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MAIZE

A LESBIAN COUNTRY MAGAZINE

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MAIZE IS BY AND FOR LESBIANS

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Letters to the editor may be published in full or in part, unless specified "not for publication".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

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

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zana
tucson, arizona

COMPOST

By Sunlight
Comptche, California

She wandered through the pasture gathering cow patties into her bucket. Already they were dry, crumbling into the summer ground. It had been months since the cows had been moved to greener pastures, their calves following, each behind her mother. She paused to admire the blue of the chicory, the lavender of pennyroyal in the ditch at the side of the road, then returned to her task.

When the bucket was full, she went back to the garden where tubs of garbage had accumulated for the giant compost pile. Opening the first, she recoiled at the smell, but spread it over the corn husks on the ground. Then a layer of weeds, chopped fine with the shovel. Then some cow patties, and on to the next tub of garbage.

It was laced with orange peels. Navels. That was December when Cheryl first came to the land--winter solstice. They had sat on the edge of the rumpled bed in the tentative patch of morning sun, peeling navels, feeding each other. She smelled the oranges again, felt the juice slide down her chin until Cheryl, laughing, licked it off.

Walnut shells. Those should have gone right into the stove. Two schools of thought--at least-- and that was hers. Put nut shells in the fire--they burn hot, but they never decompose. But there would be only ashes now, rather than these shells imprinted with the feeling of that February night. They had been lying on the rug in front of the stove, the door open to the flames, illuminating her lover's face, as they cracked walnuts on the bricks. The rain tapped on the skylight. Every drop beat like her heart, measuring the time until they would stretch out in each other's arms, the length of their bodies overlapping, hotter than fire.

She sighed and dumped another tub of stinking mush on top of more weeds. An avocado pit rolled out and lay at her feet, staring up. She thought of the March window sills--a forest of avocado seeds toothpicked into jars of water, waiting

to germinate into a cash crop. Part of the dream of a future together here on the land with their sisters.

Artichoke petals. May, spring, growing like their love. They had gone for a long walk in the woods where the iris were blooming purple and the columbine was red. Coming back hand in hand, they'd stopped in the garden and picked artichokes, served them for dinner with lemon butter and laughter.

Returning to the present, she dumped a tub that was littered with paper coffee filters, tea bags dangling stringed tags, banana peels with the label stuck on. Chiquita bananas--weren't they boycotting them? Or was that over? Anyway, they weren't organic. This was stuff the city women had brought and left behind along with their tin cans and styrofoam cups. Bits of plastic wrap and aluminum foil glistened through the disintegrating mass. Gunned labels from New Zealand apples. She shook her head--fruit shipped half-way around the world? Couldn't they wait a couple of months? Apples were already growing in the orchard. City women. How long would it take them to learn from the earth? For some reason, they peeled their potatoes, but they didn't bother to cut up their grapefruit rinds for the compost. That was when that dyke from Oakland came. And Cheryl left to go back with her.

She plunged her shovel into the thick grapefruit skins over and over, chopping them to fragments, driving them into the heap of decomposing matter. Then she crumpled to the ground, tears streaming down her face. Deep, silenced wails broke the surface and shuddered through her body. Eventually, they slowed to sobs, then stopped. She wiped her face on her sweatshirt sleeve and opened her eyes. Around her, tomatoes hung red and yellow on the vines, squash sprawled over their hills, and pole beans were climbing toward the sun. She followed them up. The sky was dappled with clouds, light clouds blowing around up there.

With a deep breath, she got up and stoked the compost pile with a shovel of manure. It was raw and smelly now, but already the rotten things were crumbling--the changes had begun. Soon everything would heat up to purify. The mess would be transformed into a rich medium to nourish new growth.

CHASING CHANGE

By Nett Hart
The Web
Foreston, Minnesota

On the drive to the city I keep noticing how many trees are dying--not one kind as when Dutch Elm Disease swept clear the boulevards and dotted the hillsides. This time it is all kinds of trees, scattered and in clumps.

I ask companions. No one has confirmed my observation. Do I look for dead trees? What's up? I get a shrug, never a collaboration. How many dead trees is more dead trees? How many is a cause?

Some have been undercut for roads and "development" along roads and being on the road myself I see them. And though I mourn the death of trees, my interest is largely about *why* they are dying and what it means.

I am fully aware of the biological degradation of earth because of pollutants and intentional biocides. I know there is a payment due for the dumping and pumping human society has done at an accelerated rate of late. And I suspect there are known hazards set loose we will never get the word on. What I want to know when I look at the trees is what do they mean.

If I lived within the oral tradition of a particular land over a long time I would know how long it takes for a young growth forest to become the canopy that keeps light from the grasses and becomes deep woods..."when your grandmother was a child, those trees..." I would know the cycle of wetlands that move, prairie fires, and the succession of tree varieties. But I do not and this creates a rather static view of our surroundings.

Why does this matter? There is not much you can do for a dying tree. But I keep feeling that if I understood where this fits in the cycles of change I could be a better ally. This year in the mid-west the flooding changed a lot of farmland and much more. The losses so many endured are so much greater than the dollar figures everyone so eagerly affixes to the property involved. When nature acts independently it is called destruction. When human society does it, it's



zana
tucson, arizona

*development. But even in this we have to admire a river that can defy the army corps of engineers and change course.

When trees died of Dutch Elm disease in the city they left a palpable barrenness because elms were the only trees strung on rows between concrete and pavement. There were no trees of other varieties and no young growth to stand this ground, no place for the dead to fall and decay and feed the soil. Their deaths were outside of the cycle, an aberrant tragedy, an aesthetic and economic deprivation.

I know this soil has been many things. There are layers of clay and silt among which are nestled water tumbled rock and ancient shells. As a child I chased after fossils, looking for a time I could not remember and a time of which no one around me had stories. These rivers have been somewhere else before. These woods, too. It is not with a sense of planetary doom that I need to know from these trees what is up but where is the cycle, where is the change, how can I align with it?

We live in a time of great changes. Maybe we always have. I'm chasing after these changes, trying to find the imprint of nature, some evidence that she initiates. While everyone is preoccupied with the impact of humans on earth I want to believe we have an effect (but so do beavers and bears. Our abilities are finite. We live on an earth with her own imagination and impulse. We live by her grace, by her whim.

WELCOMING CEREMONY

By Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home
Millfield, Ohio

The Welcoming Ceremony for New Community members unfolded in beautiful Crones Valley on July 31, 1993 as the near full moon rose in the cloudless sky. About 35 guests and non-resident members watched and participated in this three-part greeting to Marnee Kennedy and Diann Bowoman as they were accepted as full members of the Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home Land Trust community.

Following a swim in the delightfully cool, clean Echo Pond and delicious picnic supper women gathered around the campfire circle for the Herstory of Suh BAM'Uh, followed by an outrageous Celebrity Panel being quizzed on Lesbian Feminist Community and closing with The Welcome which included web-building and casting a spell of sisterhood over the campground. Singalongs delineated the three program parts.

We think MAIZE readers might enjoy and relate to the Suh BAM'Uh Herstory which was presented by SuhBAM'Uh residents, Mary and Jan, and newcomers, Marnee and Diann, and skillfully narrated by visiting friend Joyce Segreto from Youngstown, Ohio.

NARRATOR: Once upon a time, way back in 1970, there was a consciousness raising group named Elizabeth's Sisters, one of many CR groups in Dayton Women's Liberation. Let's listen to members Jan and Mary.

MARY: Shaker women didn't spend all their time cooking, cleaning and ironing. They had one big kitchen, one dining hall, one laundry for the entire community and they took turns working there.

JAN: Instead of just seeing each other once or twice a week at meetings we could work and talk and plot the overthrow of male domination every day.



Photographs by Sue Barker

MARY: It would be so much cheaper if we each didn't buy a washer and a dryer and a vacuum cleaner and on and on and on. We would use less of our time working for money and more time working for our liberation. Do you suppose we could all live together?

JAN: You mean like a retirement commune?

MARY: No, not like a rest home. I mean more like an UnRest Home--The Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home!

NARRATOR: In 1976 Jan is hired by United Campus Ministry to develop liberating programs for women at Ohio University and the community. Mary soon follows her to Athens.

MARY: Land in Athens County is so cheap and beautiful. Would you like to live out in the country on a farm?

JAN: I don't know--owning a lot of land sounds too bourgeois and selfish.

MARY: It's been 2 years and I haven't found a farm yet. I'm giving up. I'll look for a big house in town and find some housemates. Oh, look, in Sunday's paper. "A repossessed farm in Ames Township to be sold at a sealed bid auction in Pomeroy."

JAN: Let's check it out. How would we know how much to bid?

MARY: (in terror) Look at our place--it doesn't even have any doors. It's certainly going to be A Challenge!

JAN: But it has a creek!

NARRATOR: In Youngstown Diann is talking with another woman who also works in a non-traditional job.

DIANN: So you actually live in a women's commune? Is it true that in a feminist collective you don't believe in assigned sexual roles or living isolated as couples? Do you really share the work equally!! You share houses and cars and conserve natural resources? And talk to each other about making real changes in this messed up world! That's exciting!!

NARRATOR: Back in Athens County The Challenge turns out to be quite a challenge.

MARY: I'm not going to dig anymore. I can't even find the water line let alone the leak in the water line.

JAN: This is way over my head.

NARRATOR: Now we find Diann talking with a few friends at the Youngstown Women's Center.

DIANN: It seems like as soon as we get started talking it's time to leave and get dinner for the kids or put them to bed. Wouldn't it be a lot easier if we just lived together, shared childcare and cars and had more spending money. Let's do it!

NARRATOR: In Athens County the plot thickens.

MARY: This place is so big. We could have a conference in the barn. We could start a women's community out here.

JAN: Let's figure out a way to share this beautiful place.

MARY: We could have women living on the land and women activists could get some Rest and Recreation, if we had a campground, and we could have feminist conferences and workshops.

JAN: No workshops! That's what I'm always planning at work. Oh, oh, we're out of water again. Must be another leak in the water line.

NARRATOR: Their 6 page brochure is a hit. Mary and Jan need help, encouragement and counsel. They pull together The UnRest Circle: the late Joan Ruth, Sheila Drennan, Sheila Richards, Pat Hartman, Kathy Kleine, Joy Huntley, Ruth Dream-digger, Susan Srnec, and Nan Worthing. How many of the original UnRest Circle are here tonight. Wave your arm so we can find you. (applause)



Joy Huntley made an enormous contribution that has lived on. Joy tell us how it happened.

JOY HUNTLEY: We just kept saying all through the meetings, "The Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home, The Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home." We have to get a shorter name, this is exhausting. Let's

see, S-B-A-M-U-H, why, that's Suh BAM'Uh.

NARRATOR: So it's been Suh BAM'Uh ever since! In Youngstown the Todd House Collective of 4 women and 4 children came and went. Marnee and Diann moved in together and out into the country.

DIANN: Community living was a very exciting and confusing experience, but I'd like to do it again some day when I know more about myself and am more assertive.

MARNEE: Living in a community and sharing housing is not for me! But if a group of us got together we could sure buy a lot of land to get away from the men's world.

NARRATOR: The 35,000 trees are growing a foot a year. The pond is built, the water line seems to be holding, the roof is raised, a deck appears, Nancy Pierce paints the new addition, generously sharing its cost and moves in with Mary and Jan. Visitors keep appearing. Letters to SuhBAM'Uh keep flowing in.

MARY: "Dear Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home, What kind of houses or apartments do you have and how much is the rent?"

JAN: "Dear SuhBAM'Uh, I'm so glad you are developing an Old Dykes Home. I can't bear the thought of retiring in a straight community. I am 37, busy with my career now and don't have time to help out but it's good to know you'll be there for my future."

MARY: Women want a community that's established and a success. Who do they expect to do that? I'm tired of fixing up this old house. I'm getting a paying job.

JAN: It does seem that lots of women like the idea of Women's Land or writing to us about it but not actually doing the work or taking the risk.

NARRATOR: Marnee and Diann have put in lots of time and energy organizing a group of seven lesbian friends to buy land together. But they encounter problems: inheritance rights, sharing space and trusting each other. Marnee

and Diann send off a letter to SBAMUH. MARNEE: Our letter came! Hurry, let's open it!

DIANN: Oh, no! They aren't looking for landmates anymore. They're opening a feminist campground instead.

MARNEE: We'll just have to buy our own place then.

MARY: Stop the car--it's trash day and there's a kitchen sink on the sidewalk.

JAN: But we don't have a water line to the campground.

MARY: We will. Now we need to find a swing.

NARRATOR: The orchard bears fruit, Sheila Richards introduces Women's Outreach to Women from Columbus to the campground where they have been twice a year regulars for 8 years. SBAMUH has yearly workparties and Athens women pitch in. Wood gathering, uprighting the storm tossed outhouse, tree planting. How many women here tonight have helped in any of the work parties and projects held here at SBAMUH? Raise your hand and call out SBAMUH. Now name some of your activities if you will. (women respond)

JAN: I met some women from Columbiana County at Degrees of Freedom. They were asking a lot of questions about our place. I told them about all the gatherings at SBAMUH. We've really had quite a few:

1981 Wimmin's Outdoor Weekend--so successful we had another one in

1982

1983 Sisterhood Weekends, 3 of them

1984 Women's Peace Workshop

1984 STOP BURNOUT Rest and Renewal Weekend

1984 and 1985 Fall women's weekend and UnRest Circle meetings

1985 Ohio RC Women's workshop which they organized

1987 Athens Mini-Michigan Music Festival

1989 Aging and Agism weekend--the one that Hurrican Hugo drove from the campground to the house where we built a log fire

And many, many pot-lucks and Solstice Celebrations. A lot of feminism has developed here and many friendships strengthened.

DIANN: That woman, Jan, that we talked to at the music festival said they are still looking for community members at SBAMUH. Could we live with a minister? Let's find out more about their place



and meet Mary.

MARNEE: O.K. But what do you think is wrong with these women? They've been advertising for 10 years and no one has joined them?

DIANN: Who knows? No one's joined us either. Let's check it out. I can live with anything except ticks or scorpions.

NARRATOR: The four women meet at the National Women's Studies Conference in Akron in 1990. They discuss politics, feminism, personal preferences, community histories and racism, which was the big issue at that NWSA. Later Marnee and Diann camped for a week at SBAMUH. They agreed and they disagreed, but all four wanted to work toward community together.

JAN: I've started on the Land Trust Incorporation papers. They aren't so bad. It's the Internal Revenue Tax Exemption papers which I really dread.

MARY: I really like working on a new brochure with 4 heads instead of 2. They've got good ideas, a new perspective and Marnee is such a talented artist. Even their friends are helping. If Carolyn King will design it for us it's going to look nifty.

NARRATOR: The 4 women visit, at both homes, and talk and work together. Jan and Mary introduce them at some Athens feminist gatherings. Diann sinks roots into her new community even before she has moved in by calling a meeting of Athens lesbians and women to determine

if there is any interest in establishing a women's center and bookstore. Several women attend and interest is high. Marnee and Diann begin construction on the cabin Marnee has designed.

A board of Directors is recruited for the new Land Trust. Let's meet them tonight: Helene Schwab, Marty Zinn, Nan Worthing and Nancy Pierce. Stand up and let's give them a hand.

Things are moving fast now--all Bammers are having some last minute doubts.

MARNEE: The land is so hilly, nothing's flat. Our cabin's not ready!

DIANN: I still don't want to live with ticks. And two dogs; it feels like a kennel!

MARY: When are they going to get their house sold? Oh, my, they've sold their house!

JAN: Here they come. In two moving vans. My Goddess--where will we put all this stuff.

MARY: At last, we're going to be a real wimmin's community. Let's have a celebration.

NARRATOR: And this brings us to where we are tonight--living herstory--a welcoming celebration. Giving up your home and moving to SBAMUH is not unlike going west in a covered wagon. It gives new meaning to the word pioneer. All four women are pioneers. Let's have a rousing song, and give these brave women a big hurrah!



Michele Galich

1948-1993

Michele Galich, of Brown's Summit, North Carolina, died July 3 after a struggle with ovarian cancer. She was 44. Her friends will remember her for her healing and teaching skills, her massages, her pasta salads at potlucks, and her warm, bear-like embraces. A Memorial Celebration was held for her at Bold Moon Farm where dozens of her friends spoke of her loving compassion and gentleness. A deeply spiritual woman, Michele would not want us to mourn her death but to celebrate her passing to her next spiritual level. Blessed be.

Sina Anahita
McLeansville, North Carolina

ON THE LAND

SBAMUH

MILLFIELD, OHIO

The state of Ohio approved SBAMUH as a non-profit, incorporated Women's Land Trust on December 16, 1992. We want to thank many established intentional communities for their help with our Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, especially Spiral Wimmin's Land and the New Mexico Women's Land Trust from which we borrowed mightily. We found that our working together on the By-Laws speeded up the "weaving of community fabric" process including identification of some of our differences and diversity. We have a great Board of Directors, women who have put in time and energy guiding, questioning, clarifying our goals and practices. Our application to the IRS for tax exemption has also been submitted by Jan, our government forms specialist, and we are expecting its approval later this year.

Support the continuing growth of women's land by becoming a non-resident member of SBAMUH, sharing our friendship, goals and land. Write for info: SBAMUH, 13423 Howard Rd, Millfield OH 45761
(from the newsletter)

NEW LANDS

ARIZONA

Hello!

I am a lesbian sister, trying to gather support to start a woman's land. This will be under the S.H.E. Land Trust of Arizona, and will be a Disabled Community as well as able bodied lesbians. I am homeless and I'd like to offer other homeless, handicapped Lesbians and our sisters a place to be part of a woman's land!

I have 40 acres picked out, asking price \$25,000. It has a well and an electric windmill generator, two structures, partly completed, one small cabin. An outhouse and a main road, to and through the property. This land is mostly flat and will be completely wheelchair accessible. The road will accomodate 2 wheel drive vehicles. The land is located in Dos Cabezas, Arizona; nearest town is Willcox; 2 hours outside of Tucson where our sister land is located. We could build on about 30 acres of the land and NOT disturb a single shrub or tree! We can park at our building sites, trailers or homes, pull up to each door.

Any and all contributions are appreciated. All monies will go into an escrow account to be held until there is enough to pay the \$25,000. (Make payable to Myrna Steingold)

In Goddess Love,
Kymba Gold

POBox 231, Willcox, AZ 85644

BRITTANY

We are one French dyke from Brittany and three German dykes (between the ages of 27 and 42), and we have bought a beautiful large piece of land (78.5 acres) in the south of Brittany, less than 20 miles away from the Atlantic Ocean, with also a large lake nearby. There is a big house on the land, two lovely creeks, a well, a 400-year-old oak tree, lots of fruit trees, etc. etc.

We bought it, that is to say, we signed a provisory contract and paid a down-payment of about 18 000 \$. The complete amount of about 250 000 \$ has to be paid at the latest by June 1st, 1994. Only we don't have any more money.

Why then, you'll probably ask, did we still take the risk? Well, we have lots of plans. But first of all we think, that all of us dykes need a lot more lesbian owned land at our disposal. In Brittany, there's been none so far, and there is only very little in the whole of France (or any other European country, for that matter).

Our place is surrounded by large forests, and instead of curious neighbors, lots of forest animals come on the land. We want to live on and with that land and with the animals, and we want to offer space for political and spiritual lesbian activities. The place will be made wheel-chair accessible. Dykes can come here to spend their holidays. Or they can come to workshops (one of us teaches wendo, a wimmin's self-defence, another one can do shiatsu, a particular healing technique, and there's a lot more we and a lot of other lesbians we know can and want to offer). They can also come for withdrawal for all kinds of reasons, maybe that they need some rest or that they have to hide or whatever other reasons there may be.

One of our goals is to live ecologically, e.g. to use natural energy sources (sun, water and wind), a biological sewage system, etc. We also want to live here with domesticated animals, such as horses (we want to teach what we call here "gentle riding"), goats, sheep (one of us has experience with working with goats and sheep, making cheese, and spinning wool), hens, and our dog Bruja. And we want to live basically self-sufficient.

The conditions are such that we can move onto the land and into the house (that is in very good shape) as soon as we have paid the whole price, and workshops, summer-camps, and other activities could start right then. We want this to become an international lesbian meeting place. And we are also planning to start a big lesbian feminist archive.

There's a lot more land around that will stand for sale soon. More land to be bought by more dykes.

If you can give financial support to our project, please let us know as soon as possible. And in any case, feel most welcome to see us on the land next year.

Inge Kolle
Thalkleinich 1
54483 Kleinich
Germany



Debby Earthdaughter
Tucson, Arizona

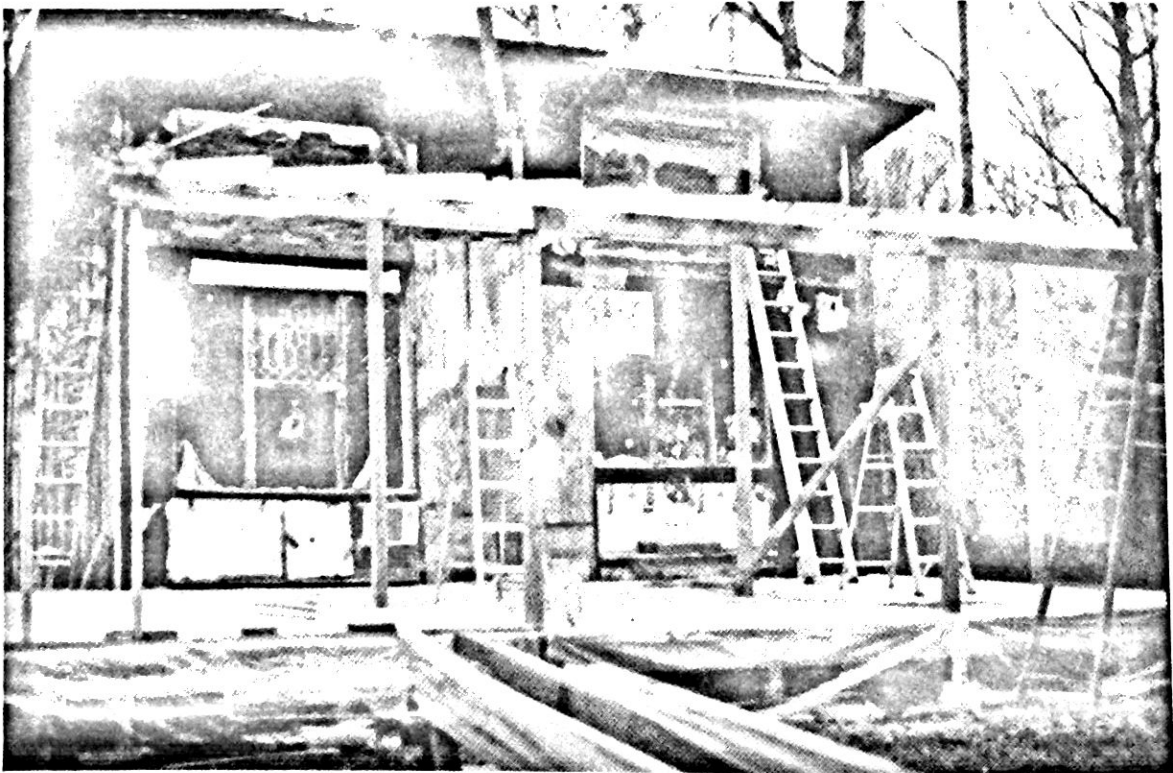
SILVER CIRCLE

HOLLY SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI

Deep in the woods in north Mississippi is a majical place called Silver Circle Sanctuary. This winter many wimmin and other fine spirits worked together building an addition to Cedar Place, the home of Gail Clear Night Sky, Gwen O. Demeter, Teega, Toby, Tykie, Sissy, and BenToma as well as semi communal cooking place during the winter. This first photo is of (from left to right) Clear Night Sky, Mitru(in back center) and Demeter drawing out plans for a difficult part of the construction.

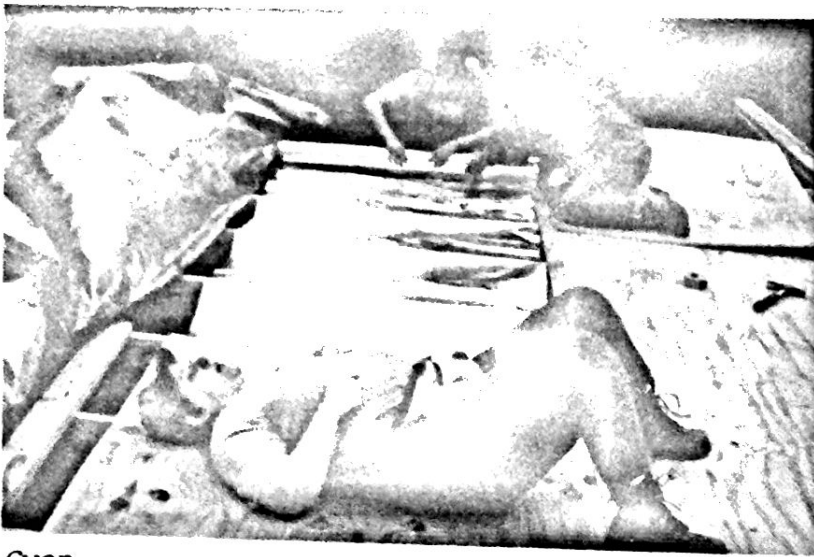


Photo by B



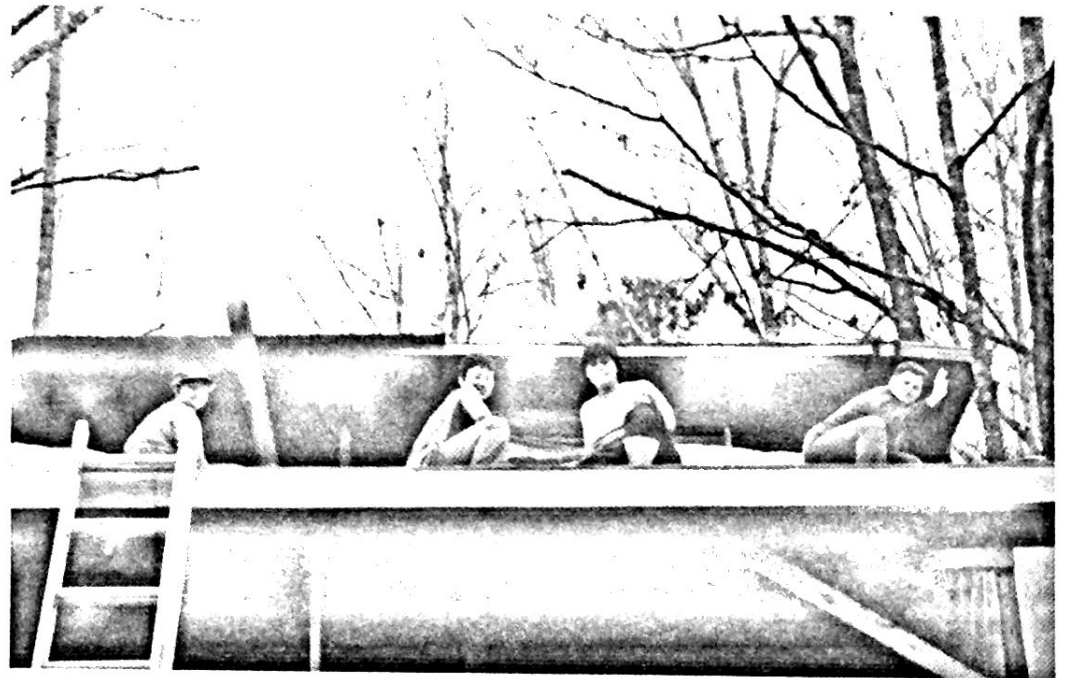
Gwen

The style of building we use at Silver Circle varies but this style is a modified post and beam in which the roof is supported by 4x4 posts connected by beams at the top and bottom. The floor and the roof rest on the beams. In this photo the subfloor is complete and you can see the posts on the new front as they continue down to the concrete piers in the ground. Also, in this photo the rafters are nailed to the top beam. We are ready to put on the roof.



Gwen

In this shot of roof construction, Ayla and Mitru finish laying the reflexitic solar sheeting while B takes five before helping to install the next sheet of plywood decking.



A happy roofing crew finish the underlay-
ment of felt to get
ready for the roll
roofing application.
From left to right:
B, Ayla, Mitru, and
Demeter.

Gail

This photo shows where we are. We stopped building in the Spring in order to put in the gardens. However, we hope to have a traveling carpenter come thru for a while and we plan to get back on the rest of the siding. Then on to rough in wiring and interior insulation and siding. B and Mitru were our apprentices this last year. Ayla and Trish(not pictured) are friends who often spend parts of the winter with us.

We feel both our apprentices, our friends, including Gail Spider who is not pictured and ourselves have learned new self sustaining skills this winter due in part to the grant from LNR we received for apprentices last year.



Gail

Gail and Gwen

MICHIGAN

WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL

I facilitated a "Lesbians on Land" workshop at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival this past August, and over 80 dykes attended!

The description for the gathering read: "This workshop will be a place where lesbians who live on land can connect. Come discuss different ways we create our own rural lesbian culture and community, how to survive economically 'in the sticks', and meet potential future land partners."

There were so many womyn attending that we weren't able to discuss the above topics in any detail. We only had time to go around the circle once and say a few words about what we were looking for, or had to offer, in the way of Lesbian Land. Unfortunately, a similar workshop, "Womyn's Land" had been scheduled at an overlapping time, but fortunately the other facilitator, Sylvia Brown, and I got together beforehand and decided to combine our groups.

It was a wonderful networking. There were two deaf lesbians and an interpreter who had each come interested in finding or creating land where deaf womyn could feel comfortable. There was a dyke who runs a dairy farm who wished to connect with other lesbians who want to raise domestic animals in the most humane and natural ways possible.

Many lesbians, both on and off the land expressed the strong desire to find others to live with who have already done their emotional work. (They said they weren't interested in repeating the 70's & 80's land scenes of acting out our unresolved "issues" on each other!)

One dyke advised womyn on land to be very clear with potential visitors about the situation, procedures and rules on their land. "Even if you don't think you have any rules," she said, "you do!"

Another lesbian suggested that those womyn looking to buy land and start a new community seriously consider putting their time and energy instead into joining and supporting one of the Lesbian Lands already in existence. "There's lots of land groups that are already established, and are struggling to survive," she said, "we don't need to keep reinventing the wheel."



"City Sister"
Jean Mountaingrove
Sunny Valley, Oregon

MAIZE magazine was mentioned and referred to again and again throughout the discussion, as the best vehicle for our networking and information-sharing; and the only known resource of its kind. At one point the address for ordering a subscription was read aloud, and I saw dozens of womyn writing down the information.

A card file was passed around during the discussion and womyn wrote down names, addresses, and their needs and interests relating to Lesbian Land. Sylvia Brown volunteered to copy and send out the list to everywom, and dykes contributed postage money.

Near the end of the workshop, Rebecca Clark stopped by to announce her workshop, "Landykes: Creating Lesbian Culture" which was also scheduled overlapping the "Lesbians on Land" workshop. She gathered up some womyn who were interested in the economic aspects of her SEEDS project.

Everywom agreed that we need to let the festival organizers know we want the land-related workshops to be scheduled at different times next year. (Our 3 were the only ones this year, but I was happy with our cooperative solution to the scheduling problem!)

Of the workshop participants, about 1/3 already live on land, 1/3 were looking for land and/or a land community, and the remaining third were curious/wishful city dykes wanting to learn more about our lives, perhaps for future reference.

It was exciting and gratifying to me to see so many dykes interested in and supportive of Lesbian Land. I hope there are more workshops of this kind next year at Michigan and other womyn's festivals.

Jennifer Weston

WOMEN ON THE LAND

A TENTING AFFAIR AT WOMAN'S WORLD

By Shewolf
Woman's World
Madisonville, Louisiana

When opinions are allowed to flow freely during any event the aftermath is one of thought provoking pondering for days after. The Women on the Land Tenting Affair was no exception for me. Before the participants arrived Andy and I had to adjust to each other's ways, establish our boundaries, work out the kinks and manage to prepare the place for the guests arrivals. We managed to get the shower pit dug, gravel poured into it, dirt covering the spot, the sheets hung around it, and the hose-spray in place.

The solution to the need for an outdoor toilet was to have a Port-a-Jane delivered for use during the 2 weeks it was needed. That turned out to be the best solution for a temporary convenience. Although much of the affair took place in the main house, the outdoor facilities took the strain off the one septic system for the period. Since many of the workshops were held outdoors under the trees, participants were near their tents and outdoor facilities as needed at those times.

From talking with participants I realized that some women have little under-

standing of the rural life and the need to protect the septic systems, preserve water, keep counters clean to avoid ants, keep grass cut low to lessen insects, etc. Most of the women in attendance, however, seemed to understand and the cooperation from them was wonderful with regard to careful treatment of the place.

A great deal of time was spent discussing each of our individual places in the Women on the Land movement at this time. Some of us are new to the concept, some have been involved for a long time and a few of us are on the fringe of the process. The group ranged in age from 23 to 62, with 50% of the women over 50 years of age. We hailed from Kansas, Connecticut, Florida, Louisiana, Virginia, Massachusetts and Germany.

My personal feelings about the gathering were mixed between joy at having women come together to share ideas and fear about not having everything women needed to make the event meaningful for everyone. As the main host before and after the event I felt responsible for its success and for the information to be transmitted to other women. We agreed that Juana would write up the event for MAIZE and then later correspondence indicated a need for each person to share her thoughts about the experience. Of course to me each one sharing some part of the event with readers seems glorious and takes a lot of the burden off one or two participants. It also gives other women more viewpoints to enjoy. I certainly hope each participant sends in at least a few comments about the affair.

I think sometimes we wonder why there is so much confusion about what should be done and how it should be done when women gather for an event. I think that we often forget that we are not all alike even tho we may share the same type of lifestyle; being women interested in living with women on the land does not create similarities among us in EVERYTHING. In many ways we have different ideas about who could be on the land, how the finances could be arranged, what chores are imp-



zana
tucson,
arizona

ortant, what kind of land stewardships are proper, how disagreements could be settled, when things could be done, what priorities are necessary, etc, etc. Some of us see the need for the community to develop first and then the selection of the land and buildings. Others see the advantages of having land secured on which to build community. [Some of us are searching for a place where the rules are already set up and if they suit us we will try to live there. If they don't suit us we will either try to change them or move on to another place. Some of us believe that the "rules" come from long hours of "sweat" in the beginning of development and if we want to have the rules we want we need to be a part of the initial decision making body.]

One of the workshops which centered around defining community and what it meant to each woman, carried some profound concepts about the nature of community and how does one build it when basics in each person do not agree philosophically. Class differences or even perceived differences often crowd out sincere exchange of ideas. [Do we have skills necessary to bridge gaps in communication when our emotionally charged behaviors encourage denial of tension?] How many of us confront uncomfortable situations WHEN THEY OCCUR? If we do so, can we deal with them in the tense state they create?

The land lent itself well to tenting areas hidden in the trees to give privacy and shade. The events were easy walking distance to everything and parking of the vehicles presented no problems since there was little rain to contend with and the ground stayed firm. A slight sprinkle on Sunday sent us all scattering indoors for an hour or so and then we returned to the greenery and open air. The area afforded privacy for the event and we were not disturbed by traffic, noise, uninvited people, deliveries, etc. While the end of May in the South is usually pretty warm, the nights cooled off and sleeping was comfortable outside. The days were warm enough for the outdoor shower to be fun. The food prep in the modest kitchen was often handled as a break period from the concentration of the workshops and went smoothly. There was food in abundance thanks to the generosity of some of the participants and the cash donations cover-

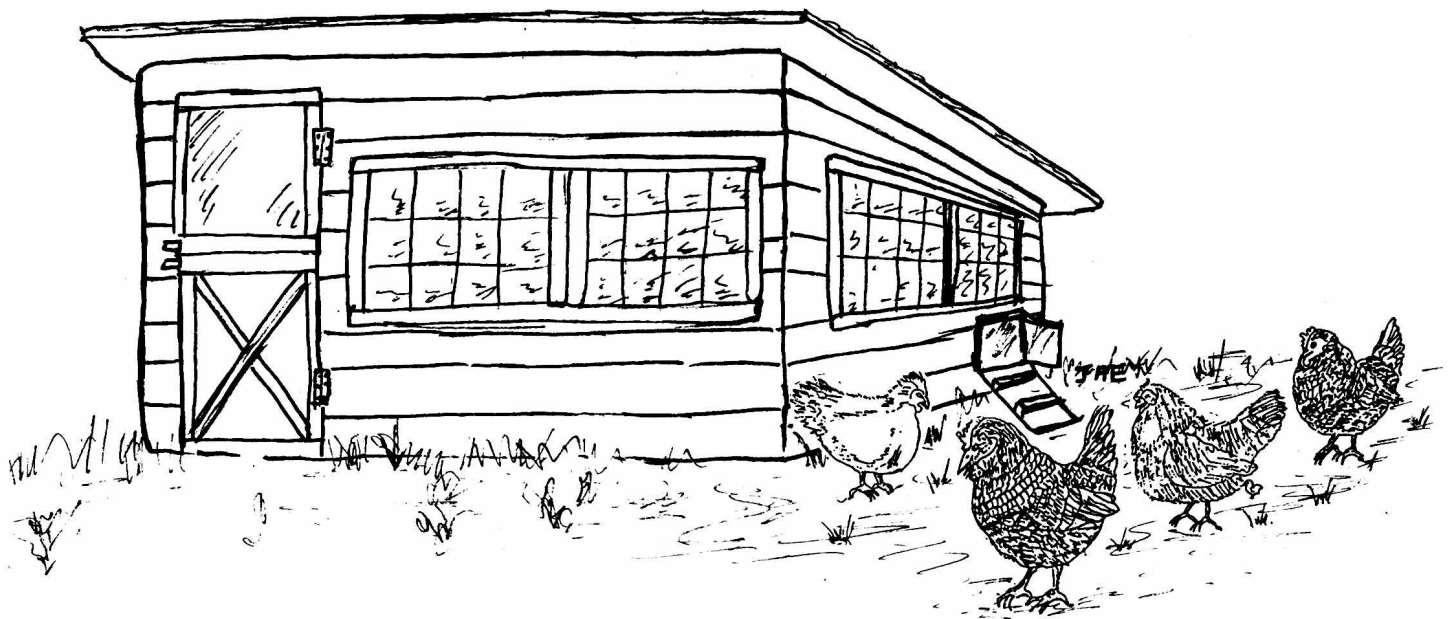
ed 75% of the expenses of the event so the burden to Woman's World was minimal. I would encourage other lands to sponsor such an event as a low budget affair not requiring great outlays of money.

The Slide Show of Women's Lands included color slides of scenes from Owl Farm and Rootworks in Oregon; Wildfire and Outland in New Mexico; Sprial in Kentucky; Susan B. Anthony Memorial Unrest Home in Ohio; Sugarloaf in Florida and Woman's World in Louisiana. Since then other lands have been added to the Slide Show which has been shown in Austin, Texas, Durham, North Carolina, Atlanta, Georgia, Provincetown, Massachusetts, Holly Springs, Mississippi, Millfield, Ohio, and New Orleans, Louisiana.

I believe that the real success to having women gather for this kind of event is in the friendships and ideas developed over time and that the more we do it, the better it gets. I suggest that women all over the country gather with those from nearby states and hold small conferences. The ideal number for me would be from 10 to 18 for good discussions, individual awareness, diversity of exchanges, contrasting opinions, and ease of operations. Accomodations do not have to be elaborate. We provided no entertainment, tours, outings, music, games or diversions, yet women seemed to be occupied with discussions for all four days.

If enough women express interest in attending this kind of event we may make it an annual Women on the Land Tenting Affair at Woman's World on the Memorial Day Weekend each year. Whether it happens or not I would encourage others to do so in their part of the country. The fun of attending this kind of event in another part of the country shouldn't be overlooked so I will be alert to invitations from other Women's Lands to present the slide show wherever it is desired if I am traveling your way.

Shewolf is a crone living at Woman's World in the South interested in women who want to learn carpentry and rural living in a warm climate. She is currently traveling with the Women on the Land Slide Show and preparing a Directory of Women's Lands. For a free entry of your land into the directory please contact Shewolf at PO Box 655, Madisonville, LA 70447



Jae Haggard
Serafina, New Mexico

"GENDER STUDIES"

By Hawk Madrone
Fly Away Home
Myrtle Creek, Oregon

The early morning sun dappled the log where she stood, just outside the poultry fencing that protects my flower beds from her scratching. Just as I had finished the tall glass of spring water that breaks the long night's fast, I had been drawn to the back porch by a sound that could only be the crowing of a rooster. But we have no rooster in our small flock of hens, having learned sixteen years ago that cocks tend to be quarrelsome at best, often vicious, not to mention lasciviously bothersome to the hens. No place for them on this Lesbian land!

So who could be greeting the sun with that hoarse guttural song?! I didn't see her at first as I scanned the area around the nearby henhouse, but then there it was again, a crowing, though a somewhat more gentle rendition of the sound that years ago would crack the early morning silence and end my dreams. She fluffed her grey and black striped feathers as she faced the sun filtering through the trees on the eastern slope, juttied out her head with its hen-sized bright red comb, and called with true purpose and delight. I stayed still,

listening and watching. She knew I was there. Indeed, she seemed to welcome my witnessing her ritual. She "crowed" again, with winged accompaniment, and then stood still as though listening for response, or perhaps she meditated in repose.

I realize, now, that I've heard this song before, in this season, coming even later in the day from the orchard where the hens range for their daily bounty in the soft earth, or on the brushy hillside. I've looked up from my work in the garden and listened with curiosity and amusement. Maybe this morning's Barred Rock has a repertoire of time and place, or perhaps the hens pass this queenly function around among themselves. Clearly, they, like I, need no male in their midst to herald the dawn or announce abundance, or just celebrate being alive. We all sing our own songs.

Hawk Madrone: I am a 54 year old country Lesbian Separatist, living on an isolated hill in So. Oregon. At Fly Away Home we cultivate food, theater, song, strong bodies and hearts, a touch of magic, and blessed Silence. I have inherited an amalgam of Lutheran, Jewish, and working class, have hearing loss and tinnitus, none of which keeps me from knowing the goddess in the Earth, in myself, in you.

VEGETARIANISM AND NON-VEGETARIANISM

By Kim Larabee
Cerridwen Farm
Reading, Michigan

I am a 300+ lb, meat-eating, self-identified separatist, Environmentally Sensitive (aren't we all to some degree), lesbian. Food issues have always been at the top of my awareness for as long as I can remember.

Understand that intake and output of food are often the last controls left to a being that has had control of everything else taken away. There is not a lot of difference between the pet who defecates on the carpet to express anger, the wild animal that refuses to eat when imprisoned, and the anorexic who is unable to eat enough to sustain her own life. I believe that is why vegetarianism is such a hot spot, with moral high ground taken on both sides.

To understand my points on the issue, I have to explain my basic view of human beings, plants and animals.

First humans. I think the initial rift between vegetarians and non-vegetarians is due to the fact that homosapiens are neither browser-grazers or predators. We are scavengers.

Hairless, long reaching, easily regurgitating, we prefer our meat dead, hung for a week or two, and then cooked. In our search to return to what is natural we've invented cleaned up "road-kill". I place us among the crows, turkey-buzzards, dingos and jackals. We do not soar like eagles or behave like timid bunnies. Our function is to clean up.

At worst this makes us murderous packs (my argument against building large communities) and at best very life-loving beings, who (when we're not starving) appreciate other species' young and often go to great efforts to save younger and more helpless beings than ourselves. We as beings are walking proof that there are no such things as dichotomies.

As a scavenger our eyes are good but not excellent; our hearing is adequate but nothing compared to a grazer; and our noses are incredibly small. (Well,

some of us, my lover corrects me.) What we have is tuned memory that allows us to return to a dead thing when it's aged to our liking. Somewhere along the line humans figured out how to control a scavenger's biggest enemy, internal parasites, and voila, population explosion.

With our current methods of mass producing meat the arguments against meat-eating are apparent. Feedlots, et al, are a fine example of everything that is wrong with our present attitude toward food. Simple, fast, clean.

However we rarely see a discussion on how plants are treated in this country. We ignore it because they do not have voices easily heard by our limited hearing. I believe the first oppression after humans decided they were separate from all around us, was plants. Plants were never designed to live in a monoculture. Yes, that means your garden where all the tomatoes are in one row or square and the carrots in another. They certainly were never meant to be hybridized where each plant is not even a distinct genetic individual.

We cry out at the slaughter of chickens yet fail to hear when a combine mows down an entire field of wheat with just as much callousness. That corn you eat is at the same age of development as the one and a half year old steer that gets butchered. Those nuts you enjoy have the same life potential as a hen-egg.

This may seem extreme but we live in a culture that ranks beings' worth. It places mammals at the top, butterflies over ants, a toss up between the cockroach and that 100 year old oak but definitely over that grass you mow down each week for no functional reason. Yet even the boys have been forced to admit that plants respond to language and emotion.

As Bea Stone says: the bottom line is that everything must eat and is eventually eaten. Even us if we didn't have such bizarre burial practices. Mother Nature never overlooks a detail. Grass, mice, rabbits reproduce and grow the way they do because they are the backbone of our piece of the food chain. ?

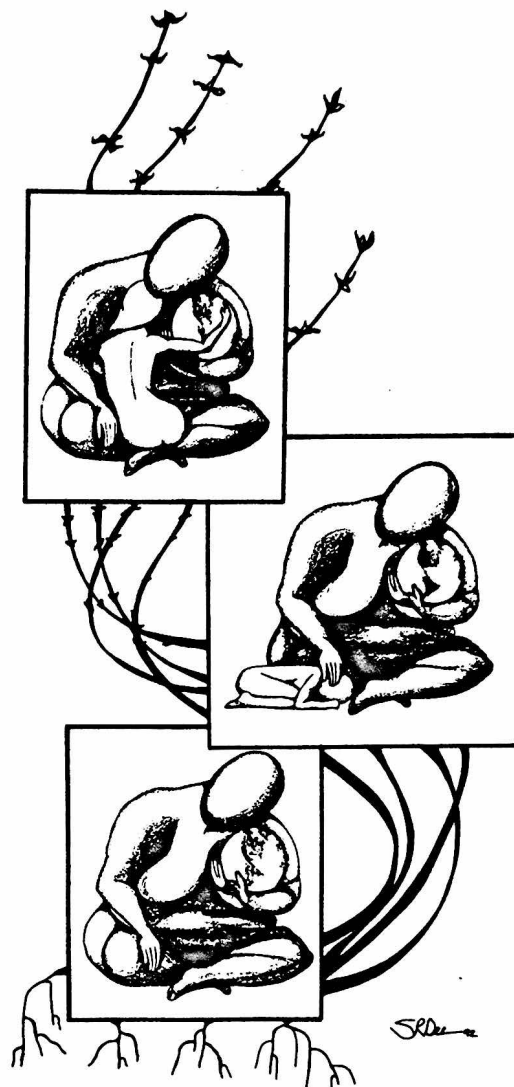
We need to acknowledge that eating meat hits us personally since it is mostly female animals in the produce and reproduce factory mode of meat production. Plants by and large do not fit our views of gender.

We need to admit that nothing about our present relationship with food is natural and that we have changed the world so much that it never will be in our lifetimes. Whether to be meat eaters or non-meat eaters is a choice we each make. Neither is wholly natural to us.

I think we have to stop judging each other about our food choices. Some people literally require meat. I know I did when my iron intake got messed up because of lead poisoning. But I'm not copping out. I'm well enough to not be dependent on meat, however I *do* choose it. I feel I need to take responsibility for it and I raise my own chickens, my own steer, and have a milk cow. I am aware of the privilege I have that allows me to make these choices.

Patriarchy does not keep around what it does not need. Earlier in this decade registered draft horses became almost non-existent as mechanization tried to make them obsolete. Of course pockets of resistance are seen everywhere and in this county 60 years ago some farmers refused to lease land to individuals who were using tractors. But the truth of the matter is that millions of animals would die if tomorrow everyone stopped eating meat, wearing leather, or eating eggs and cheese. A farmer cannot afford to keep a herd of 100 cows that are not supporting themselves monetarily. If your argument for being a vegetarian is to not be involved in the slaughter of animals then please be Vegan since a cow *must* produce a calf yearly (approximately) in order to produce milk. The calves are either incorporated into the herd or butchered as a necessity to keep us from being over-run with cattle. Vegetarianism in and of itself will not save these lives. "The only way to keep something from dying is to never let it live in the first place." (Quoting from Bea Stone.)

Since under our present food production system we have enough food to feed the world three times over, I think vegetarianism and non-vegetarianism is a personal and not a moral choice that causes or ends starvation. We must acknowledge



Shannon Dee
Boise, Idaho

that our relationship with food will always be a compromise. We need to take as much responsibility as possible in the production of our own food whether it is vegetarian or non-vegetarian. We must struggle for *quality of life* for everything we raise to eat whether it is animal or plant.

The truly radical thing is not to choose vegetarianism or non-vegetarianism (why is this the only way we stack up the choices?) and then buy all your food at a grocery store when you have an adequate backyard or sunny windowsill. The revolutionary thing is to find a way to produce food for yourself outside the hands of patriarchy. Even if it is only a small pot of chives in the kitchen window you are taking back your right to the how, what, when and where of one of the most basic controls, eating.

GOING LIKE SIXTY

NEW FRIEND, OLD FRIEND, IRON FRIEND

Jean Mountaingrove
Rootworks
Sunny Valley, Oregon

One of my pleasures in being old is having so many old friends. My silver friend of a year and a half, Chris, taught me to sing:

*Make new friends
But keep the old
One is silver
And the other gold*

The friend I write about now is one I've known for 15 years. Now, that's a long-term relationship! And she may be even older than I am at 68. I appreciate her many good qualities: always available, steady, patient, undemanding, not jealous of my other friends. Can you tell how I love this iron friend, my rusty cast iron wood-burning box stove?

"Let me count the ways..." Patiently she stands steady on her four strong legs, available to burn anything I give her. She will make my two-story, 12'x16' partly-insulated cabin plenty cozy. She cooks for me and rarely lets anything burn. She'll heat water for my hot water bottle or rocks for my cold toes at bedtime or for my fingers on a frosty morning when the truck's heater is slow to warm. She shows no resentment when, in a hurry, I turn to the green enameled three-burner propane stove. She's uncomplaining, too, when in summer instead of a jar with daisies, roses or gladiolus, I stack her top surface with papers and books I must remember to carry out.

But let me introduce you formally. Her patriarchal name is 27 Box. I have not called her that, or discovered her sacred name, her real name, but I believe she is a priestess of Kali. Transformation is her service, her role in the cycle of birth, growth, death and rebirth. Whatever fuel I give her, no matter how small, how broken or ugly, she will

change it into heat, smoke, ashes, and sometimes burnt nails.

The ashes go to other centers for further transformations--to my compost piles and my gardens for more of Kali's magic. The compost piles yield dark, sweet smelling humus. I take that to the gardens where red clay soil becomes fertile beds of vegetables, flowers and fruit that feed my body, mind and spirit.

*We find no beginning, we can find no end,
All this we know, sweet goddess*

(neo-traditional tribal song)

When I bring the garden vegetables into my kitchen, 27 Box will cook them if I feed her a few 3"-4" diameter hardwood logs. In shiny steel pots with button-top lids or in big brown cast iron dutch-oven cauldrons, I can leave my meal to her care, then go outdoors to work for an hour or two. Tired, hungry, I return to find my food is ready to eat. It has not burned because without my adding more wood, her fire slowly dies to the low warmth that keeps food just right. On a cold day, the blue pottery bowl will quickly warm on the stove and then warm my hands while the food warms my stomach.

But if I want to stay inside on a rainy day, I can climb the ladder to my loft. There I write letters or read, warmed by the same fire that is gently cooking my rice and vegetables. And, oh, the tempting smell of onions and garlic!

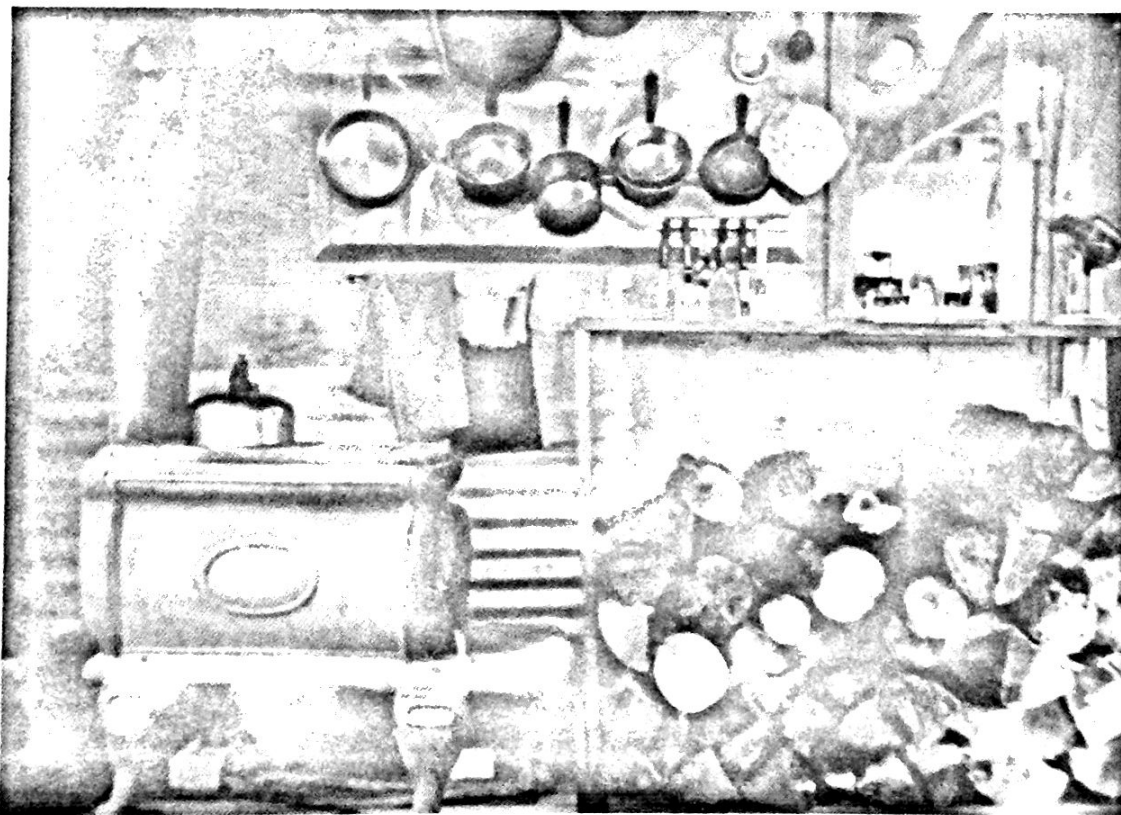
I have learned her ways so well that I can place those shiny pots on top of her next to her stovepipe for the highest heat or just over her door where it will be barely warm. About 3 feet above her surface hangs a metal wire rack (formerly a refrigerator shelf). I catch the rising heat on its way on up to the ceiling through the floor vent into my bedroom loft. On this rack I can dry stale bread cubes for croutons; cut green peppers, celery, mushrooms, and herbs for winter soups; even dry my wet socks, shoes and knitted caps.

27 Box doesn't require much care. Every Fall I check her horizontal pipe and push a light layer of hardwood ash out using a flat narrow board. From time to time in the winter, I shovel the ashes built up inside her into a 5 gallon metal can, leaving about an inch of ashes to insulate her belly. Daily care is simple. I brush the burnt oat flakes I spilled and the toasted bread crumbs from her flat surface into my compost pail. I whisk bits of wood and paper I spilled onto her throat piece into her open door. I sweep the corrugated metal sheet upon which she stoutly stands. And yes, I sweep the green carpet nearly every day. How quickly the litter around her builds up-- and in my life too! Country life is a dirty business. But I insist the bits of bark, leaves, roots, bugs, lint, slivers of wood are good clean dirt-- worthy of their place in my compost.

Just as she accomodates my eccentricities (such as throwing dandelion and thistle buds into her mouth or compulsively snatching a half-burned log out to dunk in water because the day has warmed, or I have to leave earlier than I expected and I don't want to waste that

bit of wood), I also accomodate hers. One example: she doesn't know when to stop. No way can I stop her faithful fires till all her fuel is gone. Nor can I get her to keep going all night unless I get up every few hours to feed her. She isn't willful or stubborn, she's just worn thin at several seams. As long as fresh air keeps coming in, she keeps burning. I personally understand the effects of years. We're both a bit rusty now and look out of fashion. But what a fire burns inside when things are going just right for us.

Now that reminds me of a mystery I haven't got figured out. As I humbly kneel before my friend and begin to build a fire with small offerings, urging her to brighter blazing response, I see that she gives the hottest fire with "three." I have placed two small logs next to each other, and then a third one on top, a pyramid. All touching but with spaces between. About touching and spaces in relating I know quite a bit. But "three?!" I've never had a threesome work for me. The third seems to dampen the fires instead of increasing them. I keep wondering if 27 Box knows something I should know.



Portrait of 27 Box Shoshana Frieden, Womanshare, Grants Pass, Oregon

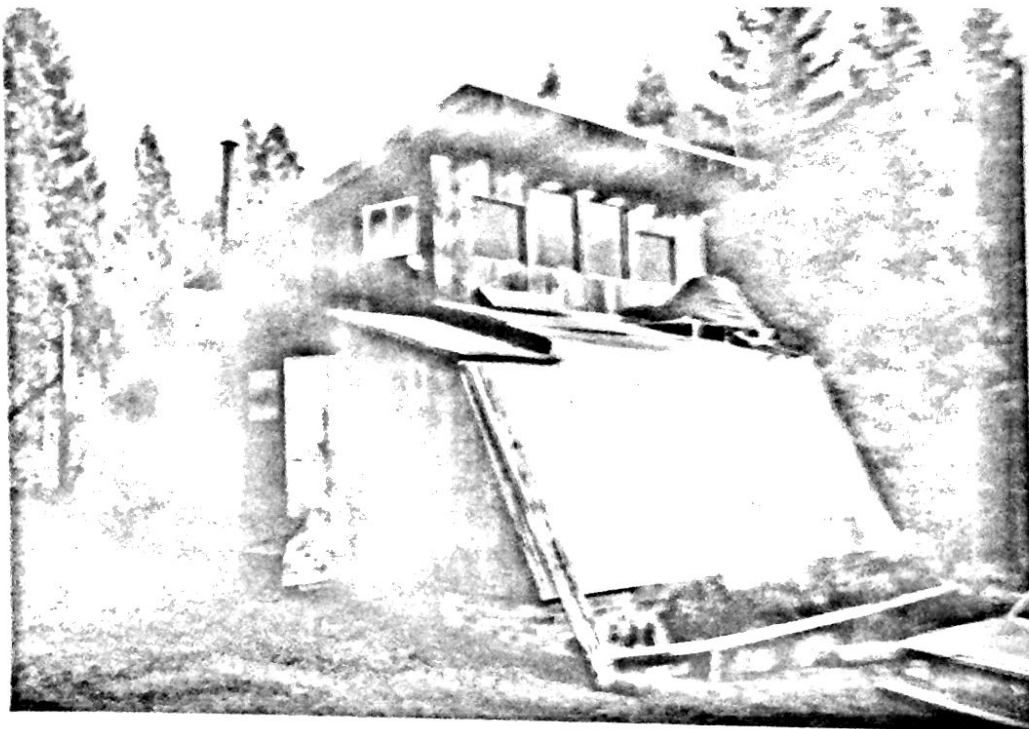
What I do know is how to prepare for her appetite. After that first cold, wet winter here in a poorly insulated cabin, I learned to prepare in July and August for that cold, dark season. I order green split hardwood at the lower summer price, delivered on the road that is dusty instead of mud. On a shady July morning I stack the new wood next to my two year supply. It will dry and age to peak burning condition by the time its turn has come. During August afternoons when it is cool under towering fir and pine trees, I collect downed wood--the dead branches and small dead trees killed by pocupines or rot. Now this wood is so dry that I break it easily with my gloved hands or stomp it with my boots to fit into cardboard boxes. The boxes stack neatly in the woodshed. No need to split kindling on icy winter days. The boxes also fit into my wood-box next to the wood rack in my kitchen.

I stay close to my old iron friend on winter mornings. As soon as I have enough clothing on to stop shivering, I open her damper and feed her her morning meal...the free shopper's guides crunched up to make more surfaces, envelopes with the pesky plastic windows removed, torn strips of cardboard boxes, small sticks, leftover lumber ends and two pieces of dry hardwood. With one match to the edge of newspaper, she is on fire and roaring. Shutting her door, I stay close until I warm up and can move to the sink counter to assemble my breakfast. As I put my sun-dried pears, apples and raisins to soak, I listen to eager song of flames ablaze. When she settles into a steady hum, I add that mysterious third piece of wood. Now we each settle into our own morning work. She heats the cabin and cooks my fruited

oatmeal. I prepare my lunch--often rice for today and beans for tomorrow--plus steamed squash or carrots or beets. After I have enjoyed my breakfast that tastes as good as dessert, she is quiet. Now it is time for another feeding. Several larger hardwood pieces are all she needs for the rest of the morning to keep her happily humming as she keeps me happily cozy and fed.

During four months of very cold days, there isn't much to do outdoors after the wood rack has been refilled with several wheelbarrow loads. Since her fire will be hot all day, I cook beans and soups, moving the pots from hot to warm locations on her flat surface. Letters written, books read, I grow restless at hours of sitting. Then I turn to candle-making... But that is another story--perhaps the one to share with you in January.

Jean: To counteract any misconception that I live and work in isolation, I credit Justine Coutts with patient editing help, Cathy Gage with typing the scotch-taped handwritten copy and the Southern Oregon Women's Writer's Group with clarifying suggestions. Thanks to all.



Rootworks: Jean's house with attached greenhouse and black pipe solar water heater, garden in background on both sides. 1992

*Photo by Tee A. Corinne
Sunny Valley, Oregon*

ONE THING I'VE LEARNED

SINCE MOVING TO THE COUNTRY

By Susan Wisehart
Hawk Hill
Drury, Missouri

Living in the country has changed my attitude about containers. I appreciate their value more and feel great respect for the womyn who evolved them from naturally occurring forms to beautiful pots, baskets and boxes. We need them so much here. They are vital to our lives in ways I was quite unaware of in the city.

Bowls of nuts, baskets of garlic, boxes of clothes and household items for taking to potlucks. The freebox that appears at most gatherings, full of items womyn no longer want but suspect other womyn will. Our truck beds holding the feed, lumber, laundry and groceries. We joke about our vehicles being closets or big purses, holding all we must have with us in our daily lives.

I covet briefcases for each of the projects I am involved with. When I leave the house to drive to one of my jobs, I haul my basket of food, water and utensils, my big zippered cloth bag of books, money, pens, hairbrush and identification, a smaller red bag I found at a garage sale which holds the many boxes of disks that go with each of the computer jobs I work on and an old briefcase I inherited from my father with papers I need to copy at the Resource Center and a few stationery supplies.

At home, I save jars, cardboard boxes and plastic bags. I can't bear to send them to recycle or the dump. Instead, I clean and stack them and use them over and over. One time Raven and Terri gave the kitchen a much-needed cleaning and removed all my jars from the shelf to make room for other treasures. They piled them in one of the cardboard cartons and set them out for recycle. It was traumatic for me to lose them, even though they had sat unused for months. Within a few weeks, I'd achieved a new collection, nearly as complete as the first one.

Terri keeps coffee cans and plastic pails. An artist always needs cans for paints and thinners. They are perfect

for dishing out feed for her many animals, too. I always ask her when I wash out a big can and she always says "Yes. Save it." Plastic pails hold soil, sand, rocks, sawdust, and grain. They double as water pails or she uses them to lug tools for a fencing job. She's even been known to buy used ones from the lineup outside the grocery store, finding that relying on their appearing unsought in her life doesn't always work.

A few of the dykes around here devote large portions of their lives to fashioning beautiful containers that they sell or trade to make some or all of their livings. Container-making is traditional womyn's work in thousands of cultures. Jenna's renowned baskets are spread across the continent, holding valuable portions of many people's lives. Pat's Red Hot Pots are prized possessions of hundreds. MiMi's lovely crocheted bags hang around many a Lesbian neck, with precious crystals, stones and other power objects cradled inside.

And then, there are our bodies, containers for all the personalities in our neighborhood and community, each formed differently and shaped uniquely, with its own personal aches, pains, delights and peculiarities. From the womyn to the animals, plants and rocks, each bit of life force is contained in a physical entity. Even the "things" are contained energy, vibrating slowly enough for us to see and touch and feel.

Pee pots. Compost buckets. Wheelbarrows. Garden carts. Pickup beds. Boxes. Bags. Sacks. Baskets. Pots. Pans. Pails. Jars. Fences. Purses. Briefcases. Cans. File cabinets. Drawers. Cupboards. Pantries. Tins. Cigar boxes. Containers of every imaginable type fill our lives. We do not take them lightly or dismiss them. We save them, yearn for them, and work with them.

Susan: I live at Hawk Hill Community Land Trust in the Missouri Ozarks, where I am nourished by all the wonderful Ozarkian Dykes.

SENSIBLE ENERGY

By Laurie Campbell
Florence, Colorado

The age of appropriate technology has arrived. We have tortured the earth with the generation of coal and nuclear power and drained our checkbooks with monthly utility payments. However, as a new generation enters the White House, we have the opportunity to transform the way we think about energy production in this country. With new advances in solar and wind technology it is now cost effective for individuals to install alternative energy systems.

Each of us cares about our earth, and we all know the harmful effects that producing electricity by conventional processes can create. Coal fired power plants pour billions of tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year. Nuclear plants create toxic waste we do not know how to dispose of. Yet we continue on with these methods all in the name of "cheap power." Well, that "cheap power" receives tens of billions of dollars of direct subsidies every year, and does not bear many of its costs to the earth. The true source of "cheap power" is actually available to you daily. Appropriate technology developments have made the power of the sun's rays and the force of the wind the cheapest power on earth. And if we used all the technologies now available on the market, we could save over \$200 billion/year in energy costs.

The computer I write this on is powered by solar electricity. The system is simple. The sun strikes the photovoltaic cells causing a charge to be created. The charge, or electricity, is run through wire to batteries where it is stored. The batteries are then wired into the house's electrical system, and made available to you on demand. Solar panels have no moving parts, require no maintenance and have been operating in the field for over 20 years with no loss of power production. My whole house is powered by solar electricity--lights, TV, VCR, computer, stereo, fans, refrigerator, and appliances.

All the power I need, with no monthly bills and an initial investment of about \$4000.

Now I'm sure many people are saying, "\$4000! I certainly don't have that much money to invest in my own power plant." Well, that is one of the joys of solar power. You can purchase your system in modules and add on to it as money is available. You can start small, let's say for example, by converting your well pump over to solar or wind power. Or perhaps, changing over only part of your household's needs to solar electricity. The options are limitless and need not be overwhelming.

Of course, for some people solar electricity may not be an option at this time. However, there are hundreds of ways to save power without going "off-the-grid." A solar hot water heater is a practical alternative for many houses, and is an investment that starts paying you back in a few short years. And for those who can't invest in appropriate technology systems, there are many things you can do to save power. Low flow showerheads and toilets, energy efficient light bulbs and appliances will save hundreds of dollars in energy costs over their lifetimes and thus save our environment and our futures. In fact, one compact fluorescent lamp replacing a 75 watt light, would keep one ton of carbon dioxide out of the air.

All of us are responsible for the planet. The earth provides us with all we need to support our lives, but it is our responsibility to use all that she gives us wisely, and alternative energy is one method that allows that. It is a wonderful feeling to know that as the sun shines, my system is making non-polluting, renewable, quiet power. I hear the wind blow and know my cistern is being filled with water for my garden and house. It is a freeing feeling to know I have begun to achieve some independence in my life, and that that independence actually contributes to the protection of my mother earth.

Laurie has a business, "Alternative Choices"--see her ad in the back of MAIZE.

FIFTY PERCENT

By maryanne
something special
miami, florida

Perhaps it's because
you're black and I'm white and
we've been together since the 60's revolution

Perhaps it's because
we've always insisted on living
in multi-cultural/racial/ethnic neighborhoods and cities

Perhaps it's because
we count the numbers of whites and "others"
everytime we mail out flyers, have gatherings,
attend events.

Perhaps it's because
we speak out when friends gather and
"isms" are laughingly disguised

Perhaps it's because
we rejoice in our small meaningful numbers
rather than pine away at the lack of a large following

Perhaps it's because
we live a simple vegetarian life,
drum around the fire circle at solstice and equinox
and share information at any cost

Perhaps it's because
you're black and I'm white and
we've been together since the 60's revolution

Perhaps not

*maryanne: i write this in response to Pelican Lee's article
(summer '93). Perhaps we truly do have "something special"
here in miami's lesbian community.*

LETTERS

Dear Maize,

I would like to respond to Pelican's article, "Multicultural Lesbian Land???" in the summer issue of MAIZE.

First, I'd like to thank Pelican for all the care and energy she took to write her article. I appreciate her clarity and detail. All the lesbians I know have dreams of forming communities that do not perpetuate the "isms". It's a lifetime of work and we all benefit when one group's experience is shared. Pelican raises many important questions about white privilege.

I have participated in the same process as Pelican during the past few years. I was involved with New Mexico Women's Land Trust from the beginning, worked on the process of securing Arf, talked of the next New Mexico land, helped write "Ideas for a Diverse Land Community". I was part of setting up the first meeting to discuss submitting a grant to Lesbian Natural Resources. I attended both these land meetings as well as the first anti-racism workshop. I'm writing to add my perspective as the only disabled lesbian who has been part of this whole process.

One of the issues Pelican mentions is the flyer that announced our first meeting. Some wimmin of color pointed out that we used the phrase "Multicultural Lesbian Land?" without including wimmin of color in our group, or doing outreach to wimmin of color. I'd like to add that we said "Accessible Lesbian Land?" without doing outreach to disabled wimmin. There is a disabled lesbian support group not far away in Albuquerque, as well as several disability support groups in Santa Fe. In the three years we talked of accessible land, I'm not aware of any outreach done by able-bodied lesbians. I think it needs to be said that if our first step should have been outreach, then I am left wondering why disabled lesbians have still not been contacted.

Pelican states that when we called a halt to everything "we met some resistance, but with enough time, energy and explanation, everyone understood". I was part of the grant writing committee and helped initiate and write the letter of apology to the wimmin of color group. I did disagree with stopping our entire process. There's a

difference between resistance and disagreement. Pelican's statement implies that understanding could lead to only one possible action. I wanted to continue with submitting a grant because I'd already decided to continue with a situation that was less than perfect.

At our first meeting, which was set up to see if we were ready to submit a grant to LNR, we established a grant writing committee and a land search committee. I was excited by the forward motion. After years of gladly giving my energy to secure Arf, which is largely inaccessible to me, and five years of living in town, it seemed possible that the next year or two might produce a lesbian land I could be on. However, during the meeting I was disheartened by the level of ablism I was hearing in some wimmin's statements. When Dedre said she needed to be on land that's half wimmin of color, I took her quite seriously. I would love to be on land that's half wimmin of color and half disabled wimmin. I simply have different expectations.

For one thing I've been in this community for a long time and am willing to try to make a home with lesbians who are already my family, and who I know are working on themselves and on anti-oppression issues. Taking this community "as is" means that if there was land tomorrow, I would still be in the minority. I would not have access to most of the houses and I would hear ablist attitudes regularly. But even if we were looking for land, it wouldn't happen tomorrow. I left our meeting feeling optimistic about our agreements, frustrated and angry about attitudes, and also knowing more than one thing can happen at once. I believe we can look for land and at the same time do anti-racism and anti-ablism work.

The other reason I was willing to continue despite our errors around multicultural land is that I'm looking at basic survival. I'm living in town with extreme financial stress, all kinds of environmental toxins, and the isolation many disabled dykes experience when it's hard for us to go out and get around. I don't want to live on all white land, but I do want to survive and be nourished emotionally and spiritually. I imagine that Dedre has similar desires since she took the risk of being the only womyn of color at our

meeting. She's willing to wait for all of her needs to be met. I'm tired of waiting to have a home. When this community stopped our process toward land, wimmin started alot of anti-racism work. This is certainly a positive result of our efforts, but the issue of ablism and accessible land seems once again to be on the back burner. This leaves me sad, angry and scared. It makes me wonder whether one need has to be met at the expense of another.

Pelican says "we were told the anti-racism workshop would not patch things up like a band-aid and so we could go ahead with our project". She also tells of the seed of a new project Dedre brought to the second land meeting. Dedre said that in order to have land that is half wimmin of color, she would exclude most of the white and Jewish wimmin who have been discussing land here. No one expected one anti-racism workshop to fix everything. However, Dedre's statement that her plan excludes most of us left room for more than one land project. The decision to stop came from white wimmin and was not imposed by wimmin of color. I felt we could continue with an altered process and with more clarity about what we could actually hope to accomplish.

Pelican starts her article talking of dreams. I dream of living on accessible land with white dykes, Jewish dykes, dykes of color, some disabled, some able-bodied. I need a home with loving dykes who are discovering our "isms" and our recovery issues. I'm willing to start with where we all are right now, which will probably be mostly white, able-bodied lesbians. I know if we have land that's truly accessible, other disabled dykes will join us. I don't know if some will be lesbians of color.

Pelican states we can't talk about multi-cultural land without wimmin of color being involved from the beginning. I agree with her. Does the same principle apply to accessible land? Of course multi-cultural requires the presence of wimmin of color and accessible is to some extent a matter of setting up the material plane in specific ways. Physical access can exist without disabled dykes, tho not autonomy. The issues are not entirely comparable. But the physical reality can be quite urgent. At our second land meet-



Mau Blossom
Doniphan, Missouri

ing one able-bodied Arf resident was in tears. One of her comments was that she's one fall on the ice away from being homeless. We're not dealing with a lesbian event or a luxury situation. There's a great need for easier land in this community. Some of us can't afford to wait.

Pelican discusses important points about white wimmin's process in relation to land and wimmin of color that arose around certain events. One important aspect of these events is that in trying to answer the hurt and anger of the wimmin of color group, and in being touched by the pain Dedre expressed at the first anti-racism workshop, wimmin proceeded in ways that left me feeling overwhelmingly abandoned. I felt unable to communicate with disabled dykes I'd been in touch with over the past few years. I'd been encouraging these dykes to believe that accessible land would happen in New Mexico. I can not presently do this outreach becuz I don't now know what commitments exist here. If commitment to accessible land still exists, it is valid to want to continue to form a land group and look for land.

I don't think anyone intentionally prioritized the need of one group or one womyn over another, but when everything came to a halt, this seemed to be the result. Pelican talks about slowing down and taking care. However, during the period all this took place, wimmin were moving very quickly--faster than I could keep up with. I think this is partially why sufficient care wasn't taken with disability needs or with my feelings.

Pelican asks "how many different priorities can be met by one land group?" Our experience has left me asking the same question. I've also seen that womyn were not as clear about their priorities as I had previously thot. I wonder now how many here are committed to accessible land. Presently at least one other womyn is ready to proceed with land search. Right now I can trust action, but not endless talk. I see a difference of opinion about whether we manifest our dreams by talking for years, or whether we begin with where we are as long as we share basic goals and values.

Slowing down and taking time is often valid. Whether or not we can afford to take this time around creating a home is also a matter of privilege.

In the spirit of continuing discussion,
Raven
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Greetings from Arkansas to all readers of
MAIZE,

Here is an update on Spinstervhaven, which is a tax-exempt charity whose main mission is "to create and maintain nurturing community homes for aging women and women with disabilities." Both within our Havens and also as a model for other women thinking about retirement, we hope to provide for maximum accessibility and self-reliance while promoting diversity, equality, and respect for each other and for the environment. SPH is currently looking for a large rural property that could provide homes for some women, camping space for members, and facilities for retreats, conferences, and other activities. (In the future we also plan to have at least one urban facility.) Future residents of SPH will be selected on the basis of individual needs and available space, with fees charged on a sliding scale according to income.

What happened to the 1000 acres?

In a previous MAIZE, an article was run with the heading "Spinstervhaven" which actually had to do with a 1043-acre parcel of land that one of our board members, Lida, was very interested in acquiring for a women's land trust. (Under her plan, women who purchased LT memberships would receive voting rights and private use of several acres, with the

rest reserved for common use by all members.) SPH was considering buying land next to or within the boundaries of the LT, but no decision had been made at the time the article was published. After research revealed that the mineral rights did not fully convey, the nearby hospital was on the verge of closing, and people of color often experienced hostility and harassment from the local authorities and townspeople, this land was eliminated from our list of possibilities. Lida has since resigned from the board of SPH and begun looking for land near Hot Springs, Arkansas, for a women's LT. Readers who are interested should contact her at 504 Booker St. Little Rock, AR 72205, or by phone at (501) 663-8781.



Mau Blossom

What's happening now?

In late March the SPH land search committee found an unusually good property which included 91 varied acres with an existing four-bedroom home. However, it was listed at \$120,000 with no owner financing. Excited about the beauty and potential of this land, the SPH board sent out a mailing to find out the amount of support that would be available from the members (both for immediate financial assistance and potential residency). Although we received some very positive

replies, the overall level of response was disappointing, and it was clear that arranging the financing would take some time. The board felt unsure whether to make an offer on this land, and before this could be resolved, the owners signed a contract with someone else.

This experience, our first "close encounter" with actually buying a property for SPH, taught us that we must either improve our fundraising skills and success level or be prepared for continued undercapitalization. If we have to depend on income from residents and visitors to meet the mortgage payments, the whole project could be jeopardized if enough income isn't generated month to month. At this point it appears financially more feasible to buy a smaller property (probably 25-40 unimproved acres) for our first Haven, one that has good development potential and is owner financed so that we can pay a large percentage down and either make low monthly payments or pay the balance off quickly. We could set up camping facilities, a pavilion, and a couple of mobile homes at first, then concentrate on raising money for homes and facilities built exactly as we want them. This will be more secure in the short run and allow us to pay as we grow in the long run. We also feel that the land will serve as a much-needed focus for educational, cultural and physical activities involving SPH members and supporters.

The most valuable result of our March letter was contact with the dozen or so womyn who expressed interest in living on the land immediately. Like our general membership, these womyn vary in age, income, health status, and present living situation. We hope to keep in touch with these women as a core group of potential residents and as an advisory group to guide us in planning our first retirement Haven.

Making Spinsterhaven accessible for disabled womyn.

Several womyn have asked whether SPH facilities will be accessible to womyn with environmental illness, and a letter from Raven has asked us to be more specific about being for "women with disabilities", especially since our solicitation about the 91-acre property specified that the first women to move there should be in "reasonably good health." Of course the

ideal Havens would be accessible, comfortable, and affirming for womyn regardless of health status, but as a small group with limited funds we cannot do everything



Mam Blossom

immediately.

More than 40% of single elderly women live in poverty, and many are isolated from family and community support structures. SPH wants to remove many of the physical and social barriers that womyn encounter, hoping to empower ageful womyn to live at home for as long as possible with maximum independence and quality of life. We can provide a safe, low-stress, positive environment and a community of supportive friends, plus such services as trips to town, maintenance, and care of the grounds. We are also committed to cultural and social diversity and to not kicking someone out if they run out of money. However, SPH cannot provide medical care and will not be a licensed retirement or nursing home. We can advocate for residents who need special care, arrange for volunteers to help out, perhaps qualify some members as home health aides, but the basic responsibility for meeting health care needs will remain with the individual.

The first womyn to live at SPH will have to help design everything from scratch, including ways to relate to

co-housemates, to activities on the land, and to the SPH organization. Because of these tasks and our limited ability to provide services, we thought the first four residents at our first Haven should be in "reasonably good health" to start out with. Of course, any currently able-bodied woman can become disabled, and many disabilities worsen over time; we intend for residents to be able to stay at SPH for as long as they feel they can. Eventually we want to provide hospice care, but this is not possible in the beginning. If a woman has a chronic condition, this will not automatically disqualify her, but she along with the other residents and the selection committee will have to decide if living at SPH will work for her.

As far as physical accessibility, any existing structures on the land will probably not be allergen-free or designed to accommodate special needs. We will have to adapt and remodel where we can, while planning carefully for future construction. Some problems can be dealt with structurally (such as providing ramps and pull bars to assist mobility). Other problems (such as EI) are less straightforward and information is less available. In order to plan for the broadest possible accessibility, we again urge womyn to help us gather information on the best possible design ideas and materials to meet different needs. We especially hope to receive input from potential residents of SPH on what they, specifically, need for long-term quality of life.

Support Spinsterhaven--It's your charity!

SPH members are committed to dealing with the problems of starting and running a major organization and struggling against our own and society's built-in racism, ableism, homophobia. But we also know that many personal issues assume major importance when people live together: noise, pets, smoking, diet and cooking, visitors, etc. What should we do about lifestyle choices conflicting with psychological needs conflicting with physical needs? Should we just set some initial rules and only accept residents who agree with them? Or should we divide and divide the space so that everyone has access somewhere?

It is hard work to create space for older and disabled womyn to be free and self-reliant within our woman-hating, death-fearing, profit-oriented society. But this is also an exciting time for womyn to be dreaming our future and working to make it happen. Support from foundations like Lesbian Natural Resources, recognition of the rights of disabled persons, lessons learned from other co-housing and independent-living experiments, the development of "green architecture", the aging of the Baby Boomer generation, and networking among womyn of like mind are just some of the tools that we can use.

Clearly, if we want a future of respect and dignity for ourselves and others, we must work to create it. Spinsterhaven is an important concept in our wombyn culture, and one that we believe should be supported materially and spiritually. Please contact SPH at POB 718, Fayetteville, AR 72702, or by phone at (501) 442-7164. We also welcome input and continued dialogue in the pages of MAIZE.

Sincerely,
Guthrie
SPH President, 1993-94

Hello,

Well one year later--after the hurricane--some of us are still here some of our sistahs have rebuilt their homes some have homes elsewhere--some of us still wait to rebuild--many of us are happy 2 b alive/living--some of us question why we are. The Great Mother continues her work she rains--the earth is coolin off and here she is damp and receptive preparin herself to receive seeds for our gardens. The leaves a subtle change in color from summer burnt to green green kreen (u know when u write words like this strange and daring shit happens)

Now that zon has moved Virgo and the Fall-Autumnal-Equinox comes, we (me and maryanne) along with other Lesbians/Dykes are lookin forward to begin diggin the gardens--two this year cuz no more chick-ens and a decrease n trees--an increase n hi-ly fertile soil and zonlight--herricane aftermath '92. We are very happy 2 c the Dykes of MAIZE restartin

the seed exchange. Count *Something Special, A Lesbian Venture* n. We will look thru our seeds 2 c what we have.

Good 2 c Rebecca start *SEEDS*--the Lesbians of Bloodroot publish their latest cookbook *The Perennial Political Palate*--Barbara Ester produce and distribute her new tape *Spirals, Music for Lesbians*--the continuin publishin of *Esto No Tienne Nombre Revista de Lesbianas Latinas*--continuing of Lesbian and wimmin only space--Billie Potts *Herbal Intensives*--Whelk Wimmin still sailin n the Charlotte Harbor--us Lesbians from all over the world workin hard and strong 2 keep 1. Lesbian cultures alive and vital. We are happy 2 c all of us doin and bein so much ndividually and together-ly. Happy 2 c Nett goin full sail with *Lesbian Natural Resources*--Happy 2 hear what Kamada has 2 say about all the festivals she is goin 2. (Louise is sendin Dykvisions 2 Kamada 2 write a dyketape of spirit-ualitié + would love other Dykes to send some additional Dykvisions) Happy 2 c maryanne start *Powerhouse Graphic*, a graphic house sensitive 2 Dyke/Lesbian needs. Happy 2 c little name Dykes/Lesbians help our big name sisters who have recently escaped from their closets by nailin the closet doors shut + re-directin our sistahs back 2 Lesbian space and culture--just plain happy about a lotta stuff--guess that's enough right now--well must go rain stopped--earth is really coolin off--no herricane this year here (Louise's observation) however we all still keep jitter n guts till end of ninth month.

A-LL WAYS
L-OOK
L-ESBIAN
W-ITH
A-LL
Y-OUR
S-OUL
A-ND
D-ANCE/D-EVELOP
Y-OUR
K-IND
E-FFORTS

Walk lightly on the great Mother.
Love n a dykely fashion,

F.Louise & Maryanne
Something Special
A Lesbian Venture
Miami, Florida



maryanne
miami, florida

Dear A-maizing Maize-womyn...

November 17, 1993 marks the 1st anniversary of Audre Lorde's death. Through her poetry, essays and prose, her vital courage, her spirit and her articulate concern touched the minds and hearts of many lives. Her naming as an African-American LESBIAN gave strength to all lesbians. Her chosen African name, Gamba Adisa, means Warrior--She Who Makes Her Meaning Known. Before her death, she was named 1991-1993 Poet Laureate of New York State.

We, whose lives continue to receive inspiration from her work, celebrate her spirit, which remains with us all, even as her physical form no longer moves among us. Her works, among many others, include: *Zami: A New Spelling Of My Name*; *The Cancer Journals*; *A Burst of Light*; *The Black Unicorn*; *Sister Outsider*; and *Chosen Poems: Old and New*.

Audre Lorde arranged for a memorial fund to donate money for a scholarship for black women writers which will be administered by the Astraea Foundation which generates grants to lesbians to pursue their creative work.

Checks can be made out to: Audre Lorde Memorial Fund, and sent care of Audre's daughter: Elizabeth Lorde Rollins, 2 So. Pinehurst Ave (#3E), New York, NY 10033.

If everyone who receives MAIZE sends even \$5.00, the impact will be substantial.

Thank you,
Kamado

THE ONLY PLACE FOR ME

By Jae Haggard
Outland
Serafina, New Mexico

calves in the chicken coop, chickens in the shed
geese on the porch, ducks in the bed



bats in the attic, squirrels in the wall
loopers in the lettuce, weeds getting tall

late for work, mud on the floor
time to do haying, wind broke the door



roof started leaking, sunburn on my face
behind on the chores gotta quicken my pace

fruit needs canning, poison ivy's out
cow dropped a calf, kid's in a pout

flour's all gone, mold in the wheat
fuel tank's leaking, blisters on my feet

birds in the berries, rabbit in the greens
worms in the apples, cats in the cream



sheep in the woods, mosquitos in the house
cows in the field, dog killed a grouse

hail got the tomatoes, frost killed the beans
clothes need washing, broody hen getting mean

deer in the garden, racoon in the corn
dogs all a'howling, kittens being born



goats in the flower bed, mice in the sink
horse's gotten out again, no time to think

if you're considering country living, a farm outside of town
there's sure to be a thousand things try to get you down

but no matter what the problems, and many they're sure to be
living in the country is the only place for me

Jae: Sound familiar? These things may not all happen at once, but sometimes it sure feels like it. I wrote this 15 years ago while homesteading with my lover in northern Minnesota. I was driving a gravel truck so had countless hours to ponder words and play with tunes. I now live in community on land in New Mexico. We have no domesticated animals and I find life a whole lot easier and less aggravating--with no shortage of things to keep up with! This can be sung to a basic talking blues (like Alix's "Talking Lesbian").



REVIEWS

VITAL TIES

By Karen Kringle

1992

\$10.95 + 1.50 p&h

Spinters Book Company

POBox 300170, Minneapolis, MN 55403

Vital Ties is a book I much wanted to read. After all, how many books are there out there about Lesbians on land? About Lesbians making their own way in a rural life?

For me reading *Vital Ties* echoes on a decade of my life--the farm, land, work, attitudes, animals, neighbors. It echoes my dreams, effort, determination, joy, loneliness, tiredness. In 1973 my then-lover Llyn and I bought 80 acres in the beautiful lake country and marginal dairy lands of northwestern Minnesota--land cheap enough for us to afford because of its hills, rocks and moraines. We "homesteaded" there for 9 years, building our own structures, living without well or electricity, raising gardens, buying and converting outmoded horse-drawn machinery to cut and put up hay with our old John Deere B. We had the full gamut of homesteading animals. Like everyone in that rural area, we worked off the land at seasonal jobs to make land payments and buy building materials, tools, machinery and feed. We bought most everything at auction. Similar to the women in *Vital Ties*, our best friends, Sherry and Viv started a dairy farm 7 miles through the woods from us--beginning with only a farm house and close-to-collapse barn. For the last half of the 70ies whenever we could, around our for-pay jobs and land tasks, Llyn and I were at their farm several times a week exchanging stories and information, helping with chores and haying and milking, building a milkhouse, and... The four of us were each other's main support. We were just coming into Lesbian consciousness. Lesbian we were, but without the words for it. Lesbians we were, trying to fit into a het farming community.

Vital Ties is a novel, yet the echoes from my life tell me how true-to-life. I think every Land Dyke will recognize the challenges, work and dreams. Taking

place on two neighboring farms in northwestern Wisconsin starting in the fifties, this story gathers the substance of Lesbian lives on working farms. It is graphic in the feeling and description of what it is like to be Lesbian and try to be a part of a rural community, to be women "making it in a man's world."

Vital Ties is a feminist reader--the tremendous burdens women face in stepping out of traditional roles, hurdles set by biological family, peer pressure, neighbors, church, media, banks. And most of all by our internalized limits--Lesbophobia, adherence to patriarchal structures and conventional attitudes, and valuing the ways, friendships and approval of males over those of womyn.

Vital Ties is a coming out story--the difficulties of self acceptance and self love, the problems to find and accept the love of another wommon, the obstacles, prejudices and ignorance affecting rural Lesbians--before and during the early days of the women's liberation movement. A story of women who start out closeted with little sense of a larger Lesbian world (one character for 20 years), yet by the end are confidently coming out to themselves, their families and neighbors. Being out in a rural area or small town where everyone (from the kid pumping gas to the bank teller to everyone at the town cafe and local bar) knows you and most everything about your life, is different than being out in the greater anonymity of the city where there are both so many strangers and so many more targets for bigotry.

Vital Ties is also a herstorical dip into bar Dyke life and Twin Cities Dyke life in the 60ies and 70ies--The Women's Coffeehouse, Amazon Bookstore, Foxy's. Despite the Minneapolis visits, the main characters Lee and Clare do not find or value Lesbian friends--Lee's three significant friends are gaymen.

Vital Ties is not about Lesbian Culture--the values and ways of being that make us a people, the unique perspectives and voice so different from the mainstream. It isn't designed to move a Lesbian-identified reader into further self-understanding or beyond most mainstream value systems. I'm disappointed in Karen's Lesbophobic dismissal of Lesbian Separatists.

Vital Ties is also not a story of Lesbian Land, of Dykes coming together to help each other get to land or create another way of being on land. Yet, this is very much a book about Lesbian experience.

Vital Ties is an important portrayal of a particular kind of Lesbian life. Our Lesbian community is each of us in our wondrous diversity and all of our combined experiences. Karen's voice is a voice we have rarely heard before. To read *Vital Ties* is to know another part of ourselves.

Jae Haggard

THE EARTH HOUSE
By Jeanne DuPrau
1992
Ballantine Books
\$8.50

Not only did I thoroughly enjoy this book, I plan to reread it at first opportunity--there's so much to chew on and digest.

Why? Although a simply written true account of a few years in the lives of two lesbians, *The Earth House* is also several interwoven stories. On one level author Jeanne DuPrau and her partner Sylvia are unpeeling the more surface layers of their lives as they find a nourishing sense of Spirit and spiritual practice (zen). Insights abound.

On another level, this is the story of two wimmin starting from scratch to plan and build (or have built) a house in the woods. We follow their progress step by step. As Sylvia says at one point, "this house is going to take more than a lifetime to build." Haven't many of us felt that! They are of course also building a life as they build a house.

And we falter with them as well. For this is also the story of Sylvia's cancer. How two Lesbians cope and sometimes cannot cope with the looming death. Yes, the house does take longer than a lifetime.

This is a story of beginnings and endings and beginnings. It's amazingly well done with a depth and realness that go directly to my heart. When I've digested a little longer, I will indeed read it again. I hope you will too.

Jae Haggard

JUST LUCKY I GUESS

By Elaine Mikels

1993

12.95 + 1.50 p&h (payable to E. Mikels)

Desert Crone Press

730 Columbia St. #C, Santa Fe, NM 87501

"From Closet Lesbian to Radical Dyke", the lifeline journey of Elaine Mikels as she tells it like it was in her new autobiography, *Just Lucky I Guess*.

Elaine shares her life and times with us in this very personal account of her work and travels and loves. Raised in California, social work in Europe after the war, Greenwich Village bars in the 50's, kibbutzing in Israel, hostel owner in San Francisco, marching across country against another war, Chicago to Cuba, getting more socially radical all the time. Then dropping out to farm in New Mexico, back into radical Lesbian feminism on the West Coast, marching, arrest and jail in the East, time out to heal in Maine, and finally returning to New Mexico where she's still going strong.

The color, excitement and challenge of her growth as a Lesbian, social activist, and world traveler combine in Elaine's story giving us a close up and honest view of the last 50 years in the life of this radical American Dyke. Her life has been part of our herstory, may she continue to lead it long and well!

Puck

SISTER/STRANGER

Lesbians Loving Across the Line

Edited by Jan Hardy

1993

\$11.95 + 1.50 p&h

Sidewalk Revolution Press

POBox 9062, Pittsburgh PA 15224

Sister/Stranger is an anthology of 35 Lesbians writing about loving someone different--different race, class, religion, ethnic group, size, ability, age. Each explores how we bridge these differences, what we fear, what we do about "mistakes", how we maintain love and intimacy. These are good, thought-provoking stories of our lives.

Includes articles by MAIZE contributors zana, Nett Hart, Jodi, Debby Earthdaughter.

Lee Lanning

ALL OF OUR SECRETS EXPOSED

Southern Oregon Women Writing on
Abuse and Molestation
Edited by NíAódagáin and Tee Corinne
1993

\$7 + \$1 p&h

Order from NíAódagáin, POBox 3,
Days Creek, OR 97429

(please make check payable to NíAódagáin)

Twenty-five wimmin tell of their traumatic childhood experiences, sharing the truth of their lives, past and present. Confronting the myths and secrets of patriarchy in a most personal way is important political work, and is the healing work we must do to create a new world within and without. Thank you, wimmin, for doing this work.

Lee Lanning

OWLT HANDBOOK

A Guide for Living at Owl Farm and
Understanding the Workings of Oregon
Women's Land Trust

\$5 + \$1 p&h

Handbook, POBox 133, Days Creek, OR 97429

Yes, the long awaited handbook from OWLT and Owl Farm is now in print and available to us all. And what a gift it is for anyone involved in creating womyn's community!

In the last 4 years the womyn of this Southern Oregon land trust have written, compiled and visioned into being this beautiful and articulate booklet describing their herstory, methods of operation, visitor information, resident process, fire and health safety. And, poems, songs and letters connecting the womyn who have lived there with the concept of and the physical being called OWL.

This handbook is not only packed with information about OWL in particular, but also infused with the love and caring, the true lesbian spirit, connection and cooperation of the greater southern Oregon womyn's community. For the past 17 years these womyn have been creating together what has become, is still becoming, Owl Farm and Trust. Their effort, energy, and accomplishments have long been an inspiring example for others of us on land or seeking to be so.

Whether you're just beginning a community or have been living it for years, this handbook will be an asset and a joyful addition on your bookshelf! Congratulations to OWLT on your excellent contribution!

Puck

TAPES

SEARCHING

By Alice Di Micele
1992

Alice Otter Music

161 Alida St. Ashland, OR 97520

Cassette \$10 CD: \$15 (add \$1.50 p&h)

Alice Di Micele's deep velvet voice moves me from feeling hope to love to despair to "everything's going to be alright", just on side one! Alice writes catchy melodies I've been singin' to myself since I heard them and lyrics rooted in nature and healing ourselves and each other and our Mother Earth, making an interesting combo of rhythms and moods. It would be great if Alice could let her creativity loose with some Lesbian lyrics, though. All in all, Alice's voice can melt you, exhilarate you, and move you to dance or tears.

Check it out.

SueWillow

LESBIAN POTLUCK

By Wyrda
1993

\$12 from Wyrda, POBox 214,
Days Creek, OR 97429

You may remember the lyrics to "Lesbian Potluck" from MAIZE last year. Wyrda's tape continues in the same vein, poking fun at all our Lesbian institutions, like co-dependency, processing, romance, celibacy. She has some great lines to laugh out loud at (I'll bet she'd be a wonderful performer to experience in person) and her tunes are catchy--I find myself humming them the next day. What I like best about the tape is, it's thoroughly Lesbian!

Lee Lanning

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
PO Box 707, Tesuque NM 87574
camping

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

COVENTREE, Chris of Coventree, Troy ME,
04987

camping, visitors, apprentices,
community members

DIXIE'S CRYSTAL RIDGE, 10641 Rhode's Lane,
Troutville, VA 24175 703-992-3521
Residents, builders.

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

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

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

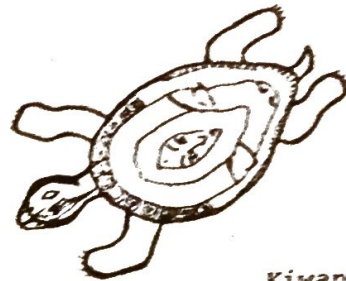


Kiwani

HARMONY HILL FARM, Northern Minnesota
Women's Land Trust, c/o Audrey Freesol,
PO Box 124, Cotton, MN 55724

HOWL, PO Box 242, Winooski VT 05404

LUNA CIRCLE FARM, Rt. 1, Box 1200,
Soldier's Grove, WI 54655
visitors, apprentices



Kiwani

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, PO Box 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
community.

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

RAINBOW'S END, 886 Raven Lane, Roseburg,
OR 97470 ph. 673-7649
We welcome visitors.

RAVEN'S HOLLOW, Box 533 RR 2, Cazenovia
WI 53924 608-249-8248

Visitors welcome
Looking for residents/partners interested
in self-sustaining woman-centered living.

RIVERLAND, PO Box 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 & camping, \$5/day includes meals

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

SKY RANCH, C4, Site 20, RR 2, Burns Lake,
 British Columbia, VOJ 1E0 Canada
 (606) 694-3738
 Women's Land Trust, seeking members

SPINSTERVALE, c/o Sunshine Goldstream,
 Box 429, Coombs, BC 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
 H.C. 72, Box 94-A, Monticello KY 42633
 visitors, work exchange

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

WISEHEART FARMS, Box 237, Williamsport,
 OH 43164
 seeking community members.

WOMAN'S WORLD, PO Box 655, Madisonville,
 LA 70447
 work exchange, construction school

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

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.

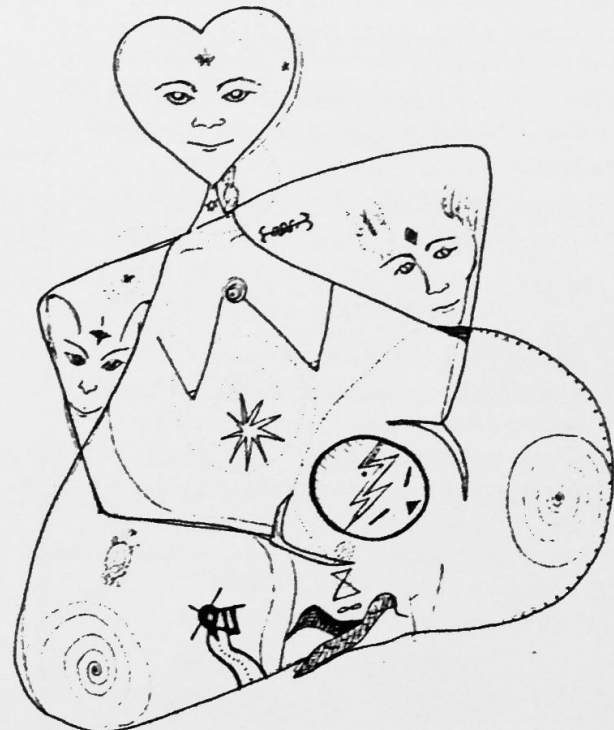
She respects the land, leaving every-
 thing the way she found it. She takes
 her garbage with her.

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.



Kiwani
 Whaletown, British Columbia

ANNOUNCEMENTS

I HAVE AN 80ACRE FARM in the mountains of Madison County, North Carolina, 1 hour northwest of Asheville. My dream is for this to be a home for Lesbians, especially Lesbian mothers who may have felt excluded from other Lesbian land because they have sons. I have 2 sons ages 8 and 9. We need more mothers and kids up here! The land has many springs and small creeks, pasture, and hardwood forest. It is very isolated (private). If you are interested, please write now as physical, spiritual, and financial help is needed for this dream to manifest. Ember Moon bourn, Rt.1 Box 60, Hot Springs, NC 28743

CALL TO SISTERS near Boston/central Mass. Lesbian south of Boston starting search for small farm with 2 stall barn and 1+ acres of farmable land to lease. Want to market vegetables, edible flowers, herbs, etc, possible riding instruction program. Must love animals (I have a cat, dog and horse) have an open mind and heart. Carpentry, farming knowledge a plus. Anyone with experience renting a small farm and starting similar venture please send me any suggestions! My search for land will begin in the winter of 93-94, I would love to find partners before search begins. Would like to locate near Boston or Central Mass.

Contact: Lisa Olson , 81 Aster Circle, Weymouth MA 02188
(617) 335-6085

IF YOU MISSED THE DEADLINE: ALERT: *The Women on the Land Directory* by Shewolf is being prepared and if your entry hasn't been mailed to me please take a few minutes to send me information on your settlement so it can be included in the directory. Send to Shewolf at Woman's World, POBox 655, Madisonville, LA 70447
For info call (504) 892-0765

LESBIAN MOMS ON LAND: I'm very interested in hearing from you about your experience. If your kids live with you on land, what's that like? Do other dykes on the land share the responsibility and daily interaction? If your kids live someplace else other than the land where you live, how's that working out? What works best for you and the kids? What's homeschooling like on land?

I'd like to correspond with any of you interested in discussing how we Lesbians on land are dealing with our daughters. How do we teach them and share with them what we're learning and creating on Lesbian land. What have you done? What's working, what doesn't work? Let's share our experiences and dreams about our daughters, ourselves, as we build our Lesbian culture. Write to me: SueWillow, PO Box 130, Serafina, NM 87569

NEW FROM MUSIC FOR LESBIANS: SPIRALS, a tape cassette of 6 original songs by Barbara Ester. \$6 + \$1 postage. Send to M.F.L. Barbara Ester, 15460 Garfield Drive, Leisure City, FL 33033.

SINISTER WISDOM, A Journal for the Lesbian Imagination in the Arts and Politics. Subscription \$17 for 4 issues. POBox 3252, Berkeley CA 94703



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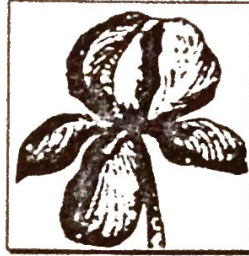
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