

HOME IS WHERE THE BUNKER IS

EXTREMIST, SURVIVALIST, AND FRINGE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

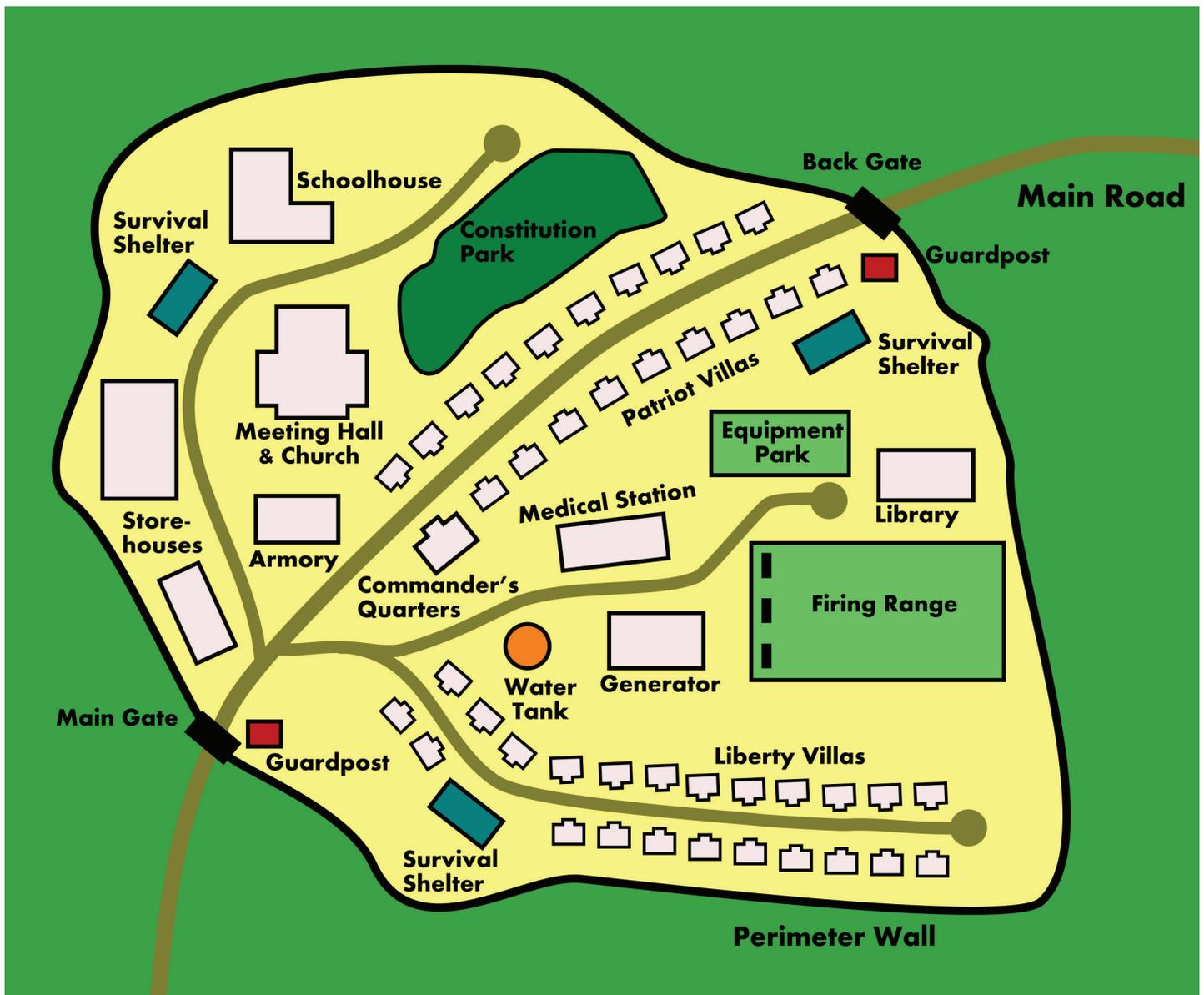


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INTRODUCTION

Their Own Private Idaho

Right-wing survivalists in the Pacific Northwest caused a stir recently when they announced plans for The Citadel, a proposed survivalist community to be built in a remote area of Idaho. According to The Citadel's Web site, the community will be "liberty-driven" and consist of residents "who have sworn their Lives, their Fortunes and their Sacred Honor to defend one another and Liberty." Non-right-wingers need not apply. According to The Citadel, "Marxists, Liberals and Establishment Republicans will likely find that life in our community is incompatible with their existing ideology and preferred lifestyles."

The Citadel allegedly plans to buy between 2,000 and 3,000 acres, part of which will be walled in order to create a fortified community. The Citadel may be the brain child of Christian Kerodin, who filed papers in Idaho in November to create a company called Citadel Land Development. Kerodin is a felon who spent time in federal prison after being convicted in 2004 of extortion charges and illegal possession of a firearm. Once a heating and air conditioning repairman in northern Virginia, Kerodin had started a "consulting firm" after 9/11 that issued reports criticizing security at local malls. His scheme was to extort money from mall owners by threatening to expose their "vulnerabilities" to terrorism if they did not hire him as a consultant. After his arrest, federal agents also found an illegal sawed-off shotgun in his apartment.

Future residents may find The Citadel a bit spartan. Every "able-bodied Patriot" over the age of 13 will have to demonstrate proficiency with a rifle and handgun, while every adult resident will be required to own an assault rifle and at least 1,000 rounds of ammunition. Conveniently, the creators of The Citadel also started the Ill Arms Company, which sells such assault rifles. Moreover, adult residents will be required to carry a loaded sidearm everywhere other than the Citadel Town Center (there's an exception for those, like Kerodin, who are legally prohibited from carrying firearms). Of course, the Citadel would be nothing without its own militia. Each household will be required to supply one person, aged 13 or older, for a "Town Militia."

The Citadel has been inspired, in part, by the "Three Percenter" concept. This is a loose anti-government extremist movement started by former Alabama militia leader Mike Vanderboegh and based on a historically incorrect myth that only three percent of the American population opposed the British in the American Revolution. Three Perceners view themselves as the vanguard of a future revolution against the alleged tyranny of the current American government.

A PLACE OF THEIR OWN

Intentional Communities on the Fringes of Society

The plans for The Citadel, though certainly grandiose, are actually not really new. There is a long tradition in the United States of fringe religious and ideological groups creating their own planned or intentional communities. The Shakers did so in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Because of persecution by others, Mormons trekked all the way to Utah in the mid-19th century to establish a community together.

In the early 20th century, white supremacist William E. Riker founded Holy City on a patch of land outside of San Jose, California. There his followers lived while he repeatedly ran for governor of California on a white supremacist platform, arguing that non-whites should be banned from owning businesses. In the 1940s, he was tried (but acquitted) on sedition charges for his support of Adolf Hitler. Holy City lasted through the 1950s.

Many other sects and groups have attempted to establish communities over the years, usually unsuccessfully. This tradition still exists in the modern era. Members of many fringe religious groups live together in relatively isolated areas. So too do the members of some extremist groups, or groups that merge both extreme ideologies and obscure religious beliefs. Examples of the latter include the polygamous Fundamentalist Church of Latter Day Saints, who control an entire town on the Utah-Arizona border; the Nuwaubian Nation of Moors, who have a compound in Putnam County, Georgia; and Elohim City, a white supremacist Christian Identity group with a compound on the Oklahoma-Arkansas border.

The advantages of such arrangements are obvious: adherents can live among fellow believers, away from prying eyes (of neighbors or the government), and can raise their children under conditions that they control. Since many such religious or extremist groups may have views that are unpopular, such intentional communities also offer a modicum of protection for members. However, they also sometimes allow the leaders of such groups to exercise a tremendous amount of control over the daily and even private lives of the residents.

Activists from fringe groups or movements have often urged like-minded people to move to specific places or parts of the country. White supremacist Jason Barnwell, a member of Blood and Honour-USA and the Aryan Terror Brigade, recently tried to get other white supremacists to move to Evening Shade, Arkansas: "We've bought 12 acres with waterfront, and are looking to build a community of solid Folk who are the same. So we are networking and trying to find the right people." At least one white supremacist did relocate there. However, the project abruptly halted after Barnwell, his girlfriend, and several other white supremacists were arrested on (and later pleaded guilty to) federal charges related to the firebombing of an interracial couple's home in Hardy, Arkansas.

Other people have been more ambitious. In the 1970s and 1980s, white supremacists urged their fellow racists to relocate to the Pacific Northwest, a project dubbed the "Northwest Territorial Imperative." More recently, some right-wingers and libertarians in 2001 began urging their fellow believers to move to New Hampshire as part of the "Free State Project."

Inspired by that notion, a more religiously-inclined right-wing activist named Cory Burnell proposed that “Christian Constitutionalists” relocate to South Carolina as part of a project dubbed “Christian Exodus.” Ultimately, Burnell fantasized, South Carolina could secede from the United States to create a country with a government run on allegedly Christian principles.

Some white supremacists came up with a different approach: Pioneer Little Europes (PLEs). Promoted originally by H. Michael Barrett and Mark Cotterill and later strongly supported by members of the Stormfront white supremacist Internet forum, PLEs would be a sort of “community within a community.” White supremacists living within a particular area, joined by others moving to the vicinity from outside, would form their own community nestled within some town or city. These “seed communities” would somehow form the basis for a future white-supremacist-oriented “cultural revival.” Since the concept was introduced, various white supremacists have half-heartedly tried to create PLE’s in various places in the United States. The only place where white supremacists could claim any results at all is Kalispell, Montana, where since 2008 white supremacist April Gaede has been enthusiastically promoting the town as a PLE location.

It should be noted that few of these planned communities, no matter the strategy used to form them or the structure that they take, end up being successful. First, many fringe planned community concepts are often ill-conceived and impractical even at their start, with their creators having no realistic chance of bringing them to completion, much less sustaining them.

Even when the creator actually has the ability to start such a community, filling it is another story. It is often difficult to convince families to uproot themselves from one area and move across the country to an unfamiliar place, especially a remote location that may have poor infrastructure and offer no employment prospects. In many instances, practicality and finances trump ideology or survivalism.

Finally, internal bickering and fighting within such communities frequently tear them apart, as inhabitants begin to resent or argue with the developers or with each other. Often, within just a few years of starting such a community, people begin to abandon it for greener pastures.

As a result of these circumstances, the history of fringe planned communities largely tends to be one of failure. Fringe religious groups tend to have a somewhat better success record in establishing such communities than do those based on more secular belief systems, especially if the group is a tightly knit group that builds the place together. Even there, the success record is not good.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Fringe Communities and Real Estate

Planned or intentional communities created by fringe groups exist all over the globe. But a peculiarly American twist on the notion is the idea of commercializing such communities—of not simply creating planned communities but actually promoting or marketing them, often with the idea of making a profit.

Though sometimes such fringe real estate concepts have been marketed to white supremacists, it is anti-government extremists and survivalists who promoters far more often try to reach. Such practices have been occurring for more than 30 years. In the simplest version, individual real estate agents, typically in remote or rural areas of the country, just use a survivalist-oriented marketing pitch to help convince would-be property-buyers to buy homes or plots of land in their areas.

However, every now and then, real estate promoters emerge—often from within extremist movements themselves—who have more grandiose ambitions. They seek not to sell an individual plot of land or house but to create an entire community of like-minded people.

Such real estate promotions can and do emerge all the time, but many of them have occurred in one or another of three waves:

1. **Early-to-mid 1980s.** Two main factors drove developments in this period: 1) a resurgence of right-wing extremism that lasted for a number of years, and 2) the birth of the survivalist movement, largely as a reaction to fears of nuclear war. During this period, the survivalist movement was strongly linked to right-wing extremism.
2. **Mid-to-late 1990s.** A second surge of right-wing extremism helped fuel the second wave, which increased near the end of the decade because of hysteria surrounding the so-called “Millenium” or “Y2K” computer bug that many predicted would cause technological civilization to crash. Fear of Y2K caused a revival of survivalism that became attractive to some people in mainstream society.
3. **From 2009 to the present.** Once more, a surge of right-wing extremism has helped create and propel the current wave, aided by a strong resurgence of the survivalist subculture (with survivalists now often calling themselves “preppers”). This survivalist revival has also brought adherents in from less extreme circles, thanks to a pop culture fascination with cataclysmic events that has included both Mayan and zombie apocalypses, as well as fears of economic collapse generated by the “Great Recession.” As a result, a number of the developments created during this period have been more “mainstream,” offering “equal opportunity” protection against a variety of imagined threats ranging from unlikely to impossible—in contrast to many earlier developments, which were more clearly associated with specific fringe beliefs or movements.

A SELECTED HISTORY OF FRINGE REAL ESTATE

Recent decades have seen many attempted fringe communities come and go, despite the promotional efforts of their organizers. Survival-oriented entrepreneurs have tried to start communities centered on particular ideologies (such as white supremacy or anti-government extremism), particular religious beliefs, and specific causes or interests (such as gun-owning). They also have started communities aimed more generically at would-be survivalists, pitching the community broadly on the basis of survivalism rather than more narrowly linking it to a cause or belief system.

What follows is a very selective list of some of the more interesting attempts at fringe, survivalist, special interest or extremist planned communities that have emerged in the past several decades (arranged in reverse chronological order based on their end dates).

The Citadel

(2012-present, Benewah County, Idaho)

As its name suggests, the concept behind The Citadel is the creation of a fortified and armed survivalist “liberty-driven” community with an extreme right-wing orientation (shunning even “Establishment Republicans”). Christian Kerodin, a former heating repairman from Virginia who has spent time in federal prison on extortion charges, filed papers in November 2012 to create the Citadel Land Development company. According to its Web site, this planned community will require residents to own assault rifles and to carry loaded weapons. It will also have its own militia group (in fact, The Citadel describes itself as “a martial endeavor designed to protect Residents

in times of peril”). According to its Web site, it envisions an eventual community of some 3,500 to 7,000 families (a number that would dwarf the actual population of the county, which has only around 9,000 inhabitants), who would live in concrete homes. However, the organizers have yet to even purchase land, much less break ground (in late April 2013, The Citadel organizers announced that they would “break ground on the Citadel Beachhead within the next 45 days.”

Luxury Survival Condo

(2010-present, Salina, Kansas)

One of the more highly-publicized commercially-oriented survival communities that has popped up due to the recent resurgence of survivalism is the Luxury Survival Condo, built by Colorado-based real estate developer Larry Hall in several Cold War-era missile silos outside of Salina, Kansas. Unlike the more middle-class Vivos development (see below), Survival Condo is designed purely for the wealthy survivalist, with space selling at \$2 million a floor or \$1 million per half-floor. The grandiose plans for the silos include pools, movie theaters, libraries, medical centers, and schools. When asked by a reporter about near-term future threats, Hall replied, “Pick your poison here. Economic collapse, pandemics, terror, global climate change, super volcano, earthquakes, tsunamis, solar flares, pole shifts, Planet X, Oort cloud, civil unrest...” Hall claims to have sold numerous units.

Vivos

(2009-present, Indiana, Nebraska, "Rockies")

Capitalizing on the recent revival of survivalism, in 2009, the California-based Vivos Group began to market a "global network of underground shelters," which ostensibly would protect people from everything from the "end times" to anarchists to the North/South pole shifts to the ever dangerous Planet X. The man behind Vivos was Robert Vicino, a California marketer and real estate developer. According to Vivos, the impetus for his venture was the then-approaching "Mayan apocalypse" that would allegedly end the world on December 21, 2012. "I'm careful not to promote fear," Vicino told one reporter, though the Vivos Web site seems almost dedicated to that express purpose. Vivos allegedly began constructing massive underground shelter complexes, made from existing hardened nuclear shelters, that could ostensibly accommodate groups ranging from 50 to 1,000 people, and would provide many facilities, including security and medical care. Vivos claims it is building or has built shelters in Indiana, Nebraska, and the "Rockies," while media reports suggest another shelter near Barstow, California. In the summer of 2012, it allegedly began scouting locations in Scotland. As of 2013, the Indiana shelter complex was allegedly sold out, but the Nebraska and "Rockies" shelters were available for \$35,000 for an adult and \$25,000 for a child.

Liberty Villages

(2003, 2009-present, New Mexico)

One of the more ambitious attempts at a planned community occurred in 2003, when Clay Douglas, a conspiracy theorist, magazine publisher and virulent anti-Semite, briefly teamed up with the American Free Press (AFP), a conspiratorial and anti-Semitic newspaper published by white supremacist Willis Carto, in an attempt to raise money to purchase an entire town in Playas, New Mexico. Playas was a company town built by the mining company Phelps Dodge in the 1970s, consisting of more than 250 homes and a variety of other buildings. Several years after the company closed its Playas smelter, it put the town up for sale, asking \$3.2 million. Douglas tried to raise money for a "down payment" on the site, in order to develop it as a planned community, but apparently never came close.

However, in 2009, Douglas resurrected the notion in the quite different form of so-called "Liberty Villages," after he began selling prefabricated cabins, teepees and yurts. He began to promote the idea of creating self-sufficient Liberty Villages (an "immediate solution to the whole [New World Order] plan for Global Communism") across the country, each of which would be near or in a small town and would have a minimum of 15 structures, about half of which would be occupied by permanent residents. They would also have bunkhouses that would allegedly shelter homeless veterans and other "Constitutionally Knowledgeable" persons. Douglas still continues to market this concept today, although it appears to be a rather transparent money-making attempt and seems to have had few takers.

Almost Heaven

(1994-present, Kamiah, Idaho)

Perhaps the most “successful” planned community emerging from the right-wing fringe was Almost Heaven, a housing development (or “Christian Covenant Community”) on 1,000 acres of land near Kamiah, Idaho, created in 1994 by a group of anti-government extremists that included Bo Gritz, Jerry Gillespie, and Jack McLamb. As Jack McLamb put it, “one of the essential parts of preparation involves having a place to go where like-minded people who seek to live as free Americans can stand back-to-back to defend themselves from any persecution or aggression of tyranny.” Unlike most other such communities, the lots of Almost Heaven sold out and several nearby follow-up developments also sold well, although people were slower to relocate than to purchase. Those who moved to Almost Heaven included a wide variety of survivalists, anti-government extremists, and white supremacists, setting up trailers on purchased property or building homes—including homes made of tires or hay bales.

It wasn’t long before trouble emerged in Almost Heaven. Some of the extreme statements and actions of residents disturbed other local residents, who frequently complained to police. Things weren’t peaceful even in heaven, as some Almost Heaven residents became disenchanted with Gritz, who in turn tried to distance himself from them. In 1999 some 30 residents signed a letter to the local sheriff to disassociate themselves with Gritz, claiming they were not interested in “cult lifestyles or behaviors.” However, residents more radical than Gritz also opposed him. One of those was

Larry Raugust, who headed a militia group, the Idaho Mountain Boys, that formed in Almost Heaven. Two of its members were convicted for a 1999 plot to blow up a propane tank farm near Sacramento, California, while Raugust himself pleaded guilty in 2003 to making pipe bombs and land mines that he buried around the foreclosed property of a friend.

Eventually, even the founders of Almost Heaven fell out with each other. Gillespie abandoned Almost Heaven in 1997, moving back to Arizona (he would die in 2011). Gritz himself left Almost Heaven in 1999 after his wife divorced him. Of the founders, only McLamb remained in Idaho. During the course of the 2000s, a number of residents of the various properties moved out, while others moved in for reasons other than to join a “covenant community,” and the area lost some of its original fringe character. Many of the lots are currently up for sale.

Front Sight

(1998-present, Nye County, Nevada)

It was perhaps inevitable that someone would conceive of a planned community organized around firearms. The person to do so was former chiropractor, gun range owner and vigorous self-promoter Ignatius Piazza, who owned a large gun training site in the desert in Nye County, Nevada. With fanfare, Piazza announced in the late 1990s that he would create on his Front Sight property a 550-acre gated community with a five-story SWAT tower and no fewer than 22 shooting ranges. With streets such as “Second Amendment Drive,” Front Sight would boast hundreds of homes and condominiums, as well as an airstrip and

a private school—whose teachers, naturally, would be armed. According to Piazza, he hoped to attract gun owners upset at states with restrictive gun laws; he told one reporter in 2001 that he had already sold nearly 50 “platinum” memberships for up to \$350,000 each. However, though originally scheduled to open in 2001, that year came and went with no progress at all. By 2005, frustrated investors had launched a class action lawsuit against Front Sight and a lengthy, bitter legal fight ensued, with Front Sight briefly going into receivership. Years passed, but the planned community still did not materialize. As of late 2012, a Nye County Planning Department Report reported that the project had still not yet started.

Greater Arizona Preparedness Project (2008-2009, Northern Arizona)

The Greater Arizona Preparedness Project (GAPP) was started in 2008 by survivalist and border vigilante Timothy Guiney and his wife, Viola. The couple claimed to have “approximately 14 acres in 2 parcels” of land in northern Arizona and sought others to help construct a “survivable, sustainable, & profitable farming and ranching community” of 100-150 families, which would generate their own electricity and grow their own food. According to Guiney, the property already had an 8,800 square foot “underground NBC [nuclear/biological/chemical] hardened nuclear bunker in complete working order.” Although some people expressed initial interest, by 2010, Guiney confessed that GAPP had become dormant “because of infighting that destroyed the original group” and which allegedly also caused the loss of the facility.

Paulville (2008, West Texas)

In 2008, Minnesota libertarian Jason Ebacher purchased some desert land in remote West Texas in order to create “Paulville,” a “gated community” that would contain “100% Ron Paul supporters and/or people that live by the ideals of freedom and liberty.” Not only did Ron Paul himself not relocate to West Texas, neither did any of his followers, rendering Paulville essentially dead on arrival.

The Confederate Colony (2002-2007, Lawrenceburg, Tennessee)

It was perhaps inevitable that neo-Confederates would attempt to get onto the planned community bandwagon. The Confederate Colony was the brainchild of J. Pat Baughman, a member of the neo-Confederate League of the South, and Jerry Creech, then a South Carolina leader of the white supremacist Council of Conservative Citizens. Baughman and Creech, living in South Carolina, originally looked at the Abbeville area for their “colony,” which they claimed would be a “planned, gated community” of 27 families (a goal later lowered) to “protect and further our cherished Southern Christian Culture.” However, allegedly because he could get a better deal on land, Baughman soon changed the Colony’s planned location to the Pea Ridge area near Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, “in the geographical center of the Confederacy.” The Colony tried to recruit especially from the League of the South and the Sons of Confederate Veterans. From the beginning, the Colony was dogged by charges of racism and extremism. Defending itself, the Colony’s Web site proclaimed that it

was not racist, though it claimed that both the “KKK & NAACP are banned.” It also opposed immigration and multiculturalism.

In 2005, Baughman embarked upon a mutual promotion effort with the Southern Legal Resource Center (SLRC), the neo-Confederate law firm headed by Kirk Lyons, who has had a lengthy history of involvement with white supremacist groups and individuals. Baughman and the SLRC announced an auction of one of the properties on the Confederate Colony, the proceeds of which would allegedly go to the SLRC (the winning bid was \$4,600). However, despite stunts like the auction, only a handful of families ever joined Baughman in his Colony. In 2010, Baughman acknowledged that the Confederate Colony “didn’t work out the way I had planned.” Baughman later moved to Texas to work on other (more mainstream) housing development projects.

Church of New Saxon/European American Heritage Foundation
(2002-2007, Bunnell, Florida)

Beginning in 2002, white supremacist Todd Findley of Bunnell, Florida, began promoting various real estate schemes to build all-white communities in Florida. These ventures included the so-called Church of New Saxon, which Findley claimed would be a “private, gated community” that would give “people of European American decent [sic] a chance to grow a family, retire, or start a new life without the day to day problems that living in diverse areas of America have to offer now.” Bunnell associated his New Saxon venture with the PLE movement; he also created a white supremacist social networking Web site called

NewSaxon. Another venture was the European American Heritage Foundation, which Findley claimed would “offer Free Homes and land for proud European-Americans.” However, Findley later admitted that “to get us up and running we accepted non white money,” although “in the very near future our org will be completely dedicated to helping only whites.” He claimed in June 2004 that 15 families had signed up so far. Somehow, the homes were not exactly free—Findley demanded a \$2,500 down payment and accepted such payments from at least 11 people. Moreover, he never built any homes, which resulted in his arrest in 2007 on 11 counts of grand theft. He eventually pleaded guilty to or was convicted on three such counts. He sold the NewSaxon Web site to the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement to help pay his legal bills.

Rivendell
(1999-ca2004, Floyd County, Virginia)

Anticipating a societal collapse because of Y2K, a group of conservative Christians, most espousing radical dominionist and patriarchal movement doctrines, created a refuge for some 20-30 families on 437 acres of land in remote western Virginia. Prominent founders included Ken Griffith, Howard King, and Philip Lancaster. Though sometimes billing themselves to the media as mainstream Christians, they were typically far from that. Ken Griffith, for example, posted an essay on-line that urged “Christians” to arm themselves to fight future persecution by the government. Rivendell’s community included a number of extremists, including frequently arrested anti-abortion extremists and Operation Rescue leaders Bruce Evan Murch and Joseph

Foreman, who argued that killing doctors and workers at clinics that performed abortion was justifiable homicide. Though Rivendell successfully survived Y2K, it did not survive its own residents. Internal bickering, infighting and even accusations of heresy between different Rivendell leaders caused some to move away, including founder Ken Griffith, who shortly thereafter would be convicted, along with two others, of conspiracy, wire fraud, and mail fraud in connection with a timber-cutting scheme. As an experiment, Rivendell had fallen apart by 2004, though a church associated with its residents still remains.

Prayer Lake

(1998-2001, Madison County, Arkansas)

To allow conservative Christians to survive Y2K, Bob Rutz, a follower of Christian Reconstructionist and survivalist Gary North, moved east and started a 700-acre development in the Arkansas Ozarks that he christened "Prayer Lake" (or sometimes "Living Springs") which he marketed through survivalist publications. For \$25,000, would-be residents would get a 3-acre lot as well as limited farming rights. Rutz said this could help them survive the coming calamity, as well as other events; for example, Rutz believed that President Bill Clinton would use the panic over Y2K as an excuse to declare martial law and take control of the country. By 1999, Rutz had allegedly sold five lots, but had many left to sell. He also hoped to build an airstrip, a hospital, a buggy factory and various other establishments.

After Y2K came and went with no collapse or martial law, Rutz reimagined Prayer Lake as a

planned community for conservative Christians without the survivalist overtones. As of 2013, he was still hoping someone would help him build his airstrip.

Heritage Farms 2000

(1998-2000, Sully County, South Dakota; Northern Arizona)

One of the Y2K crop of survivalist developments, Heritage Farms 2000 was created by Russ Vorhees on land he owned in Sully County, South Dakota. In 2008, Vorhees, a self-described "widely read source of information relative to prophesy, economics and 'cataclysmic convergences,'" began offering those who wanted to survive the coming collapse of civilization five-year leases on half-acre plots for only \$10,000. However, Sully Counting zoning officials were not supportive of the project, nor were local residents, and the county planning commission rejected Vorhees' application. This did not stop Vorhees, who reimagined the project as Heritage West 2000 on a 250-acre plot of land, notionally divided into 500 ½ acre homesites, 190 miles northeast of Phoenix. "The new Golden Age can begin right here," Vorhees promised. However, by September 1999, Heritage West was only just starting to accept deposits, which did not leave much time to move in. Of course, the Millennium Bug did not, in fact, cause the collapse of civilization, which left Vorhees a little bit in the lurch. Though he gamely tried to rebrand his efforts as a regular development effort, it came to nothing.

Terrene Ark I

(1980-1984, La Verkin, Utah)

One of the more unusual early attempts at a survivalist planned community was Terrene Ark I, set near the small town of La Verkin, Utah, which has long had an association with right-wing extremism. The brainchild of Ron Boutwell and Lane Blackmore, the Ark was a planned 240-unit condominium project—set underground. Purchasers would receive a tiny furnished one- or two-bedroom underground apartment with blast-proof doors and one or more years' worth of food. "Only group survival allows for pooling of resources and a continuing cohesive society unit," read one prospectus for the development. "You know who your friends are! The 'head for the hills' individualist or small groups are weak prey of the desperate...Only group survival can provide the necessities of civilization such as security, organized militia," etc. Although its organizers reported a great deal of interest, by 1982 they were complaining of having a "hard time" with high interest rates and said they had to put off construction. The project sputtered to a halt by 1984. "We never got it off the ground, or in the ground, so to speak," Blackmore said in 1986.

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