Interview with Pamela Haines
Interviewer: Deborah Altus
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Q: ... in an interview with Pamela Haines. Pamela, could you describe some how you got involved with Movement for New Society and Life Center?
A: Well, it's a funny story, I was part of a religious Quaker community, and there were 8 of us, trying to think about where we would live together. We wanted to live in the city, so it would be kind of relevant to what was going on in the world. We were off on the East Coast, so we were trying to figure out which city. Washington was too weird, and New York was [unintelligible], and Boston was too far away. Nobody knew anything about Baltimore, so that left Philadelphia. And we had some, there was some connections because of Quaker things, in Philadelphia. We knew some people were doing something there, but we didn't really know what. So we picked apples for a fall to raise enough money to move down to Philadelphia, and we plopped ourselves there.

Q: Were you part of New Swarthmoor?
A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah, I just talked with somebody last night -- Peter Blood?
A: Yeah, he sounds familiar.

Q: So New Swarthmoor was an intentional community?
A: Yes.

Q: Could you tell me a little bit about that?
A: Sure. That grew out of a Young Friends' organization called Young Friends of North America. Back in '69, I think, there was a Young Friends of North America gathering. My sister put forth this idea of, "Since we're trying to figure out the Spirit-led way to live, why don't we do that together, rather than individually? Why don't we get together and figure out how to live in accordance with the will of God," or whatever words you would use. And so there was probably 30 or 40 of us that kind of identified with that movement in one way or another, and there was a place that was a center place, but it wasn't a geographically defined community, it was more of a religiously, kind of a vision-defined community. A very wonderful experience for me.

Q: Even though you say it wasn't geographically defined, there was a place where a group of you lived together?
A: There was a central place, which was a farmhouse in central New York state that we had access to, that people were living in -- the community who was living there kept changing, and also it was always open for people stopping through, and then we had gatherings there. So it kind of provided a gathering point. But it was a very fluid group of people who were there at any time. A lot of people were in college, people were moving around, trying to figure out where they were going to settle on. This was kind of a magnet.

Q: Were they mainly Quakers?
A: Yeah, this was a Quaker community. I guess there were some people who got involved and became Quakers, but hardly anyone outside.

Q: You said you picked apples to support yourselves?
A: Yes.

Q: There was a group of you there that decided that you wanted to do something a little different than what was happening at that point in time?
A: Well we wanted to maintain that spirit, and live together in the city. And so we were trying to think of how to do that, and to choose our spot. We weren't tied down at all, we were at that stage of our lives when we could make big choices. So we chose Philadelphia.

Q: How would you have described yourself at that point? Would you have identified with what was going on in terms of like the hippies forming communes?
A: No. I never identified with hippies, because I always thought of hippies as people who were kind of tuning out, and being irresponsible or trying to avoid the world, and I always that we were much more trying to focus in on the world in a new way. Although, some people in that group would've accepted that label, and certainly we were seen as that from the outside. But I was always, I never liked that.

Q: Were you politically involved at all?
A: That group was. I wasn't in the midst of -- well that was the Vietnam War, and so we had conscientious objectors, and we had resistors. We had folks being sent off to jail from our midst for resisting the draft. We had folks who were really active in some of the anti-war demonstrations.

Q: So what happened when you moved to Philadelphia?
A: Well, we were pretty naive. There was one person in our group who had been active with a Mennonite volunteer -- he was a Mennonite, so there were a couple of Mennonites in that group -- in Bolivia, and he was really wanting to maintain contact with Spanish-speaking people. And none of the others of us really had a clear idea of what we wanted to do, so we focused on the Spanish-speaking areas of the city as a place to live. We bought a house in a Spanish-speaking neighborhood, and then didn't know what to do once we got there. We couldn't figure out -- we just didn't know how to be a part of that community. I mean, that would've been a stretch for anybody, but we were also -- we made a couple of overtures, and got friendly responses, but we didn't really know what we were doing. So we kind of felt like we perched in that neighborhood for about a year and a half. It was kind of a scary neighborhood for some of us who hadn't been in the city. And so I think we perched bravely, but not very effectively.

Q: Right. Did your house have a name?
A: Well we had a big fight about our name. We ended up having 2 names. We were Tadaima, which is a Japanese word that people say when they come in the house. It's kind of "at home, hello, I'm home." And we used to come in, we'd call "Tadaima," when we came in the door, and people would respond in a kind of, "we hear that you're home." I really liked that. And the other name was Joshua Tree, and that's the beautiful cactus that stands out in the desert, and that kind of felt like we were in a desert, blighted part of the city. So we perched there bravely, and ineffectively, for a year and a half.

By that time, we moved in '74, the summer of '74, by that time, we'd spent the last 6 months to a year commuting out here to West Philadelphia, and getting increasingly involved with Movement for a New Society.

Q: So you moved in in '72?
A: The fall of '72.

Q: So you were there from '72 to '74?
A: Yeah, I can't remember. It was '72 to '73 that we moved in, I really don't remember. I know we moved to West Philadelphia during the summer of '74.

Q: The whole group did?
A: Well, no, that's another funny story. There were two people who wanted to live together in a different situation, and I think maybe somebody moved out of the city at that point. And so what we did was we combined forces with another communal house in West Philadelphia, which was also losing half of its people. It's like the two halves joined forces to create a new collective house.

Q: Now I think Peter told me about this -- what was it called?
A: Bread Tree. Peter was in this first one as well.

Q: The new house was called Bread Tree?
A: Yes. It was Bread and Roses and Joshua Tree who came together. But nobody really liked that, it was like a compromise. Nobody was really happy with that. So after awhile it went back to Bread and Roses.

Q: Oh, okay. Tell me a little bit about how these houses were organized -- were you fully communal, like income-sharing?
A: We did income sharing at Joshua Tree. Bread and Roses -- we figured out how much money each person needed to contribute a month to make our communal living function. It was very, very little, we were renting for $350 a month, and we didn't have any expenses, we didn't buy anything or eat anything. It was like $80 a month each to cover food and furniture and stamps and movies, all that kind of thing. And then gradually, over the course of the years, more and more things kind of reverted to personal discretion -- people started making their own decisions about movies... but it took a long time. We were still buying communal stamps in this house in some recent history. So it was kind of a gradual evolution, I couldn't say when. I would assume like if somebody had a hard time scraping together $80 for some reason, then we all figured out -- but it was so little, it was not very much to ask.

Q: And then you took your meals together?
A: Yes.

Q: Just dinner?
A: Probably. We always did dinner together. People usually would pick up a breakfast or a lunch.

Or sometimes somebody would make up a pot of cereal, that would be pretty common, to make a pot of cereal in the morning. Or if there were folks who were eating together at lunch, then they would cook up some leftovers together, but it wasn't like somebody had the job of communal breakfast.

Q: But somebody did have the job of communal dinner?
A: Yes.

Q: Could you explain some about how you did your chores?
A: We did millions of different ways of figuring it out. The ones that worked the best were to decide who liked doing which kinds of jobs. So we usually did dinner, we divided dinner up, let everybody cook roughly one night a week, but then we would think of all the other jobs, and that included at times bread-making and yogurt-making, cleaning this and that, and shopping. And then people who liked different ones would get different ones. Sometimes -- this was a real long time ago. I think if there were popular ones, we used to trade off. Like people liked to bake bread. We would have house meetings pretty regularly, and we got to check in on how the job stuff was working.

Q: Did you operate your meetings by consensus?
A: Yes. This grew out of the Quaker tradition, we were all very used to that. It was the norm we had grown with, so it was pretty simple to do.

Q: Were most of the people birthright Quakers?
A: Actually, yeah, in Joshua Tree, there were a couple who weren't. Like maybe 70 or 80 percent, I would say [were Quaker]. But once we moved to West Philadelphia, then the percentage went down. MNS was not a Quaker organization, but it had a lot of Quaker influence. So I guess it was always normal to me, and it was normal to enough people that it wasn't like a wild experiment.

Q: So when you combined with Bread and Roses, was that a Life Center house, then?
A: Yes.

Q: So was it owned by --?
A: No, we were renting. Local realtor.

Q: Were there about 7 or 8 people again in your house?
A: Yes.

Q: What did people do to make money?
A: That's so funny; I can't remember what we did. We did some house painting, I remember doing that. There was a job at the university taking care of the rats and mice in the psychology department or something, that became one of the jobs that got shared around, that people did different shifts of it, or gave it to another person. There was a job of being on the desk of the American Friend's [?] Service Committee, that became a Life Center job that people shared. It's still kind of a communal job for alternative-type people. I wish I could remember, I was trying to think about this the other day.

There was some people who worked -- there's a home for children with cerebral palsy right down the street, and people did kind of odd shifts for that. And then people got involved with -- oh, one of the people in the house repaired typewriters. Chuck, my husband, worked with the Nonviolence in Children program of the Quaker yearly meeting, so there were also kind of institutional alternative jobs. I did some temping -- I think several people did temp work, here and there.

Q: And did you purposefully do temp work and maybe part-time work so that you'd have time for Peace and Justice type of activities?
A: Yes. We called it "bread labor." That was the work that we did to earn our bread. The goal was to do it as kind of efficiently and quickly as possible, so that we'd have more time to do other work.

Q: Can you tell me some about your other work?
A: The thing that I was most involved with was the macroanalysis collective. We worked in groups, and that was an ongoing, kind of a central collective, and then I switch-did political education -- set up political education seminars that groups could run. And so we gathered materials, we developed a curriculum, we developed a process, we wrote a manual, and we distributed it all throughout the country. And I was really delighted to have a chance to use my academic training to what seemed like a good end. People around were very, very pleased to have a process by which they could learn about what's going on, and the ecology and the economy and the politics, and how do they all fit together in the world, and what kind of a new society do we envision, and how can we get there? So we had this whole 16-week seminar series that we developed and spread. And that was my work -- basically, that was the collective that I was involved with. And then there was also the on-going work of maintaining the community, in terms of dealing with issues that came up in the community, having larger gatherings, overall maintenance of the whole group.

Q: Were all the houses pretty active with one another? Did you do things together as a group?
A: Oh yeah. This was an organization -- Movement for a New Society was an organization that, we met a lot. It wasn't like one house would get together with another house, but the people from the houses were involved in a mass, and we would do things together as a mass.

Q: Were there people who lived in the houses that weren't involved in the mass?
A: There were some, yes. That was always an issue that we talked about, what it meant to have people in your house who weren't active politically.

Q: Did that create some friction?
A: I'm trying -- we had, there was a woman who lived with us -- I think it probably created friction in some places. It depended on how, kind of tightly communal each house, the household saw themselves. If they saw themselves as an MNS house exclusively, then it was harder. In my house, we saw ourselves as people with a common perspective, but it didn't matter too much how it manifested itself. I have a sense that there was more give and take in our house than there was in some other houses.

Q: You've talked about this some, but I just want to clarify it -- could you describe the ideology behind your house, and what you thought your mission was?
A: As a house, we didn't have an ideology. We were a -- well, originally, we were just trying to figure out how to collectively discern the right way to live. That would probably be all you could say about that. The MNS houses -- the house in itself was a structure for living, but the ideology, the politics, was the Movement for New Society.

Q: I'm not sure I understand the distinction between MNS and Life Center. Are they different things, or are they the same thing?
A: It's so confusing. The Life Center is the collection of houses. It's that group of people in Philadelphia who lived in those houses with some common reason for living together. MNS is a national organization, and folks in the Life Center were the major manifestation of MNS in Philadelphia. And that was an explicitly political organization. Does that answer your question?

Q: Yeah, that's great. How would one become a member of a Life Center house?
A: You'd talk to folks in the house.

Q: Just say, "I'd like to live here?"
A: What was the standard? What we would do was we would meet together, and people in the house would talk about what we were looking for and how we functioned, and what we wanted, and what we didn't want, and see if those basic criteria were acceptable to a person. Also see if it would look like we would be a good fit -- if you live together, there's some criteria that may not be black or white or written down, but you can just tell if you're going to work together. And then, if it looked like it was a reasonable match, we would usually set up a period of trying it out with a clear time -- a month or 3 months or 6 months -- to revisit the question and see if it was working, so that both the house and the person had a clear place to say, "This isn't going to work out for us." And again, I think there were difficulties, I mean there's always difficulties in those situations. I don't think -- we didn't, we were fine in our house. It always seemed to work out okay.

Q: Did you have rules about conduct, or ...
A: We had rules about things like smoking and drugs. That's another thing about hippies -- I always kind of identified hippies with drugs, and I never liked drugs. I was never interested in the drug scene at all. So there was some -- well, there were drugs around the Life Center. I'm sure there were. Probably less smoking. Rules ... well, we had rules -- I think we were all trying to figure out about relationships and sex too, and kind of understandings about communication that, we don't do this without communicating clearly with the people that need to be communicated clearly -- that kind of thing.

Q: But when someone moved in, they weren't handed a guideline book or something?
A: No, oh no, we never had anything written down. It was more like, just the ways that we do things. We shared the ways that we did things, and the expectations that we had for people. There were some houses -- there was one house where there was a family with children, and they struggled a lot

about expectations about common child care. And in their house, if you moved into that house, you had to be willing to participate in caring for the children. But in other houses, that wasn't the decision, it varied from place to place.

Q: Can you describe some the demographics of the members? Age, race, education, class, all that?
A: We had a really broad range of ages, because we had some of our founders were old-time Quakers who had been around for years. We had people in the beginning, founders in their 30's, 40's and 50's, or 40's, 50's, and 60's, and then a lot of young people as well. We had elderly women, looking for a place to have a community and a political voice. So I would say probably our age diversity was our greatest diversity. We were very largely college educated, I would say. Very largely White. In terms of -- mostly U.S. Though we always had an international presence. One of the founders in particular had very strong international connections --

Q: Is that George Linkey?
A: Willoughby.

Q: George Willoughby, okay.
A: He was always kind of playing a role in inviting people from different countries. Different class origin backgrounds. But aside from age, there was a fair amount of homogeneity, which I think became more and more of an issue as we went along.

Q: And, I don't really know Philadelphia at all. Is this the neighborhood were the Life Center houses are?
A: Every house in the Life Center would be a 10 minute walk from here.

Q: Is this a Life Center house?
A: We aren't an official member of the Life Center Association, in capital letters, right now. We were involved in MNS and Life Center things from this house for awhile. So, loosely speaking, yes.

Q: So is this a cooperative house, or is this just your family?
A: Well, this was -- 8 of us moved here from the house Break Tree, we all moved here together. That was in '78. But since then, -- when Chuck and I started having children, I think that was the time that our family became the dominant sub-group in the house, and people who are looking for other -- well, the community was starting to disperse by that time anyway. So, gradually, over the years, it became more and more -- there are three of us, me and Chuck and Scott, of the original group, who lived together up until, not that long ago, six or seven years ago.

Q: Why did you leave Bread Tree in '78?
A: We wanted to buy.

Q: So you bought this house?
A: Yes. It was a good market for buying, and our rent had just gone up, and it just seemed, it didn't

make sense to continue to rent when the market was so good for buying.

Q: And did you continue to call this house Bread Tree?
A: Bread and Roses. We were Bread and Roses by then.

Q: I know that there are still Life Center houses, but I've heard from a couple people that the Life Center isn't going in the same way it used to?
A: Oh, it's very different now. The Life Center Association, at this point, is essentially a land trust, I think, of -- I don't know how many houses. Maybe somebody's told you. I don't know if it's five or six or seven, or eight. And this house is not part of that Life Center Association. But MNS dissolved at some point, which I assume you have a date for that too, and so, it's more like we have a historical memory here. I was just visiting with a friend who was really active there, and several of our families had children at the same time, and we're major supports for each other. When people do a sing, they invite people, so there's -- and the people who've moved into those houses tend to be people who are political, alternative, collective living types. So there continues to be that kind of a presence here in this neighborhood. But the Life Center -- the Life Center doesn't really exist, I would say. There's the land trust.

Q: And that's because there isn't the Movement for a New Society to unite people in common political activity?
A: Yes. I would say so.

Q: So when you bought this house, did you form a non-profit corporation or something?
A: No, just bought it. It was very informal.

Q: What have your relationships been like with your neighbors, when you've been living in these different Life Center houses?
A: Well, I think in general we've had good relationships with our neighbors, because we've been good neighbors. It's a neighborhood where there's a fair amount of tradition of transition. We're at the far edge of the Penn campus, and then we're, it's like 8 blocks bounded by Penn campus on one side, and then a fairly solid, working class, African-American community on the other side, which is experiencing a fair amount of urban difficulty. But there's also a transition -- like when we moved here, there were 3 or 4 families on the block who were in the parish of the Catholic Church, which I assumed you noticed -- it's right across the street. All but one of those families have since moved out. So, at this point, we're the people who've lived on our block the longest. Except for that one family. So, in a way, we've -- there was a group in MNS who was very active in neighborhood safety issues. People in MNS started the neighborhood co-op. So there's a sense of being active in the community, and basically good neighbors. I would imagine some people would have had difficulties with some of the neighbors. Nothing comes to my mind. It's a neighborhood where there's a lot of tolerance, and a lot of willingness to let people make the choices that they make.

Q: Did any of the houses you were involved in get involved with the police at all, like in terms of your, in terms of nonviolent resistance?
A: Not by household, because we weren't politically active by household. There were people who got arrested at demonstrations. You kind of went to the demonstration having decided whether or not you were going to do the things that were going to lead you to get arrested, so there was always a pretty clear kind of relationship with the police. We related with the police when we chose to.

Q: Would you say that there was much artistic expression in the houses?
A: Artistic expression -- I always made things. So personally -- I've probably been the center of artistic expression in our house, over the years. That just depends on who was living there, whether that was important to them or not. Though I would guess there was probably some bias, that that was not as politically relevant. We haven't had people being full-time artists -- I mean you can't be a full-time artist in a political community. You can't be a primarily identified artist in a political community. So in that respect, it may be less than other alternative places that you are investigating. So I would say just to the extent that people are artistic, that that would show.

Q: Maybe the songbook that Peter was involved with is an example?
A: We liked to sing.

Q: Would you get together often?
A: Yes. We'd sing a lot. It's really nice.

Q: What are some of the benefits to living in community?
A: It's great. I really like it. You have access to a lot of people, and you have access to -- when you have access to a lot people then you have a really diverse set of interests and strengths and backgrounds, and you just get to be in a richer world in your home. I really love not having to cook every night of the week. That's kind of a private advantage. You said advantages and disadvantages?

Q: Yeah, I'd love to hear what you think the drawbacks are as well.
A: We had to think intentionally about a lot of issues that kind of just fall into -- I guess a lot into sex role stereotypes in a lot of households. How will the laundry get done? Who will decide what we buy to eat. What standard of cleanliness can we agree on, and how will we -- we thought about all of those, and I think that's good to realize that those are things that people get to think about, rather than just do the way they feel like they have to, for whatever reason.

Q: So you wouldn't sweep those things under the carpet, you would discuss them at meetings?
A: Oh yeah, we would talk about them.

Q: Were these hot issues?
A: Often. A lot of the heat of our meetings would be about the nitty gritty details of running the household that people cared passionately about and had differences of opinion about. And that's one of the drawbacks, that we spent a lot of time. In a way, I can argue the other way, that one of the things I

like about not living communally is that we don't have to figure all that stuff out. I'm glad that we did it, and I'm happy to not do it.

Q: Did work get divided along gender lines a lot?
A: I think that work got divided pretty equitably. I think that the attention that people -- the passion that people felt about doing it well I think grew out of gender training. So we would have conflicts based on different gender training, but not -- there was no way that either the women or the men bought into any idea that it shouldn't be shared equally. I have to believe that it wasn't shared equally, just because of the way we were trained, but nobody would have defended that.

Q: A lot of communities have had difficulties sharing the work.
A: I would say we did very well. I remember going into one communal house one time, and they had a new person there who didn't feel like he could cook, because he'd never cooked before. I thought, "You've never cooked? How could a person be a grown-up and never cooked?" Because I had just, for years, I had been living with men and women alike, all of whom knew that they were going to cook, and cooked. So there's a very strong assumption in this group that men cooked. It was an absolute base-line thing, for example.

Q: And would men get involved in bread baking and shirt making and stuff like that?
A: Oh yes. Definitely.

Q: And they'd help with the cleaning too?
A: Yes. Now who would stay to polish the sink, that's the point where you get the training, I think.

Q: Different standards of cleanliness.
A: Right. But in terms of the conscious decisions and the divisions of labor, they were gender-free.

Q: What other things besides work would you talk about at your meetings?
A: This was all a long time ago. We had a time when people could -- we always did a time to share things that were going well, and things people were pissed off about that. That was just generic, anything. But usually the things that people were pissed off about were work-related. We also shared just what was happening in our lives. Fairly soon, we got into starting with a round of everybody sharing good things, and if there were particularly rotten things that people needed to hear about. I'm sure we talked about our household's relationship to the larger community. I don't think we had a lot of generic political discussions at our house meetings -- we had so many other opportunities, venues, to do that in. In a way, the household really was the living space, and there was this whole other working, thinking space. So the household meetings would tend to be around basic living issues. There were some houses, I think, that spent a lot of time struggling together around relationship issues, but I don't think we did that a lot.

Q: Would you deliberately try to work on personal growth sorts of issues?
A: Oh yes. That was a very important part of the whole process.

Q: The Life Center houses have certainly lasted for a long time. What do you suppose is the glue that's kept the households going?
A: I think there's a lot of history and tradition of how to make it work. So there's a kind of assumption that people can figure it out. And there's people around to check with, there's a base of experience. I'm just hypothesizing, I don't really know. So it's not this weird thing that nobody's ever done before that you're starting out from scratch with. These are big houses in this neighborhood, and it really makes sense to share them. You can cut them up into apartments, but if you're going to keep them whole, then they're really too big for a single family. And so there's a certain kind of compelling logic, particularly for single people. So actually, I think there's a lot of shared housing, just associated with the university, as just a practical way for people to have housing. I don't really have a clue how those houses operate.

Q: So student co-op houses?
A: Yes. So we have both the university and the size of the houses, that lend themselves to living together. And then that base of experience.

Q: When you came here in the '70's with the New Swarthmoor folks and started Joshua Tree, was there a lot of other collective activity like that going on? Did you feel like you were part of an emerging movement?
A: There was the MNS folks over here in West Philadelphia that we felt some sense of communality with. Nothing in our neighborhood that we were aware of.

Q: What neighborhood was that?
A: That was the Spanish neighborhood. It's called West Kensington now. Lower eastern north Philadelphia -- I don't think it's going to be too useful to you here.

Q: I'm just curious. If a group of folks were to start a collective house together, what sort of advice would you give them?
A: Random folks? For what reason? Why would they start it together? Financial?

Q: I don't know -- do you think that groups should have some sort of cause beyond simply living together?
A: Yes.

Q: Like they should have a political leaning?
A: If they just want to be a student co-op, for example, I think what they need to do is establish the rules that allow them to mind their own business, and keep out of each other's hair, and keep the rent low. But I think that if you want to do something other than that, then yes, it works much better to have something outside of the house that you all care about. In a way, I think it's similar to a marriage -- marriages work better when both of the people have a common vision or purpose or larger thing that they're kind of looking out -- that they're looking out in the same direction, rather than just looking in. I think there's kind of a funny distortion there. Or, the things that -- you end up putting more attention

to things that don't matter as much if your whole goal, your reason to being together is to put attention to those things. I'm not saying it very clearly, but I think living communally just for the sake of living communally has got a lot of traps.

Q: Unless like, you were saying before, it's students who just want cheaper housing.
A: Right. There's not really an intentionality there, it's just a convenience.

Q: Would you describe the Life Center houses as a success?
A: Yes. I think they provided a base, an affordable supportive base for a lot of people, for a lot of years. And a very rich living experience.

Q: Are there things from those years that you carry forward into life today?
A: Yes. We actually still live collectively. For example, I don't feel a particular sense of ownership with my kitchen. It's fine with me that there are other people in the kitchen. That's a big deal for some people. And for me it's not. Or, in my house in general, it's fine with me that there are people that aren't in my immediate family living in my house. I think it's great. I remember talking with a woman just a couple of years ago, she had felt some inclination to invite someone to live in her house, but she decided it would just be too hard on her family. And I was thinking, "What a loss." Our family, we try to count the number of people who have lived in our house, and it's a lot. I think we have a much more flexible attitude of how to get the work done, having had all of those years of experience -- who does the groceries is the question to ask. Who will cook, is a question to ask. And I can't tell how much -- I feel very lucky that I still don't have to cook every night, partly because my husband cooks, but it's partly also because there are other people living here that cook too. I don't know how much that's coincidental, and how much that's based on the background that we had.

Q: Do you think cooperative living is particularly helpful and freeing for women because of those sorts of things?
A: Maybe so. It's great for me!

Q: Has it been good for your kids too, to have other adults around?
A: I really think so. They just get a lot of opportunities to interact with people who have things to offer them, that we can't. We're just inherently limited by our own inexperience. I'm very pleased in particular -- we've had a lot of international folks in our house, and I think that's been a very good experience for our children. I think they really have a sense of themselves as citizens of the world. It makes a big difference. I was trying to think of the number of different languages that have been spoken around our dining room table, for example. I really value that very highly.