



## A Rainy Day Rant, or How I Spent a 3-Day Nor'easter in the Reading Room

- by Jay Martin

I am drawing from an essay in *The Land Report*, titled *The Breaking of Nations*, by Lionel Basney. The essay was taken from the writer's book *An Earth Careful Way of Life: Christian Stewardship and the Environmental Crisis*. The *Land Report* is the quarterly publication of The Land Institute in Salina, Kansas. Wes Jackson is the founder and President. He would be my choice for Secretary of Agriculture, but he would never accept the position, being one of those special people who prefer to "work the edges". At The Land Institute, the staff is working on developing perennial poly-cultures as part of what they refer to as Natural Systems Agriculture. Natural Systems Agriculture is based on the premise that Mother Nature will better inform our decisions than human cunning. While I am not a scientific person, I would have to agree with Wes simply because I know that Mother Nature has been at this quite a bit longer than we humans have and she seldom, if ever, makes mistakes. In reality, we humans may prove to be her only mistake, a bad experiment in the evolutionary progression. As the Dalai Lama once said, "Of what use are humans if the only species that would suffer from our extinction are house plants and domestic animals".

In his essay, Basney writes about Dorothy and William Wordsworth, an orphaned brother and sister, who, in 1799, hoped to find and make a home for themselves and live out their lives in the comfort of a small community on William's small investment income. They moved from southwest England to Dove Cottage, near Grasmere.

Dorothy kept a journal, the fragments of which Basney uses to describe their life in a rural community during a time of great demographic unsettling with the advent of the Industrial Age. Hundreds of thousands of people were dispossessed of their inherited places and funneled hit-or-miss fashion toward the industrial cities. She wrote about beggars coming to the village seeking help, one of whom died while there. The dead woman was buried by the parish. Dorothy wrote:

"I was affected to tears while we stood in the house, the coffin lying before me. There were no kindred, no children. When we got out of the dark house the sun was shining and the prospect looked divinely beautiful as I never saw it. It seemed more sacred than I had ever seen it, and yet more allied to human life. The green fields, neighbors of the churchyard, were as green as possible....I thought she was going to a quiet spot."

The industrial culture has always destroyed these communities wherever it found them. Neither the industries for

which these people provided the labor force nor the day's social planning were prepared to deal with them in anything but a hit-or-miss fashion. Basney argues that this displacement and disorientation among the people served the "Masters of the Universe" of the day well in that the displaced became dependent on the goods and services provided by the industries rather than a community of neighbors. Basney goes on to say that industrialization needed the cooperation, or at least the conformity of the people. The transformation from an agrarian based society to an industrial based society could not happen in a vacuum. The way of life in place had to be destroyed before industrial culture could come into its own. The trouble with traditional communities was that they offered too many securities. No one starved because all had a right to share the crop or hunt, no one lived or died alone because life was lived within the clan or parish. You cannot buy such securities; they have nothing to do with money, and therefore the market cannot profit from them. One's right to enjoy the security of a clan or parish comes by birth and subsequent good behavior. To make people into "labor" and "consumers" meant depriving them of these unbought advantages.

It also meant depriving them of the subsistence base they held in common and which provided for them. This subsistence base was an obstacle, therefore, to the coming of a nationally organized industrial economy, the destruction of which was a precondition of industrialization. An industrial economy detaches people from the earth for two reasons: to make us depend for subsistence on the market, and to gain access to the earth, we would otherwise, in self-defense, protect.

It is easy to praise and sentimentalize about traditional societies, but do we know what we are talking about? What makes a community, a community? How large can a community become before it loses its coherence? A possible answer is offered by Marty Strange (I love his name) when he was asked, "How big is the typical farm in the family farm system?" His answer, "It is about as big as its neighbors". That is, a community extends as far as you can have neighbors, as far as you can have personal knowledge of, and take responsibility for other people and places.

So, how are we to establish a relationship with the natural world that will feed us? So far our answer in an industrial era has been that scientific knowledge, money and fossil fuel will force the earth to support us. This could only be true if we accept the assumption that most of us should be "freed" from the drudgery of participating in our own

## In Your Share\* This Week

Beets  
Choice of Greens  
Choice of Sweet Potatoes  
Broccoli  
Cauliflower  
Eggplant  
Bok Choi

\*Share makeup is best estimate at publication time.

**Note: For preservation tips and additional recipes, visit the CSA website at**

<http://www.providentorganicfarm.com/>

[Rainy Day Rant - cont.] provision, get out of the way and let the machine have its way.

This freedom from the necessity of providing directly for ourselves came with an additional freedom; to choose to live within a community or not. In 20<sup>th</sup> century America we have taken this notion of "voluntary community" a step further: The idea that the individual sets the terms for community, and not the other way around. Can we live without obligation, friendship, commitment, dependence or self-restraint? Community is the link between necessity and morality. Community turns goodness into obligation. Community preserves and nourishes things industrial society must exploit and sell for a profit. We cannot properly care for this planet but through direct personal responsibility and that responsibility is only practical in self-conscious communities.

Onward, *- Jay*

## Pot Luck



Please mark your calendars for **Sunday, November 15 at 2:00 pm** for our end of year CSA pot luck at the Westside Community Center in Bivalve.

More information coming

## Announcement

I can get Holiday turkeys this year from Locust Point Farm (same place as last year). This year's price is \$2.55 per lb. They can be ordered the same way as last year, 12-15 lb. range, 16-20 lb. range and 21- 25 lb. range. Let me know as soon as possible either in person at the pick up sites, by phone at 410-873-2942 or e-mail at [ubuubok@comcast.net](mailto:ubuubok@comcast.net).

As a complement to our members' shares the week of October 26<sup>th</sup>, local farmer Candy Anderson of Arlington's Natural Meats will be offering you a FREE Sample of 1 lb of ground beef or 1 lb of pork sausage.

Arlington's Natural Meats sells Angus beef and Duroc pork that was born and raised on their family farm in Westover, MD. Arlington's Natural Meats is committed to humanely raising animals and have bred their animals to be tasty, tender, and lean. They raise them the OLD FASHIONED WAY, by not using any growth hormones or steroids on their animals. Their feed is forage based with no antibiotics or metabolic enhancers. They finish their animals with grains that our grown on their farm. All their products are DRY Aged, with no water added. All their products are USDA inspected.

Orders can be placed in advance on their website and picked up along with your CSA share. Discounts are available for buying in bulk, including half or whole beef or hogs. For more information, visit [www.arlingtonsNaturalMeats.com](http://www.arlingtonsNaturalMeats.com).

### Message from Sharon Carson, regarding apple orders:

We just spoke with the orchard . They are still picking and grading the Yorks . The only workers are the owners and one is a 90 year old woman. They asked us to come mid- November .We are shooting for returning Sunday- Nov 15th with the load and spending the Saturday before packing the apples . I am adding up all the orders today and letting them know how many bushels we need so far. They will save us what we need . I appreciate those of you willing to add the extra \$3. 00 to your #2 boxes to pay for our labor . We will no longer accept orders for bags of apples - that was not a good idea- the boxes stack and are far easier on us -worth the \$3. 00 .

We will accept more orders till the end of the month -but only for #1 apples, juice or vinegar. **Please include your contact info** . I would prefer you mail your order to me with your check or postal money order (made out to Sharon Carson). It is too confusing for me to process orders at the market in the middle of sales .

For those of you who shop at OC Organics -they will be selling the apples there this fall. .