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institute mountain west

who are we?



institute/mountain west celebrates its third birthday with this brochure. three years is a long time for a radical organization to work without steady funding, a long time for a non-dogmatic community to survive. we are proud that the institute has maintained its sense of purpose and its stable community based on love, while changing itself and living in the midst of change.



three years ago, we lived on a mountaintop an hour from denver, maintaining a quiet retreat for study and discussion from which we could venture forth to initiate actions and projects in the denver-boulder area. now, we live within an easy walk of downtown denver, in a part of the city teeming with life and activity. then, we were two people; now twelve, with none remaining from the first year. three years ago, the only radical action in denver came out of the resistance house, a group of young men fighting the draft through individual acts of courage. now--free schools, bookstores, coops, action groups; two or three of everything, and communes sprouting up around the city like mushrooms after rain.





our brochures, especially in the last year, have reflected our attempts to change in response to changing conditions. as you read this, we should be once again engaged in serious discussion of what the institute is -- not what it was three years ago or even last month, but NOW. some items on the agenda: less telling, more doing. less public resistance, more building of alternatives among the many people who have already begun to resist. less being an information center for denver (we share that function with others now), more contact and cooperation with groups in other cities where a similar ferment of change and rebuilding is going on.

but remember:

how do i know who i am until i see what i do?

Community


 by living together as a community we share physical and human resources, creating our own alternative to alienation and violence. we grow personally and politically in an atmosphere of trust and mutual concern; supporting each other, not struggling as isolated individuals.

 it's hard to maintain community without continuity; that's one thing we've learned this summer. we've rarely had as many as six staff people together; at times, only three rattled around in our big house. some of these people had outside jobs, which we're coming to recognize as a serious obstacle to community. since everybody had a turn at traveling, the group that stayed changed from week to week. the regular meetings that hold our work and people together became an effort, and dinner was sometimes the only time we all saw each other. our well-laid plans for study groups and house repair often dwindled and died without proper decisions being made. in a strange reversal of the usual sexism problem, women on the staff tended to go through crises where each saw herself as shouldering all responsibility for the institute, while the few men felt isolated and left out.

we are confident that things will come together again this fall, and that we will begin to reap the benefits of the summer's traveling: new and stronger ties with groups around the country; the education we've gained from conferences and sessions, traveling and just getting away for a while; reading that was less organized than we'd planned but much wider in range.

and the more we travel, the more we feel that this house is home. and a fine place for us to be back at work in, this fall.

visitors

 there will be twelve of us living at the institute this fall. we feel that this is the maximum number we can cope with over a long period. since people do leave though, we appreciate letters from those who are interested in doing institute work and living in the community. we will keep your name and address and contact you when there is space. weekend and weeklong visitors to our community are welcome; please write or call first. people are always welcome to come talk with us or use the library.

contributions



although each of us is responsible for his or her rent and food money, we need contributions to help meet the costs of literature, traveling, telephone, postage, etc. any amount gives us the warm feeling of support. however, we don't want to confine contributions to money. we need other things including books for our library.

resources



our library is built around the idea of radical social change; we've recently acquired new books in the community and china sections. there is room to sit, read, relax and share ideas. feel free to borrow from it.


we are available as resource people. public speaking is one of the chief ways we share ideas with other people. some of the topics we speak about are nonviolent action, alternative lifestyles, alternative systems, men's liberation, women's liberation, free schools, south america, war tax resistance, draft resistance, the air war in indochina, alternative medicine and radical ecology.

we are always happy to go somewhere else to do a session. the traveling is welcome and we want to talk to anyone who is interested. we do need our traveling expenses paid. we will also gladly speak with groups that want to share ideas with us while we're in your area. write us and we will work out the details together.


we need your help in reaching people in the denver-boulder area. if you are connected with a church, school or other group, perhaps you could make space for us in your program. larger groups reach more people, but smaller ones give the opportunity for in-depth discussion. several friends, gathered together in your living room, would be a good opportunity for one of us to talk about what we are doing.

it's no problem baking bread in a commune; each of us does it once in a while and there's usually fresh bread on hand. harder for an isolated housewife or student -- but then, you could always get together with your neighbors and share the work in the same way; five people, each baking once a week for all, need never eat wonder bread again. it's as easy to make five loaves as one (cost, 15¢ apiece), men do it just as well as women, and if you can get together a group of four or five people, we'll come out and show you how we bake whole wheat bread.


institute mountain u

 sessions are our forum for sharing ideas and experiences. participants live together and create their own community. time is left for reading, for quiet contemplation and for fun. sessions begin at 8:00 pm on the first day listed and end the afternoon of the last day. meals are a group project, food costs \$1 a day, and you should bring a sleeping bag or bedding and a towel. please send an advance deposit if you plan to attend a session.


alternative medicine - bill oct. 6, 7, 8.

 this session is for people who are into or interested in alternative medicine, acupuncture, faith healing, hospital organizing, etc., and most of all, people who want to do something about it. one of my ideas is that people may want to live together, learn and spread what we learn together, act as a focal point for an alternative to corporate medicine, and maybe start an alternative clinic.

evenings at the institute
a chance to come together to share ideas and feelings
cidoc - jenny oct. 4 7:00 p.m.


 a discussion of cidoc, the center which ivan illich started in cuernavaca, mexico. implications of deschooling society, how the legal system can be used in limiting technological growth, and learning-skills exchange centers are areas i'd like to discuss.

people's bank - pam oct. 25 7:00 p.m.


 a group of people are exploring the idea of starting a people's bank. the bank would "contain" skills, talents, goods of clothing, furniture, etc. these goods and services could be passed around by trade or "neighborliness." a people's bank could be a concrete way of creating a village economy in the denver-boulder area, building bonds among people, simplifying life-styles and working against consumerism. any person interested in participation or sharing ideas, time and energy in a people's bank but who can't come on this evening please call the institute (573-6394) or pam solo (341-5166).

West 2096 Emerson Denver
Colorado 80205 573-6394


community - iris, judy, meredith oct. 13, 14, 15

 a chance to get together to talk about the struggles and joys of communal living. some stumbling blocks we've tripped over have been leadership, sex roles, work division, community identity, and just getting started; as any of these appear during the weekend we can put theory into practice by trying to deal with them. the joys are harder to write about, but we'll probably find some of them too.


nonviolence - meredith nov. 3, 4, 5

 a time to get together and explore satyagraha - truth force. that includes coping with fear, anger, passivity - growing nonviolently. we can talk about the history and theory of nonviolence - gandhi, quakers - and action, how to bring it to life.

sexism - ruth, bill nov. 23 - 26

 sexism continues to be one of the most crucial undealt-with problems standing between us and a whole, liberated life. we need to free ourselves from sexist roles and assumptions, and also to spread this consciousness to as many people as possible.

much of the difficulty in dealing with sexism has to do with the nature of power and power relationships. men are likely to adopt a rhetoric of liberation and not deal with the realities it presents, much as liberal politicians do. women find it hard to escape from passiveness and guilt -- they are too "nice". we need to be close, to learn to love each other, to not be dependent on a relationship (or relationships) with people of the opposite sex to make us whole people. we need to develop people-consciousness, not filtering everybody through a series of standards of behavior patterns because they are men or women.

 giving sessions is one of the few ways the institute has of earning money. we suggest a tuition of \$12 for a weekend session, but we ask that you set your own, taking into account the value of the session to you, your ability to pay, and our need of your support to keep going. we need some payment from everybody who attends a session, not necessarily in money.

Looking forward



we're excited about some ideas we've been thinking about and putting into action. this section is to tell you more about them.

we have been searching for ways to tie the urban community and the rural community together in a meaningful relationship, where each can benefit from the other. the institute is considering buying land this spring near denver for the purpose of starting a farm community which will relate closely to the institute. the two communities will exchange ideas about community living, experience different lifestyles and share labor (people from the institute will work on the farm a few months out of a year and vice versa). we are also excited with the opportunity this will provide in an alternative economic sense, whereby the farm can produce food for the support of the two communities and the institute can provide labor and materials from the city.

we're working with a new group in the community to set up an alternative economic system in denver. we're tired of having to get straight jobs that are alienating and dissatisfying for economic survival. we want something that we have a say in, allows for warm, supportive relationships with fellow workers, and provides our basic needs. the group that is together now is starting with a housing cooperative. we'll fix up houses for ourselves and to sell to other groups and families. we may also start a people's credit union which can be used as seed money for many other projects such as a food coop, day care center, health center, recycling center, etc., as the community grows. we want this project to be open to everyone at any level of participation that's comfortable. we see this as a more constructive way of dealing with neighborhood rehabilitation than the widespread demolition by denver urban renewal.

a serious possibility for this fall is the formation of a communal house to support women in transition (going through the process of divorce or separation, dropping out of the rat race, exploring solidarity with sisters, or whatever). women are needed to actually live in the house, taking community life seriously and spending time on the project.

each time one of us went traveling or a friend came through from another community, there was an exciting exchange of ideas and affections. so ... we've written three other groups and suggested trading one staff member for a month. we're waiting for responses.

being exposed to primal scream within the community is encouraging more of us to try it this fall.

as this brochure is written, our interests are in building alternatives to the system. providing our own nonexploitive economic and social structures is an urgent revolutionary task. such creative living generates energy and excitement --it feels right.

we see the denver radical coalition (which formed during the mining and bombing) as organizing anti-war actions that we'll take part in. some possibilities are: becoming a local narmic group, raising medical aid for indochina, building war industry boycotts, and educating people about the p.r.g.'s seven points peace proposal.

there are now five denver area churches willing to give sanctuary to any awol military people wishing to expose the military and the vietnam war; and wanting to take a strong moral and physical stand in opposition. there is a willing support group for those people resisting. more churches are being contacted and asked to consider allowing sanctuary.

newsletter



this summer saw a lot of people coming in and out. people who came to visit, to crash, or to stay for a while. most of the time it was really good, but sometimes there were too many people too fast.

all the staff people were gone part of the time too. some were away the whole summer. those who weren't traveled a lot vacationing and escaping/recuperating from living in this busy city.

the permanent people here now are judy, ruth, bill, mary margaret, meredith, garth, fran, jenny, iris and gary.

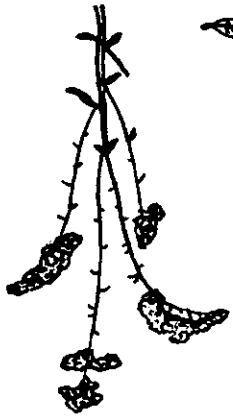
----- -- meals have been tasty and healthy with all kinds of good vegetables from our garden -- squash, corn, tomatoes, peppers, chard.....

although this summer was somewhat of a vacation time for us, we did get some work done on the house -- painting, sinks and shelves in the kitchen, a bicycle shed, a dark room set up in the basement, rugs put down on stairs and halls.



iris, judy, meredith and ruth joined a temporary women's commune at hooper farm (morgan, known as pat when she was at the institute, is one of the five permanent residents). we concluded that farm life is hard, but we enjoyed the easy flow of work in an all women's group; by contrast, we became more aware of the changes in our behavior when men came to visit.

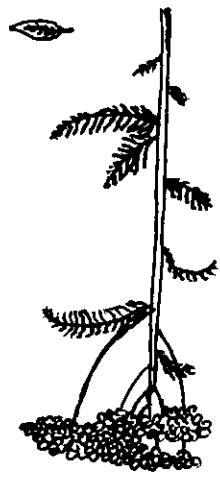
the institute continues to hold potlucks every thursday evening at 6. everybody is welcome -- please bring your family and friends, some FOOD please, and anything you want to share.



fall brochure 1972

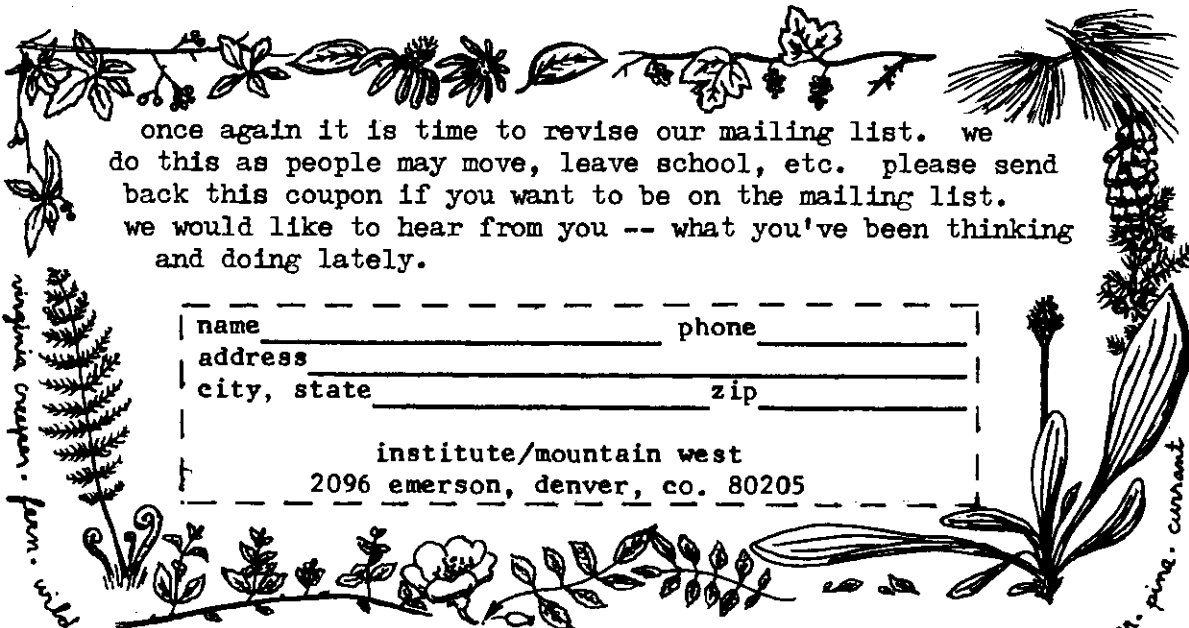
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once again it is time to revise our mailing list. we do this as people may move, leave school, etc. please send back this coupon if you want to be on the mailing list. we would like to hear from you -- what you've been thinking and doing lately.

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rose. medicinal herbs we have found growing in the area. plantain. juniper. pine. currant.