

INNISFREE

PROPOSAL

"Innisfree Growth Laboratory"

**THE INNISFREE GROWTH LABORATORY: An Opportunity For
Experiential Student-Intern Field Placements In A Weekend
Encounter-Group Setting For Graduate Students In Counsel-
ing, Social Work, And Related Fields.**

11/30/85

All contributions are tax deductible.

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P R O P O S A L

Project Title: "Innisfree Growth Laboratory"

1. Background

For over 20 years, Trenton State College in Trenton, New Jersey has offered a twice-yearly weekend encounter experience called "Personal Growth Laboratory" (P.G.L.) with undergraduate Student Activities Fee funding. In October of 1985, the scheduled weekend was cancelled at the last minute. The college threatened to withdraw its financial support of the organization when it was learned that a large number of the registered participants were actually graduate students or alumni who did not contribute to the S.A.F. general fund with their tuition.

The Innisfree Growth Laboratory was formed in the fall of 1985 to meet the immediate need for a surrogate administrative structure, in order to provide the type of learning experience participants expected and desired when they registered for the college-sponsored weekend. Twenty-five participants attended the lab, October 4-6, 1985, each paying \$50, with both Innisfree Corporation and the individual facilitators taking a substantial financial loss on the weekend. Ninety-one percent of those responding to a post-lab questionnaire (92% response rate) indicated that they would like to attend a similar weekend workshop at Innisfree in the spring of 1986.

2. Need

Many college and university schools of counseling, psychology, and social work place little emphasis on what Rogers (1961) termed the "basic encounter", stressing instead the theoretical and practical study of group dynamics in smaller and more long-term counseling groups. One purpose of the Innisfree Growth Lab will be to provide an

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opportunity for supervised encounter-group practicum experiences for interns from participating colleges and universities.

Other recipients of benefits from the proposed program will be the participants in the program. All of these people are self-identified adults who are willing to pay for the experience of taking part in the weekend.

3. Nature Of The Program

The Innisfree Growth Laboratory consists of biannual weekend sensitivity-training/encounter groups (see Appendix A for definitions of terms), facilitated by trained professionals with varied humanistic theoretical orientations and backgrounds. Brief vitae of each facilitator and intern will be made available prior to the start of the spring 1986 lab.

A. Community Meetings. Twice over the weekend all participants meet together in the recreation hall for a wide range of large-group learning and diversionary activities. Both of the "communities" will revolve around a central topic such as "reaching out" or "courage" which sets the theme for the weekend. In community meetings, one goal is to help participants feel more alive, become more spontaneous, be more aware of their total experience, and overcome feelings of isolation. Through such varied activities as guided fantasy, encounter ("new") games, massage, sensory-awakening or trust-building exercises, and other verbal and nonverbal modalities designed to foster interaction.

The process of these meetings sometimes tends to be more didactic in nature than the small group sessions. Examples of specific types of activities conducted at community meetings may be found in Shutz (1967), Pfeiffer & Jones (1976), Fluegeman (1976), and elsewhere. Frequently, feelings generated in community meetings become "grist for the mill" in the encounter group sessions.

B. Encounter Groups. One aim of this type of experience is to facilitate individual awareness and sensitivity to the manner in which one's behavior interacts with others' experiences in the world and to develop a sense of empathy. Strong positive values are placed, in group, upon honesty, spontaneity, trust, risk-taking, confidentiality, and a commitment to "work things out". The intensity of such a group experience adds power, by way of social reinforcement, to the learning process. The emphasis is clearly placed upon emotions and experiencing and expressing those emotions fully; therefore, confrontations in the group are encouraged.

Through group interaction, directed activities, role-playing, and other facilitative techniques, participants gain more of an understanding of their own ultimate responsibility for the events which shape their lives. By a combination of introspection and group feedback, participants gain insight into themselves.

Encounter groups at the Innisfree Growth Laboratory, and formerly at Trenton State College's P.G.L., are composed of relatively healthy adults who participate in the weekend experience for the purpose of gaining new insights into themselves and improving their functioning and ability to communicate. (It has been said, however, that while insight makes excellent fertilizer for growth, if it can not be applied, it is so much manure.

A basic premise is that humans naturally aspire to self-actualization when given the opportunity (Maslow, 1968). When provided with a psychologically safe "laboratory" setting such as is proposed, in which to experiment with new behaviors, the person, it is believed, will do so and thereby learn by experience how to get what he or she genuinely wants in the process of inter-relating with others.

Group members share in their commitment to abide by certain ground-rules and principles which are constructed and discussed in the opening session on Friday

night. Following is an example of a group contract:

1. Confidentiality. Each person commits to hold in confidence all that goes on in group. (Facilitators could be ethically bound, however, to take appropriate action if a participant were to (a) express current suicidal ideation, or (b) make threats to injure someone else.) Any exceptions must be unanimously agreed upon.
2. Commitment To Stay. Participants agree not to leave the group before the end of any one session, to attend all sessions, and to be prompt.
3. Honesty And Genuineness. In the context of the group, members agree to work on being as spontaneous and open as possible in relating to others their own internal experience, "here and now", as close to the moment as possible.
4. No Physical Violence. This commitment extends outside of the group as well.
5. Unaltered Consciousness. Participants promise not to come to group under the influence of any kind of mind-altering substance. Drug and alcohol use is strongly discouraged for the duration of the weekend.
6. No Sexual Contact. Because of the occasionally highly-charged emotional nature of encounter groups, group members might feel themselves physically attracted to one another. Participants are advised that it could be unwise, or possibly even emotionally harmful (if the new relationship is transference in nature) to engage in physical intimacy on the weekend which might later be regretted.

C. Facility. The weekend encounter workshop is held at the Innisfree Hostel and Conference Center in Milanville, Wayne County, Pennsylvania, located at the center of the upper Delaware River recreational corridor near the Skinners Falls rapids.

Home-cooked meals (brunch and dinner on Saturday, and brunch on Sunday) are prepared and served by Innisfree staff in the main lodge. Participants and facilitators eat together "family-style", and work together on dining hall cleanup, along with the camp staff. Participants who desire additional meals will be referred to area restaurants during unscheduled time.

D. Schedule. Detailed schedules are worked out at a pre-lab planning meeting held before the weekend. Said meeting is to be attended by Growth Lab participants who wish to attend, all facilitators, the Resident Consultant, Administrative Coordinator, and a representative of the Board of Trustees of Innisfree Corporation. A sample schedule is attached as Appendix B.

E. Screening. Individuals who have either attended Trenton State College's P.G.L. or the Innisfree Growth Laboratory in the past may attend, unless their facilitators believe that the type of experience as is offered would be detrimental to the person's emotional well-being, or detrimental to the group process.

Participants complete an application giving name, address, phone number(s), and an explanation of why they wish to attend. All new applicants will be contacted and interviewed by telephone by the Administrative Coordinator or other staff member.

F. Ethical Standards. All staff members, including interns, will adhere to the American Psychological Association's policy statement, "Guidelines for Psychologists Conducting Growth Groups" (APA, 1973). See Appendix 3 for text.

The purposes of the Innisfree Growth Laboratory are primarily educational in nature, so according to APA's statement (Guideline 4), the staff "assumes the usual professional and ethical obligations of an educator".

A brochure or introductory packet will be developed and given to all prospective participants, containing the following information:

1. An explicit statement of the purpose of the group;
2. Types of techniques that may be employed;
3. The education, training, and experience of staff members;
4. The fee and any additional expenses that may be incurred;
5. A statement as to whether or not a follow-up service is included in the fee. (Follow-up counseling services, if appropriate, will be arranged on a case-by-case basis.);

6. Goals of the group experience and techniques to be used;
7. Amounts and kinds of responsibility to be assumed by staff and by participants; for example, (i) that a participant maintains absolute freedom not to follow suggestions or prescriptions of the group facilitators or members, although they are encouraged to do so; (ii) that a participant retain's the "freedom" to leave the encounter group at any point, but makes a commitment not to do so until the session closes, or the group agrees; and
8. Issues of confidentiality.

(See APA, 1973, Guideline 4.)

4. Organization

A. Staff. Paid personnel will include the following:

1. Three facilitators or as many more as may be required (one per group, each to work with a student intern), to allow for a group size of 12 to 15, inclusive;
2. One Resident Consultant (preferably a college-level professor of counseling or social work) to be available to participants outside of group, for special counseling needs for the duration of the weekend; and
3. One Administrative Coordinator to organize, promote, and otherwise administer the weekend.

Participant volunteers will be recruited before and on the weekend to assist and supervise with specific tasks.

B. Salaries. All five staff members will be paid by Innisfree Corporation the same amount per weekend (including the planning meeting). This uniform amount will be \$200.00 per person. Out-of-pocket expenses, such as for publicity, printing, or materials incurred by staff or volunteers will be reimbursable from program revenue.

C. Advertising And Publicity. Innisfree Corporation will advertise and promote the weekend experience. The Administrative Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring appropriate publicity in such media as newspapers (e.g., T.S.C. SIGNAL and ACCENT (alumni paper), Association for Humanistic Psychology (A.H.P.) newsletters,

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PRINCETON PACKET, RIVER REPORTER, VILLAGE VOICE, etc.) and radio announcements (non-profit spots).

D. Projected Budget. The following projected budget is based on 30 participants, divided into three groups. (If more than 30 attend, or if a contracted facilitator or intern is taken ill, the Administrative Coordinator will serve as an alternate, but will still receive only the basic \$200 fee.

Salaries (five paid staff)	\$ 1,000
Lodging (30 participants 8 staff)	532
Advertising	500 *
Food (3 meals)	456
Post-lab workshop	150
Printing and office	100 *
Telephone	50
Miscellaneous	<u>50</u>
	\$ 2,838
* (requires advance capital)	\$ (650)

E. Cost For Participants. Each participant will pay \$100 for the weekend experience. A discount will be offered to those who pay at least 30 days in advance, bringing the cost to \$95. After all expenses have been paid, any remaining monies will be placed in a special account and applied toward the next lab, with the possibility for financial aid in the fall of 1986.

Dated: Milanville, Pennsylvania
November 30, 1985

Respectfully submitted,
INNISFREE CORPORATION

By: Thomas S. Rue, M.A.
Corporate Secretary/
Administrative Coordinator

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A P P E N D I X A

Definitions Of Terms

ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Encounter groups (sometimes known as personal-growth groups) offer an intense group experience designed to assist relatively healthy people in achieving better contact with themselves and others. The ground rules of encounter groups are that participants be open and honest in the group setting, that they avoid intellectualization, and that they talk instead about their feelings and perceptions. The emphasis is on eliciting emotions and on expressing these emotions fully; therefore, confrontations within the group are encouraged. Encounter focuses on the here and now and on teaching people to live in the present.

Most people who join an encounter, or personal-growth, group seek increased intimacy with others and intend to explore blocks within themselves that keep them from realizing their full potential. Their goal is to feel more alive, become more spontaneous, be more aware of their total experience, and overcome feelings of isolation.

Besides verbal techniques, encounter groups use a wide range of nonverbal modalities designed to foster interaction; touching, the use of fantasy, encounter games, sensory-awakening exercises, massage, meditation, and centering are just a few of them. These groups are usually time-limited; they often meet for a weekend or longer in a residential setting away from the distractions of daily living. During this time the participants are encouraged to become increasingly aware of their feelings and to engage in risk-taking behavior to discover different dimensions of themselves.

In sum, some of the goals of encounter groups are:

- o to become aware of hidden potentials, to tap unused strengths, and to develop creativity and spontaneity;
- o to become more open and honest with selected others;
- o to decrease game playing, which prevents intimacy;
- o to become freer of "oughts", "shoulds", and "musts" and to develop internal values;
- o to lessen feelings of alienation and fears of getting close to others;
- o to learn how to ask directly for what one wants;
- o to learn the distinction between having feelings and acting on them;
- o to increase one's capacity to care for others;
- o to learn how to give to others;
- o to learn to tolerate ambiguity and to make choices in a world where nothing is guaranteed.

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A P P E N D I X B

Sample Schedule

SCHEDULE

Personal Growth Laboratory

Innisfree
Milanville, Pennsylvania

October 19-21, 1984

FRIDAY

9:30 Departure from campus
1:00 Arrival at camp; lunch
2:00 - 2:30 Committee/facilitator meeting
2:30 - 3:00 Opening community (Rec Hall)
3:15 - 5:00 T-groups
5:15 - 6:00 Free time
6:00 - 7:00 Dinner (Dining Hall)
7:30 - 10:30 T-groups

SATURDAY

8:00 - 9:00 Breakfast (Dining Hall)
9:15 - 11:45 T-groups
12:00 - 1:00 Lunch (Dining Hall)
1:30 - 3:00 T-groups (leaderless)
3:00 - 5:30 T-groups (facilitators return)
6:00 - 7:00 Dinner (Dining Hall)
8:00 - ? Community (Rec Hall)

SUNDAY

8:00 - 9:00 Breakfast (Dining Hall)
9:15 - 11:45 T-groups
12:00 - 1:00 Lunch (Dining Hall)
1:00 - 1:30 Closing community
2:00 Departure from camp
5:00 Arrival at campus

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A P P E N D I X C

Guidelines For Psychologists Conducting
Growth Groups

GUIDELINES FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS CONDUCTING GROWTH GROUPS¹

The following guidelines are presented for the information and guidance of psychologists who conduct growth or encounter groups. They are not intended to substitute for or to supplant ethical practices for psychologists specified elsewhere.

The development of these guidelines was prompted by the concern of several units within the American Psychological Association that there be a set of operating principles for the use of psychologists active in such groups. The guidelines do not presume to specify or endorse any professional procedure or technique used in a group, but only to aid psychologists who offer groups to present themselves in a manner that is ethically sound and protective of the participant.

The present statement attempts to accommodate those suggestions from various psychologists in response to the draft statement published by the Board of Professional Affairs in the *APA Monitor* of December 1971 (Vol. 2, No. 12, p. 3). It is to be expected that these guidelines will be subject to modification as they are put to use, and also in the light of the evolution of new knowledge and practices in the utilization of growth groups.

1. Entering into a growth group experience should be on a voluntary basis; any form of coercion to participate is to be avoided.

2. The following information should be made available in writing to all prospective participants:

- (a) an explicit statement of the purpose of the group;
- (b) types of techniques that may be employed;
- (c) the education, training, and experience of the leader or leaders;
- (d) the fee and any additional expense that may be incurred;
- (e) a statement as to whether or not a follow-up service is included in the fee;
- (f) goals of the group experience and techniques to be used;
- (g) amounts and kinds of responsibility to be assumed by the leader and by the participants; for example, (i) the degree to which a participant is free not to follow suggestions and prescriptions of the group leader and other group members, (ii) any restrictions on a participant's freedom to leave the group at any time; and
- (h) issues of confidentiality.

3. A screening interview should be conducted by the group leader prior to the acceptance of any participant. It is the responsibility of the leader to screen out those individuals for whom he or she judges the group experience to be inappropriate. Should an interview not be possible, then other measures should be used to achieve the same results.

At the time of the screening interview, or at some other time prior to the beginning of the group, opportunity should be provided for leader-participant exploration of the terms of the contract as described in the information statement. This is to assure mutual understanding of the contract.

4. It is recognized that growth groups may be used for both educational and psychotherapeutic purposes. If the purpose is primarily educational, the leader assumes the usual professional and ethical obligations of an educator. If the purpose is therapeutic, the leader assumes the same professional and ethical responsibilities he or she would assume in individual or group psychotherapy, including before and after consultation with any other therapist who may be professionally involved with the participant. In both cases, the leader's own education, training, and experience should be commensurate with these responsibilities.

5. It is recognized that growth groups may be used for responsible research or exploration of human potential and may therefore involve the use of innovative and unusual techniques. While such professional exploration must be protected and encouraged, the welfare of the participant is of paramount importance. Therefore, when an experience is clearly identified as "experimental," the leader should (a) make full disclosure of techniques to be used, (b) delineate the respective responsibilities of the leader and participant during the contract discussion phase prior to the official beginning of the group experience, and (c) evaluate and make public his or her findings.

¹Approved for publication by the Board of Directors of the American Psychological Association on February 15, 1973. An ad hoc committee consisting of Donald H. Clark, Wilbert Edgerton, and John J. McMillan (Chair), the Board of Professional Affairs, and the Board of Directors were successively responsible for development of the statement in its final form.

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A P P E N D I X D

News Releases

Inner growth from sharing one's own perceptions

BY TOM RUE AND BOB MEHLMAN

If you weren't at the Personal Growth Lab on October 19th through the 21st, you missed something special. On that weekend a group of about 50 students had a lot of fun and learned a great deal about themselves and other people.

At the same time, they enjoyed the natural beauty of the northern Poconos. And the weekend was both exciting and relaxing for almost everyone.

So how did this happen? Since the mid 1960's the Personal Growth Lab has provided a unique chance for learning in groups. In a setting away from the campus participants, under the guidance of trained professionals (called facilitators), spend time together in groups of eight to 12 people. The focus in these groups is on sharing feelings and perceptions. The process is one of self-learning in a warm and supportive social environment.

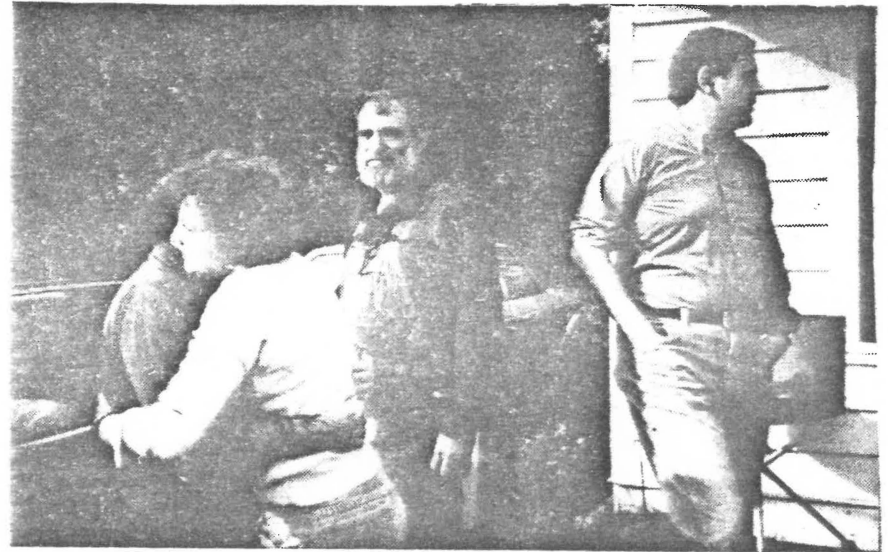
Because of this opportunity to explore their own behavior (the reason why this is called a Personal Growth Lab), most participants learn how to listen more

effectively to other people, to respond to them with empathy and understanding, and to become more effective communicators. At this lab, too, students often develop deep and satisfying friendships which continue long after the weekend.

A major characteristic of the lab is the emphasis on personal choice. Although participants often share aspects of themselves that they did not believe others would understand, the supportive atmosphere, the high level of trust, and the sense of power gained from taking responsibility for the conduct of one's own life, make the risk possible.

The changes in the faces of participants tell the story of the weekend. At the beginning of the PGL, most participants are guarded and a little anxious and faces are tense and drawn. Conversation sounds like a cocktail party. By the last day there is more laughter, more spontaneity, more openness; people are relaxed and look at each other when they talk.

Nearly 90 percent of the participants said they found the weekend so



On the weekend Personal Growth Lab trips, people learn about themselves and each other by sharing their feelings and perceptions. At a recent PGL weekend trip, Rae Fulco, undergraduate Trenton State student, shows her affection for Bob Mehlman, English professor and PGL facilitator, as Nate Passen, another PGL facilitator, looks on.

photo by Tom Rue

rewarding that they plan to return for the spring lab next April. One student wanted to do it again "because the experience, the feeling, and the atmosphere were a refreshing and helpful change." Another person reported that he would like to return "because I believe in PGL; because I like the quality of my own personal experience, and because I like what I see happen here."

The PGL is entirely student run and is supported by the Student Finance

Board. An opportunity like this usually costs upwards of \$200. Trenton State College students can go for \$10. The committee meets Wednesdays in Ely House at 7:30 p.m. and would like to see even more Trenton State students and faculty attend in the spring on the weekend of April 11th to 14th. Plan for it now though, because those who have gone want to return. Who wouldn't want to go to a place where you can be appreciated for just being you?

Innisfree — 15 year reunion

MILANVILLE — Innisfree has been on the River Road in Milanville for over 15 years, yet few locals know exactly what goes on there; or if they think they do, their impressions may be based on old memories of Innisfree Corporation's organized camp program in the summers of 1970 and 1971.

Spearheading the energy behind obtaining the funding to make the original down-payment on the organization's Milanville facility were Bud Rue as president, Bill Brown, and Clarke Maylone, three teachers from Montclair, New Jersey. The educational program they and their associates organized was idealistic and not atypical of that era.

Since the discontinuation of the original camp program in 1971, Innisfree has remained open, with some interruptions, as a not-for-profit "public eating and drinking place." It now operates a hostel and conference center, in addition to providing corporate sponsorship to the Innisfree Growth Laboratory.



An informal 15 year reunion of 1970 Innisfree campers was held recently in Milanville. Pictured (from left) are: Ann, Tom and Bud Rue in the back row; Nick Koechln, Catherine Clifford, Ron and Elaine Burger, and Michael Schlanger in the front row.

Ann Rue, who with her husband Bud, makes the 250-mile round trip from their suburban New Jersey home every weekend (and has for the last three years), explains that one of Innisfree's present services is "to provide lodging and meals for young people of limited means who have an appreciation for the area."

The people Ann was talking about have been coming, sometimes alone or in couples, and some in groups as large as 70. Nearly every weekend, Bud and Ann serve as host and hostess to educational and recreational groups from secondary schools, social service agencies, colleges, and private industry. Since no one at Innisfree draws a salary for their efforts, costs are kept to an absolute minimum. Home-cooked meals are served family style in the main lodge.

The most recent group to stay at Innisfree was a student organization from Lawrence High School in New Jersey, where Bud Rue is a teacher. The group is called the **Innisfree Club**, and exists to foster peer-group interdependence and friendships in the school. Members of the club commit not to use drugs or alcohol or create a disturbance in the area on their weekend visits to Milanville and the river at Skinners Falls. (Winter groups enjoy sliding down the hill on truck innertubes.) Typically, before each warm-weather group goes home at the end of the weekend, Rue accompanies them to the rapids area there, and together the group collects several garbage bags full of empty beer cans, broken glass, etc. discarded by canoers and others who are not concerned about the ecology of the area. Rue reports that he witnesses positive effects from these group-building experiences at Innisfree when he sees the students in school, back in New Jersey.

An example of the type of large group which Innisfree would like to attract more frequently is the Personal Growth Laboratory (PGL) from Trenton State College. Beginning in October of 1984, PGL began using the Innisfree facility for its weekend workshops in interpersonal communications, sometimes filling the place to its capacity.

When the college cancelled the weekend experience early last month for budgetary reasons, Innisfree and some of the professional group-facilitators who were involved stepped in and agreed to take a financial loss in order to salvage what they viewed as a valuable program. The ensuing weekend was a success, and there seemed to be sufficient interest to warrant planning another similar Innisfree Growth Lab in the spring of 1986.

Tom Rue, presently the resident caretaker in Milanville, is

a clinical mental-health counselor who holds an M.A. in counseling services from Rider College and a B.A. in psychology from Trenton State. He hopes to organize a weekly or bi-weekly counseling and personal problem-solving group at Innisfree, for eight to ten adolescents from Wayne and Sullivan Counties. Since Innisfree currently receives no foundation or other outside funding, an appropriate fee will be charged to each referring agency or parent.

The annual meeting of Innisfree's Board of Directors is scheduled for Sunday, December 1, 1985, at the camp. Members of the corporation are invited to attend. The membership of Innisfree is an open group of people who work collectively, as often as they can, and without pay, to maintain the physical facility and to further develop educationally oriented programs there.

T.S.C. Personal Growth Laboratory

Tom Rue described the extent of his work over the last two years on the steering committee of "Personal Growth Laboratory" (P.G.L.), a biannual weekend interpersonal communications workshop sponsored by Trenton State College.

P.G.L., he said, had taken place at Innisfree on the weekend of October 19-21, 1984. Bob Woldin and Ella Rue assisted as camp staff for the weekend. The facility was very well received by P.G.L. participants. On a scale of one to five, 55% of participants who completed a questionnaire (90% response rate) ranked their "overall satisfaction with the camp facility, staff service, and meals" as "Excellent"; 34% "Good"; and 8% "Fair". Fully 87% of the participants surveyed recommended that P.G.L. return to Innisfree in the spring of 1985. A copy of the entire Post-Lab Questionnaire was distributed to Board members, and is appended hereto as Attachment 4.

Tom related that the October P.G.L. consisted of 53 people, including 11 facilitators--the largest group of people to utilize the Innisfree facility at one time since the camp program of 1971.

The Secretary went on to report that the P.G.L. Committee was considering returning to Innisfree in the spring of 1985, and that he had submitted information to the Committee, obtained from the National Weather Service, showing extreme high and low temperatures in the Innisfree area on April 15th for the past ten years (see Attachment 6). He expressed his opinion that the Committee would probably vote in favor of returning next spring.

Project Success

Bud Rue reported that Project Success, as planned and discussed at previous meetings of the Board, "was a failure". Only two "campers" were recruited for the remedial math program. These two boys spent several weeks at Innisfree during the summer of 1984 receiving tutoring in math skills and enjoying themselves on the river,

but there was no camp program. Despite this, it was suggested and agreed that the Corporation maintain for future use its Organized Camp permit issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources.

Projected Use of Facility

The Chairperson opened the time up for discussion of groups to be approached regarding their possible use of the Innisfree facility. He cited the example of a Mr. and Mrs. Baxter from the Methodist Church in Ewing, with whom he spoke recently about a possible retreat.

Dave Rue agreed to contact the Inter-Greek Council at Lafayette College, and also to attempt to organize a recreational outing for employees at Parsons/Brinkerhoff, where he is employed.

Tom Rue stated that he had reserved dates for weekends at Innisfree for the counseling staff at the Vita Nova outpatient psychiatric program at St. Francis Medical Center in Trenton, and also for the residents of a housing program for high-functioning adult chronic psychiatric patients, run by the Progress for the Disabled Foundation, in Ewing.

Ann Rue suggested contacting the directors of various social service agencies in Wayne County, Pennsylvania and Sullivan County, New York regarding using the facility for weekend staff training. She also expressed the opinion that the most successful advertising medium open to the Corporation for the purpose of attracting recreational hostellers is the classified section of the Village Voice, out of New York. Bud Rue said that he planned to spend a considerable amount of time this summer contacting organizations in the local area.

Bob Woldin put forth the idea that the Corporation provide partial financial support of some kind to a member of the Board whose job it would be to recruit and coordinate groups at the Milanville facility.

Andy Prickett suggested an ad in the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory. Carol Prickett suggested putting up signs at supermarkets in the area of the camp. John Rue said he thought it might be productive to rent billboard space for Innisfree along public highways or to be painted on the sides of buildings.

Philosophical Void

Tom Rue made reference to some comments made by Clarke Maylone, Honorary Trustee, at the meeting of Trustees on November 27, 1982 (see page 2 of said minutes). Tom described his feelings of frustration with what he perceived as the Corporation's lack of philosophical direction or theme to its activities. He said that he would like to see the organization become more active in terms of actual program, as opposed to simply renting dorm space to hostellers, etc.

The Chairperson responded that he was "open to considering other directions, but...not looking for them." He gave a possible example of running an artist's colony at Innisfree, and renovating the bunk-house in the Chicken Coop to enable use of the ceramic kick-wheel and kiln located there.

Andy Prickett said that he saw the Corporation's present purpose for existence as to support and assist other nonprofit and educational organizations in filling their program and staff training needs by providing the facility.

When John Prickett asked the Secretary if he had a proposed philosophical statement to present to the meeting, Tom said he did not but promised to give the matter more thought. John Rue reflected that he also saw something of a need for what he jokingly termed an "Innisfree Manifesto".

In response to all this, and in summation, Bud Rue said, "I kind of agree with Clarke Maylone. It seems as though we are kind of in need of a philosophy."

No consensus was reached relative to an Innisfree philosophical statement.

P E R S O N A L G R O W T H L A B

Post-Lab Survey

Innisfree
Milanville, Pennsylvania

April 11-14, 1985

Summary

Attached are the tabulated percentages and verbatim responses to open-end questions from the survey administered at the spring 1985 Personal Growth Lab which took place April 11-14, 1985 at Innisfree, Milanville, Pennsylvania.

To the left of each item appears two percentages. The column on the right is from the April Lab; the left column, for comparison purposes, represents responses on the October 19-21, 1984 post-lab survey.

One item which did not appear on October's questionnaire is Question #16, which asks: "Which t-group were you in this weekend?" In the fall, participants of one group rated their t-group experiences significantly lower in Question #13 than the rest of the groups. As is plain to see, this rating did not recur. This would suggest, as we suspected then, that the lower rating for the one t-group was likely much more a function of personality dynamics that particular weekend than of anything else. T-group "value" ratings are entirely subjective in nature and should not be interpreted as reflective of the professional abilities of any particular facilitators.

The only other new item was #20, concerning release of verbatim quotations "for use in future brochures, articles, or other such promotional material." The names of individuals who consented to release of their statements, in connection with their names, appear in parentheses following those quotations. Statements which were specifically designated not to be released are indicated with a star (*), and should accordingly not be published.

Overall, it appears that the spring group was older and more advanced academically. Forty-seven percent indicated that they are graduate students, compared to 30% last fall. Similarly, those who reported that they first learned about PGL "from a professor" rose from 13% last fall to 23% in the spring. It may be projected that this rise is due largely to the efforts of such faculty members as Tony Evangelisto, Howard Robboy, Bob Mehlman, and others. In terms of academic majors, it is not surprising that mental-health fields place highest on the list (56%). It would appear that graduate counseling students are particularly likely to attend the Lab, among all majors at TSC. For this reason, perhaps the Personnel & Counseling Services program should receive special attention, in terms of publicity for future Labs.

Another noticeable change in the Lab's makeup, since last fall, is in the male/female ratio. In the fall, it was nearly 50-50, but the spring Lab was comprised of 68% women compared to only 32% men. The increase in attendance by counseling and related majors may account for this change, at least in part, since these programs (particularly on the graduate level) are generally sexually imbalanced. Obviously, this calls attention to the need for male participation in order to balance the makeup of the groups; but one alternative might be to actively promote the Lab through the TSC Women's Center, as an opportunity to participate in a weekend all-women's encounter.

POST-LAB SURVEY

Spring 1985

Page two

The projected return figure (Q. #14) for the next Lab dropped 15 points (74% versus 89%) since the fall, with fully 23% either not responding to this item or writing in "Don't know." This marked contrast is probably due to the approaching end of the school year, and people having less of an idea where they will be and what their commitments will be in the fall than they had in September concerning where they would be the following spring.

With respect to Questions 17 and 18, concerning past and projected involvement in a counseling alliance (beyond an encounter or t-group setting), there was a significant rise (from 45% to 87%) since the fall in those who acknowledge the possibility that they might benefit "from seeing a professional counselor or other mental-health practitioner, either in a group or individual setting." Likewise, there was also a noticeable increase (67% in the spring, vs. 50% last fall) in those who report ever having seen such a professional. Again, this may be related to the influx of graduate student-counselors, as compared to the total size of the community. Mental-health professionals, and those studying to be such, are more likely than the general population (or even the rest of the PGL community, one might suppose) to have had experience as a client in a mental-health setting, and also to be open to the possibility. Considering this, it might be appropriate and beneficial to spend some time in one of the communities next Lab dealing with the nature of the counseling process, as it relates to the discovery of issues on the PGL weekend. Dave Young's involvement, as Director of the TSC Counseling Center, as well as that of faculty members from the counselor education program, are assets to the organization in that they provide credence and added professionalism, not only to the experience itself but also to appearances on campus.

Satisfaction with the overall PGL weekend experience (Q. 11) rose dramatically from 71% describing it as "very valuable" in the fall of '84 to fully 94% in the spring. Likewise, communities (Q. #12) were rated "very valuable" by 29% in the spring, versus 23% in the fall. T-groups rose from 76% in October to 90% in April. Reasons for this are uncertain.

Overall satisfaction "with the camp facility, staff service, and meals" remained high (45% excellent; 43% good vs. 55% and 34% in October). The most obvious, and possibly only significant reason for this decline in satisfaction was the weather. Especially on Thursday night, sleeping quarters were quite cold. Despite this problem though, 81% of respondents suggest that PGL be held at Innisfree again, vs. 87% in the fall. Those expressing no opinion remained the same (3%). One other objection, mentioned in response to some of the open-end questions, was to the number of showers available. First of all, it appears not everyone knew where all the showers were located. However, it should be noted here that the Rues hope, by fall, to construct two new showers in the hostel area (bottom level) of the dorm. This will bring the total number of showers available to participants to six, with one more in the facilitators' space in the rec hall apartment. Hopefully, with the combination of additional facilities, and improved communication as to where showers are located (as well as the fact that all of them are available for use), satisfaction in this area will improve next Lab.

POST-LAB QUESTIONNAIRE
Personal Growth Laboratory

Innisfree
Milanville, Pennsylvania

April 11-14, 1985

We are interested in receiving your feedback about your satisfaction with this week-end's Personal Growth Laboratory experience, and in identifying what type of people attend. Please help by answering the following questions honestly. Your individual responses, in relation to your identity, will be kept confidential.

1. Is this the first time you have attended Trenton State College's PGL?
37 33 Yes -- SKIP TO Q. 2
63 67 No -- ANSWER Q. 1a

1a. Counting this one, how many Labs have you attended?
66 65 One to three
24 35 Four or more
10 -- Not ascertained

2. Have you ever attended any other similar encounter or t-group workshop(s)?
47 42 Yes -- ANSWER Q. 2a
53 58 No -- SKIP TO Q. 3; NON-STUDENTS SKIP TO Q. 5

3. What is your class standing? (STUDENTS ONLY)
6 3 Freshman (1-32 credits)
3 13 Sophomore (33-64 credits)
19 17 Junior (65-96 credits)
26 17 Senior (97-128 credits)
30 47 Graduate student
13 3 Other (non-matriculated, continuing education, etc.) -- SKIP TO Q. 5
3 -- Not ascertained

4. What is your academic major? (MATRICULATED STUDENTS ONLY)
45 56 Counseling (34%); Psychology (21%); Social Work (1%)
11 12 Education (ALL MENTIONS)
11 28 Other (TWO MENTIONS OR LESS)
-- 4 Undecided
22 -- Business related majors (ALL MENTIONS)

5. What is your sex?
50 32 Male
50 68 Female

6. What is your marital status?
81 59 Never married
11 19 Divorced or separated
8 19 Married or cohabitating
-- 3 Widowed

Response rate: 91% (31/34)

NOTE: Right column represents the April Lab;
left-hand figures are from the October
1984 survey.

7. What is your age?

13	6	Under 21
42	26	21-25
21	30	26-30
13	23	31-35
8	6	36-40
0	6	41-45
0	0	46-50
0	3	Over 50
3	0	Not ascertained

8. How did you first learn about PGL? (CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER)

52	55	From a friend or acquaintance who had attended in the past
18	13	Advertisement or article in THE SIGNAL
13	23	From a professor
11	3	Display table in the Student Center
3	0	Received a brochure
3	3	Saw a poster
--	3	Other

9. On a scale of one to five, how would you rate your overall satisfaction with the camp facility, staff service, and meals?

55	45	Excellent
34	43	Good
8	6	Fair
0	6	Not good
0	0	Poor
1	0	Not ascertained

10. Would you suggest that PGL be held at this camp again?

87	81	Yes
10	16	No
3	3	No opinion

11. On the whole, how would you rate your overall PGL experience this weekend in terms of its value to you personally?

71	94	Very valuable
21	3	Somewhat valuable
8	3	Fairly valuable
0	0	Not especially valuable
0	0	Not at all valuable

12. Using the same scale, how would you rate the community (large group) meetings?

23	29	Very valuable
29	36	Somewhat valuable
16	10	Fairly valuable
21	19	Not especially valuable
8	6	Not at all valuable
3	--	Did not attend (VOLUNTEERED)

13. Again using the same scale, how would you rate your t-group?
 76 90 Very valuable
 13 10 Somewhat valuable
 11 0 Fairly valuable
 0 0 Not especially valuable
 0 0 Not at all valuable
14. Are you planning on attending the Fall Lab in October of 1985? (Fall '84 percentages relate to the Spring 1985 Lab.)
 89 74 Yes
 11 3 No
 -- 23 Don't know (VOLUNTEERED)

15. What is the most important reason you responded to Q. 15 the way you did?

SEE VERBATIM RESPONSES

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 16. Which t-group were you in this weekend? | <u>T-GROUP RATINGS (From Q. 13)</u> |
| Richard & Bob's group | 1111111 (seven participants) |
| Veda, Janet, & Howard's group | 1111111 (seven participants) |
| Nate & Claire's group | 11111112 (eight participants) |
| Dick & Lynn's group | 111111 (six participants) |
| Bob, Linda, & Tony's group | 111122 (six participants) |
17. In order to further explore any of the personal issues you may have uncovered in your t-group this weekend, do you feel you might benefit from seeing a professional counselor or other mental-health practitioner, either in a group or individual setting?
 45 87 Yes
 45 13 No
 10 -- Not ascertained
18. Up to now, have you ever seen a professional counselor or other mental-health practitioner? (NOTE: Please do not count encounter or t-group type experiences such as the Personal Growth Laboratory.)
 50 67 Yes
 50 38 No
 -- 6 Not ascertained
19. We would appreciate any suggestions, comments, or feedback you might wish to share with regard to how to improve the Personal Growth Laboratory program, the camp facility, or any other aspect of the weekend experience.

SEE VERBATIM RESPONSES

20. Would you be willing to give your consent to the release of responses contained in this questionnaire, for use in future brochures, articles, or other such promotional material?
 Yes, you may quote me -- Name: SEE VERBATIM RESPONSES
 x() Anonymously only
 No, I would like my responses made herein kept strictly confidential and not to be released to anyone except in statistical form and with others' responses.

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. Please return it immediately to the Committee member who gave it to you. Your responses will be helpful in making the Lab a more meaningful experience to those who attend.

VERBATIM RESPONSES

Question 11: Most important reason why respondents indicated they would/would not like to attend the Fall 1985 Lab.

Ballot No.

- * 1 I like the chance to experience behaviors in a secure place
- * 2 I desire further development
- 3 This was such a valuable experience I'd like to repeat it.
- + 4 I'm scared of attending another session.
- 5 This may change; feelings may change. (Undecided)
- * 6 Fantastic facilitators
- * 7 It's just something I need to do for myself.
- 8 I need to grow more (Nancy Fleming)
- 9 So I may gain more insight into my self and improve and enhance my relationships with others.
- 10 Schedule may not permit (Undecided)
- 11 I want more! I will always want more. (Carol Rivera)
- 12 I have learned a few of the questions that are relevant in my life at this point in time. (Dave C. Fox)
- 13 Because I love PGL and my PGL family.
- 14 I get a lot from the opportunity to interact with people on the deeper level. I learn more about myself, life, and people. (Suzanne Crawley)
- 15 Not being able to plan that far in advance. (Undecided)
- 16 The positive growth and understanding that took place for me.
- 17 I gained so much!
- 18 Each time I've attended I've learned (or seen) something in myself that will help me attain the goal in life which is "To Be."
- 19 I want personal growth. (Peter Gibbons)
- 20 I enjoy this experience--it is very helpful to my personal growth.
- 21 What I gained here was very valuable and I want to learn more.
- 22 'Cause I feel great--real, like I can share myself and not be scared.
- *23 Undecided
- *24 I'm not affiliated with the school so I might not know about it. (Undecided)
- 25 Because I enjoy gaining the new family and friendly ties that get. I feel it to be worth while and I'm giving myself something I deserve. (Kris Deniken)

* Not to be published, with or without name

+ Not planning to attend

Ballot No.

- *26 Good experience
- 27 T-group (Dianne Schlesinger)
- 28 Because these labs give me the opportunity to understand myself and other people.
- 29 It's important to me not to keep static. It's important for me to keep moving, keep searching, keep finding what I like. My ultimate goal is to die on my feet, moving. This Lab helps me achieve that goal. (Jim Miller)
- 30 Good experience--total commitment from leaders and group members!
- 31 I need to continue working on many of the same issues as I did this weekend. Also, I am certain that I will clarify new areas for work between now and October.

Question 20: Suggestions with regard to how to improve the Personal Growth Laboratory program, the camp facility, or any other comments.

Ballot No.

- * 1 I would feel better about more people attending--though I like small groups. I enjoyed the weekend. I like Innisfree and the surroundings.
- * 2 Heat.
- 3
- 4 Warm water in bathroom (dorm)
- 5 The coldness (lack of heat) in dorms and cold water (ice cold) in dorms was an inconvenience. But if it's warmer, I think it's an ideal setting--a lovely place with tremendous views, food, and hospitality. Hostesses were very pleasant.
I grew a lot--I didn't think I would in the beginning, but I just let it happen and it did--got what I wanted out of it!!
- * 6 Heat the dorms; improve publicity.
- * 7 The food was delicious. The space of the property feels confining, as compared to other camps. I seriously object to the lack of heat in the dorm.
- 8 It would be nice to have heated sleeping quarters and better showers. (Nancy Fleming)
- 9 I found the bath/shower and sleeping facilities to be inadequate.
I think more attention should be paid to making the t-group membership more varied. Example: people who are experiencing this for the first time being placed within a group of members who have all had previous experience.
I would also like to see a broader age variation in members' age, if possible.

* Not to be published, with or without name.

Ballot No.

- 10 Will offer suggestions to committee when they come to me. Absorbed too much to analyze for good and bad right now.
- 11 It was much better than I expected but I couldn't have known that without having tried it. I've laid to rest all the pre-conceived ideas that were given to me by others. Why not have a summer session? People are out from the pressures of school, the weather's nicer, and working people may be freer to take vacation time to do it. The "community" program that was planned for the first night was extremely valuable in the observation of the group process. However, I think that the "issue" used was a poor choice. Any issue could have been dealt with in the same way for purposes of observation and understanding of the group process. As for allowing some choice in what to do on Saturday night next time, why not try sending a number of choices along with the application and let the majority be the choice, with the option of using the time to be alone or in a smaller group if one chooses. (Carol Rivera)
- 12 (1) All night coffee and tea available. (2) Keep community. Well set up! Facility was nice and staff was is fantastic. Thanx. I'll be back! Se ya then or when. (Dave C. Fox)
- 13
- 14 The setting here is lovely but the hygienic facilities left a lot to be desired.
 The activities of the communities seemed to me to be contrived and artificial. The members of my t-group discussed alternatives which I believe would have been more constructive and satisfying: coffee house, games, "dance/party," meeting of t-groups with exercises that will develop interaction between the members of the groups.
 I am willing to be a member of the PGL Planning Committee. I recognize that to have some of these things take place it is necessary to have materials prepared ahead of time. (Suzanne Crawley)
- 15 -Hot water
 -Mats or small rugs in room
 -Structure a coffee house Friday night; save the Community stuff for later.
- *16 I felt the facilitators were extremely well trained and projected a warm caring towards each other as well as the group. My only complaint was the lack of heat and the discomfort that produced.
- *17 Heat.
 Veda & Janet are exceptional. This was one of my best experiences at PGL. There was no comparison with my experience last Fall. Janet & Veda are genuine & caring & effective. My group experience with _____ & _____ was so poor as compared to this one. I felt so safe and supported to risk.
- 17 The area (location) goes along beautifully with the feeling -- openness -- and beauty of a PGL experience. It gives you space to think and a chance to be alone or with others going through similar feelings.

* Not to be published, with or without name

Ballot No.

- 19 I didn't think the first group night community was rewarding or necessary.
(Peter Gibbons)
- *20 The t-groups are great--real growth opportunities. The community meeting was a waste.
The sleeping arrangements were poor--lack of heat, dirty rooms.
The bathroom facilities were poor--toilets that don't flush; sink water that doesn't run; 1 shower for 30+ people is unhealthy and disgusting.
- 21
- 22 Coffee in the community room would get more people there and together.
I also would like to see people encouraged to ride up on the bus. There were only about 15-20 people. A 3-hour ride on a bus is a part of the experience. A small part... but still...
- *23 Heat.
- *24 The PGL Committee did a fine job. I found the facility site somewhat inappropriate for this time of year (no heat in some buildings; cold running water in the sinks).
- 25 As in the past two labs I am going home with a lot of new friends and awarenesses. I have gained a new family. The camp needs some heat. The facilities were excellent, the food great. (Kris Doniken)
- *26
- 27 (Dianne Schlesinger)
- 28 As with the other two PGL's I have been on, these weekends constantly provide growth for me as a person. In regard to the facilities... the food was superb; Mr. & Mrs. Rue were excellent hosts and the lodging and atmosphere in this beautiful area of the country were very adequate. My only complaint would be the lack of heat this weekend. I feel I could have concentrated on my growth more if I wasn't so busy trying to keep warm. How 'bout scheduling a PGL for a warmer time of the year?
- 29 Heat was the biggest problem. Also, things like showers, no electrical outlets in the rooms was annoying when trying to shower or play a radio. The showers might have been nicer if they had some kind of raised flooring. Going in there, the area that was supposed to stay dry was under ½ inch of water. It's annoying removing your clothes only to get them soaked by the floor. It might be possible to provide a drain for that area. (Jim Miller)
- 30 Heat in sleeping rooms. Rooms: total privacy for t-groups; t-groups not right next to each other.
- 31 My only complaint about the facility, etc. relates to the weather, but even that was not unbearable for me.
Perhaps as a part of the schedule packet, I would like to see a brief experiential and academic vitae of each of the facilitators made available at future Labs. I believe that this type of information will increase trust within groups, and also lend itself to better "truth in packaging." The facilitators are a great group of professionals about whom I would like to know more!



THE RIVER REPORTER

P.O. Box 20, Narrowsburg, NY 12764 (914) 252-7414

March 7, 1986

Mr. David Singleton
Bureau Manager
UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL
Scranton Times Building
338 North Washington Avenue
Scranton PA 18503

Dear Mr. Singleton:

Thank you for speaking with me this afternoon about the Innisfree Growth Laboratory, sponsored by a nonprofit group with which I am involved.

Enclosed is a copy of the press release we discussed, which I believe will be of interest to residents of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York.

For your information, I am also enclosing a copy of our new newsletter, THE INNISFREE ALMANACK, which will give you a considerable amount of background information on Innisfree and its activities.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at Innisfree at (717) 729-7762.

Very truly yours,

Tom Rue, M.A.
Editorial Assistant

tsr
Enclosures

File copy

INNISFREE CORPORATION

POST OFFICE BOX 47
MILANVILLE, PA. 18443

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS
ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

(717) 729-7762

June 11, 1985

Mr. Joseph F. Yuhas
South Ward Councilman
CITY OF TRENTON
622 Second Street
Trenton, NJ 08611

Dear Joe:

Enclosed is a copy of a map of the State of New York on which I have marked the location of Milanville, Pennsylvania. The Innisfree Hostel is located about a mile from New York Route 97, across the Delaware. Also enclosed is a local detail of how to get from the highway to the hostel.


As we discussed at the Heritage Days celebration, I hope that the Anchor House bikeathon troupe will be able to stop by, at least for lunch. Innisfree is a nonprofit organization, but in order to cover our costs we will need to ask for a fee of \$3.50 per person. For this we will provide a healthy meal: two hamburgers, baked beans, macaroni salad, corn-on-the-cob, and a beverage. The food will all be home-cooked, and I am certain you will find Innisfree's peaceful atmosphere a welcome break for your weary travelers; and at the same time close enough to your planned route to allow you to keep on schedule.

Should time permit, we also have approximately 25 large inner-tubes which you and the others could borrow to recreate briefly on the Skinners Falls rapids.

Please let me hear from you as soon as possible so we will know when to expect the group. If you would like to discuss this further, or contact me for any other reason, please feel free to call me at home at (609) 883-8199.

Thanks!

Best wishes,
INNISFREE CORPORATION


By: Thomas S. Rue
Corporate Secretary

tsr
Enclosures
cc: Judy Donohoe
Bud Rue

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree . . .

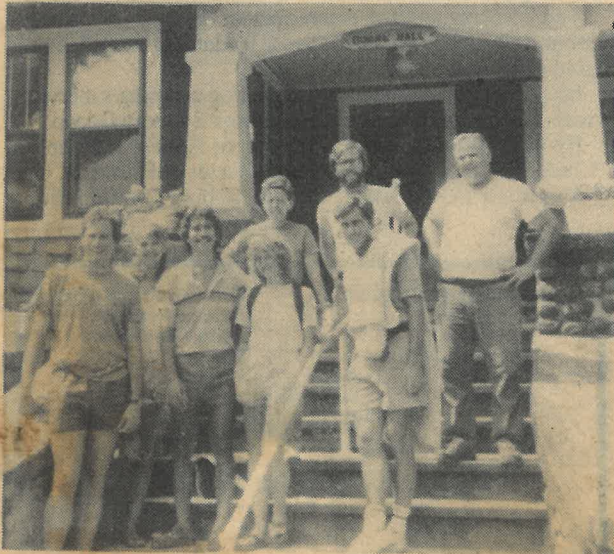
—WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Innisfree — 15 year reunion

MILANVILLE — Innisfree has been on the River Road in Milanville for over 15 years, yet few locals know exactly what goes on there; or if they think they do, their impressions may be based on old memories of Innisfree Corporation's organized camp program in the summers of 1970 and 1971.

Spearheading the energy behind obtaining the funding to make the original down-payment on the organization's Milanville facility were Bud Rue as president, Bill Brown, and Clarke Maylone, three teachers from Montclair, New Jersey. The educational program they and their associates organized was idealistic and not atypical of that era.

Since the discontinuation of the original camp program in 1971, Innisfree has remained open, with some interruptions, as a not-for-profit "public eating and drinking place." It now operates a hostel and conference center, in addition to providing corporate sponsorship to the Innisfree Growth Laboratory.



An informal 15 year reunion of 1970 Innisfree campers was held recently in Milanville. Pictured (from left) are: Ann, Tom and Bud Rue in the back row; Nick Koechln, Catherine Clifford, Ron and Elaine Burger, and Michael Schlanger in the front row.

Ann Rue, who with her husband Bud, makes the 250-mile round trip from their suburban New Jersey home every weekend (and has for the last three years), explains that one of Innisfree's present services is "to provide lodging and meals for young people of limited means who have an appreciation for the area."

The people Ann was talking about have been coming, sometimes alone or in couples, and some in groups as large as 70. Nearly every weekend, Bud and Ann serve as host and hostess to educational and recreational groups from secondary schools, social service agencies, colleges, and private industry. Since no one at Innisfree draws a salary for their efforts, costs are kept to an absolute minimum. Home-cooked meals are served family style in the main lodge.

The most recent group to stay at Innisfree was a student organization from Lawrence High School in New Jersey, where Bud Rue is a teacher. The group is called the **Innisfree Club**, and exists to foster peer-group interdependence and friendships in the school. Members of the club commit not to use drugs or alcohol or create a disturbance in the area on their weekend visits to Milanville and the river at Skinners Falls. (Winter groups enjoy sliding down the hill on truck innertubes.) Typically, before each warm-weather group goes home at the end of the weekend, Rue accompanies them to the rapids area there, and together the group collects several garbage bags full of empty beer cans, broken glass, etc. discarded by canoers and others who are not concerned about the ecology of the area. Rue reports that he witnesses positive effects from these group-building experiences at Innisfree when he sees the students in school, back in New Jersey.

An example of the type of large group which Innisfree would like to attract more frequently is the Personal Growth Laboratory (PGL) from Trenton State College. Beginning in October of 1984, PGL began using the Innisfree facility for its weekend workshops in interpersonal communications, sometimes filling the place to its capacity.

When the college cancelled the weekend experience early last month for budgetary reasons, Innisfree and some of the professional group-facilitators who were involved stepped in and agreed to take a financial loss in order to salvage what they viewed as a valuable program. The ensuing weekend was a success, and there seemed to be sufficient interest to warrant planning another similar Innisfree Growth Lab in the spring of 1986.

Tom Rue, presently the resident caretaker in Milanville, is

a clinical mental-health counselor who holds an M.A. in counseling services from Rider College and a B.A. in psychology from Trenton State. He hopes to organize a weekly or bi-weekly counseling and personal problem-solving group at Innisfree, for eight to ten adolescents from Wayne and Sullivan Counties. Since Innisfree currently receives no foundation or other outside funding, an appropriate fee will be charged to each referring agency or parent.

The annual meeting of Innisfree's Board of Directors is scheduled for Sunday, December 1, 1985, at the camp. Members of the corporation are invited to attend. The membership of Innisfree is an open group of people who work collectively, as often as they can, and without pay, to maintain the physical facility and to further develop educationally oriented programs there.

Inner growth from sharing one's own perceptions

BY TOM RUE AND BOB MEHLMAN

If you weren't at the Personal Growth Lab on October 19th through the 21st, you missed something special. On that weekend a group of about 50 students had a lot of fun and learned a great deal about themselves and other people.

At the same time, they enjoyed the natural beauty of the northern Poconos. And the weekend was both exciting and relaxing for almost everyone.

So how did this happen? Since the mid 1960's the Personal Growth Lab has provided a unique chance for learning in groups. In a setting away from the campus participants, under the guidance of trained professionals (called facilitators), spend time together in groups of eight to 12 people. The focus in these groups is on sharing feelings and perceptions. The process is one of self-learning in a warm and supportive social environment.

Because of this opportunity to explore their own behavior (the reason why this is called a Personal Growth Lab), most participants learn how to listen more

effectively to other people, to respond to them with empathy and understanding, and to become more effective communicators. At this lab, too, students often develop deep and satisfying friendships which continue long after the weekend.

A major characteristic of the lab is the emphasis on personal choice. Although participants often share aspects of themselves that they did not believe others would understand, the supportive atmosphere, the high level of trust, and the sense of power gained from taking responsibility for the conduct of one's own life, make the risk possible.

The changes in the faces of participants tell the story of the weekend. At the beginning of the PGL, most participants are guarded and a little anxious and faces are tense and drawn. Conversation sounds like a cocktail party. By the last day there is more laughter, more spontaneity, more openness; people are relaxed and look at each other when they talk.

Nearly 90 percent of the participants said they found the weekend so



On the weekend Personal Growth Lab trips, people learn about themselves and each other by sharing their feelings and perceptions. At a recent PGL weekend trip, Rae Fulco, undergraduate Trenton State student, shows her affection for Bob Mehlman, English professor and PGL facilitator, as Nate Passen, another PGL facilitator, looks on.

photo by Tom Rue

rewarding that they plan to return for the spring lab next April. One student wanted to do it again "because the experience, the feeling, and the atmosphere were a refreshing and helpful change." Another person reported that he would like to return "because I believe in PGL; because I like the quality of my own personal experience, and because I like what I see happen here."

The PGL is entirely student run and is supported by the Student Finance

Board. An opportunity like this usually costs upwards of \$200. Trenton State College students can go for \$10. The committee meets Wednesdays in Ely House at 7:30 p.m. and would like to see even more Trenton State students and faculty attend in the spring on the weekend of April 11th to 14th. Plan for it now though, because those who have gone want to return. Who wouldn't want to go to a place where you can be appreciated for just being you?