There were no major accidents or blowouts. All our meals were prepared; what a treat and a hard job to satisfy everyone. Much

hard work was accomplished at the building site; when women get together we get a lot done. Everyone gave a lot and received something as well. We learned a lot about making an event what we wanted it to be; by listening and adjusting we kept positive energy for the group--we wanted to work it all out. The group size was good for a first time situation. Space was made to hear everyone's concerns, how we were reacting to each other and our environment. We overprocessed, but realized it was happening so could stop. Juana hung in with us even though she had a hard job with our low energy levels after lunch; she pushed us to think about and work toward building community concepts and implementation. Kate appreciated the opportunity to teach a small, co-operative group and the rest of us appreciated her skill and patience. All of us got to learn new skills and try something that we hadn't done before."

I'd like to thank all of you who came. I enjoyed meeting you and sharing with you. Thank you too for all the sweat equity in the house, it is appreciated.

Mary adds this note: The idea for this week was born at a Twin Oaks workshop during their Women's Weekend in 1992. Kate and Mary from Spiral, Mary and Jan from SBAMUH, Juana and several others brainstormed about such a festival. The conversation continued when Jan and Mary went to visit Spiral the next year.

HOW TO DO A COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION PROGRAM ON LESBIAN LAND

By Juana Maria Gonzalez Paz
Louisa, Virginia
July 26, 1994

I expected this article to be like my last one about a similar program. (See MAIZE, Summer 1994 or off our backs, June 1994.) I have 26 pages of notes from the event but this will focus on how to do a similar program rather than program content, based on what we've learned so far.

1) First is the weather. An outdoor event in July comes with heat and bugs. It was 85-90 degrees. People in tents

had no place to rest in the afternoon. Tents were too hot. Only early mornings and late evenings were cool enough to be comfortable.

2) Outdoor events: camping as an option is fine but I'd like indoor shelter to be available, in terms of community housing, participants staying with local womyn or local womyn can double up and free one of their spaces for participants. This is delicate because opening our homes to strangers feels risky. So does living outside for a week. (If I camp I want a solitary wilderness experience. I'm not



Class Picture

Mary M. Morgan

willing to live outside and work and do a group program. Out of 11 people 3 camped and did the whole program. The rest of us had indoor shelter or didn't build. Builders in a small cabin reported heat stress.)

3) Food can be Do It Yourself for breakfast and lunch. If meals are included in registration we can have a variety of staples and ready to eat items on hand, plus cooking facilities and refrigeration. Participants can decide how many group meals we want. If we leave some of the food budget unspent people who sign up to cook can have some money for special ingredients, say \$10-20. In a Saturday to Saturday program most people needed a break from communal meals by Wednesday. The main cook asked for that day off and people went to town for dinner Wednesday and Thursday even though there was plenty of food at the event. Part of the attraction was air-conditioning but I think people needed a break from the group. Cooking is popular but often people want to be independent around meals.

4) Networking: We need a bulletin board or information center for people to make connections around rides, affinity groups, resource sharing. Otherwise announcements and info get tagged on to any formal session. In retrospect, it seems like a mistake to do the group program planning and decision making during or after Women's Studies class. This happened because not all of

us did building but most attended my class. Next time I'd like the chance to have a class that's just a class and not a program planning session, too. (This is nobody's fault. I encouraged program evaluations after class since we were all assembled.)

5) Program orientation and introduction: We did some of this at the campfire the first evening. Next time I'll want a more extensive and detailed intro to different aspects of the program and a formal conclusion or summary. I'll want to be very clear about my ideas of what a Women's Studies class is and what it is not. In a total of 7 sessions I was unwilling to take 2 away from class time--one for intro and one for summary conclusion. I may want to make the intro a prerequisite for the class and schedule it at a separate time, before the first class period. I started out with a course outline that could have taken a year and asking what the group wanted to cover, then tried to incorporate their choices into the 5 sessions left after my Womyn, Values and Community workshop, which took the first two sessions. I did a good job of approaching the program with non-attachment and flexibility, ready to accept whatever the group chose. Problem was the group didn't make clear choices, people burned out on group process, taking time to figure out what to cover. Turns out I have very definite ideas about what a Women's Studies class is and what it is not. I've been confused about whether I'm advocating a peer group for self-help or if I'm really the teacher. I could benefit from participating in a peer study group but that's not what's happening. It's becoming pretty clear that although it's located in an informal setting it's a real class and if I'm there I'm the teacher. We all want that. I was encouraged to be more directive. "Juana, please don't go around and ask anybody how they feel about anything. Just decide where class will be, pick a topic and make an announcement at lunch." Since I asked what the group wanted to do, instead of telling them, I don't know what would have happened, but dealing with when to meet and what to discuss wore everybody out.

7) Group process and facilitation: I facilitated most of the event, from the opening campfire circle, my 7 class sessions and some of the program planning that

happened after class. I initiated this and it was a comfortable role for me but I should have separated it more from the teaching function. At least once after class I announced that energy seemed low, and it was obvious to others that I had had it and wanted to leave, but they were fine. I'll experiment with not facilitating my class, letting other people try it. If I facilitate program planning and evaluation sessions I'll have a separate time for those.

8) Class participation: I'm a hair away from deciding "no random talking". Popcorn-style discussion where people just jump in randomly generates anxiety and uncertainty about what to expect, and invariably results in resentment about who talked more. Ideally, we'd all monitor ourselves and facilitate. It's clear that's not happening. Some people make rapid-fire comments which escalate the pace and the tension while others are silent. It alternately felt like a runaway train or like pulling teeth. There were times in my class that I wasn't willing to participate because of the compulsive talking and once I really wanted to leave because I didn't want to hear the emotional drain but I was afraid if I interrupted that might really set somebody off. I may have an entrance examination with questions about group participation-- what can we say to you to respectfully convey that you're off the topic and to please stop and we don't want to process it? If we say this to you do you agree to stop what you're doing and give the group a chance to decide what to do next? If you want to focus on a personal problem, experience or issue that is up for you, do you agree to ask the group first instead of just going into a monologue or personal anecdote without asking us first? Do you give everyone in the class permission to interrupt to remind you that you haven't asked us first before doing your thing? The right answers to those questions would be what the group can work with. If a person takes up a lot of space and feels oppressed when they're interrupted, we can say that doesn't work for this class. The point is to avoid things that drive people away happening in an atmosphere where it's not okay to say "no". I need to know my bottom line. If it's my class and I don't want to be there something's got to give. There can be a social or support group and

I can decide along with everybody else if I want to participate, but if I'm teaching I have to want to be there.

9) Time: I'm willing to try different class times but I want to start and end on time. If we start late and end on time we have 15-20 less minutes. I'm committed to ending on time. If the group wastes time I'm not available to make it up by staying later. Starting late encourages people to come late and staying late without consensus forces people to stay unwillingly or leave without closure before it's over.

10) Construction Education Program: The reality that couldn't be changed was the need to build in the morning because of the heat. I was sweating before 10 am, so a leisurely breakfast followed by a morning circle wasn't possible. I wonder if meeting in fall or spring would risk night-time temperatures too low for camping. Again, community housing would make us less weather-dependent. The construction work was indoors so rain or cold wouldn't have stopped it.

Our event had a dual purpose, community building in the literal sense, building shelter on lesbian land. We helped with a cabin under construction. We didn't build a home from start to finish and we didn't expect to, but there is more housing now and more of us have done building, which increases the level of a skill we need in the community right now. We also strengthened lesbian community through networking, social contact and friendship, education and work. I've gone to events that are talking only (or listening to speakers) and I don't want that. I'd like a more wholistic approach. It makes no sense to bring people to the land just to talk when we need building. So the question is, what else fits with a construction education program? What else can we do well and comfortably while building?

Juana is a New York-born Puerto Rican lesbian writer and former welfare mother who lives at a large commune. She is the author of a book on lesbian of color land and has been widely published in the lesbian feminist press on a variety of community and education-related topics. Juana c/o Twin Oaks Commune, Rt.4 Box 169, Louisa, Virginia 23093 (703)894-5126

SAVING SEEDS

DIVERSITY IN THE GARDEN

By Jean-Marie Wild
Santa Cruz, California

WHY SAVE SEEDS?

Since the rise of agricultural technology, scientists have been breeding food crops with concern solely for profit. Genetically bred plants, called hybrids, were initially developed to provide reliable, disease-resistant and abundant crops. Today, they are also bred to maximize their appearance, to have tough skins that will resist damage during shipping, and to have a long storage life. In addition, technological methods are now being developed to alter the genetic make-up of fruits and vegetables by splicing in genes from other species, including from animals, to further enhance their marketability. These developments are made at the expense of flavor and nutrition, as anyone who has eaten a common supermarket tomato can testify.

The US farming industry has become highly concentrated: great reliance is placed on a small number of specialized food crops, which have proven profitable. As a result, the majority of American people eat just 20 varieties of plants; and yet, there are more than 5,000 varieties of plants available. Five inbred corn crops now account for 90% of the varieties grown in this country. Only 10 types of wheat are grown, despite a range of 250 varieties.

The effect of this loss of biodiversity could be devastating. One example from history is the Irish potato famine of the 1840's, caused by an over-reliance on a single variety of potato, the "Lumper", which was decimated by a fungus blight during cool weather. A similar disaster struck the U.S. in 1970 when acres and acres of corn crops, all genetically similar, were decimated due to a susceptibility to blight.

These disasters make clear the importance of maintaining a wide diversity of plants. Yet, in the past 10 years, half of the varieties of seeds once offered have disappeared from commercial seed catalogs.

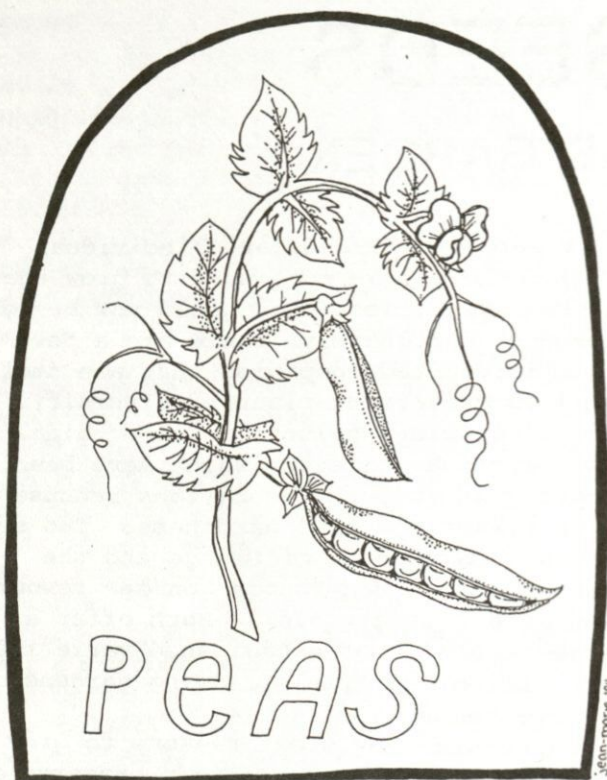
If it weren't for dedicated individual gardeners who have continued to grow these heirloom varieties, many would now be lost forever. Fortunately, there are a few alternative seed companies that are dedicated to preserving plant biodiversity. They offer wider selections, including many heirloom varieties which have been passed down through generations because of their flavor or local hardiness. Two such companies are Seeds of Change and the Abundant Life Seed Foundation (see resource list at end of article). Both offer a large selection of established varieties that will breed true, allowing gardeners to save seeds.

There are many great reasons to grow your own seeds. You can help preserve and perpetuate varieties that might otherwise die out. It's economical and a part of the cosmic "recycling" system nature intended. Growing seeds enables you to tailor crops to be specifically adapted to the micro-climate of your garden. And because you grow them, you'll have access to seeds that are untreated and organic.

HOW TO SAVE SEEDS FROM YOUR GARDEN

Annuals (like beans, peas, corn, cucumber, eggplant, lettuce, melon, spinach, squash) bear seed in the same year they are planted. They need no special care, only to be planted early enough in the season to give them time to ripen seed before the frost. Some plants are often grown as annuals, such as tomatoes and peppers, although they are actually perennials in their native habitats.

Biennials bear their edible crop in the season they are planted and only during the second season do they flower and produce seed. These plants include beet, cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, celery, onion, parsley, parsnip, rutabaga, chard and turnip. These plants will need to be protected through the winter (either under a thick covering of mulch or in cold storage) and then allowed to grow the following season.



Jean-Marie Wild

Save seed from your best plants. Watch the plants throughout the growing season, keeping in mind the qualities you most want to encourage. Consider the whole plant, not just one isolated fruit. For example, you'll want to save tomato seeds from a plant that bore many excellent fruit rather than a plant that has only one beautiful specimen. There are many qualities you may want to consider when selecting plants from which to save seeds:

- Flavor
- Yield
- Vigor
- Color
- Size
- Aromatic appeal
- Disease resistance
- Insect resistance
- Earliness of bearing
- Lateness in bolting to seed (lettuce, etc)
- Good germination
- Texture, tenderness, juiciness
- Weather tolerance
- Drought resistance
- Absence of thorns, spine, etc.
- Storage life

You may want to devise a system to remind yourself, and others who spend time

in your garden, which plants/fruits have been selected for seed keeping, so that you don't forget and eat them! Strips of brightly colored cloth or yarn tied around the plant work well for this purpose. Select seeds from more than one plant of the same variety, even if you only need a few seeds, so that you maintain a broad genetic base. Exceptions are self-pollinated plants like beans and peas which are inbred by nature. Seeds from squash and pumpkins also can be saved from one specimen while maintaining diversity. To avoid cross-pollination, it is a good idea to grow in a season only one variety of plants that may cross-pollinate, or to grow them at great distances from each other.

It's not advisable to save seeds from hybrid plants because their offspring are often sterile or may produce plants unlike the parent plants. The cross of hybrid plants often reverts to resemble one of its ancestors. Some hybrids, particularly F1 hybrids (the first generation of a cross between two hybrids), are patented, making seed saving technically illegal; most will not breed true, so seed saving is pointless, anyway. Patented seeds are usually clearly marked on the packet.

Seeds should be well ripened before picking, but not so over-ripe that they fall to the ground or get blown away in the wind. Seeds encased in fleshy fruits, like tomatoes, peppers and eggplant, should be allowed to turn ripe and soft, even a bit overripe, before seed is collected.

Many types of seeds scatter when the plant reaches maturity (lettuce, onion, greens, and many flowers). To be sure of catching a good seed crop from these plants, tie a ventilated cloth or paper bag over the seed head.

Seeds from edible seed crops, like corn and beans, will hold their seeds after maturity and can be picked when mature and allowed to dry, or they can be collected from the plant after they have dried thoroughly.

Collect seed on a sunny day after dew has evaporated. It is advisable to collect seed before the first frost: although cold temperatures will not harm most seeds, the extra moisture held after a frost will damage their quality.

After collecting seed-bearing fruit, the seeds will need to be extracted and

properly dried before storing. For peppers, squash and melons, separate the seed from the pulp and float the seeds in water so that good seeds sink to the bottom. Then dry the seeds. Fermentation of tomato seeds will help control bacterial canker. Spoon the seedy tomato pulp into a jar, add about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water and allow to ferment 3 to 4 days. Pulp and immature seeds will float to the top and can be poured off, reserving the good, heavier seed at the bottom. Dry the seeds thoroughly.

Seeds of lettuce, sunflower, dill, calendula (and other plants that are picked dry) can be shaken through a screen to sift out chaff. Or they can be poured from one bowl to another in a gentle breeze: the chaff will float away while the heavier seeds fall into the bowl.

Peas and bean seeds are removed from their pods by threshing. Use care not to be too rough or you may damage the seed interior.

It's important to dry all seeds, even if they already look dry. Seeds with a moisture content above 8-15% will deteriorate during storage. Large seeds will need to dry for 5 to 6 days, small ones will dry in 3 to 4 days. Once the seeds have been dried, do not allow them to sit around in the open air or they will reabsorb moisture.

The best place to keep your seeds is in sealed, moisture-proof containers, such as mason jars or storage tins. Store them at temperatures below 40-50 degrees; in the refrigerator is ideal. Stored properly, many seeds will remain viable for several years, though it's advisable to use them the following season, and to collect new seeds each year.

Growing your own seeds is simple and rewarding. I hope this article will encourage you to give it a try!

RESOURCES

Seed Companies:

Abundant Life Seed Foundation
PO Box 772, Port Townsend WA 98368
(206) 385-5660

Organically grown, open-pollinated seeds, no F1 hybrids. Specifically grow plants suited to the Pacific Northwest.
Seeds of Change
1364 Rufina Circle #5, Santa Fe NM 87501
(505) 438-8080

Over 2,000 varieties of heirloom, open-pollinated, and hybrid plants, no F1 hybrids. Organic. Dedicated to the preservation of biodiversity. Very informative catalog.
Seeds Blum

Idaho City Stage, Boise ID 83706

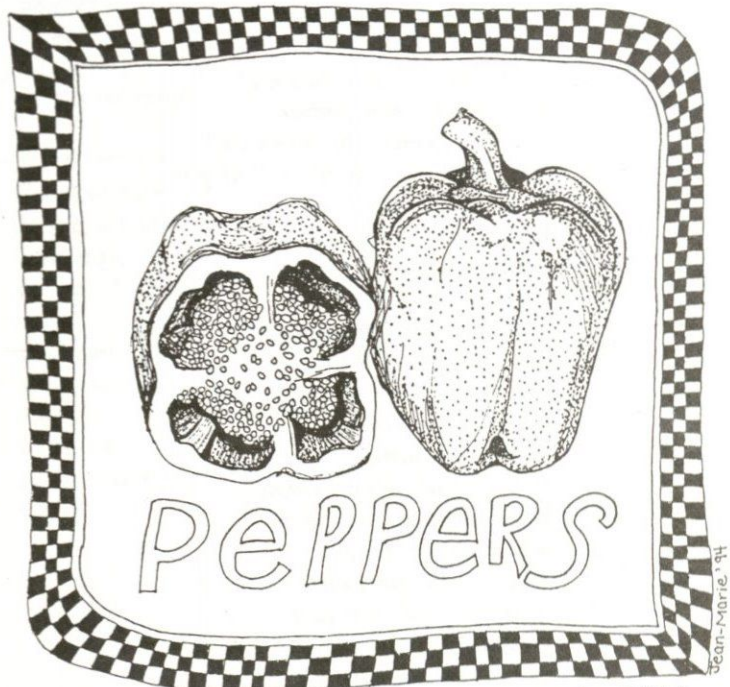
Over 7000 heirloom varieties, including unusual potatoes. Woman-owned.

Seed Savers Exchange

Rt. 3, Box 239, Decorah IA 52101

(319) 382-5990

Open-pollinated seeds of vegetables, fruits, berries; no hybrids. Organization for the exchange of seeds between individuals, with a focus on preserving biodiversity. Publishes Seed Savers Yearbook yearly in January, with over 900 members offering more than 15,000 listings. Memberships are \$25, and include yearbook.



Jean-Marie Wild

Reading Material:

Saving Seeds: The Gardener's Guide to Growing and Storing Vegetable and Flower Seeds, by Marc Rogers. (Storey Communications 1990) 185 pp \$9.95. A comprehensive guide to saving seeds, with step-by-step instructions for growing and collecting seed from numerous vegetable and flower types. Extensive source list.

Seeds of Change, By Kenny Ausubel (Harper, 1994) \$18 ordered from Seeds of Change. The founder of Seeds of Change describes the company's mission and vision in vivid terms.

¿PERO, QUE PASO, MAMA?

By Maria Christina Moroles DeColores
(Sun Hawk)
Arco Iris
Ponca, Arkansas

*Mama, when I was little
I remember you saying,
"When I had my first baby
and it was a boy, I was
so disappointed, then when
I had my second and it
was a boy, I cried for days.*

*"But then you were born
and I was so happy, 'una niña'
A little girl,
to dress up and pamper
Y una 'guera,' at that."*

*¿Pero que pasó, Mama?
Why can't I remember
What happened between us?
Why can't I remember that joy
how much you loved me
Why can't I remember,
being hugged by you?*

*I look at old photographs
you, standing with all of us
in front of our government
housing apartment
You, "tan india"
in your full black shirt,
your short puff sleeve
white cotton blouse
Against brown skin
So beautiful and tall
Holding my hand,
me in my sunsuit
all cute and chubby
Jesus and Junior
at your other side
Holding Diana in your arms
But, already
There was a sadness in our eyes*

*¿Pero que pasó, Mama?
Was it because of Diana
"La prietita"
Who came so soon after
She looked so much like you
Her big black eyes
rich brown skin and
thick black hair*

*Not like me
"The milkman's daughter,"
they used to say
A joke that was not true
I look so much like
my "tias, indias Aztecas"
on Daddy's side of the family
A joke I never liked*

*But no, I look back at the photo
And Diana wore the same
sadness in her eyes*

*¿Pero, Mama, que pasó?
Now, I look into my heart
to remember
What you and the photo
won't tell
"Ya se, que eramos
tan pobres"
six kids in the "barrio"
"Con padres que
casi no hablaban ingles"
I know it was hard*

*¿Pero, Mama dime
que pasó?
But, Mama tell me
What happened to your love
Were you just too tired
or was it me?*

*I remember you, working all the time
Leaving early, after
we were all dressed and fed
Coming home after working
All day cleaning,
caring for the rich
white people's kids
on the other side of town*

*You would walk slowly,
up the dusty dirt road
me watching the kids
after school
Vigilant to see your figure
Appear at the foot of the hill
Rushing to straighten
the house, in a mess
Quickly pushing things
under the beds,
wiping faces,
hopelessly taking
a last look,
Before you'd walk in*

*You glancing to see
we were all there
would go to the kitchen
Silently cooking dinner
Before Dad got home*

*Fresh tortillas, de maize,
Frijoles moledos,
Arroz con pollo y
Siempre chile*

¿Pero, Mama que pasó?

*Why can't I remember
the joy, the laughter?
Was it the babies
that kept coming,
one after another?
Then back to work
For the white people
They would always say,
You were so good
to their babies
You would smile,
yet the sadness
Showed in your black eyes*

*Or, mama was it me?
You wanted a sweet,
little girl
But me,
always dirty,
tangled hair
in Junior's old clothes
That I loved
Playing rough,
getting tough
with the gang
in the "barrio"
Wishing I was a boy
Having their Freedom
Learning to fight
to survive,
to be accepted
Learning to steal
or go without*

*Pero, mama
I know now
it wasn't your fault
and now I know
it wasn't mine either*

*You only did what you could
to survive
I only wanted to be free
to be me
to be more than just another
Girl*

Sun Hawk: I am a 40 year old lesbian chaman renegade. First generation Mexican American Indian (Coahuilteco Nation of Northern Old Mexico). Eldest daughter of a traditional working class Mexican family of eight. Living in a remote region of the Ozark Mountains with chosen sister, partner of 10 years, 6 year old son and all our wilderness relatives.

"I was taken out of formal schooling after the 7th grade, beginning then my intensive survival and spiritual education of life with mother earth as my main school ground and head teacher."

Founder and caretaker of Arco Iris (reclaimed native land) since 1978 rebuilding matriarchal spiritual community. "With these words of love, anger, and unending faith, I share my life, loves and visions with you."

THIS LAND IS OUR LAND

By Nett Hart
The Web
Foreston, Minnesota

Owning land is problematic for many of us Lesbians. For one thing we do not benefit from the ways land usually comes to one's ownership under patriarchy, both in the passing of title through inheritance and in economic opportunity. But the problem of owning land is a bigger question: how can we be said to have control over a bit of the living Gaia? How can land be "owned" by an individual?

Lesbian land, Lesbian community land, reflects our ambivalence to owning land, many of our titles held by long ago residents or one individual when multiple Lesbian homes are there. Over and over as Lesbian communities change or individuals change or die, the laws that protect blood families disadvantage Lesbian communities.

To create permanent Lesbian community on land and to protect our ability to make homes for ourselves and other Lesbians, inevitably we will live on land that is "owned" by someone. There are ways to create legal structures of ownership that advantage our chosen Lesbian communities and take the land out of the speculative land market. All of these, of course, involve us with the patriarchal legal system. But by avoiding intentional legal involvement Lesbians often find ourselves with unintended legal consequences. So here's a quick breakdown on community owned land.

Lesbians can own land as partners or groups either as joint tenants or tenants in common. Under joint tenants you all are assumed to be equal owners unless you deliberately have set up a "share" system and if any of you dies, the remaining dykes on the deed survive you and own the land equally again. Under tenants-in-common, you own equal shares but if one of you dies (or I should say, when) her brother or father or son could end up on the title with the other dykes. Bad idea most of us say. The disadvantage with joint tenants is that if any of you

wants to move on, break up, or be ornery, she can force the rest of you to buy her out immediately or put the entire piece of land on the speculative land market, probably pricing it out of the reach of other land dykes. Bye bye Lesbian community.

Since the Lesbian land movement's upsurge in the '70's there has been a lot of interest in land trusts. There exist a number of organizations that have land trust in their name but actually very few are land trusts. Much more common is the creation of a Lesbian land non-profit (such as Oregon Women's Land Trust) that owns the land as a non-profit corporation.

Since there is so much confusion about land trusts, let me explain that they are created primarily for preservation of land, not community. So the passing of title to a land trust ties the residents to certain development restrictions FOREVER. Some Lesbian communities have successfully leased land from an existing land preservation trust and agreed to the covenants. Hawk Hill in Missouri is an example. The land was already owned, then donated to a land trust when these Lesbians formed an agreement to lease from the land trust. Since many Lesbian communities are not heavily involved in development, leasing from a land trust may be an option.

But if your Lesbian community is buying the land, you may agree with the sentiments of a land trust, you may even say land trust in your name, but you'd be better off forming a non-profit corporation. This is done on the level of state or provincial government. In the US you would contact the Secretary of State's office for the state in which the land lies and in Canada you would register with the Provincial Government Charitable and Non-Profit Organization Section. You will need a name, articles of incorporation that state the purposes of your organization and by-laws that lay out how you will conduct business between yourselves. Samples are widely available. This and

a usually nominal fee makes you a non-profit organization. The non-profit corporation owns the land, the structures and utilities. None of you will ever privately benefit from the sale of the land. The land can change residents and remain secured for the purposes of the community. The only caution is to check with your local government: in some states corporations cannot own farm land.

The corporation pays all land expenses and property taxes. Residents usually pay "rent" to the corporation that enables the corporation to meet land payments and taxes. When a resident leaves, she takes with her only her personal belongings. If she dies, it does not legally change the land ownership. When a new resident comes, she "owes" no back payments. This option works for lots of flexibility on community land.

The corporation is legally a person. (This makes sense in Patriarchy.) As a person it can have a bank or credit union account, incur debts and liabilities, have its own federal number. It cannot have a lover. But land owned by a corporation protects individual Lesbians from the debts and liabilities of the corporation.

Corporations pay taxes. If you do not believe your non-profit should pay income tax, then in the US, you have to convince the federal government by filing for tax-exemption. There are many categories. You may be a neighborhood association in structure and file to be tax-exempt as a 501(c)(4) or a horticultural association 501(c)(5). These categories of non-profit corporations do not pay income tax, but donations to them are not tax deductible. If you believe the purposes of your organization are charitable, as opposed to self-interest, then you can file for tax-exemption as a 501(c)(3) and if you receive it, donations to your organization are also tax-deductible. In Canada, you apply for charitable status with the provincial government and meet the criteria if the charity spends all its resources on charitable activities carried on by the charity itself. Donations are tax-deductible.

The criteria for charity are harder to meet as you in effect are demonstrating to the government that you are performing a service in exchange for the loss of revenue to the government that

were you not doing it, the government would have to do it. Since creating Lesbian community is not high on their list of priorities, you will have to be charitable as an educational, religious or service organization. Many Lesbian land communities do meet the criteria and should lay claim to the benefits. If you do decide to file for tax-exemption, the applications are available from the IRS in the US and Revenue Canada in Canada. There are a number of books that will help you with the process. If you are not a charitable group and you do not anticipate a "profit" as a corporation, you may not need this process. If your corporation has paid employees, you will have to file and prepay employment taxes on the state and federal level.

Some states have a separate category for cooperatives or unincorporated communities which falls somewhere between individual and corporate ownership. These are generally more simple--and less durable--than a non-profit corporation and not under some of the guidelines for non-profits. Regulations vary widely by location. This process requires a knowledgeable legal professional.

In general, the process of deciding what legal structure most benefits your community needs and writing by-laws and purpose statements is one which clarifies for the community its internal relationships. It is something we do for ourselves, both to be clear among us and to define the intentions we have for Lesbian land.

Nett is administrator for Lesbian Natural Resources, a non-profit organization which provides advocacy, technical assistance, skill sharing and grants to Lesbians on land. For more information: Lesbian Natural Resources, POBox 8742, Minneapolis MN 55408-0742

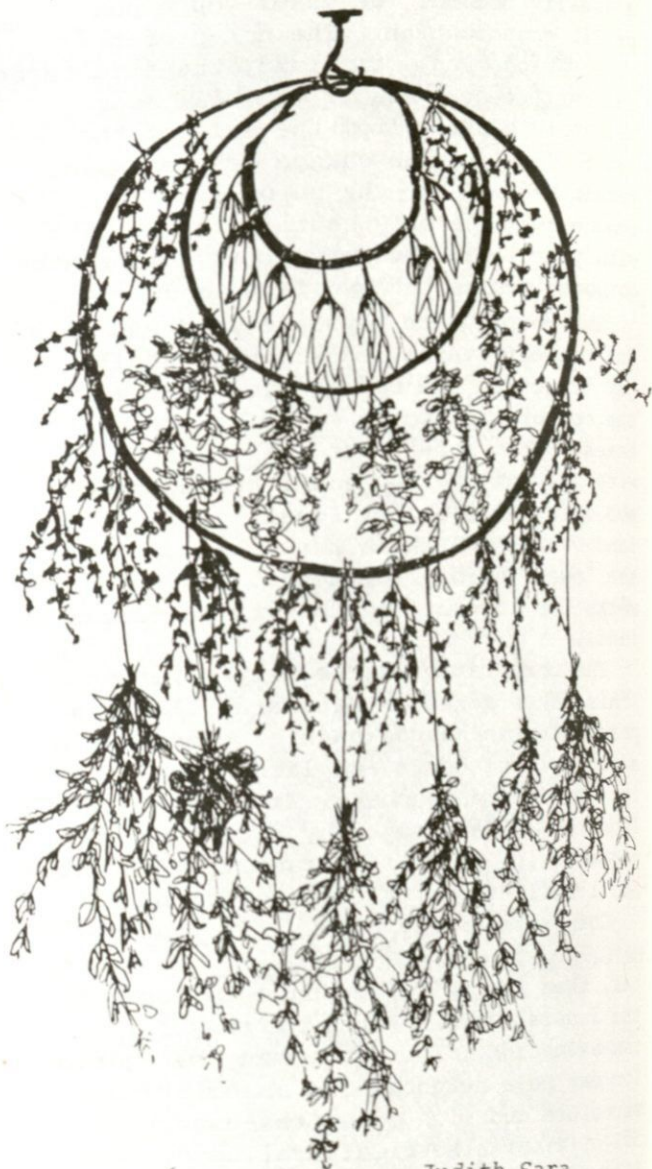


LEZ TRY THIS

DRYING HERBS

As I understand it, herbs are best when harvested just before flowering, on a dry sunny day around 10-11 am. Then they may be hung upside down in bunches in a dry airy place that doesn't get direct sunlight. Where I live, such shady well ventilated spaces are limited, so I use this hoop arrangement to dry a lot of herbs in a small space. I hang it in front of a screened window. You can make the hoops out of whatever you have handy. The smallest hoop, I made from a sassafras sapling that a porcupine had stripped of leaves. (It was growing too near the former barn where I live anyway, but I had been reluctant to move it.) The middle hoop is the metal ring from a lampshade that I stripped of fabric. (It was torn and ripped and unusable as a lampshade.) The largest hoop I found at the dump. I wasn't sure at the time what I would use it for, but I knew it would come in handy, and it did. I save those wire and paper twisties that come from the grocery store, and use them to tie the herbs in bunches and fasten them to the hoops. The lowest bunches, I hang on a string. The hoops are not attached to each other, so when the herbs from one hoop are dry, it can be easily removed, the dry herbs unloaded and reloaded with fresh herbs, and then replaced on the hook.

Judith Sara
Montague, Massachusetts



Judith Sara
Sage, mint and oregano are drying on hoops.

REFLECTORS

I use strips of aluminum foil to form letters, numbers or decorations which will reflect headlights or flashlights. Examples: house numbers stapled to a wooden board at the turn off to my road; an arrow pointing to the path to the outhouse mounted on a tree; a crescent moon stapled above the outhouse door.

WARM ROCKS

I collect smooth rocks in a variety of sizes--flat and round. I heat them on top of the woodstove and wrap them in a cloth bag or towel to warm my toes in

bed, or my hands in my jacket pockets. Or place them in my boots for 5 minutes to warm them before wearing them out in the cold.

INSOLES

Try cutting cardboard in the shape of your insoles, covering one side with aluminum foil. Place in your boots with foil side down, cardboard side up, so the warmth of your feet will be reflected back to them.

Jean Mountaingrove
Sunny Valley, Oregon

SPRING EQUINOX

By Tamarack
The Web
Foreston, Minnesota

Now very early morning is light
And the birds begin to return,
Wake me with songs
That I haven't heard in so long
That it seems I've never heard before.
The tamaracks come to life again,
Purple cones and bright green promise
That spring is on the way.
I sit on the porch
In the first hot days,
Making new lists of what I plan to do,
Watching the snow
Turn to rivers and creeks,
The pond melting,
Sounds of rushing water everywhere
The earth reappearing more and more each day
Like a huge furry bear
Taking a deep breath
Breathing, a long, slow sigh of contentment.
The first bits of green push
Through the earth
Opening her, allowing her to breathe.
Mice and rabbits explore
And take news to sleepy groundhogs,
Waiting to hear
That six weeks has passed
Since that bright frozen day
When they predicted the wait
For Spring.
Robins are suddenly here,
Scratching among the leaves
In the ring of heat
Around the giant oak
And the geese have come home.

I call out to welcome them
As they call spring greetings
And sightings of corn, and water,
And messages to each other
Of how far north is safe to go, today,
Riding the pulse of the warm weather,
Flying over as a promise
That the warmth is here to stay.
I walk over the crusty snow
Hot sun on my hands and face
Sinking in past my knees, waking my body,
Exploring the projects I've rested from
Since Autumn,
Emerging from my hibernation
As the great earth bear
Stretches
And as she heaves and sighs
Shaking off the months of frozen sleep
I laugh and celebrate in amazement
That each year I am given this:
To be part of this Great Melt,
To be part of this fresh, new beginning,
To be part of this new moon
As the evening comes, the earth holding
the heat,
As the light fades into soft pinks, and
turquoise and lavender,
To indigo
With northern lights dancing across the sky
Goodbye to winter
And I sleep, and dream
Of all that I can do
Now possible
That spring is here.



*Kitt Redwing
Grand Rapids, Michigan*

ON THE LAND

KIMBILIO

BIG PRAIRIE, OHIO

Kimbilio Farm in Holmes County, Ohio is offering 4-8 week residencies in 1995 for womyn interested in developing their own personal artistic or other interests and working to develop womyn's community. Kimbilio is a bed and breakfast and retreat/workshop center for womyn on 52 acres.

There are organic vegetable gardens, herb garden and many perennial flower gardens.

The experience would include:

- *One-two month residency during May to Sept.
- *Housing and most meals would be provided
- *"Country-living" skill building
- *Womyn's community-building skills
- *Integration into intergenerational family--communication a priority!
- *Designated time and space to work on your own projects
- *Designated time, 4-5 hours a day, 5 days a week, for work at Kimbilio

We would like womyn who are interested to contact Chris or Sarah at Kimbilio, 6047 TR 501, Big Prairie, OH 44611. Telephone: 216-378-2481. You will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire and describe your plans. Slides or examples of your work would be appropriate. A personal or telephone interview will be required. You will need to provide for your own personal expenses.

LUNA CIRCLE FARM

S.GROVE, WISCONSIN

It's our first winter storm and I'm happy to be inside drinking hot tea. We had a wonderful growing season this year. For the most part, the weather was great so the vegetables produced a large harvest. For this abundance, I am truly grateful.

The big news from this farm is that on November 1st we purchased a piece of land. For the last four years we have rented the house and the land on which we raise our crops. While this farm has been very good for us, we are looking forward to settling on a place we can

really call home. Our new land is beautiful. It's 35 acres of rolling ridge top land. About half of it is cropland and half is wooded. And, best of all, we will be the third lesbian household on our road.

We are very excited about this new land. At this time there are no buildings or well on the land. So we have our work cut out for us. We plan to begin building in the spring. We will stay on our rental farm for another growing season. This will give us a place to live while we build. It will also enable us to work up the soil and prepare the new land for farming in the '96 season.

So this winter will be filled with our usual dreaming over seed catalogs. But we are also planning buildings, researching non-toxic building styles and reading about solar and wind energy. And, by this time next year, I will be watching the snow fall over our own land.

May the winter find you all with your wood piles stacked high and your root cellars full.

Tricia

WOMAN'S WORLD

MADISONVILLE, LOUISIANA

All is well at Woman's World. Two gals coming for Nov and Dec to park their motor home in the yard and be temporary residents. A gal from Tennessee is negotiating a 3 month stay with us and two additional women want to come for one to two months in Dec, Feb and March. Barbara is moving back from Connecticut and will be with us for about 3 weeks til she gets a place in New Orleans and settles into a job there for 3 to 6 months. She has put her Connecticut place on the market and plans to stay here indefinitely. Connie is planning on walking the land in Oct and possibly selecting her 5 acres for building sometime after she retires from teaching in 2 years. Three women from town have expressed strong interest in doing the same thing but not waiting til retirement to build so that would really get the development off the ground if it comes to pass.

I keep plodding along with the house. Got the sheetrock finished and the walls

painted on the porch addition (about 900 sq.ft.) and am trying to trim out the window frames when time permits. The workshop is still waiting to be completed and while waiting, a woman from Atlanta came to visit and brought us a scroll saw and a router for the shop. It is well equipped now and just needs the ceiling, walls, door, etc. to become a shop. Once it is finished and sealed so the mud daubers can't get to the tools, I will be able to move all the tools out of the third bedroom of the house and reclaim that space for visitors. Boy will that be nice! Things are moving here just too slowly to suit me so I get discouraged at times. Then a bunch of great women come along and we get all kinds of projects completed (or started) and I feel great again about the dream! I'm sure you know what I mean.

We have decided to stop having work-exchange visitors for the carpentry school unless they can come for at least one month at a time. It seems that shorter terms just don't work out well for either party. The students need more time to learn and be able to practice and acquire skill and the place needs to benefit from some work after the student becomes fairly competent. The month or two month contract seems to work out the best for all concerned.

I am giving consideration to having the *Women on the Land; A Tenting Affair*, we did in 1993, again in May of 1995. This time the thought is to have the women who sell the Yurt come and build one here at Woman's World with the attendees helping and learning how to do it. We might build the platform ahead of time in order to have an off the ground area on which to build. That way we could build the Yurt during the 4 day weekend and have lots of community building workshops as we build and learn. I would like to hear from women who might be interested in doing this over the Memorial Day weekend in May of '95. If there is enough interest expressed I will set it up for the women to come and stay in their tents on the land as we did before.

Right now as I am between visitors all the work is my responsibility so I am just swamped. The grass is still growing, the Satsuma grafts are done and need watching, the indoor plants need attention, the

love bugs have invaded by the thousands and have filled the house through every pinhead opening. They do no harm so we just put up with them for a few weeks and then they leave, but sweeping is a daily routine.

Soon about 45 locals will come for a gathering here, hopefully in the yard, weather permitting, and the food will be outstanding. The cooking in this part of the country is cajun, creole, and classic! This local group has been meeting for food and social exchanges for 6 years now and the numbers keep growing each year with more and more rural dykes coming out to socialize.

The annual Thanksgiving Celebration of Lesbians will begin on November 23 with the arrival of four out-of-state women who will stay for the 4 day event. So far it looks like our visitors will come from Texas, New York, Maryland, and Mississippi, with the residents from California, Tennessee, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. On the 24th we will cook and eat and give thanks for all of us and our earth and spirits with the local women who come. This will be the 8th celebration at Woman's World attended by women only with no patriarchal traditions to endure.

from the "Church" of the Feminist Spirit,
Shewolf

ARADIA

COROMANDEL, NEW ZEALAND

Aradia is 485 acres of open womyn's land in New Zealand. We drink out of the stream whose watershed is all within Aradian land, and Aradia also protects the top part of two other watersheds. The land that is Aradia was logged once upon a time, except for the Tawa grandmother trees whose lumber wasn't marketable, thank goodness. Now the manuke, a pioneer shrub, has created a cozy nursery for the native forest trees, the tallest of which are now twenty feet. It is exciting to see the rebirth of a forest. The land is only a twenty minute walk from the sea, and a lovely beach we call Lesbian Beach. The land has

been in women's hands for five years now, growing and flourishing with ever expanding housing, gardens, visitors, and community.

At the beginning of the venture, two women undertook a mortgage for the land with faith that the Goddess would send eleven other shareholders to help pay off that loan. We are now seven, and expect the right women to come at the right time. We need to find \$7000 (U.S. currency). We could possibly refinance with the farmer from whom we rescued this land, but we don't feel good about the ethics of giving him any more money than we have to. The same goes for the banking system that supports so many oppressive and destructive patriarchal practices.

So, we want to offer women the chance to make an ethical investment that will help to nurture women and this special 485 acres of our wondrous home planet. Here's what we propose:

- *You could be interested in becoming a shareholder.
- *You could lend us \$500 or more for a 3-5 year period at 5% interest per annum.
- *You could lend us \$500 or more for a 3-5 year period at no interest per annum.
- *You could gift the community a one off donation.
- *You might want to make regular direct credits by way of a gift to help us keep our vision alive and growing.

If you are interested in becoming a shareholder, you can write to us and ask for more details. If you would like to know more about an interest bearing loan, please write to us. We will post you back a loan contract detailing the interest payable, interest payment options, principle repayment options, length of loan, and answer any other questions you have. If you wish to lend us money with no interest payable we would also enter into a contract with you regarding payment. Just let us know if that is an option you are interested in. A donation can be mailed to us at the address below.

If you have any other ideas of how we can raise this money and keep money in women's hands rather than giving it to the boys, we'd love to hear them. Please share this information with your friends.

Blessed Be,

The Aradians

Aradia, c/o Post Office, Coromandel, NZ

LAND LESY

Land LESY (Lesbian Economic System) is a regular MAIZE listing for Dykes on the land or reading MAIZE. LESY includes anything we want to give, offer or pass along to each other, as well as specific things that we need. Everything is Dyke to Dyke, for our personal use (not to sell or give to someone else.) (See article in Maize #41)

LESY is not money-based: no buy/sell, no barter/exchange. No Dyke needs to offer something in order to accept something and visa versa. LESY works when we give what we have to offer (no sacrifice) and when we accept as much as we need or want. We each find our own balance in giving and receiving.

With each response to an offering or request, the Lesbians decide between themselves the details of the transfer--how, when, how many or how long, who pays for gas or shipping or materials, etc. We will create our Land LESY as we use it. Yes, use it, that's what it's for!

FULL CIRCLE FARM, 604 Silk Hope Rd,
Siler City NC 27344

Offers: *Seeds (many kinds left from organic farming operation)

*Information/instruction in organic gardening/farming/greenhouse, carpentry/renovation

Requests: *Work: carpentry, gardening, orchard, general work on the land (experience not necessary)

TERRA, Chateau Gres, 21440 Poiseul La Grange,
St. Seine L'Abbaye, France

Offers: *A true fairy tale on cassette, "The Curious Princess" by Viviane and Doris.

*Doris: I've got lots of flower seeds to offer, various kinds. I'll make a surprise flower seed package for every woman writing. (Mainly because I am not very organized yet and it would take me hours now to take out all the seeds and write down their names here, but I'll have great fun finding, selecting and sending them to every woman interested.)

THE WEB, POBox 8742, Minneapolis MN 55408

Offers: *Comfrey salve
*seeds

OUTLAND, POBox 130, Serafina, NM 87569

Offers: *Any size or style of Red River Menstrual Pads, postage paid (for your personal use)

*Any back issues of MAIZE that we still have copies of, postage paid

*information on building: adobe, round, non-toxic

*seeds: corn(Inca, multicolor, sweet), green beans(pole), scarlet runner beans, kale, rutabaga, spinach, dill, basil, feverfew, calendula, cosmos, parsley, marigold(large and small), New Mexico chili(mild), sunchokes, horseradish root (to plant or to eat)

*seeds for desert or dry farming: dill, marigold, New Mexico Sunflower, desert four o'clock, bush morning glory (these last 3 are wild here)

*Lee: I am working on compiling a set of Lesbian "values" or "ethics" questions and topics for discussion--about 150 cards I call "Important Pursuits". I will send them to any interested dyke or dyke group for your use. I also seek input to expand the questions and topics. For Lesbian use only.

Requests: *Organic seeds (not hybrid) anyone have golden bantam corn?

*Old cotton fabrics, sheets, shirts for making quilts and rag rugs. Write and tell us what you have. We'll pay postage.

*Organic lemons(we'll pay postage)

MARNEE & DIANN, SBAMUH, 13479 Howard Rd, Millfield OH 45761

Offer: *New 50/50 tee shirts left from our screen printing business. They are recycled prints--a heavily inked womyn's silhouette printed ovetop of the words "disco dyke" which sometimes peeps through after washing. (DD wasn't a great seller.) Sizes available: 1 XL, 2 L, 6 S, 2 petite all mixed colors. Free. Please send \$1 for third class postage or \$3 for priority mail along with your address and size request.

Request: *Organic onions, will pay shipping and handling.

*Used lesbian fiction & nonfiction, feminist, healthcare, gardening, building or children's books, especially multicultural resources. We'll circulate them or give them a new home. Sorry, can't pay shipping unless you send a list first and I can see what we might use and what we'd just give away.

ZANA, HCR #2, Box 850-398, Tucson AZ 85735

Offers: *Book of my poetry and art, herb woman (Send 6x9" self-addressed envelope with \$1.05 postage.)

Requests:

*Home-canned organic grape leaves

LIERRE KEITH, 103 Country Club Rd, Greenfield MA 01301 413-772-6270

Offers: *Copies of my novel, *Conditions of War* (postage \$1)

*Sewing (you need to supply materials) I can make replicas of clothes you have and love, I can patch and repair worn-out favorites, I can make clothes to order, especially clothes for fat dykes-- I've got lots of large-size patterns, and quilts--I love making quilts.

DORIAN GREGORY, 103 Country Club Rd, Greenfield MA 01301 413-772-6270

Offers: *Grantwriting and fundraising advice

*Handpainted Goddess clocks

NANCY EVECHILD, 3608 14th Ave. So, Minneapolis MN 55407 612-729-5984

Offers: *A well-respected professional psychic with a practice in Minneapolis since 1988, I offer insightful, useful, in-depth readings by mail on tape for the cost of the tape and postage. Call or write for brochure. Please indicate LESY.

SUSAN D.SMITH, RD 3, Box 880, Port Matilda PA 16870

Offers: *Organically grown catnip, packaged in recycled plastic from bags my dialysis supplies come in. (small bags) *Plastic tubing from my dialysis supplies. this tubing would have had only sterile solution in it, no body fluids.

HEATHER, POBox 809. Lumsden, Sask, Canada SOG 3C0

Offers: *Handbound soft-covered journals, postage paid

*Long distance reiki (healing energy; let me know if you want this focussed on a specific part of your body or generally physically or emotionally; a description/drawing/picture of your physical self will help me to focus on you while I send energy but is not necessary.)

Requests: *Wild wimmin stories/poems

*Wimmin's/lesbian's songs/chants on tape or paper with music

*Handmade rattle

*Handmade paper for books

NANCY ESTES, RR2, Box 710,
Broken Bow, OK 74728

Offers: *A pair of shoes, white with white shoe laces, no velcro, all leather, athletic style, Voit brand name. Stated size is 7, but they are a mighty large 7. From toe tip to heel tip on bottom of sole is 10½ inches. Widest point is 4 inches across. They are slightly worn by me, but are too big. They are not super bouncy like Reebok, LAGear, etc. They are only slightly bouncy. (Postage paid to lower 48 states.)

*A small amount of seeds of cypress vine and puke weed (lobelia).

Requests: *A small amount, perhaps 30 seeds of a very hot or hot green pepper such as Jalapeno or hotter. I will pay postage.

KARINA, POBox 3074, Charlottesville, VA 22903 or Rt.12, Box 31, Charlottesville VA 22901

Offers: *Radio air time, live or on tape/CD on WTJU-FM Charlottesville. Send your songs, stories, poems, jokes...

*Very informal B&B, place for people to stay en route, can sleep in 1 room of 3 room cabin.

Requests: *Correspondence with womyn living in community. I am 41 years old, love country life and now seek a community to share with. I am preparing to change my way of life from solo cabin dweller and want to learn from womyn who are happy with their communities/land trusts. My focus is on the way of sanely living in community--ensuring the integrity of self, relationships, spiritual growth, economic stability, mediation and processing differences...Personal stories of what went wrong/right are welcome! Thanks and many blessings of health and love everyone!

*Writer to co-write Lesbian plays/screen plays, and discussions with directors.



Marnee Kennedy

JENNIFER WESTON, Gathering Root Farm,
Rt.5, Box 934, Ava MO 65608
417-633-3610

Offers: *Instruction in Basketry, Drawing, and Horsemanship

*Emotional support for dyke incest survivors,

*some of my own vegetarian recipes (featuring garden produce, etc.)

*organically grown garlic

*basket "seconds"

Requests: *Carpentry and Plumbing assistance

*tree pruning and trimming

*eucalyptus pods and palm tree flower stalks (to use in my baskets)

JUANA MARIA GONZALEZ PAZ, Twin Oaks,
Rt.4 Box 169, Louisa VA 23093
703-894-5126

Offers: *About 50 copies left of my book *The La Luz Journal*, true story of a lesbian of color land group in California circa 1978 that I want to go to people seriously interested in and committed to lesbian land

*about 8 copies of a 1983 book about Twin Oaks the straight commune I live at, that explains how it works

*Lesbian Community Development: Planning, Education and Retreat Programs. I can work with groups to help design an educational self-help or study group geared to your interests.

*I accumulate assorted reading material on womyn, ecology, community and education that I'd like to pass on.

Requests: *help in planning more formal community-based education programs, even just discussing ideas

*transportation to lesbian lands or retreat spaces. I don't drive but I can pay for gas.

*a retreat, preferably on lesbian land halfto a day's drive (I'm off hwy 64 halfway between Charlottesville and Richmond, VA, 2½ hours from DC) with people interested in my lesbian community development workshop ideas. I'd like to talk one-on-one without responsibility for a formal program, not seeking fun or entertainment, just peace and quiet (I live in a commune.) I can help with chores and provide some food but I can't pay money.

LETTERS

Dear Womyn,

We have noted that some womyn may feel the need to expose, share or even compare information concerning womyn's lands with communities created by men in which womyn participate or compare what womyn are doing with theories on communities dreamed up by men. (We are referring to NiAodagain's writing on the Development of an Alternative Community: Womanshare, which was presented to the Northwest Oral History Association's Gay and Lesbian Caucus (MAIZE #41) and to Juana Paz's letter about the info on womyn's lands that she wrote for "Communities", a magazine for men and womyn. (MAIZE #42)).

As far as men (gay, nice, or other) are concerned, we feel that they will have to figure out what they want to live by themselves. Given the universal hatred for womyn expressed by the majority of men, and the cowardly stance of "nice" men who don't dare deal with men and their problem with womyn, we of Terra have decided once and for all to take care of ourselves and to create (as far as it is possible) an environment in which we as womyn can grow to express love for ourselves, each other, and discover our own ways of doing things without interference. We believe that our lives and our discoveries cannot in any way be compared or shared with any group of men. Womyn and men are simply not in the same position on this planet.

Whatever stance other womyn decide to take on this issue, we ask womyn to keep all information, photos, ideas, memories etc. concerning *TERRA* among womyn only.

The trees are bare, and the light of the Winter Moon once again reaches into spaces which are hidden in Summer. The Winter festivities among us are about to begin: pies, cookies, steaming spiced teas, cinnamon and cloves, candle lights, evening readings, songs...love to us all.

Viviane & Doris

Terra, Chateau Gres, Poiseul LaGrange
21440, France

Dear MAIZE,

Today is my 65th birthday and I gave myself the wonderful present of reading your summer 9994 issue from cover to cover, and what a delight it was! Every article, from "Life in the Outer Hebrides" to "On Dirt and Clutter", transported me--as an armchair country dyke--to my dream of being a real one, which never really happened for me, although I did spend several months in a no-longer-extant women's community in Craryville, New York, called "Women's Ways." I was also a member of a kibbutz in Israel for two years--1954-56. (That was anything but a women's community, but it was living on the land.)

As editor of the *Feminists for Animal Rights Newsletter*, I took the liberty of entering women's land addresses listed under "Country Connections" into our complimentary mailing list for the purpose of sending all of you our semiannual newsletter. I hope you will enjoy it and that some of you might even see fit to send us an article or art, a poem, an essay, or even just write and let us know how you like it.

I want to let you know about a place called Farm Sanctuary, which rescues sick and abused farm animals and lovingly nurses them back to health and gives them a great home. Recently, a crate of baby turkeys fell off a truck and FS was notified. Many of the birds were crushed to death and the survivors were left lying helplessly along the highway. Farm Sanctuary rescued 126 of them, but only have room for 60. (They house cows, sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese in what is a paradise for these formerly abused animals.) Anyway, they are looking for loving homes for these turkeys, who make wonderful, affectionate companions. If any of you wish to adopt one or two of these birds or other animals and give them good dyke homes on your land, contact me, or Farm Sanctuary directly: Farm Sanctuary, PO Box 150, Watkins Glen NY 14891. 607-583-2225. They have also just started up their second sanctuary in California.

It is gratifying to know that so much land is in the care of good dyke hands and hearts. I wish you all well.

In Sisterhood,

Batya Bauman

Feminists for Animal Rights, POBox 694,
Cathedral Station, NY NY 10025 212-866-6422

Readers:

There has been an increase in gay harassment in Northern California, an area previously known as gay friendly. Incidents range from verbal harassment to break-ins and armed robbery. We cannot afford to sit back and let this kind of male violence continue unchecked.

On September 28, 1994, at 3:00am, two unarmed lesbians were brutally attacked and robbed at their home near Laytonville in Northern California by three armed, masked, men. These women are barely able to eke out a subsistence living on the land they share with two other women in an isolated rural area. Police protection out there is impossible, and electricity and phone lines do not reach them.

We have set up a fund to supply them with some immediate needs such as a cellular phone and/or CB radio with solar charging systems, a working vehicle, a locking gate and other minimal measures to help ensure their safety. We are organizing with other local people to set up support networks so that someone is always available for help in emergency situations. We need to set up other CBs and phones to establish a communication network among the lesbians, gays and friends in the neighborhood.

Donations are desperately needed; even small contributions are welcome. Please make your check out to the Mendocino County Observer, POBox 490, Laytonville, CA 95454. Make sure you indicate on the check that it is for the Woodman Canyon Support Fund.

Dear MAIZE,

Thank you very much for "Building Our Lives" in the Spring issue. We both read it, gladly. We'd like to add a few of our good finds to your various sections in the Resource List. We are recovering from cancer and chronic fatigue and the following suggestions are from our list of successes--we won't waste your time with so-so products.

Books:

The Whole Way to Allergy Relief and Prevention, a doctor's complete guide to treatment and self-care. Jacqueline Krohn, MD, Frances A. Taylor, MA, Erla

Mae Larson, RN. Hartley and Marks, 1991. Available from NEEDS, 1-800-634-1380. (\$18) If you want to use just one book to learn how to treat yourself back to life from any immune disorder, you need this one. Not enough praise for this one, written by 3 survivors of Environmental Illness, who run a clinic in Los Alamos, NM. We were initially overwhelmed by this book, but *everything* in here is true and useful. We can not recommend it enough and we've gone so far as to give away copies.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, The Hidden Epidemic by Jesse A. Stoff, MD and Charles R. Pelligrino, PHD. If you want scientific information that is fairly easy to understand, on viral diseases, chapters 1-5 are excellent. The rest of the book has some good ideas on setting up a heal-yourself-from CFS program, but the products advertised are not good. We ordered them, had a toxic reaction and couldn't get a refund til we got the FDA on their back. But, the scientific information helped to understand how we got sick which helped us figure out how to get well. (\$11)

Healthy Healing, An Alternative Healing Reference, by Linda G. Rector-Page. Healthy Healing Publications, 2715 Pater St. #206, Soquel CA 95073, \$27. 1992 The best book we found to guide us through the complex world of vitamins, minerals, enzymes, amino acids, herbs and you name it. Supplements. This information is real, everything we've tried works well. And it's fun to use. You can really feel a woman's intelligence at work here; the book has a good feel.

Catalogs:

Seventh Generation 1-800-456-1177 The cheapest and highest quality recycled, unbleached toilet paper and facial tissues and panty liners. Friendly, reliable, New Age, but slow to deliver
Real Goods 1-800-762-7325 Sometimes expensive, sometimes cheap. Lots of good items for energy conservation, recycled products, the whole green thing.

We have more information on how to purify your indoor environment if you're a land dyke stuck in the city/suburbs. Just write to us at POBox 591, Sebastopol CA 95473

In wellness and joyfulness,
Willa & Erda



Lesbian Natural Resources

PO Box 8742 · Minneapolis MN 55408 -0742

Announces a fourth cycle of grants

Lesbian Natural Resources is a fund established in 1991 to support Lesbian community land projects. Our purpose is to assist Lesbians in obtaining and maintaining community land, in developing rural skills and self-sufficiency, and in community development for Lesbians of many different abilities, ages, races, classes and economic backgrounds. Our intention is to support the growth of Lesbian communities who are actively creating Lesbian culture, preserving land based life skills and rural ecosystems, and discovering non-oppressive ways to live and work together.

Grants will be made for purchase of land, development, and housing under the following guidelines:

- ▼ The land is owned by an incorporated non-profit for Lesbians/Wimmin.
- ▼ The land is the home or intended home of a community of Lesbians/Wimmin whose intent is to create autonomous nonpatriarchal Lesbian culture.
- ▼ The land encompasses a minimum of ten acres or adjoins other Lesbian land and is sufficiently private to invite Lesbian creativity and culture.
- ▼ The resident community has secured, or developed a plan to secure, finances for the remaining land costs.

Grants will also be made to make housing spaces accessible, develop economic self-sufficiency on the land, hold community events and workshops, under the following guidelines:

- ▼ The land is privately held Lesbian land or non-profit Lesbian/Wimmin community land
- ▼ The land is home to Lesbians/Wimmin
- ▼ The intent of the residents is to build Lesbian community

We want to give away amounts of money that will make a difference to lots of Lesbian communities. If your land community has a project you would like help with, write for grant guidelines and simple application forms.. This fund is made possible by contributions from the Lesbian community.

Applications are due March 1. Decisions will be announced May 1.

Lesbian Natural Resources offers advocacy, skill bank, resource exchange, and a donor program and is developing a resource library, Lesbian Land archives, outreach programs and a full apprenticeship program for Lesbians wanting to learn rural skills. If you are interested in any of these programs, please write:

***Lesbian Natural Resources
P.O. Box 8742, Minneapolis Minnesota 55408-0742***

COUNTRY CONNECTIONS

- AMAZON ACRES, HC 66, Box 64A, Witter AR 72776
visitors, primitive camping, 240 acres
- ARCO IRIS, HC 70, Box 17, Ponca AR 72670-9620
- ARF/New Mexico Women's Land Trust, POBox 707, Tesuque NM 87574
- BOLD MOON FARM, 5780 Plowfield Rd, McLeansville NC 27301
Camping only for dykes who write well in advance. Also concerts and other special events in the summer. Write to be on the mailing list.
- CABBAGE LANE, POBox 2145, Roseburg OR 97470
- CAMP SISTER SPIRIT, POBox 12, Ovett MS 39464
- COVENTREE, Chris of Coventree, Troy ME 04987
camping, visitors, apprentices, community members
- DOE FARM/Wisconsin Women's Land Cooperative, Rt2, Box 150, Norwalk WI 54648
camping, lodging, memberships, summer work
- FULL CIRCLE FARM, 604 Silk Hope Liberty Rd, Siler City NC 27344 919-742-5959
Visitors(camping and guest room), community members/farm partners, work exchange.
- FULL MOON ENTERPRISES/MOONSHADOW PO Box 416, Hopland CA 95449 (707)744-1648
camping
Moonshadow Ranch (707)744-1093
- HARMONY HILL FARM/Northern Minnesota Women's Land Trust, c/o Audrey Freesol, POBox 124, Cotton MN 55724
- HOWL/Huntington Open Women's Land, POBox 53, Huntington VT 05462 (802)434-DYKE
Open to all women and children
- INTOUCH, Rt.2, Box 1096, Kent's Store, VA 23084
camping and events center
- KIMBILIO, 6047 TR501, Big Prairie OH 44611 216-378-2481
Artist residencies
Bed and breakfast, retreat/workshop center
- LUNA CIRCLE FARM, Rt 1, Box 1200, Soldier's Grove WI 54655
visitors, apprentices
- NORTHERN MINNESOTA: Barbara Hodges, 1403 Savage Rd. Cook MN 55723 218-666-3114
Come share work and friendship in Northern Minnesota. Visitors welcome. Very primitive camping. Also welcome are kids that don't scream (alot) and dogs that don't bark(alot).
- OUTLAND, POBox 130, Serafina NM 87569
Remote Lesbian Community seeking residents committed to self-sufficient living based in Lesbian culture and spirit. We welcome a variety of Dykes including old Dykes, Dykes with disabilities, Dykes of color and Dykes without money. Write for info on becoming part of our intentional community.
- OWL FARM/Oregon Women's Land Trust, Box 1692, Roseburg OR 97470
open land
- OWL HOLLOW, c/o 25650 Vanderburg Lane, Arlee MT. 59821 (406)726-3662
- RAINBOW'S END, 886 Raven Lane, Roseburg, OR 97470 phone:673-7649
We welcome visitors.
- RAVEN'S HOLLOW, POBox 41, Cazenovia WI 53924 (608)767-3075 or (608)983-2715
Visitors welcome
Looking for residents/partners interested in self-sustaining womon-centered living.
- RIVERLAND, POBox 156, Beaver OR 97108
Lesbian art retreat, community members
Write for more info on either.
- ROOTWORKS, 2000 King Mountain Trail, Sunny Valley OR 97497
Women and girl children. No dogs.
Cabins and camping, \$5/day includes meals.
- SILVER CIRCLE SANCTUARY, Rt.5, Box 100, Holly Springs MS 38635 (601)564-2715 6-8pmCST. One hour from Memphis TN
Camping, visitors, apprentices
- SISTER HOMELANDS ON EARTH(SHE) Box 5285, Tucson AZ 85703
Saguaro Sisterland, 12101 W. Calle Madero, Tucson AZ 85743
- SKY RANCH, C4, Site 20, RR2, Burns Lake, British Columbia, VOJ 1E0 Canada (604)694-3738
Women's Land Trust, seeking members

SPINSTERHAVEN, POBox 718, Fayetteville,
AR 72702

SPINSTERVALE, c/o Sunshine Goldstream,
Box 429, Coombs, British Columbia,
VOR 1M0 Canada (604)248-8809

Any travelling woman is welcome to stop
by Spinstervale on Vancouver Island, BC.
We have a few small cabins (\$5/nite/
person) and camping is always available.
Work exchange, too, by arrangement.
Herbs, goats, gardening.

SPIRALAND/Spiral Wimmin's Land Trust
HC 72, Box 94-A, Monticello KY 42633
Visitors, work exchange

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

SWIFTWATERS, Rt.3, Dahlonega GA 30533
Riverfront campground or bed and breakfast

TERRA, Chateau Gres, Poiseul La Grange,
21440 St. Seine L'Abbaye, France

TURTLE ROCK, 1755 Highview Lane, Upper
Black Eddy PA 18972

Camping and guest room for women
travelling through. Companion animals
welcome outside only. We love company.

WE'MOON, 37010 SE Snuffin, Estacada OR
97023 phone:630-3628

Wimmin-only rural intentional community,
35 miles southeast of Portland, OR is
seeking new members who are very inter-
ested in living and participating in
the work and play of community life.
Beautiful land, 52 acres, large organic
garden. We use consensus decision-
making, and celebrate the cycles of the
Earth. We currently have two spaces
available. Drug and alcohol free.



Kiwani

Whaletown, British Columbia

WHITE ROCKS HOMELAND, POBox 231, Willcox
AZ 85644

Rugged high desert country. Very rough
road to get to land. No water or elect.
Campers are welcome and need to provide
all necessities.

WISEHEART FARMS, Box 237, Williamsport
OH 43164

Seeking community members

WOMAN'S WORLD, Shewolf, POBox 655,
Madisonville LA 70447

Work exchange for landwomen, builders,
and gardeners to improve rural living
and construction skills, about one hour
from New Orleans. Developing community
with land ownership as well as community
land ownership of women-only space.
Please try to write for invitation to
visit and for rural living experiences
at least two months in advance.

WOMEN'S ART COLONY FARM c/o Kate Millet,
295 Bowery, NYC, NY 10003
summer: writers and artists work exchange
spring & fall: landwomen and builders
work exchange

WOMLAND, POBox 55, Troy ME 04987

TIPS FOR VISITORS TO LESBIAN LAND

The visitor calls or writes in advance
and arrives somewhere near when she said
she would. (Include SASE if writing)

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 takes
her garbage with her.

She comes willing and ready 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 the 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.

\$3.50

NUMBER 43