

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT WOBURN LAWN

This is the report of the Woburn Lawn Project from Area Havana. In the area of Corporate Patterns, the Project has concerned itself with a broad base of community participation through neighborhood stakes, action guilds and community assemblies. The stakes meet weekly to study and reflect together, and plan stake action. Each stake has created a vista with a flower garden, bus shed, welcome sign with the stake slogan, and benches. Each stake also named the lanes and pathways in its neighborhood. I live in Stake 1; our slogan is "we are alive" and my home is on Hill Crescent.

The stakes have funded all of their projects through local fund-raising events such as dances, the sale of peanuts, and family donation. They have their organized stake workdays to get the jobs done. Stake Leaders Training for 25 local leaders once a month includes writing stake curriculum and learning the methods to keep the stakes moving. The stakes also support community-wide events. For example, they provide the food for weekly community workday lunches. The five action guilds also meet weekly and are responsible for the work in health, education, farming, building and industry.

Once a quarter in a community assembly, we decide the projects that we will accomplish the next quarter, and hear reports from the stakes and guilds. As a result of doing all of these tactics, 79% of the families in Woburn Lawn participate in some community event on a regular basis. Eleven new community gardens have been built. Forty-four families have landscaped their own homes, thirty families have built new driveways, and thirty-seven families have planted new food gardens. We think that Woburn Lawn looks good.

Many communities today face the problem of having only a small group of leaders who make the decisions for the whole community. Our breakthrough is in knowing that we are all leaders and we can use our stakes, guilds and assemblies to decide things together.

We have learned many things about making the stakes come alive. First, the stake leaders need to visit every home, every week. We do this by delivering our Voice to each home every week. This gives us a chance to talk to our neighbors. Second, a regular community calendar helps people to participate. People then know that every Monday is Workday, every Tuesday is Stake Meeting, and so on. One week it rained very hard, and only five people came to our stake meeting, but we had it anyway. Holding to the regular calendar is important. Third, it is important for the stakes to be always planning and carrying out activities. These activities should focus on the stake, like beautification and clean-up but they should also be activities which support community-wide efforts. Finally, we have learned that it is important for stake leaders to meet regularly for training in methods so that the stakes can be self-sustaining.

We are developing new patterns of being a community that allows all the people to participate, and that is important for the future.