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Southern California's Guide to Conscious Living

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VOLUME 19, NO. 2

JOHN ROBBINS

Vibrant Visionary


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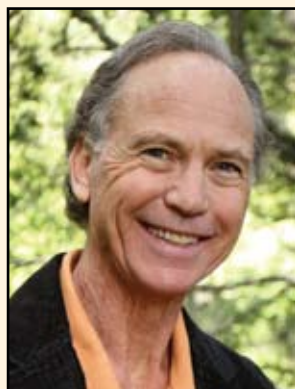
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John Robbins

Vibrant Visionary

By Donna Strong

John Robbins is one of the most passionate and articulate activists of the real food movement in America. Since his first book, *Diet for a New America* was published in 1987, he has been a major contributor of vital information to expand our understanding of issues regarding food.

Food is sustenance, and it is one of the primary sensual pleasures of life. Our daily choices of what to eat directly affects not only our health, it also directly impacts our sense of well-being. Given that the U.S. population now numbers over 311 million people, our collective food choices also have a colossal effect on the environment.

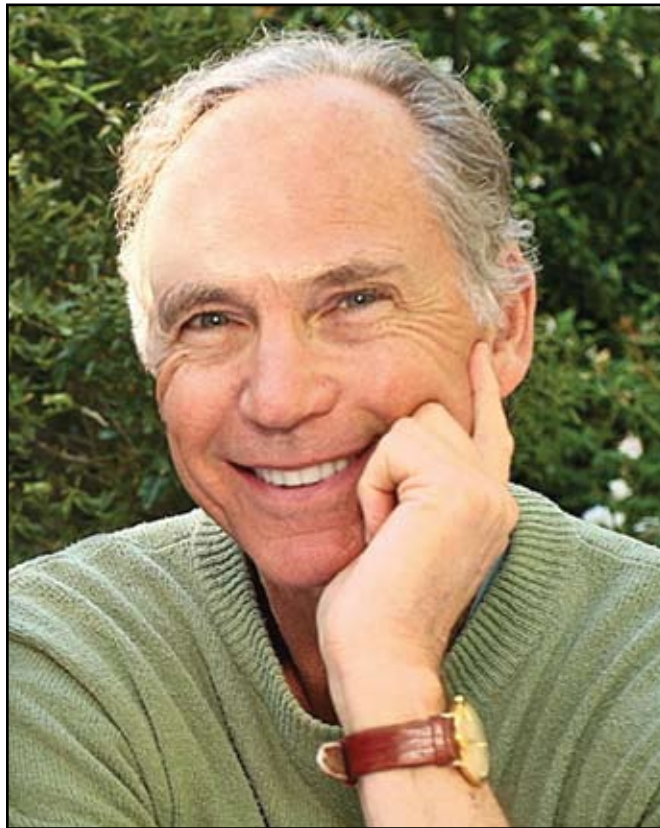
For several decades now, John has been educating us about the individual and environmental effects of corporate food production, or what he calls the Great American Food Machine. He has been a tireless crusader, using information as a call to wake up, demonstrating both the consequences of our choices and pointing out much-needed course corrections.

John began by living the pinnacle American Dream — his father Irv was a founding magnate of Baskin-Robbins ice cream. Yet even as a young man living in a privileged situation, he listened to the inner call to quest for a deeper dream. Instead of following in his father's footsteps, he settled onto a remote island in the Pacific Northwest with his wife Deo, where they learned to live from the land for a decade. This experience set the foundation for John's life work, using food as a sustainable practice of living.

Over the decades, John has become one of our country's foremost champions for expanding our social conscience and acting as a pivotal catalyst

for transforming our vision of America. He is kindling awareness of the essential affinity we share with other forms of life and greening our perspective on how to live with greater com-

seeking to increase their control over our food policies. Fast-food chains and industrial food systems are profiting while seeking to increase their dominance in the market. Along with that, you



passion and care, wholeness and vibrancy. We are fortunate to have a wide-ranging discussion with John in this annual issue devoted to the Environment.

Awareness: *As one of my favorite thought leaders, I would like to check in with you regarding some of the major trends you see converging and emerging in these intense times?*

John Robbins: Honestly, I see a collision taking place. On the one hand, Wal-Mart is now selling 25 percent of the food purchased in grocery stores and supermarkets. Monsanto is

have an increase in genetically-engineered acreage.

On the other hand — and this is the collision taking place — there are increasing numbers of people who want their food to carry a decreased carbon footprint. They want locally-grown and healthier foods, not food that has been genetically engineered. They also want to have a food-production system that is sustainable — friendly to the earth, friendly to the consumer, to the farm worker.

There's a growing awareness that food should be healthy, not a health hazard. So you have

these two forces in our society and they are colliding with each other. They want different things, so they are in conflict and it plays out in everyone's lives — at every dinner table, in every supermarket checkout stand and every restaurant.

It plays out on every farm and in our commodity programs. Are we going to have a greener diet that's going to be more earth-friendly or are we going to have a greener diet in the sense that it's going to the highest bidder so the decisions are defined by money?

McDonalds, Monsanto, Wal-Mart are on one side of this battle, and on the other side are people like me and Michael Pollan and Jonathan Safran Foer and Kathy Preston and Andy Weil and a whole lot of people including researchers like Dean Ornish and Caldwell Esselstyn and scientists like Colin Campbell.

A tremendous amount of evidence is surfacing about the health consequences of these two directions. One is leading to greater health for people and the other, to deteriorating health.

The industrial food machine is why we have the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) telling us one-third of our adolescents will develop diabetes. What's at stake is our personal health and possibly the stability of our planet and the viability of civilization.

Awareness: *You had mentioned in some of the information you sent me that there is a great deal of anguish in people. Is some of that anguish emanating from the issues you've just described?*

John Robbins: Yes. I think everybody feels that "business as usual" is taking us over a cliff. They may not know exactly where the cliff is or what, if any-

thing, they can do about it, but there is a sense of angst, and a sense of helplessness and fear. It's warranted. There are trends in our society that are quite frightening. Sometimes I think if you aren't afraid, you're not paying much attention.

I also think that the amount of fear we have is not a measure of whether we can get through this or not. If our passion is greater than our fear, if our commitment to connect with one another and with the power within ourselves that can see us through this adversity, then we will make it; we will turn the tide. We will generate healthy food systems and create ways of life that are sustainable and socially just and thriving.

Awareness: Do you feel in some ways that the standard American diet has derailed the American Dream?

John Robbins: I do. I think it has alienated us from our strengths in many ways. If you feed children junk food, they decrease their ability to concentrate and learn. They become anxious and agitated. Their self-image and self-confidence plummet. If you feed junk food to adults, the same thing happens.

Even if adults are choosing it and think it's an expression of their right to eat what they want, it's just as damaging. So the industrial food machine and factory farming and feedlot beef and the genetically-engineered and pesticide-laden foods are dividing us and separating us from our ability to respond fruitfully, creatively, spiritedly, joyfully, and effectively to problems that we have.

Awareness: I totally get you on that. Wonderfully said! One of the things I wanted to ask you about is becoming more inventive. You wrote about this quality in your book, *The New Good Life*, that addresses life in America after the economic collapse of 2008.

John Robbins: Yes. Becoming more creative, resourceful, resilient — it's really what this is about, and that happens when we are connected with one another. We find what we value, what is our treasure, what really is our richness. The beauty we

have is the ability to develop more love in the people you love and those who love you, to find the courage to love with your whole heart. That is where our richness lies. I don't think it's in the direction of accumulating more material things.

There is so much in our society that makes us want to eat high on the food chain and think that grain-fed beef is the reward of affluence and lentils are peasant food. We end up eating food that's bad for us and bad for the earth and plays into the profits of the industrial food machine.

Awareness: Well said. I wanted to share a comment of yours, that food gives expression to the great heart within. Would you talk about what you've noticed when we change our diet?

John Robbins: It's really beautiful, actually, when people change their diets and their bodies become more responsive to their spirits. They become more capable of expressing their inner intelligence. They become more emotionally stable. There's more inner peace. There's more sense of clarity in their thoughts. There's more sense of connection to their dreams. There's more sense of integration between the inner and outer aspects of their lives.

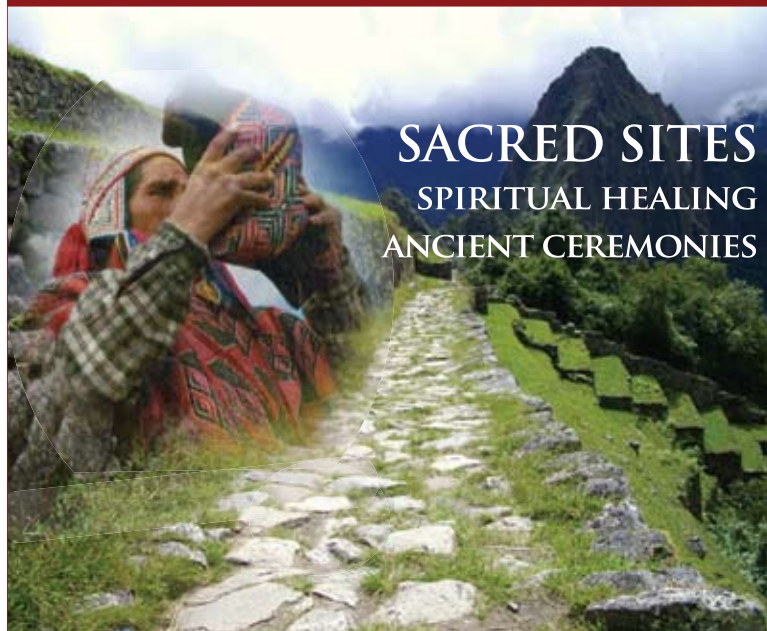
It's really an extraordinary thing people can do when they step out of the industrial food machine and start to grow some of their own food or buy food from local growers; shopping at local farmer's markets or getting involved in CSAs — community-supported agriculture — or being part of a co-op or any of the ways people start to inhabit their bioregion and get to know the food world that they live in.

Also, when people start eating healthier and make choices on behalf of their well-being, there's a commitment that's being expressed at a cellular level. They're making the statement that they deserve to be cared about; they deserve to be loved; that their well-being is worth cultivating, and then it flowers.

Awareness: Continuing with the subject of food, I've been doing research for a couple of

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Robbins...

(Continued from page 7)

years on the Internet about all the ways in which gardens are springing up across the country. With the decentralized movement of people having more direct access to food, what do you see happening as people are putting their hands in the soil and literally bringing home their own broccoli?

John Robbins: I'm really glad to be seeing it. In the industrial food system, we have come to depend on very long supply chains. Carrots, and celery and strawberries all travel thousands of miles from the Earth to the consumer, and we take that for granted. That system has only made any sense at all — if it ever has — in the day of cheap diesel fuel, in particular, for trucks.

We need to be able to grow food where we are and not depend on the long supply chains that are vulnerable to disruption in many ways and completely dependent on the cost of fuel. Growing food in cities, on rooftops, replacing lawns — which really are very impractical in the first place — with vegetables, this is wonderful.

We could grow a great percentage of our fresh produce right where we're living. It's actually one of the nice things I am seeing. Every town I go to, people are growing more food.

Awareness: What are you noticing when people do that?

John Robbins: You know, they always say to me that they never knew how good a tomato tastes. The only tomatoes most people have ever eaten have been shipped a thousand miles or more, and they're not bred for taste or nutrition, they're bred to ship thousands of miles and still look a certain way on the shelf.

People are now finding out what a real tomato is, or a real carrot, or a real cabbage. They are beautiful things, and yet we look down on foods like cabbages, thinking, "Only the poor would eat that." Well, we impoverish ourselves when we think that way. We've taken classism and used it to separate us from

the Earth. Now many of us are restoring that connection, and growing foods is a terrific way to do that.

Awareness: That's very well said. I wanted to thank you for the newspaper article you sent. I was deeply inspired by your family's experience with your twin grandsons, River and Bodhi. I wanted to ask you about giving us some understanding about the wonderful 'poise under pressure' and 'compassion in action' that your family has been developing.

John Robbins: Well, thank you. It is not easy to raise special needs kids, and we have two. River and Bodhi are autistic and have severe developmental delays. It's great that we have four adults here because it's a tremendous challenge, frankly, to raise kids even under the best of conditions. With conditions like this, it's much more demanding.

You know, adversity happens in everyone's life, whether as health or economic issues — there are so many ways that adversity can appear. Some people respond to adversity with self-pity, with distraction, with avoidance. They don't feel capable. Yet there's another path in which we respond to adversity by becoming open to powers of response that we might otherwise have never known we had access to.

There's something about adversity — if we face it fully together using our strengths, then it's as Hemingway said, we become "stronger in the broken places." How we respond to adversity says a tremendous amount about the kind of people we are becoming.

Awareness: I would agree with you, and it feels like one of the things that your family did was to draw from your core values of care and compassion.

John Robbins: When our grandkids were born, they were extremely premature and had all these difficulties. You know, are we going to respond with compassion or without it? My fundamental belief is that when we live by love's guidance and let love govern our lives and teach us and shape us and direct us, then we become not only bet-

ter people, but we become more true people. That's my path, and it's my choice and my prayer.

Awareness: *It struck me how you've worked with facing pain and adversity on a deep personal level, and you're able to address how we move from these disconnected places that are very painful...*

John Robbins: Yes. It is the ability to overcome what divides us. Sometimes we project

My definition of a successful person is someone who brings out the best in other people.

our shadow onto other people and then we demonize them or fear them. In that fear, we give power to the differences, rather than empower our ability to connect despite the differences or to even celebrate the differences.

Someone doesn't have to think like me, or come from the same economic or cultural background, or have the same religious beliefs for me to find something worthwhile in them; my goal is to find something to respect and appreciate. *My definition of a successful person is someone who brings out the best in other people.*

Awareness: *That's an excellent definition! I'm going to be quoting you on that.*

John Robbins: In society, if you say someone is a successful person, generally what is meant is that the person has acquired a lot of money, and I think that by defining success so materially, we impoverish ourselves, we lose touch with where our real richness lies.

So I have redefined a successful person as somebody who brings out the best in others; one who adds beauty to the world, or love or caring or happiness by the way they are with other people and the planet.

Awareness: *I'm so with you, because everybody has that power within.*

John Robbins: I think so. I think we're happiest when we're adding to the happiness in the world. The truth — I think we're

much more connected with one another than we normally realize. We're part of each other's dreams. We're part of each other's hearts and how we treat each other — the level of respect that we live with for one another and ourselves really determines the quality of life that we're going to generate as a society.

When I hear "greed is good" from certain economic or political philosophers, I think they are missing the boat entirely. Greed is not good. Greed takes us away from our sense of sufficiency, our sense of peace, out of which our generosity arises; out of which we care for one another without feeling we are sacrificing or depriving ourselves.

Awareness: *Then comes a real sense of abundance.*

John Robbins: Yes. Truly, the sense of abundance that we all look for — a sense of prosperity and thriving, and richness that we all seek — it's wonderful that we seek it. It's just that we've been taught to look for it in the wrong places. Instead, we need to look at how abundantly can you love or care, how abundantly can you honor others, rather than thinking of abundance as having a 14,000-square-foot home or some stupid thing like that. In the food world, we can eat simply so others may simply eat. We don't have to eat high on the food chain and consume an extravagant amount of calories and resources in the process.

Awareness: *Yes. I think you're clearly making the point that people are faced with the choice of whether they're going to keep going down the route of compensatory pastimes or find real growth and pleasure from eating more authentically.*

John Robbins: Yes. Think of all the addictions that we so easily succumb to. Often it's because we're avoiding a sense of loss and pain that's part of our experience as human beings. If

we can find in ourselves, with the support of one another, the ability to face the loss and disappointment, the betrayal, the anguish, and work through it, then we become stronger, more committed, more passionate and genuine people, then we're people of the Earth instead of people of the lie.

Awareness: *Food itself is such a gift from the Earth and it's a gift from the divine. When we have a sense of that, our lives are very full.*

John Robbins: Yes! I love what you said, "Food is a gift from the Earth." It reminds me of the power of gratitude and humility — of being receptive to these gifts,

and how differently it feels to live as a human being with gratitude versus with entitlement. To experience food as a gift of the Earth just creates a whole different vibration, a whole different frequency of consciousness.

John will be speaking at the Health Freedom Expo in Long Beach Sunday, March 4 at 2pm in Room 102C.

For more info on John's events and books, see www.JohnRobbins.info

Donna Strong is a writer and creative catalyst with a passion for flow-ers and flourishing. Donna's book, *Coming Home to Calm*, shares her perspective on creative spirituality, of bringing our soul's creative capacity into human life. For more information, visit www.donnastrong.com

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The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.

— Mahatma Gandhi

Advice from Hollywood's Greenest Actor

An Interview with Ed Begley, Jr.

By Randy Peyser

How many Hollywood stars do you know who would rather ride their bikes to work than show up in a Beamer?

Ed Begley, Jr. rides his bike to a film shoot. He takes public transportation to a TV taping. He grows his own vegetables, captures water for his fruit trees in an underground cistern, and is driven to teach others how they, too, can make a positive impact on the environment.

Begley is the author of *Ed Begley's Guide to Sustainable Living*, and co-star, with his wife, Rachelle Carson, of the reality TV series, *Living with Ed*. He has received six Emmy nominations for his role in the TV series, "St. Elsewhere" and has been a familiar face on such TV shows as "Six Feet Under," "Arrested Development," and "Boston Legal." His film credits include "Pineapple Express," "Best In Show," "Batman Forever," "The Accidental Tourist," and others. He will also be starring in a new CBS comedy called, "Gary Unmarried."

Begley has been called "Hollywood's Greenest Actor," an "Uber-Environmentalist," and even "Eco-obsessed." In addition to his prolific TV and film work, he is active on the boards of Friends of the Earth, Tree People, and many other environmental organizations. He has been the recipient of awards from the California League of Conservation Voters, the Coalition for Clean Air, the Santa Monica Baykeeper, Heal the Bay, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and others.

Begley is a passionate way shower for those of us who desire to step up our part in saving the planet. What impressed me the most during our interview was his repeated emphasis on

focusing on the small steps that anyone can take to contribute to energy efficiency, without having a movie star's budget.

Randy Peyser: Can you talk about your mission?

Ed Begley, Jr.: I didn't intend to be on a mission. I'd lived in

said, "Sign me up." These were not theoretical problems about some future ozone depletion or climate change; they were real things happening to me that I could taste and feel in my lungs and that I could see in the Bay.

So I got involved, and I did all this stuff on a very modest

what I could afford. As a result, I had extra money in my pocket. So, my mission, if you want to call it that, is to share this information.

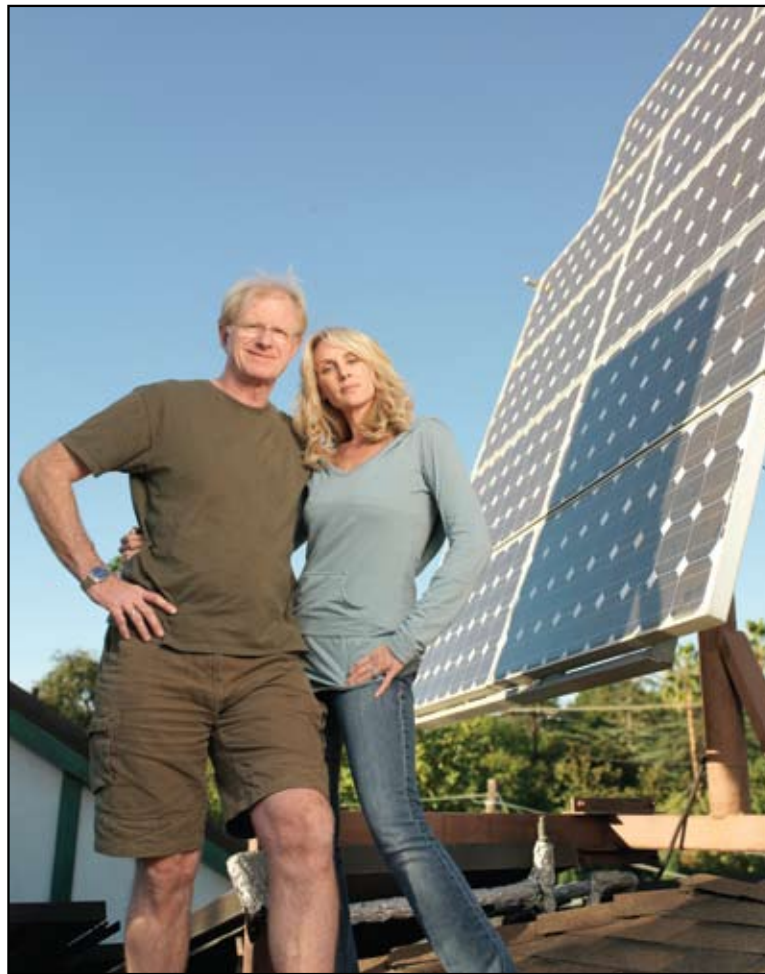
Randy: What are some things you've done to your home?

Ed: I started in 1970 with the cheap and easy stuff. In 1990, I started to take my environmental activism to another level. It was the 20th Anniversary of Earth Day. There was a book out called, *50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth*. I did all 50 of them and they worked. I bought weather stripping with an adhesive backing. I put in compact fluorescent bulbs. I got an energy-saving, programmable thermostat. The gas company offered a 0% loan to put insulation in my attic. Right away, my energy bills plummeted.

Again, I had extra dough in my pocket so I decided to do more. I put up solar hot water. My natural gas bill dropped even more. I put in a drought-tolerant garden, which meant less money for gardening, and no money on garden supplies or lawn amendments. I took out my lawn and put in fruit trees. I was saving money at the grocery store by growing fruit. The trees quickly paid for themselves.

I put up solar electric. That's a big-ticket item, but I theorized that I would get my money back over time and I have. The State and Federal government now provides assistance in most cases. There are all kinds of rebates. And if you don't want to own solar panels, you can put them on your roof for \$500 down. There are people all over the country leasing solar panels.

Then I decided to see what I could do beyond that book. I needed to put up a fence. The only reason my fence stayed up was because the termites were holding hands. I found fencing



Ed Begley, Jr. and wife Rachelle Carson. Photo courtesy of BCII.

Los Angeles for two decades and was fed up with the smog. When the first Earth Day was announced in 1970, they talked about the dirty water. I'd seen that at the Santa Monica Bay. They talked about the dirty air. I breathed that for years. I

budget. I was a struggling actor in 1970. I started recycling, composting, using public transportation, riding a bike, eating lower in the food chain, and using vinegar, water and baking soda to clean things. I didn't buy expensive solar panels; I just did

made out of recycled plastic.

I also put in an underground cistern where I collect rainwater. I have 550 gallons underground that I use to water my vegetable gardens and trees. That's free water from the sky. These are a few examples of the things I've done.

Randy: What are some innovations that people don't know about but should?

Ed: I alluded to one briefly; it's the new solar leasing program. Sanyo's is the best. They have bi-facial solar panels. These are panels that have both a front and back face. Normally, the back face has a backing that is just a coating that serves no purpose. These panels get sunlight from the bounce off your roof, as well as from the sunlight striking on the top of the panel. You get extra current from the bottom of the panel. That's very exciting and something that not a lot of people know about.

Other innovations are rain-water catchment systems that are available where you can store up to 10,000 gallons of water underground.

Randy: Can you tell us about one of the boards you serve on?

Ed: I've been on the Coalition for Clean Air for years. In 1970, they told kids: "No playground today; you must stay inside," because the smog was so bad. Now we have four times the cars and millions more people, but we have cut that smog in half.

We can thank the American Lung Association and other advocates for clean air, but the Coalition for Clean Air brought government leaders, the private sector, citizen activists, and associations together to hold the Air District responsible and to get them to enact the kinds of rules we needed to clean up the air.

Randy: Where should someone start if they want to make a difference?

Ed: I suggest that people do it exactly the way I did — pick the "low-hanging fruit" first. Do the cheap and easy stuff. I didn't run out and get solar in 1970. I would have gone broke. I did what I could. Do that. There are so many choices today to make your utility bills drop consider-

ably. Use public transportation. Get on a bike. Do it in a fiscally-responsible manner and you will save money if you do it right.

Live simply so that others can simply live.

Randy: Can small steps really make a difference?

Ed: If everyone in America put into efficiency everything they could afford, we could quickly reduce that horrible number of 350 billion dollars, which is the amount of money leaving the country every year for foreign oil. How many wind turbines could we build for \$350 billion?

Randy: How can someone figure out what to do to make their home more energy efficient?

Ed: I recommend that people do an energy audit first. I had a book and a TV show about energy efficiency. When the energy auditors came to do a home-energy audit of my house, I was sure they wouldn't find anything. But they were able to cut my natural gas bill and my electric bill in half!

If I could cut my bills in half, think about what every home in America could do. Do an energy audit for your home, then pick

the low-hanging fruit first. Save some money, then think about the solar.

Randy: I love your references to low-hanging fruit, considering you plant fruit trees in your yard.

Ed: That's true. I'm eating delicious tangerines. I've got lemons and kale in the backyard, and I have broccoli and lettuce for dinner tonight. There's nothing more delicious than fresh produce.

Randy: What's next for you?

Ed: I'm building a new, LEED platinum green home. (LEED is a rating system for the design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings. Platinum is the highest lev-

el of LEED certification.) I want to demonstrate what you can do by building from the ground up. You can have a passive solar design where you align the house with the movement and patterns of the sun in summer and winter for the Summer and Winter Solstices and the Fall and Spring Equinoxes.

Randy: Final thoughts?

Ed: The basic underlying principle for all I do is: Live simply so that others can simply live.

For more information, visit www.EdBegley.com. You can follow Ed Begley, Jr. on Twitter at EdBegleyJr.

Randy Peyser is the author of *The Power of Miracle Thinking*, www.MiracleThinking.com. She also edits books and helps people find agents and publishers. www.AuthorOneStop.com

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Steve Trash Uses Magic to Entertain & Educate the Power of Recycling

By Annabelle Stevens

“You have REAL green magic inside, don’t forget to use it.”

That’s the eco-empowering message that green entertainer Steve Trash-Rockin’ Eco Hero and Kid Comedian brings to adoring fans all over the planet. Since 1984, Steve Trash has entertained over 20 million kids with live ecological illusions, magic tricks, and family-friendly fun appearing in live venues all over the world, including Japan, Australia, Canada, Portugal, Spain and across the United States.

While performing green magic, Trash chats up audiences of all ages, educating people on the value of the “three R’s; reduce, reuse, and recycle. His zany Green Magic Show takes a refreshing and unexpected spin on the importance of recycling. Each of his tricks performed with “found object trash” is inspired by his personal view that everything in the natural world is connected and people should be keenly aware of this.

“I do lots of tricks with trash, found objects,” says Steve. “An object that you considered not valuable becomes valuable by changing the way you think about it. I can do magic with something that has been thrown away and therefore it becomes valuable again.”

Steve grew up in Alabama, and spent most of his childhood in the woods, playing and learning about nature. His passion for magic was born early when his Grandfather shared a vanishing key secret with him, and Steve was hooked. He started doing his own magic when a Scouting Expo required each Cub Scout to perform a magic trick. Enjoying the reaction he got, he never stopped.

Around 1981, Mr. Electric, Marvyn Roy suggested I should “go find my light bulb,” Steve explains. “What he meant was to find something that would make me unique as an enter-

tainer/magician in the marketplace. So, very early on, I was looking for a hook or something that rang true for me personally and emotionally.

Steve also took advice from Mark Kornhauser. “Mark once said that we should pick three

threw away — old footlockers, shoes, and junk store stuff — so he started creating props out of items that had been discarded. That’s when, Steve Trash-Rockin’ Eco’ Hero was born. After studying theater in Alabama, Trash perfected his routine, working

cards into a green deck and my famous eco-effect; transforming real trash into real money.”

He enjoys that style of magic a lot, however, he feels most at home in a theater. Steve started performing in plays when he was eight years old and studied acting in college. Whatever the venue, Steve focus is on the family market. Having a special connection with kids, allows him to create green magic that gets his message across in a “fun” way — so they remember the content and the magic.

“The best thing about being a green magician is that you can create amazing illusions, but they also “mean” something. The audience can see the pieces of paper instantly change into cold hard cash. It’s both a magic trick and a metaphor for the value of natural resources,” says Trash.

Steve has attracted the attention of adult audiences too. His powerful green magic illusion — recycling an aluminum can is a crowd favorite. In this effect, which he performs live on the street and on the stage, he refills and reseals an empty aluminum can in less than six seconds. He leaves his fans captivated and thinking about their power to make a positive difference in the world.

Steve also really enjoys performing big illusions like the Magical Recycler — in which a young lady wearing a very old and tattered dress is magically recycled into a young lady wearing a lovely new dress. Every trick he performs has an eco-friendly message and he makes recycling cool!

Outside of his green magic shows, Steve is actively involved in making the world a better place. He’s a member of the National Recycling Coalition, the North American Environmental Education Association, the Coalition for Quality Chil-



Photo by Patrick Hood

of our best characteristics and build a character based on that. I chose big, comical, and environmental. I love the environment and it’s important to me that we have a better understanding of our connection.”

Merging these passions, Steve began searching for a way to do magic tricks with trash. As a child he had always been fascinated by the things people

his “street magic” in New York, Los Angeles, and Tokyo.

Steve works state fairs in the summer and performing arts centers and schools in the fall and spring, traveling 100 to 200 days a year. “My fair shows are similar to street magic shows,” says Steve, “The audience is very close to me and I’m doing sleight-of-hand magic tricks, including changing a red deck of

dren's Media and a founding board member of Keep the Shoals Beautiful, a non-profit organization with the mission of protecting and enhancing The Shoals area of northwest Alabama.

Steve was featured at the 2011 "Keep America Beautiful, Great America Cleanup" national kickoff in New York City's Times Square and won the 2011 Environmental Educator of the Year Award. He also performed at Hollywood's famous Magic Castle, turning the castle green for the first time. Unlike some entertainers who guard their "territory," Trash encourages all magicians to join the cause. He goes as far as to make suggestions on how other magicians can get started.

Steve lives in a very energy-efficient home out in the woods of Frog Pond, Alabama. Frog Pond Manor is an earth-bermed home, meaning, it is partially buried in the earth, allowing the natural insulating abilities of dirt to warm and cool it. It features all the eco-amenities you would expect: on-demand gas water heater and a walk-in recycling closet.

"I'd really like for us to be on a path toward energy sustainability in the U.S. and around the world. If people understand nature and how it works, they will make good decisions about how they can use the planet's resources in a smart way."

This year, Steve will explore a new venture and offer inspirational keynote addresses to businesses presenting "bottom-line" evidence that sustainability efforts from large and small companies can give them an edge in the global marketplace. This keynote will integrate his life-long passion for both business and the environment.

Please visit: www.stevetrash.com or www.stevetrash.net

Kids Konserve™ Lessens Lunchtime Waste

By Courtney Straub

Kids Konserve™, manufacturer of non-toxic, waste-free lunch packing items for both kids and adults, helps make lunch and other on-the-go meals more sustainable. The company transforms waste-producing plastic bottles into reusable, Insulated Lunch Totes, and offers reusable, waste-free "Food Kozies™" as an alternative to plastic baggies.

"While the movement to eat healthier picks up steam, many people still rely on plastic baggies and paper sacks to carry their lunch to the office, throwing bags "away" after use," explained Chance Claxton, Kids Konserve co-founder. "Our research indicates that the average child creates 67 pounds of lunchtime trash, headed to our ever-growing landfills each school year! We are providing kids and adults with healthier lunch-packing solutions, better for both people and planet."

More than 60 million plastic water bottles are thrown away in the U.S. each day. On Earth Day, or any day, put them to good use and help ease this environmental burden with a Kids Konserve Insulated Lunch Tote.

To offset the 500 billion to a trillion plastic bags consumed worldwide each year, ditch plastic baggies and wrap food in a reusable, recyclable and BPA-free Kids Konserve Food Kozy™. Kozies are ideal for preserving the freshness of everything from sandwiches, bagels and fruit slices to large blocks of cheese. They can also be used to wrap meats and vegetables for refrigeration.

For more information, visit: www.kidskonserve.com

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"GREEN WISH" MAKES A LOCAL IMPACT

An Interview with Raphael Sbarge

By Randy Peyser

Raphael Sbarge is the Founder of Green Wish, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping local environmental organizations raise funds in their communities through barcoded donation cards situated in local retail shops.

While Raphael may be known for his roles in such films as *Risky Business*, *My Science Project*, *Independence Day*, *Pearl Harbor*, and others, or for his seasons on *The Guardian*, or for his appearances on TV movies, such as, *Billionaire Boys Club*, *Introducing Dorothy Dandridge*, and others, the actor is just as equally passionate about making a positive environmental impact on the world his two children will inherit.

Randy Peyser: How did Green Wish get started?

Raphael Sbarge: I am a dad and the birth of my daughter was my inspiration. About five years ago, when I looked around, I thought about what she would get from inheriting all of "this." I started to think about what I could do as a parent. There is so much need. I saw Green Wish as a way to make a difference.

Randy: How does Green Wish work?

Raphael: There are barcoded cards at cash registers in stores. People make donations and the funds get encoded into an account that is associated with Green Wish.

Randy: How many organizations do you fund?

Raphael: Nine local green organizations that cover the gamut — from sustainable education, to covering the air, water, the forests and more. 90% of the money that gets collected goes directly to these organizations.

Randy: Which organizations do you fund?

Raphael: Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots, www.rootsandshoots.org; Organic Farming Research

Foundation, <http://ofrf.org>; Santa Monica Baykeeper, www.smbaykeeper.org; Surfrider Foundation, www.surfrider.org; Northeast Trees, www.northeasttrees.org; Los Angeles Conservation Corps, www.lacorps.org; Friends of Los Angeles River, <http://folar.org>; Coalition for Clean Air, www.coalitionforcleanair.org; Algalita Marine Research Foundation, www.algalita.org

Randy: How much money have you raised?

Raphael: \$50,000 over two years. That's not nearly enough, but it's a good beginning. When I call organizations to let them know we'll be sending money to them, they often burst into tears. They said, "We need this money so much," and "this is such a wonderful and creative way to expand our reach." I find working on Green Wish to be a "natural Prozac" because I feel good when I'm working on it.

Randy: Is Green Wish only in Los Angeles?

Raphael: Right now it is. Once we get larger, we can "clone" the program all over the country.

Randy: Where can people donate in Los Angeles?

Raphael: Our local sponsors are Anawalt Lumber, UNIQUE Los Angeles, M Street Coffee, Rev 7, KellyGreen, TailWashers, Extrabux.com, and The Green Garmento.

Randy: Are you working on any other kinds of programs?

Raphael: We started an "EEK-O"-Halloween Program. We're providing access to the schools for these nine environmental groups to speak to the children so the kids learn about the environment from a local point of view.

For Halloween, the children also carry a box with a globe on it. It allows them to raise money for the nine local groups. The children write their "Green Wish" on their boxes. Some of

their green wishes are to: "plant more trees; recycle more; be kind to the animals; have flying cars that don't use gasoline;" and "don't use oil that kills birds and turtles."



The EEK-O-Halloween Program gives kids a tactile sense of what is happening around them environmentally, and it shows them the good work that people are doing.

Randy: Ed Begley, Jr. (who I've written about in this issue), and his wife, Rachelle, are very supportive of Green Wish. Can you talk about their involvement?

Raphael: Ed and Rachelle were excited about the idea of Green Wish when I first approached them. Other than Al Gore, Ed Begley is the face of the environmental movement. Thank God Ed Begley exists in the world. He does so much good and is tirelessly committed to making sure the word gets out. He liked the idea that one organization could help many.

Ed and Rachelle know the money will get to the organizations to which it is promised. Ed also helped provide vision, and he knows which organizations are doing good work. For Ed, and for me, too, it's all about the next generation and what we

are going to leave our children.

Randy: Where do you see the biggest need?

Raphael: Global warming. We just did a series of interviews about global warming from a scientist's point of view with Jess Adkins, a climatologist on our Board. There are many aspects related to global warming. You can make a difference through legislation, or through education, by teaching children to recycle, to reuse, to plant more trees, or by considering what you're putting into the water or spraying into the air.

Randy: Do you have any upcoming events?

Raphael: Yes, Ed and Rachelle are building the most ecologically-advanced home in North America, and perhaps in the world. Look for our web series documentary about it. It's called, "On Begley Street." Ed and Rachelle took their 1936 home and deconstructed it. They recycled 94% of the materials for that house. For example, the drywall was ground up into gypsum and given to avocado farmers; the light fixtures and windows went to Habitat for Humanity. The lumber was shipped to Mexico and turned into a chapel.

It's a remarkable project and they have an incredible team of builders. They have a solar array on the worksite, so they are working from the power of the sun.

Randy: What is your wish for the planet?

Raphael: My wish is that we can hopefully leave the planet a little better, or at least, no worse, than how we received it, for the next generation.

For more information, or to volunteer for Green Wish, please go to GreenWish.com

Randy Peyser is the author of *The Power of Miracle Thinking*, www.MiracleThinking.com. She also edits books and helps people find agents and publishers. www.AuthorOneStop.com

What Are You Doing for Earth Day This Year?

By Carolyn Chase

This year's Earth Day theme is "It's Our Nature." It's our nature. That is to say, it's human nature to build and explore. Especially in the 20th century, it's our nature to transform massive areas on the earth for our own uses.

It's our nature. That is to say, all life is dependent on the natural world: all "functions" of plants and animals that create and maintain the atmosphere, the flows of water and waste and food. It's in our best interest to conserve and protect nature and the natural functions of earth.

But also, it's our nature to ignore the important in favor of the convenient. Rather than conservation being a valued and protected part of our culture, we need to have things like "Earth Day" because we need to be reminded. We need to join together and spread the word.

And so, those of us who want to help create a clean, healthy environment will gather at the 23rd annual EarthFair in Balboa Park on Sunday, April 22 from 10am to 5pm. More than 350 organizations will be present to help spread the word in a way that makes a tangible difference.

Five entertainment venues, the Children's Earth Parade and activity area, an energy-efficient vehicle show and eco-friendly foods make for a great day in the park for the whole family.

If just attending the event isn't enough for you, step it up by volunteering. EarthFair is produced by volunteers, both at the event and before. Volunteer online at EarthDayWeb.org, or call (858) 272-7370 if you are interested in an advance job or special project.

If you can not volunteer for Earth Day on the 22nd, visit the San Diego EarthWorks website at EarthDayWeb.org and browse the EarthFair online exhibitors'

list where you can find a new volunteer niche online.

Human nature can also be our



Stand Up For Nature

undoing. It is our nature.

Consider climate change. Everyone agrees the geography of the earth has changed greatly over time. Everyone agrees there have been ice ages and warmer ages in earth's past. Whether or not it's being caused by human industrial activities, or caused by an Almighty Being, shouldn't the discussions be about how to address the challenges?

But it's not. It's decidedly not. We're still having to fight against massive new pipelines and dangerous oil-drilling schemes. The massive deepwater blowout in the Gulf of Mexico seems to have taught us little or nothing.

We take for granted most of the scientific progress we enjoy. Yet we tolerate a political culture that is actively turning away from science, cutting scientific research and education, and denying widely-held scien-

tific truths about earth's natural systems.

The human response needs to be to rise to the challenge, rather than arguing over it, or making it actively worse. We're ill-prepared to overcome the influence of billions of dollars from global commercial interests.

But if you care about nature and America, you must surely see the only way to overcome that influence will be through the actions of millions — yes millions — of Americans using tools of democracy. We have seen how it is done around the world — massive, persistent protests. We have only to organize them here.

This is an important election

year; is it your time to get active in politics? The Sierra Club Political Committee evaluates candidates for their environmental views. Watch for their endorsements or join in the process. The environment is completely under-represented, opposed by a new, unlimited flood of private interest money — much of it from oil interests. (We don't really know who is buying the election, do we?)

Don't take the outcome for granted. Agitate, negotiate, litigate, educate, demonstrate, recreate: there is much work to be done. There are many, many ways that you can make a difference. Choose a new one for this Earth Day. Make it part of your nature.

For additional information about EarthFair call (858) 272-7370 or visit: EarthDayWeb.org



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Natural Reflections

By Gene Sager, Palomar College

WORD ABUSE

My research on natural and green products includes trips to the local supermarket where I read labels and packages, taking copious notes as I stand in the aisles. Sympathetic female shoppers stop and ask if I need help. I do present a pathetic image, I suppose, as I puzzle over promising claims on the packages. This is a dead serious topic (including crucial health and environmental issues) and an amusing investigation (devious or outlandish claims abound).

Most puzzling on a recent trip to the market was a cheeto-type product "Made With All Natural Oil." I read the long list of ingredients and found they include "partially hydrogenated soybean oil" — an extraordinarily unnatural oil and an ingredient many doctors tell us to avoid in any amount.

I called the company's "nutrition expert" to inquire about the discrepancy. The reply was quick and confident: the hydrogenated oil is in the seasoning, not in the cheetos themselves. I objected that the seasoning and the cheetos are one — there is no separate packet for seasoning. The seasoning is cooked in. The expert held steadfast to the cheetos and seasoning distinction, and so ended the conversation.

A fascinating category of foods today is the energy/health bar. Filled with fruits and nuts, they are touted as a "natural snack" but any random check of the ingredients reveals that most of the fruit used isn't organic. I take it for granted that non-organic fruit is not natural because most pesticides and herbicides are not natural. These poisons remain in the fruit, so we should not call these energy bars "natural."

Meanwhile, marketeers engage in tokenism, taking the lack of preservatives as sufficient to warrant the label "natural." What is worse, many fruits used in these bars are members of the

notorious "dirty dozen gang" — the twelve foods that are most dangerous if not organic. For example, non-organic apples, cherries, and strawberries are health hazards.

Let I be dismissed as an inveterate complainer, I can assure you that some uses of the word "natural" for foods and other things meet with my approval. The word "natural" is often over-used and abused, but not in the name of a local landscape company called "Natural Landscapes."

They use native organic plants, locally grown. In my area this means live oak trees and buckwheat. Instead of thirsty grasses, they will use ground covers like manzanita and sages. Native plants fit the ecosystem — the weather, the soil, the rocks, the birds, insects, and animals; "natural" means "in harmony with nature."

In what follows we will test out the notions of "natural" and "in harmony with nature;" as they stand, these words are far too vague. They need to be worked out in specifics — in various kinds of living conditions, products, and in the activities of daily life. We should not hesitate to criticize phony or impractical ideas of the natural life.

NATURAL MEAT

Amid the multifarious uses of the poor word "natural," the claims made for foods are arguably the most common and the most important. While most food ads and labels remain unregulated, the United States Department of Agriculture has established an official label to designate certain meat as natural: it must be free of artificial colors, flavors, sweeteners, and preservatives; and "only minimally processed."

Although the "minimally processed" term has no teeth since it is too vague, the prohibition of additives like artificial colors and preservatives is clear enough. What is also clear is the omissions of all reference as to how the animal was raised; these matters are conspicuous by their absence.

What was the animal fed? Were its natural instincts suppressed? Most beef cattle in North America are subjected to confinement in feedlots where they are fed grains and given antibiotics.

Many will have been given growth hormones. The antibiotics and hormones are retained in the meat which can bear the label "natural." Ruminant animals like cattle do not naturally eat grain; it upsets their stomachs. It goes against their nature to stand in a cramped feedlot for months.

If "natural" means "in harmony with nature," beef production raises a host of serious health and environmental issues. Are the grass and grain organic? How much water does beef production take from our supplies? How can we produce natural meat from such an unnatural process? No wonder the Union of Concerned Scientists lists the USDA label "Natural Meat" in their "Buyer Beware" category.

One lesson to be learned is that we are still thinking of the world and our food in a bit-by-bit fashion. We have heard it said that all things in nature are inter-related, but we still think of the animal feed as one thing and the beef patty as a separate item. The cheetos are one thing and the seasoning another. The "natural spring water" is one thing and the handy plastic water bottle is another.

URBAN MAKEOVER

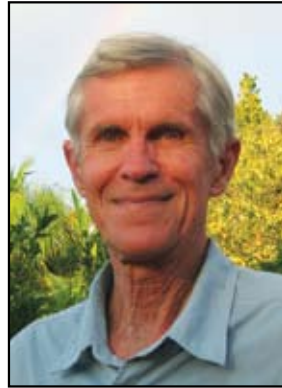
Issues about the natural life are not limited to products and services. The natural life is a way of life, a lifestyle, daily activities. It is sometimes stereotyped as a return to a primitive life, and critics of naturalism challenge us by saying, "If you are 'into' living a natural life, why don't you move to a cabin in the woods or live with the Indians or live like the Amish?"

Actually this primitive image of naturalness is quite unrealistic and would distract the natural life movement from its contemporary approach and goals.

The primitive image assumes that technology is suspect; and it assumes that city life cannot be natural. These assumptions are misleading, if not flatly false. It is our nature as human beings to invent and use tools. Today, technology is a mixed bag — some useful and relatively safe, some wasteful and dangerous. Discretion is called for.

Some technology can be produced so that its contribution outweighs its negative environmental impact. Computers and mass-transit tech are two examples. The natural life today involves electronic networks to inform and coordinate efforts to preserve the natural environment. The new mass transit is high tech and far superior to "my car culture" (MCC). MCC is an obsessive way of life based on highly inefficient gas-fired boxes mostly used by just one humanoid at a time.

Advocates of the primitive image assume that life in the city cannot be natural. This image of the city has it filled with asphalt and cement, noisy, crowded, and polluted. Apartments, condos, and houses are crammed together with little or no green space. This picture obscures the differences among cities and the natural possibilities within a given city. From changes in air quality to the proximity of parks and other green areas, there are urban variations, and the natural



life is within the grasp of a well-informed, resourceful urbanite.

Here are a few guidelines to illustrate the range of challenges and choices we have: (1) Be wary of dwellings controlled by associations, landlords, or others who prevent you from installing solar, composting, and other natural activities.

(2) Walking is key to the natural life. A good case scenario is a dwelling within walking distance of a park, mass transit and a grocery store. A walk or jog in a park or other green area is exercise and a nature exposure; domesticated nature is nature nonetheless.

(3) Sometimes ecological links involve political links. In the city where I live, we had to go through our city council to put pressure on the city council of the neighboring city in order to rid our streams of pesticides that were leaching in from the neighboring town.

When we get beyond the separate bit-by-bit mentality, we learn to deal with the multi-dimensional issues and large

regional issues, even global issues. The natural life today is natural in a new key: to act in harmony with nature, we need to take a well-informed, consciously-conservationist approach.

I have emphasized the ideas of "well-informed" and "consciously." In a sense, we have become watchdogs on guard against greedy corporations, sluggish governments, and a public manipulated by marketeers and the media. All this requires constant vigilance and effort.

COMING HOME

The word "natural" sometimes implies "spontaneous" or "relaxed." But we have been speaking of the new key natural life as though we can enjoy no respite from the hectic task of protecting the environment. Most of us have read the results of research which shows that mere presence in a natural setting can reduce stress and even foster recovery from illness. The positive influence is double if

we attend to the surroundings and appreciate them.

Unhurried, conscious experience of nature can bring relief from stressful dealings with people. Nature fascinates, soothes, and calms us. This is true even though nature has the potential to disturb or destroy our lives as in a violent storm or earthquake. It is not so much beneficent as awesome and mysterious. It supports our lives and we feel a deep affinity with it.

The occasional outing to National Parks and places with amazing panoramic views isn't the only sort of natural setting experience. Many cities have green areas including residential streets which invite an experience of nature, albeit domesticated nature.

But the most influential nature experience may well be our own homes. Pots and plant boxes can grow flowers and vegetables. And don't hire out the yard work — not even to the Natural Landscapes company mentioned above. Landscape experts may be consulted, but

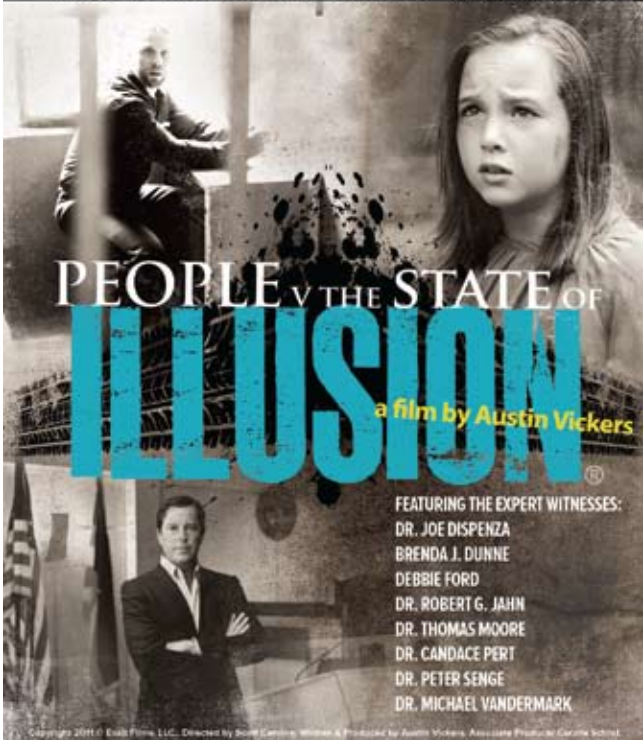
we really should do the work ourselves.

One of the urban tragedies I witness on my daily walks is the hired gardener who comes to work tending the plants while the resident fires up her SUV and drives off to a fitness center for exercise!

Experience in nature begins at home, and, in a deeper sense, nature is our home. Communion with mother nature is a spiritual experience in which we become aware of our deep roots, our connectedness with all things. Thus the natural life attains a balance between the challenges of environmental vigilance on the one hand and communion with nature on the other. A veteran greenie once told me, "You can't say you really love your mother unless you visit her every day."

Gene Sager enjoys teaching and writing on contemporary American culture and the environment. His articles have appeared in various journals, from Sustainable Development to Commonweal to The Middle Way. His favorite pastimes are moonwatching, gardening and writing.

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Health Freedom

The Relationship between Our Health and Our Environment

By Dr. Margaret Cochran

The time to create a better relationship with your health is *now*. The earth is the macrocosm of each of its inhabitants, and when we live in accordance with nature, it is optimal for our mental, physical and spiritual health. When we fight nature, we pollute the planet, our minds and bodies. You, the individual and consumer, have the power to perpetuate healthy and sustainable changes in your own life and with the planet at large.

Join us at the Health Freedom Expo March 2-4, 2012 at the Long Beach Convention Center, 300 E. Ocean Blvd., Exhibit Hall A. The Expo offers 3 days of dynamic speaking programs with world-renowned doctors, practitioners & health experts; over 200 booths filled with cutting-edge products, knowledge and services; informative hot-topic panels and award-winning documentary. For more information, call (888) 658-EXPO or visit: healthfreedomexpo.com.

Since the 'industrial revolution' manufacturing goods has ruled our economy. Our economic success has been driven by the lie that people and the

environment are not our most valuable and precious assets. In fact, they are often considered mere impediments to making profits. So, if we manufacture a breakfast food that consists mostly of sugar and is an insulin-raising nightmare, it is OK because it results in profit. The end justifies the means... absolutely!

And with regard to consumer responsibility for the problem, we often throw up our hands and surrender to the marketplace because we are told that if we don't, we will be jobless, poor and unable to feed our newly-created carbohydrate addiction!

Food is chemistry after all, our bodies are electrochemical entities and to say that food powerfully affects them is a gross understatement. There is an important psychological principal which the food manufacturing industry takes advantage of daily via advertising and promotional campaigns, and of which most people are consciously unaware, and it is: **'food affects mood which drives mood to choose food.'**

If you are feeling tired, anxious, sad or even happy you will be driven to either soothe or celebrate your mood with food, and as a food manufacturer, I want to be your 'dealer.' Like any good 'dealer' I am not the least bit concerned about what my drugs are doing to you, what effect manufacturing them may have had on the people who did so, or how any waste products produced may have harmed the planet.

For example I wrote an email recently to a major food manufacturer about the fact that they continue to put trans fats into products aimed at children, in spite of well-documented evidence of the danger to human health. I received a 'form' response explaining to me in a condescending manner that any negative health effects trans fats may cause "haven't been proven . . ." This is a classic gambit that the tobacco industry used for many years and it is now the 'go to' defense when anyone does not want to deal with reality. It is called denial, and we are literally killing ourselves whenever we use it.

Bottom line, we are encouraged on a daily basis, from multiple sources — educational, political and industrial — just to name a few, to think we are living in a modern and progressive society. However, despite all our apparent sophistication and advancement we have vast quantities of toxins in our environment that are poisoning us and our planet.

We have created an economy largely based on human-made chemistry rather than naturally-occurring chemistry. Now in some cases that is a good thing as we have created medicines that can save lives — antibiotics are a good example of this. Some not-so-good examples are petroleum products and farming poisons. We are so attached to our petroleum products that we are literally destroying the earth to get at its last dregs of oil so we can create gasoline, a poison whose waste and by-products are known carcinogens.

And of course we must not leave out farming poisons like pesticides and herbicides. I suspect if someone approached you and said they were going to cover your fruits and vegetables and the land they were grown on with poison to facilitate a maximum yield, you would probably say "No thank you!"

And, of course, that's what non-organic farming looks like, and lots and lots of people eat non-organic food. Considered in the abstract, the idea of poisoning our food and the planet that sustains us would be a laughable idea, but it's not abstract, it's real, it's happening now and it's deadly!

The world used to be a very agrarian-based, garden- and farm-to-table world. However, as we have developed a more industrial culture we have increasingly adopted a mindset of 'lethal separation.' We close

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ourselves off from basic reasoning like cause and effect. We have repressed important concepts such as 'you are what you eat' or don't eat.

We are also encouraged to forget to use one of our earliest acquired developmental milestones, that of 'object permanence.' Object permanence is the awareness that something that has existed, still exists, even if it's out of our line of sight.

Or put another way, the trans fats in the canned frosting you are eating will get you a trip to the cardiologist in addition to a ticket for a four-vessel bypass operation. And, when we dump garbage in the ocean and don't

see it anymore, that does not mean it's gone away.

Here's the good news — you have power and lots of it that you can use to affect changes in your own life and the world. All those 'good folks' who want to make money and are doing so by poisoning you, watch what you purchase and what you don't very carefully, and they're not going to manufacture what you don't buy!

So the key concept here is something I call 'Whole Brain Thinking.' Whole Brain Thinking is the cognitive skill of being able to think AND feel rather than think OR feel about your life choices. When using this

skill you will not be swayed by fantastical claims, sales pitches and fear mongering. Beware of anyone who says they or their products are things you cannot live without. Be cautious around anyone who wants to tell you that there is only one answer to our political, economic and environmental problems... theirs.

There are a few basic and powerful steps that can improve your life, your health and the health of our planet more rapidly than you might think: Eat whole organic unprocessed foods. Drink the purest water possible. Breathe deep relaxing breaths several times a day. Move! Don't sit so much. Turn

off the electronics and let your brain rest. Use Whole Brain Thinking. And attend the Health Freedom Expo.

Dr. Cochran will speak at the Health Freedom Expo March 4 at 3pm in Room 103A.

Dr. Cochran is a transpersonal psychologist, licensed clinical social more than 30 years of experience. She works with her partner, board-certified family physician David J. Waggoner, MD, at Saratoga Family Health Center, where she takes a whole-person approach to health and wellness. Dr. Cochran is a columnist for The Huffington Post and a contributor to ABC-TV, No. California. She also hosts a radio program; Whole Brain Thinking: Wisdom, Love, Magic Visit: www.sfhc.com and www.drcochran.org

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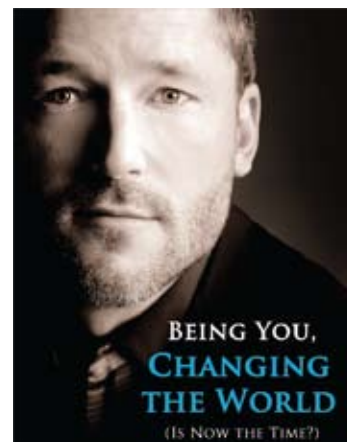
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Thinking of Going Veg?

The Whys and How-to's of Plant-based Diets

By Terri Goodwell

Giving up Big Macs, chicken nuggets and sushi may sound extreme, but vegetarianism is on the rise. If you're one of more than 7 million Americans who have decided to "GO VEG," you're in good company. From historical greats like Pythagorus, Albert Einstein and Leonardo Da Vinci, to present-day celebs like Ellen Degeneres, Carrie Underwood and Alec Baldwin, vegetarians and vegans are going mainstream.

Why go vegetarian? Most people do it for animal welfare, but others cite religious reasons, or because of health, environmental or world hunger concerns. Whatever the rationale, people usually decide to "GO VEG" because they want to make a difference.

The majority of vegetarians say they don't want to be the cause of animal suffering. They think of their fellow beings as friends not food, and they object to how inhumane animals are treated in the overcrowded and unsanitary factory farms where they live until they are slaughtered.

As ex-Beatle vegetarian Paul

McCartney says of the killing, "If slaughterhouses had glass walls, everyone would be a vegetarian." So, switching to a vegetarian diet will certainly make a difference by saving the lives of more than 100 animals a year.

Many people are becoming vegetarian or are eating less meat, fish and poultry because of health concerns. According to Dr. Neal Barnard of Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM), "Eliminating meat and dairy products from your diet is a powerful step in disease prevention." The American Diabetic Association states that vegetarians and vegans are less prone to heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and obesity than are meat eaters.

Marta Holmberg of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) says that people who become vegetarian report weight loss, more energy, clearer skin, better resistance to colds and flu, and a more positive outlook on life. So if you want improved overall health, moving toward a vegetarian diet could be a good first step.

Some eco-minded people

decide to "GO VEG" because it's the *green* thing to do. Factory farming has a negative effect on serious environmental problems like climate change, over-exploited natural resources, deforestation, and water and air pollution. PETA states that producing a gram of protein from meat uses more than 10 times the amount of fossil fuels than it takes to produce a gram of protein from vegan food. So, adapting a vegetarian or vegan diet could make a real difference to the health of our planet.

Sometimes those concerned about world hunger become vegetarian. Farmed animals consume about 60 percent of the grains that we grow. Think-quest's Health Zone states that of 20 million tons of plant protein given to raise cows, only 2 million tons of protein are used when the cows are consumed. That means 18 million tons of plant protein are wasted! If the 20 million tons of plant protein had gone to people and not cattle, this may have greatly helped the world's starving people.

Whatever the reason, if you *do* "GO VEG," it's important to

do it the healthy way. These days it's relatively easy to get all the necessary nutrients from a vegetarian diet — as long as you're not eating mainly cheese pizzas, fries and other junk foods, and you're giving fruits, vegetables, whole grains and plant-based protein sources about equal billing in your diet. The latest USDA food guidelines depict a plate divided roughly into quarters for fruits, vegetables, grains and protein, with an optional dairy choice off to the side.

Nutritionists agree that eating a variety of plant foods every day is sufficient to meet the nutritional requirements. PETA's Vegetarian Starter Kit (E-mail peta2@peta2.com for a free copy) advises that adequate protein can be easily obtained by eating whole grains, beans, peas, lentils, tofu, nuts and veggie meats. Iron requirements can be met by eating such foods as beans, cashews, spinach, broccoli, tomato juice and tempeh.

Vitamin B-12, which is not readily available in vegetarian or vegan diets, can be found in many fortified cereals and soy milk, or it can be taken in fruit-flavored chewable tablets. According to The Vegetarian Resource Group, vegans, who avoid all dairy products, can meet the daily requirements of calcium by eating tofu, leafy greens and fortified soy milk and orange juice.

Eliminating meat and dairy products from your life may take some retraining and adjustment, especially for family and friends. But, if you "GO VEG," even just a couple days a week, you will truly be making a difference — for yourself, the animals, and our planet.

So, the question to ask might not be "Why go vegetarian?" but "Why not?"

Terri Goodwell is a freelance writer who has published articles, poems and short stories. She is currently working on a young adult novel about the magic of believing.



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Can We Save the Planet for \$1.00

Public Support Encouraged for New Eco-Kids TV Show

By David Greene

In today's economy, will families donate \$1 or more to save the planet? Mike Miller, co-founder of Big MaMa Earth Entertainment, is counting on it. Miller, known as Grandpa Mikey to his grandkids, is a TV infomercial producer, a past executive search consultant and has been an environmentalist his entire life.

"Our environment is in peril — approaching a tipping point," and "our children, being the future of our planet, can show us the way." To encourage everyone to take action, Miller and his team are developing the first Eco-Kids TV Show called, "Big MaMa Earth & ME."

The TV show will engage, inspire, and empower children, teachers, and families to take action. It will teach them about environmental solutions they can implement in their homes, schools, and communities. The show will be a blend of a green Hannah Montana, Wild Kingdom, and Sesame Street.

The Big MaMa Earth "Learning Experience," which is the hub of the TV show, has been portrayed by many as like an "Eco-Disney Act on Wheels." Miller designed a circus-looking solar-powered 20' trailer with a drop-down stage and a professional sound system that is pulled by a new Ford F-150 Eco-boost truck. Original Eco-theme songs such as: Big MaMa Earth & ME, Big MaMa Earth's Crying Out, Go Green & Clean, Save the World, Change, and others are performed by Ross and the Eco-Earth Kids on the Big MaMa Earth stage.

Big MaMa Earth Entertainment has 36 animated characters in the development stage in which Big MaMa Earth is the main character. Her friends, "Sammy Sea," "RainForest Tree-

O," and "Pukey Pollution" were released to support and interact



with Big MaMa Earth at events and in the Eco-TV series. As the Eco-TV series grows in popularity, other animated characters will be released and additional walk-around theme characters will be produced to keep the Eco-TV series fresh, unique, and exciting.

The Big MaMa Earth Learning Experience co-hosted 17 high-profile events in 2011, from the Aquarium of the Pacific — Kids Fun Run, Let freedom Ring on July 4th at CBS studios, to ABC 7's Spark of Love Toy Drive. In 2012 they will be co-hosting the Dana Point Whale Festival on March 3rd & 4th and Earth Day in San Diego at Balboa Park on April 22nd and invites the public to visit them.

Miller believes the public will want to be involved in the creation of this TV show and is asking us to pledge. To pledge \$1 or more, go to the Kickstarter website which is an established social media funding platform which helps artists, companies and entrepreneurs.

Type "Big MaMa Earth" into the discover bar and the project will appear. Then watch the video and read the information. On

the top right side, you will see a button — "Donate \$1 or more." Please click on it and begin a simple registration for Kickstarter and Amazon. You've just helped save our Planet.

Why should I care or pledge to create this Eco-Kids TV Show? Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, humankind has over-consumed many of the earth's natural resources to a point of exhaustion, with little regard for the long-term effects on our planet and its inhabitants. We must be good stewards of our planet and STOP this destructive cycle.

Our children are our future and they will learn through this TV Show. Please do not think of it as a donation! Think of it as an Environmental Protection Plan for future generations. If you see the value in this TV Show, pledge and be part of History!

Are Miller and his team doing this for profit? According to

Miller a large portion of the proceeds, which the show will generate through advertising, will be donated to the Big MaMa Earth Foundation to enhance environmental education in schools.

Big MaMa Earth is dedicated to empowering children and families everywhere to take action through the dissemination of factual and non-biased scientific information that is both enlightening and entertaining. This initiative will bring about positive, incremental changes, and ultimately fuel humankind's reconnection to Mother Earth.

Miller encourages kids, families, and corporations to review the website at www.bigmamaearth.org and view the "Events," "Photo," and "TV/Press" sections to experience how Big MaMa Earth and the Eco-Earth Kids are loved by children, families, and teachers. See how they inspire and empower others.

For more information about the Big MaMa Earth project, please contact Mike Miller at (951) 244-8444, or e-mail bigmamaearth@ca.rr.com

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The Raj Ayurveda Health Spa.

Ayurvedic Healing at the Raj

By Ann Nelson

I wanted to go to a unique place, unlike any place I'd visited before and decided to spend a few hours poring over my old travel guides. After picking up a few books from a shelf in my garage, I dusted off "The Best Vacations to Enrich Your Life" by Pam Grout. This book reviews all types of trips, including arts and crafts getaways, volunteer vacations and "brain retreats."

The Raj Maharishi Ayurveda Health Center, located in Fairfield in the middle of the Iowa cornfields, caught my eye. This center, simply known as "the Raj," opened in 1993 and at the time was the only Ayurveda health facility outside of India. I wasn't exactly sure what Ayurveda treatments were, but was aware that Dr. Deepak Chopra had written several bestselling books about this 5,000-year-old natural healing tradition.

When experiencing stressful times in life, traditional Western medicine often recommends exercise or anti-depressants. Ayurveda rejuvenation treatments are designed to get to the root

of the real problem and restore imbalances in the nervous system that build up from stress and busy lifestyles.

Downtown Fairfield looks like any other charming old town founded in the mid-to-late 1800's. There is a quaint town square lined with old brick buildings. The town, home to around 9,200 residents, is far from traditional and a place Oprah found so intriguing she visited just before Christmas 2010. It is safe to say that Fairfield has more meditators per capita than any place in the U.S. It is believed that a quarter to a third of the Fairfield residents presently practice transcendental meditation on a regular basis.

In the late 1950's, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi started the TM movement as a means of bringing spiritual balance and peace to the world. In 1973, The Maharishi International University was founded in

Santa Barbara, CA for the purpose of promoting this cause. One year later the school moved to Fairfield and is now known as The Maharishi University of Management.

Preparation for my trip began ten days before I boarded the plane from San Diego. My home preparation kit arrived in the mail and contained essential herbs and pages of instructions. To obtain maximum benefit from the program, it was highly recommended that I follow the pre-treatment procedures, including eating special soups and herbal tea. The instructions were clear and easy to follow.

George, a driver recommended by the Raj, picked me up at Cedar Rapids Airport. I couldn't help but notice the peaceful and quiet manner this man displayed as he pointed out highlights while driving along through the countryside. He informed me that Fairfield is quite progressive when it comes to the environment. The town is said to have the only solar-powered radio station in the U.S. George moved here over twenty years ago to practice TM and begins his day, along with thousands of other local residents, with meditation.

Soon after arriving at the Raj, I met with Mark Toomey, PhD, the Ayurvedic Health Specialist.

All treatments are customized and based on the results of an initial assessment of the Ayurveda pulse. This test reveals an incredible amount of information about what is going on with your body and your spirit.

The results also indicate the imbalances that may be developing at the deepest levels of your physiology, including levels of toxicity, metabolic digestive weaknesses and vitality. Dr. Toomey explained that sludge and plaque build up in our arter-



Guest receiving a Pinda — a special heated massage involving a mixture of herbs, milk, and rice through a bolus.

ies and our bodies need an occasional tune up, like our cars.

My pulse assessment determined that my metabolism and energy level were a bit sluggish. His assessment was not off base. After finding where I was out of balance, Dr. Toomey recommended a program consisting of a specialized diet, herbs, aromatherapy, massage treatments and meditation. Following his specific instructions were an essential ingredient in removing toxins from my body and restoring balance.

Prior to visiting The Raj, I felt raw and fragile after the unexpected loss of a dear friend. The warmth of the guests and genuine staff cannot be overestimated. I felt comforted and cared for. I went on long afternoon walks with Ted. He has been a guest at many Ayurveda Health Centers all over the country and returns to the Raj every year because he feels it is the most authentic center he has visited.



Shirodhara — a deeply relaxing spa treatment for mind and body.

During my visit, I met guests who had made the decision to spend time here because of a serious illness. I met people like Leslie and Howard, a happily married couple, who have stayed in luxurious hotels all over the world, but now prefer to take trips that have real meaning.

Plush towels and high-thread-count linens are no longer important to them. During my trip, I did not meet one person who visited the state for the sole purpose of impressing their friends. People come here for genuine, heart-felt reasons.

Days at the Raj are filled with yoga, cooking classes, meals, meditation and alone time. Staff members were always on hand if I had a question or wanted to talk. I picked up the phone a few times during my visit and made a personal appointment with Lisa or Helen. These private talks were important, insightful and truly helped me figure out how I needed to move forward.

The time I looked forward to most during my stay were the daily three-hour Maharishi Rejuvenation Treatments. During my first treatment, sesame oil was poured over my entire body by two technicians who used a synchronized four-hand massage to rub the oil into my skin.

It is believed the application of herbalized oil softens and opens the channels of elimination so toxins can be easily removed from the body. During this treatment, I was certainly experiencing a little slice of heaven here on earth!

The New York Times has recognized The Raj as "one of the four recommended silent/meditative retreats." Newsweek Magazine listed The Raj among "the best eight Destination Spas." A few days after arriving home, I realized that going to Iowa in the middle of the winter had been an excellent decision. Visiting the Raj is one of the most pleasurable and memorable trips I've ever made. Lessons I learned during my stay will have a lasting impact on my life.

For more information on the Raj Maharishi Ayurveda Health Center, call (800) 248-9050, or visit: www.theraj.com

Ann Nelson is a freelance writer residing in San Diego, CA.

Speak Like the Force of Nature You Are

By Lee Glickstein

Twenty years ago I was determined to heal my severe public speaking anxiety organically, since conventional methods did not work for me. What I discovered in the process was that the most powerful healing for self-consciousness is to allow yourself to get listened into existence as the force of nature you are.

The expression "force of nature" came up a few years ago in praise of Olympians like Michael Phelps and Usain Bolt. But each of us is a force of nature, an unrepeatable miracle, a personalized energy field seeking expression of our greatest good. Even weeds demonstrate this as they break through the smallest fissure in the cement sidewalk to reach out to the sun.

It is the habitual illusion of separation — from each other and from creation — that causes so many of us to install a cement ceiling on our psyche hindering us from reaching toward full expression. This illusion of separation engenders self-consciousness and anxiety, and has us pounding the pavement with our heads trying to break free of a self-imposed prison of mind.

We have something to learn from weeds, which heed the call of the sun. The weed is not separate from the sun nor the sidewalk nor the fissures in the cement, and so embraces the fissures and flows through them into emergence.

What is our equivalent of the sun that calls us forth as a force of nature?

Here is my view. When we were infants, the eyes of one or both of our parents were the unblocked sun: warm, bright, embracing, expansive, receptive, available. They reflected our integrity as a force of nature so we could express ourselves into

those eyes unself-consciously, and we could be silent in those eyes with no anxiety. But as our personalities emerged, there came a time for many of us when great clouds eclipsed the sun: scowls, disapproval, blame, shame, distraction, self-absorption, fear.


At some point we lost our safe harbor, our true home, our spacious listening through the eyes of unconditional love. The disappearance of such listening is the genesis of self-consciousness and the illusion of separation.

Meanwhile, underground, our wild weed nature unrelentingly seeks listening eyes, our sun. Essential listening is the prescription to wholeness, our channel to unselfconscious expression as a force of nature.

Make a practice of getting regular uninterrupted listening, with a friend, a loved one, or a safe group setting. And don't take for granted the people in

your life who give you special listening. Honor them for letting you shine.


Lee Glickstein is founder of Speaking Circles International and author of Be Heard Now: Tap Into Your Inner Speaker and Communicate with Ease (Broadway Books and Sounds True Audiotapes), and the Ebook, The Alchemy of Influence. He facilitates groups in "leadership transmission" through Relational Presence, and will offer programs in Pasadena on Friday evening, March 9, and Saturday, March 10. www.speakingcircles.com



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Those who fail to work for the Truth have missed the purpose of living.

— Buddha

Food Production and Self-Reliance

By Christopher Nyerges

One of the most common questions asked by beginning gardeners is "What should I grow?" and some variant of "How do I keep the bugs from eating my corn?"

These are understandable questions, and ones that I try to not answer. Rather, I try to bring the conversation around to the broader topics.

Always start from the beginning. If your goal is to become a bit more self-reliant and to produce some of your food and medicine in your own yard, let's begin with what you already have.

START FROM THE BEGINNING

Take an inventory of what is already growing in your yard. Which are natives and which are introduced exotics? Is the yard carefully tended, or are these plants just growing wild on their own?

Hire a botanist or gardener to come to your yard and tell you the names of the plants that are already growing there, and find out as many of their uses as possible. Learn about the bushes, the trees, the ornamentals, the vines, the weeds. You might be surprised to learn that you already have useful plants in your own yard, already surviving well with whatever care they are getting.

Once you do a survey of what is already growing in your yard,

you might be surprised to learn that what is right before you can provide some of your needs. Knowledge is the key to opening this door.

Also, if you are like most urban and suburban homeowners, you have a front lawn which is simply "wasted space" in most cases. The front lawn is one of those relics from a bygone era which most of us do not need. The maintenance of that lawn requires water, fuel, fertilizer, and lots of time all for the sake of having a green lawn.

I have noticed a trend in many urban areas where folks are foregoing a front lawn and planting roses, herbs, cacti, and otherwise turning that space into something useful.

SO WHAT DO I GROW?

You are ready to do some planting. How do you go about making the selection of what to plant.

Yes, there are entire libraries of books out there, telling you everything there is to know about gardening in great detail. The Sunset books are excellent. Everything by Rodale Press is excellent, from their Organic Gardening magazine, to their "Complete Book of Composting" and "Encyclopedia of Organic Gardening."

These and more are useful references that will provide you with a lifetime of information. I also strongly recommend that

you read Fukuoka's "One Straw Revolution" for a philosophical underpinning to guide your choices.

So how do you select what to actually plant in your garden?

I have many times read these exciting accounts of some urban homesteader who explained why they planted each and every variety of whatever they planted, and they even provided a map for the ideal way to lay out your garden. You need to take such advice with a grain of salt. Keep in mind that what works for one individual may or may not work for you.

So, begin by ignoring everything you have ever heard about which plants should go into your garden. Start by making a comprehensive list of what YOU and your family like to eat. Yes, you can always expand your list as your food tastes expand. But for now, write the list of what you eat. Also, besides food, consider plants that will provide you with medicine, and other useful items (like the silk floss tree provides a downy material for pillow stuffing).

Additionally, your plant selection should take into account the fragrances you want in your yard, as well as those which attract birds and other animals you would like to welcome. Think of your yard or garden as your own biosphere with the possibility of providing all your needs.

Once you know what you

want to grow, you could just get seeds and plants and start planting. However, if you are a bit more serious and have a long-term view of things, you might draw a map of your yard so you can plan out where to put everything. Draw in the plants that are already there.

SOURCES OF SEEDS AND PLANTS

You *could* just order seeds from all the catalogs in the world, and you could also drive to your neighborhood nursery and purchase all the plants you wish to have in your garden. There's nothing wrong with that choice. And here is another option.

One of the principles of permaculture is to see how your own land can provide you with all the fertilizer and plants you need. Here's how.

First, look at all the seeds you routinely discard in your kitchen. If, in fact, there were no catalogs in the world to purchase from, and no stores to drive to, you would use every one of those seeds for the next generation of your garden. We overlook many of our common resources because we don't *need* to recognize what is before us.

SEEDS

Seeds from watermelon, cantaloupe, and all squashes (such as spaghetti squash and pumpkin) can be saved and planted. (You'll think twice before buying any "seedless" watermelon). These are sprawling vines that require a large amount of horizontal space.

Grape seeds can be planted. Seeds from beans can be planted. Both these are vining plants that require vertical space (meaning, plant them next to a fence or trellis). Seeds from bell peppers and hot peppers can all be saved and grown.

Tomato seeds are easy to extract, and can be immediately planted. They tend to be some of the easiest seeds to grow. The



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Be sure to keep in mind that you will get the best, most consistent results from the so-called heirloom seeds, which means they are not hybridized seeds. It will take some work and diligence to buy only foods with non-hybrid seeds.

BUILD THE SOIL

I learned that — regardless of what you grow or where you live — **the health of the soil is the single most important factor** in producing plants that are drought-tolerant, bug resistant, and able to survive in the greatest range of temperature.

My next experiment in that small yard was to go to the grocery store and get boxes of old produce, dig a hole here and there in the garden, and bury the old vegetables so they would decompose and enrich the soil.

Simultaneously, I went to the local cemetery and obtained bags of grass clippings. I began to layer the bare ground around the base of the plants with liberal amounts of grass clippings. This was a thick layer, not a thin sprinkling of grass clippings.

The top layer would dry out a bit, but underneath, it stayed moist, softened the soil, and provided an environment where earthworms thrived as well as lots of other bugs thriving. With the layered grass clippings on the ground, I now noticed that the herbs and vegetables thrived and grew well, and the bug infestation was at a minimum.

Plus I didn't need to water as much. I continued to get as many bags of grass clippings as possible and mulched the soil. And I continued to bury old vegetables in the garden. I produced onions, tomatoes, Swiss chard, zucchinis, and lots of herbs. I decided to skip the corn.

THE SQUATTER'S GARDEN

Just a few years later, I was a squatter in a house in a hilly part of Los Angeles. The house was empty and I simply moved in, had utilities turned on in my name, and lived there for a year and a half until it was clear I had

to move on.

In this garden, I grew only the non-hybrid varieties whose seeds I could harvest and replant. These were the vegetables also known as the heirloom varieties. At the time, I was not aware of how today's farmers are captive to the corporations which produce the hybrid seeds, the widely touted miracle of modern farming.

I was always disturbed about hybrids, whose seeds would not produce the same plant they came from. Wherever possible, I have always obtained and used non-hybrid, or heirloom seeds, and would save some of the seeds for the next season, just as small farmers and families have done for centuries.

Part of my garden was the famed three sisters of the Southwest — corn, squash, and beans, which David Ashley suggested I grow. Squash is planted, and allowed to sprawl on the ground as a ground-cover, keeping moisture in the soil. Corn is planted throughout the area, and once it gets a foot or so tall, the native beans are planted.

The roots of the beans fix nitrogen, meaning, you are increasing the nitrogen content for your corn by growing the beans nearby. And the corn provides a trellis of sorts for the beans. This "three sisters" garden is a common theme in arid Southwestern gardens.

I have gardened and worked the soil since about age 12 or so. And the most important thing to do is to improve the soil. And since every household produces kitchen scraps, and most yards produce grass clippings and various leaves, one of the very first steps in urban self-reliance is to set up some compost system so you can begin to produce your own compost from those items you are typically discarding.

You improve your soil with compost, with earthworms, and with some mulches. These are the keys to good soil, and good soil is the key to self-reliance.

This article is based upon Christopher Nyerges' latest book, *Self-Sufficient Home* by Stackpole. He is the author of many books on self-reliance and conducts regular workshops. He can be reached at www.ChristopherNyerges.com or Box 41834, Eagle Rock, CA 90041.

Can A Water Bottle Impact the Environment?

By Shelley Anderson

Disposable plastic water bottles are a critical threat to our planet. 38 billion water bottles go into landfills every year and sit there for hundreds of years before they even begin to decompose. In fact, if these bottles were laid end to end they would circle the earth 150 times . . . every year! If this pace keeps up, where are we going to put the one trillion plastic bottles that will be produced in the next couple of decades?

As good stewards of our planet it is our responsibility to stop this insidious non-organic pollution and to start using bottles that can be safely refilled and reused.

Pura Stainless was created with a simple vision — to make a difference by responsibly manufacturing safe, durable and cost-effective infant, toddler and adult bottles and accessories. The safest bottle in the world, all Pura products are rigorously tested by an independent and globally-recognized testing lab and exceed all relevant safety directives.

Pura provides the safest and most durable adult bottles!

Pura Stainless bottles are crafted from food-service grade, electro-polished stainless steel. The bottles are 100% BPA-free,

do not leach harmful chemicals like plastic bottles, nor do they require chemical linings like aluminum bottles.

And, unlike other bottles, the lids are also made from stainless steel because what good is using a non-plastic bottle if you are still drinking through a plastic cap? Pura bottles are available in various colors and sizes ranging from .35 liter to 1.2 liter. And they are backed by an unprecedented lifetime warranty.

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All products in the Kiki line convert from infant bottles to toddler sippy cups and vice versa and are available in various colors and sizes from 5 oz. infant to 11 oz. toddler.

For information on the Pura product line visit: www.purastainless.com



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Ascension Portal 2012

Mayan Atlantis Discovered?

By Sri Ram Kaa and Kira Raa

While it is generally accepted that the infamous Guatemalan Crystal skulls are Atlantean in origin, what most are not aware of is that the secrets of the skulls were kept at Lake Atitlán in Guatemala with the Mayans. This captivating lake is the legendary resting place of Kings, Queens and Tribal Chiefs from all of the Americas. Discoveries of the “remains” of chiefs from as far north as Canada and as far south as Brazil have confirmed what mystical travelers have always known. **This is one of the most mystically sacred areas in the Americas.**

The extraordinary secrets that have been held here and the return of the Ascended Masters abode of the Crystalline city above the lake, all point toward one fact . . . *Atlantis is rising . . . again* . . . and calling to those who are ready to remember. This goes beyond any “new-age” fantasy or story. The science and the keepers of the ancient secrets are all in agreement and there is more!

Archaeologists are finally exploring the sunken Mayan city that was discovered 16 years ago: a heavily-guarded secret due to the extraordinary condition of the site. When first discovered the High Priests of the Maya were not eager for continued revelation of this city, and with good reason! The discovery was at first dismissed as quoted here from a CDNN article.

“Samabaj, the first underwater archaeological ruins excavated in Guatemala, were discovered accidentally 16 years ago by a diver exploring the picturesque Lake Atitlan, ringed by Mayan villages.

“No one believed me, even when I told them all about it. They just said ‘he’s mad’,” said Roberto Samayoa, a recreational diver who grew up near the lake where his grandmother told him

legends of a sunken church. In 1996, he found the site, with buildings and huge ceremonial stones, known as stelae, clearly visible. It was clear Mayan pilgrims flocked to worship at this site before it was submerged by rising waters.”

The 4,300 square-foot area is being mapped with sonar tech-

• Is this a bona fide ancient ascension portal?

• Is this why the ancient tribal chiefs, Kings and Queens from all over the Americas chose to be brought here upon their transition?

• Is this why only high priests and priestesses have inhabited the shores of the lake and its



nology and excavation of structures has begun. Beautiful Lake Atitlán is the deepest lake in Central America, and its bottom has not been completely sounded. The mysteries it contains defy the mind and invite humanity to deeper remembrance and recognition of our cosmic roots. The presence of ancient mysticism allows us to release our pre-conceived notions and to restore ourselves to a greater wisdom that sits within the heart of all humanity.

What is quite “bewildering” to those leading the exploration is the perfect condition of the city and lack of “bodies.” Pottery is intact and for those who are aware of the exact location, the energy emanating from this site is tangible and powerful.

now submerged sacred islands?

• Why has this stunning discovery been “hidden” for 16 years and is just now being discussed?

It will not go unnoticed by Atlantis researchers that this new site at Lake Atitlán bears striking similarities to the legend of Atlantis. Let’s look at the similarities and facts:

• It is generally well accepted that Atlantis is a sunken city.

• Atlantis was on an island surrounded by water.

• Atlantis had great advanced technology and cosmic connection.

• The inhabitants of Atlantis “scattered” upon the imminent demise of their civilization.

• Is the name of this lake a “coded” message for those who

are willing to open the ancient codex? Atitlán!

Several years ago, we published the best-selling book, *2012 Atlantean Revelations*. In that book we shared never before known information about the origins of Atlantis on our planet. Shortly after the release of this book, we were called to begin dialogue and reconnection with the Mayan Elders.

In conjunction with direct guidance from the Archangelic realm we were lead “back” to Lake Atitlán and quickly “adopted” by the High Priests and the Sacred Oracle of the Maya. We were shown the ancient city now being made public and we were honored to witness the rise of the Ascended Masters Abode of the Crystalline City that the ancient Maya have spoken of for eons yet never made public.

With assistance from the elders we were guided to become the custodians of sacred land. It is the exact location of an ancient lakeside temple attended to by the priests and priestesses for thousands of years. This temple is in the exact location that overlooks the newly-revealed Mayan Atlantis and in direct alignment with the strongest “nagual” of the lake, *The Sleeping Giant*. (see photo)

Close friends with the High Priest of the Maya, we are able to share these gifts with those who are called to re-connect with their mystical Atlantean heritage that has ignited for all of humanity... again. This is a 2012 moment for EVERYONE!

2012 is not as much about a date as it is about the choice we are making! Atlantis is rising as are the ascension portals for those who are ready to experience them again.

The visitors streaming to the shores of Lake Atitlán at pristine TOSA La Laguna are experienc-

ing miraculous shifts in their lives. The nature reserve that is now under our protection, in conjunction with the authentic Mayan ceremonial site and sacred geometrical location on the lake are true magic.

As was shared by the High Priest of the Mayan while tears poured from his eyes:

"Anyone who comes here with sincerity in their heart will be cured of anything. It can be physical, mental or spiritual. For this is a sacred spot and it has been carefully and perfectly re-ignited. The time of the eagle and the condor has again come forward!"

Profound gifts are waiting for humanity as this ascension portal ignites again. Are we ready to discover Atlantis again?

That is the greatest gift of 2012 . . . it is your choice!

Learn more about this powerful energy and Lake Atitlan by visiting, www.TOSASPA.com In addition to 2012: Atlantean Revelations, you may also enjoy Sri and Kira's newest book, 2013: Mayan Sunrise available at Amazon and your favorite bookseller. Sri and Kira are documenting the journey of 2012 in the land of the Maya at their website, www.SriandKira.com

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As daughter and disciple of Master Liu Chi-Jen, Jenny has first-hand experience in Feng Shui.
Please see her article in this issue.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

— Margaret Mead

Our Health and Our Environmental Connection

By Sandy Kay

By understanding our bodies and our divine connection to all the elements around us, we can create, build and sustain a healthy mind, body and spirit.

What if there is one common thread underlying health and balance in every area of your life? What if it didn't involve magic potions, how-to seminars or step-by-step plans? What if I said you already have all the tools at your finger tips? Would you like to know what it is? It's energy. OK, maybe this isn't such a big secret.

Learning how to integrate the energies and essences of nature with our body and lifestyle has been the base for Eastern Healing for thousands of years. We have incorporated a few styles known as Reiki, Acupressure and Shiatsu. In ancient times, healers did not have the knowledge of cells, bones, muscles, chemistry or biology. But they did have their senses, intuition and experience.

After working with people over thousands of years, they began to see how the elements of the environment were harmoniously interwoven in a delicate balance, and how ever-changing forces of nature influenced the human body. Physics, Chemistry and Quantum Physics all support the connection between energy, the elements of our environment and the healthy vitality of mind and body.

So what is energy? We can't see energy directly but we can see results of too much or too little. Modern quantum physics recognizes that the underlying force of basic manifestation is energy without mass.

In China, a system to represent energy was developed known as "The Yin and Yang Theory." This has become the basis for most Oriental healing arts. Yang energy comes down from the heavens and Yin comes up from the earth; colliding and

uniting in our bodies, forming a primary channel of energy.

Like streams forming from rivers, many channels or meridians are formed from the primary channel, leading out from our core to the organs and outer limbs of our body, nourishing and activating our metabolic processes. The early practitioners of Oriental massage, experienced electric-type energy flowing through the body and discovered energy vortexes called Chakras, as well as doorways to the channels of energy called Points or Tsubos.

Understanding that meridians move through the body connecting and coordinating to meet our body's requirements in an efficient and complex network, The Five Transformations or the Five Element Theory was

developed. When we are balanced and aligned with characteristics of the five elements: Water, Wood, Fire, Earth and Metal, the seasons, hours of the day and climate, we can better understand and address the challenges in our minds and bodies.

When yin/yang, seven chakras, five transformations, meridian and point theories are integrated with an intention of compassion and reverence, they provide the basis for a powerful and complete system of healing.

Sandy Kay has been a Licensed Massage Therapist and Holistic Wellness Practitioner since 1998. She is an expert in reading the body's meridians and designing wellness packages personalized for each individual client. Call (714) 454-8568 or email: sandykay4massage@gmail.com

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For further information Contact:

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Dr. Eric Pearl on the New Frontier of Healing

By Jackie Lapin

Eric Pearl is a chiropractor, healer, teacher, and author of *The Reconnection: Heal Others, Heal Yourself* (Hay House Inc., 2001). He travels the globe extensively throughout the year teaching a new form of healing called Reconnective Healing.

Pearl uses the phrase "I don't know" often when answering questions about Reconnective Healing. He left a successful private chiropractic practice in Los Angeles to travel the world, teaching people how to use energy to heal a range of diseases and conditions. Pearl doesn't know exactly why it works, though scientific studies show it does, but he is certain Reconnective Healing *does* work — and that almost anyone can learn how to heal others and themselves.

"Three of the most important words we can put together are 'I don't know,'" Pearl says. "We are trained to believe we have to know. When we say, 'I don't know' over and over again until we're comfortable with it, we can really grow."

Pearl says that Reconnective Healing differs from traditional energy work because it involves the trio of energy, light and information. During a healing session, practitioners use their hands to sense and feel the space around the person's body. When doing so, clients and practitioners are connecting with a bandwidth of vibrational frequencies. Researchers believe it may be these frequencies of energy, light and information that aid in achieving a state of balance, where healing oftentimes occurs.

Gary Schwartz and his team of researchers at the University of Arizona's Human Energy Systems Laboratory have performed six controlled experiments substantiating the electromagnetic transference during a healing session. The frequencies create coherence and order in the body, according to Dr. Wil-

liam Tiller, a professor emeritus at Stanford, who measured huge energy surges in rooms where Reconnective Healing seminars were in session.



UK brain researcher Dr. Richard Hansbury observed when clients received the Reconnective Healing frequencies during EEGs, their brainwaves organized into states of peak performance. These and other results have led the researchers to refer to Reconnective Healing as "information medicine."

Schwartz conducted research showing frequencies and light transmitted during healing sessions can change the DNA. "We have research showing DNA of both humans and plants becomes modified, restructured or, as I like to say, reconnected," Pearl says. "It raises the level of light we emit as human beings; light plays a very important part in healing."

Pearl says a healing doesn't occur the same way for everyone. Some people need more than one session and some clients don't feel the full effects

immediately. However, most "results tend to work instantly and last a lifetime," Pearl says.

"We're accessing something that has always existed in the universe but has not existed for us before. ... It's the perfect intelligence of the universe telling the body how to heal."

He's seen great success in patients with a range of conditions including AIDS-related diseases, cancer, scoliosis, cerebral palsy and even bunions. His explanation of Reconnective Healing can be very philosophical and metaphysical, but the work is supported by results and science.

In his book, which has been published in 36 languages, Pearl goes into detail about his awakening to Reconnective Healing and his realization that he had the ability to teach others. The book also has instructions for learning how to access the healing frequencies.

Through his book and a series of seminars and workshops now scheduled on six continents, Pearl has taught more than 70,000 people. (He teaches Reconnective Healing to children, has a program for healing animals, and hopes to conduct workshops within the prison system.)

"I believe that I am here to teach this consciousness to as many people as possible," says Pearl. "Hopefully this work will become known to virtually every person on the planet. I hope to make it better known than Coca-Cola. Hopefully one day we won't have to teach it. You will be able to just sit next to somebody and pass on the energy."

For more information about Dr. Eric Pearl and *The Reconnection*, or to register for an upcoming Reconnective Healing Seminar, visit www.TheReconnection.com, call (323) 960-0012 or read Eric Pearl's book, *The Reconnection: Heal Others, Heal Yourself*.

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3rd Annual Goddess Festival Coming to Laguna Beach

By Kaci Christian

The Festival of Goddesses returns to Southern California for its third year to celebrate and honor women. Scheduled for Saturday, March 31, 2012, the event will again take place on the grounds of the famed Festival of Arts (home to the legendary Pageant of the Masters) and in the Forum Theater located at 650 Laguna Canyon Road in Laguna Beach. The all-day event features activities on the grounds and in the theater from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and wraps up with an evening concert and celebration concluding at 10 p.m.

Founder Yamini Redewill explains the festival's intent. "We offer women a wonderful opportunity to escape from their normal commitments and celebrate the goddess in all of us, revealing our true nature as uniquely beautiful expressions of the Divine Feminine. This year, the charitable partner of the Festival of Goddesses is Orange County-based Laura's House, an organization committed to ending domestic violence. A portion of the proceeds raised during the event will benefit the charity. "We're honored and thrilled to be collaborating with the Festival of Goddesses," says Andrea McCallister, Director of Development & Communications for Laura's House.

"Raising awareness of the domestic violence in Orange County and continuing to support the women and children who are affected by domestic violence is critical." The efforts of another charitable organization, The Teen Project, serving recently-emancipated (homeless) foster children, will also be highlighted during the festival. A silent auction and various raffles will enable guests to donate towards these worthy organizations.

Festival guests will enjoy the wide variety of vendors selling unique merchandise and gourmet food. Other activities on the grounds include a fashion show,

art exhibit, belly dancing, hula hooping, yoga demonstrations, live entertainment, and a singles "rapid-dating" mixer. General admission tickets are only \$10 each. Full festival passes offer access to additional events occurring in the Forum Theatre.

The ever-popular and talented Mistress of Ceremonies, Lynn Rose will open the program with a lively "get up and dance" song. Then two panel discussions moderated by TV news personality, Kaci Christian, will feature celebrity panelists discussing "How to Find Your True Purpose and Prosper in This Economy" and "How to Love Yourself and Be Fully Self-Expressed."

Among the panelists are best-selling authors and international speakers, LuAn Mitchell, Marsh Engle, Kelly Sullivan Walden, Dr. Elizabeth Lambaer, Marigold Somerset, Allana Pratt and Suzy Prudden, among others.

After lunch, The Funniest Housewives of Orange County, will perform their hilarious show, spoofing the popular TV series, Real Housewives of Orange County, and then hold a mock panel discussion of their own. The final session will discuss "How to Find Your Soulmate" with a panel of women and men, facilitated by Hollywood celebrity matchmaker, Renee Piane, followed by the singles mixer on the festival grounds. The day will conclude with an awards ceremony honoring extraordinary women.

The evening concert in the Forum theater will feature the haunting Celtic stylings of Christina Duane and her band, followed by the evening's headliner, the popular and dynamic spiritual rock star, Larisa Stow and Shakti Tribe.

Access to these events is limited to the theatre's capacity and a sellout crowd is expected. A limited number of full festival passes are for \$65 in advance, \$75 at the door, based on availability. Tickets are available at www.festivalofgoddesses.com or by calling Yamini Redewill at (949)494-0294.

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Best Ways to Detox (Part 2)

By Dr. Juliet Tien (Dr. J), D.N. Sc.

In part 1 of this article, I addressed Steps 1 and 2 to detox your body. Step 1 is to educate yourself so that you will learn to adopt a healthy lifestyle. This includes a yeast-free nutritional program to nourish your body and starve your little enemies: yeasts and parasites.

Step 2 is Herbal Therapy to remove excess yeasts and parasites in your body so you can activate your innate intelligence to heal whatever ailments you might have. When you take Step 2, one important task is "toilet watching." Pay close attention to the "creatures" in your toilet. Most likely you will see the following evidence: 1) Debris of yeasts: cloudy urine, and hair or cotton-like stuff floating in the urine; 2) Eggs of parasites: seed-like stuff in the stool. They may look like sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, brown rice, or broken corn; or 3) mature worms: they might look like spaghetti (hook worms), fiber (pin worms), and dark green broken tree leaves (flat worms). There are more than 250,000 species of yeasts and parasites. I won't be able to describe all of them.

The following two steps will further detox your body and mind:

Step 3: Regenerate Your Glands and Organs

Regenerating your fatigued

glands and organs is just like jumpstarting the sluggish battery of your car. **You need to take formulas that contain a combination of high-quality and absorbable vitamins, minerals, and Chinese herbs that nourish your body and balance the hormonal system.** Many

of my female clients report that they experience marked improvement in mental clarity, energy, libido, menstrual regularity, and relief from menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes, mood swings, and night sweats after taking the natural hormonal regeneration formula for several months. In some cases, they were able to conceive and have a full-term pregnancy after several disappointing miscarriages.

How about men? Many wives or girlfriends of my male clients

thank me because the intensity and joy of their love lives increase as a result of their male partners taking the formula to regenerate the male hormonal system! When the male hormonal system is regulated, you will also experience an uplifting of your mood. Some of my clients are able to wean themselves off anti-depressants. Another benefit is increasing your energy and productivity, as well as mental clarity.

An additional way to regenerate your organs and glands is taking an herbal formula that contains a high concentration of protein, digestive enzymes, and other nutrients from herbs and grains. When your body is well-nourished, you will be able to curb your appetite for junk food, and stop sugar craving. Your hypoglycemic symptoms will also be reduced or eradicated. If you are too busy to have meals at regular hours, have this type of herbal drink ready. It will carry you over for a couple of hours!

Step 4: Cleanse Your Mental Toxins

Your mind has a great capacity to create, invent, and carry out complicated tasks, when you make the best use of it. However, most of you only utilize less than 5% of your mental capacity, and the remaining 95% is unused (or wasted, rather). Why? The answer is simple. You cloud your mind with "mental toxins"! **What are mental toxins? Any thoughts or emotions that hold you back from being the best you can be.**

When you suffer from a se-

If you want to change the world, BE that change.

— Mahatma Gandhi

vere case of yeast and parasitic infection, not only is your body toxic, but also is your mind! Carrying negative emotions such as anger, resentment, regret, grief, fear, and guilt, day in and day out, is just like driving your car with the hand brake on. It will cause a lot of wear and tear on your immune system!

How to uproot your mental toxins? Please be aware that traditional psychotherapy does not work when you suffer from a stubborn case of yeast and parasitic infection. The focus of spiritual psychotherapy is for you to understand the concept of "universality" and reduce or eliminate your "Poor me! Why me?" syndrome. **Everyone has his/her share of challenges. Learn to understand, accept, forgive, and release whatever life situation caused your emotional imbalance.**

As a result, you will learn how to draw on universal energy to handle life challenges and to heal yourself with ease, grace and perfection. This may sound like a tall order, but actually it's simple. When you change your thinking; you will be able to change your life. Every cloud has a silver lining. Focus on the positive aspect of every life event, and you will be much happier!

If you take all the steps described above, you will find that you are *becoming* a different person — a person who has control over his or her life, instead of being controlled by your life events, whatever they may be!

Dr. Juliet Tien (Dr. J) is a leading expert in treating female or male yeast and parasitic infections, and overweight or under-weight conditions. She is also the best-selling author of Breaking the Yeast Curse: Food and Unconditional Love for Magic Healing and Healthy and Tasty: Dr. J's Anti-Yeast Cooking.

For more information, please call (800) 715-3053 or (818) 472-2213, or send e-mail to drj@drjsbest.com Website: www.drjsbest.com Facebook fan page: www.fb.com/drjsbest (Become a fan to read updated articles regularly on alternative, holistic treatment for various health issues.)

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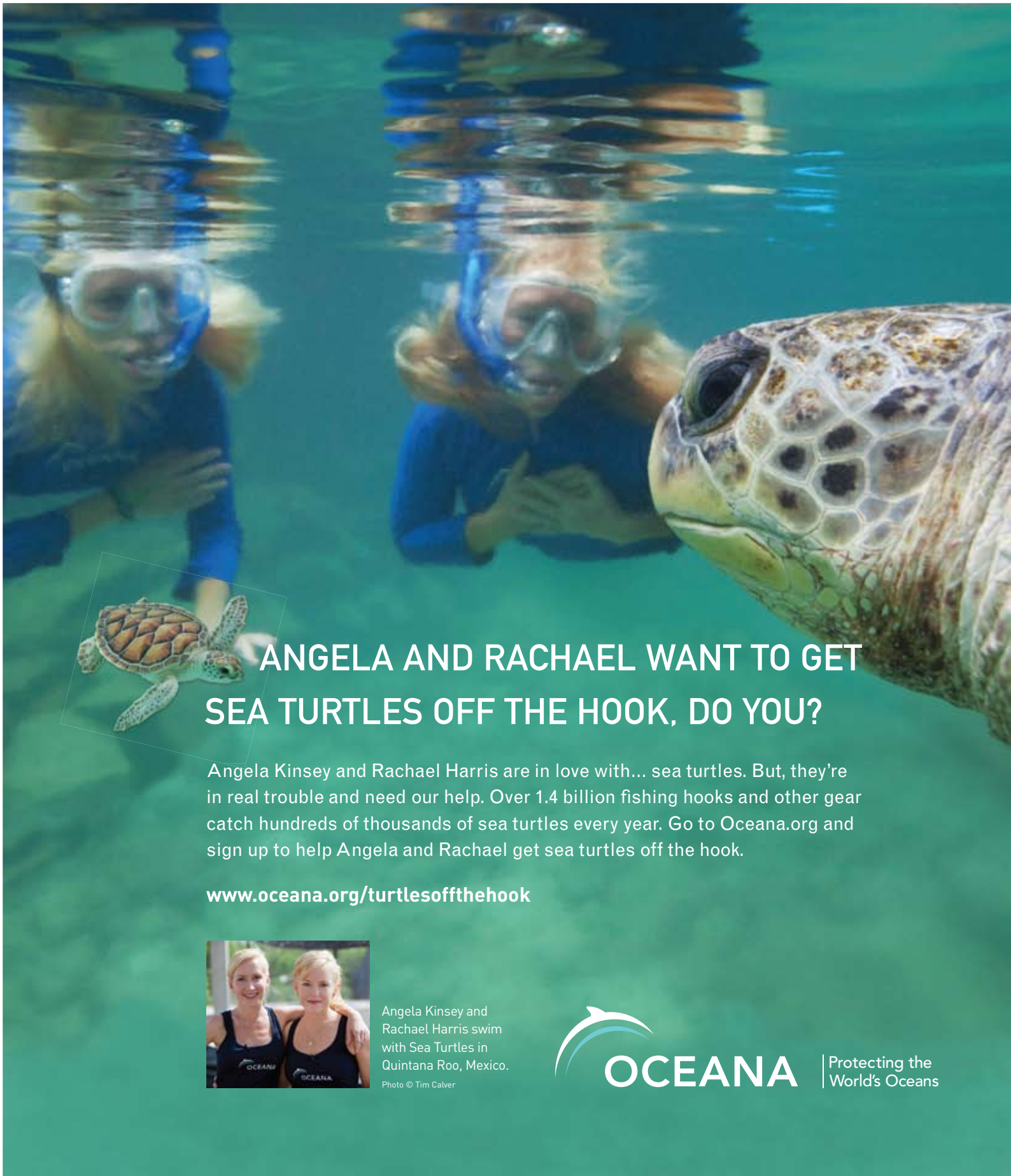
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Angela Kinsey and Rachael Harris swim with Sea Turtles in Quintana Roo, Mexico.
Photo © Tim Calver

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MUSIC Reviews

By Michael Diamond



DARSHAN AMBIENT

Dream In Blue

www.spottedpeccary.com

"Dream In Blue" is a CD I'd been reading about for a while as placing high on the charts of Zone Music Reporter and capturing the CD of the Month honor on Echoes radio. After giving it a listen I can hear why it has been garnering such adulation. Michael Allison who records as Darshan Ambient, has conjured a dreamy alchemical blend of ambient, electronica, and jazz elements. While the album began as a nod to Miles Davis and John Coltrane and definitely includes jazz shadings, the overall feel leans more towards the ambient side of the spectrum.

Michael plays all the instruments on the recording including synthesizers, piano, guitar, bass, drums, and trumpet. I especially enjoyed the inclusion of the trumpet, which paid homage to Miles, although in this ambient setting recalled to me more the music of Mark Isham or Jeff Oster.

There is a lot of musical diversity on the album and other tracks traversed sonic territory

in a wide range from Patrick O'Hearn to Brian Eno, yet all in the totally original style that has distinguished the numerous Darshan Ambient recordings over the years. For those not familiar with this multi-talented artist, "Dream In Blue" would be a wonderful introduction.

JANET CAROL RYAN

Flower Of The Heart

www.janetcarolryan.com

Subtitled "Meditations, Prayers, & Blessings for Heart-centered Living," this lovely CD by Janet Carol Ryan, radiates warmth and beauty, while providing guidance and support for attuning one's being to the vibration of love in their life. The program opens with a brief welcome from Janet, followed by a musical meditation with Tibetan Bells and Crystal Singing Bowls, creating a sacred space for centering and looking deeper within. From there the journey continues with guided visualizations, songs, prayers, and blessings for opening your heart, remembering your Higher Self, and maintaining that awareness

throughout the day.

This is Janet Carol Ryan's second release following her "Abundant Blessings" CD, which included meditations and affirmations for increasing one's prosperity. In her work as a spiritual counselor and educator, she sees her role as a catalyst, combining a practical application of universal principles and affirmative prayer to help people "turn obstacles into stepping stones." "Flower of the Heart" is practical on an outer level, as well as deeply meditative and engaging of one's inner nature.

In addition, Janet has recently produced an inspiring new music video with Karen Drucker called "I'll Light A Candle," which can be seen at: http://youtube/vqM1_u_aUR8

ANN SWEETEN

In the Wake

www.annsweeten.com

In a recording career that has spanned 14 years and includes 9 best-selling albums and 2 Italian compilations, Ann Sweeten has managed to achieve a level of success that many musicians only dream of. In addition to her music consistently placing high on the charts, receiving extensive radio airplay, and winning numerous awards, she holds the prestigious title of an official "Steinway Artist/Composer," placing her in the company of some of the most distinguished pianists in the world.

Her latest release, "In The Wake," is a showcase for the skills that have elevated her to such lofty musical heights. The album is co-produced by Windham Hill Records founder and Grammy award-winning producer Will Ackerman, who also plays guitar on two tracks. Additional instrumentation includes flute, English horn, oboe, violin, viola, and cello, all used sparingly to lightly season and subtly enhance the flavor of her rich piano compositions.

Among her inspirations she lists one of my all-time favorite pianists, Suzanne Ciani, as well as composers Stephen Sondheim, Erik Satie, Tchaikovsky, and Debussy, revealing her classical background and new age influences. Her music is both contemplative and emotionally evocative, providing a world-class listening experience.

MONKS OF THE DESERT

Blessings, Peace & Harmony

www.christdesert.org

www.sonymasterworks.com

Gregorian chant is an ancient musical form dating back to the early Middle Ages. It gained a new audience in recent years as groups like Enigma and others melded its ethereal harmonies with contemporary drum loops, synthesizers, and sound effects to produce a modern hybrid. However, this recording by Monks of the Desert contains no electronic enhancements — it's the real thing and probably sounds pretty much like it did centuries ago.

This group of Benedictine monks lives in the high desert in a remote corner of northern New Mexico where they are totally off the grid. Their monastery is built on a sustainability model featuring passive solar electricity and water heating, biodiversity, and more — all of which won them a National Green Award.

They view chanting together as a way of building community as well as "creating peace in a world that is so clearly not at peace." It is emphasized that one doesn't have to sing along, or understand the words in Lat-

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(Continued on page 41)

BOOK Reviews

By Sonia von Matt Stoddard



THE NEXT ECO WARRIORS

22 Young Women and Men Who Are Saving the Planet
Edited By Emily Hunter

Transcending the boundaries of a world conceived as comprised of only resources and exploitation, to a world streaming with life and vulnerability, we are introduced to 22 crusaders who fight for animals and the elements. We see their failures and successes, along with a welcome to join in their fight against interests of those who live in this world for policy that benefits profit and pleasure over principle.

Our generation bears the responsibility of making positive changes to our planet. Every person's story, from around the world, shows us that every individual is capable of creating positive change that will have massive impact, and continue to build energy toward the creation of a new world, one with renewable energy and sustainable economy.

These are the stories of wars being fought against denialists of an old regime that cares only about profit, at the expense of human life. We are inspired by each individual's experience associated with the cause close to their heart, and are invited to join the battle.

Published by Conari Press, this book is available at your local bookstore or www.redwheelweiser.com

ECOMIND

Changing the Way We Think, to Create the World We Want
By Frances Moore Lappé

If we can learn to remake our "mental map" and move away from our preconceptions, we can think and function more like an ecosystem and lessen the impact of the current systemic destruction that has incurred since the conception of our industrialized world. By breaking free from our current core beliefs and opening up to seeing the possibilities around us, we can realize our power to change. This is what marks the cultivation of our "eco-mind."

The author deconstructs seven common "thought traps" about ourselves and our ecology, and offers a new mental framework that stimulates the imagination and dissolves feelings of powerlessness. Throughout the work, she shows examples of how people are tackling problems by aligning with nature, rather than fighting against it.

Included are breakthroughs in neuroscience and ecology, showing us that the only choice we

don't have is whether to change the world. By understanding and acting upon the theories in this book, we *will* change it, and with positive results.

Published by Nation Books, a member of the Perseus Books Group, this book is available at your local bookstore or www.nationbooks.org

PLANETARY HEALING

Spirit Medicine for Global Transformation

By Nicki Scully & Mark Hallert
(Includes CD of Guided Visualization)

The tools, practices and processes in this book are designed to foster new ideas and increase creativity in solving problems, revealing how to move beyond helplessness to active participation in global healing. As technology and science replaced beauty, it was, in effect, traded for utility.

The authors believe by engaging in shamanic-based journeys and practices, along with visualization exercises (with help inspired by the included CD) we can replace our negative direction with physical, emotional, spiritual and environmental healing across time and space.

This book is a *do*, rather than a *read*. Each chapter fosters a continuing process through practice, with examples and exercises on how to accomplish each. You will learn how to identify, then connect with feelings and concepts like love, fear, and healing,

then continue to transformation at the deepest level, resulting in a positive release of energy that can be utilized by all.

Published by Bear & Company, this book is available at your local bookstore or at www.BearandCompanyBooks.com

HEALTHY EATING, HEALTHY WORLD

Unleashing the Power of Plant-Based Nutrition

By J. Morris Hicks
with J. Stanfield Hicks

Our craving for the rich Western diet has intensified to the point that we have virtually abandoned the type of natural, plant-based foods that nature intended for us to burn as energy.

With dairy and meat products and excessive refined sugars and fats accounting for the majority of our diets, the lack of whole plants in our diets have led to an abundance of diseases, including obesity, diabetes, heart disease and stroke, as well as many others. Most health issues are fast-food driven. And, what you eat not only affects you as an individual, but also has ramifications on the environment.

This isn't a weight-loss book, but rather about how adopting a diet of whole plant foods will enable your body to find its ideal weight effortlessly and permanently. Divided into three

(Continued on page 41)

PLEASE
RECYCLE



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WILL JOHNSON
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Voices of Hope

By Audrey Hope

I AM MEANT

*In this state, this place,
I am meant
To be heaven above, earth below,
In me, wholly at once.*

*In truth, though blindly,
I am a hologram
Alive in many directions,
Though my feet hit firmly on the
ground.*

*This is a planet of mirrored
elegance-
Air, water, earth, sky
And everything I see,
I am too...*

*Need I question to care?
Need I ask and how?*

*It is a simple code of living,
Really, after all,
To reflect answers
Out my window,
Where nature speaks...*

*When the forests cry rain, it is
my tear,
When the land shakes, it is our
pain.*

*And the 2012 prophesy is in the
tides!
Water as supreme messenger
Carries the new age in waves -
Some already come, some on its
way.*

*I suppose we need a special
boat,
Fueled by heart and spirit,
And captained by mavericks,
Fearless us, who stay the course.*

*I hear the sea-
We are meant to be in power,
We are meant to herald peace,
We are meant to change the
world,
And I bow to the chance.*

Audrey Hope is a spiritual counselor and host/producer of REAL WOMEN, an international award-winning talk show dedicated to life-altering perspectives. Visit: www.hopesrealwomen.com and audreyhope.com Her CD, The High Voltage Hope System, is available on amazon.com

Devaa Haley Mitchell

Re-Awakening the Sacred Feminine

By Michael Diamond

Devaa Haley Mitchell is a spiritual guide, public speaker, and musician who I first had the pleasure of meeting and interviewing when I reviewed her excellent "Sacred Alchemy" CD for the September/October 2011 issue of Awareness Magazine. The thematic vision of the recording is the exploration and expression of wisdom and power of female spiritual archetypes.

The album musically reflects 13 faces of the Goddess, including Tara, Kali, Mary Magdalene, Isis, Aphrodite, Pele, and others. Devaa uses her music as a vehicle for the expansion of consciousness and the re-awakening of the sacred feminine — something that is greatly needed in our world today. This album certainly achieves its goal of "expressing the glory of God/Goddess and love for Spirit embodied in all that surrounds us."

The theme of unity and communion is also reflected in her work as the founder of the *Inspiring Women Summit* (www.inspiringwomensummit.com), which is a virtual gathering of more than 55,000 participants from more than 160 countries. According to Devaa: "This is perhaps the most exciting time in history to be a woman on this planet."

We are part of the vanguard of a new era, in which women and feminine qualities are restored into partnership with the masculine. While it's true that our world faces many crises, never before as women have we had so many tools, resources and freedoms to wake up and consciously evolve ourselves, and the world around us."

Another avenue she channels her energy and service into is her *Soulful Women Certificate Program* (www.soulfulwomen.com/certificate). This is a 9-month initiation to prepare participants to step out and play a bigger role in

ushering in a new era based on the principles of love, peace and co-creation — including with men.

The program combines the wisdom and depth of an ancient mystery school, deep inner work and practical business skills one needs to deeply impact the world and enjoy a fulfilling and prosperous life in all areas. She

describes it in this way:

"To make the larger Shift in our world will require a powerful network of awake, embodied, clear women leaders who can, in turn, help other women stand fully in their power, love, and service. In turn, these women can stand with powerful, sacred noble men in partnership to create a template for the new humanity. We have seen that some processes of healing, initiation and empowerment are better done with other sisters; the love and power released can be astonishing."

For over twenty years, Devaa has been on the forefront of the spiritual growth and human potential movement. In addition to having earned a Master's degree at Stanford University, she is currently finishing her doctoral work and will receive her D-Min in 2012.

She is also a co-founder of The Shift Network and has held an administrative position at The Institute Of Noetic Sciences. There is no doubt that her transformational work will only keep expanding as time goes on.

While she "recognizes the path of the sacred feminine as her spiritual home," it is important to remember that each of us, no matter our gender, has male and female qualities in varying degrees, and that the awakening of the sacred feminine is of great value to all humanity in our quest to become whole and balanced beings.

For more information, visit: www.devaa.com



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MUSIC Reviews

(Continued from page 38)

in, but that "just listening creates peace," and can even change the way our brain works. The best way to experience it is to "listen with the ear of your heart."

JULIA HARRELL

Marimba Dreams
www.juliaharrell.com

In the interest of "keeping it real," let me share that I had some involvement in the production of this recording, so the focus of the review will be more factual than evaluative. MD

The marimba is not usually the first instrument that comes to mind when thinking of new age music, being more commonly associated with orchestral, jazz, or world music. Its deep resonant woody tones have a sonic signature unlike any other. As an accomplished percussionist Julia brings many years of experience to this project and in addition to marimba, she also added atmospheric textures on synthesizers. Another element that was an influence on this recording is her interest in the healing power of sound, which was "instrumental" in motivating her to create this album.

The music on this CD was inspired one day when she got a strong message during meditation to tune in and record on the marimba. After minimal editing, additional tracks of synthesizers, guitar, and nature sounds such as ocean, dolphins, birds and a mountain stream were added creating a musical spectrum that ranges from meditative to moving. "Marimba Dreams" is a unique offering that provides a soundtrack for relaxation and letting your imagination flow.

Michael Diamond is a music producer, recording artist, and music journalist in the San Francisco Bay area with over 30 years of experience writing for nationally-published magazines and more recently worldwide on the internet. He currently has five CD's including two with new-age music pioneer Steven Halpern. For additional reviews of CD's, DVD's, and more, please visit: www.michaeldiamondmusic.com

BOOK Reviews

(Continued from page 39)

sections, focusing on health, global issues associated with a deteriorating environment and some practical changes based on plant-based meals, this book shows us how to make health your primary objective. Everything else will follow.

Published by BenBella Books, this book is available at your local bookstore or www.benbellabooks.com

FOUR ELEMENTS

Reflections on Nature
By John O'Donohue

Air, water, fire and stone: the breath of God, the tears of the earth, at home at the hearth of spirit and as the tabernacle of memory. This book is a very poetically written landscape that leads us back to those basic natural elements we knew as children, but may have forgotten as adults lost in the noisy and busy realities of daily life.

We may have lost the wonderful and mystical qualities of our minds, but by coming back to an interaction with these elements, we may be able to restore our spirit, bringing a deeper meaning to who and what we are, and what our purpose is for being in this life.

By exploring a range of themes relating to the way in which we live our lives today, the natural energy and rhythm of the natural world, its innocence and creativity, power and splendor, we are introduced to the important lesson of how to benefit most from the wisdom of the earth.

Published by Harmony Books, this book is available at your local bookstore or www.crownpublishing.com

Awareness Magazine's e-magazine is available online free of charge

Visit: www.awarenessmag.com

DVD Review

By Lyda Whiting

INSPIRED BY ANGELS

Produced and Directed by Tony Miller

Music by Peter Sterling

Do angels exist? If they do, what roles do they play in our lives? Do they watch over us? Can they help us? Do they communicate with us? Can we connect with them? What is an angel, anyway? Are there different kinds of angels?

Almost 70% of Americans believe in angels. Do you? Join the filmmakers on a journey to discover the answers for yourself.

Filled with beautiful images of angels in art and popular culture, this film features extensive interviews with Doreen Virtue, Susanna Hart, Terry Lynn Taylor, Mica Monet, Amirah Hall, Keiko Anaguchi, and many others who

work with the angels every day. There are also clips of people on the street talking about their own beliefs about angels.

The music by Peter Sterling, known for his beautiful harp playing and ethereal compositions, is performed by the Quantum Leap Music Collective.

This new documentary is available on two DVDs, Part 1, "Calling All Angels" and Part 2, "Heaven on Earth." Each DVD runs about an hour.

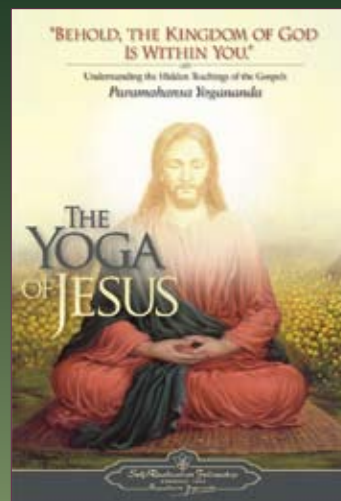
Do angels exist? Watch this film, and decide for yourself. Perhaps, as one man says, "All of us are angels. We just don't know it."

Produced by A Cut Above Productions, these DVDs are available at angelsacap.com or at Things from Heaven, an angel store at 365 E. Main St., Ventura, CA 93001.

Each time a man stands up for an ideal... he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope..."

— Robert F. Kennedy

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KID'S Reviews

By Lyda Whiting

THE MAGIC FOREST

Written by Jesse Dowell
Illustrated by Seth Rios

While resting in the forest, Cody imagines a different world. It's a surprise when Cody opens his eyes and finds himself in that world, with a giant creature right in front of him. Cody is a little afraid, but he's curious too. The creature talks to Cody, and introduces him to three other animals. Cody and his new friends set out on a quest to the bottom of a volcano, in search of a legendary treasure. What will they find?

This book invites children to join Cody for a magical adventure in their imagination. Young readers will be excited as they journey along with the unusual characters and discover a completely different world. The illustrations are colorful and expressive, enhancing the text but leaving room for the reader's imagination too.

The author is a ten-year-old who started writing this story in second grade, and who has won poetry contests at school since kindergarten. His enthusiasm and creativity shine on every page. This book, and the author, will inspire children to write their own imaginative stories.

Recommended for ages 4 and up.

Published by Inkwell Productions, this book is available at inkwellproductions.com or jessedowell.com

NOT YOUR TYPICAL BOOK ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

Written by Elin Kelsey
Illustrated by Clayton Hanmer

How can your clothing choices help the planet? How can we feed ourselves, and take care of the earth at the same time? How can new gadgets help the environment?

Reading this book may make you feel hopeful about the environment. It is packed with things that kids (and their parents) can actually do for the environment, from donating their old sneakers, to growing an urban garden.

Readers learn how scientists are using nature's ideas to create new products and methods that are eco-friendly, which includes being good for people too. They learn how bees are connected to burgers and world peace, and how cell phones are connected to gorillas. They even meet a sustainable happiness researcher!

This book presents complicated ideas in an entertaining and understandable way, without placing blame or oversimplifying. It empowers children and adults to help make a difference by giving them simple steps they can do. Filled with colorful cartoons, this book will capture the imagination of all ages.

Recommended for ages 5 and up.

Published by Owlkids Book Inc., this book is available at your local bookstore.

ONE SIMPLE THING

Written by Paula Ginsburg
Illustrated by Julie Freeman and Anka Trubnikov

What can one child do to help the planet? It seems overwhelming at first. But when you focus on one simple thing, it's amazing what you can accomplish!

Written in rhyme and narrated by a friendly seagull, this book gives children inspiration to start with just one small action to help improve their neighborhood and the world. Early readers will find this book fun, and younger children will like having it read to them while they search every illustration for the seagull.

The author is a public school teacher who was looking for a way to bring environmental awareness to her students. They decided to create a homemade poster campaign to reduce the use of napkins in restaurants. Their project has expanded to include thousands of students and hundreds of cafes, and has been going strong for twenty years. It is now a symbol that reminds us how we can make a difference in small easy ways.

For ages 5 and up.

Published by the author, this book is available at amazon.com or email: onesimplething@gmail.com

MALLORY GOES GREEN

Written by Laurie Friedman
Illustrated by Jennifer Kalis

Mallory is excited to be on her elementary school's environmental committee. She wants to make her school and home more friendly to the environment. But as soon as she decides to go green, things start going wrong. Her family and friends don't appreciate Mallory helpfully pointing out what they are doing to waste energy and resources. Her classmates don't appreciate Mallory deciding on the class project for the Green Fair on her own. Mallory does not understand why no one is listening to her. In fact, most of the people she knows aren't even talking to her any more.

The relaxed, first-person narrative makes it feel as if Mallory is talking directly to the reader. Kids learn how to go green, and that it is a lot easier with the cooperation of the people around them, and a lot more fun too.

Early readers may need a bit of help with a few words, but should be able to read it easily. There are fun illustrations of Mallory and her friends, and the text is divided into short chapters.

For ages 8 and up.

Published by Darby Creek, this book is available at your bookstore.

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REFLEXIONS BELFEXIONWZ

By Robert Ross



on Sun Valley's Serenade

*"Pardon me, boy
Is that the Chattanooga choo
choo?"*

*Track twenty-nine
Boy, you can gimme a shine
I can afford
To board a Chattanooga choo
choo
I've got my fare
And just a trifle to spare"*

— Song 'Chattanooga Choo Choo',
written and composed by
Mack Gordon & Harry Warren,
and featured in the movie:
Sun Valley Serenade.

CHOO-CHOO

Nineteen forty-one, the movie Sun Valley Serenade makes its debut, starring Sonja Henie and John Payne. The world is at war, but for an hour and twenty-five minutes and the price of admission, all is well. Sonja Henie, who made her name as an Olympic skater, winning in the 1928, 32 and 36 Olympics, is a shining star in the film — with her radiant looks, blond hair, button nose, and Norwegian accent.

In the film, she falls in love with John Payne, who is committed to someone else, of course. Throughout the movie we are treated to some . . . unrealistic skiing scenes (Hollywood took some liberties), great music by the Glenn Miller Orchestra (In the Mood, Chattanooga Choo Choo, Moonlight Serenade, etc.), and an ice skating extravaganza featuring Sonja Henie herself, doing what she does best. Oh, not to forget, by the end of the movie, she wins over John Payne and they live happily ever after. For nostalgia buffs, the movie is a must see.

For the past half dozen years my wife and I have made a so-

jour from San Diego to southern Idaho, to ski and enjoy the ambience of Sun Valley. As the name implies, the resort lies nestled in a valley — the Hood River Valley — surrounded by the Sawtooth mountains. Ketchum is the main town, with a population of a little more than 3,000.

The winter months draw skiers, both alpine and cross country, and summer and fall are perfect for a host of outdoor activities including hiking, biking, golf and river rafting, to name a few. This Swiss Alp setting has attracted more than a few celebrities like Bruce Willis, Tom Hanks, Jamie Lee Curtis, Clint Eastwood and Tony Robbins, who have homes in the area.

BELL TOLLS

Sun Valley — as a resort — was the brain child of Averell Harriman. He was the chairman of the Union Pacific Railroad and an avid skier. In 1935 Harriman commissioned an Austrian count, Felix Schaffgotsch to scour the U.S. in search of a potential "Swiss Alps" type of mountain resort. It was decided that the Hood River Valley would be that setting. The Union Pacific had a spur line running from Boise to Ketchum, making the area accessible.

By December 1936 the Sun Valley Lodge was opened and the rest, as they say, is history. Soon names like Errol Flynn, Clark Gable and Ernest Hemingway were flocking to this ideal getaway. In fact, Hemingway completed For Whom the Bell Tolls in 1939 while staying in suite 206 at the Sun Valley Lodge. Papa Hemingway eventually made Sun Valley his home and is buried with his fourth wife about a mile north of the

Sun Valley Lodge. The railroad tracks were eventually taken out in 1964 to make way for the Hood River Trail.

Today, Sun Valley has world class ski runs, a lively art community, unique restaurants, and in the summer months, hosts numerous music festivals. Two thousand and eight also saw the opening of the Sun Valley Pavilion which is home to the orchestra's annual three and a half week series of free concerts. The Pavilion is also used by performing artists from around the world.

SOUP

There is something about homemade soup, especially if you have to take three or four chair lifts — rising in elevation from 6,000 to 9,000 feet — and ski for forty minutes before enjoying it. Seattle Ridge Lodge, built with huge timbers in 1973 can only be reached by skis. It sits atop of Bald Mountain, which affords one of the most spectacular 360 degree views imaginable.

There's always a roaring fire and more than a few lunch items to choose from. Seattle Ridge Lodge is known for its homemade soups — so it's always a treat to stop in mid-day and see *what's on the stove*.

Another restaurant worth visiting on the slopes, is the historic Roundhouse (built in 1939). It's perched at 7,700 feet and can only be reached by gondola. The menu features a host of gourmet dishes from salmon to quiche.

THE HALLWAY

The focal point of the Sun Valley experience is the Sun Valley Lodge. It was originally built in 1936, but has gone through numerous upgrades. There's a huge circular hot tub outside surrounded by pine trees and a view of snow-covered mountains. There's also an ice-skating rink, a gourmet restaurant, and a very cozy and comfortable

lobby, where one can sit and read, or just do a little people watching.

The real treat of the hotel are the old black and white photos of past visitors which line the hallway leading from the lobby to the outdoor hot tub. You might find yourself saying: *isn't that Gary Cooper, Janet Leigh, Lucille Ball?* Look at this one, *Jacquelyn Kennedy on skis*, or *I think that's Clark Gable*, and *I bet that's Errol Flynn*.

The movie Sun Valley Serenade is available on television — for free — in each guest room, or you can view it in the Opera House a few yards from the Lodge.

See the movie a couple of



Bob and Ingrid Ross enjoying a spectacular view at 9,000 ft. on Sun Valley's Bald Mountain.

times and it will be difficult to stop thinking about Sun Valley or humming the tune *"Pardon me, boy, Is that the Chattanooga choo choo? Track twenty-nine, Boy, you can gimme a shine...*

Sun Valley has been called a little Shangri-La . . . **we think so!**

Robert Ross can be reached at: SanDiegoRoss@yahoo.com

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If you want to change
the world . . . BE that
change.

— Mahatma Gandhi



By Jesse Anson Dawn

Tips on Keeping Mind & Body Young

Jesse Anson Dawn (accurately photographed at age 67), author of the national award-winning book **Never “Old,”** plus **The Rejuvenator’s Bible**, speaks out about a most stirring subject: how to personally control the unwanted effects of “aging.”

Presently answering the question: “How do mind-expanding methods affect the aging process?”

Dear Readers,

Ever since I came to realize that mental strength changes **everything** for the better, my teachings stay duly focused on methods that ((**perpetuate**)) the irreplaceable powers of the increasingly vivified mind. All of which are techniques that, over time, encourage the need to give the TV a rest, because to truly activate (inner-directed), curing abilities, it highly depends on the mental freedom to learn about them. And an essential part of that freedom is to, somehow find the time to (tune-into) the **Body-Guardian Genius Channel** — the one now emerging (**INSIDE**) **you** — the ((**LIFE-saving**)) one that, quite crucially, teaches us how—

PERCEPTIONS CONTROL THE MAJORITY OF PHYSICAL EFFECTS

Extensive studies reveal that (perceptively focused) self-concern is the most potently curing power of **all** — a fact that makes (deeply caring) attention to your mind’s body its **saving grace**. And to help motivate your ((**Inner-Love-Power**)) level of being, it truly helps to ask yourself vital questions such as this:

Who is the **REAL** you? A “you” ruled by TV and pharmaceutical-pushed, [ageism-based] perceptions, or the enlightened **TRUE YOU** who, step-by-step, learns to maintain your ((preciously need-

ed)) physical well being? Otherwise, dear reader, if you let your curing abilities fade away, you may fail to realize the **BIG** difference between stimulating self-repair to **continually happen**, or just wondering **WHAT** the ?%#! **HAPPENED** to it?

But fortunately, there are two future-world outcomes open to us: the world of “I wish I had” or the world of “I’m glad I did.” But to avoid falling into the [“I wish I had more time to learn about my body, where can I get a quick-fix?”] mode of thinking, I teach a **developing** process that is not about “quick fixes,” but one that uncovers your truly (**inner-self**), where the ((ever-healing **REAL YOU**)) **lives**.

As more and more I realize the transformative results of mind-powered, deeply perceptive, healing emanations, and how positive energy creates **vastly** different physical outcomes than negative energy.

And it’s mainly due to my willfully positive, central-brain-activations that, despite reaching the so-called “elderly” phase of my life, I continue to embody the look and vitality of a “normal” 30 or 35 — just as the recent photo of me (at the top of this article) **accurately** verifies. Yes, that’s the **REAL** me at 67, and that’s my **REAL** hair, and my **surgery-free, make-up-free, REAL** face. And you can be quite **sure** of that, because nothing is deceptive or ineffective about my regeneration-reviving methods, mainly because I perceptively **LIVE** by faithfully practicing this steadily helpful truism:

Healing oneself is not a physical, but a deeply MENTAL process.

Thus by intently actualizing that fact, I have, quite naturally, kept nearly the same face and body for over 30 years — a result that often urges people to ask

me: “How **long** can your methods keep working so **well**?” And my true-to-life answer to that is this:

Mental energy ((**PERPETUAL-LY**)) heals, but its ongoing ability greatly depends on not falling into what I call:

THE SKEPTIC TANK

Dear mind and body, together we STAY, freed from the Skeptic Tank of rapid decay — is a regular prayer of mine, helping me overcome the cynical notion that self-empowered curing is not “scientifically established.” But if all of “science” is based on actual reality, then bumblebees couldn’t fly, because “scientifically” its wings are too small to lift its body. However, bumblebees ((**positively**)) launch themselves anyway — a superb talent that I, and perhaps you too, would like to have the wings to

do. But quite delightfully, sometimes I **feel** like I’m ((**mindfully**)) flying, especially when learning self-renewing skills.

And amid that elevated awareness, I’m reminded of this classic line from Ben Franklin: “**Without books for the mind and body, a house is not a home.**” Or as Albert Einstein wisely put it: “**Most of all, this world needs truly safe and natural, multidimensional methods of self-curing.**”

And with those two revelations duly comprehended and utilized, maybe we can finally transcend the increasingly outdated, [Old Era] system of treating disease and “aging” with merely drugs and surgery, and thereby advance onto a truly **New Era of Consciousness...**

*“Youthman Messenger” Jesse will answer questions (about real rejuvenation and ((**protection-energy**))) by emailing jesseisforreal@yahoo.com*

Ways to Regain Your Own Reasons for Hope

Watch a sunrise or sunset.

Take a long walk in a quiet natural area.

Sing a song you haven’t heard in years.

Paint a picture of the ocean.

Write a poem.

Pet a cat or dog.

Hug your child.

Tell someone how much you love them.

Read a child a story.

Volunteer at a local school, hospital or nursing home.

Make someone laugh.

Call up an old friend — and catch up.

Make dinner and invite a friend to share it with you.

Give a gift to charity.

Turn off the TV and count your blessings.

Visit a place of worship.

Learn more about another culture or creed.

Say hello to a stranger.

Plant seeds.

Visit a zoo or museum.

— Jane Goodall

Visit www.janegoodall.org



Feng Shui Concepts

By Jenny T. Liu, M.A.

Respecting Mother Earth with Chi Art

When you take the time to be truly present and fully appreciate what you have, the simplest events can profoundly affect your life. Everything around you, everything you do, every person you meet, will have a message for you and is a teacher. The best teachers inspire you to see more, want more, and be more. Observe the teachers in your environment, for potential teachers surround you at every moment. I once found an unlikely teacher while peeling a steamed beet.

I marveled at the deep red color of the beet in my hand and couldn't resist taking a bite. As the sweet earthy sensation filled my mouth, the life cycle of the beet from seed to fleshy vegetable flashed before my inner eye. In that moment, I received a spontaneous message from one of Mother Nature's teachers: the root of inspiration lies in reconnecting with nature. As long as you seek knowledge, teachers will appear.

Observing teachers and tuning in to their messages is exactly what we as feng shui masters do for you when we consult with you and your home. We listen and pay attention to the teachers who are in your house, garden, and office, as well as the messages that are revealed in your habits, physical body, selected friends, and family relationships. You may be surprised how much you can learn when you are present and pay attention. Communing with good teachers is crucial.

I learned to recognize teachers in the environment from my father, Chi Jen Liu. For as long as my father can remember, every-

thing around him — both physical and non-physical — spoke to him with a message. It is no wonder he followed his calling of becoming a feng shui master whose job it is to listen to every-



Turtle's Fantasy of Fortune from Heaven by Grand Master Chi Jen Liu.

thing in the environment — sharing what others cannot hear and interpreting what others cannot understand.

Grand Master Liu has the ability to communicate with the universe on many levels. Many of the messages he receives come from tuning into the cosmos through meditation. While in deep meditation, he received a vision and translated it into the Chi Art featured in this article.

Chi Art contains images and messages of high intelligence and positive power. Every time you look at Chi Art, your brain receives the positive messages. You then reinforce these positive messages with meditation, focused visualizations, and repetitive chanting.

When you do this, the positive messages become one with the biological functions of your brain and body, and your mind will be able to create the changes you desire on physical, emotional, and spiritual

levels. Grand Master Liu's Chi Art is a celebration of the many teachers around us that stimulate our minds and propel us towards achieving our potential and a higher awareness of life. *Turtle's Fantasy of Fortune from Heaven* is one of my favorite paintings.

Underneath the translucent surface of our ocean, a world similar to our own world upon land exists. The intuitive dolphin, steadfast turtle, and playful fish in the painting choreograph a fluid dance with lengths of seaweed, as if entertaining an audience. They wave help from their mouths like banners, communicating messages they wish to speak.

The fanciful diagram they create with the kelp is more than a passing random pattern — it is a message to humans asking them to have mercy on Mother Earth. With the kelp, the sea life form the mantra charm diagrams promoting "wealth without disaster" to remind humans that harmonizing with nature and its resources is the way to true wealth.

Destructive habits from the land above are having a great impact in the watery depths below. The creatures that have inhabited this planet much longer than we have are sending

us an urgent plea. The dolphin — symbolic of harmony and intelligence — reminds us that although humans are lauded for advancing technology, true intelligence works in harmony with nature. The sea turtle represents longevity and the fish are icons of abundance. They come together in *Turtle's Fantasy of Fortune from Heaven* to empower you to receive the blessings of health, sustainability, and prosperity without harm.

The message of *Turtle's Fantasy of Fortune from Heaven* is a reminder to find better ways of building wealth while sustaining our natural resources. After all, as the ocean lies beneath our land, it is the root of human sustenance and the foundation of our prosperity. When we destroy our precious ocean life, we destroy a vital resource.

This Chi Art allows you to align yourself with the powers of our oceanic friends and receive the profound messages from these teachers. Please send them the positive energy of your love and appreciation, and join them in healing the beauty and majesty of our beloved oceans.

Master Jenny Liu holds a Bachelors Degree in Environmental Design from UC Berkeley and a Masters Degree in Architecture from UCLA. She is an expert in Feng Shui who shares her knowledge through consultations, seminars, periodicals, and the internet. For more information, see Liu-Fengshui.com



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Musings

By Mystic Trish®

Be Humble... for You Are of the Earth

Be Humble, for you are of the Earth.

Be Noble, for you are of the Stars.

— Serbian Proverb

As we move toward the Galactic center of our universe, what are we going to experience? As we move farther and farther into deep space, what are we going to find? There are many predictions for what the earth is supposed to experience as we move close to and move through the galactic center of our galaxy later this year.

We have several super moons and eclipses set to happen in 2012. How will they impact our oceans? How about those tectonic plates and volcanoes? And what about the solar flares?

Now all these things would be going on here on planet earth even if humans were not here to witness it. Does that make you feel noble or humble? We have had a heck of a ride in the past year on this earth.

There wasn't a day when you could not find a news report on how our own behavior had negatively impacted our environment and contributed to a new natural disaster of the week. We are beginning to look like the natural disaster movies of the week on the Syfy channel.

Are we humbled yet?

I'm not sure how noble most of us feel about the way we are treating the Earth. We should be humble and understand that being allowed to live on Earth is a privilege. Many ancient cultures

believed we have our origins on other planets: the South American native people, the Australian aboriginal, even to the ancient Egyptians.

Do you believe in UFOs? Do you believe that the crop circles in England are coded messages? So how much of our trouble is our own fault and how much is the natural cycle of the planet? Are we just accelerating global warming? Have we hastened it along? Are we bringing about our own doom?

Is it really our doom? Or are we as a species just going to transform into higher light beings? What would that look like and how would that happen?

Are we going to push our environment with a human-made disaster? Will it be nuclear or is there a large volcano or tectonic shift that will occur?

Will we get such a large solar flare that it causes massive mayhem in our world and all of our electrical grids are affected and our GPS goes down along with our satellites and global communication?

It is the year of the Dragon. Are these the dragons that accompany Kwan Yin, the Asian Goddess of Mercy who hears the cries of humanity? Or is it Quetzalcoatl? If you follow the Mayan prophecies the Quetzalcoatl, the plumed serpent, is supposed to rise this year. Is this a coincidence? And how exactly is he supposed to rise. Maybe that dragon is Jormungand the Midgard serpent that starts Ragnarok.

What did the ancient Maya know? What were they talking about when they said it was the end of a cycle? Was it the beginning of a new one? Or what did the ancient Hindu or Vedic astrologers know? This is the time of the Kali-Yuga, another great time of upheaval and change.

Did the ancients see the environmental mess we have made of our home? Did they see that we would be dealing with ecological disasters? So many in one year, it's hard to hold it all in our mind at once.

Do you feel noble?

The term noblesse oblige has an interesting meaning and history.

The definition is... with privilege comes responsibility; the responsibility to do the right thing and to help the less fortunate. Who is trying to help this cause?

The Libertarian party believes that water and air pollution are an assault on people and therefore they should stop. Do we have other political leaders making a stand and taking some responsibility with their great privileges.

Around my neighborhood I see people trying to make a difference. Some are gardening with plants that do not need as much water. We are using more organic amendments and composting our kitchen scraps and growing our own vegetables.

I even hear chickens in the neighborhood now. Someone near me has a beehive. Recently I heard the bees follow their new queen to start a new hive. The people who are doing these things are fulfilling their karmic contract and acting in line with their dharma or noblesse oblige.

Spring equinox is a time of balance. Can we as a species find balance with our selves and our environment again, before it's too late? If you belong to a group of any kind, take a moment each time you gather to join your energy together and lift up the group energy. If you don't belong to a group join one online. There are several that have scheduled global group meditations.

One of the ways I find balance within myself and my planet is to start my day with a daily ritual. I light a candle and honor the 4 directions with this little daily devotional—

*By the East Wind that Blows
By the South Fire that Glows
By the West Water that Flows
By the North Earth that Grows
By the quarters of the Earth
Do we move among the Stars
In harmony between the Sun
and the Moon®*

Trisha Howe is a born intuitive who started psychic training at age 15. She has over 30 years' experience in Intuitive Counseling, Crystal Healing, Tarot, Mediumship, and Clairvoyance. Contact her at Mystictrish@cox.net or at (949) 493-0705.

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Blessings of Grace from the Birds

By Allen and Linda Anderson



People are constantly having experiences with dogs, cats, and horses, and consequently observe them more often. But some of our favorite stories are about birds in nature. Not trained to do human bidding or interested in living in anyone's homes, when wild birds offer gifts, they are blessings of grace.

Brad Abendroth, bird-watching enthusiast and nature photographer from Eden Prairie, Minnesota sent us a story about his unexpected experience with a bird that showed an extraordinary depth of gratitude.

Brad writes:

During our lunch hours and breaks, I always used to like feeding shelled peanuts to birds from my car. When I came outside, I would have a crowd of birds hanging out on a red pine near the spot where I always parked. Other birds, such as blue jays, chickadees, and white-breasted nuthatches would be waiting as well.

A Northern Cardinal I named Cy, after the Iowa State Cyclone mascot, was very comfortable with me, so I could always get pretty close to him. I started feeding Cy at least seven years ago. In five or so years, I saw him through experiencing a couple of bald phases, losing all his tail feathers, attracting a mate, and having offspring.

Two years ago, Cy eventually went missing. I didn't see him for four to six months. I thought another male might have pushed him out of his territory. Either that, or Cy had passed away. I continued to feed the cardinals but I knew none of them was Cy. On a walk one day, I found Cy again on the other side of the

lake near my office. Since then, I would always make an effort to see him during my lunch hours.

After our company moved I didn't make it over to the lake anymore, until one late-summer day. I was running some errands and decided to stop at the lake. I hadn't come prepared with peanuts in my pocket as I usually do. I tried to attract some warblers. Then I heard the familiar chirping of a cardinal that grew louder and louder. Within moments, Cy appeared from out of the brush.

I apologized to him that I had no peanuts. Do I get back to work now? Or should I return late, drive to the grocery store, and return to feed Cy? I decided to get some peanuts. Cy followed me back down the path, chirping away.

When I returned to the lake, it didn't take long for Cy to fly toward me again along that narrow path. He was chirping his little heart out. I placed a pile of shelled peanuts along the path for him. He ate very well. I love that bird.

A WHITE DOVE FOR GUNNER AND TOOTSIE

Joe and Jean Jeffries live in a suburb of Des Moines, Iowa. Their romance and marriage story is not only one of their falling in love but of blending their dog family. Tootsie was Jean's dog, and Gunner was an ex-show dog who belonged to Joe. The two pups had very different personalities. Gunner was quieter and more focused on mealtime than Tootsie, who was bouncy and easily distracted.

Joe and Jean wrote in the story they sent to us, "We called Gunner and Tootsie the kids.

They loved to play ball and tug of war and to go for walks. Tootsie never missed a chance to be the boss and would tease Gunner until he could ignore her no longer. A couple of times she pushed Gunner too far, nipping at his ear and growling, and he gave a swat to make her leave him alone. Their disagreements didn't last too long, and they were soon best buddies again."

Gunner was a little over fourteen years old when he died. "We missed him so much, Joe and Jean wrote. "Every Monday night we would light a candle and remember our special Gunner Dog. Needless to say, Tootsie then became even more pampered. Soon after Gunner was gone, Tootsie took a bad fall. In a dream Tootsie visited Jean. The dog wagged her tail and said, "Please, oh, please, I want to go see Gunner now."

Joe and Jean write the rest of the story:

We kept Gunner and Tootsie's cremains with the intent to bury them when we planted a couple of new bushes in front of our house to honor the two dogs. Weeks and months went by until we finally decided what to do. We would refurbish our rock garden. We ordered two special six-inch rectangular stones and had the kids' names and paw prints etched on them.

On Monday, October 11, 2010, we were talking with our gardeners and our neighbors and sharing stories of our kids with them. We told them we had decided to put both cremains in the same spot, as Gunner and Tootsie had been inseparable during all those wonderful years they were with us.

A white dove swooped down over Jean's head and perched on our garage door roof. We were all first stunned and then completely mesmerized by this beautiful small bird with white wings. This beautiful bird was very calm, staring down at us. The dove stayed for five minutes and then flew off as quietly and quickly as it appeared.

That evening we couldn't stop talking about the white dove appearing just as we were preparing to bury Gunner and Tootsie's cremains, which had been stored in boxes from our veterinarian. The next day, Joe returned the boxes to the vet and told her about the white dove. She said, "It was the kids."

White doves are not a native or common bird in Iowa. Nor are they typically kept in cages as pets. This dove was definitely sent to us by the kids who wanted us to know they were doing just fine.

What are your blessings of grace from the animal kingdom?

Allen and Linda Anderson are authors of a series of books about the spiritual connection between people learn from their fifteen years of publication. Visit www.allenandlindaanderson.com to check out Woof, Meow, Write, Publish: Writing about and Animals for Love and Money. Subscribe to the Andersons' free, online newsletter at www.angelanimals.net and follow them on Facebook and Twitter@angelanimals.

*The greatest discovery
of my life is that a
human being can alter
his life by altering his
attitude.*

— William James

CALENDAR of Events

Calendars are \$1.00 per word, minimum \$15.00. Phone numbers with area code, websites, and e-mails are considered as one word; hyphenated words are considered as two words. Please e-mail your listing to: info@awarenessmag.com

ONGOING

"Create positive dating experiences and lasting relationships" Workshop series by Dr. Shelly Zavala and Sharon Davis. Thursday evenings 6:30pm-8:30pm at 2414 Vista Del Oro, Newport Beach, CA 92660. For men and women singles or in a relationship. Register at www.datingandbeyond.com. Space is limited. See dates below:

March 22 Workshop "Make Better Dating and Relationship Choices" - Learn the science behind attraction and how to break old habits.

April 5 Workshop "Attract the Right One" - Learn about the psychology of attachment by integrating the heart with the head.

April 26 Workshop "Create a Successful Dating and Relationship Strategy" - Know the difference between your wants versus needs before defining your relationship goals.

May 10 Workshop "Connecting in the 21st Century" - Learn how to navigate the dating maze by romancing the web successfully and safely.

May 31 Workshop "Learn the Tools to Build and Maintain a Healthy Relationship" - Learn conflict resolution and how to achieve lasting love without losing yourself in the process.

In the Days ahead... WATCH FOR THIS MAN!

Who calls for sharing and justice as the only means to peace. Take to heart his message of the oneness of the human family. Know that, in doing so, you guarantee a positive future for all. Our Elder Brothers are among us now. All will be well.



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MARCH

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March 10 — Natural Hormone Replacement Therapy. Free information session, Sat-

urday 3-4:30pm. Get a personalized free Mini-Evaluation. Meet experts in the field. Call now to register! The Gateway, 2503 S. Barrington Ave., W. Los Angeles. (888) 752-5665. www.peaklifela.com, www.facebook.com/PeakLifeLA

March 13 — Reiki Healing Circle. Tuesday 7-8:30pm. Love Offering. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

March 14 — Spiritualist Gathering with Kathleen Vance. Wednesday 7-8:30pm. \$10 donation. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

March 16 — Energy Medicine Study Group - Resonant Healing. www.LifeShapes.org, (951) 677-0652, lifeshape@aol.com

March 18 — Aka Dua Gathering. 12:30-2:30pm in La Verne. Learn about the Aka Dua energies and how they can benefit and expand your life for healing, transformation, heightened spiritual awareness, and more! Discussion and demonstration. Level 1 and Level 2 Transmission/Attunement offered. \$10/person. More info and RSVP www.soundbodyarts.com

March 18 — Sacred Sounds Gong Meditation. 6:30 pm in La Verne. Journey within the alchemy of the sacred harmonics of Gongs and Voice to align, clear and heal mind, body and Spirit. \$20/person. More info and RSVP www.soundbodyarts.com

March 22 — Start a New Career Helping Others. Become a Hypnotherapist Today! Start working in a career doing what you really love. Classes starting NOW! Tuesday & Thursday 7-10pm, Tarzana, CA. Call (800) 479-9464, www.HMCollege.org

March 24 — Reconnective Animals Dreamchaser field trip. Presented by: Renee Colton and The Reconnective Animals Support Team, 1:00-3:00pm. Dreamchaser Equine Rescue/Rehabilitation and Animal Sanctuary, Dunrovin Ranch, 48019 N. 7th Ave., New River, AZ 85087. All proceeds go to benefit the animals of Dreamchaser Sanctuary. animalsarewaiting@msn.com, (480) 595-0888.

March 27 — Reiki Healing Circle. Tuesday 7-8:30pm. Love Offering. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA

92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

March 27 - The Reconnection: Heal Others, Heal Yourself. Presented by: Eric Pearl, 6:30pm. Changing Hands Bookstore, 6428 S. McClintock Dr., Tempe, AZ 85283. Complimentary. (480) 595-0888. animalsarewaiting@msn.com

March 28 — Spiritualist Gathering with Kathleen Vance. Wednesday 7-8:30pm. \$10 donation. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

March 29 — Reconnective Yoga Workshop. Presented by: Fernanda Delgado. Vibrate at a frequency that transforms you and your Yoga Practice! Accelerate & enhance your Yoga Practice Expand your connection with spirit Increase your health and well being. 7:00pm - \$15. Hyatt Regency Phoenix. For more information and to register: info@TheReconnection.com or call (323) 960-0012.

March 31 — Signs of the New Times... Hear about the many signs that planetary transformation is underway, learn why real change is ahead, and find out who has come to help. Talk, short video and Q&A. Free! Santa Monica Main Library Auditorium, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. Santa Monica 90401. 3:00-5:00pm.

March 31-April 1 — Level I/II Seminar: Reconnective Healing. With Eric Pearl and The Reconnection Teaching Team. \$657. Learn how to access this all-inclusive 'new' spectrum of healing comprised of energy, light and information known internationally as Reconnective Healing®. Hyatt Regency Phoenix. For more information and to register: info@TheReconnection.com or call (323) 960-0012.

APRIL

April 2 — Reconnective Kids! Class. Taught by Renee Colton. Reconnective Kids! is one of the newest program from The Reconnection®, created to teach children Reconnective Healing®! Reconnective Kids! engages children in a powerful and interactive play-workshop format designed to introduce these intelligent, empowering and transformative new healing frequencies to children ages 8-12. 6:30pm.

\$48. Hyatt Regency Phoenix. To register: info@TheReconnection.com or call (323) 960-0012.

April 10— Reiki Healing Circle. Tuesday 7-8:30pm. Love Offering. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

April 11-14 — Biodynamic Craniosacral - Restoring Resilience in the Nervous System. www.LifeShapes.org, (951) 677-0652, lifeshape@aol.com Continuing Education - Nurses, Acupuncturists, NCBTMB.

April 11 — Spiritualist Gathering with Kathleen Vance. Wednesday 7-8:30pm. \$10 donation. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

April 19 — Start a New Career Helping Others. Become a Hypnotherapist Today! Start working in a career doing what you really love. Classes starting NOW! Tuesday & Thursday 7-10pm, Tarzana, CA. Call (800) 479-9464, www.HMCollege.org

April 20-22 — Inner Directions Gathering is the "Spiritual Event of the Year." Explore authentic spiritual teachings in a joy-filled weekend of meditative dialogue, music, and silence. La Jolla, CA. www.InnerDirections.org

April 21- Connecting with the Source Retreat in Sedona, AZ. Join Medium Debra Martin and Healer Sheri Roach to gain spiritual awareness and healing for your soul on this sacred land surrounded by the dramatic red rocks of Sedona. An experience that will last a life time. Registration and info at www.connectingretreats.com

April 21, 22-24 — Level I and II - Natural Facial Rejuvenation Face-lift Massage. www.LifeShapes.org, (951) 677-0652, lifeshape@aol.com. Continuing Education - Nurses, Acupuncturists, NCBTMB. HomeStudy also available.

April 24— Reiki Healing Circle. Tuesday 7-8:30pm. Love Offering. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

April 25 — Spiritualist Gathering with Kathleen Vance. Wednesday 7-8:30pm. \$10 donation. Common Ground, 14051 Newport Ave., Tustin, CA 92780. (714) 573-2540. www.embracehumanity.com

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April 27-29 — Akashic Records Practitioner Certification Training with Barbara Schiffman, ARCT. Learn to read the Akashic Records for yourself and others with Linda Howe's Pathway Prayer Process. Expand your Soul's evolution and learn powerful Past Life healing processes. Burbank, \$325. (818) 415-3479, www.YourLifeandSoul.com

April 28-29 — Connecting With Spirit Retreat in Sedona, AZ. Come spend a day connecting and receiving messages from your loved one on the other side with Internationally known Research Medium Debra Martin. Learn how to see, hear, feel and know the signs your loved ones are trying to give us. This experience will leave you feeling like you just spent the day with a lost loved one! Registration and info at www.goldenmiracles.com

MAY

May 5-6 — Shamanic Sound Healing Retreat. Integratron in Landers, CA. Two Day Retreat with Master Sound Healers Phyllis Douglass and Scott Shepherd. Ceremonial Drum Circle, Sacred Sounds Healing Concert with Singing Bowls, Gongs, Bells and Voice, Chanting Meditation and more! Join us for this healing and transformative experience on a magnetic vortex in the Mojave Desert! More information and registration@www.soundbodyarts.com

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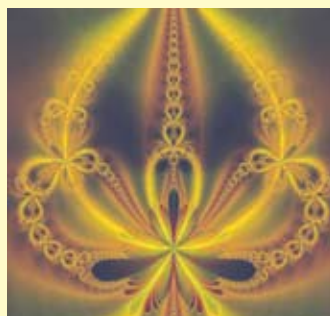
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