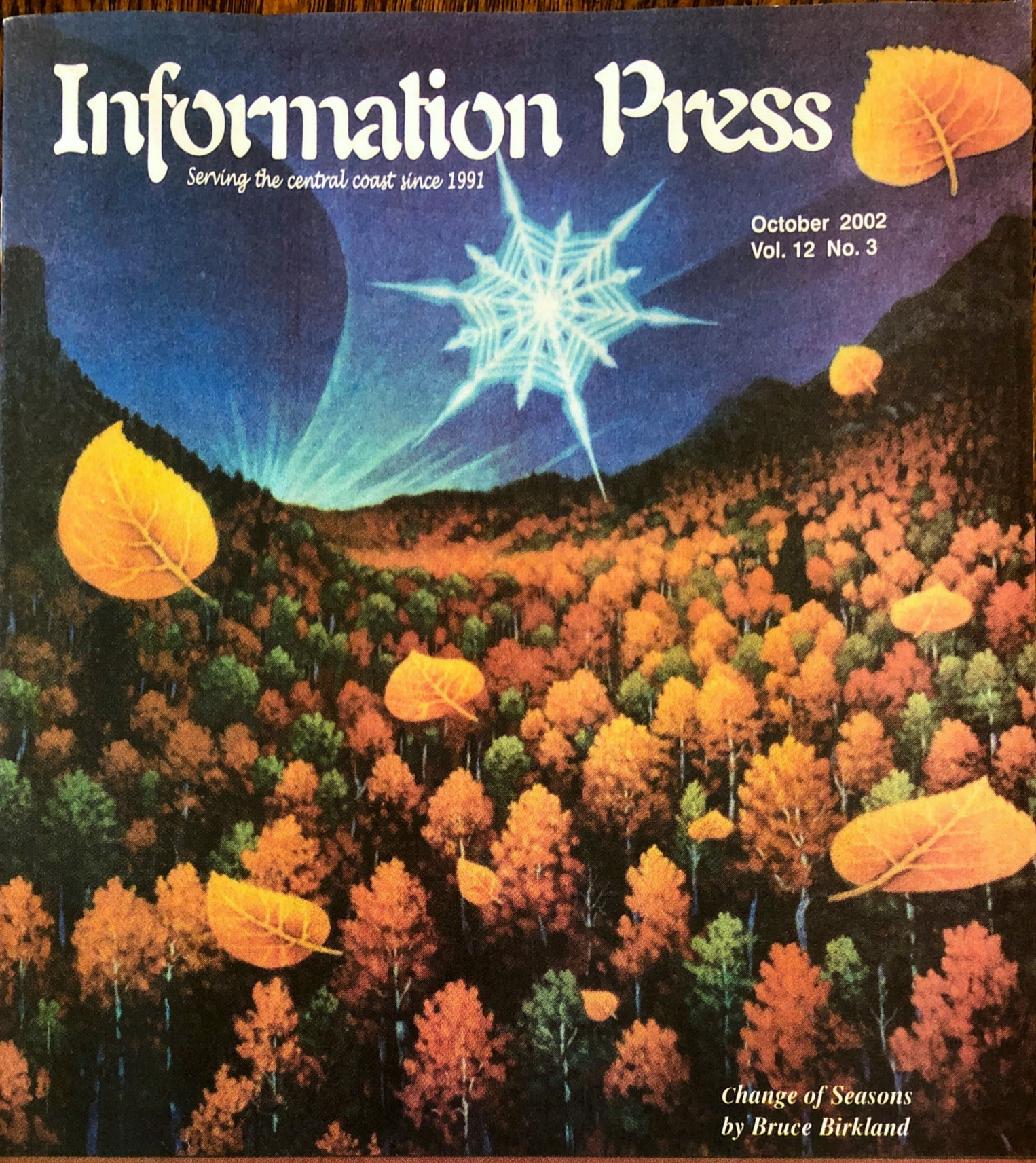
Information Press

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Change of Seasons
by Bruce Birkland

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Gwenn Henkel, CMH, MH, PH.D
Certified Medical Hypnotherapist, Hypnoanaesthesiologist, Master Hypnotherapist

As a result of a serious back and neck injury in 1995, Gwenn Henkel found herself with the debilitating conditions of Fibromyalgia, Myofacial Pain Syndrome and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Drugs and physical therapy did not help, but at the suggestion of one of her doctor's, hypnosis did! She was able to completely restore her once active life, and overcome the continuous pain of the maladies she once suffered.

Gwenn has made it her soul purpose in life to help people to learn the power of their minds and teach them how to use it. You do not have to learn to live with chronic pain conditions, and you can make permanent changes in your life with self-hypnosis.

Now a Master Hypnotherapist from the San Francisco Bay Area, Gwenn Henkel makes week long visits to San Luis Obispo. She will be returning from Nov 11-15.

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Paso Robles Cohousing Neighborhood Looks Ahead to Groundbreaking

by Neshama Abraham Paiss

The Oak Creek Commons cohousing community has been moving steadily forward in its creation of a 36-household co-housing neighborhood on 14 wooded acres in Paso Robles. The community is almost filled and still has a few homes available.



Future residents of Oak Creek Commons sitting outside during a weekend retreat in Paso Robles

What's unique about cohousing is that the future residents are the designers and co-developers of the project, including the overall site, the individual homes and the community building or Common House. Moreover, according to founding member, Mike Swettenam of Paso Robles, this cohousing project offers "a spiritual connection to both nature and community." He says: "What I love about our neighborhood is we are preserving 10 acres as open space where we can view the sunset from the hilltop, listen to frogs in the creek, gaze upon the stars, watch a hummingbird, camp out, or find a quiet place to meditate all without getting in a car and driving anywhere."

He also says that the ongoing interaction with people is what makes "cohousing a spiritual experience." This model of sustainable living is composed of over 40 adults and children who have been meeting for the past three years to create the neighborhood. Members are of all ages and stages in life. Because future residents reside in different parts of California, the community has developed a strong Process Team that devotes time to regular retreats and workshops and communi-cates frequently through emails and bridge calls. Members practice non-violent communi-cation to solve conflicts openly and peacefully.

The groups interest in healthy living includes a landscape plan full of edible plants and an organic garden. Members have also chosen a top-of-the-line ventilation system for their homes and extra insulation to make them highly energy efficient and reduce utility bills.

In addition to equal ownership of the land, residents will also share use a 4,000 square foot community owned Common House. The Common House is typically the social center of a cohousing neighborhood where people pick up their mail and pass through on their way to their homes. The Oak Creek Commons Common House will hold a large kitchen and dining area for optional community meals several times a week. Anne Jackson, a member of the community now living in Los Angeles says "I'm looking forward to cooking community meals and trying out new recipes and seasonings that I might not cook for myself and my small family." She adds, "I like the idea of buying in bulk and feeding people for less money."

The Common House will also have guest rooms for overnight visitors, library, sitting room, meeting space, office area, children's play room and a Great Room for special events. Members of the group are planning to play music together and hold dances in the Common House, offer regular yoga classes and host a book club and discussion groups, among other activities.

Construction is planned to start in December of 2002 with people moving in during 2003. The community holds free orientations and site tours on weekends in Paso Robles. For more information, call 800-489-8715 or visit us at: www.OakCreekCommons.org.

Neshama Abraham Paiss is a professional writer and a resident of Nomad Cohousing in Boulder, CO, where she and her husband are raising two daughters.



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