



# PERMACULTURE CREDIT UNION NEWSLETTER

ESTABLISHED MAY 18, 2000

JANUARY 2007

## Adding Value and Longevity to the Farm

THIRTY-SOME YEARS AGO my wife RoseMary and I gathered up a pile of stones from the hillsides above the Embudo Valley and began building what was supposed to be my writing studio, a one-storey round structure thirteen feet in diameter. We called it the Tower—though a better name would have been “the Pillbox.” In the end the space didn’t work well for writing, and within two years I had moved my writing desk back into the living room. When our children reached the age when they wanted some distance from us, they took turns living in the Tower. For the last fifteen years it has sat empty and unused.

We went back to farming after a five-year hiatus in 2004 and began to wonder whether we might be able to use the Tower in some way connected to the farm. For apprentices? For caretakers? It was, however, too primitive: it had a wood stove, which had once set the roof alight, no water or bathroom, and a colony of noisy critters had claimed the crawl space above the vigas.

Without knowing what exactly its final purpose was going to be, we decided to remodel the Tower and add a square two-storey structure to it. A retired architect friend, Ron Rinker, came up with a conceptual design that cleverly complimented the interesting stone walls of the Tower by leaving two-thirds of them exposed while adding about 400 square feet of usable space for a bathroom, mechanical

room, and upstairs kitchen and living area. The old Tower space would be the bedroom, and above it three quarters of the tower roof would become a deck for the kitchen-living area. Lex Lucius, a Santa Fe sculptor and metal fabricator, would design and construct an elegant



interior spiral staircase to connect the two floors.

To do all this, we needed financing, which was provided by the Permaculture Credit Union, in the form of a Home Equity Line of Credit, which also helped cover the costs of converting to drip irrigation early in the 2006 season.

Eventually we hit on a plan that promised to help pay for the new construction and occasionally supply us with farm help, particularly during garlic harvest days in June and regular farmers’ market picking days from April

until November. The Tower would be a guest house, a bed & breakfast without the breakfast, which we would market with a farm tourism angle for those interested in sampling the farm life for a few days—though with no obligation to those who would be content lounging on the deck watching the rest of us labor below. The Dixon Cooperative Market has such a wide range of organic and conventional groceries. We figured that guests might even be happier choosing their own snacks and ingredients for meals, and they would be free to forage from the vegetable and flower plantings that largely surround the Tower—and throw their kitchen scraps to the chickens in their nearby pen.

RoseMary and I have been farming for about thirty years. I will be 70 in a year and know that the inevitable process of slowing down is well underway. I want to keep farming as long as I can: being able to remain productive in this way is both a gift and a consolation. The Tower will help us do that by somewhat reducing the need to farm as intensively as we now must in order to make ends meet; it will provide us with occasional help; and, as our circumstances change, we can go back to the original idea of a place for an apprentice to live, a place where the next generation of market farmers can learn the ins and outs, ups and downs, pains and joys of the farming life.

*Stanley and RoseMary Crawford have written and farmed in Dixon since 1969.*

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# On the Joys of Being a Rookie Board Member

It all begins with winning an election. Not a bad way to start any new endeavor, especially one for which one feels, as I did, profoundly under qualified.

At my first board meeting I felt I was swimming - or drowning - in a sea of numbers. I was assured that, given time and study, the hidden meaning of all of these mystical symbols would come clear. At this point, six months into my tenure on the PCU board, some of these are just beginning to fall into place. Tools are made available to new board members: the experience and education of more seasoned board members, the expertise of Donald Sarich, our President and CEO, and a small library of books and manuals. There are also online resources

The board meets once a month for one and one half to two hours. Additionally, there are committees such as Fundraising, Marketing, and so on, which have meetings as needed, usually no more than once a month. Every board member belongs to at least one committee, and some of us belong to two. Nora, the board Chair, participates in nearly every meeting. The meetings have agendas, tend to be very focused, and nearly always begin and end on time. Tasks are chosen (or, if you are absent, assigned) at meetings and much of the time you devote to your board responsibilities consists of completing those tasks. Sometimes you get to go to conferences and workshops with staff and other board members to be an ambassador for the credit union and for Permaculture.

Mind you, this is a volunteer board. We all have commitments and responsibilities outside of our responsibilities to the board. This is not a fulltime position . . . but there is a persistent sense that more time would be well spent, regardless of how much time you're already spending. If you can

only spend 2 hours on PCU business one week but can spend 20 hours the next week, the 2 hours will be appreciated, and the 20 hours will be needed and helpful.

*The main qualification for being a rookie board member seems to be a passion and commitment to the concept of Permaculture.*

We don't want the PCU to be like every other credit union or bank. Of course we are eager to provide more services to members as we grow and can afford to do so, but we exist to do things differently. We are a fractal representation of our membership: in the same way that you are trying to live your lives on a different model, we are here to help you live those different lives and to reflect the values that inform your decisions in the decisions we make as a credit union. Everything you do in your

capacity as a board member - whether it's learning to read financial statements, designing a newsletter, or writing a grant - is a way of materially contributing to the creativity of those who are committed to making their lives serve the planet and its people.

There is a quotation from playwright George Bernard Shaw that seems to sum up the contrast between Permaculture and the consumerist, looking-out-for-number-one culture in which we find ourselves. Shaw said,

*"This is the true joy of life: being used up for a purpose recognized by you as a mighty one; being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish clot of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy."*

Board membership in the PCU allows us to, figuratively, be there to help Stanley and RoseMary Crawford build their Tower (see Stanley's article in this newsletter). And who wouldn't have wanted to be part of that?

## CALL FOR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION IS FEBRUARY 28, 2007

It's that time of year when we begin looking for members who are interested in becoming more actively involved in the growth and direction of our credit union. Two current board members' terms will expire in May, 2007. We are looking for energetic individuals who would like to help guide our current operations as well as define the future of our institution.

Serving on the Board of Directors is a very rewarding experience. Previous experience with credit unions or other boards is not mandatory but is desirable. Requirements for serving on the board are that the candidate be a member in good standing and be bondable. It also requires a significant commitment of time and talent, a willingness to learn the intricate regulations of credit union management, and a commitment to the PCU as a unique institution striving to create an alternative financial landscape based on permaculture ethics. Monthly board meetings are held in Santa Fe. Board members from out of state would be obligated to attend a board meeting in person at the beginning of each quarter at their own expense.

**Those interested should send a letter along with a bio/resume to Permaculture Credit Union, Attn: Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 29300, Santa Fe, NM 87592. Or call the credit union for more information.**

## PCU BOARD AND STAFF ON TOUR

Among the many enjoyable duties of being on the board is the opportunity to attend various workshops and conferences with staff as representatives of the PCU.

Board members Jake Ingram and John McAndrew, staff member Eileen Banashek and Don Sarich, our President and CEO, all attended the Solar Fiesta in Albuquerque. Board members Nora Haskins and Susan Coulter attended the Bioneers satellite conference in Taos with Eileen, while Don and board member Wesley Roe and his wife Marjorie Erickson went to the main Bioneers conference in Northern California.

Staff member Willina Martinez attended the Permaculture weekend workshop at EcoVersity with Nora, John and Supervisory Committee member Phil Vergamini. John also went to the Sustainable Food and Seed Sovereignty Conference at Pojoaque Pueblo. Don gave a talk on invisible structures at the Permaculture Design Course in Tucson, and Marjorie and Wes were at Green Festival and Sol Fest in Northern California this year.

Our board and staff do our best to be available to meet with members near and far and to find new members. We will let you know when we will be on tour again in 2007, and hope to see you then.



**IF YOU'RE DOING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING, YOU'VE ALREADY STARTED PRACTICING PERMACULTURE:**

*Enjoying the beauty of nature*

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*Growing some of your own food*

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*Walking, cycling or taking public transport instead of going by car*

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*Making decisions about what you buy on the basis of how it effects the Earth*

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*Reusing and recycling materials Supporting nature conservation*

**THE NEXT STEP MAY BE TO: Contact other people locally who are interested in permaculture**

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*Go and see a site where it's being practiced*

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*Look for a book or two on the subject*

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*Get a permaculture designer to come and look at your house and garden or farm*

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*Attend a course*

EXCERPT FROM PERMACULTURE IN A NUTSHELL BY PATRICK WHITEFIELD

## VISUALIZE PCU!

We would like to create a permanent visual display for the PCU table at conferences and festivals that includes photos of our members and their sustainable projects that have been funded with PCU loans. If you would like to be a part of the display, please send large color photographs (e.g. - 4"X 6" or 5"X8") to our mailing address or e-mail digital photos to us at eileen@pcuonline.org. And please give us a short quote to put next to the photo. Thanks!

## KEEP US UPDATED

Returned statements cost us money. Please give us a call as soon as you have a change of address or phone number. Also let us know if you are going to be "temporarily away" so we can hold your mail or send it to an alternate address.

THANK YOU!

## PRINCIPLED PEOPLE

What defines us as a credit union is not where we work or live, but the principles we hold in common. Tell us a story or give us an example of how you have implemented the principles of Permaculture in your decisions and your plans. We will print some of your stories in subsequent newsletters. Photos are welcome. Send everything to eileen@pcuonline.org. Subject to read: Attention Newsletter Editor.

<b>FINANCIALS</b> (All numbers are Year-to-Date totals)	October '06	November '06	December '06	Financial Goals for 4th Quarter 2006
Loans	\$2,232,328	\$2,146,536	\$2,144,178	\$2,310,192
Total Assets	\$2,686,395	\$2,782,215	\$2,822,472	\$2,705,653
Retained Earnings	\$95,969	\$92,066	\$98,400	\$106,793
Capital Ratio (Retained Earnings/Assets)	3.57%	3.31%	3.49%	3.52% (Required) 3.95% (Goal)
Membership	865	875	876	878
Total Income (Loans, Investments, Fees & Donations)	\$152,294	\$167,885	\$186,811	\$171,085
Total Expenses(Operation & Dividend Expenses)	\$154,943	\$174,438	\$187,029	\$162,910
Net Income or Loss	(\$2,649)	(\$6,553)	(\$218)	\$8,175



# PERMACULTURE CREDIT UNION

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Permaculture Credit Union pools the financial resources of people who believe in the ethics of Permaculture ---- care of the earth, care of people, and reinvestment of surplus for the betterment of both. We apply those resources to earth-friendly and socially responsible loans and investments.

### OFFICE LOCATION

4250 Cerrillos Rd., 2nd Floor,  
Santa Fe, NM 87507

### MAILING ADDRESS

PO Box 29300,  
Santa Fe, NM 87592-9300  
Toll Free: 1-866-954-3479  
Phone: (505) 954-3479  
Fax: (505) 424-1624

Web Site: WWW.PCUONLINE.ORG  
Email: PERMA@PCUONLINE.ORG

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday 10:00am - 2:00pm  
Loan Request  
Monday - Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm  
Or by appointment for member convenience.

### MANAGEMENT & STAFF

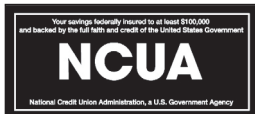
Donald J. Sarich, President/CEO  
Eileen Banashek, Bookkeeper  
Willina M. Martinez,  
Member Services Representative  
Matthew Carrasco-Truillo,  
Loan Processor

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nora Haskins - Chair  
Hugh Roberts - Vice Chair  
Susan Coulter - Secretary  
Barbara Mueller - Treasurer  
Jake Ingram - Director  
Wesley Roe - Director  
John J. McAndrew - Director

### SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

Carolyn Agard - Chair  
Joseph Ellis - Member  
Elizabeth Martin - Member  
Phil Vergamini - Member



## 2007 HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

NEW YEAR'S DAY  
MONDAY, JANUARY 1

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.  
BIRTHDAY  
MONDAY, JANUARY 15

GOOD FRIDAY  
FRIDAY, APRIL 6  
(CLOSE AT 1:00)

MEMORIAL DAY  
MONDAY, MAY 28

## USA PATRIOT ACT ANNUAL NOTICE TO MEMBERS

### Member Identification Requirements

In accordance with Section 326 of the USA Patriot Act, applicants for new accounts are requested to provide current picture identification that verifies identity including name, address and other identifying information.

In some cases, identification will be requested for current members if original documentation was not obtained with the opening of the account. In all cases, protection of our members' identity and confidentiality is our pledge to you. We support all efforts to protect and maintain the security of our members and our country. This notice is being published as required by law.

### PRIVACY POLICY

We do not disclose any nonpublic information about our members and former members to anyone except as permitted by law.

## MEMBER SERVICES

We are currently financing up to \$95,000.00 in loans per household. All rates are subject to change without notice.

- NEW & USED VEHICLE LOANS
- MORTGAGE LOANS  
(Land & Home Equity)
- BICYCLE LOAN DISCOUNT
- SIGNATURE LOANS
- SHARE & CERTIFICATE SECURED LOANS
- CREDIT CARDS
- STUDENT LOANS
- SUSTAINABILITY DISCOUNTS

We provide sustainability discounts for projects that are earth-friendly. The usual discount is .75% off our current loan rates. Call our office staff for details.

### DIRECT DEPOSIT

Have funds directly deposited into the PCU from your paycheck or other financial institution. Pay your bills by having funds directly transferred from your PCU account. Pay your PCU credit card with ease online.

### MEMBER ALERT

DO NOT RESPOND to email scams that ask you for your account number, credit card number, and personal identification numbers. Email messages that ask for this type of information are fraudulent, and should be reported immediately.

This includes seemingly real notification from VISA Security and NCUA (National Credit Union Administration) requesting you to go to a website and log in. We will never contact you and ask for this information.

## WHAT IS PERMACULTURE?

We all have pondered the meaning of Permaculture, whether we are new to the concept or teach others what it means. We've been printing selected definitions in our newsletters to give you food for thought. So tell us how you define Permaculture. As space permits in upcoming newsletters, we will print - and ponder - your responses. Please be succinct.

Send your thoughts to eileen@pcuonline.org. Subject to read Attention Newsletter Editor.

*"Permaculture starts with an awareness of both the overall limited resources on the earth and the abundant local resources that surround us. That shift in awareness reveals the interconnectedness of natural ecosystems and leads to action intended to minimize one's impact on the planet and maximize the beneficial results. Whether employing sustainability in a backyard garden or applying natural patterns while designing a business model, integration of permaculture principles into our lives will gradually change the way we interact and lead to a better world for all."*

— Ken Genetti - off-grid remote homesteader for 21 years