

## Welcome to Gaia Education:

an international consortium of educators developing curricula and courses on Ecovillage Design and Development for Urban and Rural Settlements. Gaia Education is a programme of the Global Ecovillage Network. The Gaia Education team of leading-edge ecovillage educators called "GEESE" – Global Ecovillage Educators for a Sustainable Earth – has developed an Ecovillage Design Curriculum- a four-week comprehensive course to the fundamentals of ecovillage design.

The Ecovillage Design Curriculum has the endorsement of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research- UNITAR. The Ecovillage Design Curriculum is an official contribution to the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development- UNDESD.

## Upcoming EDE Courses:

**May East**, our Program Director at Findhorn, writes:

Next courses will be in the following villages:

[Ecoaldea Huehucoyotl, Mexico](#)

[Crystal Waters, Australia](#)

[Tamera, Portugal](#)

[Kibbutz Lotan, Israel](#)

[Keimblatt Okodorf, Austria](#)

[UMAPAZ, Brazil](#)

[Findhorn Foundation, Scotland](#)

[Sieben Linden, Germany](#)

[Instituto Tonatzin Tlalii, Mexico](#)

**Giovanni Ciarlo, writes from Huehuecoyotl, Mexico:**

There are two full Gaia Education courses being planned in Mexico for this year. One is being organized by the same group that had Max come last March. They are inviting him again for the full four week course in the state of Oaxaca, in southern Mexico to teach it to local activists in sustainability and urban planners. The other course is one I am organizing with the support of the Mesoamerican Ecovillage Network in central Mexico. This will be oriented more to people exploring creating new ecovillages throughout the country. At the moment we are still waiting for funding to be allocated for these two courses.

**Liz Walker, writes from EcoVillage at Ithaca in New York State, USA:**

Here at EcoVillage at Ithaca we're excited to be planning one of our first residential trainings. We're used to teaching semester long courses with students from Ithaca College or Cornell University, but we have less experience with intensive, residential adult programs. We will warm up by having two EcoVillage Experience Weekends, June 9-11, and September 8-10. Then, from July 8-15th, we will launch a week long training, "Creating Sustainable Communities: the Ecological Dimension," adapted from the EDE curriculum. We hope to attract a healthy mixture of professionals, leaders and activists who are eager to create more sustainable neighborhoods, communities and ecovillages. Participants will learn from hands-on involvement with EcoVillage at Ithaca (an award-winning, internationally recognized example of sustainable community development), the Ithaca region's flourishing sustainability movement, and the learning community that course participants create. This highly participatory, capacity-building workshop will introduce:

- \* **Connection** to Bioregion and Place
- \* **Sustainable** Land Use Strategies (from Smart Growth to Permaculture)

- \* **Organic** Agriculture, and Local Foods
- \* **Green Building** and Sustainable Energy Use
- \* **Personal** Sustainability and Culture Change.

In addition, the social and economic dimensions, which are integral to any sustainability process will be woven throughout the training. Instructors include: Liz Walker, co-founder and executive director of EcoVillage at Ithaca, and Elan Shapiro, co-founder and program chair of Sustainable Tompkins (a regional initiative). For more information, or to register, visit the EVI website <http://www.ecovillage.ithaca.ny.us>, or email us at [liz@ecovillage.ithaca.ny.us](mailto:liz@ecovillage.ithaca.ny.us).

**Kosha Joubert, writes from Sieben Linden, Germany:**

Dear All! We are happy to announce that in Sieben Linden preparations are running for the first EDE-Course in Germany. We have decided to call our course "Design for Sustainability"-Course. Seems to work better for funding applications... Have a look at the flyer! Through this I have stepped into deeper contact with the young adults living in Sieben Linden and with the Travelling School of Life. The Course is now going to be held as one of the courses especially open to students from the TSoL. TSoL grew out of the initiative of, amongst others, many inspired young Europeans. Their goal is to open up avenues of living and learning in ecovillages to young people, concentrating on Europe. As I see it, they are happy to be offered this course as one of different educational possibilities. I notice that working with these young people is a gift to myself! They have open hearts and loads of energy and beauty! We are also going to invite groups of 3 young adults from Tajikistan, South Africa and Columbia. I am envisioning that after the course they will be able to support each other in their home countries. Wish us well!

**Max Lindegger, writes from Crystal Waters, Australia:**

Ecovillage Design Education at Crystal Waters 31. July to 25. August 2006: A full EDE will be offered at the Award winning Ecovillage in the South-East of Queensland, Australia. Course facilitators will include Max O Lindegger, Lloyd Williams, Kate Allen, Jill Jordan and local guest speakers. Crystal Waters offers an experiential learning opportunity in an Ecovillage with about 250 residents: Experience innovative ideas in Agriculture, Architecture, Water Harvesting, Waste Recycling, Governance, Social Activities, Land Restoration and more. Feel a sense of village life, marvel at the stars, breathe clean air, drink sparkling water... be surrounded by abundant wildlife. Learn from experienced teachers.

For more information visit our website [www.ecologicalsolutions.co.au](http://www.ecologicalsolutions.co.au)

**Chris Mare, writes from the bioregion of Cascadia on the North American continent:**

I am collaborating with two other "Cascadians" – Russ Purvis of Kakwa Ecovillage and Michael Hale of Yarrow Ecovillage, both in British Columbia, Canada – to produce a 1-Week Introductory EDE at Yarrow. This Course will be in conjunction with the UN's World Urban Forum 3 Conference to be held in Vancouver, Canada, June 19-23. We plan to take the enthusiasm, excitement, and ideas generated at the WUF3 and ground them in an EDE stretching the curriculum in an urban direction. We are hoping to get delegates and GEN reps from the Conference to participate in this design course. For more information, see: [www.yarrowecovillage.ca](http://www.yarrowecovillage.ca)

**Lilah Glick, writes from Keimblatt Oekodrf, Austria:**

Course Title: **Ecovillage Design Education Course**

Dates: **July 1-23 (might be longer)**

Location: **KEIMBLATT OEKODORF**

Altenmarkt 95

8333 Riegersburg, **Austria**

Lecturers: **Ronny Wytek, Martin Kirchner, and others**

Curriculum: **Holistic World View, Social, Economic, and Ecological Topics**

**Course Description:** This three week course will integrate the four components outlined by Gaia Education to provide fundamental understanding for Ecovillage Design for Urban and Rural Settlements. The EDE will integrate both knowledge based and experiential learning to introduce and reinforce the course topics. Activities include nature walks, Feng Shui analysis, art and theater, Ecovillage slide show, consensus modeling, sweat lodge ceremony, bioregional networking, alternative money systems, strawbale construction project, garden design project, and much more. Participants will work in teams to create a comprehensive plan for ecovillage design and will conclude the course with a presentation of their work.

**Mark Naveh writes from Kibbutz Lotan, Israel:**

We are honoured and thrilled on Kibbutz Lotan to have been granted certification by Gaia Education to run the Ecovillage Designer Education programme in 2006. The EDE curriculum is to be incorporated within our existing ten-week Green Apprenticeship permaculture design course. The GA is an intensive hands-on work/ study experience that we have been developing for the past 5 years that links practical skills in permaculture, organic gardening and sustainable building techniques with formal studies in topics such as ecological design, soil science and green technologies. The course is interwoven within the daily life on Kibbutz Lotan, an intentional community that combines a modern and egalitarian approach to Judaism with a cooperative, participatory lifestyle and environmental awareness. As part of the practical aspect of

the course, participants help to build and maintain our environmental education center, alternative/natural building projects and migratory bird reserve. All the activities are designed with the belief that an individual can bring these ideas to their own homes and communities and be agents for positive change.

The feedback we have received from past participants on the GA course has been extremely positive. The programme also has a very positive influence on the community of Lotan as a whole and the process it is going through. We are very excited at the prospect of implementing the Gaia curriculum within the Green Apprenticeship. Through the holistic approach of the EDE curriculum we have been able to examine from a new perspective the opportunities that our community affords to hosting this programme, and the possibility of involving a greater number of Lotan members in its implementation. We believe the international connection with the eco-village network together with the renewed, expanded programme content and an increased student base that includes local participants will both greatly improve the existing GA programme and also be an important element in Lotan's ongoing development as an eco-village. The dates of the next Green Apprenticeship courses are March 8 – May 16, September 6 – Nov 14 and Nov 29 – Feb 6 2007. We look forward to reporting back to Gaia Education about the implementation of the EDE curriculum in the upcoming courses.

## In community

### Mark Naveh

Center for Creative Ecology

Kibbutz Lotan, Israel

Website: [www.kibbutzlotan.com](http://www.kibbutzlotan.com)

Email: [lotan-ecocenter@lotan.ardom.co.il](mailto:lotan-ecocenter@lotan.ardom.co.il)

## Report from Last Courses:

**Chris Mare** writes from Washington State, USA:

The Village Design Institute ([www.villagedesign.org](http://www.villagedesign.org)) was fortunate to have scheduled an Ecovillage Design Course (EDC) in July 2005, just one month after the Training of the Trainers meeting at Galgafarm. We immediately took the opportunity to frame our Course within an EDE format. Since this was just a 5-day EDC there was not time to cover all 20 Modules individually, yet all four Dimensions were equally represented in a truly “integrated” ecovillage design scenario. This format provided a well-rounded introduction to the complexities of Ecovillage Design, and, judging by the favorable feedback, was well-received by the 28 course participants. This EDC was held in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains, amidst sparkling waterfalls, on a 40-acre parcel desiring *to grow into* an ecovillage. While some infrastructure already existed, students were asked to locate a cohousing residential “neighborhood” and an educational complex, while designing for food and energy self-reliance within the property. Additionally, students were asked to “think over the fence” and integrate this emerging ecovillage economically and socially within the greater surrounding community. The fractalized adaptability in course length built into the Curriculum allowed us to present a comprehensive introductory EDE to a group consisting largely of professionals on a site lacking extensive accommodations. Even so, I found the 5-day format far too compressed to present adequate information, provide an experiential component, *and* conduct a decent Design Studio. Next time I will need to increase the introductory EDE to seven days. If advertised far enough in advance, I hope professionals will be able to adapt. One playful note: on the evening before the last day, we hosted a ‘salmon and wine open-mic party’ and invited many friends and neighbors not involved in the Course. This event seemed to nurture good relations all around.

## Report from the Communications Group:

### A) Internet Pages:

The official Gaia Education website will soon be up and running. Check out [www.gaiaeducation.org](http://www.gaiaeducation.org). Information, news and events have already been posted on the Wiki homepage. Check out [http://ecovillage.wikicities.com/wiki/Gaia\\_Education](http://ecovillage.wikicities.com/wiki/Gaia_Education). More reporting from Gaia Education can also be found at the Gaia Trust website. Please see [www.gaia.org](http://www.gaia.org).

### B) Four Keys:

**Hildur writes from Gaia Trust, Holte, Denmark:** The work with producing Four Keys to Sustainable Living is continuing. It is a bigger task than anticipated. Will and Maddy are collecting material with assistance from Hildur for the Worldview book. The 'lifeline' is still negotiable. Will and Maddy are filling in the Worldview book as they can amidst their busy schedules.

Kosha from Sieben Linden has come up with a new list of content for the Social book in cooperation with Robin Alfred from Findhorn. Lifeline for this book is also negotiable as process is of paramount importance – **Kosha**.

May and Maddy have agreed on Permanent Publishing doing the editing of the first two books and likely all four books. The lay out has been decided upon as 900 words per page, in two columns, including illustrations. Maddy will you fill in: number of letters on each page, two columns, boxes with examples, stories, poems and songs. Titles are to be decided by editors. Frontpage is being discussed as operational format.

## C) New Members of Communications Group:

The group now includes: Hildur, Kosha, Maddy, Chris, Duane and Alexandre.

Welcome to Chris (who is coming from the Curriculum Group) and Alexandre (who has been doing the beautiful graphic work for the curriculum and website).

## Report from the Strategy Group:

### Max Lindegger writes from Southeast Queensland:

**First:** Franco Werlang from Sao Paulo, Brazil has joined the group - Welcome!!

**A vision:** We believe that the Strategy Working Group (SWG) has the opportunity to forward a longer vision. We see that "youth" has come up in discussions and we need to find a way how we could utilise this energy. We feel that input is required to spread the message loud and widely and to give the "South" a voice. How do we feel about longer courses? By "long " I mean 3 years, 4 years... if we want to move into this direction ( I understand that the friends at Tamera are excited about such possibilities) what is needed?

We expect that the group will become more active as feedback reaches us from people who have been teaching EDE's and participating as students. All ideas welcome.

At this point it is possible that I will be involved in facilitating courses here at CW, in Mexico and Tamera , Portugal.

## Report from Accreditation Group:

**Daniel Greenberg**, focaliser for the Accreditation and Certification group writes:

The Gaia Education Certification Committee, with members from Senegal, Australia, Germany, and the U.S. have reviewed a flurry of applications from ecovillages and other groups in over ten countries. It has been an inspiring, global process and we are proud to offer inaugural certifications to Ecovillage Designer Education courses offered in 2006 within the following communities:

**Crystal Waters**, Australia

**Findhorn Foundation**, Scotland

**Huehuecoyotl**, Mexico

**Instituto Tonantzin Tlalli**, Mexico

**Keimblatt Oekordorf**, Austria

**Sieben Linden**, Germany

**Kibbutz Lotan**, Israel

**Tamera**, Portugal

**UMAPAZ**, Brazil

Provisional certification has also been awarded to Gaia Asociacion, Argentina

Endorsement and encouragement has been offered to the 1-week EDE courses being held at Ecovillage at Ithaca, USA and Yarrow Ecovillage, Canada

The Certification Committee welcomes new applications as well as inquiries from people interested in joining the team of reviewers.

## Gaia Education News:

### From **Giovanni Ciarlo** at Huehuecoyotl:

First of all, after much negotiating and several meetings, we have a go ahead from the office of Urban Development in Mexico City to publish a regional appropriate book containing much (maybe most) of the educational ideas developed in the Gaia Education curriculum. The idea is to have a booklet in Spanish with local examples of sustainability that can be used in upcoming courses in Mexico and Central America. This is a big thing for us, because there is very little written material in Spanish that we can draw from and this is will have the focus of a training manual for teachers and students. I hope we can do the same with the four keys eventually.

Another important news related to this is that the Spanish version of the curriculum has been translated fully by Maria Vazquez and Ulises, two very capable and enthusiastic sustainability colleagues from Spain. In fact Ulises made me aware of their catalogue of Spanish titles on sustainability which is the best source of published material in Spanish and should be included in our resources area of the \$ Keys. Check them out at [www.ecohabitar.org](http://www.ecohabitar.org). I am in the process of proofing the Spanish curriculum and hope to begin using it in our courses here soon.

### **Jonathan Dawson** writes from Findhorn Foundation, Scotland:

Dear friends, as a contribution to this newsletter, I have been asked to update you on what I have been doing of late. Well, apart from celebrating our success with the EC 2006 grant and leading students around villages in distant Senegal in quest of the elusive concept, 'sustainable development', I have been doing a whole lot of writing!

In fact, it would not be too much to say that words are simply flowing out of me. Early in the new year, I wrote three articles, all of which are now in the process of publication: one questioning what I see as the somewhat complacent ecovillage response to the challenges and opportunities thrown up by Peak Oil; another proposing a mechanism whereby pensions savings could be used to finance ecovillage infrastructural projects; and a third on my impressions on visiting the celebrated London developer-led eco-development, BedZED.

Now, I am in the middle of writing the Schumacher briefing paper I have been commissioned to write for the Schumacher Society. This is a truly wonderful opportunity to scan the world for ecovillage best practice and to then bring it all together between the covers of a book. I am learning much as I write and deepening the sophistication of my insights into just what is the role of ecovillages in the Great Turning that we have now entered. I look forward to sharing with you soon the fruits of my labour. Blessings, Jonathan

### From **Liz Walker** at **EcoVillage Ithaca**:

EVI Director Liz Walker's book, *EcoVillage at Ithaca: Pioneering a Sustainable Culture* (New Society Publishers, June, 2005) has helped to introduce the concept of ecovillages to a broad audience in the U.S. and abroad. It seems to ring a bell of hope and inspiration for many people, from professors to inner-city activists, from children to elders, from environmentalists to entrepreneurs. Permaculture Magazine (published in the U.K.) said: "I know of no book that more powerfully and honestly describes the reality of what it is like to create and to live in an intentional community... As the age of cheap oil draws to a close, we need living experiments in the reweaving of human-scale, locally-based social economies. As an illustration of how we can begin this process, even at the heart of the Empire, EVI is without match. Enormous credit goes

to Liz Walker for sharing its story so well with us." Ripple effects from the book continue to eddy outwards. The publication has led to phenomenal publicity, speaking engagements around the country, and soon the book will be published in Korea. It is also currently being translated into Japanese. Publicity includes over 20 half-hour interviews on National Public Radio regional programs around the U.S., as well as shorter pieces on "Earthwatch" and "Viewpoints," each syndicated to 300 stations. In addition, "Voice of America" did a 5 minute radio program on EVI that was broadcast worldwide to 100 million people in late November, 2005. Print media includes reviews in four national U.S. magazines and several online publications. Most recently, Al Bia-Wan Tannia, the largest environmental magazine printed in Arabic did a four page story about EVI. Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the book's influence is that some readers, such as a Filipino doctor, and an African American alternative health care activist, have been inspired to create ecovillages in their home environments - an endangered watershed in the Phillipines, and inner-city Oakland, CA.

## **Launch of Gaia Education in Brazil. May East writes:**

The launch of Gaia Education Brasil was in rapport with the launch of a new university created by the Secretary of Environment of Sao Paulo Municipality called **UMAPAZ**-University for a Culture of Peace and Environment.

The launch of the University was on January 25 and I did the official opening talk on January 30. We had 220 people and at the end of the talk we had 186 people wanting to join EDE Brazil starting April 15. We will have 90 places available.

It is going to be the first urban application of the curriculum. A transdisciplinary group (including three educators, a journalist, two architects, an economist and a weaver)

is starting, after carnival, weekly study groups to prepare and adapt the curriculum to Latin American urban context. The translation of EDE in Portuguese is being done.

The Secretary of Environment has given to Gaia Education Brasil, a room as our operations headquarters in the newly inaugurated university in the Ibirapuera Park, the most alive place in the whole Sao Paulo.

The programme will run from April to September with four weeks intensive led by Michael Shaw, Ross & Hildur Jackson and May East joined by Brazilian experts on the themes and many satellite actions in the city in-between modules.

As you can imagine our Brazilian articulators Marcelo, Franco, Lara, Virginia, Giuliana, Analu ...those you met during GEN +10 and others are working so focused and happy. As EDE is being hosted by a Municipal University the course cannot be charged and they are raising the funds needed for the programme to fly. The selection process is being designed and they are aiming to include environmental educators, leaders of neighborhood associations, bioarchitects, urban periurban agriculturalists, ethical social responsible business people, and so on....

## Letter from **Geza Varga** of Galgafarm, Hungary to Hildur:

Thank you very, very much for your kind and warm interest as "mother goose" about one of the lost small chicken.

I am well concerning my health, but I am not well at all if I look around the world. You know being a farmer really means being in the front line of the battle against this neoliberal madness.

I don't know whether you followed the preparation for and the process of the Hong Kong ministerial of WTO. You know that I am active in the European farmer's organisation as board member. Our Board had meetings with Pascal Lamy general secretary of the WTO

and Peter Mandelson the trade commissioner of the EU already before Hong Kong. During the discussion when we disagreed with the planed strategy of the EU in Hong Kong Mandelson told us "...you have to understand that the EU has to offer its agriculture for the sake of its industry and service!" According to his opinion we don't need agriculture here in Europe because we can buy cheaper all kind of food from the developing countries like Brazil for example. The EU's - specially included the Hungarian government's policy would like to let die the traditional small scale agriculture the quicker the better - they think. This is exactly what we feel and experience every day. I went to Hong Kong as the only Hungarian farmer and met the peasants coming from all around the world there, listened to their stories about how they have to struggle literally for their life every day (our daily struggle in Europe is only for economic survival). We demonstrated together every day for the whole week of WTO negotiations. We faced teargas and all other kind of violence of the police just for we wanted to hand over petition to those criminals inside the conf. center. Some 1400 farmers had been arrested, but released within 48 hours. When I came home 14 farmers were still in prison and I organised a demonstration in front of the Chinese embassy here in Budapest for the release even of 14 who were friends of mine (see the photo!). There were such demonstrations for the release of those farmers 19 different places of the world.

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In my/our desperation we formed a new ecoparty called "Living(human) Chain for Hungary". I am one of the ten initiators, which means we work on different organisational tasks literally day and night. We will have the parliament election on the 09 of April. We hope to be able to nominate 25-30 candidates for the election - I am one of them. Our responsibility is very high because we started this kamikaze action without any resources against politicians for which the money is not a limiting factor at all and have the whole range of medias behind them. Nevertheless last Saturday we organised a strong demonstration against GMO at and around the Hungarian Parliament. We, some thousand people formed a real living chain around our parliament symbolizing we want to protect our country from GMO's. I distributed organic traditional corn seeds for the demonstrant - which we grow in Galgafarm - inviting them to plant and preserve the seeds for the future generations. (see the attached photos!)

You know Hildur I feel that our soft, gentle and slow move of creating ecovillages is not enough. The problems we, the mankind facing with is much more brutal and need lot more quicker actions. It is the reasons I engage in everything which I may hope to help some (and the reasons for my extreme overload too).

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So I am not at all lost as one of the geese, but I can't afford a pleasant slow flight with our flock, because my task as a farmer who wants to keep our farming traditions requires more direct and less pleasant and very time consuming actions.

Dear Hildur I hope to see both of you in summer in Denmark during our GA (general assembly). much love géza

**Daniel Greenberg** writes from Living Routes in Massachusetts, USA:

We are starting a new January-term program in Peru. Here's the course description: January in Peru studying Andean-Amazonian spirituality, ecology and bio-cultural regeneration. The emphasis will be on native Quechua-Lamista cosmology as it relates to nature and community with a focus on the Oro Verde coffee cooperative, whose members are Quechua-Lamista and *mestizo campesinos*. Topics include shamanism, community building, tropical agriculture, reforestation, biodiversity regeneration, and fair traded organic coffee production/marketing.

An inherent challenge in offering study abroad programs is the environmental impact of international travel. For example, a round-trip flight from Boston to London produces over a ton of carbon dioxide - per person! Carbon dioxide is a major contributor to the Greenhouse Effect, which is warming the Earth's climate and is quite possibly the greatest environmental threat of the 21st century.

Beginning in the Fall of 2005, Living Routes has instituted a Carbon Offset Program in order to address this challenge. We calculate international and ground travel on each of our semester, summer, and January-term programs (as well as for U.S.-based staff) and commit to planting trees to offset the carbon emitted by all this travel. Wherever possible, students plant the trees themselves within the host ecovillages and/or affiliated regional sites.

**Vinya Ariyatne** writes from Sri Lanka, describing Tsunami recovery efforts initiated by Sarvodaya:

The Tsunami that hit the Asian continent on December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2004 was the worst natural calamity in Sri Lankan history. It left twelve districts in shambles and the lives of those

who reside along its coastlines in tattered ruins. The disaster killed 40,983 people and injured 23,189. A total of 4,846 people are still reported missing. The number of displaced was 516,150. Altogether, more than one million people were affected by the tragedy. The value of damage to infrastructure is estimated to exceed 1.3 billion U.S. dollars.

*Focusing on 226 Villages* – Sarvodaya immediately launched into action to provide relief to the survivors of the disaster. It commiserated with all of the affected population in the country, but believed that scattering its funds over too many geographic areas would lead to a lack of complete rebuilding in any one place. Hence, following its initial relief phase, the movement focused its post-Tsunami reconstruction work on the 226 affected Sarvodaya Service villages. A total of 425,538 people lived in these hamlets and Sarvodaya calculated that of this population, 189,005 people were directly distressed by the catastrophe. This included 6,770 deaths, 21,447 destroyed homes, 13,278 partly-destroyed houses, 380 damaged public buildings, 13,737 ruined toilets, and 5,184 affected wells.

*Shanthi Sena Leads the Way* – The foundation for the reconstruction work was set up by Shanthi Sena volunteer teams that traveled to the affected villages. Each of these teams consisted of five to ten individuals from unaffected villages. The members were rotated every ten days and volunteers from within the affected villages eventually took over the teams.

The volunteers were given an initial training on what they had to do and sent to the affected villages where they set up tents and launched their work. This included analyzing the development work and the extent of Tsunami damage in the village, collecting statistics on the damage and the main necessities that the tidal wave

created, providing guidance to volunteers in the village, coordinating with Sarvodaya District Centers as well as other organizations, and assisting the village obtain the services it needed from outside sources. The teams conducted pavul hamuwa discussion groups, organized spiritual activities in coordination with religious leaders, organized cultural events, arranged for first aid and other health facilities, cleaned the environment, provided the immediate needs of the affected, established a common kitchen which supplied food to those with special needs such as children and pregnant or lactating mothers, set up preschools, and prepared the people of the village for long-term reconstruction work.

Sarvodaya divided this post-Tsunami reconstruction work into twelve broad areas:

- 1) Camp and Community Management
- 2) Water and Sanitation
- 3) Health and Preventive Care
- 4) Housing Resettlement
- 5) Women, Children, and Orphans
- 6) Psychological and Spiritual Healing
- 7) Livelihood Support, Trade, and Micro-finance
- 8) Documentation and Legal Assistance
- 9) Environmental Management and Ecology
- 10) Communications
- 11) Disaster Management and Mitigation
- 12) Integrated Villages

**Ina Meyer-Stoll**, co-Secretariat for GEN Europe, writes from ZEGG, Germany

Achim Ecker and I will be doing a tour of the US conducting 'Forum' workshops. We are also open to giving presentations about ZEGG and the Global Ecovillage Network.

We will be arriving in New York on May 3rd and departing from San Francisco on June 20th. To schedule a workshop or for more information: [ina@gen-europe.org](mailto:ina@gen-europe.org)

**From the Editor: in honor of Will Keepin, Satyana Institute, Whidbey Island, USA**

I know that Will went to India to reconnect with a project he's been working on, helping the disadvantaged at a center giving aid and psychological comfort to orphans, single mothers, and battered women. Will has said Ecovillage Design principles apply to this center and his work there. We went ahead and included this news item for him since he doesn't have regular access to email. Thanks Will.

**Lucilla Borillo writes from Torri Superiore, near Genoa, Italy, and includes a letter sent from Massimo to May East on 1 February 2006**

Dear May,

we have been working at the programme, and we are still in the process of defining who will be our partners. We are working with the Italian Network RIVE, the Permaculture Academy, and others. (I have just finished writing, on behalf of the Italian Academy, the introduction to the translation into Italian of Bill Mollison's book, and it kept me busy for some time). We need to have the strong support of other people because our energy is not enough to launch a one month course in Italian, since it is difficult to find enough students to cover all the costs for one month of course.

The time-frame we have in mind for the EDE course is in about 12 months, in February - March 2007. So, we have not great hurry to receive the Certification now, but are still very much interested in being part of the process. I am still available as a teacher, and would be happy to see my name in Hildur's list of teachers, if it is published in the EDE journal, specifically for my area of expertise about retrofitting existing settlements in the mediterranean area.

Also, I would like to be still in the EDE mailing list so that I can read the messages and keep up to date with the discussion, also if I have little time to write back at the moment.

I will inform you of progress we make as we define the partnerships, so that the Certification group can see we are still working on this programme. Please let me know how much time we need to have the Certification for 2007.

All the best dear May, and thank you for all the work you are doing,  
Massimo.

The Torri delegate to the Italian network, Cristina, participated to the winter meeting held on February 11 & 12, and presented the proposal to the Wisdom Council. It received a lot of interest, but since Massimo was not there (but sick in bed...). the details could not be discussed, and the discussion is adjourned to the next meeting in mid-May. The reality of RIVE is that its members are small communities and not Findhorn-size ecovillages. Any one of the members is too small to run the full curriculum. So we need to find partners and we are actively pursuing this option. Today Massimo will receive the visit of a representative of the Italian School of Sustainability (<http://www.cascinasantabrera.it/scuola.html>) to discuss their partnership too.

At the moment, Torri is in a planning and re-organisation phase (huge amounts of accounting!). We are starting to receive the first tourist bookings after the winter pause, and are promoting our ecological tourism business. The idea is to launch the organic restaurant (meals and related cultural activity), and the guest house (for ecologically-minded tourists, and in particular for trekkers and excursionists).

The first course we will have in Ecological Communication (Jerome Liss method) with Eva Lotz, from ecovillage Upacchi (Arezzo), on April 24 / 28. We are active also in the Permaculture network, and Massimo has been very busy with the publication of the

Italian translation of Bill Mollison's book "Introduction to Permaculture". And, he does not want to cut on his farming time, that's really where his heart is, so he spent many afternoons pruning, mulching, and doing other garden work.

If you have the chance, please read some articles published on Torri Superiore recently:

Communities Magazine, Issue 129 Winter 2005, by Richard Register "The village can save the city" on ecovillages on traditional village model. Permaculture Activist, Issue 58 Winter 2005, by Peter Bane, Albert Bates, Keith Johnson "A village for the ages"

Not so recent but quite good is also Communities Magazine, Issue 125 Winter 2004, by Bill Metcalf "Torri Superiore: Restoring a medieval Italian village", where he defines Torri "... one of Europe's most beautiful ecovillages" (no less!)

## **New books! New articles! Meetings! Research!**

**From Hildur:** Eckhart Tolle **A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose** (2005) Dutton Adult; New York

From a spiritual worldview, Tolle describes how we can all be part of creating a new Earth by awakening to our life purpose. He describes the "painbody" (containing

negative emotions, fear, hatred, jealousy and anger), how it was created and how we can get rid of it. An eyeopener; very simple and useful for education.

**From Chris:** Leon Krier *Architecture Choice or Fate (1998)* Andreas Papadakis  
Publisher; Windsor, Berks, Great Britain

While not exactly 'new' I found this excellent book to be very timely. Krier, the designated planner for the Prince of Wales, has been described as the "godfather" of the movement to recover from the ill effects of Modernism. He articulates in eloquent detail his vision of a synergy of ecology and urbanism. With a 'growing edge' of Ecovillage Design being the use of fundamental principles and practices to retrofit urban patterns, designers will find this book immensely useful. Full of strikingly handsome plans and aerial views of urban quarter design, including the "new town" of Poundbury and a fictional Atlantis.

**From Maddy:** Patrick Whitefield *The Earth Care Manual: A Permaculture Handbook for Britain & Other Temperate Climates (2005)* Permanent Publications; The Sustainability Centre, East Meon, Hampshire, GU32 1HR, U.K.

Described as "the definitive Permaculture Design book," *The Earth Care Manual* gives a vision of a sustainable future and the practical steps we can take towards it, both large and small, urban and rural. The book defines Permaculture and places it in the context of the green movement. It contains

- An overview of Permaculture and its approach to: soil fertility, water, climate, microclimate, energy and materials.
- How to apply Permaculture to buildings, gardens, orchards, farms, woodland and biodiversity.

- A step-by-step guide to putting Permaculture into action, how to develop your home or project on Permaculture lines, plus many useful skills and techniques.

Both practical and inspiring, *The Earth Care Manual* is clearly and accessibly written by Patrick Whitefield, one of Europe's foremost permaculture teachers, designers and authors. Meticulously researched, informative and highly readable – it is *the* definitive book on temperate permaculture. Bursting with case studies, photographs, charts, diagrams and illustrations, it shows how to put permaculture into action and take a decisive step into an ecologically harmonious future.

“Recommended...a wonderfully practical book offering advice on the skills that will enable you to lead an environmentally sensitive lifestyle” – *The Daily Mail*

“A profound achievement in the ripening of the global permaculture movement...thorough and beautifully designed...an essential reference...highly recommended.” – *Permaculture Activist (USA)*

## From the Editor:

Max wanted to mention a new book he's discovered by David Anderson

***Environmental Economics and Resource Management*** (2003) of which an editorial review says, “[the author] offers a comprehensive, applied, policy-oriented text to provide students with a solid economic foundation that will allow them to better evaluate the pressing environmental issues.” I am also familiar with another book ***Environmental Economics: An Elementary Introduction*** (1993) by R. K. Turner, et al., which asserts that the essence of Environmental Economics “lies in a sequence of

logical steps: assessing the *economic* importance of environmental degradation; looking for the *economic* causes of degradation; and designing *economic* incentives to slow, halt and reverse that degradation” (p. vii). While Environmental Economics takes a big step forward by recognizing that “the environment is not a separate entity from

the economy,” it, like cohousing, still comes up short; for it still regards the environment as something “out there,” something that can still be managed effectively with conventional market mechanisms, if only the right indicators are included. For a “deeper” perspective, there is a sister discipline called *Ecological Economics*. In the highly recommended *A Survey of Ecological Economics* (1995) edited by Rajaram Krishnan, et al., we find “the idea that the world’s economies are a *function* of the earth’s ecosystems” (emphasis added). Ecological Economics goes so far as to propose a value system based on thermodynamic calculations, so that, just as in ecosystems, economies are evaluated on their ability to make optimum use of the initial solar input. For more information, see The International Society for Ecological Economics [www.ecoeco.org](http://www.ecoeco.org). In any case, there might just be room for some of these ideas in the EDE Curriculum.

Meeting and Call for papers: COMMUNITIES: YESTERDAY’S UTOPIA, TODAY’S REALITY.

**INTERNATIONAL COMMUNAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION** invites to its  
**NINTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE** in DAMANHUR, VALCHIUSELLA  
VALLEY, ITALY. **28nd JUNE TO 1st JULY 2007**; Post Conference Tour 2nd – 3rd  
July [rsoboly-t@bezeqint.net](mailto:rsoboly-t@bezeqint.net) tel: ++ 972 3 5344458

In closing, here's an editorial from **Maddy Harland**, editor of **Permaculture Magazine, UK**, called "FINDING A PLACE TO DANCE" – a sensitive piece that helps to place our urgently felt work in greater perspective:

History reveals that when humanity is faced with new challenges that cannot be solved with old thinking, new capacities at mental and biological levels will evolve. We are now living in a point in history when changing life conditions are of such magnitude that a new worldview with a transformative vision is beginning to emerge." Nancy Roof, co-founder, United Nations Values Caucus

Back in the mid nineties, when I first started writing editorials for Permaculture Magazine, my subject was often an explanation of permaculture design and why it was a good thing. Many greens at that time knew little about it, let alone the mainstream, and it was generally regarded as a dubious Australian invention unsuitable for export to cool temperate and other climatic adaptations. Time and the work of authors like Patrick Whitefield have relieved many of this misconception. Then, as I warmed to my job, I began beating the drum of environmental awareness, exhorting readers to sit up and take note of the reality of climate change, dwindling resources and biodiversity, the threatened fate of the Gulf Stream, Peak Oil... I was playing my part in trying to engage people in the process of changing their beliefs and lifestyles. Increasingly today, mainstream television and newspapers inform millions of people who want to hear. The science of climate change, our ecological planetary crisis and Peak Oil are accepted facts, even to the reluctant White House. We are not short of reliable information.

Despite this, the challenge for many is twofold. Firstly, we know what's going on in the wider world is true, but what can we do about it? The problems are huge and we can think it's up to governments to find solutions, not individuals. Secondly, even if we accept that we can make the small changes that collectively change the world, the news is so grim, what is the point? We're all gonna die anyway! It is obvious that ecovillagers do not fall into category one. They are already aware of the crisis and the need to respond, but they may just feel the hopelessness of the situation and fall into category two. We are all vulnerable to negative feelings. Given the enormity of our problems, this is a very sane response. I do... sometimes.

So how do we stay engaged in the face of catastrophic information like the consequence of Greenland melting in the near future? How do we keep on walking our talk and maintaining a sense of commitment and optimism, despite the timescale of reversing climate change et al.

Besides my work, I have a number of personal strategies to stay engaged. Firstly, I "follow my joy". This involves appreciating simple pleasures like sunsets and sunrises, seeds germinating, warm fires and good books, beautiful scenery, long walks, friends and my dear family. None of them cost money. I am not a great consumer. I don't give a damn about what car I drive (though I appreciate energy efficiency and well designed machines and tools). I find the deliberate obsolescence of designer clothes totally irritating. My friends know I love charity (aka thrift) shops!

Secondly, I remind myself that life can be totally unpredictable. I am old enough to remember the tanks rolling into Prague in 1968. As a little girl I heard the news on the radio and felt the fear. Later on, I could never have

predicted the sudden collapse of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union nor the triumph of Nelson Mandela and the establishment of a free South Africa.

This tells me that however dark our future may be, we cannot predict it in its entirety. It is therefore necessary to try and live this life in the moment and not allow ourselves to project our fears on to a future we don't yet know. This is not denial we still have to act it is an acknowledgement that marvellous, unexpected triumphs are possible. We humans are capable of fundamentally changing our worldviews and therefore our relationships with each other.

A poignant way in which I have been learning the art of living in the moment is from my elderly mother. Last year she had a stroke that has affected her memory. Remembering what she has done five minutes ago, let alone yesterday or last year, is difficult, sometimes impossible. Instead of being self-pitying and defeated, however, she has adapted to her situation with courage and magnanimity. The fact is that often there is only "the moment" for her and this has made her joyful and appreciative of each day she has left. No longer able to drive a car, she uses her empty garage as a place to dance. Adapted from the latest Permaculture Magazine 47 Editorial. For more information on the magazine please see [www.permaculture.co.uk](http://www.permaculture.co.uk)

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