



NWEC Newsletter

MARCH 2009

Inspiring a new perspective on our relationship with the environment and each other so that we may all act to create a socially harmonious and ecologically sustainable future

NEWS FLASH

NWEC General Meeting

**When: 5.30 pm
March 2, 2009**

**Where: Rees
Campbell's home
12 Pellisier St
Somerset**

Please send RSVP & agenda items through to Rees reescampbell1@bigpond.com

For more information and directions see Page 5

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Voluntary Simplicity by Robin Krabbe

Implicit in the CSA Project and other NWEC projects is the concept of voluntary simplicity (VS). Many people would have heard of the saying "live simply so that other people may simply live". In one respect this alerts us to the gross inequalities in the world, akin to the tragedy of people starving to death in some countries, while obesity increases in the western world. However many would react to this plea by saying 'what difference does it make to starving people in Africa if I don't buy that plasma TV? I see instead a much more

immediate and personal reason for practising VS; in getting off the consumerist merry-go around and improving one's quality of life. **Once you no longer truly believe that money buys all that entails the good life, you are then open to a whole new liberating lifestyle.** When you are not chained to working long hours just to maintain a consumerist lifestyle, you then become freer to cultivate non-materialistic sources of satisfaction and meaning. Richard Gregg, in the 'The Value of Voluntary Simplicity' writes that VS involves both inner and outer

condition. **It means singleness of purpose, sincerity and honesty within, as well as avoidance of exterior clutter, of many possessions irrelevant to the chief purpose of life.** It means an ordering and guiding of our energy and our desires, a partial restraint in some directions in order to secure greater abundance of life in other directions. It involves a deliberate organisation of life for a purpose. The whole world appears to be geared to Henry Fords idea that civilisation progresses by the increase in the number of peoples desires and their satisfaction. The

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Sustainable Dwelling Dilemmas by Rees Campbell

Pondering time vs. money, functionality vs. aesthetics, and what is really sustainable?

It is an age old dilemma, which is being constantly updated in our world of rapid knowledge and technological development. I'm about to embark on a new adventure in my life which necessitates a dwelling. Only a holiday, weekend end type of dwelling, but.....

With minimal money, do I just go the short cut and get an old caravan? These are well designed for living space, but impersonal and generic. The image and décor, although it can be changed, lacks aesthetic appeal. In many ways, environmentally impure, and just doesn't suit the beautiful area. Or do I gradually build a driftwood humpy; adding bits as money time and opportunity present? This often ends up looking like a graveyard for things "that might come in useful someday" and does not solve this winter's problem.

Do I get a pre-fabricated shed, built of energy expensive steel, combating that guilt with the rationale of stimulus spending? What about energy? Can I afford not only the original set-up of solar energy, but then the appliances that run off the battery bank? Can I afford a compostable toilet? What do I do with grey water? Is there little enough just to water the surrounding bush from a pipe? If anyone has experience of building a cheap, attractive, environmentally sound little dwelling, tell me your secrets and the pitfalls. And in the meantime, if anyone has an old caravan for loan or sale, perhaps I could use that for a while, sitting on the step with a glass of wine and planning the humpy! Give me a call with your ideas and input: 0409 006 170



Recycling Matters! Part 1 by Netty Schrammeyer



Rethink, Reduce,
Reuse, Recycle!

“When you
recycle... you
save landfill
space, natural
resources and
your money
....It is your
choice”

Recycling is one of the most immediate things that can be done in being more proactive in our sustainable consumption habits. With most of the recyclable materials, such as paper, glass and aluminium, the processes are straight forward. Although, I am sure there are questions that people have relating to each of these materials and other things related to recycling. The WISEN forum www.wisen.org offers the opportunity to discuss the issue further, and I invite you to join in by going to the website and clicking on the forum link. Before you head to the website, I would like to offer you some information that I hope clarifies issues and prompts discussion.

The most important step is to **Reduce waste!**

When we shop we buy our waste. In doing so, it would be reasonable to use some guidelines in our choice:

Rethink - when you buy!

Reduce - what you waste!

Reuse - what you can!

Recycle - and buy things made from recycled materials!

*Recycling Matters
Part 2 will be in the
April Edition*

When you recycle kerb-side or at your Waste Management Centre you save landfill space, natural resources, and your money. When manufacturers use recycled materials to make new products they use less energy and fewer natural resources. **It is your choice.**

For the organic waste, such as green and food waste, you can build a compost heap or make a worm farm, the results of which can be used in the garden.

Items that are usable, but you are finished with, such as clothes, tools, kitchen equipment, and furniture, etc, you can take to a 2nd hand shop, the Tip Shop in your area. Other options are to advertise these in the newspaper or community newsletter, sell at a garage sale, post on www.freecycle.com or to swap with friends!

Swimming with Penguins by Niko Campbell-Ellis

This summer Matt, Jazz, Huon and I have had the wonderful experience of swimming with penguins! We've had many inspiring experiences during the school holidays that have involved the natural world but our penguin swims have reinforced my long held belief in the importance of connecting with the natural world through knowledge and experience.

Pengie is a juvenile penguin that our friend, a registered wildlife rescuer, had brought to her after a suspected collision with a boat. Pengie is overcoming his injuries in her tender loving care.

This close contact with a penguin has given my children and me a greater appreciation of these animals and their ecosystem. Huon, who is five, now knows that penguins need to swim everyday to maintain their waterproofing and that he can harm a penguin by touching it as the oils in his skin react with the penguin's waterproofing oils. This factual knowledge is enhanced by having watched the penguin swim, flying through the water with its wings rather than paddling with its flippers, noticing their tiny feathers and their remarkable colour, watching them dive and chase fish underwater. He confidently shares his knowledge with friends from school, spreading the influence of his experience.

Swimming with a penguin is a pretty rare and special experience; however, the NWEC's value of finding the sacred in the ordinary prompts the uptake of endless opportunities to help build connections with the natural world through experience and knowledge. Planting a garden, caring for a pet, cooking a meal, so many everyday activities provide opportunities for this type of education.



Huon and Pengie

great advances in science and technology have not solved the moral problems of civilisation. They have actually altered the form of some of these problems, and greatly increased others. The just distribution of material things is not merely a problem of technique or of organisation. It is primarily a moral problem. In Arnold Toynbee's, *Study of History*, he concludes that the real growth of a civilisation does not consist of increasing command over the physical environment, but lies in what he calls 'etherealization'; a development of intangible relationships. He points out that this process involves **both a simplification of the apparatus of life and also a transfer of interest and energy from material things to a higher sphere.** Fritjof Capra goes further in talking about how we value work, in his book "The Turning Point: Science, Society and the Rising Culture". An important aspect of the necessary revision of our value system will be redefinition of 'work'. Currently unpaid work is not valued. Those who do have jobs very often have to perform work in which they do not take any pride, work that leaves them profoundly alienated and dissatisfied. As Karl Marx clearly recognized, this alienation comes from the fact that workers do not own the means of production, have no say about the use to which their work is put, and cannot identify in any meaningful way with the production process. The result is products that show less and less craft, artistic quality or taste. Lack of responsibility and pride, together with the overriding profit motive, have resulted in a situation where most of the work carried out today is wasteful and unjustified. As Theodore Roszak said 'work that produces unnecessary consumption or weapons of war is wrong and

wasteful. **Work that is built upon false needs, or deceives, manipulates, exploits, degrades is wrong and wasteful.** There is no way to redeem such work by enriching it or restructuring it, by socializing it or by making it 'small'. This state of affairs is in sharp contrast to traditional societies in which ordinary men and women were engaged in a wide variety of activities- farming, fishing, hunting, weaving, making clothes, building, making pottery and tools, cooking, and healing – all of them dignified, useful work. In our society most people are unsatisfied with their work and see recreation [although mostly passive!] as the main focus of their lives. The leisure industry is huge, featuring resource and energy intensive gadgets and exhorting people to evermore wasteful consumption. There is an interesting hierarchy of work in our culture- work with the lowest status tends to be work which is most 'entropic', ie where the tangible evidence of the effort is most easily destroyed. This is work that has to be done over and over again without leaving a lasting impact, eg cooking, cleaning. These are the jobs that are essential to our daily existence yet pay the least, and are mostly done by women and minority groups. This hierarchy is exactly the opposite in spiritual traditions. High-entropy work is greatly valued and plays a significant role in the daily ritual of spiritual practice. Buddhist monks consider cooking, gardening etc as part of their meditative activities, and Christian monks and nuns have a long tradition of agriculture, nursing and other services. It seems that the high spiritual value accorded to entropic work in those traditions comes from a profound ecological awareness.

***"Live simply so that others
many simply live."***



***"Buddhist Monks
consider cooking and
gardening as part of their
meditative activities."***

Doing work that has to be done over and over again helps us to recognise the natural cycles of growth and decay, of birth and death, and thus become aware of the dynamic order of the universe. 'Ordinary' work, as the root meaning of the term indicates, is work that is in harmony with the order we perceive in the natural environment. Such ecological awareness has been lost in our culture, the highest value being placed on work that is out of the natural order. Not surprisingly, most of this highly valued work is now generating technologies and institutions which are extremely harmful to the natural and social environment.

His conclusion of an approach to work towards a solution? He says a bootstrap approach, similar to the one that contemporary physics has developed may be most fruitful as a solution to our problems. This will mean gradually formulating a network of interlocking concepts and models and, at the same time, developing the corresponding social organizations. None of the theories and models will be any more fundamental than the others, and all of them will have to be mutually consistent. All the new social institutions will have to communicate and cooperate with one another. This is where groups like ours, the NVEC, can play an important role!

Calendar of Events

NWEC General Meeting

When: 5.30 pm, March 2, 2009

Where: Rees Campbell's place
12 Pellissier St Somerset

There are lots of changes afoot for the NWEC this year, Mechange funding, the Organic Garden Centre, Matt and Chris' paid positions finishing etc.

Please send agenda items through to Rees on reescampbell1@bigpond.com and an RSVP would be appreciated.

Directions: Turn south (away from the water) at the only set of traffic lights at Somerset up Falmouth St. Turn 3rd street left into Pelissier St, then immediate right into small cul-de-sac. My house is the boring brown render with a high deck. Contact 0409 006 170 for inquiries.

Managing Waste in a Changing Climate Conference & Expo 4 – 6 March 2009

For more information visit www.taswasteandclimatechange.com.au or phone 1300 651 02624

Introduction to Permaculture March 10,11 and 12, 2009

Sisters Creek Tasmania
The Permaculture Institute, and Bill and Lisa Mollison are proud to offer an **Introduction to Permaculture** Course, taught by Dave Spicer, Project Manager. For more information or contact Dave's mobile 0458 694 820 www.tagari.com

Earth Hour 26 March - 8:30pm - Worldwide

Join the millions around the world in switching off lights for one hour at 8:30pm on Saturday March 28 Visit the website for info: www.earthhour.org

Permaculture Gatherings

Have you taken a course in Permaculture design or read about it and are keen to develop your knowledge and skills? If yes, then you will be pleased to hear that the Permaculture Association of Tasmania have begun organizing Permaculture gatherings in the northwest to provide opportunities for you to connect with others who wish to expand the application of Permaculture in the area.

For more information please contact Chris 6437 1137 chrismitchell63@gmail.com or Nick 6435 4559

nj_towle@tassie.net.au
For more information about the Permaculture Association of Tasmania go to www.permaculturetas.org

NWEC Project Updates

CSA Project by Robin Krabbe

The NWEC CSA project has had a successful start, with all three farmers now currently supplying 16 families with vegetable boxes, even some with strawberries and blueberries in them! The feedback so far has been very positive. We have reached the top ten of the Me Change competition (out of over 200 entries), focusing on



reducing obesity and improving health, so that is very good news! CSA has two main methods of fighting obesity and improving physical and mental health.

The first method is the increased consumption of fruit and vegetables that tends to occur when people become CSA members, the second is the increased physical and mental health by being involved in the running of the farms and in the social networks that are an integral part of the concept.

Sea Spurge Project ~

Now easier with a new boat!

by Matty Campbell-Ellis
Using some raised money allocated to Sea Spurge control activities and work in the Hunter Islands Group, the NWEC have purchased a new (second hand) workboat. This will make working in these islands a lot safer for volunteers. The waters around the islands are renowned for their ability to change rapidly and a safe workboat is essential. The vessel

is a Tasmanian built aluminium half cabin Vandiemian Seaman with a Yamaha 85HP motor and some safety equipment included.

The boat will now be decked out to suit the work that the NWEC is currently performing in the islands and future activities that we hope to undertake. Other funding also provides money for additional safety equipment and a range of life jackets, handheld VHF radios and personal trackers and location beacons that will be purchased in the coming weeks. This will enable more volunteers to participate and visit these remote and spectacular islands needing a little help to maintain their ecosystem values.

The Recipe Corner

Preserving Summer Vegetables by Carol Donaghey

This time of the year usually means heaps of zucchinis! This is a very simple pickling technique so you can have the taste of summer throughout the year!

1 kg zucchini thinly sliced
2 small onions thinly sliced
¼ cup salt
2 cups apple cider vinegar
1 teas caraway seed
1 teas cumin or turmeric
2 teas mustard seed

-Place sliced zucchini and onion in bowl, add salt and cover with water. Stand for 2 hours. Drain well
-Bring all other ingredients to the boil. Pour over zucchini and stand for another 2 hours
-Replace on stove and bring to boil, simmer for 15 minutes
-Bottle- I reuse random jars and these reseal well when the hot mixture is inside them

Zucchini Crusted Pizza

from *The Moosewood Cookbook*

Preheat oven to 200
3 1/2 cups grated zucchini
3 eggs, beaten
1/3 cup flour
1/2 cup grated mozzarella
1/2 cup grated parmesan
1 Tbs. fresh basil or 1/2 tsp dry
Salt and Pepper

-Salt grated zucchini & let sit for 15 minutes. Squeeze out excess moisture
-Combine all ingredients and spread into an oiled baking pan. -Bake 20-25 minutes until surface is dry and firm.
-Brush with oil and put in griller for 5 minutes.
-Pile all your favourite pizza toppings on (sauce, vegies, cheese, etc) and heat in the 200 oven for about 25 minutes. Enjoy!

NWEC Info & Contacts

Visit our website www.nwec.org.au to read future newsletters and keep updated on our current projects.

Executive members

President - David Henderson

Vice President - Niko Campbell-Ellis

Treasurer - Carol Donaghey

Secretary - Rees Campbell

Publicity Officer - Robin Krabbe

Public Officer - Andrew Jordan

Contact for committee members:

coordinator@nwec.org.au

Newsletter Contributions

Please share some relevant stories, recipes or any events that are upcoming. To submit your contributions, please contact Bonnie McGee: bonniecolleenmcgee@hotmail.com

Volunteers Wanted!

The NWEC is always looking for volunteers to simply get involved and lend a hand. If you are interested, contact Matty Campbell-Ellis: coordinator@nwec.org.au

NWEC news is the newsletter of the North-West Environment Centre Inc. Views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the NWEC.

Members and supporters are notified each month when the current newsletter is posted on to our website. www.nwec.org.au
If you are not receiving this notification email, but would like to, please let us know by emailing: info@nwec.org.au



Membership Details:

First Name:

Surname:.....

Address:

.....P'code:

Date: / /

Email:.....

Membership Type (please circle):

Individual: Waged \$10

 Unwaged \$5

Family: Waged \$15

 Unwaged \$10

Other: POA

[] I/we prefer member communications printed and posted at \$5/year.

[] I/we also wish to donate: \$.....

[] I enclose a cheque/money order for membership fee, donation (if applies) & service fee (if applies), payable to:

North-West Environment Centre

PO Box 999, Burnie Tasmania 7320

Please note:

For schools, business, community organisations please provide a contact person. If you require a tax invoice, or wish to pay by electronic funds transfer please contact Carol Donaghey on 03 6445 1025 or email ricardo@bordnet.com.au

Most member communications are sent by email. If you do not have an email address, posted communications are available for a small service fee of \$5/year. The NWEC Executive Committee reserves the right to refuse membership.

Membership is renewed annually from 1 January.

Those joining between October and December receive the following years membership inclusive 15 months membership.

Contact Us:

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