

LIVING THE REALITY

THE NEW MEMBER SURVIVAL HANDBOOK

Version 2.0.1

Last revised by Ethan 02010.05.12

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The purpose of this New Member Survival Handbook is not to be a thorough reference about Twin Oaks, but to have just enough of the right information to make living here a little easier. It can be very hard to be a new member here. It's difficult to be a new person anywhere, and it takes time to make connections and find people whom you trust and are compatible with. Some members had a fairly smooth new member period, but had difficulty later on. Sometimes members want to get to know visitors, but figure they've already met the new members and the new members will be here a long time so why go out of the way to talk to them. The people at Twin Oaks are very diverse and Twin Oaks is always changing. Besides getting to know everyone (which you will) and finding some close friends (which you may or may not), getting your work situation the way you like it will be the thing that makes life pleasant here. But don't expect to find the perfect job, close friends, hot sex, a nice room, or to understand the system right off the bat. Don't believe everything you hear (or read). Different members have different realities (opinions), so get a second opinion if its important. Usually the **manager is the best source of information**, or check with your New Member Parents or the Process Team for conflicting answers or anything that doesn't seem to fall into any one area.

Hopefully, this manual will make life easier for you, but when you have questions about where to get batteries (and whether the community pays for them), how to do LEX at Acorn, or whatever, don't hesitate to talk to your New Member Parents or the manager of the appropriate area.

When you realize you no longer need or want this Handbook, whether after 2 months or 10 years, please return it to the New Member Parents to be reused or recycled.

WELCOME TO TWIN OAKS!

Table of Contents

Getting Settled.....	3
YOUR BEDROOM.....	3
WHERE TO GET STUFF FOR YOUR ROOM.....	3
YOUR FIRST FEW WEEKS.....	3
GETTING IT TOGETHER.....	3
YOUR MEMBERSHIP.....	4
TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER.....	4
COURTESY.....	4
Where can I find...?.....	5
TOUR OF TWIN OAKS.....	5
THE HEALTH OFFICE (inside MT).....	5
LIBRARY.....	6
THE OFFICE (Llano).....	6
The Outside.....	7
TWIN OAKS' ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBERS.....	7
PHONES.....	8
COMPUTERS.....	8
VEHICLE USE.....	8
REGISTER TO VOTE.....	10
HOW TO DEAL WITH POLICE.....	10
Labor.....	11
FINDING WORK.....	11
NEW MEMBER HOURS.....	12
OVERQUOTA.....	12
THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN FILLING OUT YOUR LABOR SHEET.....	12
ZK LOUNGE.....	13
KITCHENS.....	14
EMERALD CITY.....	15
AVOIDING EXHAUSTION.....	15
The TRADE-OFF GAME.....	15
HOLIDAYS.....	15
Other Tidbits.....	16
GUESTING.....	16
BICYCLES.....	16
ELECTRIC CARTS.....	16
NATURE.....	17
HEALTH.....	17
SICK HOURS.....	17
WORK RELATED INJURIES.....	18
DOC AND CARPOOL HOURS.....	18
MENTAL HEALTH.....	18
IN AN EMERGENCY.....	18
Appendices.....	19
GLOSSARY.....	19
A GUIDE TO BEHAVIORAL NORMS AND ATTITUDES AT TWIN OAKS.....	22
EXPLANATION OF TWIN OAKS PROPERTY CODE.....	24
HOW TO BE A LONG-TERM MEMBER.....	26
CONCLUSION.....	27
Whose handbook was this?.....	28

Getting Settled

YOUR BEDROOM

When you arrived, you should have gotten a 3x5 slot, a mailbox, a 3-digit membership # and a room. You may have gotten a bedroom that is less than thrilling to you. Don't worry. Pretty soon people will be moving around or out and some nicer rooms will be opening up. You can check out openings on the 3 X 5 board, talk to the room assigner and keep your ears alert. **Be patient.** It can sometimes take awhile to get a permanent room. Almost everyone at Twin Oaks moves out of the room in which they were originally placed.

You may know which SLG you would like to live in. If so, find out who their SLG rep is, and find out the process for moving in. Some SLGs require a three-week visit and then they decide whether to accept you, others are much less involved, and some have little process at all. If the SLG you are interested in is full at the moment, get your name on their waiting list.

In your room you should find a lamp, a clock, a bureau and a bed. This stuff came by way of Trusterty which also provides bed frames, mattresses or futons, paint and spackle, but probably not any hours. Check the **Trusterty trailer** up at E.C. for these items, the occasional space heater or nice piece of carpet.

Commie clothes provides pillows, sheets, and blankets. If you want to fix up your room, talk to the manager of **building maintenance**. You may be able to get some hours and free paint.

WHERE TO GET STUFF FOR YOUR ROOM

On the opposite side of the Harmony laundry lines from Harmony are the **Flips** and **Bozo sheds**. In the Flips shed, you can find wonderful things that other people have gotten rid of, like lamps, stereo speakers, etc. In the Bozo shed live the light bulbs if you're in the dark. Fans often live there as well. Peruse and use.

On the west side of the driveway leading up to Llano is the **storage barn** which contains things like dressers, carpet, and mattresses. There is also the **Trusterty trailer** up at E.C. The Trusterty manager probably has an idea of specifically what is where. If you are looking for something in particular, you can mention it to the Trusterty manager, who can keep an eye out for if something like that pops up.

YOUR FIRST FEW WEEKS

You get two days worth of **"transition" hours** when you arrive at Twin Oaks. These can be used to take a few days to get your room in order and get settled. You can also jump into work right away in your first few days, and use the transition hours to jump start your vacation balance.

You'll be getting a few oreos assigned in your first few weeks. Some of these things you already know about somewhat from your visitor session, others will be completely new. The **labor oreo** will reexplain how to fill out labor sheets, how to find work, and other general labor issues. At the **legal sign-in**, you will sign documents making you an official member of Twin Oaks. The **health oreo** will give you more detailed information about the health policies of Twin Oaks now that you are a member. The **vehicle use oreo** will explain how to fill out TORs, how to become a Twin Oaks driver, and how to sign out vehicles.

There are also regular **new member dinners** once a week. Anyone who is a provisional member can eat with other new members and the **New Member Liaisons**. People can share how their week has been, general new member questions can be answered, and sometimes we have other members attend as guest speakers to talk about themselves or a particular area.

If you don't have a mailbox or 3x5 slot in ZK within a few days, please pester your new member liaisons to make one for you! These are important, as they are one of the main ways people will try to communicate with you.

One of the main problems people often have early in their membership is finding enough work. Methods for getting into various areas are described later in this handbook. However, if you are experiencing difficulty, it is better to let your new member liaisons know sooner rather than later. They may have ideas about which areas need help at the moment, and offer other advice for finding work in particular areas.

GETTING IT TOGETHER

What seemed part and parcel of being a visitor suddenly becomes quite elusive as a new member. There may be few or no other new members who have come at the same time as you and you may feel like you are the only person who doesn't know everybody else. So, what do you do?.....

Well. . . you can find out about events going on by reading the 3 X 5 board. There are also groups that get together regularly whose schedules wouldn't be posted and who may or may not want new people, so TALK to

people. Decide what you would like to do and maybe someone is already doing it. If no one is, someone may be interested in doing it with you. Don't be afraid to post your own 3 X 5 saying you are interested in getting involved in _____. To the right of the 3 X 5 board there is a strip of brown pockets where you may reserve the retreat cabin, the canoes, the folding bike, and so on. You can reserve the double bathtub by signing the calendar just outside the bathroom in upstairs Oneida. There is a pottery studio and kiln for potters in the Dairy Barn, a darkroom in MT, and camping equipment in MT and the Rec shed.. There are also nice tree houses in the woods to play in. A good way to get to know people is to arrange one-on-one dates with them. In the hx shop or at mealtimes works out well.

One thing to watch out for and avoid is bonding through negativity in social situations which feel friendly but are based on being critical of others and of Twin Oaks. Also, experienced communitarians recommend **not getting involved in a sexual relationship as a provisional member** whether or not you think that you were meant for each other. It takes a lot of the little energy you have to spare, you will run into their ex-lover around every corner all day and night, and if you break up, you will see that person all the time, with their new partner, and no getting away from the PAIN. People have left over just these things, so do consider exerting some self-control, but this is of course ultimately up to your personal choice. Just remember this advice; it happens enough that it was worth mentioning here.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Hopefully, by now you've taken care of any debts, pets, assets, needed medical and dental work, and perhaps even gotten an HIV test. **At your five month point, your allowance, VE and labor balances need to be zero or above.** These balances are posted every month or so on clipboards in Llano office. If you don't keep them above zero, then your six month poll will only give the options of extend or reject for people voting on you. (An extension is an extra three month period in which you won't receive the benefits of being a full member at Twin Oaks – most notably the right to vote and health coverage.) As a provisional member, **it is in your best interest to never go into the money or labor hole.** It's a good idea to build up a little vacation balance and allowance buffer in your first few months in case something comes up that you want to do, as opposed to going into the hole and then trying to get out of it, which is much more stressful. The rest is pretty much up to you. A poll will go out to the community, but if you aren't going to pass, you will most likely already be aware of it. So if you're the average member and fit right in, all that worrying you're doing is unfounded.

As a provisional member you can't vote on full-membership polls (or Planner overrides), but you can input on visitors and are encouraged to do so. People may ask you to be a manager, but this responsibility is best avoided until you're well settled in. You can express your opinions in meetings, O & I papers, notes to managers, planners, etc. Just remember that jumping in with both feet (but without much information, history or firsthand contact with the people here) can have the effect of causing a splash you hadn't anticipated. A bit of advice for early on is to read papers, talk to people, ask questions, and remember there's lots of time to feel out the scene and become fully involved in decision-making and input-giving on all levels.

TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER

There is lots of stress here. Just like everywhere else in society, there are emotional issues that people here deal with in a variety of ways. Some members are on lithium, or antidepressants, some see outside counselors, some co-counsel, some do spiritual work. Some days are good, some not so good. There is depression, upset and the like. We try to give each other slack, sometimes we get involved as friends or even as members of a person's Care team, if needed. If you have any energy to help relieve some of the distress, even in small ways, this would be valuable for the community. Offering a hug to someone who looks like co could use it is often appreciated. Or even if the person looks like co is doing fine. Being able to tell when someone doesn't want to be bothered is an important skill to cultivate. Being friendly without being intrusive is often the best way to be supportive of each other.

If you are having difficulties with someone that you don't think you can work out on your own, check in with the **Process Team**. They can talk to the other person for you, arrange things like mediations, and a variety of other conflict resolution approaches.

COURTESY

You were probably told these things as a visitor, but we'll reiterate them. When you approach someone, remember to **ask before asking**. The proper way to do this is to say what you want to ask about specifically to give the person a chance to say no. For example, say "can I ask you a question about hammocks?" instead of just a vague "can I ask you a question?" Someone may be willing to talk about hanging out later, but isn't in the mood for

a work question, and asking first gives them the opportunity to take that personal space. Remember that it's a norm not to ask questions while in the line for the steamtable. Some folks take on the farm vacations and will leave up a 3 X 5 to that effect. If such is the case, don't ask co any work questions. Leave co a note asking your question, but don't expect a prompt response. If you approach a few people eating together, ask them if it's all right to join them. People frequently have private dates together. It could also be a meeting.

Some people will never answer 3 X 5s. It's not anything to take personally. You just need to approach these people directly when your note hasn't been answered. Some people also check their email infrequently enough that a 3 X 5 or direct communication would be better.

Where can I find...?

TOUR OF TWIN OAKS

Of course you went on a tour as a visitor, but just in case you forgot or haven't been there yet, here are a few places you might want to go:

First there's **commie clothes (CC)** in Harmony where you can find all sorts of wonderful things to wear. As a visitor you weren't supposed to use commie clothes so I suggest you spend a little time up there and get familiar with what's about. Keep looking, there are actually some very nice things there and you just may be able to find one in your size. Please put things away when you are done looking. If you want to return or donate clothing to CC, put it in the laundry bins downstairs. There are also pins and needles, thread, yarn, fabric, and notions there for you to use.

So what do you do when your shoes wear out and you can't find any in commie clothes? First, look in commie clothes, then, talk to the manager, there may be some money available for you to buy a new pair. CC will also help pay for underwear, bras, other stuff, but **ASK FIRST!!!**

Also in Harmony, in the bathroom by the washing machines (unless it's a beautiful summer day), are clean towels. Between the laundry room and the living room is the **House Closet**, where soap, toothpaste, shampoo, tampons and cleaning supplies are stored. There should also be a place in your SLG for cleaning supplies and First Aid, etc.

It's wonderful to live with the nice **Woodshop** that we have and be able to make marvelous projects in our "free time." You should talk to the shop manager before the first time you use it because there are some tools with special needs that you will want to become familiar with first, even if you have used similar tools elsewhere. Try to leave it neater than you found it. If there's a problem with any tools, tell the shop manager and also leave a note. If you need wood for a project, look under the table where the radial arm saw is mounted. For larger pieces, look in the racks of the lumber storage shed on the other side of the clothesline. There are some personal stashes of wood there so don't take anything with a name on it. There is also wood in the tobacco barn. If you ask an EC worker, or a woodshop regular they may be able to turn you on to some other stashes as well. Then when you're done, label your project so that you have a reasonable chance of finding it again and put it out of the way.

Be careful. Especially with the table saw. Dianne cut off part of her finger there. It's easy to be hit in the chest by a big piece of wood. Most woodshop accidents happen when the worker is tired or in a hurry, so **don't** work under those conditions! Don't use the machinery up in EC for our wood projects; it's prioritized and specialized for our hammocks business, use the woodshop in Harmony instead.

Across the courtyard, just south of Llano is the compost Café. **Smokers** should know that there are only three inside spaces in the community where people can smoke: the compost café, the smokers' lounge in ZK, and one of the decks at Tupelo (SLGs set their own norms on this, in general you can't smoke in your room). Please don't smoke outside in areas of high traffic or outside open windows. You won't find cigarette butts on the ground here – you've joined the ranks of the most considerate smokers on the planet!

THE HEALTH OFFICE (inside MT)

Here you can find aspirin, vitamins, and first aid items like Band-Aids (in case your SLG has run out) and leg braces, plus other medicines for your ills, birth controls, toothbrushes, some self-help tapes, and plenty of books. When taking pills, only take what you need, not whole bottles. There are empty bottles for you to decant what you need; it's a good idea to write what you have decanted and the expiration date on the bottle. Drop a 3 x 5 to the health team if we run out of something. Be sure to lock the door on the way out so children don't go in.

LIBRARY

Updated by Mala, 2/3/09

The library manager has two responsibilities: subscribing to magazines and organizing our book collection. Quite a few members make their personal magazine subscriptions available to the community. Beyond this, we generally budget money for a number of community subscriptions each year. Each winter we vote on which magazines we want to subscribe to in the upcoming year. In recent years we've purchased between 5 and 12 subscriptions, depending on the size of the budget. Current magazines should stay in the ZK lounge or in the rack outside the lounge. Recent back issues live on the shelves by the phone booths, and may be borrowed. Magazines older than a year may be privatized or cut up for validation cards or whatever.

We have a wonderful book collection spread throughout our residences. In the past we sometimes purchased books for our collection; these days we have a steady influx of donations from members, ex-members, and friends, and the main job of the library manager is culling out enough old books to make room on the shelves for the new books. The library functions much like commie clothes, in that the boundary between the public collection and private collections is very porous. There is no sign-out system; just help yourself to what you want, keep books as long as you want them, and return them when you're done to the shelves in ZK (near the bus station) or Llano kitchen. You can also donate books at these locations; let me know if you have more than one box of books you'd like to donate. The library has a very small labor budget and is essentially a one-person crew; however, if you'd like to use some of your new member hours to help with shelving, etc, talk to me. There is no catalog, as books flow in and out of the collection so constantly, but I have a pretty good idea of what we have at any given time, and am happy to help folks find things. Here's what's where in the library (mostly arranged by the Dewey Decimal System).

Non-fiction arranged by subject:

Philosophy and psychology (100s):	Women's SLG
Religion (200s):	Women's SLG
Social sciences (300s):	Women's SLG
Languages (400s):	Ta Chai
Math and science (500s):	Ta Chai
Applied science and technology (600s):	Ta Chai
Arts and recreation (700s):	Ta Chai
Essays, letters, etc. (800s):	Upstairs Oneida
History, geography, travel (900s):	Harmony

Fiction, drama and poetry arranged by author's last name:

General fiction:	Upstairs Oneida
Science fiction and fantasy:	Upstairs Oneida/Sci-Fi Lounge
Mysteries and thrillers:	Upstairs Oneida
Poetry and drama:	Morningstar
Young adult:	Beechside

Special collections:

Women's library:	Women's SLG
Communities and utopias:	Harmony

THE OFFICE (Llano)

The phone extension for Llano Office is 0.

Hours when there is an office person scheduled:

M-F	9-12, 12:30 - 5:30
Sat	9-12, 12:30 - 3:00
Sun	no office co

If you have trouble with anything in the office, ask the office co for help.

The **vehicle sign-out book** is on the counter on the left as you walk in. Take some time to read the **vehicle use policy** in the back of it. There is more about vehicle use elsewhere in this binder. To the left of the door you walked in is a spreadsheet showing common destinations and the cost of taking a vehicle to those locations on average based on our current per mile rate. Carpooling can significantly bring these costs down!

Behind you, on the counter, is the **transfer book**. You'll use this if you owe someone money, if you paid for something out of your allowance that the community will pay for (like gas, the drivers' license fee), or whatever. It's pretty straightforward, but if you have any trouble, just ask the aforementioned helpful office co. (Do not use this book to make corrections – speak to an accounting person.)

If you need **cash**, just ask the office co, and they'll fork some over. You can't get cash very easily after office hours so if you're going to town in the evening or on a weekend, or very early in the morning, **visit the office earlier and get supplied!** If you need a large amount of cash, let an office co know a day ahead of time.

If you need a **check**, you can find the book on the shelves behind the office co. They can show you how to fill out the stub. There is a list of current authorized check signers inside the cover.

We've got Twin Oaks stationery and envelopes for your convenience and **stamps** for letters. UPS comes just about everyday. You can talk to the person sitting on the middle computer in the products office about shipping by UPS.

If you need to buy something from Louisa, C'ville, or Richmond and won't be going to these places, then you can fill out a **TOR** (Twin Oaks Requisition) and the tripper will get it for you. The pink TORs are used when you have something that the tripper needs to bring to town with them like a library book, or the old part that you're replacing, or yourself, etc. If you yourself are going in, it's *always* a good idea to talk to the tripper beforehand as well. TORs should be put in the evening before the day you want it filled, so the tripper has time to plan their schedule. If you have an early morning appointment and the tripper for some reason doesn't look at the TORs after you put yours in, co might not be ready to go when you need to leave. When you fill a TOR out you will need to be very specific or else you may get something other than what you want. Include the brand name, amount, size, flavor, color, bottles or cans, everything! Attaching a label of a product to a TOR can be helpful. If you don't want something a little different, then write "no substitutes" or something similar. Do the tripper a favor and call around to locate an item, especially for a C'ville TOR and **definitely** for a Richmond TOR. If you need a lot of things from a store, you may be able to call the store and have them put everything together for you ahead of time so all the tripper needs to do is go in and give your name. Sometimes its better to wait until you go to town to buy something if its is important to you that it be a certain way, but you don't know what exactly is available. You may have a one or two day wait so fill the TOR out early.

There is a **photocopier** in front office to the right of the stairs. If you need help with it, do ask. Use recycled paper if possible. And don't forget to record your usage (work areas, or your personal allowance, are charged at 2 cents per side of photocopy).

On either side of the door leading to the stairs there are various clipboards that show everyone's monthly vacation balance, allowance and VE amounts, sick hours, and areas labor and money budgets. It's a good idea to keep track of your labor and money on your own as well, in case an input error occurs on the official printout.

The Outside

TWIN OAKS' ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBERS

On the wall near most phones are the directions on how to get to Twin Oaks, the most recent internal phone numbers, and useful local phone numbers.

Twin Oaks Community
138 Twin Oaks Road
Louisa, VA 23093-6337

Main office	(540) 894-5126 or 5127
Products office	(540) 894-5125
fax	(540) 894-4112
Emerald City	(540) 894-5141
Kaweah	(540) 894-5117
Morningstar	(540) 894-5817
Tupelo	(540) 894-5787

While domestic calls are now 'free' for individuals, your 3-digit membership number is also your phone code for long-distance calls not covered by our current phone plan.

Area code for Richmond = 804; area code for Charlottesville = 434.

PHONES

As a new member, you will be assigned a **three-digit accounting code** to use when making long distance calls. If you don't know yours, consult the list on the bulletin board in the Llano accounting office. Unless you are calling outside of the US, you probably won't have to use this code often. If your three-digit number were 999, then what you would dial might look like this:

1(540) 894-5126 {tone} 999

To transfer calls, all you have to do is press the toggle button one quick, short time (this is called flashing), then, when you get a dial tone, dial the extension you want, and after you've got the person you want, hang up and the two will be connected. Since this doesn't always work out, tell the caller the extension number you will need in the event that you gets disconnected! If the person that you're looking for is not around and you need to take a message, just flash again and with luck you will be reconnected to the caller.

Talk to the phone manager if you would like voicemail. Consider e-mailing. It will save you money.

Since **cell phones** are now affordable with allowance, they have become much more prevalent. Please make sure to continue to follow the norms you were told as a visitor: keep the ringer on vibrate or silent, and only use cell phones where there are already existing landline phones.

COMPUTERS

There are usable **public computers** in a number of different buildings. You may use them all, but anyone who uses one for work will have priority, and be prepared to be bumped during normal work hours. The computers in the products office are generally used by desk workers during office hours; it's a good idea to not use this office at all during the busy season in the summer. There are also computers in the Llano offices that are public, but again are prioritized for those doing work in those offices. Please keep in mind that public computers are not your personal computers: don't download or install other programs without checking in with the Information Technology managers first.

All computers are linked into our network, which consists of several different drives. MEDIA contains extensive video, pictures, and music files. AREAS contains folders for each work area for storing their data. INDIV contains a folder for each member. This is where you can store all your personal files. Keep in mind that while MEDIA and AREAS are considered publicly accessible, you should only be going in your own folder in INDIV. The advantage of saving your files on the network drives is that you can then access your files on any computer. The IT managers will often delete files saved to the local hard drives of computers to clear up space, so don't save your files there! Remember that we all share the same network space, so keep in mind how much space you're taking up, and backup your important files often, as our network, like any other computer, can fail.

Our IT manager can set you up with a **personal Twin Oaks e-mail address** that ends with @twinoaks.org if you ask. You can have this email forwarded to whatever address you want; most people have a TO address for ease of telling people their address.

All of our residences have a wireless network that can be used by personal computers. However, SLGs have different norms about having and using personal computers. If this is important to you, this is another thing to ask about when deciding where to live. The IT managers are willing to help you connect your computer to the network, but keep in mind that their responsibility is to keep the communal systems running, not your personal computer. If they are willing, you may be able to give them PSCs to work on your personal computer. There are also some operating systems that they do not support at all. Especially if you are thinking of buying a new computer, it is good to check in with the IT people first.

Try to keep in mind that you are sharing an internet connection with 100 other people. We currently agree not to use any file sharing programs, as these how a lot of resources. We also limit our amount of streaming video to no more than half an hour a week, and generally try to be conscious of how general file transfers we are doing. If you are hogging more than your fair share, the IT people will come to talk with you. If you can't self-limit your bandwidth use, the IT people can slow down your connection a lot or even cut your computer off from the internet. As with most things at Twin Oaks, it is best to be personally responsible, rather than have someone have to keep asking you to not take more than your fair share.

VEHICLE USE

If you own a car, you may want to keep it until you know that you want to stay here for awhile, but you have to sell it (or store it off the property) by the time you become a full member. Give it a bath, move it up behind the warehouse, start it from time to time, but don't use it or let anyone else use it unless you're moving out. (Some

members may ask you if they can use it, please say no. Remember that the community allows provisional members to keep their cars because they usually take a while to sell, and we want to make sure you want to stay here before doing so. They are not there for other members, or anyone else, to be able to use as a free ride outside of our existing car sharing systems.) You won't want to anyway because we have an fleet of well maintained cruising machines. If, by the end of your provisional membership, you do decide to stay, then you'll have to get rid of it. First see if you can dump it off on one of your relatives or friends because it is very hard to sell a car from here and chances are very high that the community will not want to buy it.

To drive here, you will have to have a **Virginia driver's license**. You can go into C'ville on a town trip to the DMV to get it. You'll need several forms of ID and proof of residence at TO to get your license (the easiest way to get that is by registering to vote), see the DMV list on their website for complete information. You'll also need to get on our insurance, which involves giving your license, previous driving record from past states of residency, and a few other forms to the insurance meta. See co for more information. Really, it's not that bad!

The **vehicle-use policies** are in the back of the sign-out book in Llano. Take some time and read them, they're not very long, and it will save you a lot of headaches.

To use one of our Twin Oaks vehicles after you've become an authorized driver, check the sign-out book to see if anyone is going the same direction. People often want to **share rides** in order to share expenses. If you want to go to Louisa, C'ville, or Richmond, try to plan to do so on the regularly scheduled buses. Just mark off your labor sheet, and put in a TOR for yourself! If you need to go into town for something (such as a doctor's appointment) and carpool by going in with the tripper, you can **take up to 2.0 hours under "vehicle use."** This is one of the ways we try to encourage car-sharing.

If you can't find someone going the same way then sign a vehicle out in the vehicle sign-out book, indicating who the driver is, who else is going, what type of vehicle you want, and which account the money comes out of. If it's a pleasure trip, charge it to "allow". If not, find out what area you are charging it to and write that under "what area?" If it is more than a 200 mile round trip, or a several day long trip, request this from the **long distance vehicle assigner** well in advance. Co needs to OK it and give the car a long distance check-up first. The sooner you inform co, the better. Vehicles may be reserved about 2 months ahead of time. If it is vacation season (the warmer months) or the end-of-year holidays, you may not be able to get a TO vehicle without much advance notice, because of heavy usage at these times.

If you don't use a vehicle that you have signed out, cross it out in the book, and take the magnate off the board for that car if it's today. Someone else will probably want to use it, but, also, if you don't indicate that you didn't use the vehicle, then you will be charged as if you had.

By dinner the night before you will use the vehicle, the vehicle use manager will assign you one of the fleet and you'll need to find out which one you got. If you are using it immediately, just sign it out and take whichever one is not reserved (make sure that the sign-out book and the magnetic board match) and go look for it in either Llano or MT parking lots. It should be there, but if it's not there check out ZK, M*, Nashoba, or Tupelo parking lots. If you can't find it, it probably means that someone took it without signing it out. The keys live in the accounting office just to the left of the door as you walk in.

When you're done with it, resist the temptation to leave it at Tupelo or M* overnight. It is our norm to **fill the gas tank if it is less than ¼ full** when you return the car. Leave it in Llano or MT parking lots so someone doesn't have to run all over the place at 5 a.m. looking for it. Roll the windows up. In the chillier seasons, try to park with the front of the vehicle facing out of the parking spot so it will be easier to access the battery if it has trouble starting. If you notice (or cause) any problems with a vehicle, leave a note in the car, in the auto shop, in the auto managers 3 X 5 slot in ZK, **and** talk to them about the problem as soon as possible. Even if it is a little problem like the windshield juice not working, or a funny sound, or if you've driven in a pothole. Driving in a pothole can throw the vehicle out of alignment even though it seems to be driving normally.

The **charge rates** for each vehicle are on the bulletin board next to the magnetic board. Many trips are cheaper if you keep track of miles instead of going by the flat rate. You'll usually save money by writing the mileage in the book after you get back. If you only need a vehicle for use on the farm, write that on the destination, and there is no charge (this is if you need to use a pickup to move many large items from one building to another, for example), although do consider if you can move whatever you want to in one of our non-petroleum powered carts.

If you need gas, you can fill up on the farm at our big Y2K tank, or pay for it elsewhere from you own pocket and later reimburse yourself by transferring money from "Gas" to your allowance in the transfer book. If you are certain you will need gas, you can get money from the office co and charge it to "Gas." Remember to return the change from the money you spent back to "Gas." If you're returning a vehicle, make sure it has at least 1/4 of a tank of gas. Take a few minutes to fill it up at the Y2K tank before returning it, or the vehicle karma will come back to you on one sub-zero 6am.

The community also has a program called **Fridays after Five**, where we subsidize the costs of a group of three or more people in one car going into town Friday evenings. You can learn more about this by reading the

Vehicle Use policy in the vehicle signout log.
Please don't smoke in any of the cars.

REGISTER TO VOTE

The easiest way to do this is by mail. There are usually forms in the office, although you can find them and print them from online nowadays. You can also register to vote at the Louisa County Courthouse, Mon.- Fri. 8:30 - 4:30, if you happen to be going into town. It takes about 5 minutes. No ID is necessary but a driver's license helps. You can take 0.5 hours local relations credit, overquota, to vote at Yanceyville Church, our local polling station. Oakers often go over in groups on election day.

Registering to vote also is the easiest way to get proof of residency for getting your drivers license, a necessary step to be able to use a TO vehicle. So, even if you don't plan on voting, consider registering if you are interested in driving.

HOW TO DEAL WITH POLICE

Created by Alex as Legal Manager 2/09, last updated by Ethan as Legal Manager 4/09

The purpose of this section is to give all new members the basic ideas of how to deal with police on or off the farm. If the police come on the farm and you feel unable to deal with them in the way described below, ask them to wait while you find a "representative of the community." Then try to find a Planner, the legal manager, or another long term member who feels comfortable with dealing with police. We want to both maintain good relations with the local police, but also don't want anyone to search the property unless they have a legal warrant.

Talking with police:

- Be polite and respectful, but be firm about your rights.
- You do not have to answer any questions.
- You do not have to identify yourself except in 2 situations. If you are pulled over in a car and you are the driver you must present your driver's license, registration and proof of insurance. If you are properly detained (meaning actually arrested) then you must give the police your name. However, if you reasonably fear that your name is incriminating then you can claim the right to remain silent.
- Prior to be arrested you should not answer any questions and if you are arrested then you definitely should stop talking. You have a right to remain silent. Use it.
- Shortly after being taken to a police station you are allowed to make one local phone call. If you do call an attorney the police are not allowed to listen in. If you are not sure who to call, try to call Twin Oaks and get in contact with the Legal Manager, or call a cell phone of someone who can relay that message.
- Be clear that you do not want to answer any questions without speaking with an attorney.
- We all want to know how to talk to police and what questions we should answer. And we all want to believe that it is ok to speak to them if we are innocent, but the reality is the best way to talk to police is not to talk to them at all. I have pasted a link to a nice lecture by a former defense attorney. Part 2 is a separate video of a third year law student and former police officer and it is supposed to be a "rebuttal" of the professor's presentation. It is not a rebuttal at all. The student spends the next 20 min or so agreeing with everything the professor said. Enjoy: www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8z7NC5sgik

When you are pulled over:

- Do not consent to a search of the vehicle. Even if you personally have nothing illegal, remember that we share vehicles, and someone else could have carelessly left something in the car without your knowledge. On that point, never bring anything illegal into a car.
- Anything in plain sight (which includes scent) is fair game and could result in a full search of the vehicle and your arrest.
- Warrants are often not necessary to search vehicles, because of their mobility. Usually the officer is permitted to search the vehicle only if:
 1. you consent
 2. the officer has probable cause to believe the vehicle contains incriminating evidence
 3. the officer reasonably believes that he/she must search the vehicle for his/her own safety.
- Not consenting or not answering questions does not give the officer probable cause, so don't consent to a search and don't answer questions.
- If the officer says they are going to search the vehicle, do not interfere. Simply remind them that you do

not consent to the search and let the courts sort it out later. You do not want to add an obstruction charge.

At your home:

- You have much greater rights in your home than you do in a vehicle.
- Police either need a warrant or your consent to search your property. (I'm still finding out whether a 911 hang-up gives the police the power to conduct a walk through. Preliminary research and conversations with an attorney indicate that it does not give them that power)
- Do not let police into any Twin Oaks building. Ask to see a warrant. If you let them in then anything in plain sight is fair game.
- If it is possible, ask the police to wait outside a building while you try to locate the Legal Manager or a Planner.
- If they have a warrant, check the who/what/where/when of the warrant. If the date and time don't match do not let them in. If it is not signed, do not let them in. If it specifies a certain location, only let them search that location. The warrant should also specify what they can look for, which can prohibit where they can search. For example, if the warrant is for an individual, then they cannot open your desk drawers, because there is no reason to believe that a person would be in there.
- If the police do not have a warrant but simply want to "talk with" or "question" a person, have them wait outside while a member goes to their room/location to get them to come outside. Don't bring the police into a building or to that member's room unless they have a warrant.
- If they ask to do a walkthrough, do not consent. If they insist do not bar their entry, but make it absolutely clear that they do not have your consent. Just as I mentioned in the vehicle example, let the courts sort it out later. Not consenting to a search generally means that they won't be able to use whatever they find in court.
- If another member has consented to a walkthrough, their consent is only valid for non-private areas. In other words, communitarian X cannot consent to a walkthrough of Y's room. This is well established law. If you are renting out a room in your home to someone, you still cannot consent to the police searching that other person's room. Same thing applies here.
- Keep in mind, that walkthroughs do not grant police to move things. They are only allowed to look at stuff that is in plain sight. Consenting to a search may have different implications.
- Remember that "plain sight" includes things like sounds or scents. "Sight" does not mean just things that one can see with eyes.
- Be mindful about what you leave in common spaces. Even if police have a warrant for a specific individual's room, they will likely still pass through a common area. Do not endanger other members and yourself through carelessness.
- Never consent to the police using a computer. This will legally give them access to everything on our network in the same way bringing them into a building allows them to see things in plain sight.
- I cannot stress this enough though: **No one should consent to a search or walkthrough ever. EVER!** You may think you are trying to be helpful by showing you have nothing to hide, or that the police are trying to make it seem like you have no choice but to let them into your building. There is absolutely **nothing** that can be gained by consenting to a search. The only possible outcome is the police don't find anything (which would be the same if you had never consented to a search) or they do find something and make an arrest.

Labor

FINDING WORK

Some things to think about when looking for work are whether you like to work alone or with others. Whether you want physical or mental work. Inside or outside work. Strictly scheduled or flexible. Do you want to work with wood, papers, machines, animals, etc.?

There are a number of jobs that often don't get enough help. Some of these are: food processing, garden in the summer, BTU, commie clothes, cleaning, helping the dinner cook, milking, STP, and, of course, industry work like sawmill, cutting and drilling stretchers, oiling stretchers and chairs, running the rope machine, doing the woodwork on and assembling hanging chairs, and making tofu.

Making hx is our bread and butter. Once you learn an operation well enough that you don't have to think about it anymore, the work can become relaxing and meditative. It will be easier to enjoy music and conversation. You'll find that there are regulars in the shop and that different parts of the day have different atmospheres, so check 'em all out. It is also the best place to catch up on all the important gossip. Outloud music hours are: Tuesday, 5-10pm, and Thursday, 1-6pm. If you should drift away from hammocks work, please remember that you may be

called back to the hx shop in times of need by the appearance of **hx quota**, which assigns weekly goals for the community to make, and raises everyone's quota by 1.4 hours each week we don't make that goal.

Most new members start out doing a lot of income generating work like hammocks and tofu in their first few months, because that's where the entry level work is available and plentiful. It can take a while to find out which areas need more labor, and it can take a while to get into those areas as a regular job. Some areas are given such a small labor budget that there is only enough for one person to work in that area a few hours a week, so it may be that you won't be able to work in some areas at all. Don't get discouraged while trying to figure out all of this! It is very typical for new members to do lots of income work their first few months while they to figure out their work scene, and some longer term members have said that it can take a few years until one figures out co's general work scene based on the seasons.

Talk to the managers and find out what a job is like. See if they need any help; use your new member hours. There are also job openings posted on the right-hand 3 X 5 board. Keep a look out on the 3X5 board for new open jobs and areas that need help; this happens very often! A few words of advice: go easy on your body – vary tasks and positions to avoid repetitive stress injuries.

NEW MEMBER HOURS

New member hours are like visitor hours in that they are not charged to any area's labor budget. They are meant to encourage managers to train you for a job which may take more time for training than they would wish to spend from their budget. You have 52 new member hours that you can use at any point in the first six months in your membership. Keep track of how many you use; if you use more than you have, the balance comes out of your vacation balance! While you are able to, it may not be a good idea to blow lots of your new member hours on helping someone who has a very limited budget. For instance, helping someone out in the library may seem like a great job, but then, when your new member hours are gone, you probably won't be able to work in the library regularly. Try to use most of them for checking out work areas that you think you might like.

To take new member hours, make an extra column to the right of the OQ column, write NMH at the top, and record NMHs the same way as you would for overquota. Don't just take "new member hours" like it is a budgeted area; all of the work needs to be under an existing area, and you only mention that you did that work with NMHs in that extra column. This should be explained to you in your labor oreo in your first week. Ask your new member liaisons if you have questions.

OVERQUOTA

When you work more hours than required in a week, this is considered **overquota**. Any amount you work overquota automatically goes into your vacation balance. Hours that you work overquota in an area don't come out of that area's budget. When you total up your labor sheet, subtract the number of hours you worked by quota. This amount is how much you worked overquota. You can disperse this amount as you see fit in the OQ column of your labor sheet. Some of the work you do may be things that you agree to do in part or entirely overquota because there are not enough hours in the budget to fund your work in quota. If someone wants you to do certain work overquota, it's important to get that clarified beforehand. For example, you may want to help out in the library and make arrangements with the manager to work an hour a week in there overquota, because the budget isn't big enough to fund your work otherwise. In general, it's better to give overquota to smaller domestic areas. Don't bother giving overquota to income areas, they are allowed to overspend their budgets if we need to up production. Policy limits how much an area can spend overquota based on its assigned budget, so there are still limits, even though the hours don't affect the in-quota budget.

THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN FILLING OUT YOUR LABOR SHEET

Filling out your labor sheet can seem complicated at first, but it is important everyone is using the same guidelines. The labor assigner is trying to coordinate the work of 100 people, so if people are not being clear in the same way their job becomes a lot more difficult! Follow these guidelines the first few weeks, and you'll have it down and be helping other new members before you realize it.

- Get your sheet in by **dinner on Monday**. You may want to write that task on your sheet each week until you remember it. If you remember that you've forgotten, fill your sheet out, find where the labor assigner is working, and give it to co **ASAP**. If you have a full schedule, it is better to turn one in late than for co to assign you things that co will just have to change later.
- Fill in the date. This matters because it is possible to turn in sheets for different weeks.
- Write your work preferences for this week in the blank space on the right side. These can range from preferences (I prefer outdoor work this week) to limits (please assign no more than two garden shifts this

week) to availability (I'm open to doing a garden shift if needed). Remember that you should **talk to the manager of an area to see what work is available** and to get on that crew, otherwise writing it on your sheet won't do anything!

- If you know you're not going to want to be assigned some regular work of yours, tell the assigner before revisions.
- Don't request scheduled work by writing it in the DTW column. This is the section just above the blank space on the right side with the lines on it. It's for things that you need to do in the week when you have time (for example, making laundry detergent). Request work in the notes section.
- Don't completely fill up the "notes" section, as labor assigners may have something to write to you, and do read any notes they've sent. It will usually save you a lot of hassle.
- If you self-req anything on a master, write it on your sheet as well, and vice-versa.
- Be clear about your times, especially how long something lasts. Use horizontal lines to block it off. Keep in mind things can start on the half hour, although this isn't as common.
- It is worse to go of the farm and not tell the assigner than it is to say on your sheet that you'll be gone and then you stay. It is easier for co to add stuff on revisions than to have to reschedule meetings and jobs.
- Be flexible. Don't fill in all of your time with shading and lines. We are mostly going to give you things you already said you wanted to do. If your schedule is tight, **SELF-REQ A K-SHIFT**. Remember everyone without a health exemption is expected to do a weekly K-shift.
- If you are **going on vacation off the farm** and won't be around when it's time to turn in the sheet at the normal time, be sure to turn the sheet in before you leave. If the sheet is not the next one to be assigned, don't worry, you can make sheets for weeks in the future. Be sure to write the correct dates on the sheet, and write "FUTURE SHEET" on the top of the labor sheet. The labor assigner will store these in their notebook until they're needed. You can also do this with reqs for future weeks.

REVISIONS

- *Don't take your sheet away for revisions*, just do your revisions in the lounge before noon Thursday. And when you put your sheet back, put it back in alphabetical order. (You can also go by the small number that's been written above your name.) Don't make the labor assigner hunt you down to find your sheet that you shouldn't have taken yet!
- Don't change the front of your sheet on revisions, just mark the revisions box (in the upper left corner of your sheet), and write your request on the back and they will work on it.
- Let the labor assigner know the importance of any requested revision. For instance, "If it's not too much trouble...", or "I can't do this because I forgot I'll be OTF...." If you are asking for something to be removed because you can't do anything at that time, say so, or you might get something else at that time.
- If you are looking for work, check the "Not assigned before revisions card" on the today board for areas that need help covering their work. Also look for this after revisions for jobs that we still couldn't get covered this week.
- During revisions the labor masters are left behind the sheets. Check them out to see what jobs the labor assigner is assigning, what jobs aren't filled. This will give you a better idea of how the community functions and alert you to possible ways you can help out.
- **Be nice to the labor assigners.** It's one of the hardest jobs we have on the farm. If they request you fill out your sheet or reqs differently, please do so. They will do their best to meet your requests, but remember that they are also trying to coordinate 99 other people's labor scene as well. If you make an unreasonable request or owe them an apology, consider accompanying it with something like chocolate.

LABOR ASSIGNING SCHEDULE

New labor sheets are due	Monday 7pm
Revisions	Wednesday dinner to Thursday noon
Sheets are out	Thursday evening
Completed sheets are due	Sunday 5pm

ZK LOUNGE

If you have questions about how to fill out your labor sheet, ask your New Member Parents or the labor manager.

There are some important times in the week to remember. Your filled-out labor sheet is due in the lower left wooden slot in the ZK lounge by **Monday, 7 pm**. **Revisions** time is after dinner on Wednesday through

Thursday noon. If you've changed your plans, or don't like something that you've been assigned, now is your chance to do something about it. If you do have revisions to make, don't change the front of your sheet, write your desired changes on the back. **Don't forget** to check the "revisions" box in the upper left corner or the labor assigner may not notice. The sheets are picked up again at **Thursday, noon**, so make sure you have done this by then. Next week's labor sheets are ready for you to take at **Thursday dinner**. (If you are off the farm for several days, your sheet may have been moved to the box on the upper left to make room for people turning in next week's sheets.) Then, after finishing work on Thursday, total your labor sheet (adding both the rows and columns) and turn your completed sheet in to the box on the lower right. If it is not turned in by **Sunday 5pm** you won't receive the two-and-a-half bonus hours of vacation time, which adds up to about three weeks a year. This is how our vacation time is built into the labor system.

Along with the blank labor sheets, you can also find **labor req** sheets. If you need to schedule work or a meeting for a group of people, this is what you fill out. Be sure to fill out all lines of the req sheet, and *write the names of those you want req'd in alphabetical order* (this makes labor assigning much easier!). Ask a labor assigner or longer term member for help; we've all filled one of these out at some point. Turn these into the same box you put the labor sheets for next week in (the lower left box).

The **culinary sign-up** hangs on a clipboard right above the labor sheet slots and to the left. If you want to cook or help cook, do Louisa bus, Tupelo serf, or your K-shift with a certain person or on a certain day, then you'll want to sign up here instead of just getting assigned randomly. Some people have set days for doing these jobs, so it is good to check in with the manager of an area before just signing up for any of these things. This clipboard also has the **masters** for most areas, which show who is working in the given area when. For example, you could look at the dairy master to see the milking schedule for the week, or the same for garden shifts, and so on. Some other masters are located on the bulletin board in the phone booth in ZK. Hanging on the counter below the labor sheet station is the **people finder**, for finding out where someone is scheduled to be, and, to the right. There is also a people finder in Llano office, and there is a labor master in the office, and specialized lesser local labor masters in ZK kitchen, on the side of the milk dispenser in ZK snack kitchen, and various work areas in the community (ex. there's a tofu master in the Tofu Hut).

Under the counter is a notebook that contains all the permanent labor reqs. When a manager adds someone to the crew or changes the regular time of work, this is where that information is kept. You shouldn't be altering this book unless you manage an area. If you need help figuring out how to change something in here, ask a labor assigner.

Just to the right of all the labor stuff is a page with members' names and their mailbox locations.

Next to the double doors into ZK dining room and the pingpong table is a tall skinny bookshelf with references which will be of help to you. This is also where you can find a copy of the **Twin Oaks policies notebook**. Policies can also be found on the network in the POLICY folder in the AREAS drive. Ask the manager of the relevant area or the Process Team if you have questions about a particular policy.

KITCHENS

As you know, everyone does a K-shift. What you may not know is that you can do **Llano serfs** instead. For information about what to do on your K-shift, **check the K-shift list** posted on the bulletin board next to the music system. Don't forget to clean and drain the dishwasher and to refill the milk dispenser. It can be useful to help with at least a few cooking shifts because it teaches you where food is kept (and there's a lot to know about) and where utensils are kept (making your K-shift easier). If you do cook, remember that there are people here with special diets. Become familiar with people's diets so you know how much to make of a particular thing, as community meals should have something for everybody. Anything you put away from the steam table should be labeled with the date it was made (which may not be today's date in the case of leftovers), what the food is (or your best guess), and any special diet information (gluten free, vegan, nightshades, etc.). Everyone working on a K-shift should stay until every job is complete (for example, the person clearing the steam table doesn't just leave when they've finished the steam table, they see what else still needs to be done).

In general, you can use any **kitchen** in any building. In ZK, use the snack kitchen for cooking until after dinner; the main kitchen is prioritized for cooks making community meals. Don't get in the cooks' way! **Llano kitchen** is shared by the entire courtyard, so it's better to not do major cooking projects there in high use hours during the day. Do not use anything in the milk processing area for personal cooking. If you want to use a kitchen for a meal and don't live in that building, you should check in with the SLG first to make sure there are no conflicts, as some SLGs have house meals. In buildings besides ZK and Llano, it is a good idea to bring whatever you need to cook if you are using a lot of ingredients, because those kitchens are stocked by members of the SLG, and are probably not anticipating you using the kitchen, and it wouldn't be very nice to use up things that they've brought there without refilling it!

Most SLGs have norms about cleaning up after yourself, especially pots and pans. Don't leave messes for

other people to clean up, no one is anyone else's servant here! When cooking meals for medium sized groups (like your SLG), cook hours may be available; check with the cooks manager first.

EMERALD CITY

There are two other paths up to EC besides Tupelo Ridge Road. Bring a flashlight if you go out there to work and will be coming back at night. If you discover a bike at Emerald City, don't ride it back to the community. The norm is that bikes at Emerald City are reserved for the folks who brought them up. You may take up to .3 of "travel time" as part of your labor credit for any E.C. shift of 3 hours or more.

There are many different work areas at EC: Warehouse, Shipping, Chairs (ECW), Varnishing (OZ), Stretchers, Oiling, Sawmill, Kiln, Rope, Grommeting, and other things that happen on a more ad hoc basis. The only way to find out what jobs are available are to ask those who work in those areas, although someone on the RPM may have an idea of the overall picture if we're short anywhere.

AVOIDING EXHAUSTION

One important piece of advice for a new member is on how to avoid exhaustion. This doesn't happen to everyone right away. It creeps up on you. One of the hardest things you may have to deal with as a new member is working every day, especially if you have a number of jobs that only give you two or three hours a week. Some days you will only work five hours or maybe three, but if you don't have any days off in your schedule fatigue can creep up on you and **WHAM!!** you start crying and you don't know why, because nothing seems to be wrong. Go to bed. Or you do a little work, maybe a four hour day and you feel so tired that you wonder if you aren't one of the lazier people around. This can happen. Go to bed. It's easy to get "**overextended**" and have too many commitments, so try and learn your limits quickly so that that won't happen. **Learn how to say "No"**. Having some scheduled work is easier than having all unscheduled work. It's helpful to take a whole day off, if not on a weekly basis, at least every few weeks. Schedule it in the next labor week. But if you're feeling' it now, don't wait. Let this time off be mostly unstructured. You can work on that project if you want to, but don't schedule it ahead of time. Relax. Do what you want. The worst exhaustion for many new members is around the third month. You should have time to work your way out of the labor hole if you get into it. You'll get more used to this way of working, plus, you'll probably be getting work that you like even better as time goes by.

The TRADE-OFF GAME

You've probably heard people mention the **Trade-Off Game**. This is the way in which we all participate in economic planning. In the fall the planners take stock of Twin Oaks resources and then tell the community how much money and how many hours are available for ongoing budgets and for OTRAs. An OTRA is a **One Time Resource Allocation**. Money for Twin Oaks bicycles is an ongoing budget, whereas money for band equipment would be a one time purchase and therefore an OTRA. Each member creates their own ideal budget and submits it to the planners, who then decide, with this information, the money and labor budgets for the following year. The planners tally the results and use their judgment on borderline items.

Also, if there are any excess dollars or hours in the middle of the year, then there may be a smaller version of this that takes place in the summer called the Mid-year trade-off game. It would be mostly made up of OTRAs, but could include supplements to ongoing budgets.

You'll be able to participate in these processes even as a provisional member. Look for announcements about the Trade-Off Game on the O&I Board in the last few months of the year.

HOLIDAYS

Some holidays that are often celebrated here include:

Validation Day, Feb. 14, handmade valentines are left out for all to sign.

Spring Equinox, around March 21st.

May Day, usually May 1st, complete with May pole.

Anniversary, on June 16.

Summer Solstice, around June 21st.

Autumn Equinox, around September 21st.

Halloween, where everyone dresses up and the children hand out candy.

Winter Solstice, around December 21st.

New Years, with a quiet party and a rowdy party.

We decide about credit for holidays on the Trade-Off Game, so in different years we get different amounts of time off for different holidays. You'll get your **birthday** and your **anniversary of arriving** at Twin Oaks off from work (6.0 hours credit for each of these days if you remember to claim it).

Other Tidbits

GUESTING

If friends or family come to visit, you should post a note on the 3 X 5 board in ZK announcing who they are and the dates they'll be staying in advance. This really helps members feel more comfortable with strangers suddenly appearing in the community. This helps your guest feel more welcome here! If your guest is not staying in your room, then talk to the **room assigner** to see where co can stay. Clean sheets and towels are your responsibility (and be sure to stop in after your guest leaves to tidy up the room). You should also post a 3 X 5 on the general message area in the building where your guest is staying, and on the door to the room as well, announcing their presence, and the dates of their stay. If your guest will be here more than a week, have them plug into the labor system. If they want to be here a month or more, a letter to the community must be posted and formal input solicited by CMT. It is the hosts responsibility for making sure that the guest is familiar with our norms.

BICYCLES

Any bike that doesn't have a name on it is considered to be public, and you can ride that bike anywhere. Please leave the bike at the bike rack near whatever building you have rode to. If there is no bike rack, please lean the bike against a tree in a noticeable place. If you're riding to an out of the way location like somewhere in the woods, please don't leave the bike there! Be responsible enough to bring it back.

If a Twin Oaks bicycle has a problem, leave it outside of MT, next to the bike shop. Please attach a label to it explaining the problem if it won't be completely obvious to the bike repair people. Do not ride a broken bike; you'll probably just make the problem worse. The bike crew will do their best to keep all bikes in good working order, but it is important to remember that they do not perform routine checks on bikes, and usually only work on them when someone brings them behind MT. So, before hopping on a bike, it is a very good idea to check to see if it is in basic working order, with no flat tires, and **working brakes**. This only takes an extra 10 seconds, and it's better to find out that the brakes aren't working right before you're flying downhill on Tupelo Ridge Road!

As a courtesy to pedestrians, ride on the road instead of paths as much as possible. Especially, go around MT, and avoid the corner of Harmony leading into the courtyard. If you do find yourselves on one of those paths by accident, please go very slow, as those areas have blind spots. If you're going to be riding at night, go slow and have a flashlight.

As per our property code, you may keep your own **personal bike**, but this bike can only be used off the farm. Such bikes should be stored in Nashoba shed, your room, or some other storage location. Many people choose to use their personal bikes on the farm by turning them into **assigned bikes**. Assigned bikes are the ones you see on the farm with people's names on them. They are for that person's use, but they are Twin Oaks property, and the member is expected to leave those bikes here if they drop membership, or they can sometimes buy them back from the community. Members can also request an assigned bike from the bike manager. Usually the bike manager will first determine if you actually need an assigned bike (for example, if you live in the courtyard you will usually have your choice of 30 bikes anyway, or perhaps you work at EC a lot and need reliable transportation), and also make sure that you don't get one of the better public bikes (if people start taking the better public bikes, then soon everyone will want or even need an assigned bike because the quality of the public fleet will diminish).

If you would like to use the bike shop to work on your own bike you can, but talk to the bike manager first. The bike crew may also work on your personal or assigned bike, but the bikes budget is prioritized for public bikes. You may have to give PSCs or allowance to bikes for them to fix the problem. It would also be a good idea to learn basic bike maintenance if you have a personal or assigned bike, so you can change that flat on your own.

ELECTRIC CARTS

There are use restrictions for these carts. Please don't use them unless you are having a physical problem which makes walking uncomfortable. If you do want to use one, talk to the Health Team. If you have an unwieldy load, talk to someone who moves loads around a lot. There is a bicycle trailer, carts at MT, carts at specific buildings, and a number of garden carts which can do the job and don't use **nuclear energy**. If you need to move something really large, sign out a pickup truck.

NATURE

There are lots of beautiful flora and fauna (critters) here. Some of the potentially dangerous ones include:

Poison Ivy - There is lots of it here. It grows where meadow meets forest. The leaves of this vine are vaguely mitten-shaped and the stems are reddish. They often have a little irregular 'bite mark' on one of the leaves. Even if you think poison ivy doesn't affect you, that has changed for people when they walk through a field of it, so be careful!

Copperheads - poisonous, but not aggressive. Orange-ish with diamond-shaped patterns.

Ticks - Even if you don't go into the woods you can pick them up in tall grass. There are tiny-weenie ones called seed ticks which come in huge numbers so scrub your pits and groin with brown soap after a summer walk.

Chiggers - Even teeny-weenier than seed ticks and gosh! do they itch! Use brown soap in any tight places 'cause that's where they like to go. Their favored habitat is high grass, so avoid walking through such environs in summer.

Brown recluses - spiders with a "fiddle" outline on their back. You don't see them much, but they can be aggressive when disturbed.

And, of course, **Black Widows** - glossy black with a red shape underneath where you normally wouldn't be looking! They like woodpiles and have been seen in MT, the woodshop, and EC.

That's pretty much it for the tour. See the safety manager about batteries for a **flashlight** to carry around with you because when it's dark, you can get disoriented at first. Be careful not to shine flashlights in other people's eyes. Actually, when it's very dark you can tell where the road goes by looking up to see the stars between the trees. There are some places with dangerous drop-offs that are very hard to see, like the one just past the compost café. It will take a couple of months, but you will get so familiar with the lay of the land that you can do it when it's pitch black out, impressing your city-dwelling guests. Meanwhile flashlights are definitely worth carrying around at night.

HEALTH

All prospective members and residents should get any needed medical and dental care before arriving at T.O. They should have a dental check-up and cleaning within the past six months. People over 40 should have a general physical done before joining or should have had one in the past six months. Women should have a pap smear done within six months of joining. Copies of medical records should be sent to T.O. to be put in co's medical file.

The HTM should be notified if any chronic medical or dental condition exists. This should occur while the person is visiting. The person should leave the HTM a note to arrange a time to discuss their condition and any special needs they may have.

Twin Oaks will not pay for pre-existing health care needs for provisional members. This includes doctor visits. We will cover treatment for injury which occurs during your membership. Under some situations the community will make special arrangements (via contract). If you come with a member loan, it can be used for paying bills for whatever the community will not cover during your provisional time.

All provisional members wearing corrective lenses should have their prescriptions updated and obtain new glasses or contact lenses before arriving at T.O. or expect to use their current prescription until one year of membership has passed.

As a provisional member, you are not covered by any of our main health programs in general. However, there are many things that apply to all members:

SICK HOURS

You can claim sick hours when a physical illness prevents you from working. We encourage members who are too ill to work to take sick hours. The community needs you to get well, not to draw out your illness by working while sick. When you're sick, your "job" is to get well. You can claim up to one seventh of a week's quota per day (currently that would be 6.0 hours). On a day when you claim sick hours, 6.0 hours total is all you can claim for the day.

To be clear, sick hours are for actual sicknesses, not for just feeling like you don't want to work today. Also, things that are clearly a result of your own poor choices do not get sick hours. For example, if you drink a lot at a party, and then feel too sick to work the next day, you cannot take sick hours for that. If you know of an upcoming party, perhaps you should also mark off the next day on your labor sheet for a mini-vacation to recover.

Members who are neither ill nor in dire pain, but rather handicapped (i.e. broken bone, sprained ankle) are encouraged to seek out work that will not make the condition worse. Office work, mending commie clothes in bed,

and writing out policy are just a few of the work alternatives available to individuals who are able to serve community needs while healing. Overquota, PFF, and OPP are not to be done on a day that sick hours are claimed.

Sick hours may not be assigned on your labor sheet. Sick hours are not assignable. The only exception to this policy is during preparation for imminent surgery and the Health Team should be notified before you assign hours to yourself.

If you claim sick hours for two weeks you should notify the Health Team about your condition so that they can provide therapeutic referrals or support in dealing with the condition. The Health Team reviews sick hours use. If a pattern of frequent use becomes apparent, they will contact you to discuss your health problems and needs. Sick hours totals for all members may be posted in Llano office with monthly and cumulative amounts.

WORK RELATED INJURIES

In short, if you have injured yourself severely while being a provisional member so that you need emergency care, we're not going to tell you to just deal with that broken leg on your own for the next few months! Other not as critical but still somewhat necessary medical needs can sometimes be authorized on a case by case basis. Depending on the circumstances, the community may pay for the health costs, or try to find a way to make it affordable to you, through things like absorbable loans. See the Health Team for more information.

DOC AND CARPOOL HOURS

"DOC" credits are given for time spent traveling to/from and visiting the doctor. If you are going to see a specialist in C'ville or R'mond, you may claim up to 3.0 "DOC" hours. If you are traveling to Louisa, you may claim a maximum of 1.5.

It is recommended that members use the tripper system to go to their appointments. The time spent waiting for the tripper to retrieve you after an appointment is ½ creditable under "CARPOOL"- and only up to 2 credits.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health needs such as counseling, care groups, or emergency leaves of absence are dealt with by the Mental Health Team. Like most of our other physical health related policies, most of the programs are only available to full members, but other arrangements can sometimes be made depending on the situation. Contact the Mental Health Team for more information.

IN AN EMERGENCY

1) Find someone to drive you to Louisa Medical Associates if you need immediate care, or to UVA Hospital in Charlottesville if it's serious and/or not normal business hours. **DON'T WAIT!** If someone is seriously injured, getting them to a hospital is the most important thing; just take a car and GO! If you are injured on the job even as a provisional member, Twin Oaks will cover your expenses.

2) **Rescue Squad** number is **911**. It can take them up to thirty minutes to get here. **It almost always makes more sense for us to drive someone to the hospital than to call the ambulance, as we can get them there faster.** Only if we can't transport that person for some reason does it make sense to call emergency. When you call, give them clear directions (please make certain to send them to the *front* entrance of Tupelo Ridge Road) and designate someone to wait at the driveway to direct the ambulance quickly to the site.

Poison Control phone number is 800-451-1428

Crisis Intervention Center at UVA is 804-924-5564

OTHER HEALTH INFORMATION

Our full health policies are quite lengthy and are often revised, so they will not be re-printed here, but be aware that there are many other services available that are not described here, as most do not apply to new members. The full policies are publicly available in the policy binders, or you can check in with with the HTM or MHT. It would be a good idea to be familiar with them by the time you are a full member.

Appendices

GLOSSARY

- **Acorn** - our younger sibling community about 7 miles to the south
- **Anniversary** - June 16. the celebration of the founding of Twin Oaks in 1967; marked by many ex-members, guests and friends visiting for the occasion. Usually celebrated the weekend that is closest to the 16th.
- **Ass.** - Somewhat tongue-and-cheek shortening of "assigner", as in Labor Ass. or Room Ass.
- **Baker branch** - a group of mostly ex-Twin Oakers and other folks that live about five miles away in individual homes on a land trust.
- **Bijou**- the video/exercise/music space at Kaweah; can also be reserved using the sheet outside door.
- **Bozo Beach** - Area on the non-courtyard side of the Bozo/Flips Shed with a stage and firepit. Popular place for outdoor parties. Not to be confused with an actual beach.
- **Bozo Shed** - across the road from Harmony (with the Flips Shed), it holds lightbulbs, fans and other various things
- **BTU** (british thermal units) – labor code for stocking firewood and stoking furnaces in your SLG. Measured in hours, not energy.
- **Bus (LBus, CBus, RBus)** - Shorthand for the Louisa, Charlottesville, and Richmond town trips respectively. Also see TOR and Tripper.
- **C & U Council** - construction and utilities council.
- **CB** - child board. Decides everything related to non-members at Twin Oaks under 18.
- **Central field** – cow pasture south of the old orchard, between the two driveways, north and east of the herb garden.
- **Children's shelter** - A floor and roof with no sides located at the near end of the river field.
- **CMT** - Community Membership Team - makes decisions on visitors, long term guests, tallies votes for full membership, and other administrative tasks of membership policy
- **Cmty**- community.
- **Co-co - co-counseling** - A peer counseling and therapy method used at Twin Oaks.
- **Co** - gender neutral pronoun.
- **Compost cafe** - two rooms in a shed behind Llano used by smokers. Named because it originally was built to be a composting toilet which was declared illegal before it was used.
- **Conference site** - The clearing in back of Oz at Emerald City where the Women's Gathering and Communities Conference are held.
- **Council** - A grouping of similar managerial areas that makes managerial appointments or firings and hears appeals. For example, the agricultural council.
- **CP** - community planners.
- **CTYD** - courtyard.
- **CVP** - community visitor program.
- **C'ville** - Charlottesville.
- **DTD** - during the day.
- **DTW** - during the week.
- **Date** - one-on-one hangout time. Doesn't necessarily imply physical intimacy or a primary relationship. Lots of us schedule work dates.
- **Double Tub** - The bathtub big enough for (at least) two people in upstairs Oneida. Can be reserved on calendar outside the bathroom.
- **Drop-in** - an unannounced visitor. Not O.K.
- **Duck Stamp** - If one of these appears on your labor sheet, there is a community meeting scheduled at that time. Check the 3x5 board to see what and where it is.
- **EC** - Emerald City.
- **EGFS – Emma Goldman's Finishing School. An urban FEC community in Seattle.**
- **EW** - East Wind community in southern Missouri. Their primary business is nut butters. Many Oakers are ex-East Winders. A good place to do LEX.
- **Econ plan** - the one-year projections of money and labor and how they are to be distributed to best meet the needs and goals of Twin Oaks. This process takes from Nov. to Jan. and establishes the main policies and projects for the next year. There are many public meetings, member surveys, position papers, a traditional trade-off game, etc.
- **FEC** - Federation of Egalitarian Communities. Half a dozen communities that share our values and with whom we can do labor exchange. <http://thefec.org>

- **Fecotopia** - The composting toilet in the courtyard, south of the fairs shed
- **FIC** - Fellowship for Intentional Communities. Our wider network, made up of the several hundred very different communities listed in our [Communities Directory](http://ic.org). <http://ic.org>
- **Flame out** - to vent pent up anger or frustration, often accomplished by posting an O & I paper, a 3 X 5, or yelling, slamming doors, etc. Unserene.
- **Flips** - a method for distributing items that become available to the community or that other members don't want involving multiple coin flips between interested people. Typically used for pieces of furniture or other things that are anticipated to be in demand.
- **Flips Shed** - Shed across from Harmony (along with Bozo Shed) that hold various lamps, electronics, etc. that are free for anyone to grab. Leave stuff like this you no longer need here for others to find. Not for dumping broken stuff, put that in the recycling.
- **Fulano** - a fake member name occasionally used as an example in policies or hypotheticals. Usually only used when a proper noun seems needed and co won't work.
- **Grabs** - items that most people probably don't want, so anyone can just take them, rather than waiting for flips.
- **Green Room** - Public room in Tupelo that has had many uses or non uses in its history
- **Guest** - a friend who is staying at Twin Oaks for awhile but who is not in the 3 week visitor program. Co always has to have a host member. Not to be confused with visitor. Can be used as a verb ("gusting").
- **HC** - either hammock chair or hanging chair.
- **HCR** - the chair shop at Tupelo.
- **HTM** - the health team.
- **HX** - hammocks (sometimes hmx).
- **High South** - cow pasture located on the hill to the south of the pond.
- **House** - term used for cleaning - e.g. "house manager", "house closet", "three hours of house."
- **In the hole** - owing money or hours to the community.
- **Juniper Branch** - the land that the main part of Twin Oaks is now on. Antiquated term since we now just refer to this area as "Twin Oaks," was more relevant in early years.
- **Kaweah** - our residence, just across and up the road from Zhankoye. Also contains the Bijou and subdivided into the SLGs **Sunrise** and **Beechside**
- **K-shift** - cleaning up after a meal. KII is after lunch. KIII is after dinner. Yes, once upon a time there was a KI; it's not that interesting of a story.
- **LCs** - labor credits.
- **LEX** - labor exchange. creditable work done by a member of one community while visiting another community. Can also refer to a person currently at TO from another community (ex. "Fulano LEX")
- **Lawson land** - 100 acres of hay land plus some woods 3 miles from Twin Oaks purchased from the Lawsons. There is also a small pond, and wild turkeys.
- **The Leaves** - a newsletter written by Twin Oaks' members about life here. Think about contributing a sketch, article, photo...
- **Live** - the proper place for an inanimate object. As in, "Where does the broom live?"
- **Lumps** - treat food made from sugar held together by oats, peanut butter, cocoa and butter. Crude but effective.
- **Meta** - Antiquated term for one who used to work in our now mostly defunct collective childrearing program. (Check out some of our older child books, words like "parent" have been replaced by "meta.") Is still sometimes used as a term to show official but non-managerial responsibility of an area, or general non-official responsibility/caretaking for an item/area (ex. meta of a community video camera)
- **MHT** - the mental health team.
- **NML** - New Member Liaisons, formerly (although still often) New Member Parents. The people you should talk to if you have any questions about anything in your first six months of membership.
- **MT** - Modern Times. Home to the Auto Shop, Equipment Maintenance, Bike repair, Farm, the Fabric Bed Studio, and Health Office, among other things.
- **M*** - Morningstar. child-friendly modular residence next to Degania.
- **Monocan forest** - 60 acres of wooded land we own that's just across the county road from Emerald City.
- **Mother** - a person who takes care of a specific communal object or an area within a managership. Also sometimes called a parent, meta, or manager.
- **Music Room** - Room in Tupelo home to many musical instruments. Same room as HCR.
- **Not OK** - describes behavior that is undesirable. It was originally used so that the word "bad" wouldn't be.
- **O&I** - Officially "Opinions and Information" (or ideas, depending on who you ask).
- **OPP** - overquota products projects. Overquota hammocks industry work done to earn something extra for yourself or the community, outside of the main economic plan. Often earned by piecework.

- **Oreo** – Short for orientation. Most of these were for the visitor program, but there are some for new members as well. Can also be used to describe explaining a task, as in, “let me give you a quick oreo about the tilting skillet.”
- **OTF** - off the farm. Not to be confused with **on** the farm, which wouldn't be abbreviated.
- **the Outside** - not here; elsewhere; the rest of the world. A common shorthand term for the ideas, attitudes, and methods represented by the worst of life in the mainstream culture. Other similar terms include **The Mainstream, Dominant Culture, Babylon**.
- **Overextended** - when someone couldn't say "No," and now has too many obligations.
- **Oz** - the chair and stretcher varnishing building at EC.
- **PFF** - products for friends. Overquota hours worked to earn products to give away to family and friends or good causes.
- **PSC** - personal service credit. A method of using your vacation balance to get a massage, some shelves built, a guitar lesson, or some other personal service.
- **PT or PTM** - The Process Team, which deals with conflict resolution, community meetings, and other areas of community process.
- **Pagan Ridge** - The ridge south of Llano beyond High South, so named because the pagan group meets there for holiday celebrations. There is a circle of stones there.
- **the Pit** - the carpeted, sunken floorspace in TCLR, where you can hang out. Please remove your shoes first.
- **Planning Council** - Council consisting of most of the major planning or administrative teams and managers, and hears appeals of those groups decisions. Not to be confused with the Planners.
- **Polyamory or Poly** - General term that covers many forms of intimate relationships that involve more than two people.
- **Pond**- the pond down the hill in back of the Fairs shed. There is also the **bio pond** to the west of the main pond, which filters out a lot of the organic material to keep the main pond swimmable, with varying degrees of success.
- **Poo Corner** - The composting toilet in Kaweah Yard near Sunrise.
- **Poop Deck** – The composting toilet off of the back deck of ZK.
- **Poopelo** - Tupelo's composting toilet
- **Primary** -
 - Someone who watches after a child while their parents are elsewhere. Typically scheduled in 2-3 hour shifts based on the age of the child and the needs of the parent for that week. Can be used as a verb and an adjective.
 - Term for the relationship that holds the strongest bond for two (or more) people in a polyamorous relationship, and often sets guidelines for interactions with possible secondaries.
- **Process** – Can refer to:
 - The established ways we go about making decisions in specific circumstances. As in, “we need to go through this process to make a loan.”
 - The act of checking in with people in a decision-making process. As in, “we need to do more process to collect more opinions from the community on this topic.”
 - Intense, involved, or deep conversation between two or more people about emotions, disagreements, or making new agreements. For example “they are in co's room processing about their relationship.”
 - Food processing: turning food (like tomatoes) into storable goods (such as sauce or salsa). Sometimes people will simply say “I have processing tonight”, but they usually stick in “food” with that.
 - A general complaint about Twin Oaks. As in, “I have to go through so much process to just do X!” A reality of living in community. See overextended, and the sections on “avoiding exhaustion” and “how to be a long term member”
- **Public** - Term used to refer to anything available for public use as opposed to personal or private (ex. a public bike, a building's common space, or "is this bag of chocolate chips public?") Typically anything that doesn't have a name on it or isn't in a personal space is considered public.
- **Quiet hours** - time during which noise is to be kept at a minimum. Each SLG has different agreements about this, so ask. In general, assume 10pm-8am.
- **Req** - A requisition for someone to be scheduled for work or a meeting that is turned in on the same schedule as labor sheets. A common way to plan, as in "Please req me for that meeting Monday."
- **River field** - The field on the near side of the river.
- **R'mnd** - Richmond.
- **SLG** - small living group.
- **STP** - sewage treatment plant.
- **Scattered** - mentally confused, disorganized, forgetful, overextended.

- **Serf** - person who cleans Llano kitchen, the Bijou, Morningstar, or who housecleans at Tupelo.
- **Sewer line** - the path that runs from Aurora, past Tupelo, and up to EC.
- **Shannon Farm** - a land trust community near Charlottesville where we go and party sometimes.
- **Stateroom** – The common living room of upstairs Ta Chai
- **TCLR** - Ta Chai living room. The place with The Pit. Can be reserved by placing note on the door leaving to the hx shop (on the hammock shop side of the door).
- **T.O. or TO** - Twin Oaks. Seen on license plates among other places.
- **TOR** - Twin Oaks Requisition. Pronounced like "tore," annoyingly close to "tour." A pink or white slip of paper used to order things for the tripper to pick up from Louisa, C'ville, or R'mnd.
- **Trade off** - a fact of life, that choosing one thing involves prioritizing it over some other thing.
- **Trade Off Game** - a method for getting a large number of people involved in the economic planning process. Good for showing people the realities of trying to divide up a limited number of resources among a large group of impatient dreamers.
- **Transition** :
 - a period during which a member entering or leaving the community is not bound by our property code. You get a week coming in and four weeks when you leave. Not to be confused with:
 - a period during which a member entering or leaving the community does not have to contribute to the labor system. You get 2 days coming in and 2 weeks when you leave.
- **Trippler** - person who goes to town to buy things for people who fill out TORs, and takes in people who want to carpool and not have to pay out of their allowance for the trip.
- **Tupelo Ridge Road** - One of our main roads leading from the Dairy Barn entrance, past MT, up to EC. Only tractors should use this road between Tupelo and EC.
- **VE - Vacation Earnings** - Twin Oaks members can earn personal money working an off the farm job. However, this money can not be used for anything on the farm, and unless one is off the farm on vacation for more than 24 hours (as in, not just going out to eat for the night).
- **Visitor** - someone who is staying at Twin Oaks in the 3 week visitor program. This term should not be used for guests. We like to confuse guests by telling them they are not visiting.
- **Wellhouse Field** - North and South. The fields directly on the opposite side of Vigor Road.
- **Wiz** - a person who thinks they know how to run things (a manager) at EC or OZ. Short for wizard, as in The Wizard of Oz.
- **Women's living room** - located in downstairs Oneida, houses the women's library, and (with rare exceptions) is for women only after 6 pm and before 6 am.
- **X** - Suffix on a name indicating this person is a previous (ex-) member of TO. (Fulano-X) Can also be used for other former affiliations (ex. "Fulano X-Viz", "Fulano X-Ganas", etc.)
- **ZK or Zhankoye** - the dining hall.

A GUIDE TO BEHAVIORAL NORMS AND ATTITUDES AT TWIN OAKS

The following is a somewhat random collection of various Twin Oaks norms. Most of these things are important to communicate to new members, but don't really fit into any of the above sections.

GENERAL: Communal living is intense; it's both demanding and rewarding. Three helpful guidelines: be honest, be kind, ask questions.

YOUR ROOM: **You do not own your room.** If you are away for more than 3 days, it is available to be used by others for the time you're gone. If you are a member, you may ask that your room be used by other members only. Don't go in other private rooms without permission.

PUBLIC SPACE: We share most things, so a good rule is "leave things where you find them". **Please don't take current magazines from ZK.** Library books and magazines (non-current issues) can be taken to your room. Please be sure to return them when you finished with them.

Work areas and residences all have their own norms. If you're not sure what they are, ask someone.

If you can't make it to a scheduled work shift, it's your responsibility to get it covered and/or tell the manager. If you're too sick to do this, have someone else do it. Jobs that are particularly important to get covered are: Milking, K-shifts, desk, and tofu. Unpleasant things happen when no one shows up for these.

Managerships, and other job vacancies, should be posted on the 3 X 5 board in Zhankoye before they are filled. Anyone can sign up for these jobs. We practice equal access. For some jobs, experience or having shown previous interest may be relevant. If you are interested in a particular work area, let people know.

NUDITY: We accept nudity in residences, but are careful about being nude around outsiders, especially locals, which means not being nude in the courtyard or in ZK during the day. (See community policy on clothing optional areas for more details.)

TOILETS, SHOWERS, UTILITIES: We can pee freely outside, but go out of the odor range of buildings in warm weather. The yard manager asks that you not pee on flower beds!

No tampons, condoms, paper towels, or cigarettes in toilets. These things go in containers by the toilets. If you flush this stuff down the toilet, our STP workers end up having to pull them out at the STP.

The toilet flushing norm is: "If it's yellow, let it mellow. If it's brown flush it down." Use your discretion, being conscious of energy and water use, and lingering odors. Be conservative with hot water.

If the electricity goes out, please use an absolute minimum of water. Also, it's expected that everyone not take showers during this time. Usually we have warning from maintenance people about a water shut-off. We prepare by filling jugs and buckets with water for drinking and flushing toilets in kitchens and residences. Also, do not stoke the furnaces, as most rely on electricity (and water systems) to circulate heat.

We are careful to throw things away in the right place and to recycle when possible. Glass of clear, green, and brown, cans of any kind, cardboard, each have separate receptacles in the snack kitchen and out on the loading dock. All varieties of paper now get recycled in the same container. (Chipboard is recycled with cardboard or with paper.)

ZK/KITCHEN/MEALS: At meal times, take one reasonable serving until time for seconds. Consider taking less if there's not much. Don't take more unless there is obviously plenty.

Please avoid negative comments or jokes about others' diets or about meals. If you like what was cooked, **tell the cook!** They're much more likely to fix that food again if they know someone out there cares. You may also feel the need to give cooks occasional negative feedback. However, it's a good idea to find out from them when they'll be ready to listen. Right after dinner isn't the best time for negative feedback.

Scrape leftover food from your plate into compost buckets before putting your dirty dishes in the bins. Do NOT put bones, meat, or animal grease in compost. Put these on a separate plate in the bus stop area or in special buckets in the walk-in freezer. Oh, and don't put silverware in the compost bins either; it can take years for them to resurface in the garden under a garden crew members foot.

SEXUAL/MEDICAL/DATING NORMS: We try to be conscious of medical problems, especially infectious ones such as crabs, scabies, herpes and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). If you think you might have a disease, get it checked out, let the health team know (it can be kept confidential), notify your contacts/sexual partner(s) immediately, and avoid infecting others. When you're a visitor, any medical questions or problems should be referred to the CVP Crew, but if you're a member they should be directed to the Health Team. Everyone is expected to be careful to use reliable contraception unless the community has granted approval for a pregnancy.

We try to be comfortable with the chosen sexual behavior (and most any other kind of behavior, for that matter) of others. Our personal behaviors vary widely. We try to allow and encourage touching that is friendly and non-sexual.

It's OK to ask for dates in a friendly, straight-forward way. It's OK to be direct and clear with a person about what you want if you are sexually attracted to co. It's OK to tell someone you're not sexually attracted to co, if that's the case. It's OK to turn down a request for a date. It's OK to accept a request for a date and turn down an offer (or make clear a non-explicit request) to be sexual with the person, if that is what you prefer. We try to be thoughtful and responsible in our relationships. Honesty, forethought, and direct communication is encouraged, in all matters, particularly sexual ones.

It's NOT OK to continue pursuing someone if co says "no" or gives you a message that co is not available for whatever you're asking them for at the time. It is your responsibility to check out what they're feeling if you sense some hesitation or ambivalence. It is your responsibility to make sure that the other person consents to whatever is going on, and that they are in a state in which they can consent. We have a **Sexual Harassment and Assault Policy** that everyone should read. We take these things very seriously here.

We try to maintain that all forms of non-exploitative sexuality are acceptable between peers, but not between children and adults. Some people think that very young children being sexual is something they barely tolerate or do not wish to have happen. Other people think it's OK. As a community, we tolerate most choices, but will not tolerate sex play between adults and children.

PERSONAL ITEMS: We try to use personal resources in a way which doesn't make others envious. We try to share. If we can't share, we keep things private. It's OK to ask someone to loan you something. Often you can locate something by posting a 3 X 5.

COMMUNICATION: Public complaining is viewed by most of us as undesirable. If you have a complaint, it is encouraged that you discuss your concerns with the person(s) responsible. Try to avoid gossiping in public. You can ask others to stop if you hear them gossiping.

Some of us believe in giving direct feedback as much as possible. If you want to give feedback, it's good to make it an "I" statement, owning your feelings, and not blaming. It's best to give feedback as soon as you notice there's a problem. You can get help from people if your feedback is charged with anger or other strong emotions, like having an understanding third person there. The Process Team is available to help with this kind of stuff. Just drop them a note.

Assertiveness (respecting both yourself and other people) is an important skill in community. If the people you live with don't know what you think or feel about their behavior, there's little chance that things will change in ways you'd prefer. It's more likely that you'll get what you want out of life in community if you tell others what you want directly and honestly, without hostility or manipulation.

We sign and date all written messages, notes, and O&I papers we post. **We always sign our comments.** This is our norm for accountability. Informal discussions in public are generally open to anyone who wants to join in. If you're interested in attending a business meeting as an observer, just ask if it's okay to sit in. Try not to disturb meetings if you are not there to contribute.

If you want to participate in a discussion on the O&I board, take some time to learn about the topic beforehand. Ask questions of several members. Be cautious and exercise restraint, especially as a provisional member. Some folks here do not want to be bothered about business stuff at particular times, especially during meals. Ask first, before launching into the statement or question, "Is this a good time for you to discuss such-and-such?" If not, you can ask for another time that would be better.

Some cooks have asked that people stay out of their way, which is encouraged, but you can use your judgment about approaching them. EC is another area to use sensitivity about interrupting someone, especially if they are using loud machinery. Don't yell for people unless it's an emergency.

MUSIC NORMS: Music is played outloud only at specific, posted times in the hammock shop. We do not ordinarily play music in ZK during meals. Different SLGs have different norms about music use in their buildings or your personal rooms. Be aware of quiet hours.

EXPLANATION OF TWIN OAKS PROPERTY CODE

You don't pay to join. You don't get anything when you leave. The Community supports you while you're here. Twin Oaks Provides for its members on the basis of need or equality. Equality is a fundamental community value which informs the property code. We try to avoid displays of wealth which may give rise to envy.

With the exceptions described below, we expect members not to use outside income or pre-existing assets during their membership in Twin Oaks.

Pre-existing Assets

Pre-existing assets are any property owned by a member before joining Twin Oaks. This includes personal property, real estate, stocks and bonds, and money. It includes money that was earned before joining Twin Oaks, even if payment is received after membership begins.

Pre-existing assets remain the property of the member. However, with some exceptions, members are not permitted to use, spend, sell, exchange, or earn income on pre-existing assets while they are members of the community.

Members may bring tangible personal property to the Community for their own personal use so long as this property **fits in their room** or designated private storage areas. "Tangible Personal property" means "things" (like furniture, clothing, bedding, books, cassette tapes). Money and stocks and bonds are not tangible personal property. Most members have stereos; a few have personal computers. Televisions are not permitted in the Community, nor are guns.

Provisional members may store **cars** at the Community behind EC until they have been accepted for full membership. Unless the car has been loaned or donated to the Community, it may not be used by anyone. After the member becomes a full member, the car must be sold, stored away from the Community, or loaned or donated to the Community.

This rule also applies to other types of grand personal property (such as power tools, large machinery or

other property that can't fit in a member's room). With the Community's permission, a provisional member may store such property at Twin Oaks until co becomes a full member.

Capital assets are things like **real estate, money and investments**. Any income earned on capital assets must be turned over to the Community. For example, interest earned on an outside bank account must be given to the Community. Rent from real estate must also be given to the Community.

Twin Oaks prefers that capital assets be loaned or donated to the Community. Typically, new members deposit their money with the Community as a "**Member Loan**." The Community returns the money to the members, without interest, when they leave. Members are also free to keep their money in outside bank accounts, donating any interest earned to the Community.

Members **may not spend from their capital assets**, except that:

1. Provisional members may use their capital assets to tie up their outside affairs (in particular, to pay medical and dental expenses).
2. Any member may do so to pay debts that existed prior to membership (such as school loans and including payments on existing insurance policies).
3. With planner approval, members may use their capital assets to make charitable contributions, or pay expenses of children, parents or elderly relatives. Remember to ask the planners first.
4. Members may use their capital assets to pay the expenses of maintaining preexisting assets. For instance, members may use rental income to cover mortgage payments, taxes and the cost of repairs to real estate. Any income over the cost of maintaining the property must be given to the Community.

All capital assets not loaned or donated to the Community must be listed in the membership agreement.

Inheritances are treated as pre-existing assets. This means that members may receive inheritance, but may not spend them while they are members (subject to the spending exceptions listed above).

Royalties received during membership are treated as preexisting assets, if they are payment for work produced before member joined the Community. The Payments belong to the member, but cannot be spent during membership (subject to the spending exceptions listed above).

Property loaned to the Community is used, maintained and insured (or not) at the Community's discretion and expense. It is returned to the member when co leaves.

Income During Membership

From the Community:

1. **Allowance**. Can be spent on anything. Monthly amount set by community.
2. **Vacation fund**. Rotated by seniority. May only be spent for vacation. Funded at the discretion of the community.
3. **Weeds & Knots**. Small grants for specific purposes, made on request of the member and based on need and availability of funds.
4. **Leaving fund**. Paid to full members at end of membership. Funded at discretion of the community.
5. **PFF**. "Products For Friends." For a specified number of hours of over-quota products work, members may obtain Twin Oaks products to give away or keep for themselves. Typically, PFF is used for gifts to family and friends or to barter for other desired goods.
6. **OPP**. "Over-quota Products for Projects." Members may do over-quota products work to earn money on a piece-work basis for specific projects. Projects must be approved and can be for either community or individual benefit, but community projects are prioritized. OPP is active or stopped at the discretion of the community. Check the OPP policy for specifics.

Outside Income:

Unearned income includes interest on **bank accounts**, dividends on **stocks and bonds**, income on **investments, social security, disability payments, pensions, and child support** for a child living at Twin Oaks. Unearned income is the property of the Community. (An exception is made for provisional members under 18, who are not required to donate unearned income to the Community.) The Community assumes responsibility for any tax liability on unearned income donated to it.

Income earned during membership is the property of the Community, except:

Vacation earnings are income earned by members on vacation time and off of Twin Oaks property. Vacation Earnings may be spent only when outside of Louisa County for at least 24 hours and only on consumable items (i.e. transportation, meals, lodging, entertainment; NOT possession to be used on the farm.) Members are reasonable for the taxes on their VE.

Gifts are the property of the recipient. Gifts of petty personal property may be kept and used at the Community. Gifts of money may be spent only when outside Louisa County for at least 24 hours and only on consumable items (i.e., the same spending restrictions as for VE), except that earmarked gifts may be spent on the purpose for which they are earmarked. For example, your family may give you a sweater for your birthday, or they

may give you money to buy a sweater. If they give you money, but don't tell you what it's for, you can't use it to buy a sweater. (You call use it on vacation). So if you want to use gift money to buy things to use on the farm, ask your donor to earmark it.

As with most everything at Twin Oaks, the property code is enforced through the **honor system**. Occasionally, suspected violations come to public attention and are dealt with through the usual community processes, such as O & I discussion and feed-back. Extreme violations may result in expulsion from the Community. Feel free to ask the **legal manager's** advice about particular property questions.

The property code is contained in Article IV of the by-laws of Twin Oaks Community. Anyone may obtain a copy of the by-laws from the legal manager. Some aspects of the property code are also required in order to retain our tax-exempt status under Section 501(d) of the Internal Revenue Code. That section requires the Community to have a "common treasury" and to operate its businesses for the common benefit of its members.

by Seneca, 7/20/91

Updated by Ethan 02009.08.04

HOW TO BE A LONG-TERM MEMBER

The time to think about being a long term member is while you are a new member. Once the seeds of dissatisfaction have taken hold, it is difficult to reverse the process. (It is a lot easier to prevent the onset of dissatisfaction.) Twin Oaks is a very easy and pleasant place to live. One can quite comfortably live one's entire life here, yet many people leave.

There seem to be two main reasons why people leave. One is that they burn out on the frustrations of living with a large group of people in such close quarters. The second is that there are some things that people can't get here that they can get on the outside. Things like schooling, a particular career, a particular mate, a particular climate, etc. Sometimes nothing can be done about the second, but there is a lot that can be done about the first.

People who manage to live here a long time have methods for dealing with the frustrations of group living which allow them to continue to live here happily. There are three key bits of information that have helped me and may help you:

1. Your life is under your control here. The only absolute demand placed on you is that you make quota and don't overtly break any of our community agreements. There are also the behavioral norms you just read. All other demands you place on yourself. Of course, getting in touch with your own real desires is the hard part.
2. Twin Oaks is always changing. Even one person can affect the directions that Twin Oaks moves.
3. Trust the people who live here. Expect to cooperate and compromise with the group and to trust the group's judgment.

Few things in our culture prepare us for living cooperatively in groups. The mainstream culture gears us for competition and rewards individual success. It should come as no surprise then that we find it difficult to live cooperatively. Twin Oaks doesn't yet have an education process to teach cooperation so each member must learn it on co's own.

Most of our decisions involve consulting with someone. Sometimes the someone is the whole community, sometimes it is a small group, or one other person. The decisions that we make as planners, managers, and individuals affect the rest of the community and so the rest of the community must be consulted.

We must take care of each other in many different ways. Each of us creates burdens for each other. Fixing a tool that you yourself accidentally dropped seems less frustrating than fixing a tool that someone else dropped. Cleaning someone else's dishes rather than your own may seem very frustrating. Having a good attitude about fixing and tidying and cleaning up after other people definitely make it easier to live here. Others are cleaning up after you as well.

We all have different standards of cleanliness. Cleanliness issues are frequently a source of persistent frustration for some people here. Lowering one's standards is the easiest way to deal with it. Another is to live and work in spaces that have less traffic and are more controllable and then put lots of energy into maintaining those areas. There are always a few people who won't clean up after themselves. This is true. Accept it. In every area of the community one must clean up other people's messes. Education and assertiveness might help some, but won't cure the problem. Unresentfully cleaning up after a few other people is the best we can strive for.

Twin Oaks is a small society and we can't do everything. Many times in the past there have been people who wanted something that wasn't currently available here, but when they asked, the opportunity was created. (Things like taking classes, vocational training, getting a particular trip funded, a musical instrument.) The first step toward getting something that isn't here is to try to figure out how to create it, or create some of it here at Twin

Oaks. It could take years if it's a big project, but, still, it might be possible.

If there are things that you want that clearly can't happen here, it can be helpful to think of all the costs that would go with that opportunity and to choose to not want to pay those costs.

Twin Oaks is a safe place for playing with your definition of self. It is possible to be different people here, so take the opportunity. Behave differently than your past patterns dictate. Wear strange clothes. Work in unusual work areas. Practice different patterns of communication. Change your name. All these lead to different ways of viewing one's self and they can lead to dramatic personal growth. There is often a lot of support for people who try to break out of old patterns.

If it comes to the point where you are feeling burnt out and feel a need to leave, try retreating within Twin Oaks. Quit reading the O&I board for a while. Avoid gossip. Stop going to planner meetings. Give up your stressful managerships. Put up a note saying that you are burnt out and are avoiding responsible positions. Spend more time relaxing and going for walks. Do LEX at another community. After a while, a few months, perhaps more, you will feel re-energized and ready to gently re-immense yourself into the community.

Complaining doesn't bring about positive change. We all are extremely overqualified at complaining, but that gets us nowhere. Have the courage to try to make changes to the things you are dissatisfied with, or accept that you are going to have to learn to live with them. Don't let other people's trips make you feel that you don't belong here. We are a diverse group.

Make a career and/or a life plan here and follow it. Living here is a great opportunity to learn more about yourself, your likes and dislikes, your want and needs. You'll may find that you don't really know yourself as well as you think.

CONCLUSION

We hope this binder has been useful as a crash course about the more important aspects about Twin Oaks new members should be aware of. We know that this doesn't include everything one should know or think about as a new member. We doubt we could even write such a document! If you have any questions about anything in or not in this handbook, please remember **your new member liaisons are there** to answer any questions you may have.

After reading this, if you find there is anything in here that you find to be out of date, or anything that you thought should be in here that isn't, please let a new member liaison know. This handbook will be a continual work in progress, as the policies and norms of the community will always be changing. We would love your feedback on improving the new member experience.

When you are done with this packet, please return it to a new member liaison, and they will pass it on to the next new members!

WELCOME TO TWIN OAKS!

Whose handbook was this?

Name

Join Date
