Summer Construction

More construction occurred in this valley during the summer season than ever before. The Clifford Coffey super-insulated two-bedroom house on the Sand Hill Community Land Trust was started on May 21st and completed with cistern and compost toilet (Bob Fairchild's design) less than two months later. The lumber was sawed and dressed locally at Turner Lumber Company at Swiss Colony in Laurel County and virtually the entire structure was designed and constructed with local help. Several hundred persons have already visited the site and have been amazed at what can be done with less than $10,000 worth of materials.

A two-bedroom bunk house has been constructed on the ASPI grounds by Joe Wagers using three local summer employment opportunities workers. Joe had previously helped construct the cordwood building in 1983. This most "Appalachian" of all the ASPI buildings is a classical pole house perched above the nature trail and required an enormous outlay of sweat and energy to move two tons of materials from the valley to the building site. The bunk house solves the ASPI problem of where to house spring, summer, and fall groups of volunteers. It can hold eight persons comfortably and has a wide porch that looks out over the wooded hillside. Shower facilities are still to be added.

The woodworking shed was completed with concrete floor, secured doors, shelving, and furnished with a planer-joiner. A volunteer crew cleared the land from behind the cordwood building for the construction of an herb solar greenhouse later this fall. A playpen area has been constructed for use by the land trust children. Erosion barriers have been constructed on the northern slopes of the nature trail.

The Clifford Coffey House

1988 CALENDAR

The Calendar season starts early, and for the first time, the next issue is ready by mid-year. Thanks to the efforts of Warren Brunner's daughter, Sharme (at Copyrite Printing), we have the best-ever edition for early sales. The 1988 theme is the Craftspeople of Appalachia; the 366 suggestions are new and just as exciting; the cover and design by Mark Spencer are regarded by early viewers as the best yet. See enclosed brochure for ordering now.

RECLAMATION CONT.

ASPI has presented evidence of improper surface mine reclamation at sixteen Clay County, Kentucky sites to the London Federal Office of Surface Mining. The information was obtained using aerial photography by Warren Brunner, coupled with ground surveying performed by Peter Ayers. The photos showed extensive amounts of highwall, severe erosion of slopes, exposed layers of shale, undistributed piles of top soil, muddy water collected in open strip pits, and the potential of mud slides on public roads.

Aerial photography has been traditionally excluded as a monitoring method for finding improper reclamation practices because of expense. ASPI has found that the use of preliminary ground surveying to determine areas of county surface mining allows surveyors to identify zones of activity but to miss many particular sites. In fact, only five improper sites were found in the county ground survey and three times as many using aerial photography. Increased aerial surveying costs were equivalent to about $1,200 extra per county.

WATER MONITORING

The Kentucky state Waterwatch Program has designated ASPI as one of the 25 monitoring groups in the Commonwealth. Three sites in the Rockcastle River Valley have been approved for monthly testing for six types of information. Marsha Lambdin, who resides on the Land Trust, has been trained to do the required analytical work. The state furnishes equipment and reporting forms. Sites include the unreclaimed Black & White mining area and two locations on the Rockcastle River.

The ASPI Bunk House

NACCE

While you are receiving this newsletter the most important gathering of church-related environmentalists on this continent is occurring. The conference event at North Webster, Indiana on August 19-22 is the beginning. Hopefully the 60 some speakers, 250-piece art exhibit, film festival, and display of environmental educational materials will inspire the participants to redouble their efforts to bring the environmental message to the parishes of North America. The proceedings are already being assembled and will be available before the end of the year, along with videotapes of all the conference sessions and the document approved by the assembled body. The NACCE Board is expecting Al Fritsch to produce an action manual in 1988. More on his and other NACCE-related publications and materials in the autumn newsletter.

THANKS

...to the four interns from Gainesville, Florida; ...to Ed Gemerchak and his crew of four students from Loyola Academy of Illinois; ...to Sabrina Tuttle for her help during the month of July while preparing for her stint in the Peace Corps; ...to William Hoover for his second generous donation of a $50,000 computerized gas chromatograph for our West Virginia chemical laboratory; ...to the Jesuit Community of Lexington for the 1981 Chevy; ...to the Sisters of Loretto for the $10,000 loan for the next Sand Hill Community Land Trust house; ...for an anonymous donation of $1,500 from Colorado for general expenses; ...to the Appalachian Community Fund for the $1,000 grant for the operation of the Hoover Laboratory at Fairmont, WV; ...to the Covington Diocese Campaign for Human Development Fund grant of $1,000 to help employ local residents; ...to the donors from Sacred Heart Church at Pinehurst, NC and from Sacred Heart Church in Springfield, MA; ...to Tim Newton who gave two weeks in helping to build the bunk house; ...to Dora Mae Wagers and the musicians who helped make the Homecoming a great event; ...to John Horstman for donating computer consulting time; ...to Professor Tony Roccanova for helping with our Land Trust comprehensive development plan; ...to Cissy Ward for four new appliances to assist vounteer facilities here and in Harlan County, and for house paint; to Bobby Simpson for furnishing us with mattresses for the bunk house; ...to the craftspersons who acted as photographic subjects for the upcoming 1988 Simple Lifestyle Calendar; to the William Harmeyer family for rugs for the land trust residence; ...to Timothy Collins for filling in on many additional tasks while engaged in research; ...to Robert Ayers of Los Angeles for editing two videotapes for ASPI on solar demonstration and the coal reclamation projects; ...to recent note card and book purchasers; ...to Copyrite Printing of Richmond, Kentucky, for its superb production of the 1988 calendars; ...to L.A. Warner for his donated vacation time; ...and to an anonymous donor of a chain saw, weed eater and electric blower.