

KOINONIA PARTNERS

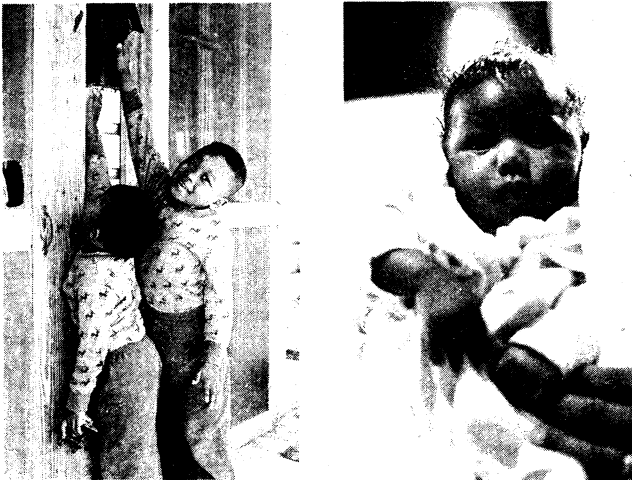
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"We seek a new spirit..."

SPRING NEWSLETTER 1973

When by happy chance an idea is born that can benefit a number of people and at the same time serve a felt need in the market place, the industry which emerges should indeed be a lively one! Such is our hope for KOINONIA HANDCRAFTS. Laurie Fuchs, Carol Brink and Linda Fuller launched HANDCRAFTS in the summer of 1970. They began by selling a few things in a clothing store in Albany. Since the renovation of the old cow barn into a shop, the business has been aimed primarily at a mail-order trade. Carol and Laurie, partners in HANDCRAFTS, have guided the fledgling industry for the past two and a half years. Until now, the sales have been seasonal, with the greatest volume occurring at Christmastime. However, it is the hope of all those involved in the industry to have this shop in year-round operation. In order that our many partners around the country will be aware of another area of need in Sumter County, we want to introduce you all to the women who work in KOINONIA HANDCRAFTS.



Mamie Lee Baker has been 'at home' at Koinonia most of her life. She remembers Bible Study sessions during her girlhood summers, square dances on the lawn, water-melons and hayrides. Mamie was born in 1941, just a year before Koinonia was formed, and now has two sons who attend our Child Development Center. Gregory Glenn, 5, and George Timothy, 4, have two sisters, Mamie Ann, 19 months and Sylvia Denise, 5 weeks. Mr. Baker, whose father lives in Koinonia Village, is employed locally.

When she started with HANDCRAFTS two and a half years ago, Mamie brought her own sewing machine to the farm till she learned to make dashikis, after which she took work home to complete. Then she learned to do patchwork. She began working full-time in the HANDCRAFTS barn over a year ago and now makes every garment with skill. Mamie will be returning to work in mid-March. Her mother, who plucked chickens at Koinonia in the early fifties, will care for the two girls, and the boys will return to the Child Development Center. She would like to see KOINONIA HANDCRAFTS become a year-round industry so she could be fully employed. But she smiles wistfully when she says that she does enjoy being at home with her family.



... a spirit of partnership with God' and our fellow man."

Mary Alice Brown, 20, has two active children, Trina, 3, and Rodney Jerome, 2. She lives with her mother, four brothers, and a sister near Plains. Another sister lives in Koinonia Village. Mary Alice and her family have attended Bible Study at Koinonia and have many fond memories of Clarence Jordan's 'cotton patch' style of teaching. Although Mary Alice learned to use a sewing machine just a year and a half ago when she started working here, she works 'at the speed of light.' She enjoys her work and is a talented seamstress. Before learning to use a machine, Mary Alice made her own dresses by hand and has used her own designs in embroidery.



Rosa Mae Burton was born near Smithville in Sumter County twenty-three years ago. After her mother died, a neighbor whom she calls grandmother cared for her and three brothers. Her grandmother now sits for Rosa Mae's three children -- Hattie Louise, 7, John Arthur, 4, and Viola, 3 -- while she works. Last September, when Rosa Mae began working at HANDCRAFTS, her only experience had been in mending clothes by hand. Mamie Baker taught her to use a sewing machine and now she makes peasant blouses and dresses skillfully. Rosa Mae doesn't own a car, but her brother brings her in the morning and she 'finds a way home at night.' If Rosa Mae can work throughout the year, she hopes to save enough for a down payment on a house in Koinonia Village.



Mattie Ruth Hurley, the mother of six children, works four nights a week as a nurses' aide in a convalescent home. During the six weeks before Christmas when she worked with HANDCRAFTS, Mattie Ruth managed to appear smiling and bright-eyed at 8:00 every morning in spite of her tough schedule. Her husband, John, is employed by the City of Americus. Mattie Ruth's children (ages 15, 13, 12, 9, 8, 7) help with cooking and housework "because they know I'm working for them." Mattie Ruth also learned to use a sewing machine at Koinonia, and would like to work every day at least for awhile -- or, as she says, "as long as I can stand up under it and still do a good job." Mattie Ruth is a thoroughly outgoing and friendly person who smiles a lot, although she sleeps only a few hours most days, sometimes has to catch a ride to work, and has responsibilities few of us would envy.



Carol and Laurie took me to visit two of the ladies who make quilts for KOINONIA HANDCRAFTS. I came away fully aware that I had been in the company of artists. I was overwhelmed with the beauty of the work they showed us, entranced by their stories, and warmed by their hospitality.

in Bolivia, the Stewarts said: "Returning to Michigan and resuming our work, we felt a restlessness that we couldn't explain even to ourselves. Perhaps after living among the underprivileged in South America we became more sensitive to the reality of human need that exists in so many areas of this troubled world and felt a certain futility about our day-to-day activities."

They weren't sure where this was leading them, but it seemed to be away from the security of home in the suburbs and friends of twenty years. After visiting Koinonia last spring, the Stewarts decided to become volunteers here for a year. It wasn't a huge decision to leave Rochester, Barbara says, "It was something we had been moving toward for a long time."

Charles retired early, after 35 years. They kept only what belongings would fit in their van and left their apartment behind. Since last January the Stewarts have been at home here at Koinonia. Among other things, Charles is foreman of the ferro-cement building crew working in our housing program. Barbara is a vital part of the Koinonia Sewing Industry.

Although the future beyond next January is unplanned, the Stewarts feel right about where their decisions are taking them. It is people like the Stewarts who encourage us to keep growing.

In addition to communicating the ideas of His Kingdom, we are also trying to apply these ideas. One critically important area of application is constructing homes for dispossessed neighbors. Since the FUND FOR HUMANITY's beginning in 1969, it has provided the capital to build thirty new homes. These homes are sold at cost on a twenty-year non-interest loan to rural families who desperately need housing. In an attempt to cope with rising building costs, we have started to experiment with new building methods and materials.

One experiment involves building concrete block houses by stacking block walls with no mortar, and then spreading on a strong surface-bonding material (fiber glass strands through a special mortar mix). This method is less expensive than the conventional process, primarily because it does not require professional masons and can be done by volunteers.

A second experiment -- one with exciting possibilities for Koinonia and beyond -- is a ferro-cement process. The process, amazingly, cuts the cost of wall construction in half. It involves forcing a rich concrete mixture through several layers of chicken wire mesh stretched over forms. The resulting thin wall is stronger than a conventional 8-inch cement block wall. Harry Doherty, who introduced ferro-cement to Koinonia, designed and built a ferro-cement dome that he and his family live in at Koinonia



David Mast and other volunteers put up a Sure-Wall house



Larry Stoner & Charlie Mann



One of the arches for the Mosley's house

and made two television programs in Lubbock, Texas.

In addition to leading numerous discipleship schools in other places in the past few months, we have held two week-ends of discipleship studies here at the Farm for persons who have traveled from all parts of the country. Also, we have spent many hours with hundreds of volunteers and numerous college groups who have come to share life with us. We feel that Koinonia is an appropriate environment for questing young adults, so we have tried to facilitate their search for Reality by providing three Work/Study sessions during the past year. Each group of ten to twelve young adults spent eight weeks with us in worship, work and recreation. During this time, they spent twenty to twenty-five hours a week in individual reading and seminar discussions of (1) the values of the American culture, (2) the teachings of Christ, and (3) the styles of Kingdom living.

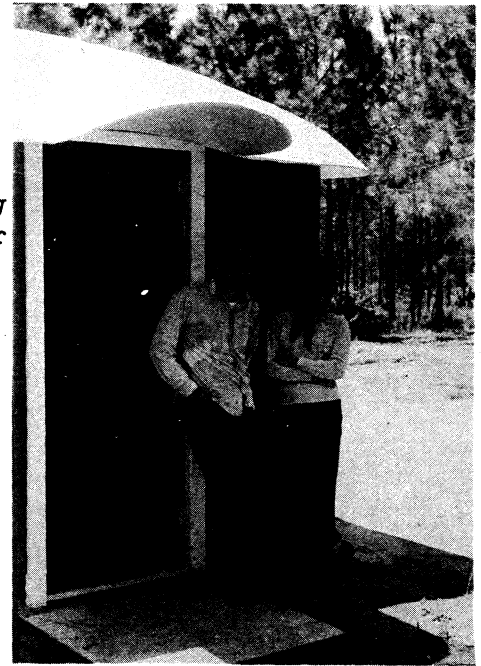
Through these efforts to communicate the Ideas of the New Order, we have a deep hope that people will re-shape their lives. . .

. . .by becoming compassionately concerned for others, rather than being self-centered;

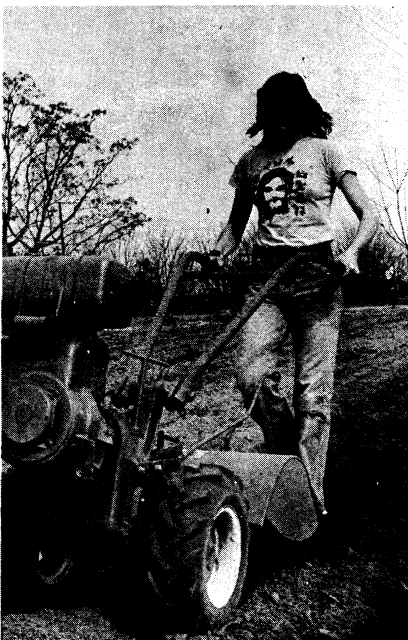
. . .by giving back to life what has been generously entrusted to each of us;

. . .and by living to create goodwill, rather than supporting the destruction of life, whether that be the lingering economic and psychological violence here in southwest Georgia or the continuing violence to our brothers and sisters in southeast Asia.

We believe that discipleship calls us to: "CHANGE YOUR WHOLE WAY OF LIVING . . . FOR GOD'S NEW ORDER OF THE SPIRIT IS CONFRONTING YOU !" And we are confronted . . . continually. As we seek to understand what it means to be God's people, we pray that our lives and yours will make the Spirit of Partnership a reality.

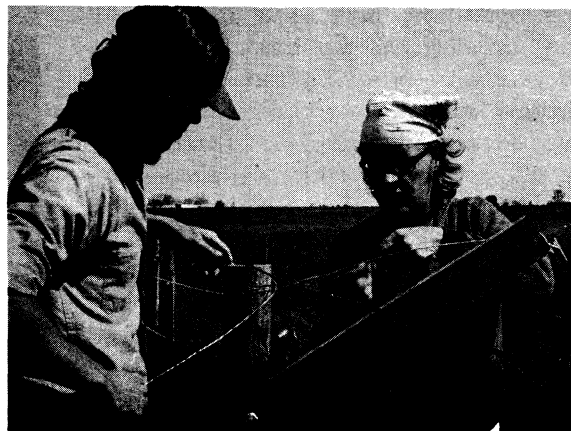


Charles & Barbara
in front of the Mush-
room House, a ferro-
cement structure



Patti Dodd prepares the
garden

Changes in life style sometimes are in process over a long period of time. Charles and Barbara Stewart always knew that they wanted to be involved in life in a way that they knew meant changing their life style, yet not knowing specifically what that meant. When the children left home, Charles, an employee of Bell Telephone, and Barbara, a counselor at Oakland University, both took leaves of absence from their work and served in the Peace Corps in 1968 and 1969. After two years



Jim Dodd & Robert True
in the vineyard