

From Arcturus to **Love** Creek:

MAPS Moves Across the Continent



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THE MAPS OFFICE STAFF HAS accomplished an intricate and exhilarating feat, moving our headquarters thousands of miles cross-country. From 1998 to May 2006, the office was located in Arcturus, a house that MAPS President Rick Doblin built in Sarasota in the 1970s while studying psychedelic therapy and laying the groundwork for his drug policy reform efforts. Arcturus is a psychedelic, hand-made art house, practically a living organism, with walls of cedar and granite that soar to skylights and rainbow-colored stained glass depicting a cosmic Eden on a turtle's back. Arcturus seemed a fitting base for MAPS, and, with New College of Florida nearby, the location provided a small but steady flow of recent college graduates and students to run operations and drive the mission forward.

As MAPS celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, it is burgeoning from adolescence into adulthood, both literally and metaphorically. We're experiencing a time of transition on many levels, as our successes demand that we expand to accommodate our achievements and prepare for the new challenges that lie ahead. With transition comes growing pains, and we were indeed feeling the restrictions imposed upon MAPS by our previous location. Our 400 sq. ft. office space was bursting at the seams, and, though Sarasota had served us well, the lack of a supportive atmosphere was limiting.

Last winter we began searching for a new home for MAPS that would provide new opportunities for educational outreach, community-building, and a more desirable location for our staff and future staff. Our short list included Chicago,

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MAPS' new two-story office at Love Creek has a "shipping facility" on ground level with a spacious office and meeting room upstairs.

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Boston, Asheville NC, and, of course, the San Francisco Bay Area, which eventually emerged as the front-runner. The Bay Area has a rich history of scientific, cultural, and political innovation, and is already home to a substantial proportion of MAPS' members and supporters.

Once we settled on a general vicinity for the new MAPS office, we kept our options open, looking for homes, offices, and live/work spaces everywhere in the area, particularly in Oakland, Berkeley, and Santa Cruz. After three months of dedicated *Craigslist* hunting, I found a listing titled "Magical Sanctuary by a Babbling Brook," for a property in Ben Lomond, a small town nestled in the San Lorenzo Valley, 10 miles north of Santa Cruz. To our amazement, everything about it fit our needs—affordability, accessibility to the larger communities of the Bay Area, a professional office space on the property separate from the living space, and plenty of nature to replenish our energies. Once

we had all visited, there was no doubt about the suitability of the spot, and the move was on.

Despite a plethora of logistical concerns, we managed to organize, pack, and then deliver the entirety of the MAPS office safely to the opposite shore. Upon our arrival, we were amazed at the welcome we received, as many local MAPS members and supporters came to offer their support and assistance. When our moving truck met us at Love Creek, a dozen volunteers helped us unload, easing our transition. Others brought us meals, helped set up our computer network, and assembled furniture. We've settled in quite nicely, thankful for the beautiful spot we've found and eager to engage our new surroundings. The new MAPS headquarters at Love Creek is thriving with activity, as we work together in the name of social justice and scientific freedom, with the intention to change the world! •



MAPS staffer Julia Onnie-Hay showing MAPS' new Love Creek office some love.