



EARTH MATTERS

Research and Education in Ecology and Sustainable Living

fall through summer 2005-06 , number 27 ♻️ printed on recycled paper

*"We do not stop playing because we grow old, we grow old because we stop playing."
- George Bernard Shaw*

I wish everyone would follow Marshall Rosenberg's advice (author of Non-Violent Communication) and make a list of all of the things that he or she feels they don't WANT to do, but HAVE to do. He then suggests that we change this word "have" to "choose" and look at the list again, re-evaluating our choices. We read, "I choose to do xxx because..." and if we can't find a good reason, we simply find a way to stop doing it.

I have made a commitment to doing this in my life; please let me know if it works for you, too! Let's all grow old together, playing the whole way through, and recognizing that sometimes we do things we don't necessarily enjoy because we CHOOSE to do them for very good reasons - for love of others, for the good of the earth, for beauty and truth...

In that light, we hope you will enjoy reading this annual report of our work and play with the Sequatchie Valley Institute at Moonshadow. Please be in touch - we'd love to hear from you!

*- Ashley Ironwood
Earth Matters, editor*

SVI UPDATES -

SIERRA CLUB STUDENT NETWORK.

October 14-16, 2005. Moonshadow was the host site for this incredibly productive and inspired group of young environmentalists. Twenty-four students met, planned, hiked and played together throughout a sunny weekend.



NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE CLASS. October 27, 2005. Brantley Crowder brought 37 students from his class in Chattanooga to learn about sustainable housing, organic gardening, and use of renewable resources. A great time was had by all, with lunch among the big rocks. The students were interested in everything, and we hope a few will return as interns.



Sequatchie Valley Institute and
MEDIA RIGHTS at Moonshadow
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If this box is checked, your membership or subscription to Earth Matters needs to be renewed. THIS REALLY WILL BE YOUR LAST ISSUE. As much as we'd like to, we cannot afford to send out freebies anymore... Please stay in touch and become a member!

The newsletter of the Sequatchie Valley Institute & MEDIA RIGHTS at Moonshadow

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The mission of the SVI is to offer society an opportunity to experience and learn about living in harmony with nature by providing: a dynamic model residence and learning center; education, research, land conservation and restoration; and a vision for attaining a sustainable future. Earth Matters is a project of MEDIA RIGHTS whose goal is to offer a place for people to create their own media. Therefore, the articles here don't necessarily reflect the views of SVI or its Board.

WHITWELL BROWNIE TROOP VISIT. November 12, 2005. About 9 Brownie Scouts came for a hike and lunch. They received their SVI badges for the trip.

SVI BOARD MEETING. November 19-20, 2005. This two-day visioning meeting took place at SVI Moonshadow. Many thanks to our board members who were able to join us for this very important time together.

LUNCH AND A LOG SHIITAKE WORKSHOP. November 20, 2005. Fifteen participants and lots of kids attended this favorite workshop.

SVI BOARD MEETING. December 5, 2005.

THRASHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ECOLOGY CLUB PRESENTATION. January 10. Johnny showed slides of SVI and talked about our sustainable living programs to a large and enthusiastic group of young environmentalists.

SCIENCE EDUCATORS' MEETING AT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION. January 11. Carol attended this meeting with the other educators in Chattanooga, including the TN Aquarium, the Nature Center, the Zoo, the Discovery Museum, Audubon Acres, and more. We are analyzing a questionnaire that we sent out to the schools to determine factors that prevent or encourage class participation in our many excellent programs.

SVI BOARD MEETING. January 14. Our wonderful board braved the cold to sit by the fire at Moonshadow sipping hot pine needle tea and coffee, while working together to make SVI a stronger, more productive non-profit.

SVI BOARD MEETING. February 18. Our new board member, Antoinette Simmons, hosted this excellent board meeting at her charming home in Chattanooga during a snow!

OPEN HOUSE. February 25. We had an excellent turn-out for our first event of the year and made many new SVI friends. Some of Carol's students from her Environmental Studies class at UTC also attended. Please see their comments in the newsletter. Everyone had an opportunity to see our innovative natural buildings, solar electric system, permaculture gardens and orchards, as well as hike on our nature trails. A vegan potluck dinner followed.

JOHNSON STATE COLLEGE, VERMONT, SPRING BREAK WORK PROGRAM. April 1-4. This amazing group of enthusiastic (and strong!) college students pitched in and helped with gardens, mulching, building, and anything else we asked for! When asked if they missed being on a Florida beach boozing it up, they said, "We don't care about things like that!" See article in this issue.

SPRING WILDFLOWER HIKE FOR TN AQUARIUM MEMBERS. April 2. What a great turn-out for this hike! We had a beautiful hike, with almost all the flowers in full bloom. The bloodroot was almost gone, and the bush buckeye was just budding, but all else was lovely. As we strolled back to Moonshadow, Bradley called out, "The creek has come down and the cars can't pass!" What a shock! There had been no rain that day that we knew of, and it is very rare for the creek to rise without a heavy rain. It must have rained up the Gulf. So, several of our visitors were trapped at Moonshadow! They joined the Vermont students for lunch, and all was well. By late afternoon, the creek was low enough for the most adventurous ones to cross. A good time was had by all, along with a good story. Thanks to John Johnson for guiding the hike.

Are you able to give donations to non-profits and get matching funds from your workplace? If so, your \$50 donation could be worth \$100 to us!

Thank you!

Thanks to Carol Kimmons for donation of tuition for CPR classes for 3 staff members.

Thanks to University of Vermont Spring Break workers for just being an inspiring group of young people, as well as for all their help.

Thanks to Jenna Seymour for her fabulous donation of a gas clothes dryer which will help us continue our work of environmental education (in well-dried clothes).

Thanks to Pinnacle Granite and Stone for their continuing contributions of scrap tiles and granite.

Thanks to Prentice Hicks for donating his gorgeous hand-blown glass goblets for sale at our wine-tasting.



Thanks to Bumble-Bar for their delicious donation of bars to help inspire the work of the SE Student Network for Renewable Energy during their annual conference held at Moonshadow. Yum!

Thanks to the Association of Visual Artists for their generous grant of \$750 to Carol Kimmons to attend classes at Appalachian Center for Crafts.

Thanks to the American Solar Energy Society for a grant of \$100 to help with the expenses of the National Solar Tour.

announcing the
**IRONWOOD
 GLASSWORKS
 WEBSITE**

web pages with information and a catalog can now be found through
www.svionline.org

BECOME A MEMBER OF SVI!

Members receive one year's worth of issues of our newsletter, "Earth Matters." For donations of \$25 or more, you will also receive discounts on workshops (\$5 or 10%, whichever is higher) and invitations to special events. Contributions of any amount will be used wisely and are tax-deductible; SVI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

SUGGESTED DONATIONS (DON'T LET IT LIMIT YOU!)

- Subscriber \$10 (newsletter only)
- Member \$25
- Family \$35
- Organization/ Business \$50+
- Sustainer \$100+
- Benefactor \$1000+
- Other _____

PLEASE CHECK AREAS OF INTEREST

- Land Trust
- Education & Research
- Social & Environmental Activism
- Organic Gardening & Permaculture
- Natural Building
- Arts & Crafts
- Solar
- Media
- Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

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E-Mail _____

PLEASE NOTE:

To stay on our mailing list for one year, please send us \$10 or more. At this time we are unable to pay for the printing and postage without your help.



We Need Your Help

Let us know if you would like to serve on an SVI committee. Our committees are: Education, Land, Ground Stewardship, Spirit, Fundraising, Marketing, and Outreach.

SVI could use your help with fundraising by using an SVI script to make calls requesting donations.

We need folks to do presentations (using our computer or slide programs) to schools, churches, social groups, etc. to request donations and to encourage participation in SVI activities.

Would you like to be a volunteer? SVI needs volunteers for office work, building maintenance and painting, publicity, house cleaning before and after events, cooking for events, help during events (greeting, shuttling, collecting fees, serving drinks, etc.) building, gardening, spending time with out children and/or elders, and more!

You can also support our staff by purchasing pottery, glass crafts, and books. Check out the Ironwood Glassworks pages on our website, use the link to email Carol about her pottery or call ahead to visit the Como Se Llama Gallery (we'll be sure to have the pine needle tea hot).

CHARITABLE GIVING

“Lay hold of something that will help you and then use it to help someone else”
—Booker T. Washington

Charitable giving is a wonderful way to support organizations that are important to you. It is universally beneficial. Both the giver and the heir benefit through substantial tax advantages while supporting their favorite causes. SVI can work with donors and their professional advisors to help them arrange gifts that will receive the maximum tax and legal benefits. Here are a few simple ways you can make a gift to SVI that will help provide substantial support for our programs.

1. *Your Will.* A will directs how your property will be used and distributed after your lifetime. You may provide for SVI by making a new will, modifying your present will, or by including SVI in your trusts. A gift to SVI in your will is tax deductible for estate tax purposes. If you wish, you may direct the gift to a specific program or establish an endowment or scholarship through your will and request that it be named for you or someone you wish to honor.
2. *Life Insurance.* You may designate SVI as the beneficiary of your life insurance policy.
3. *Retirement Plan Assets.* You may designate SVI the beneficiary of your retirement plans. Distributions are taxed at high rates, so contributors may consider using your retirement plan assets to make a bequest to SVI and reduce your estate and income taxes.
4. *Appreciated Stocks.* You may receive an income tax charitable deduction based on the market value of the stock and you avoid capital gains on the appreciated value of the stock.

These are only a few of the ways you can make a gift to SVI while enjoying tax incentives. For information on planned giving, talk to your financial planner or professional advisor. SVI can provide you with a book on planned giving - ask Carol for more information.

SPRING WILDFLOWER HIKE. April 8. On our second hike, the buckeye were in full bloom. Thanks again to John Johnson and to Christine Bock, TN Aquarium Head Horticulturalist, for guiding this hike.



SVI BOARD MEETING. April 11.

SCIENCE EDUCATORS' MEETING AT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION. April 13. We are thrilled to be a part of this group of Chattanooga area educators. Please let Carol know if you, too, are interested in being involved as a representative of SVI.

UPLANDS RETIREMENT VILLAGE TRAVEL CLUB LUNCHEON AND TOUR. April 19. This group of 33 retirees had an excellent visit with us, including tours of the gardens and solar homes and a delicious lunch. They combined their visit here with a visit to the Children's Holocaust Museum in Whitwell, 7 miles from here. If you haven't seen the movie about the project, "Paper Clips," be sure to do so. Thanks to Chris Gulick for organizing the tour.

HEALING SELF, HEALING EARTH WORKSHOP. April 21-23. Ten participants attended this yearly workshop to explore our inner and outer environments through shamanic journeying, nature awareness, a sweat lodge, sharing circles and deep ecology processes. Thanks to Bill and Cathy, the ultimate guides for spiritual enlightenment. See article in this issue.

UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH, RELIGION AND ECOLOGY CLASS. April 27. Dr. Jerry Smith brought his class of 20 students for the tour of our facilities and the nature hike up the hill as part of his program. We always enjoy talking with his class about our lifestyles and community ideas. This was Roamin Ye Sheng's first time to lead a tour - he did an excellent job.

EARTH DAY FOR HAMILTON COUNTY SCHOOLS. May 4. Carol and Johnny took the solar models, shiitake logs, and dogwood name tags to Booker T. Washington State Park for the annual 4th grade Earth Day event. They entertained and educated over 200 active and enthusiastic kids.

DUNLAP MIDDLE SCHOOL HONOR CLASS. May 11. Rita Condra brought this great group of 40 kids for a special end-of-school treat. We were very impressed by their enthusiasm and interest. Several of the students are in 4-H and have learned to identify the forest trees. They knew every tree!

CHATTANOOGA CENTER FOR CREATIVE ARTS SCHOOL. May 12-13. The school's earth club joined us for an overnight camping trip. They toured Moonshadow, watched a video about Permaculture, had a terrific discussion and stayed up late talking by flashlight.

LUNCH AND A LOG. May 13. We had an intimate group of participants for this impromptu workshop. But even with the smaller group, we inoculated hundreds of spores of shiitake mushrooms, ate well and enjoyed each other's company tremendously.

WORK DAY. May 14. Thanks to Paul, Sarah, and Kelsey for a good day's work and spring fun.

COLLEGEDALE ACADEMY. May 17 and 18. Marty Miller again brought his senior class in ecology for their "Final Exam". We always enjoy this group. Marty also shared some of his wonderful photos with us. You'll be seeing them on our website.

TRACES OF EDEN PRESENTATION. May 21. SVI hosted a presentation and signing by Nishantha Gunawardena on his beautiful book of photographs and text, *Traces of Eden, The Last of the American Wilderness*. The Chattanooga Nature Center hosted the program. We then brought Nish out to see our home at Moonshadow. Of course, he loved what we are doing, and we discussed a possible future collaborative work. See tracesofeden.com for more information. AND we still have books for sale - please let us know if you'd like to buy one.

BONNAROO! June 12-18. See article.

SCIENCE EDUCATOR'S MEETING AT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION. July 13. Johnny attended a discussion on the best techniques to encourage teachers to bring more school field trips to the Chattanooga area science and environmental programs. Thanks to Pamela Blass Bracher for acting as our moderator and to Community Foundation for hosting.

ANTI-POWER WORKSHOP AND SOMA VIDEO AT MOONSHADOW. June 21. Soma is an anarchist group therapy from Brazil based on the work of Wilhelm Reich. Nick Cooper, who shot and directed this documentary, screened it for us, lead a discussion and then showed us a few capuera moves outside. For more info, see www.somadocumentary.com

NATURAL BUILDING WORKSHOP. June 30-July 10. See photo spread in this issue.

FOOD FOR LIFE. July 13-16. See article.

CUMBERLAND WILD CONFERENCE. BEERSHEBA SPRINGS, TN. July 15. Carol and Johnny shared information on the work of SVI at this program focusing on protecting the Cumberland Plateau's biological diversity. Thad Adkins, a graduate of the MS program in Environmental Science at UTC, was the major organizer. See the article in this issue.

SEED SAVING WORKSHOP AT CRABTREE FARMS. August 12. In a couple of hour's time,

Patrick taught over a dozen curious folks everything he could about seed-saving.

OPEN HOUSE. August 13. Tour and meal.

SOUTHERN STUDENT NETWORK ENERGY SUMMIT. August 17-20. See article.

GROWING FRUIT TREES WORKSHOP AT CRABTREE FARMS. September 9. Patrick spoke to a couple of dozen folks for over two hours about the ins and outs of growing fruit trees while Ashley and Legume sold their jewelry during Crabtree's fall plant and crafts sale. Then we all headed home to celebrate Patrick's 40th birthday in style!

"KILOWATT OURS" SHOWING IN CHATTANOOGA. September 26. With the Chattanooga Theatre Centre, SVI co-sponsored the screening of this informative documentary. After the film, a public forum was held with a cross-section of environmental experts from the Chattanooga area. Over 100 people attended! Many thanks to Jeannie Cerulean for organizing the event along with Jon Cable and Alicia Whitcher. Thanks, also to Mr. T's Pizza, Lupi's Pizza, Signal Mtn. Rd. Subway and River Street Deli for donating refreshments. Special thanks to the Chattanooga Theatre Centre for allowing us to use their space for the program!

ANCIENT RELATIONS, ABUNDANT FUTURES. October 6-8. We were honored to have Chuck Marsh and Frank Cook at Moonshadow to join Patrick in leading this workshop - all three of them together at the same time!! We enjoyed seven different teas while going on hikes, meditating and holding deep discussions. We focused our talks on our relationship with and co-dependence on the plant world, how to relate to it and better understand it...

10TH ANNUAL SVI SOLAR HOMES TOUR. October 7. Over 100 people had the opportunity to visit 10 homes in Southeast Tennessee, including the Chattanooga area, Sequatchie Valley, and the southern Cumberland Plateau. These homes feature solar



Sage's Description of his painting above:

The swings and houses are for the animals. Only monkeys. There's a storm and lightning. The big trees are oak trees. The monkey house has a thatched roof. All of the green stuff is trees. The brown is the tree trunk. There are chameleons on the trees.

Anakeesta's description of her painting to the right:

Oh yeah.

if you would like to see them in color, download the color newsletter from our website: www.svionline.org

THE FOREST
Don't Cut Down Trees

I don't want to die into a tree,
because the chainsaw might
cut down me.

If I were going to be a tree,
let me find a safe place to be.

With so many trees around me,
nobody could see me.

With animals to be
living forever on me.

- Sage Indigo Ironwood, 4 1/2

Sage



Anakeesta Ostara Ironwood, 18 months



The generation that I am a part of has a rather large responsibility. When I think of the rate our nation is moving at consuming, consuming, and consuming more, it's hard not to think of where we could be in 20, even 10 years. As a young person, I'm watching our mountains get blown up, CO2 collecting in the atmosphere, and the global temperature dangerously rising. I also see a lot of apathy in my peers concerning environmental issues, which is unsettling. But coming to the Sequatchie Valley Institute in August made me a lot more optimistic about our generation, and what we plan to do for the future.

It was probably the best way I could have imagined my summer ending. From August 18th-20th, the Sequatchie Valley Institute hosted the annual Southern Energy Network Student Summit, where over 25 passionate, determined, earth-loving students came together to make realistic goals for "greening" our campuses. My group had come from James Madison University in Virginia, and other states represented were Tennessee, Florida, and Georgia.

We spent the better portion of three days meeting each other, doing workshops, and making goals for the upcoming year. In the workshops, we went over in detail how to make green energy and conservation on campuses possible, such as creating campaigns, specifying goals, using direct-action, utilizing media, working with campus administration, and spreading awareness to fellow students.

In the midst of learning steps for our campaign strategies, the group had a lot of amazing discussions, which I found most rewarding. We shared past victories of working with administration and getting students to actually care about issues. We talked about why we were there, what we cared about, and expressed to each other our anxiousness to get back to school and begin our campaigns.

By the end of the weekend, each university had a list of campaign goals and motivated attitudes to go back to their campuses with. I think I can speak for the group when I say that we all had a new surge of energy running through us that we needed to put into action immediately.

Overall it was an incredibly productive weekend that filled my mind with information and helped formulate an organized plan for environmental change. I walked away inspired by what I had learned and the people I had met. My opinions about our generation had been turned around – there actually were people who were trying to make a difference. Furthermore, I was grateful that groups like the Southern Energy Network existed, people like Liz, Willie, and Jason, who put student potential into action. Thanks so much to them for getting the movement moving.

Sequatchie Valley Institute could not have been a more perfect place for us to have been that weekend. The beauty and atmosphere that surrounded us was a constant reminder as to why we cared about green energy and conservation – nature and life. The people at SVI took care of us like we were part of the community, and it made everything we were learning about seem more important. A huge thank you to everyone at Sequatchie for supporting us in our passions and aspirations, and for everything you did that weekend.

- Tina Christopoulos - James Madison University



and renewable technology as well as "green" building techniques. SVI sponsors this yearly tour, which is free and open to all. Including, of course, the homes where SVI is! In addition, three homes in Chattanooga feature grid-tied electricity—solar electricity is sold back to the Electric Power Board by the homeowners. For more information, visit our website.

WELCOME TO LANNEA JASMINE KIMMONS! September 29th brought the Kimmonses, the Cases and the Ironwoods together to support Michelle and Joel and best we could as Michelle labored to bring their daughter, Lannea, into the world. Moonshadow is ready to hold two more tiny footprints in it's soil.



ARTS UPDATE

October 2005 - Carol, Patrick and Ashley sold their wares at the Ketner's Mill Crafts Fair here in the Sequatchie Valley. It's a great way to reach out to folks who live nearby.

Patrick Ironwood attended a lampworking glass class in Chattanooga from November 10-13. He has learned to make marbles! Then Ashley participated in the same class in the spring.

Carol and Johnny attended the TACA/CAST (Tennessee Arts and Crafts Assoc.) Christmas Tour of Crafts in Monteagle on December 3-4. It is an open house for studios in the Sewanee area, but since we are so far away, we set up

our crafts at the Monteagle Inn, a lovely bed-and-breakfast. Carol also had 3 pieces in the show at St. Andrews School. It's a good way to maintain our connection with the art community on the plateau.

SVI crafts people continued to attend the Chattanooga Market on Sundays to the bitter cold end, in December, 2005.

Carol and Johnny installed a shower stall at Sweetgum which includes a complete tree of hand-made tiles by Carol and mosaics using donated tiles from Pinnacle Granite and Stone and Tileworks, both in Chattanooga. Thanks for the donations!

Carol Kimmons received an Individual Artist's Grant from Allied Arts in Chattanooga for her project, "Seeking the Edge: Ritual and Reality in Ceramics". The grant provided funds for Carol to attend two residential ceramics workshops at Appalachian Center for Crafts at Smithville, TN, in July.

Ashley has become a regular at the Chattanooga Market this fall and plans to stick it out through the cold of the winter. She's loving having return customers and has been more and more successful with sales each week.

Sean Nitchmann has helped Ashley create a website for Ironwood Glassworks. It can be found on SVI's website, www.svionline.org. Check it out and tell your friends! Each piece on the website is a one-of-a-kind and will be replaced with a new item once sold.

As the newsletter year is coming to a close, Carol, Patrick and Ashley, once again, sold their work at Ketner's Mill Crafts Fair during the weekend of October 21st and 22nd. They also participated in Normal Park Museum Magnet School's "Normal-palooza," a crafts fair and educational festival for the school the following weekend. All three of them demonstrated their art (Carol: pottery, Ashley and Patrick: lampworked glass) for all to learn a bit about how it's done.

The following article was written by Jen Richards for the Dade County Centinel in Georgia. We're so grateful to our friends with media connections - we got a whole lot of calls and a couple of natural building workshop attendees thanks to this piece!

DADE COUNTY RESIDENT INCORPORATES GREEN BUILDING IDEAS LOWERING THEIR UTILITY COSTS.

Christine Bock is the lead horticulturalist at the Tennessee Aquarium, a Lookout Mountain Land Trust board member, and the vice president and a board member of the Sequatchie Valley Institute.

When Bock started building her home in Dade County 10 years ago, she wanted to use green ideas. "A green building doesn't have a big impact on natural resources," Bock said. She said she was interested in not spending her paycheck on utilities and minimizing her effect on the environment.

Bock estimates her electric bill at \$25 a month for her 1400 square foot home. "If a building is designed efficiently it won't lose energy," Bock said.

Bock got a lot of her building ideas from Sequatchie Valley Institute a learning center on 350 acres of mostly forest with about 5 acres cleared for orchards, vineyards, gardens, and structures.

"We are a family based community with a non profit organization focusing on teaching folks about living sustainably." said Ashley Ironwood, co director of Sequatchie Valley Institute.

Bock said she first visited the institute when she heard about their solar house and their building ideas. "I have always been interested in living self-reliantly, lowering my monthly overhead for more freedom. I checked it out and got inspired." Bock said.

Bock describes her home as a passive solar house. Passive solar is simply collecting the heat of the sun. "One passive solar design is building windows facing south and not on the north to help heat the house," Ironwood said. Instead of just windows, Bock has a greenhouse built on the southeast side of her house. Opening the doors from the greenhouse heats the house with warm oxygenated air Bock said.



Bock also uses windows on the top of her house to capture light coming in so she doesn't have to turn on lights, and uses an efficient wood burning fireplace. According to Bock, most fireplaces take air out of the room resulting in a cold room with a burning fire. At the institute, she learned about an efficient design from the 1700's called the Rumford fireplace. "The Rumford takes heat out of the flu and puts heat into the room." Bock said.

According to Bock, an on demand water heater also saves energy. The water pipe passes over a flame that doesn't begin heating until you turn on the faucet Bock said.

Bock is not alone. Oswaldo Lopez-Armas, a local builder, is always looking into ways of building environmentally. "I like to leave as many trees in place as possible." Lopez-Armas said. "I don't like the way they clear cut the lot."

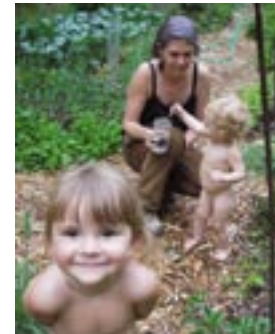
According to Lopez-Armas, if you want to be competitive it's hard to build green because most efficient materials are expensive. "I want to do it but people look at the bottom line." Lopez-Armas said.

"Sometimes it's worth it to spend extra money on efficient building materials to save money on utilities

WHERE'S YOUR ECOVILLAGE?

In the minds of folks self-educated enough to grasp the need for sustainable living and cooperative social relations – at odds with the corporate approach of competition for maximum consumption – people want a real community and the individual skills to survive in a post-petroleum culture.

The meltdown that a growing number of people are fretting over, as they lose confidence in government and the market system, does not become more understandable or manageable from incessant revelations on the malfeasance of officials. Yet when we pay close enough attention to world events while putting U.S. political developments in perspective, we can start to reposition ourselves – at least mentally – to change our lives and prepare for the future.



The realization many people are having today, no matter what their background or political affiliation might have been, is that the system (i.e., society) is so flawed that things cannot be fixed. Efforts to fix corruption in public office that are thwarted; corporate crimes; irreversible damage to the environment, and all manner of ills associated with population growth, are still unlikely to be addressed seriously by our leaders on any level. The big picture is avoided. This is one reason more and more citizens lack confidence in most any voice of concern. Reform of the whole system is never a mainstream media issue.

The above atrocities and other factors are why many an intelligent person actively seeks a way out. That way seems to typically mean an escape from the city and finding a real community that has ecological consciousness. The U.S. has a small but growing ecovillage movement. A larger movement is the ecocity or green cities movement, more tied to the existing infrastructure while aspiring to change it radically. This movement shares many of the same values as the ecovillage movement, but wants to greatly alter today's cities by stopping urban sprawl and redevelop the urban landscape to improve density and open up spaces for nature and food production. The movement hopes to see transportation transformed from car-based to walking, bicycling and rail. Dovetailing with the ecovillage and ecocities movements is a recent effort, the relocalization movement. It is developing projects, tools, networks and relationships to enhance regional self-reliance, sustainability, and equity.

Lastly, there's a form of urban ecovillage that is a state of mind if nothing else. I'm thinking of the one in Oakland, California known unofficially as "The Ecovillage" or "Ecovillage510" (after the area code). Its website bills the group as "A community of relationships of people who like to do things together." It's a "social ecovillage" but not a residential or spiritual ecovillage. It has no geographic boundaries; most of the people associated with it live around Oakland's Lake Merritt. "The Ecovillage" has no organization, no officers, no membership, no dues, no rules, but folks meet at least monthly for a potluck to create a "neighborhood" calendar of free events that are "sponsored" or led by the individual who shows up to propose the event. Its calendar, published monthly, maintains the focus on relationships as much as the content of listed events and classes.

Find your sources of information and inspiration for sustainable living, and make common cause with friends and family. Together, we are more likely to get through periods of wrenching change – and come out stronger and more secure.

– Jan Lundberg – www.culturechange.org





The first few days of Bonnaroo 2006 for the Sequatchie Valley Institute crew were all about tolerance, patience and a bit more tolerance. We danced from one miscommunication to another, waiting for everything to fall into place. Yes, we have to admit, we weren't always patient (we're not used to having to deal with so much bureaucracy), but the day finally came when the gates opened and the crowds flowed in like a tidal wave. And we were ready.

We soon felt right at home after the 100th drop-mouthed person entered the booth, asking "how can I do this?" The days were long - the booth was open from 8am when yoga began until 2am when the interested folks still wandering through were fewer and fewer. The days were full - building the straw-bale structure (although they gave us hay so they could save money - but the hay bales were smaller so we ended up needing lots more), plastering it, telling folks all about natural building and sustainable living at Moonshadow and selling our crafts while the sounds from five stages all swirled around our heads. The music was incredible - it's a wonder we were able to make the time to eat, let alone cook for 20 (thanks especially to Brian and Melissa - yummy).

Ashley, Didi and their friend Todd, formed a band, "Wild Shadow," and performed so many times on the Solar Stage that their voices were half-gone by the end of it all. On the last day Ashley serenaded a couple with "Give Yourself to Love" as they got married on the Solar Stage (their names were Ashley and Patrick!), and later on the same stage she sang "Forever Wild" to Bonnie Raitt!

Every day the Solar Stage brought music, dancing and interviews with eco-minded musicians. "I'm a musician," Bonnie Raitt said, "but I live and breathe this air, and I eat this food, and I don't wanna contribute in my lifestyle to not making things better." She named sustainability "the issue of our time," and said, "the seeds of change are really already creating a groundswell of movement for protecting the environment and switching to a different way of looking at our place in the world and on our planet."

Informative slide shows were also presented on the Solar Stage (Patrick and Ashley: Natural Building; Patrick: Ancient Relations, Abundant Futures; Bradley: Permaculture). Oh, were we tired and inspired by the end of our 8 Bonnaroo days!

We'd also like to give the folks at Bonnaroo a green thumbs-up for taking a step in the green direction this year. The following is a list of Bonnaroo's 2006 Green Initiatives:

- Over 25000 gallons of biodiesel fuel (\$100) to replace diesel for non-music stage generators
- WastAway refuse handling process to recycle over 250 tons of garbage
- Concession food served with biodegradable wraps, plates, cups and cutlery manufactured from a renewable resource
- Festival wide recycling and composting program
- Cool Tags wind credits purchasing (and facilitation of purchases for patrons)
- Solar stage and sound system
- Organic cotton and hemp t-shirts
- Tree free posters
- Post-consumer recycled toilet paper for portaloets
- Post-consumer recycled paper for administrative needs
- Aggressively seeking ways to make Bonnaroo 2007 even greener



in the long run." said Keith Bien a local natural builder. Ironwood said there are alternatives. "Green building can be using the most high tech windows on the market and yes that can be expensive. Natural building is building using materials that are found on the land." Ironwood said.

Natural building is an aspect of green building that Lopez-Armas has thought of as well. He is planning on building his office using compressed blocks of dirt and recycled material such as ground up tires and vinyl covered with stucco to keep them dry. "You can use dirt from your site." Lopez-Armas said.

According to Ironwood, Sequatchie Valley Institute wants to bring these natural building ideas to the people. "We teach about building without spending a lot of money." Ironwood said.

The institute is hosting two natural building workshops this spring. "We have two weekend workshops. The first (May 26-28) focuses on ferro-cement and timber framing. The second (June 30-July 2) will focus on cob which is a mix of clay, sand, straw and water." Ironwood said.

According to Ironwood, unconventional building materials don't have to lead to unconventional looking homes. "Cob and natural building has been used for centuries. They can look totally normal, a naturally built house can look just like your neighbors house." Ironwood said.

According to Bock, natural and green building is not just about saving money. "It appeals to people's resourcefulness." Bock said.

"When I wake up in the morning I see materials whose source is really obvious to me. I know where everything came from I feel connected to my house in a way that I never have before." Ironwood added. Ironwood also spoke of 6 natural building internship slots. Interns will go through 6 weeks of training including the workshops and a week long building demo at the Bonnaroo music festival and 4-5 months as a team member working on a three story timber frame meeting hall.

For more information contact the Sequatchie Valley Institute at (423) 949-5922 or visit www.svionline.org.

ashley brings you a bit of spring ironwood wisdom:

after breakfast one spring morning, while i was hanging out with my kids, sage asked me why it was okay to pull out weeds and not other plants - were weeds bad? i told him no, weeds weren't bad - they were plants that grew really easily. and if there were lots of weeds growing around another very useful plant, we should pull most of the weeds up so they wont overshadow the other plant. i told him all plants need sunshine to live and some plants need help in order to be reached by the sun. if you let the weeds that grow so easily take over, then that plant that needs special care and love may die from lack of sun... so, how does that relate to the rest of our lives? i've found this to be incredibly profound and useful. maybe we should all take a look at what needs more attention in our lives - are we able to give that piece of our lives the time and energy it deserves in order for it to grow strong and healthy? or are we consistently distracted by the weeds, the parts of our lives that come easily - the parts that don't take as much work or concentration or dedication? no, the "weeds" aren't bad - they help fulfil our lives, too - and we need to cultivate them as well, as long as they're not keeping us from giving the special attention needed by the other useful parts of our life-garden...

sage likes to make up songs... oftentimes he will be wandering about singing his thoughts to the wind. one day i overheard him singing "my heart can be found deep in the forest." ahhh, i love that...

snekeests first learned sign language this spring to communicate with us. on mothers' day morning she pointed to her doll, made the sign for "milk" and then brought the baby up to her chest to nurse it...



A GLADE *(written in the early summer 2006)*

In the two months we have been here, I know that I have changed just as much as the landscape. In early May, A Glade was barren, and seemingly lifeless; much the same as I was feeling, coming from a well-groomed lawn, concrete, weed killer, ticky-tacky, Wal-mart kind of town. My family (Myself and Roman, and our kids Dylan, Reza, and Joya) spent one year in that Western Kentucky town. A practice in zen, for sure.

Here at A Glade, we witnessed the gradual succession of redbud blossoms (from which we made mead), maple buds, and the grand finale of the green oak pollen still tickling our throats. On the ground, we first met wild phlox, violets, then wild geraniums. We patiently awaited the blooming of the dwarf-crested iris blankets, and painstakingly kept children and puppy from trampling them. It was well worth the effort. Carpets of irises ranging from white to violet faded all too quickly.

Our tipi has withstood a few substantial rains, sheltering 4 humans, 29 chicks, and a puppy named Grub. What a relief, though, when we finally finished the coop, and sent the chicks out of the tipi! Roman also spent hours digging and hoisting huge chunks of sandstone out of the earth so we could have a bonafied squater. He plopped a pallet over the hole, sealed the edges with clay, and voila! When it rains, several salamanders seek refuge under the lid, so watch out for them!

We spend a lot of time hauling and heating up water, too. We tried making a rocket stove out of cinder blocks, but it needs some tweaking yet. For now, we cook on propane, and simmer stews, rice, or beans in a Haybox. We get drinking water from Moonshadow (about a ten minute walk), and water for dishes and animals from the creek. We are living pretty happily without electricity or running water. We come to Moonshadow to socialize (with some amazing folks) and use the intern computer, so all of our needs are met. We have had neighbors with groups of kids come up and take pictures, apparently our tipi is the talk of Dunlap Elementary! The kids were half soaked from trying to cross the bridgeless creek to get to us.

Our future projects include: building a winter structure, solar food dryer, building a better rocket stove, rocket stove water heater, a bridge, and earning money without getting a "real" job (he he). We are really enjoying our family time in the woods. We welcome visitors (especially when we know ahead of time) and would love to receive input regarding any of our projects or otherwise.

To learn more about the appropriate technologies listed: www.efn.org/~apro/AT/attitlepage.html
We are so privileged to live so simply

- Legume Ye Sheng

Update: the Ye Sheng's are spending the fall and winter in Kentucky, looking forward to the spring again...



- The chillingly brilliant film, The Future of Food, which left me convinced that Monsanto is the most evil corporation in the history of mankind
- The talk by Joel Kimmons which opened my eyes to whole new ways of considering what's good nutrition
- Sandy Hepler's illuminating connecting of dots about what factors have led to Western corporate dominance around the world, and the travesties of justice which have come as a result

But it wasn't all heavy! There were plenty of fun things too:

- Going to sleep feeling hot on most nights, then waking up briefly in the middle of the night feeling deliciously cool
- Spending a week eating many things I'd never tried before, yet never feeling any hunger or stomach upset, and losing weight to boot
- Chocolate! Trying some fabulous South American chocolate (and coming home with two pounds of it)
- Drawing a little design for one of Frances' demonstrations that was quickly adopted as the "logo" for the whole workshop
- Singing under a night sky to a group of strangers who'd become familiar
- Watching a group of toddlers alternately bring joy to and wreak havoc on the scheduled events
- Becoming used to not showering and becoming comfortable in an unlikely setting for me
- Hardly getting any bug bites at all, and no sunburn!
- The enormous amount of natural beauty I was surrounded with every day

But above all the various details of ideas and interactions through the week, there was something which made this experience more special and more fun than anything else, and that was the joy of more deeply connecting with someone I love immensely. This whole thing was conceived in a moment of enthusiastic hope by me and Ann Marie, and it turned out to be a wonderful, I'll say magical, experience in growth, understanding, and devotion for both of us. Through constantly learning more about each other by exposure to these experiences, through transcending challenges to each other to reach states of greater

appreciation and gratitude, and through the simple joy of experiencing everything with and through each other, we achieved a profound level of feeling that I'm grateful for and really, really happy about. It's hard to do it justice prosaically.

What can I say—I love you, Ann Marie.



So, all in all, a richly satisfying and challenging week of exploration and discovery in the company of a group of searching, striving, mixed-up, wise, and quietly beautiful people, all under the noble watch of the grateful and supportive earth.

- Kevin Gamble

The following article was taken from Kevin Gamble's internet "blog" about his trip to Moonshadow when he attended "Food for Life." For those of you who are not in the "cyber-know," a "blog" is like an informal internet journal... Thanks, Kevin, for letting us reprint this in the newsletter!

After spending a week in the Tennessee hills camping and attending workshops at the Sequatchie Valley Institute, what can I say about it in one journal entry that will do it justice? If I tried to write about every single experience, every nuance of event or personality or eye-opening bit of information, it would take far more time than I have, or space than one would want to see filled with type.

Perhaps I'll revisit specific themes or ideas in future writings, but for now I'll just try to share some overall impressions and favorite memories. In general, it was a remarkable experience on multiple levels. Firstly, it was remarkable on a purely experiential level—just the simple process of camping out for that long (the longest I've done since spending 9 days in Moab, Utah in '98), under hot & muggy conditions not ideally suited to me. Honestly, that was a challenge to me, and while I found myself adapting to challenges as they came up, it continued to find ways to test me, and rising to those was at times fun, gratifying, and exhausting. I know I'm not that well suited to constant change, but I'm also not testing my limits of flexibility either, so this felt good.

It was also a remarkable experience in terms of people & personalities. The mix of people I encountered there was all over the map. From bright-eyed students to enthusiasm-filled veterans of peace studies & natural building to quietly hardy young men and women working to keep the cooperative going, there was always someone new to be discovered and something new about them to be understood. My naturally judgmental observance was constantly working, trying to suss out and peg people and being surprised in the process.

And it was an interesting process. I found myself at times hitting my own wall of patience and understanding, trying to detach myself from the experience in analyzing it but all the while going through the same tests and catharses as everyone else there. In the end, I saw a great crazy-quilt of humanity, of people damaged and hopeful, directionless and disciplined, laughing and quieted with sadness, all doing what needed to be done, day in and day out, doing the work that would sustain them and each other. In the end, that was the answer, the only observation that held up to honest self-evaluation.

To bring things back down to a less abstract level, here are a few of my favorite memories from the week:

- The quiet, solid dignity with which the farmers at Sequatchie Cove Farm talked about progressive ideas of renewable energy, harmony with the earth, and self-sufficiency
- The brilliantly logical explanation of permaculture, and how working with the earth's natural tendencies, instead of forcing an artificial state upon it, can result in both greater abundance and greater ease
- The way that a series of hand-holding circles revealed a growing comfort in and reliance on each other as the week progressed



WORMS ARE EASY: A DESIGN FOR A FREE, INFINITE CAPACITY WORM BIN MADE FROM COMMON REUSABLE MATERIALS

i know you may have seen all the fancy and expensive worm bins in catalogs lately, with fifty-page instruction manuals full of do's and don'ts, and the appropriate conditions for worm life, but let me give you the real truth about those wonderful crawly, slimy, living soil - worms are easy. they're like the weeds of the animal world, they'll live almost anywhere and anyhow.



in my own experimentation with abusing and neglecting worms, i've left them for months in closed containers, neglected to feed them for weeks, occasionally forgotten about them entirely, and they simply live.

with this in mind, i decided there needed to be an easier (read as - cheaper!) way to "ranch" worms. and my experiments led me to the most obvious and simplest solution, a resource many people have either thrown away or let stack up in the garage: black planter pots.

they're cheap as free, durable, reusable, and perfectly designed. they are, in fact, functionally identical to the worm-bins you see advertised, though with fewer bells and whistles.

all, and i mean ALL worms need is food and cover (they won't go to the surface). and what do you get out of the relationship?

you get:

- a clean and efficient receptacle for kitchen wastes (save our land from landfills!)
- the most amazing garden additive ever made, better than compost!
- a low maintenance, reliable pet! increase the biodiversity of your home!

but really, step by step, how does it work?

ingredients:

- worms (red wigglers are best, but any will do for a start)
- food waste (no meat!)
- used black plastic planting buckets (any size, any number, as long as they nest together and have drainage holes)

directions:

take 1 bucket, insert worms, and food waste (about a half-gallon or so). place 2nd bucket inside 1st bucket. the 2nd bucket provides cover and shade to your worms. when you get more food waste, put it in the second bucket and put a third on top. et cetera.

the buckets can stack about five high before they become unstable, and start squishing the bottom buckets. at this point you can take the a middle bucket (or an bucket you know worms have already traveled into) and make a new bucket stack. you can also put them in milk crates to add stability, or arrange several small stacks of buckets that brace each other, or both.

after a month or so, take the buckets from the bottom, and spread the newly created soil on your garden or lawn. if there are worms still in it, don't worry, they'll take care of themselves, and if they don't, they turn into great dirt. repeat.

cautions:

the buckets will, obviously, leak some brown crud downwards when it rains. this is valuable, nutrient-rich fertilizer if you wish to save it and spread it. other wise, just put the buckets on any out-of-the-way patch of lawn or dirt, and let the nutrients return to the earth.

worms will eat most things, eventually. it is not recommended, however, to use any meat products in your worm bins, as it may attract flies or pests which could spread pathogens (a little oil or grease is okay).

if you see mealy bugs or roly-pollies or other decomposers - it's okay! they're just expanding your micro-fauna decomposer ecosystem!

if you get flies

- make sure your food waste is covered better. add some torn up news paper or leaves if you need to, or use an old pot lid to cover the top.

i've used this system many times, and i love it. if you have any questions, email me!



- bradley jones - youcouldif@yahoo.com



HEALING SELF, HEALING EARTH: A PERSPECTIVE

Way back in April of this year, 2006, SVI hosted the sixth annual Healing Self, Healing Earth Workshop over Earth Day weekend. The purpose of the workshop – simply to reconnect with the Earth and Self. In our destructive culture, where consumption and competition are mantras, the simplicity of reconnection to a primal Self is a necessary exercise for anyone willing to sanely survive. And one of the best places to experience this workshop is Moonshadow, where nature and Self intermingle daily.

When I first wrote this article, I was still very high from the workshop experience and rambled on and on about visions and dreams, exercises and emotions. However, as most have noticed, this is not the spring issue of the newsletter and it has been months in the city since I laid eyes on that previous article. I have decided instead of editing the article, which reads more like a diary entry than anything else, I will simply share bits of the workshop because one day, you dear reader, might want to experience the healing powers of the workshop.

Partners Bill and Cathy have led the workshop for years now, and both are shamanic healers. Throughout the weekend, however, they stressed the importance of not being leaders, simply guides towards the reconnection all ten participants were searching for in our own lives. The workshop progressed from knowing one's self to knowing one's Self in relation to nature and others. Towards the beginning we paired off and spoke about



what kind of animal we felt like at that moment. Speaking about how we felt was an extremely important part of the workshop, in fact, the healing part, because in our culture, we are so isolated and rarely are able to just sit and share feelings and emotions with one another. Throughout the weekend emotions poured over our lips and through the tears in our eyes as we shared, intimately, emotions, thoughts and fears with virtual strangers, but people we trusted nonetheless.

One highlight of the workshop was our sweat. The previous week, interns at Moonshadow built a sweat lodge of saplings with soft pine and grass for a floor. Piled blankets and sheets completed the domed structure and a small hole for rocks sat snug in the middle of the dome. Two people, of which I was one, were charged with tending the fire. Duties included creating a fire large enough to heat up 26 medium-sized rocks, keeping the fire hot and bringing in the stones before each session. Everyone looked forward to the sweat and experienced a range of emotions as we cried out together through the healing journey and well into the dark night.

The next day, as our closing exercise, Bill and Cathy led us on a shamanic journey. Sprawled on our backs in Mud Dauber, the cob house, Cathy beat a drum as Bill's words lead us through a meadow, onto a cliff and beyond. Many of us had no idea how long we left our bodies, but as we came to, paper and colored pencils encouraged us to re-create the places we had been that all contained similar themes.

It's hard to write about Healing Self, Healing Earth because there are so many wonderful things to share. However, I hope this little glimpse inspires you to experience the healing powers of the workshop yourself.

- Amanda Womac

A number of years back, Patrick and I were taking one of those rare moments to lay basking in a springtime sun on a great slab of rock that in the not too distant past of millions of years had peeled off the bluff. Spring—the green, the flowers, the hint of the summers heat in the sun's rays—allows the profound and common to mingle relaxing our relationships to time leaving understanding plastic to the depths of other ways ... anyway... Patrick commented that if we each simply contributed more than we took, that the difficulties that were so pronounced on our planet would at the least be manageable.

We exist in the milieu of a human ecology. Outside of this most of us are blind (even within it we seem blind). Offering ourselves to the realizations of our actions, to the rippling effects of all we do on all the world requires no great myth or saint it only requires that we care about something other than ourselves. It is not about you.

The following it is a manifesto of sorts on what it will take to change the world from a personal standpoint. No I am not a believer or embracer of the new age or old religion notion that we just need to deal with our own problems. This just leads to deification of the self- the answers are not with you- they spread away from you into a world that in order to survive we must have passionate and continuous intercourse. Daily release from the chains of cultural domination and Daily reinvention.

Egalitarian, anarchist, and community-oriented oath of easy living: As a member of this community it is my responsibility to be aware of all necessary inputs needed daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly to make this community function. To avoid the implementation of a hierarchal dictatorial management system community members including short term visitors need to be aware of what needs to be done and should willingly integrate themselves into these activities. This will often require new community members to ask for instruction from the seasoned comrades. All it takes to make the world a better place is to contribute a little more than we exploit. So, notice the world outside of your ego- notice the gutters, road, garden, kitchen counters, floors, porch, and all-- lots to be done - don't put someone in the place of needing to be a boss.



While the above was written with Moonshadow as the community in Mind, allow for other greater (and narrower) interpretations- find where your focus needs to be right now along a spectrum ranging from the great matrix of systems that make up the Earth Community (I'm talking way beyond humans here), to the needs of your more immediate surroundings (your political country, your bioregion, your neighborhood, down to the immediate relationships inherent in your place right now (be it the give and take of a conversation to the watering of a young planting). The work to be done first requires listening beyond within (so that the work to be done is truly for greater good); be it from the words of an elder or more experienced person to the nonverbal messages/clues a plant or landscape offer to the patient and genuinely concerned being. While there's always "wood to chop and water to carry," the work itself is often more subtle in nature, often the simple (but, oh, so neglected) honoring of the inherent splendor and intelligence of another by temporarily setting aside your thoughts and desires and listening, trying to truly understand for just a moment more. Watch in amazement as those thoughts complete themselves and the desires fall away as we work towards taking care of each other and allow ourselves to be taken care of in the process.

- Joel Kimmons

The most important thing I learned at Moonshadow was how to be human... how to be a family person... and to recognize my family as all the cosmos... Embrace the processes of the greater than human world. Try to find acceptance in the other without human adulteration- relinquish the need to alter every stone in my path. Find it in myself that the desire to change a landscape, move a rock, cut a tree, mow a lawn, kill a cow, eat a tofu sandwich, etc are all the same - they are the impact, the imposition of the individual- necessary at some level but reckless abuse at another. Seldom do we consider or are able to consider the web of events that transpire due to our being, our existence, or ultimately our actions. Often cultural myths dissuade one to bother by suggesting certain actions are necessary, consequences are acceptable or trivial, or that it is not necessary to consider the world outside the narrow confines of the individual.



Maturity measured by years while behavior is ignored- stagnancy and eutrication of a species trapped in adolescence- our morphine: ego satisfaction. Personal desire, responsibility, anarchy, free market capitalism and, ultimately, in the big and small, evolution. How can we know if our actions are acceptable?

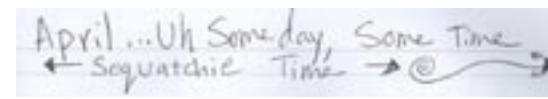
(this has been...) A central question considered by thinkers- part of the evolution of our mind- a combining metamorphosis of physical and mental. Our future as a species is dependent on the cognizance that we are evolving and that understanding such concepts will not occur by the dogma of rationality but must be woven into our being. As we become the future, we must become the answers, we must become the solutions. Actions belong to a greater world. Each thing we do contributes to a web of influence constructing the human ecology and affecting the broader world where space and time exchange and interchange, past and future express momentary truths in the solid but evanescence present. Our influence trails on in returns of reciprocity. This builds the individual (simplistic yet meglomaniac), culture, society, human ecology, et al.

So what's our impact and who cares? Even considering that any human concept of morality has any universal significance is arrogant- is this a moral comment? Oh the baseness! To consider oneself or one species as the meter of moral delineation! Who needs drugs or materialism when we are so strung out on delusion.... What freedoms do we have, if any, caught in this matrix of action and consequence? We have evolved with such industrious capacity - given such power we feel almost inclined to use it. Capability has become almost a certain predictor of human action. Our greatest freedom as a species may be to be aware of the events we set in motion- the reduction of possible futures.

Due to our (humans as of late) remarkable gravitation the event horizon for consequence is always closer, and our distance from the cosmic and mature always further.

Doing the right thing, which in today's world probably is more akin to doing the left thing, allows me to make a parenthetical comment on politics. The problem with democrats and republicans is that we would even ever consider placing our legal, economic, social, moral etc beliefs under one or two little categories. Or to allow them to be categorized at all! What do you do with your life? And what should we each do? Outside of the individual's micro-ecology does anyone care? Do you rely on the efforts of others? (of course, but is that a problem? For them? For it?) Do we care about the little things, do we speak for the trees, do we stand both in will and in action for that which does not in any way benefit the self? Do we consider an ecologic sense that we share this planet with many, many things that all have equal claim? What do we need to do, each of us, everyday, to make our world a better place? Praying or meditating everyday will not feed us nor stop sweet shops and environmental destruction - prayer is nice like cookies from grandma but why not be direct and actually not support these business practices. It may not matter in the cosmic scope of things whether you kill (KILL) the mosquito that is harvesting your blood for its progeny but for human spirit considering, realizing, and actually being aware of the mental aspects of our actions is growth.

This is the story of how we began to remember: A glimpse into the life of twelve Vermont college students in search of an ecologically sound world.



What do you get when you pile 12 college kids from Vermont into a van, drive 20 hours straight then release them like monkeys out of a clown car into rural Tennessee?

- heart kissing, cookie eating, dancing, hippie loving cults.
- a traveling circus stopping at a gas station near you, complete with headstands, glowing Frisbees, execution of hackie sack grandeur, and yoga contortions rarely seen in a BP parking lot.
- a swarm of college-aged folks in search of volunteering wherever the help is needed from weeding and cooking to llama poop-scoopin' and brush hauling.
- (or the most likely choice in this little pop-quiz) all of the above, and beyond out to the far reaches of all that is sensible on such a college-sponsored venture.

To describe our brief 2-day stay at Moonshadow as fantastic would be an outrageous understatement. Our time had different affects on each of us, ranging from a new awareness of what sustainability is, to life changing revelations about our dreams, goals and lives to come. We are thankful to have discovered Sequatchie Valley Institute and many of us hope to return someday. On our journey we kept a group journal to compile thoughts and memories. I'd like to share some quotes from our journal with you all.

"I feel personally free for the first time in a long time" -dave

"Camping outside in a rural setting and working with natural materials have swirled together to make me love nature. This entire trip I have had really good, wholesome energy, my body just feels so cooperative. All the food we've been eating is really wholesome and healthy, it's all delicious!" -sara



"It was fun to feel like an adventurous kid again! I've been feeling that way in all the things I do at Moonshadow - youthful, energetic, fulfilled, happy, determined; at SVI work becomes play." -cara

"It's nature that blesses our human-ness, nature that refreshes a critical spirit, nature that brings darkness, mystery, unknown..." -jen

"It is undeniable that there is magic in this place." -amanda

"Through good health of your body, good health of your soul will follow, and good health of the earth will return." -jess

"[I have been] seeing things on this trip that I typically have only seen in my dreams... above all else I have become radically altered in a truly amazing way." -dave

We all send sincere gratitude to everyone at Moonshadow for sharing your beautiful energy and daily lives with us - it truly was magical. You helped us to fathom the seemingly impossible and realize the world is what you can dream.

In peace and joyful spirits
- amanda barnard
& the Vermont crew



SEEKING (INTENTIONAL) COMMUNITY

Life lived in community seems to be the way to go. I have heard the argument that the tribe or village unit of social organization is the most appropriately evolved human social structure. Although I can't provide much basis or justification for this assumption, I can agree with it. After all, before modern times and its trend of rugged, individual, capitalistic living, people worked together to meet the challenges of sustenance here on Earth. Remember, there was not as much mechanization or cheap energy then (and may not be as much in the future), so more people meant more power. So, community sized up to the demands of technical challenges.

Another good reason for community is the satiation of our social needs. We are, more or less, social creatures, and wouldn't you agree that it is better to have close friends rather than competitive rivals?

Due to personally perceived social and technical benefits of community-based life, I feel strongly for joining a group of like-minded individuals in "intentional community." Intentional community may be understood, literally, as the phrase implies. Community is another one of those tricky terms in the English language that can carry a variety of meanings for a variety of minds. Depending on who you ask, community might mean a neighborhood, the people in a town, classmates in college, or a network of friends in some on-line game. The "intentional" part of the phrase conveys that there is a deliberate intention behind the members of a community. In my case, I am seeking a rural, land-based, intentional community where people can subsist upon on-site (and regional) income and production resources, in which key values of eco-consciousness, equality, cooperation, sharing, and non-violence are held and put to action.

If this idea of living in an intentional community seems interesting to you, check out the Fellowship of Intentional Communities (<http://www.ic.org>) or the Federation of Egalitarian Communities (<http://thefec.org>) for more info. The FIC offers a great resource for learning about and finding particular communities called the Communities Directory. The print directory can be purchased or found on-line at (<http://directory.ic.org>).

Where did I get this unconventional idea of living in a community, you might be wondering? Well, during the summer of 2000, I had my first taste of a rural, land-based, intentional community- this place and organization we all fondly know as Moonshadow. Taking part in a month-long internship, I joined the Moonshadow residents, friends, and fellow animal and plant land-inhabitants in the pursuit of "sustainable living." I witnessed and learned various elements of "alternative" living such as solar electricity, spring water, home gardening, Earth-based ritual, and working together in general; do-it-yourself living. In a sense, this awakening experience planted a seed in me. Although it was not until much more recently that I have actually begun a quest to find my own intentional community, this early inspiration from Moonshadow has remained with me.

I hope that we are all able to find community in our lives, that we are able to work alongside each other and in harmony with "nature," so that we may be ultimately satisfied with our experience on Earth.

One of my favorite memories from my short internship in summer 2000 was that of all the different frog sounds coming from the big pond (while sitting on the porch of the big house). It was a fun task to try to count the number of distinctive calls (of the different types of frogs). There were also quite a number of these creatures jumping around in the fountain out front. I can also somewhat vividly recall the return of rain after what had been a dry spell. There was talk of lack of rain and such. Then, one day, it dumped. It was beautiful to see. Again, hanging out on the porch (under a roof), watching the downpour.

- by Brian Moe – bm0e@yahoo.com (he's the guy on the left in the picture above of his previous community, his household in Northern California)



CUMBERLAND WILD!

This important conference on July 15th in Beersheba Springs was organized to promote protection and reasonable preservation of the Cumberland Plateau through development of a sustainable, tourism-based local economy.

SVI is located on the southeastern escarpment and edge of the Cumberland Plateau, which is a gem of biodiversity, unprecedented in the Southeast for its species richness and abundance. The Plateau has historically escaped widespread development experienced by the rest of the region, but that great good fortune is rapidly reversing.

The Natural Resources Defense Council lists the Cumberland Plateau as one of the 12 most endangered wildernesses in America, noting that its significant number of threatened and rare species are increasingly in competition with pine plantations and developments. Only a small fraction of the Plateau is publicly owned. Recent decisions by Bowater

(pulp and paper company) and other traditional landowners to sell off vast holdings poses both a significant threat to the future of the area and a major opportunity to acquire key tracts of pristine forest. This window will not remain open for long, and has occurred at a time of budget cutting with regard to conservation projects. Without immediate and decisive action, these extraordinary natural assets will be logged and developed in a manner that destroys the character of this unique region. SVI, with its capabilities to hold land in trust, has long sought to protect the escarpment of the Plateau, but has been restrained by lack of funding and administrative leadership. We continue to support these efforts and are open to suggestions on ways to proceed.

We received a request from Cumberland Wild! to join the Conference in Beersheba Springs. The following are excerpts from the letter thanking us for attending:

"I want to thank all of you for making Cumberland Wild an unprecedented success. Your efforts and involvement demonstrated the strong foundation for conservation on the Plateau, and further established a network that will be both a force for change and serve as a buffer from it. By pooling resources, sharing ideas, and working together, destructive land use practices and disregard for a natural balance can be changed, and long term, sustainable economic progress achieved. The wild places sustaining the basic elements of our very survival must be protected, and together we can summon the resolve to do so.

"A vast body of evidence unequivocally suggests that our species has gulped up resources at an unsustainable rate. Whether your concern is disappearing forest, loss of wild places, skyrocketing carbon dioxide concentrations, or urban sprawl, there is no question that self-interest and apathy have outpaced environmental concern, and will continue to do so unless a sea change of societal awareness occurs. This cannot happen without a massive exertion on our part. In turn, this exertion is not effective or possible without a common sense of connection and cooperation amongst the environmental community.

"I fervently hope that all the good intentions of that day are converted into positive actions on the Plateau and beyond. Key properties must be acquired, and sensibly administered. Zoning, covenants, and other planning must be sought, lest our very effort to secure the wild character of the region brings about the uncontrolled development that will destroy it. Established natural areas must be protected from ill-conceived "improvements." Major Plateau stakeholders must be encouraged to manage their resources in a sustainable way, and held accountable for their actions. Perhaps most importantly, the public must be educated to recognize and appreciate the inherent values of the natural realm.

"Our cause is smart, it is just, and it is vital to our continued survival as a species. It can succeed if we rely on the variety of our expertise, the strength of our convictions, and the support from one another. Otherwise, we will struggle on alone but suffer the same ultimate loss. Thank you again for being a part of the day, forgive me for being so overblown, and best wishes and good luck in your work.

Sincerely, Thad Adkins"

SVI presents its appreciation and support to Thad for his courage and hard work in organizing and directing this exciting conference. For more information, contact Thad_Adkins@hotmail.com or The Nature Conservancy, gcall@TNC.com, or see the website, www.CumberlandWild.com.





NATHAN HENDRIX was reminded that prolific ideals don't only exist as thought experiments when he first witnessed the diversity of building and nurturing practices that are alive at SVI. This place has been an inspiration to him that continues to have snowballing effects. As an audio engineer and recording artist, the good vibrations he feels as an intern become fuel for making uplifting music that has a conscience. As a human, he's sure that re-attaching to the wilderness and learning more about growing healthy foods will enrich his life and the lives of his family, partner and friends. He wants to make his mobile recording studio solar-powered. He came here in part to develop a deeper understanding of solar energy and to further cultivate a creative, problem-solving mind in terms of community-building and sustainability. The practical applications of everyday living here have helped him to see that he can do for himself. He can survive and enjoy what industry suggests there's no time for. He's thankful for the knowledgeable air and educational environment at SVI. He loves the sound garden. He's also excited to help make the next wave of Moonshadow live music compilations.

ASHLEY HALEY BAGGETT was born on a farm in Michigan from where she and her family left after a couple years and moved to the suburbs until she was able to leave on her own. Her strong pull for something different brought her to Washington state where she lived for 6 months living in and out of the woods. This was just the beginning of her excitement for what the world has to offer. She jumped in and out of college and then realized that it was just not where her heart was at the moment. So she kept traveling and went to a couple extended herbology classes, studied natural healing from all walks of life in Belize, and then massage therapy school in attempts to learn more of how the body works. After much pressure from others to get a "steady" job so that she could make her dream of living on land a reality, she decided to get away from a lot of those voices. In January she came to Moonshadow after seeing flyers on the wall of the health food store where she worked and stories from others, fell in love with so much, and moved here in February. She is so incredibly grateful for the beauty of the land, the inhabitants, the discoveries of herself, and the opportunities that came from here living here. After taking on the role of inn keeper for a time this summer, Ashley is now continuing to travel and has found a love for art in many forms that she looks forward to learning more about from the places that her heart is leading her to.

ANAKEESTA AND SAGE IRONWOOD aren't new to Moonshadow this year, but since they're always changing so much this seemed like a great opportunity to say a bit about who they are this season. Anakeesta can run and climb like the big kids - her favorite words are baby, ball, na-na (breastmilk), hot, eee (eat, leaf, tree, etc), ow (usually said to get Sage to stop) and I or my (when she wants something). Sage continues to amaze us all with his maturing ways. He loves to have us read non-fiction to him: trains, space, dinosaurs, electricity. He just soaks it all up!



COMMENTS FROM CAROL'S ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE CLASS AT UTC AFTER VISITING MOONSHADOW

"The most beautiful thing was the river...I would love to sit on the bridge for hours and just listen to the water rush past! It is interesting that you can drive through the water.

The home was lovely. The tiny broken shards of mirrors around light bulbs were aesthetically pleasing and helped to radiate more light into the rooms. I loved the enormous fireplaces as well. All of the windows in the house made it bright and cheerful. It is clear to me that the people who live at SVI are selfless people that would rather live without a few luxuries to help their environment than to live like most of the rest of the world in selfish overuse.

The sacrifices they have made have encouraged me to live lighter on the Earth. I don't plan on getting solar panels and growing all of my own food, but I put the environmentally friendly light bulbs in all of my lights; I open the windows instead of turning on the A/C; and I recycle all my paper products. I hope that other people are also encouraged by the wonderful example SVI has set." Christy Myers.

"I have never been interested in a science class before this one. While my instructor talked to us about her way of life, I kept thinking about all the saving of energy. When she invited us to SVI I knew nothing would prevent me from going. ... I was amazed at the black dirt in the garden. It looked as good as my dad's tomato garden in Michigan. They explained that they used llama manure to fertilize it. The garden had different plants mixed together, not the same crops in rows. They also had plants that would prevent bugs from killing the crops.

The house was built by hand, and I could almost visualize Carol and Johnny working on it. It looked so peaceful and serene. There was no television set, but it looked so inviting to read a good book, or to cuddle on the circular couch and talk by the fire. This house was a home, something you don't see much of anymore. I know they used car batteries to store electricity, and fluorescent bulbs, grew their own food, conserved on water, etc. But something we didn't learn in our class was the love, dependency, respect, and joy that this house had produced." JoAnn Poschke

"I enjoyed my visit to SVI because I was exposed to a very practical and efficient lifestyle by which humans can better co-exist with and preserve the Earth's land, organisms, and natural resources. I learned about rotational cropping and the use of recycled materials, like carpet, to help prevent erosion. I was exposed to means by which humans can preserve life by living less wastefully." Jessica Martin

A letter from a member:

Hi dear Ashley:

I read Earth Matters cover to cover and felt SO inspired by what you all are doing--- a kind of social incubator for ecological living (with a sense of humor). Moonshadow and SVI are really fantastic!

Thank you. As we in the US awaken to oil depletion (and environmental destruction), I'm hopeful more and more funders realize how critical it is that we have MODELS OF SUSTAINABILITY and that you have all the bucks you need to do what you do.

Love to you and all,
Bill Pfeiffer



"I would have to say this was one of the most beautiful and interesting places I have seen. Everything about the self-built house was amazing and unique. The solar energy is harvested by solar panels that transfer the energy into batteries. This entire place was amazing and I would love to be involved in something like this later in life." Jared Dooley

Check out our website for more info about events and workshops: www.svionline.org and you can Join our email listserve - send an email to: svi_moonshadow-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

A PERSONAL HISTORY OF SOLAR DESIGN

In 1998 I was a freshman in Forestry in Brazil. By the end of my first year at University of São Paulo I attended a 3-day Permaculture Course. The course was taught by an agronomist and an architect. The architect's name was also Marcelo and, at that time, he had just returned from a 6-month world trip searching for ecologic building. Marcelo showed us many amazing pictures, but one of them I could not take out of my mind. He showed a very simple and efficient solar water heater that he saw at The Farm Ecovillage Training Center in Tennessee. I was so delighted with that project that I even thought about changing my major.



In July 2000 I got a scholarship to attend Michigan State University for one year. In June of 2001 I went to Moonshadow to accomplish a two month internship with the Sequatchie Valley Institute. By the end of June, a trip to The Farm was arranged. There, I could see through my eyes the same image I saw in the picture in 1998. That amazing solar water heater does exist! And it does work! On the following day, together with Patrick, we started to build a similar model at Moonshadow, using the available material at that moment. Yes, we finally got a solar water heater at Moonshadow!



Later in August 2001, after I returned to Brazil, Patrick made some improvements on Moonshadow's equipment.

Continuing with my undergraduate studies, I was determined to build a Brazilian version of that equipment. I found some precious help from a professor of the Exact Science Department and we made thoughts into actions: The first model was a black metal drum over an open silver metal drum.

We were not very worried about efficiency, since we were in Brazil we had plenty of sunshine. We were trying to design a system that was very cheap and very easy to build. In 2002 a project to develop the system and help people learn how to build it was submitted to the University of São Paulo. The project was approved and other students also started getting interested in cheap and easy ways to use solar energy. We created the Solaris Extension Group at the University.



By the end of 2003 the Solaris Extension Group had developed a webpage (www.ciagri.usp.br/~solaris), published a Step by Step Low Cost and Easy to Build Solar Water Heater Construction Manual and built improved equipment at a group member house. The improved system uses roofing aluminium foil in place of the silver open iron drum.

Soon the Solaris Extension Group focus was on the usage of all solar energy (not just solar water heaters). I developed a simple fruit and herbs sun dryer at my home.

Aiming to help people to learn how to build this equipment we held a Construction Training at the University and built a demonstration model.



In December of 2003 I graduated and in February 2004 I was hired to develop and manage a Ecological Farm donated to the University. "The Ecologic Center" is a 50 hectare rural property that has been completely reforested with native species. The Ecologic Center is a place for Environmental Education for schools and Agrarian Education on techniques that promote use and conservation of the natural resources. When I started, the property was

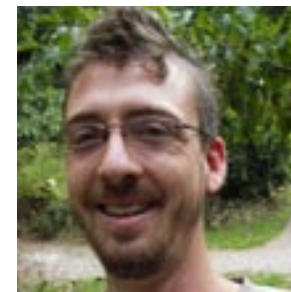


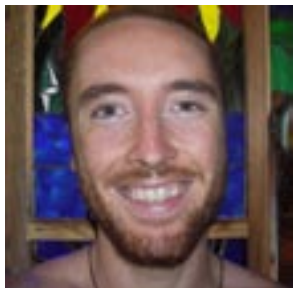
SEAN NITCHMANN states, "helping people better understand one another may be the most noble, artful activity of which I'm aware." Inspired by the spirit of this mantra, Sean has used the two years since graduating from university to explore wildly different cultures in hope of cultivating his...nobility.? Moonshadow is his first venture into sustainable community living - an interest which may have started with a desire to build his own home, but continues to blossom into a more holistic view of natural, sustainable existence. For him Moonshadow provides a feeling of empowerment: de-mystifying much of what society tries to convince us is out of our capacity. As he continues to learn he hopes to share this empowerment through personal example while helping people who have embraced modern consumer-culture to at least consider the merits, accessibility and viability of stepping out of it. To learn more about Sean and to view some of his design work, you are invited to visit his website: <http://www.members.aol.com/spnitch/MyDesignOnlineIV.html>

ADAM DAVIS started life out in San Antonio, Texas. He was raised in the consumption-hungry suburbs of Northwest Houston. He stayed in Texas for college in Austin. He hoped to find a "liberal" diversified campus in which he could push himself to find the way to save the world. Though dissatisfied with the uniformity in the university, he finished his college career. He studied math and philosophy, lived in a housing cooperative focused on organic locally produced food and worked at a food cooperative with the same focus. Adam fell for a hippie girl (Berea Ernst, who used to be an intern at Moonshadow) and her land and moved to Appalachia to see what it was all about.



ALEX FEAR was born in the inner city of Atlanta, Georgia in 1978. Since he was a toddler he has had an immense infatuation with the natural world. Trusting in himself to be autonomous as it concerns his education, Alex withdrew from school in the ninth grade never to go back. His journey of self-education has introduced him to many aspects of political and social thought. These include philosophy, poetry (which he enjoys writing), anti-war activism and working as an editor for a non-profit literature magazine. He has worked construction for over a decade, staying within the walls of the working-class world which he will always be a part of. This labor-intensive but mandatory type of work helped to prepare him for another step in his journey of self-education: the DIY builder who uses natural and salvaged material in order to minimize human consumption and maintain sustainability. He has been involved in this type of work for almost five years now, beginning on his dad's land in Fairmount, GA. There he also maintained an organic garden and studied a variety of subjects. There are no words for how thankful he is to Moonshadow for giving him the opportunity to expand the power of his thought.

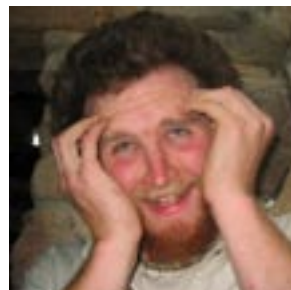




BEAU ETTER-GARRETTE studied community and environmental living at a small private college in the White Mountains of New Hampshire not far from where he was raised. After spending a couple years living and playing in Montana he came back home and soon found out about the Sequatchie Valley Institute. He came to Moonshadow in the Spring as an intern and found the place to be exactly what he needed at this time in his life. After spending a good deal of time working with Patrick on natural building projects around Moonshadow, Beau became confident enough to accept the role of a staff builder for SVI. Beau's future plans are always the same - leave it up to what ever comes along, everything

always works out. He enjoys extreme adventures alone in the woods and long hikes up the creek to mysterious places. Beau also loves living within the community here at Moonshadow, working hard, playing with stone, cob and wood and just simply loves to live and smile a lot.

BRADLEY JONES is a sith-hippie, green nihilist, and has succumbed to the doublethink ways of the deep ecologist. Bradley was born and raised in Mississippi, dabbled in the West Coast, but has come back to roost in the mixed mesophytic forest of our own Cumberland biogem. He tries to talk just barely more than necessary. He has been an intern or staff on and off for many years. Bradley started out the season as a staff builder and has taken on the inn keeper role where he is better able to hang out with his son, Logan.



NADA JONES is a captivating, intoxicating individual. Around her birds suddenly appear and choruses of angels sing hymns to her bonny face. Seriously though, Nada first found Moonshadow in the Summer of 2002 and returned as an intern several times thereafter. Bradley and Nada were married at Moonshadow in the Summer of 2004. After a year-long stint in San Francisco, they decided to join the SVI staff and settle down in the Valley with their son, Logan. When she's not doing office manager stuff or mothering, she likes to make jewelry, do needlework, and day-dream about Ulinawi, their future community project which is wooded walk away from Moonshadow.



LOGAN JONES was born in San Francisco on new years day, 2005. He does not like greens, but he will eat them when disguised as his favorite snack, "veggie booty." His mother is Nada and his father is Bradley. He likes tractors A LOT and can say lots of words like: tractor, mine, i-want-a-bite, tractor, no, i-want-to-eat, tractor, etc.

Logan has quickly become great friends with Anakeesta Ironwood and when they're together they can be seen hugging and kissing one moment and then screaming MINE at the top of their tiny lungs the next.



forsaken for 4 years, and, as there was no budget, we started to develop low cost equipment to create a demonstration site – most of them inspired by my experience at Moonshadow in the summer of 2001.

Created together with the architect, Marcelo, our first large event was a workshop on natural constructions and Low Cost and Easy to Build Solar Water Heaters. Marcelo built a dry toilet very similar to the one I used at Moonshadow. In the dry toilet we built a system to collect the rainwater for washing our hands.

During the workshop we also built the first solar water heater at the Ecologic Center. Since than many other workshops have been organized and now there are plenty of solar water heaters.

I have even been using it to warm up the water of a pool. No chlorine is used at this pool - the water is treated with ozone.

In 2005 the Solar Heater was awarded first place in a Rural Inventor Contest.

The system got a two-page report in the main rural Brazilian magazine.

Nowadays the Ecologic Center's demonstrative area includes: Organic horticulture, a chicken tractor (In fact, the first chicken tractor I ever built



was at Moonshadow), and a water tank built from used old tires. That was also subject of report in that same regional magazine.



In the end of 2005 we started a program of Agroecology for Family Farmers sponsored by the Federal Government. This training program is called Sun & Fruits (www.solefrutas.esalq.usp.br)



We have monthly meetings with practical and theoretical classes on: Agroforestry and fruit and herbs solar dehydrators.

We have three kinds of solar dehydrators:

1. A very tiny and inexpensive one
2. A medium size one
3. And we are building an industrial one



Those two months I spent at Moonshadow were memorable - it really made big difference in my life. Certainly, without this experience I would not be able to deal with the challenges of my actual job. However, despite the knowledge I acquired at Moonshadow, the most valuable lesson was not technical but social: I learned about having a big heart, like a mother's heart, that has pure love for everyone - it does not matter how he or she is or what he or she does. I am eternally grateful to all the Moonshadow residents and staff.



- Marcelo Precoppe
Intern at Moonshadow on 2001

Marcelo recently received a scholarship to study the use and conservation of natural resources at Goethe Institute in Germany!

Scenes from My Island: Episode Two (written during the Spring of 2006)

ev·o·lu·tion (n)

1. The theoretical process by which all species develop from earlier forms of life.
2. The natural or artificially induced process by which new and different organisms develop as a result of changes in genetic material
3. The gradual development of something into a more complex or better form



“The self is a center of organization, constantly drawing on and influencing the surroundings, whose skin and behavior are soft zones contacting the world instead of excluding it.”

- Paul Shepard

Last year, I submitted an article to the newsletter that reflected upon the importance of nature and the impact a “thing like my little backyard garden can have on personal well-being. I closed my article with the above-mentioned quote. Since then, much has happened in my little oasis, namely, that Joel and I are expecting. As you might imagine, this type of life-changing event spurs much personal reflection and has brought me to the notion of the re-invention of the Self.

Currently, my body is re-inventing itself. Under my very nose, I am morphing from maiden to mother. I grow rounder as each day grows longer. My bones shift, my skin shifts, my mind shifts. I think about where I have been, from where I came and what I am becoming.

I have been re-inventing myself since, well, since I was conceived. I moved from blastocyst to embryo, complete with yolk sac like the first reptiles to crawl from the seas. Soon, I lost a tail, gills, and the yolk sac. I became a placental mammal. I was born and the comfortable world I knew of gurgling sounds inside my mother’s body changed to a world of light, temperature fluctuations and mechanical sounds. I adapted; I developed an immune system, things made me laugh, I became more independent.

From early in our lives, our experiences mold us into the individuals we will become. As children, our behavior is sculpted by the social and cultural boundaries of our daily lives. During adolescence, we yield to puberty; our bodies change physically. We become awkward in a shell that was once quite comfy. We find deepened voices and new curves where once we looked and sounded quite similar to one another, yet we adapt and learn how to live in our new, more unique Selves.

Our “college days” lead to re-invention stemming from lessons learned from experimentation, rebellion and the questioning of authority. Some of us eventually marry, and once again must redefine ourselves not only as individual but also as a duality. Parenthood moves us from carefree self-sufficiency to mentor, authority figure, and safety net. Finally, we meet old age; where once we were agile and sleek, we find ourselves frail and dependent and must again re-adapt and find our place in the world.

It seems to me that humans have always been in this state of flux, moving from one climate into another, one ecosystem into another. From one tribe into another, feast into famine, sleep into waking. From one country to the next, one government to the next. And with each transition, the Self re-examines where it is going and

business in Chattanooga to where he disappears several days each week. In his free time, he enjoys rock climbing, yoga and reading. He is thankful to be living in such a beautiful, natural setting amongst the kind and interesting folks who either live here or are visiting.



FRANCES JOHNSON, who grew up in and around our nation’s capitol (smirk), is a self-taught vegetable eater. After dropping out of a prestigious hippie college in order to bake more bread, she now celebrates her status as a freelance fermenter always in transit from one hilly place to another. Perhaps she is a true culture junkie at heart. After working as the inn keeper in early spring, she traveled, came back to present at Food for Life and is now studying nutrition in Northern CA.

JOSHA DILL was born and raised in Stuttgart, Germany. Her adventure began when she travelled through the Southwest of the United States in 1994. She ran into her husband Mike in a youth hostel in Page, Arizona and lived with him in her city of choice, Berlin, for two years, got married in Denmark and finally moved to Austin, Texas. Working in apartment management for years she rediscovered her passion for gardening, using the moon position for fine-tuning. She is a professional gardener, loves singing in a choir, studied bodywork and Astrology in Berlin and is interested in healthy foods. After living in Texas for 9 years, she is up to a new adventure starting an eco village project in Central Ecuador she’s been dreaming about for a long time. To experience community and “sustainable” living before-hand, she decided to make a stop for an internship at Moonshadow where she gathers as much knowledge as possible. She discovered a new passion for cobbling and another favorite, the weekly sharing circle, where you learn to speak in front of a group without any interruption and get to know people on a much more personal level. Feeling empowered for her new endeavor, she’d love to take Moonshadow with her that already feels like home to her.



ELANA DAVIDSON has been visiting Moonshadow every year for the last several years and has finally come for a longer stay. Elana spent her childhood in an intentional community in Massachusetts, an experience that continues to deeply influence and inform her life and is very much a part of who she is. Elana is working on her final degree project in a self-designed major focusing on children and children’s lives. “If there was an equivalent for children to feminism or women’s studies, that is what my degree is,” she says. While at Moonshadow she is thinking and writing about what a new paradigm of childhood could look like based on greater autonomy and self-determination for children.

She is using the children and the community of Moonshadow for her inspiration. Elana is full of energy and laughter, likes to do handstands in the kitchen and is working on her back walkover (someday folks... someday). When not at Moonshadow she lives in Burlington, VT, where she is excited about creating kid-positive environments (free schools, intentional communities, neighborhood...) that build community and support child autonomy and self-determination.

FOLKS WHO'VE ADDED THEIR COLOR TO MOONSHADOW IN SPRING AND SUMMER 2006



BRIAN GEIER is a Hoosier by birth, but happy to make a home here in the rich woods of East Tennessee. Once, he went to Brasil and landless peasants who radically took back land from the rich sparked his interest in agriculture and land-based life. Later he studied sustainable agriculture at the University of Maine, and though he gained a lot of book knowledge, he didn't learn how he could be a farmer. So, he went to work on farms after he graduated. Experiments in animal power, Permaculture and community building, art collectives and anarchist organizing permeated his time on farms in Maine, North Carolina, and Indiana, and he liked all of those things, except maybe

animal-powered farming. His current interests and work revolve around growing food, making gardens productive and fun to be in, learning forest farming, studying the woods, brewing, healing from a bad car wreck, music, paying attention to mysterious things, teaching kids, and building a sustainable community where he can stay for a long time. He finds Moonshadow a very exciting and empowering place to be sharing the Head Gardener role right now, and is looking toward the future with his head held high.

MELISSA LOUISE CALHOUN grew up in the suburbs of Atlanta and was ready to leave them by the time she graduated with a degree in Biology and a heavy disillusioned heart. Identifying as an environmentalist while inside the academic world lead her down avenues of politics, research, and bureaucracy toward burn-out, frustration and impotence. So she decided to learn some real skills (how to grow food!) and to attempt to transform her life time with opportunities to cultivate a real appreciation of this earth which she felt such a strong desire to protect. Since 2002 she has practiced the art of food and herb cultivation in Maine, North Carolina, Indiana, Poop, and now Tennessee, in both small and large scales, organically, chemical free, and experimentally biodynamic, as an apprentice and independently. Melissa would like to become more attuned to the healing herbs and wild plants to find out what *she* can do for *them*. She is excited that there is so much still to learn. SVI has provided her with the opportunity to live closer to her family in the south while being blessed with the breathtaking beauty of the valley, the forest and the landscape here that those who've gone before have lovingly prepared with their sweat, hands and vision. Moonshadow is her daily reminder of the beauty that humans can sustain when they'll cooperate with their 'still small voice' rather than closing their minds and hearts. She is moreover thankful and amazed to be sharing the Head Gardener position (and yet another garden) with her loving friend Brian.



JON CABLE, a recent college grad (UTC School of Business), plans to spend as much of the 06' season at Moonshadow as possible. He has taken on the role of treasurer and grant-writing coordinator (wanna help write a grant?), while also maintaining his part-time gutter cleaning

adapts to survive. Much of this transitory nature can be traced to perhaps the essence of all migratory and transitional movement: survival. You follow the food to feed your brood. And with this, I find borders to be merely one more experience that the Self regards, digests, and integrates in order to survive.

Daily, I am witnessing a migratory shift into this land I call home, rich with the history of migration and reinvention. My house was built by migrant labor. Much of the food I eat was picked by migrant hand, and this hand works hard, as do so many of our own hands, due to the need to survive. I cannot help but feel excited, it stirs in me a feeling of adventure and newness. Perhaps it is because I was born to migratory parents; perhaps it is because I am in awe of the myriad of forms that fall into the category of "humanity;" perhaps it is because I like surprises.

We must not be afraid to re-invent ourselves. We do it everyday without even thinking about it. The choices we make from each new experience we have are what define us. With each new experience the Self re-examines the situation and reacts based upon past experience and personal history. We integrate this new knowledge into our persona, rewiring our hard-drive, and retaining the new information for a future encounter. We are re-invented, and as definition #3 states above, we have moved towards a better form. Millions of years of adaptation can't be wrong. One can only hope that resistance is futile.

- Michelle Kimmons

Re-mixed and Re-mastered!

MUSIC FOR THE ACTIVE HEART

volumes one and two

CD's are available from
MEDIA RIGHTS
at Moonshadow

With music from DiDi,
Evan and Guy Carawan,
Danny Dolinger, Robert Hoyt,
Ashley Ironwood, Kale Kalloch,
Michelle Kimmons, Alicia Littletree,
Mary Anne Hitt, David Rovics,
Vida and Rodney Webb

