

KOINONIA FALL NEWSLETTER # 2 - NOVEMBER 1, 1971

"Come, ye thankful people, come" .... all our peanuts are in, and we are right in the middle of an abundant corn harvest .... "raise the song of harvest home!" Farming is but one of the partnerships at Koinonia .... Bo, Ed, and George do most of the work .... the rest of us are bound to the soil through the labors of our brothers, and the close kinship which we all feel to the earth. This kinship is especially meaningful at harvest-time. Thanksgiving will be especially joyous this year.

In the weeks since the last newsletter, we have really learned to give thanks.. .. Koinonia has known death and birth. Death took us suddenly. Struck silent for a time after Rick May's fatal car accident, we struggled to pass through our grief to celebration in faith. Ladon Sheats was Rick's closest friend and room-mate .... he shares some of his struggle with us all ....

"Rick May moved quietly into our lives in September of 1970. He came to us as a volunteer, wanting to give of himself during his four-month break from studies at Goshen College in Indiana. He quickly assumed responsibility in construction projects, where his initiative and skills placed him in constant demand around the farm. After only a few weeks here, Rick made a statement that burned indelibly into my mind .... 'I've never worked harder, never earned less (just room and board) and never found so much meaning in what I am doing.' I guess it was this meaning and Rick's deep love for the fellowship here that brought him back to us again in April of 1971. Since April, Rick had been building homes for dispossessed families in the Koinonia housing village, and had been spending much of his time with several families who lived near Koinonia. He was helping one of these families build a much needed out-house and planned to help the head of this household purchase a truck so that he might become free of economic oppression. He said at one point, 'I don't know where the money is going to come from, but we gotta find a way.' And that was his spirit .. .. 'wherever there is a need, that's where we should be involved.' Because of his fatal automobile accident on September 21 (he had been on his way to Albany to check building specifications) Rick will not personally see his dreams become reality .... but the spirit of this stalwart young believer etched a pattern on our lives which leaves us deeply committed to living out his faith. Rick's deepest feelings were conveyed by a prayer he sung constantly during July and August .... a prayer which also speaks the minds of his brothers and sisters in the remaining Koinonia family.



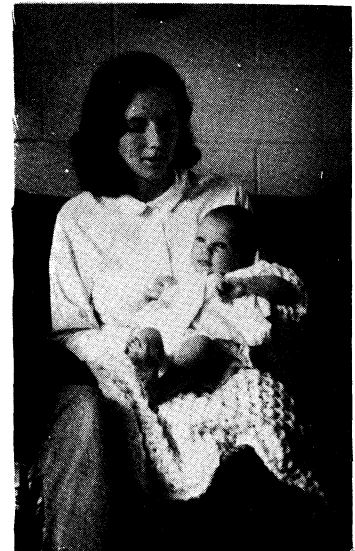
RICK MAY

'Into your hands we commend our spirits, O Lord;  
Into your hands we commend our hearts,  
For we must die to ourselves in loving you;  
Into your hands we commend our love.'"

Less than two weeks later, while we were still mindful of our experience with death, Georgia Ailene Fuller came screaming into this world to minister to us through the deep experience of birth. Georgia was the first baby born on the farm

since 1958, and Linda's own words carry the special fullness of this event for all of us ....

"A healthy cry .... several joyful cheers .... the community bell rings at eleven p.m. to herald the arrival of our fourth child, a girl, Georgia Ailene. A chattering crowd gathers under our bedroom window just at the moment of birth to give forth with two full choruses of 'Happy Birthday to you!'



LINDA & GEORGIA AILENE

"My decision to have a home delivery right here on the farm turned out to be one of the most beautiful experiences of my life. Made possible by a good county health department prenatal clinic and midwife program, my regular check-ups gave me a chance to identify and get acquainted with a number of women who have home deliveries by mid-wife not by choice but by economic necessity. (A midwife delivery is \$35; a hospital-doctor delivery is somewhere around \$500.) Personal relationships with two midwives who have been working in Koinonia's bakery for a number of years, gave me the confidence that all would go well.

"Millard wanted to be by my side for the birth, and this would have been impossible in our local hospital. Thank goodness, more hospitals are giving the father the opportunity to witness this dramatic event rather than shoving him off into a waiting room.)

"Mrs. Gussie Jackson (who was featured as Koinonia's senior employee on the first page of our last newsletter) was the midwife who arrived at our home at 10 p.m. on October 1, to deliver our nine and one-half pound girl. 'Miss Gussie' had asked one of our women, Ann Zook, to assist her. Our children had tried to stay awake but it was not until the next morning that they came in to see their new sister by my side. Christmas morning has never been this exciting. Truly, this was a Christ event, celebrated by mother, father, brother, sisters, fellow Koinonians, and our dear partners all over the world. Thanks be to God and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

It seems odd to say that a time of harvest has also been a time of growth, but such has been the case for our small fellowship here on the farm. A harvest is possible only as a result of the sowing of the seed - but once the seed has been sown, the harvest must come to give purpose and value to the planting. "The Lord giveth; the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

The noisy arrival of our newest and youngest partner, Georgia Ailene, also heralded the return of some older friends to Koinonia. Henrietta and Willard Matz, two of our closest non-resident partners, have once again traveled from Attica, Ohio to share our way of life with us in Georgia. The Matzes first came to Koinonia three years ago, and they have returned three times since, each time for three months or more. Willard is a fine carpenter, and has assumed the responsibility for construction and installation of cabinets in Koinonia Village houses. Henrietta's enthusiasm and cheerful disposition have really brightened up the address-o-graph room.

Two other friends have also come home to us again .... Clarice and Del Murray from Sherrard, Illinois. Del and Clarice drove their Avion trailer to our yard last January and stayed with us three months. Del's skills as a diesel mechanic

were fully utilized in the shop, and Clarice assumed much of the responsibility for the processing of orders for pecan products. We were over-joyed that they could return to us again this year .... the old trailer is back in the yard .... Del is back in the shop, and Clarice is busy processing your Christmas orders.

Last year, our October newsletter carried news of Sammy Rufus Sims, Sr. and his family, who had just moved into Koinonia Village. At that time, five houses were occupied and four were under construction. Now, only one year later, we are happy to report that 17 houses are now occupied and 7 are under construction. Walter and Otha Shelton, their three children & Otha's mother, Mae Lizzy William, moved into their new house just two weeks ago, and they are just now beginning to get settled. The Sheltons moved to the village from Sumter City, which Mae Lizzy describes as "what used to be a thick settlement, but everyone is leavin' now. It's nothin' more'n a collection of old plank houses, so fulla holes that they can't ever heat up, and when it rains, it comes beatin' in so that it's leakin' on the outside and rainin' on the inside. I was born not far from here, y'know. Just down the road and cross the creek ... I've knowed about this place, too, all of my days, but I ain't never got here before now." We are happy that she and the rest of her family are with us now.

New houses in Koinonia Village are available to families on a 20 year no-interest mortgage, with monthly payments ranging from \$25-\$32. With conventional financing, these houses would cost \$75 or more. Koinonia's Fund For Humanity takes the burden of interest off the backs of the poor and enables them to live in a decent house of their own. In the growth of the housing village, the construction and operation of the new Child Development Center, and our continuing effort to develop new, rural based industries like the new Sewing Industry, it is the Fund For Humanity which makes it possible for us to make the jump from dream to reality. And the Fund For Humanity exists from the shared profits of all Koinonia ventures and from tax-deductible gifts and non-interest loans from our friends and partners.

The Koinonia Sewing Industry and Koinonia Handcrafts are two of the industries which got their start through non-interest loans from the Fund For Humanity. Koinonia Handcrafts have recently added several new craftsmen. Scot Woodland has come from California, and his energy and creativity have been put into batiking fabrics. Scot has everyone drawing little caterpillars, mushrooms and whimsical woodland creatures on pieces of muslin ... these are then painted with wax to block out the dye ... and many different colors are built up through a process of dying and re-waxing portions of the picture. Koinonia Handcrafts now offer these batiks, approx. 16" x 22" for \$5.00 postpaid. They are perfect for hangings, placemats, bookcovers and gifts. If you don't have a Handcrafts order blank from the last newsletter, please write and ask for one.

The new Sewing Industry also continues to grow steadily ... we presently employ 20 people. As you will see from the enclosed flyer, we have decided to offer you the opportunity to purchase directly from us at a savings of 1/3 or more. We have no words to describe the joy in seeing so many people from the surrounding area learn new skills and develop warm relationships within this small industry. Our dream is that we will soon be able to provide similar job opportunities for more people.

**DON'T FORGET TO SEND IN YOUR ORDER FOR PECANS AND CANDY AND FRUITCAKE AND ALL THE OTHER GOOD STUFF DESCRIBED IN THE PRODUCTS CATALOG. AND DON'T FORGET YOUR FRIENDS EITHER!**

Our continued progress in all phases of Koinonia's ministry is a source of great joy to all of us here on the farm .... and we are happy to share this joy with you! All of the partners of Koinonia send you warmest best wishes for the upcoming holiday season.