



# Pine Gate

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Newsletter of the Pine Gate Sangha

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Pine Gate is the voice of Ottawa's Pine Gate Sangha, who practice engaged Buddhism in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh. Friends of the sangha also contribute to the newsletter. Submissions are invited, articles of 500-700 words, poems and insights that reflect engaged practice and personal experience are appreciated. The Pine Gate Sangha has many leaders and the newsletter is an organic outcome of sangha insight. Effortlessly it appears.

Ian Prattis provides dharma talks and teachings that encourage practice through deep non-action, so that engaged practice (action) emerges from understanding and compassion. His wife, Carolyn, teaches a regular Qi-Gong class at Pine Gate Meditation Hall as an introduction to mindfulness practice. The Pine Gate Sangha welcomes old and new members to its regular and special activities.

## **Earth My Body, Water My Blood     Ian Prattis**

The closing of the former Rockcliffe Air Base in Ottawa and the 2006 proposal to develop an eco-community there provided an opportunity for ecology students at Carleton University to do something useful for the city of Ottawa. What they learned about ecosystems, globalisation, environmental ethics and the direct threat of Global Warming was applied to a project right here, right now in Ottawa. Their final assignment was to focus on the Rockcliffe eco-community development and submit a brief to the Canada Lands Company, the federal agency responsible for the Rockcliffe Development. I encouraged teamwork so that students could pool their resources to investigate specific aspects of establishing an eco-community in Canada's capital city. This collection of student reports is the result of their ability, diligence and genius, and are applicable to the establishment of any eco-community project.

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The title of this collection – Earth My Body, Water My Blood – is taken from an earth chant sung by children, in countless languages, around the world:

*Earth My Body*

*Water My Blood*

*Air My Breath*

*And Fire My Spirit.*

The chant provides four of the great elements – Earth, Water, Air and Fire – which are a means of representing the Universe in Buddhist and Taoist traditions. The sequence describes the correspondence of all things to each other, the principle of interconnectedness and also the metaphor to organize this book. There is also a fifth great element – Space – and it is my hope that this modest collection of thoughts and suggestions will penetrate the Space of humanity's consciousness about a better way to live. The five great elements taken together are thought to be inherent in all aspects of life. They exist on three levels of reality: the material, the subtle and the inner essence. The material level describes the reality of our bodies and environment and rather than expand into full spectrum complexity, I will stay at this level in order to draw out the features that provide a pertinent map for this book. The principles of the five great elements have parallels with Hindu philosophy and are found in Aboriginal, Chinese and Western Alchemical traditions. All of these systems of thought recognize that each element in fact contains all elements, so there are circles within circles, all interconnecting – beautifully expressed by the Oglala Sioux medicine man, Black Elk, as the interdependent hoops of all nations and traditions. A profound template organizes this collection.

The shape, form and structure of both inanimate objects and living beings are given by the element Earth. Earth provides our home and natural environment. As the source of all the food that nurtures us Earth provides the appropriate element for the contribution from Matt, Chris and Kayla on Community Supported Agriculture. They describe how this form and structure returns us to a sense of locality and community that industrial based agriculture is simply not designed to do. If we think

about the structures and forms that create our homes, we also find Earth there as a fundamental premise. Ian and Evan extol this pervasiveness in their brief on Green Building Standards in order to reduce energy consumption and return us to a closer and healthier relationship with Mother Earth.

Fluidity, adaptation and cohesion are the inherent properties of the Water element. Our world and our bodies are largely made up of water, which is always in motion filling whatever contains it. However, once water is intelligently and constructively guided to serve both conservation and humanity needs – it has an awesome power and strength. The detailed report from Stella on Water Management points this out brilliantly.

The element Air is defined by movement and the IN and OUT of breathing connects us physically to the outside world and all the other elements, of which it is an integral part. Yet it brings to the external world a dynamic of thought that can be reflected as ideology. The contributions to this section deeply examine the ideological basis of a successful eco-community. Greg and John present a treatise on how to market ecologically sound behaviour; Xena, Jan-Michael and Clement establish the basis of a mode of living necessary for an eco-community to work; Joe and Ian examine the practical ways that eco-structures develop community; while Matilda and Whitney delve into the philosophy of transforming values so they can sustain such a form of community.

The element of Fire certainly provides heat, but it also brings illumination and clarity. Fire clears our mind and its objects of perception, refines them and translates ideology into action. Without the element of Fire we would remain asleep at the wheel and the best of intentions would not find an expression in terms of action. Specifically, Amanda and Angela write about the Global Ecological Village network (GEN) based on the Findhorn model of a teaching and learning centre for eco-communities; Nikolaus shows how eco-communities could enter the Carbon Credit market; Rebecca and Sam emphasise the need for ecological education in eco-community

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schools; while Samuel and Erin provide a model for successful eco-tourism.

The final great element – Space – is the pinnacle of the preceding four elements, the repository of our consciousness, the limits of our vision. This intelligence is the domain that I hope this collection will impact in a positive manner, providing a template to live in a balanced way with ourselves and with our natural surroundings.

The concluding article – Simple Steps To Empowerment – is a contribution I have included to reinforce the Space element – the latent ecological intelligence that lurks within every person.

*Excerpts from student briefs follow to establish ecology as the theme for this edition of Pine Gate. The Rockcliffe project is presently subject to a First Nations Land Claims, which is not yet settled. However, the briefs apply to the establishment of any sustainable eco-community.*

### **Transformation Matilda Van Duyvendyk & Whitney Ellis**

In order to create a sustainable community there must be a solid foundation of collective thought and beliefs that reinforce the core value of being interdependent within the community and its environment. The values of the members within the community must demonstrate that they are prepared to change their own lifestyles in order to generate a community that will be sustainable and conscious of its lifestyle and the actions that reinforce environmental awareness. Without the individual's awareness and actions aligning with the core values of the community the project will therefore suffer. This awareness of the individual and further, the collective members of the community, must be reinforced by guidelines that outline the collective values that the community promises to uphold as a whole. We propose that the core values of the community and their own initiatives should be embodied by a creed, or by a community created set of principal guidelines for action and interaction with the environment as a whole. This is one set of

commitments that an entire community despite varying backgrounds can be of 'one mind'.

These communal expectations should not be determined by people who live outside the community. The responsibility of ensuring the community creed will be dependent upon those individuals that live in accordance with it. This statement of belief must hold symbolism that connects with action, as the actions of the community should be reflective of the creed. We believe this declaration should be generated through consensus by the community members. The emphasis placed upon the process of the community members reaching a consensus underlines the understanding that society is not pre-fabricated; by which one can create a community void of the actual members and when those members are implemented the community will function within the preset boundaries. The social nature of a community is complex and multi-vocal, therefore the consensus process of creating a creed is imperative to generating an inclusive community. This consensus method of reaching a common ground which is agreeable to each member in the community also demonstrates the understanding of process; since the Rockcliffe project will gradually come into being as a functioning community with environmentally conscious members, that reflect the creed throughout their choices and actions.

The initial members of the community will inevitably be responsible for containing a certain amount of environmental knowledge, as it will be up to those members to further the growth of the community and reinforce the eco-friendly lifestyle. This becomes generated through dialogue and encourages deep ecological thought. Without having members that are willing to take on a leadership role concerning the sharing of ecological knowledge and new innovative ways of promoting awareness and creating new alternative methods of living away from the dominant paradigm, the community will not have the motivation to prosper and grow together. This sharing of knowledge is also essential with concern to the younger generations of members that will be raised within

the community. All of these points that reaffirm a unifying statement of commitment are demonstrative of ecological consciousness within the community. This foundation for ecological consciousness recognizes the importance of transformation at the base of the community through dialogue and innovative communal decisions.

Ecology is about the interconnectedness of all living and non-living things within an ecosystem. To be ecologically minded as a community, those same principles must be applied to the community themselves. This emphasizes the mentality of being part of a 'mixed community'. People rely on each other for support and help in their daily lives. Their actions and reactions have effects on those around them. An eco-minded community should rely on some principles of reciprocity with its community members. To re-enforce community strength, members should be able to depend on the skills and knowledge of other members. Perhaps one way of doing this would be to have a large board in the community center that profiles the different members of the community and what they have particular knowledge, skill or interest in. Some could be engineers able to design eco-friendly energy systems, where others could be skilled carpenters able to take the design and transform it into life. Other members could have the knowledge to build eco-efficient gardens while some may have the interest and time to help tend to them. By creating a system that facilitates community interaction and skill or trade reciprocity the community is strengthened by self-sufficiency.

### **Stormwater Management      Stella P. Georgilas**

From the Rockcliffe Community Design Plan, the fundamental planning objective for the project is to redevelop the Rockcliffe site as a world-class sustainable community and a model of urban sustainability. In my view, there is no other reasonable course of action. Given the impact that urban development has on our natural and our social environments, as Canadians, we must see

ourselves as global citizens, and take advantage of our economic and technological privileges to showcase the application of environmentally sustainable practices at every opportunity.

The redevelopment of any eco-community should include an integrated environmentally sustainable stormwater management plan. Environmentally sustainable stormwater management can be implemented today – we have the technology. I will provide a few examples in Canada where aspects of these technologies are currently in use.

- The City of White Rock, in Greater Vancouver, B.C., built a new municipal operations building a number of years ago, and incorporated a number of water management features into the design and operation of the facility.
  - Waterless urinals and low-flow faucets reduce potable water consumption.
  - Stormwater is collected in a large storage tank and used for toilet flushing, municipal vehicle washing, and landscape watering.
  - The thermal energy in the stormwater storage moderates building interior temperatures and reduces space heating and cooling energy costs.
  - The building's green roof reduces stormwater run-off, and insulates the building, reducing space heating and cooling energy costs.
  - The parking area is surfaced with gravel, allowing for infiltration of stormwater.
  - Potable water use for sewage conveyance has been reduced by 100% (i.e., potable water is not used). Overall use of potable water has been reduced by 87%. Potable water consumption has been reduced by 36%. Stormwater run-off has been reduced by 26%.
  - Overview of the White Rock operations building project are available online at:

- <http://www.gvrd.bc.ca/buildsmart/pdfs/whiterockkpperationcentrecasestudy.pdf>

<http://www.edcmag.com/EDC/Protected/Files/PDF/0904cp-WHITEROCK.pdf>

- The Town of Oliver is a community of approximately 9000 located in the Okanagan area in south central British Columbia, approximately 25 kilometres north of the border with the U.S.A. Oliver is located in Canada's only true desert area, and water is a valuable resource. Since the 1980's Oliver has reclaimed water from its sewage treatment plant for irrigation; an 18 hole championship golf course is irrigated entirely with reclaimed sewage water; re-claimed water is also used for irrigation at the airport and cemetery. The reclaimed water winter storage reservoir has created new habitat for a variety of plants and animals. Information on the Town of Oliver is available online at [www.oliver.ca](http://www.oliver.ca).
- The City of Vernon is located in B.C.'s Okanagan, north of Oliver. Greater Vernon has a population of approximately 36,000. Vernon's tertiary sewage treatment plant produces high quality reclaimed sewage water. Provincial authorities allow this high quality reclaimed water to be used in areas with unrestricted public access, such as golf courses and playing fields. Vernon's reclaimed water is presently used as irrigation water on at least two major golf courses, a number of silvaculture nurseries, and large areas of agricultural land used for grazing and hay production. Sewage solids are treated and composted. The final product is rich in nutrients and is sold commercially as fertiliser. Information on the City of Vernon is available online at: <http://www.vernon.ca>.
- The Greater Vancouver Regional District has been developing integrated approaches to stormwater management for several years. A considerable amount of information regarding these matters is available on line at:

- [www.gvrd.bc.ca/sewerage/stormwater\\_reports.htm](http://www.gvrd.bc.ca/sewerage/stormwater_reports.htm)

- Individual approaches will not be sufficient to for us to overcome the environmental sustainability challenges we are facing. Governments at all levels and the development community must take the lead in developing environmentally sustainable communities. I realize that this process of change will not happen overnight; however, new developments can provide the examples and set the precedents that will eventually become the norm. We must show that Canadians are world-class leaders with respect to environmental issues.

### **Global Ecological Village    Angela Ashawasega**

Realizing that environmental degradation threatens the survival of our species, we must take immediate action to move toward sustainable living. Learning to live in harmony with the Earth is essential, and educating ourselves now is the only hope for generations to come. By joining the Global Eco-village Network (GEN), the Rockcliffe project and others like it would have the support necessary to develop sustainable systems and speak up for future generations. Environmental crises of global warming, industrial pollution and deforestation indicate a lack of ecological knowledge all across the map. Global transformation requires not only an awareness of the issues, but also an awareness of the solutions and for that it is wise to take refuge in aboriginal wisdom, which is reflected in the heritage of the writers of this brief.

By joining GEN, a planned eco-community project could have a worldwide impact on the encouragement of ecological consciousness. GEN already has 88 member communities across the globe, consisting of clusters of villages on every continent all engaged in the mission for sustainable futures. As Canada's capital and more importantly a city of concerned citizens, Ottawa should take the

steps to make the Rockcliffe eco-village one new member. Findhorn, the founder of GEN, provides a model for the organizing group of Rockcliffe to consider. With an emphasis on education and awareness, Findhorn's outreach programs and ecovillage training center offer a model that will assist in developing plans.

The ability to deliver diverse programs that meet both local and global needs could readily be achieved through providing facilities for a Teaching and Learning Center. A variety of educational programs and workshops would allow people to share in their special interests while developing a strong sense of community. Encouraging participation in activities of interest to both individuals and the Earth, the center will highlight the great diversity and potential of Ottawa and its citizens. It will provide a safe and friendly environment for children, youth, adults, and seniors to interact and develop tightly knit communities of like-minded people – like-minded with respect to mother earth.

Sustainable communities are concerned not only with the environment, but also with the social and spiritual needs that society must address. While directly combating issues of environmental degradation, the center will also ease social ills. It will provide a healthy alternative to street crime and vandalism, and the possibility to experience a sense of community often sought for in gangs. People can develop security in themselves and their surroundings; in their future and the future of their children. Inspiring confidence, the center will turn children into leaders and help transform today's leaders. An eco-community Learning Center could provide a teaching resource to public and professional groups of all ages and backgrounds. It may be utilized by elementary and high schools, universities, businesses, government and other special interest groups. Offering such flexibility within its numerous internationally respected services, Findhorn is formally associated with the UN Department of Public Information. The United Nations recognize the increasing urgency of global warming and the planetary problems we are facing.

We must recognize the increasing need for leaders who are knowledgeable and experienced in sustainable development. The UN has utilized Findhorn for training local authorities in sustainability and any eco-community's Learning Center could also be used as a UNITAR (United Nations Institute of Training and Research) training center.

We will not be able to face the challenges of global crises without an awareness of the problems and the knowledge to develop solutions. Ecosystem management knowledge is fundamental to maintaining a healthy environment. Local Indigenous groups could share their traditional knowledge that values a harmonious relationship with the Earth and takes into consideration the consequences of actions up to seven generations in the future. Thus a creative and respectful relationship with the local aboriginal organization "Indigenous Co-operative on the Environment" (ICE) would be appropriate particularly as there is an outstanding land claim with respect to the area that the Rockcliffe project occupies. ICE could assist in the teaching and learning components of environmental education. This established organization could also provide links to other organizations.

In keeping with aboriginal wisdom we end with: "All Our Relations."

[www.ecovillagefindhorn.org](http://www.ecovillagefindhorn.org)

[www.lammas.org.uk](http://www.lammas.org.uk)

[www.ice-networks.ca](http://www.ice-networks.ca)

Community Supported Agriculture  
Christopher Blomkwist, Matthew Muir & Kayla Lewis

We have extensively researched Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), and the benefits for a sustainable eco-community. Once people start considering the results of a more stabilized and efficient eco-community, they may realize that they are not disconnected from the natural world but part



of a symbiotic relationship here on planet Earth. A question we ask ourselves as a group is: why not "Go Green"? Why not live in a manner that is environmentally sustainable in the long term? Currently, our lifestyles of mindless over-consumption have created an atmosphere where people choose to look the other way instead of confronting the damage being done to our environment. What better place to implement a new strategy for long-term sustainable eco-community, than in the capital of Canada. When this eco-community is completed and proves to be sustainable, others will hopefully be made aware that there is little cost or disadvantage to living a green lifestyle.

A comprehensive definition of CSA offered by the United States Department of Agriculture is that CSA is a relatively new socio-economic model of food production, distribution and sale, aimed at both increasing the quality of food and care given to the land, plants and animals. At the same time, CSA reduces potential food losses and financial risks for the producers and allows small-scale commercial farmers and gardeners to have a successful small-scale closed market. In addition, there is a long list of benefits from implementing such a program into a long-term sustainable and efficient eco-community: CSA programs operate with a larger degree of community and consumer involvement and create stronger than normal consumer-producer relationships. The basic premise is that a cohesive consumer group is willing to fund a whole season's budget in order to get quality, often organic, foods. We feel that a CSA program would be perfect for the new Rockcliffe eco-community. CSA helps to establish a sense of community and encourages land stewardship. In addition, CSA encourages communication and cooperation among food producers as well as supporting the bio-diversity of a given area and the diversity of agriculture through the preservation of small plots of land producing a wide variety of food products. A CSA is a mutually beneficial relationship in which a producer supports the community's needs for fresh, nutritious, wholesome food, and community support allows

the producer to devote his/her energies to organic, conscientious and sustainable farming practices.

In order for a CSA program to be implemented as part of an eco-copmmunity, it would only require setting aside c.20 acres of land. This would be sufficient to grow and harvest crops for the entire community. Many CSA programs in Ontario, such as *Valentino's Organic Family Gardens & CSA* just outside Ottawa, harvest produce between June and October with an average production of 16 – 20 weeks. <http://valentinoscса.tripod.com/id1.html> At *Valentino's* they charge a membership fee of \$500 dollars, with an additional \$50 dollar charge for incurred gasoline expenses from the distribution vehicle. However, eco-community members could simply walk over and pick up their produce directly from the farm since they live next to it, or at a central drop-off location that would be decided upon in advance – a more environmentally friendly method of distribution.

The final aspect of CSA programs is that of labour. Many CSA programs, maintain a single farmer who is supported solely through his local community – via the purchasing of his produce. Although this is a good method of organizing a CSA program, there are other options. The natural growing season, as mentioned, is between June and October. This is a time when many university and high school students are off from school and are looking for full or part time employment. It would be possible to hire some students, potentially members of the eco-community, to assist in many of the tasks associated with farming operations. What is more, giving students a chance to work on such an environmentally friendly project might inspire their commitment to other environmental endeavors. Another option, particularly in regards to those who may not be able to afford the yearly payment for such produce, is for individuals to work part-time on the farm, a weekend here or there, to subsidize their yearly yield intake. Although there are a variety of methods of organizing a CSA program, it is ultimately up to the producer and the community to decide how to structure such a program. From the choice of produce harvested to the yearly

membership fee community members pay in return for weekly produce, it all depends on the needs and requirements of the eco-community.

## Carbon Offsets

**Nikolaus Sands**

One of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions is electricity generation. If green power is not available in a certain area, a company or individual household can offset their electricity use by purchasing 'renewable energy certificates' (REC's). For every unit of electricity generated from a renewable energy project, there is a corresponding REC that can be sold. By purchasing REC's, customers can choose to support clean, renewable energy. The money generated by the sale of REC's goes to new and existing renewable energy facilities, thus providing a financial incentive for developers to build more renewable energy projects.

Going carbon neutral is an easy way for companies to take responsibility for their carbon emissions, even if they cannot immediately change their emission practices. These industries can buy credits for their emissions from projects that are carbon neutral such as wind farms and solar installations - or an eco-community project. By purchasing these credits, industries can apply them to their own emissions and reduce their net climate impact. While offset programs cannot be a substitute for government regulations to reduce greenhouse gases, they are a step in the right direction and provide good incentives to shift towards carbon neutral industries.

As carbon offsets are primarily concerned with ecologically friendly energy production, an eco-community project would have to provide information as to what forms of sustainable energy production are going to be used. If no energy production projects are being planned, carbon offsets could be sold to provide the financial means to building the new infrastructure that could sustain them.

According to A Consumers' Guide to Retail Offset Providers prepared for the Clean Air Cool Planet group on Dr. David Suzuki's website ([www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org)), the highest quality offset providers are those that have *additionality*. This *additionality* means that a project would not have occurred without the benefit of selling offsets. High quality offset providers must also be accurately verified and quantified in terms of energy output and use. Therefore, if an eco-community project was to sell offsets, the project could get funded to build new infrastructure with regards to energy production (wind power, solar power, and geothermal power). This would allow further sustainable development for the project and provide the highest quality offsets to buyers.

Selling carbon offsets could provide an eco-community project with an excellent opportunity to generate revenue and expand its sustainability portfolio. The purpose of third party carbon offset sellers like Climate Friendly ([www.climatefriendly.com/projects](http://www.climatefriendly.com/projects)) is to help establish sustainable eco-communities. Companies that emit carbon dioxide are willing to pay large sums of money to 'offset' their emissions and claim to be carbon neutral. As a result, community projects are given the chance to build and expand. The selling of carbon offsets provides such projects with a chance to collect extra revenue. As well, it would allow expansion with little pollution consequences.

## Retarded Pygmies

**Dr. Peter Stockdale**

*Peter's talk on Community Peace Groups was given at the Peace Prayer Day held on October 13, 2007 at Ottawa City Hall. He followed the irrepressible demonstration of Laughter Yoga with Sophie Terrace and lamented that order to get everyone's attention he needed to do a strip. Maybe next year as the opening performance!*

"The grim fact is that we prepare for war like precocious giants, and for peace like retarded pygmies"



Lester Pearson said that during his Nobel Peace Prize speech in 1957, 50 years ago. It still rings true today. But the truth is that while today we are not giants, we are not pygmies either. This magnificent day shows we are not retarded pygmies of peace. Sr. Mary-Ellen, David Smith and Ian Prattis are not peace pygmies, but ARE great exemplars of how to pursue peace and love well. We have traveled far but we have far to go. Our strength is in our communities and its individuals, who recognize what has to be done. But we do not have the tools to finish the job. Our greatest weakness is in our institutions of peace, which are still small seeds and far from being mighty oaks.

World-wide, we are starting to create an architecture of peace, just like we have an architecture of war, and a health sector. We are starting to talk about peace professionals, with the aim of having the same precision, clarity and coherence that other professions do. Three countries, Nepal, the Solomon Islands, and Costa Rica have created Departments of Peace. Thirty countries have NGO campaigns to create them. Germany and Italy have created national Civilian Peace Services; there are proposals for them in front of the Parliaments of France and Spain. On a national level, Canada has fallen behind and we have no good excuse for it. While the focus of much of the most politically dangerous conflict is at the municipal level, there is little focus on peace by local governments. In Ottawa, we have begun to move in that direction.. Deputy Police Chief Larry Hill has been key to building bridges between the police and various groups. Bob Chiarelli played an important role in making Interfaith Ottawa and Peace Camp a reality. In his proclamation on the International Day of Peace this September 21<sup>st</sup>, Mayor Larry O'Brien recognized Ottawa being a City of Peace as part of the city's vision. However, peace is not a core bottom line in municipal government, unlike some cities in the UK, where peace is part of the regular business of emergency planning.

Most of the work so far has been done by individuals, faith groups and small NGOs. Inter-

faith Ottawa and the Capital Region Interfaith Council stand out. Scratch the surface of these initiatives and you will find small communities, Quakers, Baha'is, the Family Federation, Mennonites, Buddhists, Unitarians and Ismailis. Grandfather William Commanda's vision of a Circle of All Nations has inspired many. There are many local organizations working for social peace in Ottawa. Friends for Peace, City of Peace Ottawa, UNAC, Potlucks for Peace, the Department of Peace, JNikira Dinqinesh, the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee, Peace Camp, the National Capital Peace Council, HUG, Cross-Cultural Sound Exchange, the Peace Museum group, Saint Paul Conflict Studies, CICR, CIAN, Carleton's Mediation Centre, the Catholic Immigration Centre, OCISO, Ottawa Community Housing, really vital ethnically based associations, and mediators and developmental NGOs - ALL working to prevent conflict and strengthen the prospects of peace.

Our communities are strong. We communicate amongst ourselves, but the mosaic is still vertical. The top of the mosaic is in pretty good contact with each other. But we are only NOW developing a new level of leadership that explicitly talks to each other on a regular basis about matters of peace. Institutional support is generally weak and happens on a project by project basis. This should not be a big surprise; the latter has been the norm in the NGO community for over a decade. However, another part of the struggle is that we are only now developing a language of peace. Peace is still only described relative to the absence of conflict, the way we used to describe being Canadian as NOT American. Peace is NOT understood as an operational goal to be built by a society, in an interlocking way, which includes faith communities, ethnic communities, linguistic communities, NGOs, schools, government and business. But we are talking to each other, dreaming, lamenting and playing together. We can see that today at this Peace Prayer Day, and we did during the recent Peace Festival Ottawa that was brought into reality by the pleasant persistence of Balwant Bhaneja. An example I mentioned earlier

was when Mayor O'Brien proclaimed the International Day of Peace on September 21<sup>st</sup> and that Ottawa is a city of peace. This meant cooperation between the Mayor's Office, Inter-faith Ottawa, and HUG. We are seeing this kind of cooperation more and more.

At City of Peace Ottawa, we are cooking up several things, Awad Loubani is thinking about how to build on the Peace Camp model developed at Ashbury College. And we are also cooking up the development of a physical Path of Peace running between Gatineau and Ottawa. On the Gatineau side, the path would start at the Museum of Civilization. On the Ottawa side it would begin at the Ottawa Women's Monument and run down Elgin. The Path of Peace would meet at the proposed Circle of All Nations aboriginal healing and international peacebuilding centre on Victoria Island that is the vision of Grandfather Commanda, and Douglas Cardinal, the architect of the Museum of Civilization. The aim of the path is to recognize the efforts we have made for peace, understand what we have done to get to the peace we have, and be catalysts for new initiatives and institutions that build peace. This year we started the walk on making that path real with the Mayor's proclamation, a walk led by HUG. It concluded with a Circle of All Nations Peace Concert on Victoria Island sponsored by Department of Peace Canada and lifted into reality by the shoulders of Navin Parekh, Tito Medina and myself.



**Dr. Peter Stockdale**

Our challenge is to be mutually supportive because we need to build a whole society in a comprehensive manner - we cannot afford to make peace ad hoc. It must be local, national and international all at once because peace is local, national and international all at once. We need permanent programs and organizations in place because a project here or there won't do it and the risk is too high. But we must NOT fall into the trap of competition in the cause of peace. We also have to explain to each other as activists, and in an active way as a society, what kind of peace we have, what kind of peace we want and what do we have to do to maintain and build it. And there is some urgency, Ottawa is not a little town any more, we now have conflict on our transit system and shootings in our communities. There is a lot of mutual ignorance and suspicion, some tolerance but less respect. In the end, as we build the architecture of peace we CAN NOT be precocious giants because that would not serve peace. To serve peace, we strive to go beyond our selfish egos, but neither can we forget our needs. But most of all, we must always keep our ears listening to the music of the spheres, the rush of the rivers, the birds overhead, the happy laughter of children, and the beat of our good hearts.

### **Ecology is Every Step**

**Joseph Emet**

Some time ago, I rewrote a part of the Metta Sutra to reflect the new reality of our times:

*I hold the Earth and the Sky with love in my heart,  
I hold the Oceans and Rivers with love in my heart,  
I hold the creatures of the Earth with love in my heart,  
Beings big or small, near or far, living now, or to come,  
May they be happy, May they be safe,  
And may their hearts be filled with joy.*

This came out of a feeling that we now need to extend loving kindness to the Earth herself as well as to her children, that what may have been unimaginable a long time ago is now a reality: our

lack of loving kindness endangers the life and security of not only other earthlings, but of the planet herself, and of her beautiful body. That changes our relationship with the Earth, and leaves old moralities in need of a revision.

I enjoyed a new traffic sign that appeared in parts of Québec recently; I saw it in the Gaspé region first. It says "Conduisons avec Amour", with red hearts. Also, "Attention à nos enfants." But we need to show our love for our children and our consideration for their future not only by not squishing them under our wheels, but also by practicing ecological driving. The safety of our children is intimately connected with the safety of our planet. And we not only need to drive with love in our hearts, but also wash dishes, cook, clean, and shower with love in our hearts. Yes, these days compassion applies to washing dishes, and it does not just mean talking care not to break them. I have a strong conviction that the excessive pollution that threatens to ruin our planet comes not from things that truly add to our quality of life, but from our carelessness, wastefulness, and lack of concern.

I am struck with how current ecological initiatives are so often based on fear and anxiety: fear of the future, and anxiety about an impending disaster. I keep wondering what would happen to a relationship or a marriage that was also based on fear and anxiety. I know that I don't want to be in that kind of a relationship! My feelings about the environment are based on love and kindness. I cannot help thinking that action based on positive feelings is more likely to bring positive results.

### Eco Poetry Lynne Wycherly:

*I dedicate this book of poems – North Flight – to the biota of the Northern Isles: lichens, moss, insects, grasses, blue hare, geese, whimbrels, terns.....all the minutiae such lives depend on – and above all, the whales. Stanzas from different poems.*

I touch history; taste loss.

Sand whales extinct. We  
are architects of an empty house.

Ship Burning –The Energy of Fire  
The carved head cuts the night  
lappets streaming.  
The wind crackles gold flags,  
Thiassi's wings, Slepnir's mane,  
Flames' mutations,  
Flung against the black.

Hail draws white lines across  
My spirit. Shattered, numb,  
I wait for Baldur to stir in the sun.

Darwin Waits for his Wife  
Dear God, mute ghost: I would not  
Give Him up, but events orphan me.  
I see Annie; her face is closed.  
Emma, I am lonelier than you know.  
Darwin's predicament is ours!

Pascale Petit: A Dawn Trail - The Huntress, 2005

Each day we come earlier, searching for that hush  
no freeway hum can shatter,  
when the morning wind blows all sound  
into the next creek  
and even our footsteps are muffled  
by a soundproof carpet.

Deeper into the silence we notice the flutter  
of dropping needles  
soft as feathers from the sky, and a pause  
in which we sense a presence,  
where we begin to see ourselves as part of the  
forest,  
the thought emerging  
like a white doe who keeps a shy distance,  
at home in the heart of the grove,  
before language, before the human tongue  
took root.

**A Gateway to Peace: Pine Gate Buddhist Sangha**

Pine Gate is a Zen Buddhist community practicing Engaged Buddhism in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hahn, the celebrated author of books such as “Anger” and “Peace With Every Step.” Inner peace, clarity of mind, deepening awareness, balance, stability and clarity, opening the heart, forgiveness, community and fellowship: this is what Pine Gate is all about.

### **How to Open the Gate?**

This Buddhist community, or sangha, is located in the west end of Ottawa, in the lower level of Ian Prattis and Carolyn Hill’s home. They named this sanctuary “Pine Gate Meditation Hall” after a story from Thich Nhat Hanh’s book “The Stone Boy and Other Stories.” A young swordsman leaves his master’s mountain retreat to go into the world to vanquish monsters and demons, not realizing that the biggest monsters are his own. After many years, he wearily returns to his master’s mountain retreat. But despite his formidable strength, he is unable to open the Pine Gate, which leads up to his master’s residence. This is because the only skills he has developed over the years are his anger and his arrogance. The Pine Gate can be opened only by someone who is pure of heart. Frustrated, the warrior lies down in front of the gate and falls asleep. Next morning, he is woken up when a young man opens the gate from the other side. It is his brother who has descended the mountain in order to fetch water in the river. They embrace and they share stories as they go down to the water’s edge. Later, as they climb the mountain, the swordsman explains that he could not open the Pine Gate. The young man then opens the gate for his brother. The latter suddenly realizes what monsters he allowed to grow within himself during his years of wandering. The lesson from this story is that no matter what demons we struggle with, externally or internally, there is always a sangha member there to open the Pine Gate and provide sanctuary when we are overwhelmed and heavy burdened. The naming of the meditation hall is in keeping with the Buddhist precept of “Taking Refuge in the Sangha,” which is where the teachings of the Buddha manifest themselves most strongly.

### **Beyond the Gate: Peace and Planetary Care**

Since the opening in 1997, Pine Gate Meditation Hall has become a sanctuary for many friends who have sought its peaceful atmosphere. In 2003, as the invasion of Iraq was being planned, Pine Gate sangha became a catalyst in the creation of Friends for Peace, a coalition of local environmental, peace, and social justice groups. Friends for Peace has since then held five annual “Peace Prayer Days.” The last Peace Prayer Day took place at Ottawa’s City Hall in October 2007. It was an opportunity for different faiths and cultures to stand together for peace, social justice and planetary care, while having a good time. Each year, Friends for Peace gives awards to individuals who usher in a culture of peace in our society. This year’s Peace Award recipients were David Smith and Sr. Mary-Ellen Francoeur. David was recognized for his Foundation, which assists young people in the city at risk from drugs, while Mary-Ellen was honored for her efforts in the advancement of interfaith advocacy for peace. Donations collected during the day were offered to the David Smith Foundation.

### **Directions to Pine Gate**

There are regular Buddhist meditation and teachings at Pine Gate Meditation Hall every Thursday night from 7pm to 9 p.m. The address is 1252 Rideout Crescent, close to the Woodroffe South exit of the Queensway. Aside from the Thursday night sessions there are nature hikes, sweat lodges, days of mindfulness, and meditation retreats. Carolyn and Ian also offer Qi-Gong classes. For more information, contact Ian Prattis or Carolyn Hill at (613) 726-0881, or email Ian at [iprattis@cyberus.ca](mailto:iprattis@cyberus.ca) Carolyn at [Chill.Carolyn@gmail.com](mailto:Chill.Carolyn@gmail.com) Or you can download the latest newsletter from <http://www.ianprattis.com/pinegate.htm> Ian Prattis is the resident dharmacharya (teacher) at Pine Gate and has trained with Masters in Vedic, Shamanic and Buddhist traditions. Ian, a former Carleton professor taught ecology and anthropology; as an ordained meditation teacher he

encourages people to find their true nature so that humanity and the world may be renewed.

### **The Sixth Mindfulness Training: Deer Park**

Aware of the suffering and degradation brought about by the unsustainable use of material resources on the Earth, we are determined to find ways to use resources with mindfulness and a clear view to the long-term effects of their use on ourselves and on future generations. Knowing that collective suffering such as global climate change, deforestation, water scarcity and the pollution of the air, soil and waters arises from the daily actions of human beings, we are committed to transforming our way of life in order to bring about peace and harmony within our family, our local communities and ecosystems, and the world.

### **Voices on the Environment    Ian Prattis**

I am aware that the reader is intelligent and knows of the devastating violence done to the Earth in the name of progress and development. To continue telling stories about such devastation does not seem to be getting through any more, particularly to the students I taught at the university. I attempted another way with a film made for my Ecology and Culture class. This endeavour was designed to nurture confidence in making a difference to our local ecosystem. *Voices On The Environment* shows how different people in the community of Ottawa enhance the ecosystems they engage with. We listen to the directors of the Stone Angel Institute talking about the meaning of the land in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; to environmental activists engaging with immediate local issues as well as with international leaders. We see teachers making the effort to bring teenagers to wilderness experience as an alternative to drugs and alcohol. We pay attention to business people talking about Fair Trading, of how they turned their workplaces into environmentally friendly domains; look at a householder organizing her neighbourhood into a pesticide free zone; and

above all we are made aware of the voices of children.

These voices of our Future show deep concern about our neglect of the planet. Earth poems from a Grade Four student illustrate the mature awareness and hopes of a ten year old child; a speech at Rio from an angry teenager wrenches your heart because she is so right about our inability to reassure her generation that things are OK. Mohawk children learn about their environment in their own language so that their culture and environment may be saved. Elementary schoolchildren invite us to their Earth Day with joy and insight about the state of affairs on planet Earth. At the end of the film there is Silence, to reflect on the journey of *Voices* before the children sing us through the final credits. Filmed in Ottawa and the neighboring Gatineau hills, *Voices On The Environment* incorporates the beauty of the natural world and encourages the viewer to step up and be a positive and confident agent for change. Our troubled civilization and planet both require this. Nothing less will do. This is not a film about politicians, prominent figures in society or those with particular axes to grind. This is a film about everyday citizens just like you and me who are determined to make a positive difference to the ecosystems we engage with. They are confident, not indifferent. They are positive and have not given in to the example of government and corporate neglect of the environment. Ordinary citizens in my home city of Ottawa give me so much cause for hope.

The commitment is to look deeply into the changing web of life, of which we are a part. Then develop the attributes of understanding, wisdom and compassion to guide our responses to the dramatic earth changes we are faced with. All the arguments about changing consciousness through meditation arrive at this conclusion, making consciousness changing an axiomatic component of human evolution. Without such a step we cannot move to a new form of behavior that is inspired by ethics and responsible leadership. This is the arena from which solutions will emerge to regulate and change the institutions that presently bring devastation and



cruelty to the planet. This is the new cultural process to revolutionize the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



### **Eco-consciousness and Home      Anne Fleming**

Squirrels: bushy-tailed acrobats, a delight to watch racing across lawn and garden, endlessly harvesting pinecones, nuts and crab-apples. One of their winter storage spots is between the slats under the back deck. At what point does this accumulated mass of organic material become the reason the support board begins to rot, causing the top board to sink? This summer, the roof over the pool needed extensive repairs due to carpenter ants. I am sure their decision to set up housekeeping there was a result of the squirrels using the space in the back deck as another of their pinecone storage depots. I cannot change squirrels from doing what squirrels must do to survive. Is it my role to simply replace the rotting boards on deck and roof before the property disintegrates; or to wage endless chemical warfare on the squirrel population in my backyard?

I remember flipping on the light switch late one night and noticing a huge, beautiful centipede stationed near a hall night-light in a home we were visiting in Provence. I was the guest. This was his home. I let him be. The following morning, I saw he was dead. One of the other guests who shared

the home with us had seen him too, and killed him. That centipede had a mourner.

My property is a multi-family dwelling. I pay the taxes for every centipede, spider, swallow, groundhog, chick-a-dee, toad, cardinal, skunk, crow, rabbit, mourning dove, mallard, mouse, sow-bug and ant that shares the place with me. Mostly I'm content to simply observe my co-tenants, relocating the crawly ones from within the house to the exterior. But sometimes, after seeing too many of them in my personal space, I am compelled to call the bug-spray into action. There is a limit to my tolerance. Mosquitoes and deer flies I can tolerate until the first bite. Then, the gloves are off!

I once threw out my entire pantry of dried goods due to a moth infestation when I was unable to locate its source. How does one keep a home free of 'pests' and still honour the integrity of the greater environment? Although, I guess the real question is: how much bug-spray over a lifetime will it take to exterminate me?

### **The Human Impact**

**Crispin Tickell**

*From an article in Resurgence No. 243 July/August 2007*

Damage to the current life systems of the planet is not yet irreparable. Most of the solutions to the problems we have created are already well known. Take the human population problem: we know it can be solved through improvement in the status of women, better provision for old age, wider availability for contraception, and better education, especially for young women. Take degradation of land and water: we know that reforestation and introduction of greater biological diversity in agricultural systems can restore the health of the land. Take the atmosphere: we know we have to change to systems of sustainable energy generation and reduce our levels of energy consumption. Take human relationships: we know we have to find ways to reduce the gaps between rich and poor. Take the way we conduct most scientific enquiry:



we know we cannot continue to break issues down into compartments, and so miss the internal dynamics of life systems as a whole.

Our descendants may regard this as a disastrous epoch in the history of Earth – or they may see it as a time when humans pulled themselves together, changed direction, and took advantage of the immense opportunities open to them.

Those opportunities are partly technical, relating to the use of information technology, and partly personal, relating to the thousands of miniscule ways in which we run our daily lives. At the most basic level we have to reconsider how we feed ourselves; how we warm and cool ourselves – in short how we receive and use energy; where we live and work; how we transport ourselves; how we use, save and recycle materials; how we work with others across the world; how we treat the other animals and plants with which we share this planet; and above all how we think; not just as producers or as consumers, but as real, creative, imaginative resourceful people.

### **Remedy for Mother Earth    Ana-Karyn Garcia**

We are all aware of the global warming **crisis** and how the organism we call earth is responding with a defense to our ignorant and unnatural behaviors. What we don't know is that thousands of years ago seekers in north India were envisioning this moment and were giving us a simple remedy to aid and heal mother earth's electromagnetic field. Perhaps in a reclusive cave and in deep meditation, or in the open fields of the country side, the seekers played with the fire element and put together a bombastic formula that unites the vectors of time, form and mantra.

**Agnihotra**, as it is commonly known, is a Vedic practice that burns organic substances in a copper pyramid at the exact time of sunrise and sunset. This celebratory ceremony is accompanied by unique, simple and subtle mantras. The execution of this daily practice has become recognized around

the globe as a Homa Therapy. **It is the purification of the atmosphere through the use of fire.** The ashes of the ceremony have been used as a remedy in different illnesses and as an agricultural fertilizer with incredible results. The places where Agnihotra has been performed have been healed from radiation, mental negativity and other toxic conditions. The central idea of Homa therapy is “You heal the atmosphere and the healed atmosphere heals you.”

Every time I perform agni hotra at home, a peace of mind arises within me. Although I may not have the time or the power to participate actively in the recovery of our sick mother earth, I feel in my own humble way that I am contributing energetically to say thank you, to rest in gratitude and to envision a hopeful awakening of our care and respect for the earth.

Learn more about this powerful and effective practice by visiting [agnihotra.org](http://agnihotra.org) or **receive** training in Ottawa by contacting Luz at [luzesthervargas@hotmail.com](mailto:luzesthervargas@hotmail.com).

*Courtesy of the Bioenergetics Institute.*



**Agnihotra**

## Worlds Converging

Nick Hart-Williams

*From an article in Resurgence No 243 July/August 2007*

The Converging World's mission (TCW) is to fund the generation of the cleanest possible renewable energy – in whichever region on earth it is most efficient and effective to do so – and for that process to benefit and support the local population in the pursuit of sustainable livelihoods. The first pilot project – a wind turbine financed by the West of England community of Chew magna – has been up and running in Tamil Nadu in S. India since April 2006. The current goal is to finance the building of a series of larger turbines in Tamil Nadu. Each turbine will produce 4 million units of electricity per annum which, fed into the national grid, will earn two million pounds over the twenty year life of the turbine. At the same time it will avoid the release each year of 3,600 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> from some of the dirty coal that would have otherwise been used to produce electricity.

Of the turbine's earnings 25% goes into education, health, employment and empowerment of some of Tamil Nadu's poorest people. The remaining 75% is used to finance future turbines. At the same time producing that amount of renewable energy also provides TWC with carbon credits which can be offered to the UK market, yielding a further 1.2 million pounds per turbine – a sum then used to promote contraction of energy use through renewable energy projects and educational programmes to help people reduce their energy consumption.

Thus an English community directly supports and has an ongoing relationship with a much larger Indian community. Together they collaborate in producing a massive amount of clean energy and a corresponding reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> – and the funds generated go entirely to develop sustainable

communities in both countries. For more information go to: [www.theconvergingworld.org](http://www.theconvergingworld.org)  
**Green Partners with Poland    Canada Export**

*Sangha member Joe Kennedy was written up in the Trade News section of Canada Export*

When Joe Kennedy entered the waste management business he never imagined his work would take him to Poland at the invitation of young entrepreneurs eager to tap into Canada's reputation for environmental expertise. Currently president of WCI Environmental Solutions Inc. Kennedy began his adventure in 1990 when he was approached by young Polish entrepreneurs after he gave a speech on new environmental technologies in Ottawa. Once in Poland, Kennedy found a country ripe for the development of environmental technologies and scores of bright young minds eager to leverage Canadian investment into successful green partnerships. "After meeting with companies it was apparently better to establish a new joint-venture company for a fresh approach," he says. And so in 1994, an associate company, known as WCI Natcol Sp.z.o.o., was born, allowing Kennedy to market WCI technologies throughout Poland.

Through its Polish associate, WCI has participated in a number of ventures – composting and sorting facilities, water reclamation and wastewater treatment facilities. The EU, of which Poland is now a part, enforces environmental standards and provides large subsidies for projects in transition countries like Poland. Although Canadian companies cannot access these funds directly, they can follow WCI's lead and open a joint venture with Polish companies. By working with Polish partners there is the potential to expand across the whole EU market, including Eastern Europe and Ukraine. Kennedy says the future of central Europe's environmental sector is looking brighter than ever – bright green that is! For more info on WCI's new environmental technologies:

[www.wciwasteconversion.ca](http://www.wciwasteconversion.ca)

## A Failed Genetic Experiment? Ian Prattis

*This is a brief excerpt from Part Two of Ian's new work "Failsafe: Taming The Wild Mind" – to be published in 2008. See [www.ianprattis.com/failsafe.htm](http://www.ianprattis.com/failsafe.htm) for context.*

The Failsafe in Consciousness concept was created in my 2002 work *The Essential Spiral* to describe how consciousness expansion will be held back by a deliberately cultivated ignorance about better knowledge. That is until the global ecological situation deteriorates to a breaking point. This breaking point will then act as a catalyst, exposing such ignorance. At which point consciousness is propelled into expansion, deliberation and change. My vision is a positive one, as I believe that humanity, drawing on a new consciousness, can create new structures and organizations out of which emerge the radical solutions to address the endemic environmental crises facing us. We have the knowledge to create this, but the obstacles that stand in the way are not technological. They are the attitudes, values and concepts that define the present dominance of corporate values, rampantly consolidated through "turbo-capitalism." The necessary clarity to deal with the global environmental crises will emerge, once our thoughts, values and attitudes shift and no longer sustain and feed our internal pollution. This is the radical internal Climate Change necessary to engage intelligently with the external Climate Change.

To make Failsafe a robust concept I identify three major interconnected components:

1. Innate Earth Wisdom,
2. Counter Culture and
3. Tipping Points in Consciousness.

We do in fact possess innate earth wisdom. Ninety-nine per cent of our evolution as a species relied on a hunting and gathering adaptation known as foraging – a strategy of adaptation based on sophisticated ecosystem knowledge, which was integrated into harvesting patterns through a spiritual understanding of the world. That is still hardwired into our brain and it is simply a matter of

re-accessing what we already possess. It is the radical remembering of this mindset that activates the feedback needed to prevent further degradation of the global ecosystem. The counter culture pulls together the Ecology of Ideas from Gregory Bateson, Rachel Carson's Radical Ecology Movement and the fostering of Gaia as metaphor and social movement through feminists, environmentalists, and the New Age beads and incense set. This strange coalition established a broad consensus that provided a foundation for the new science of Ecopsychology. The counter culture also touches base with a responsible corporate response and the emergence of the powerful anti-globalization movement. Tipping points in consciousness are about achieving a critical mass for radical change and draw on the new science of Neuroplasticity that clearly demonstrates we are not necessarily stuck with present mindsets. Our mindsets can be changed but that does take extensive and diligent internal work. Just as there are tipping points in the external ecology of Gaia, so must there be tipping points in the internal ecology of consciousness.

Should my arguments about a Failsafe in Consciousness prove to be unfounded, I am left to look directly at the likelihood that humanity is a failed genetic experiment. If we continue to turn our beautiful rivers into sewers because of our endless greed and neglectful ignorance, it is obvious that there is no place on Mother Earth to support our present civilization. That too will join the trash heap collectively created by mindless generations of humanity. The ancient ecologist on Mars studying a million years of earth history would note a parasitic infestation of Planet Earth that was not very intelligent. An intelligent parasite would ensure the good health of the host that supports it. And so the Martian biologist would factor in an inevitable elimination date for our species in her star-date log. A million years from now is merely a blink of an eye in geological time. After Global Warming destroys the present habitable econiche, any future civilization that evolves will be able to draw on the triumphs and failures of our present civilization.

This is a sobering metaphor, yet we have to accept it as a potential reality staring at us from the very near future. Our present values and patterns of consumption are the architects of the present global ecological emergency, as we remain ignorant to the consequences of the fact that everything interconnects. But once we can clearly recognize this possibility, we know for sure that despair and denial will do us no good. Instead, a window opens in our mind for peace and steadiness to enter, which could then propel our species to live differently so that we may have a future on planet earth. This requires a mass awakening of attributes that run counter to the bottom line of turbo-capitalism and the ecology of greed. The attributes that come to mind are Love, Compassion, Joy and Equanimity – the rediscovered basis of the Failsafe concept.

Despite all the warning signals to humanity, if the Failsafe in Consciousness does not kick in, the field is open for James Lovelock's conclusions to take root. That means my book is a failure. I set out to contest Lovelock's conclusions about "billions of us dieing with only breeding pairs left in the Arctic Circle" as the epitaph for our civilization. But perhaps after all the Arctic Circle may not be such a bad evolutionary staging point, as digital records, carefully preserved as archaeological relics, could provide clear guidelines for future civilizations to conduct themselves more appropriately with respect to the Earth Mother.

Nevertheless, I remain an optimist - for time is on my side. In Part One of Failsafe I concluded that we have ten years. That is a very long time for mindful behavior to take root and the methods for doing this rapidly are laid out in the following chapter – Part Three: This Moment Heals All Moments. We have ten years – 3,650 days within which to make a change – and until these days expire I choose to remain an optimist. Let us do the necessary internal work – together.

Ian has been invited to be dharma teacher in residence with Fish Lake sangha in Orlando, Florida from January 21, 2008 to February 19, 2008. This is a time of service to other Central Florida sanghas also. For more information on programs, talks, Qi-Gong classes, sangha practice contact Pam Allen [PALLEN1236@aol.com](mailto:PALLEN1236@aol.com) Tel: 407 353 2000. There will be a day of mindfulness at the Tibet-Butler Conservation Reserve on Saturday February 2, 2008. Great timing to escape the Canadian winter!

**Teacher in Residence**

**Fish Lake Sangha**

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## **Sedona Retreat 2009 “Honoring The Sacred”**

**With Dharmacharya Ian Prattis and Carolyn Hill:** *A retreat is slated for April 2009 in the Red Rock region of Sedona, Arizona. This magnificent location is nature’s cathedral. The retreat runs from a Sunday (arrival by 4pm) and ends the following Saturday (departure 11am). Located at Quail Ridge Resort in the Village of Oak Creek just outside Sedona - a stunning location with Red Rock country as the back yard.*

### **Sacred Journey of a Lifetime- Typical Schedule:**

7.00am	Morning Meditation	8.00am	Breakfast
9.30am	Journey to sacred site or Medicine Wheel; talk & meditation		
12 noon	Picnic Lunch	1 – 4 pm	Afternoon Rest
4.30pm	Dharma Sharing	5.30pm	Dinner
7.00pm	Evening Practice, Sweat Lodge, Healing Circle or Qi-Gong		
9.45pm	Prayers & Chanting	10.00pm	Lights Out & Noble Silence

**Accommodation:** Self catering units – 2 person (approx \$450 US per person) and 4 person (approx \$300 US per person). The units are very comfortable with AC, kitchen unit and utensils. There are outside barbecues, swimming pool and hot tub: [www.quailridgeresort.com](http://www.quailridgeresort.com)

**Food:** Breakfast and lunch are included in the retreat fee. Each household unit is responsible for their own dinner. There is an IGA close by and also many small restaurants within walking distance of the retreat location. Bring your own tea, coffee, snacks and food supplements. Retreat food is vegetarian, special diets are not provided.

**Travel:** Fly to Phoenix – from Ottawa approx \$750, group rates may be available from Westjet: [www.westjet.com](http://www.westjet.com) or Continental; [www.continental.com](http://www.continental.com) Shuttle from Phoenix to Sedona – \$85 US round trip [www.sedona-phoenix-shuttle.com](http://www.sedona-phoenix-shuttle.com) The last shuttle is at 8.00pm so ensure your flight gets to Phoenix in plenty of time. The shuttle stops at La Quinta Inn in the Village of Oak Creek – within easy walking distance to Quail Ridge.

**Costs:** You organize and pay directly for your own transport to Quail Ridge Resort.

Accommodation costs are payable by cheque to Ian & Carolyn, who will make the group booking with Quail Ridge Resort. The **retreat cost of \$1,000** includes your daily breakfast and lunch, transportation around Sedona, guiding, ceremonies, tuition and other costs. The accommodation costs and retreat fee should be sent in one cheque, as accommodation will not be booked without the registration fee. Prices are approximate at this time. Discounts have been secured, but they are subject to change.

**Fitness & Waiver:** Participants are expected to be in reasonable physical shape as there are easy to moderate hikes. A signed waiver is part of the deal. Bring water bottles, backpacks, food containers for lunch items, hiking boots or good runners. April temperatures: Average High 73 degrees, Average Low 42 degrees.

Reply to Ian Prattis [iprattis@cyberus.ca](mailto:iprattis@cyberus.ca) 613 726 0881 if this sacred journey of a lifetime appeals.

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# **JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2008 AT PINE GATE**

## **Zen: Engaged Buddhism in the Tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh**

*Directions: Take Queensway to Woodroffe S. exit; Go to Baseline Rd; RT on Baseline; RT on Highgate (next lights); RT on Westbury; LT on Rideout Crescent and follow it round to 1252 Rideout Cr. – home of Pine Gate Sangha.*

*Contacts: 613 726 0881; [iprattis@cyberus.ca](mailto:iprattis@cyberus.ca) [Chill.Carolyn@gmail.com](mailto:Chill.Carolyn@gmail.com)*

*Attendance is by donation according to means. Ball park: \$5 - \$10.*

*Resident Teacher: Dharmacharya Ian Prattis, True Body of Wisdom*

### **JANUARY**

**Wednesday January 9, 2008 – Wednesday March 12, 2008** 7.00pm – 8.30pm

**"Qi-Gong Class" with Carolyn Hill**

8 week class: \$75, Drop in \$10. No class on Wednesdays Jan 23 & Jan 30

**Thursday Jan 10, 2008** 7.00pm – 9.00pm

**"Back To Basics – Walking Meditation"**

It is not about walking on water or over hot coals. It is about walking with awareness on earth. Walking Meditation at [www.ianprattis.com/meditations](http://www.ianprattis.com/meditations)

**Thursday January 17, 2008** 7.00pm – 9.00pm

**"Questions & Answers with Dharmacharya Ian"**

Questions may stem from a person's practice and experience. "How many angels can dance on a pin" may just draw a smile and a request for the next question.

**Thursdays January 24 and January 31, 2008** 7.00pm – 9.00pm

**"Gala, Science and the Buddha"**

Dharma talk by Dharmacharya Ian. Relevance of Buddhist teachings for Global Warming

### **FEBRUARY**

**Thursdays February 7 and February 14, 2008** 7.00pm – 9.00pm

**"Sutra Study"**

The Better Way to Catch a Snake is about preventing the dharma from biting you on the backside. How to Be with the Sick investigates death and dying.

**Thursday February 21, 2008** 7.00pm – 9.00pm

**"Five Mindfulness Trainings Recitation Ceremony"**

Affirmation of the moral and ethical basis of sangha activities. Discussion of the fruits of practice plus realistic difficulties.

**Thursday February 28, 2008** 7.00pm – 9.00pm

**"Friends for Peace AGM"**

Milestones in bringing peace, planetary care and social justice to the fore in Ottawa.

### **RETREAT**

**Friday February 29 & Saturday March 1, 2008 at Marguerite Centre, Pembroke, ON**

**"Retreat with Dharmacharya Ian"**

Registration: [centre@margueritecentre.com](mailto:centre@margueritecentre.com). Friday evening Feb 29: Public Talk:

"Buddhism and the Environment". Saturday March 1: One Day Retreat: "Failsafe:

Taming the Wild Mind". Tel: 613 732 9926, [www.margueritecentre.com](http://www.margueritecentre.com). Cost \$125.