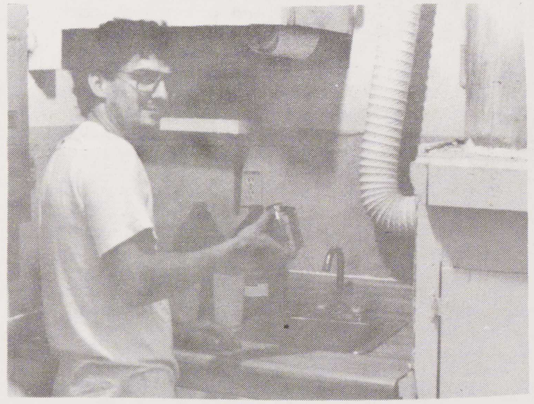
ASPI LIBRARY RESOURCES

Libraries contain books--and periodicals. ASPI's Resource Center receives about 150 newsletters, weekly & monthly journals, and other magazines ranging from "Acid Magazine" written by the Swedish National Environmental Protection Board to "Zeta Magazine," a new social change periodical from Boston. These are the results of an information explosion and an aggressive exchange program with a large number of publishers.

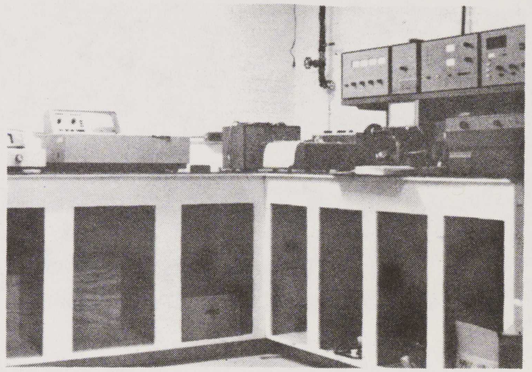
You are invited to come, browse and read. The periodicals are not as concentrated in space as the book portion of our library. We are willing to share duplicate copies with other non-profit groups. Plan to stay as long as you like. If you are arriving after work hours, phone ahead to make sure someone will show you around. No one will push you out for we have no "closing" time.



Jerry V. Fry 's pride: our new photographic development space

PHOTOGRAPHY

Jerry V. Fry, our spring '85 intern, has returned for the summer of '88. He is finishing a photography program at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. He has put a dark room together using some space in the first floor Solar House storage room. With the assistance of J.C. Whitt he has built a drying chamber, installed a sink and shelving, and prepared some space for making and enlarging black-and-white prints. Much of the equipment had been donated and was ready for service. Now ASPI is able to process some of the many photos related to our environmental and citizen monitoring programs. Smile!



Recently installed instruments at the Fairmont, WV Laboratory

SUMMER CHANGES

A number of improvements were made on the grounds in the past few months, even though the drought has been very hard on most growing things--both plant and animal. The grounds have been cleared of weeds and underbrush, allowing visitors to sight snakes (both copperheads and rattlers) at a respectful distance. New horseshoe pits and tenting sites have been added. An dozen fruit trees have been added to cleared land on the river side of the access road. Five flower boxes have been built and adorn the front of the herb greenhouse and the terrace near the cord wood building (keeping them in water has proved to be a problem).

New walkways have been added to the solar house along with steps leading up to the building. The rail fencing has been straightened, signs on the trails mended, and some new floor coverings have been added within the Solar building. The old tool room has been converted into a root cellar--so as to hold the large harvest from the demonstration gardens when and if it comes.

The bunkhouse now has a shower room and a primitive water storage system. We are also starting to build another cistern for the cordwood building (the ASPI office).

Darrell Smith, a second year summer intern, puts a finishing touch on the new bunk-house shower-room

PUBLICATIONS

Al Fritsch has been able to devote a portion of 1988 to his writing projects. The ETHNIC ATLAS OF THE UNITED STATES (Facts on File) inches nearer completion during this calendar year. Al says he will never again tackle hobbies and stay with environmental works.

During June, Al completed an environmental Action Manual for the churches (title to be determined). This has been distributed to a advisory committee and has the blessings of the North American Conference on Christianity and Ecology, hopefully as a resource for believing communities. The suggestions are due back in late summer.

While awaiting Manual criticisms Al has launched a co-author venture with an old colleague of 16 years, Art Purcell. The two hope to tap Art's experience on the Three Mile Island Commission to write a book on the tenth anniversary of the TMI accident. The publisher is R & E Miles.

ROGER LEE COUCH, OUR JANUARY, 1989 "Simple Lifestyle Calendar" Face, is at the left in the Newsweek picture.

January 1989
Simple Lifestyle Calendar

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SIMPSONS
(Becky serves on the ASPI Board)

MICHAEL PATRICK—PICTURE GROUP

Simpson serves the local community out her back door

KENTUCKY

Survival in the Hollow

The mine owners said the flood that ruined 37 homes in Harlan County was an act of God. Becky Simpson didn't buy that. She saw that 25 years of strip mining had clogged the creek with clay and left the Appalachian hollow vulnerable to flooding. Simpson helped organize the hollow's families, who sued the mining company. The owners weren't her only opponents. Many local men didn't like seeing a woman in charge; others in the area thought she was a complainer. "Some of them told me if I don't like it here why don't I leave," Simpson recalls. "I told 'em I was here before the strip mining started, and I'd be here after it was done." Her efforts got results: $150,000 in damages for 17 families. She saw to it that the creek was dredged and the hollow closed to future strip mining.

Now Simpson and her husband, who is blind, run the Cranks Creek Survival Center—a fancy name for the help they give out at their own back door. With a driver, Bobby goes around the region collecting goods and money from churches and civic groups. Last year, in search of canned food, milk, baby food, garden seeds and clothes, he made more than 200 trips. "We've wore out three trucks," he says. (The Simpsons take no salary from the center, scraping by on Bobby's disability check.) A recent donation put a roof over the center's unfinished meeting and storage building, and another $10,000 is needed for siding, floors, windows and furniture. But people who need help can't wait. A young mother comes by to get milk for her baby; another mother and her three daughters stop in for shoes. "We haven't been a drop in the bucket," Becky Simpson says: there are always people in some nearby hollow "worse off than any we've seen." When the suffering she sees overwhelms her, she locks herself in a room for a few minutes to get away. Then she starts up again, because "getting out and doing anything is better than sitting home worrying ourselves to death."