

Delta Pace HDP

Box 269
Pace, MS.

Town Meeting: Mississippi
Box 2432
Jackson, Ms. 39205

March 14, 1980

Dear Colleagues,

Enclosed is the construct used for the fourth "cluster" meeting in North Central Mississippi last night. We saw this meeting as a time to decide the role of that cluster, and get a real decision to continue or not. We feel it worked. The issues are involving younger people, established structures (county, agency) and men. The people meeting are from West, Pickens, Kosciusko, Benton, McAdams and Goodman. (West & Pickens have made it every time, the others sporadically) They have met once a month since December; their Town Meetings were in November. The focus has been:

December - sharing victory stories and planning to meet monthly

January - viewing the Pace slide show and planning local slide shows, etc.

(note: Kosciusko has invited William Bell to return to show Kosciusko the Pace slide show and to use that as a means to get commitment from Kosciusko people to get involved. That will happen in mid-April)

February- planned energy conservation projects- see enclosed results

I guess what's unusual about the cluster is that the people are very poor, rural and Black and they have said they see the value of meeting together and learning methods, new ideas, etc. They are very interested in the signal town conference and the Delta Pace HDP.

There are 3 other clusters initiated - Golden Triangle is all white, smaller participation. Southern is mixed, lots of potential. The North Delta cluster had its first meeting a week ago with four towns represented with 75 participants. (Average in North central has been 30).

We'd appreciate any reflections you might have. Each meeting/is created as we go, since it is the forerunner to the others.

Grace and Peace,

Diann McCabe

Diann McCabe

/dm

enclosed - cluster notes (2 mtgs)
- notes from 3-11-80 mtg.
- article by Ruth
- news articles

*Justin
Reading
Miss.*

Operations

Place: West Town Hall -9 30

Intro- Song - Pickens song

Intro participants ----name and hero, someone you admire, that you've been thinking about lately. Go around the room.

Reading - JOURNEY TO IXTLAN - The proper mood of a warrior.

- Conversation
- 1What do you remember, what words, phrases
 - 2What came to mind that you've experienced - when were you frightened by something dangerous? What experiences (they said snake, bull)
 - 3What was Don Juan trying to teach, what was the lesson in this?
(you can endure rather than just get angry at people, you can think twice, and not be just angry, but reflect and go from there)
 - 4What will you take with you from this lesson, what was helpful?
(with the proper mood, you can do more than you thought)

Context- Tonite is about bringing you up-to-date on where we've come from and look to where we're going and what we could do.

ICA-	'63	5th City	GRID, IRON MAN
		Research	Community Congress (town meeting)
	'68	Riots	Decision to stay
			Preschool Health Post, Mayor Daley
			Take 5th City to the world
	'73-74	Majuro/Oombulgurri	(impossible situations)
	'75-76	8 HDPs	Iron Man to the world
	'76-77	24 HDPs	Pace, Mississippi
			5000 Town Meetings USA
	78-79	400 HDPs, mass	Began TMs around the world

HUMAN Development

Break - coffee, cookies, informal conversation awakenment

Context- Mississippi's Role



- 1st TM-Jackson 1976
- Pace, 2-77 (TM consult, Xerox playground Delta Days, preschool built)
- 77-78 TM in every county
- 78-79 GOVCP sponsored 200 TMs across the state

(that's why were able to come to your town last year) with statewide assembly 6-79
Again continued TMs this year second time around. Were asked to work with towns.
Question is, what's needed? Not just for West, or Pickens, but what for the world?
How could your community be a sign to all of Mississippi and to the world? People in Pace laughed when they considered that they might make a difference in this state and in the world. AND THEY HAVE. The MS. state report has been seen all over the world (through work of ICA) and people are impressed. You've made a difference. But it's just a beginning.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

What have we done in our three previous meetings?

share stories — telling our story — planned energy community projects

What was the value in meeting together? (learned from ea. other-if they can, we can)

What would be the value of continued meeting? Same - we'll keep each other going)

Should we keep meeting? (yes) What should we do?

- report on plans
- share stories
- work on energy projects
- work on industry
- work with agencies on housing
- invite each other to celebrations
- training in leadership methods
- write songs
- build displays

North Central Signal Communities Cluster

February meeting: ENERGY/VISIBILITY

37 present from Pickens, West, Benton, McAdams, Goodman

Intro:

song, who's here from _____, report from last months meeting

Reports:

each town pick a reporter. report on one or two steps or accomplishments that have taken place in the last month. What is the one blocking point that you would like advise from the other towns on?

After each report, brainstormed ideas on how to unblock. "What advise do you have?"
"What did you do in your town to deal with a situation like this one?"

Energy/Visibility workshop

1. Passed out red "Guide for Home Energy Saving".
2. Reflection: What ideas strike you?
 - What are some things people in your community are already doing?
 - What new ideas does this give you on what can be done in your community?
 - Which of these things could be done by a large group of people?
 - Which of these things would be most visible to the whole community & to people outside the community?

Meet in groups by town

Decide on one Energy Event that could be done in one day, by a group of people, that would be visible.

- 1) Pick a date
- 2) What area of town or particular task will you focus on?
- 3) Describe the event.
- 4) How will you involve older people, young people, women, men, etc.?
- 5) How will you celebrate your accomplishment at the end of the event?

PICKENS

Workday on Saving Energy to kick off an energy club

Hold in late March

Involve all the people on Union Rd. in Pickens.

A group will do door to door visits (walking), take "Checklist on Energy" and help each household fill it out, decide on energy saving steps with ea. household.

Have celebration at city hall at end of day with refreshments.

BENTON

Clean an area for playground, 20' x 70' (in order to keep people at home for recreation)

March 1st- first Saturday in March

Children clean area, women supervise, men haul trash, young children "water boys".

Have weinie roast at end of day

Energy day

4th Saturday in March

Gather and create posters and flyers (simple energy checklist)

Contact groups and every home

Put up posters and deliver flyers

Have refreshments.

WEST

Paint up/Fix up day (West saw anything they could do to keep people interested in their home town as a contribution to energy saving-limiting travel, etc. so they worked on a previously planned event)

To be held in April

Involve 50 people in groups of 10 each

focus on 5 different areas.

Raise funds for paint, etc. with a BBQ the week before

Hold clean-up day from 8:00 to 2:00

Fix up houses falling down, clean up streets, paint areas that need painting.

Gather at Community Center after for refreshments and talk about what done and future projections.

There was one person from McAdams, and one person from Goodman. The woman from Goodman worked with Pickens. McAdams worked on who else needed to come to represent the town (they have had more representation at previous meetings)

Rehearsing the past history of MS. -

April '76- 1st TM in Jackson, Con Maloney (Senator) was M.C.
 Fall '76 - Mississippi manuevers using area Houston Day I's
 Winter '77 - Pace TM, consult, Clarksdale & Greenville TMs
 Spring/ June '77- Delta Days (20 Tms in Delta using Pace, colleague orchestrators)
 Xerox built park in Pace
 Summer '77 - preschool built in Pace
 Fall '77 County coverage began - West Tennessee
 Feb-March '78 - Mississippi county coverage done
 May '78 Delta Pace Day - Ruth Wilson visits Pace
 Aug '78 Initial proposal to do 200 TMs in MS sponsored by the GOVS office writtern
 Oct '78 - 1st TMs began
 Nov '78 \$25,000. approved by MS. Budget Commission for 1/2 of the TMs (total budget submitted was 52,500.)
 Dec. '78- GWF in gov. mansion w/120
 April '79- \$20,000. approved for completion of TM: MS 200 by CSA
 June '79 - statewide Town Meeting Assembly in Jackson w/500 including reps from Wash D.C., Colorado, Minnesota, Arkansas and Louisiana as well as Area Houston ICA

R. WILSON
 D. CLAMMER
 T. LUSH
 E. CAPERTON
 E. HOWARD
 T. MCCABE
 D. MCCABE
 G. HOWARD
 J. CRESS

This year 79-80:

Town Meeting II created
 Agencies see value of local involvement
 There are visible signs of local initiative
 People (mayors) see the value of getting everyone involved
 See value of building a plan together
 concept of "town meeting" becoming popular
 core of leadership is meeting regularly in many places
 practical results are coming from local initiative
 there are images of MS. "moving up"

ADVANTAGES

1. proven track record of TM
2. Washington D.C. knows we can ~~deliver~~ deliver (because of MS)
3. groups of communities are ripe for clusters
4. individuals within agencies see the urgency of getting our methods
5. key individuals see themselves as guardians and movement
6. Advocacy of governor's Office of Citizen Participation
7. There is a new mood across the state of what ~~xxxxxx~~ now?
8. Governor Winter's open stance toward the growth of MS.
9. Winter sees the importance of GOCP.
10. Public & private support
11. Public money rec'd.

TRENDS

1. "The time is right and there is a way to change" image
2. partnership of private/public/voluntary sectors
3. new openness by officials toward local residential participation.
4. Agencies see the need for participation from the local.
5. Answers to the future will be coming from models that break away from past norms.
6. clergy sees their role as caring for community - new grasp of the parish.
7. there is the image that citizen participation is human development
8. People are moving back to Mississippi - strong "roots" mythology.
9. private sector sees its social responsibility
10. Mississippi's potential for growth in all ways

VULNERABILITIES (brainstorm)

1. no economic sign in Pace
2. Pace is in the Delta
3. Inadequate front-term funding
4. dependence on one source of funding
5. Red Tape, Strings attached and accountability that comes with public funding
6. Inflated economy's affect on private and public availability of funds
7. Awakenment campaign's dependency on ICA staff
8. ARK/LA campaigns, no visible public support
9. TM:MS Ltd. (the incorporation) ambiguity about future and replicability
10. current self-support deficit relative to replicability of this strategy.
11. ~~Haze~~ Haze of the movement regarding global consensus.
12. Tension between long ~~xx~~ term planning and flexibility.
13. Maintaining global priorities while maintaining current momentum.
14. dis-relatedness of Pace to awakenment campaign.
15. How get depth: what is the relationship of TM:MS to doing the 2 million villages.
16. We don't know how to occasion metro cadres.
17. after doing TMS ~~wx~~ everywhere, what is the next necessary deed.
18. we haven't built a strong movement.
19. ~~how~~ how do we grasp the significance of what has happened in MS.
20. gap of "on behalf of".
21. We don't take the time to ~~formulate~~ formulate colleagues - w how pick up those who've seen through?
22. ICA's identity outside the GOV&CP.

VISION FOR '81

1. LENS - city/county as a total package (pub/pri/vol)
2. Ten solidly rooted clusters.
3. 25 strong movement colleagues
- ~~4~~ 4. Pace as a training center
5. modules and clusters
6. cluster participatns to HDTS
7. 3 interms from HDTS
8. 100 trained in methods
9. something visible that show's what's happening in communities (slides, etc.)
10. training available to lots of people, ~~xxx~~ i.e., Academy in a format that goesk to people.
11. Experimental models in training people.
12. demonstration neighborhoods (2-3) in Jackson
13. coming out in the black!
- 14.

BLOCKS

1. short ranged planning
2. not identified struktures to build the movement
3. don't have ~~xxx~~ thought-through ~~xxx~~ the kinds of experiences that enable a person to journey --- unsystematic approach to journeying people.
4. inadequate pattern for building/sustaining the core.
5. unclear about doing massive formulation of cores.
6. weak private sector frame - delimited to Delta and Jackosn.
7. unexploded symbolic power of Pace
8. delimited exposure (?)
- 9.

CONTRADICTION: unclear strategy for doing massive formulaton of a local based/global moveme'

PROPOSALS

1. build cluster of towns in each PDD w/ variety and learn how to do it.

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As I See It

The Deeper Meaning of Volunteerism

By Ruth D. Wilson

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION—OR volunteerism—is the foundation on which this country was built. Without question, it offers the only constructive alternative to citizen alienation and isolation. I believe that one of the principal hopes in solving local, state and national problems is the constructive involvement of citizens in decision-making/problem-solving processes.

Nearly a century and a half ago, Alexis de Tocqueville, perhaps one of the most perceptual critics to examine the American scene, noted that the truly unique feature of our



Ruth Wilson is the director of the Mississippi Office of Citizen Participation in Jackson, Mississippi. She also serves on the executive committee of VOLUNTEER's board of directors.

social system was a vast network of independent voluntary institutions dedicated to tackling a variety of public problems. Today, these institutions (public and private) have been able to offer only limited help. Faced with limited resources and spiraling demands for social services that far outstrip our ability to finance them, agencies all too frequently have responded by increasing or extending the services they already provide.

Rapidly changing social and economic conditions are now compelling these organizations to search for new ways to improve performance, to narrow the gap between potential and performance. Our nation's future will be determined largely by the adjustments made by the institutions involved in the lives of citizens.

Citizens today want greater responsibility in influencing the change necessary to release agencies, organizations, programs and services to become more efficient and effective helpers. Valuable and needed services would be curtailed drastically if citizen volunteers did not contribute their time and talents.

Therefore, there is a need for the citizens of a community to have a vehicle through which they not only can share in the responsibility for meeting basic human needs, but also can assume the lead role in attacking social problems, developing resources and creating caring communities. Such means must be provided to shift the seat of responsibility away from government and professionals—and back to citizens and their communities.

Genuine citizen action must become the dominant method of helping people. Genuine involvement of all people must be the key concept. By providing them with a model for participation, citizens can move swiftly to take their rightful place as leaders in serving community needs. An effective participation model allows the citizen to realize s/he is in the driver's seat and that his/her effectiveness will determine the future directions of his/her community. Agencies serving the field of volunteerism, such as Voluntary Action Centers, Volunteer Bureaus, offices of voluntary citizen participation and citizen affairs, must then become helpers and enablers to the new volunteer community by providing training and supportive services. They must work with—not for—the community.

The problems relating to citizen participation are complex. They will not be solved quickly, nor can they be approached naively or simplistically. Citizens everywhere seem to distrust the viability of government action and are distrustful of the motives of public officials and private leadership. Solutions will depend on the ability of public agencies and private organizations to harmonize their need for volunteers with sound and effective programs in which citizens have initiative as well as input.

Today, the limited citizen involvement that exists often is initiated and controlled by the government to improve or gain support for government decisions, programs or services. Unless more opportunities are created for responsible action, initiated and controlled by citizens for purposes they themselves determine, obligatory participation involving such mandatory responsibilities as paying taxes will continue to become the arena for citizen revolt.

Continued ineffectiveness of local, county, state and national leaders with respect to meeting basic human needs in

(Continued on p. 45)

As I See It

(Continued from p. 2)

our country (housing, employment, education, etc.) has increased public frustration, fear and a loss of faith in leadership. Citizens must be reintroduced to constructive and meaningful participation in decision-making/problem-solving processes and program implementation in their own communities. They must be trained to sustain citizen participation and to design and implement new local citizen participation programs. Structures and funding for continued citizen participation must be firmly established.

The continued growth in and expansion of the volunteer community indicates that voluntary agencies and organizations need to take a serious look at their programs and services; and how the broadened horizons of volunteering affect the way in which they deliver services to the community. They can become both model and agent for effective citizen participation. How?

Voluntary agencies must continue the task of setting and enforcing standards, training staff and volunteers, developing ways to equip agencies to employ volunteers effectively to impart the human service delivery system. They can support those citizen initiatives where the most good is being accomplished, nurturing and using good techniques of planning, measurement and evaluation to make sure that both financial and volunteer investment in an area continues its work effectively.

They can encourage incentive funding of citizen initiatives that effectively meet community needs. They can help make funds available to citizen efforts for successful innovative projects when documentation shows that crime is decreasing, the needy are receiving benefits, the aging are cared for, children are reading, citizens are becoming self-sufficient, etc. Encouraging discretionary funding and other incentives would serve on the one hand as a powerful stimulant to improve social profitability and on the other as a disincentive to penalize mediocrity.

They can use multidisciplinary planning and strive for cooperation and coordination in the planning process. This means more communication and exchange between the various voluntary agencies working with local citizens. They can develop outreach services to help develop local resources structures.

In effect, they must help citizens realize their capacities and energies by increasing their understanding, skills and community spirit. What people can do for themselves is more important than what government can do for them. When local citizens are awakened and galvanized into action, genuine hope is in their grasp. Thus, it is not the leader who builds a new community, but people who are inspired to do so.

If the efforts of voluntary organizations remain on a surface level, they cannot long endure. Through citizen participation, it is possible to enable people to work through for themselves adequate functional community life. This should be the aim of agencies: to equip citizens, through op-

portunities for citizen participation and volunteer service, to transform their communities.

TOWN MEETING: MISSISSIPPI, SPONSORED by the Office of Citizen Participation and the Institute of Cultural Affairs, has proven to be a successful citizen participation model. Since October 1978, more than 10,000 Mississippians have participated in 251 town meetings through which they have worked together to improve the quality of life in their towns. They have planned libraries, built fire stations, acquired additional doctors, developed community organizations, built and improved parks, planned and staffed recreational centers, established regular and on-going town meetings, provided transportation for seniors by raising money to purchase a bus, acquired a building for a health center, incorporated communities, held community festivals and built town halls.

Town Meeting: Mississippi is aimed directly at one of this state's most crucial problems—that of limited local citizen activity in the decision making/problem-solving processes about matters concerning their local communities and neighborhoods. It is a three-hour community event in which local citizens meet together to discuss the challenges facing their community and to create practical proposals to deal with those challenges. During the meeting a song, story and symbol are created to celebrate the town's past, present and future. The meeting closes with participants reporting their proposals and singing their song while a booklet is distributed containing the town meeting's agenda. Participants leave the meeting with a sense of what they think and do has an effect on the future of their community.

Town meetings give a cross-section of a community a chance to talk together. They serve as a regenerative force, as an alternative to alienation, as a means of enhancing human dignity, nurturing hope and enabling others to see possibilities.

Since as a rule people at the local level don't get together regularly, no one knows what the community consensus is or what ideas people have. Town Meeting gives permission to local groups, agencies and governing bodies to move on the expressed consensus.

The Town Meeting has stimulated a quickening of local responsibility and a revitalization of democracy at the roots in Mississippi. There is a deeper commitment on the part of leadership in the communities toward undertaking new proposals. The Town Meeting is giving those plans clear and positive directions. Through Town Meetings, for example, utility companies are responding to the need to speak on the energy crisis. Each town where meetings are held is writing at least one energy proposal. A new confidence is becoming apparent on the part of small and rural communities of what they think is possible.

In closing, if there are answers—and there are—to the American dream of finding solutions to society's problems, the basic approach must be one of bringing together massive citizen resources—material and human—to coincide with massive human needs.