



Groundswell News

Newspaper of The Go-Back Club, a Simple-Living/Action Brigade

We Are One Family. These are OUR stories: www.gobackclub.org

Our Motto: Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without.

A Celebration of Youth, Issue No. 46B: January 2019

Iona's Column:

Pick a Project for
Alternative Gifts



Dear Reader,

I came up with the idea of getting this issue out early so that people who are trying to figure out alternative holiday gifts which don't involve buying

"things" for people who already have too much, might just love to make donations to needy people in the name of those they love.

Two of my favorite projects are in crisis now: Emmanuel, the amazing tree-planter in Burundi, ran out of money to continue paying his workers, and Ssengendo, an orphan who runs an orphanage for 36 children, has run out of money for their food and rent.

One American dollar goes a long way in Africa. Western Union fees are \$9.99 or \$16 depending on the amount sent and the country to which it's sent. Even though I made the offer of being an intermediary in my last letter, I can't do that anymore except for these two projects.

I need to cut way back because my husband needs so much time and energy due to his poor health and upcoming surgeries. I won't be publishing again until things have settled down here.

I'm also cutting out Facebook and will only be communicating via emails at gobackclub@pa.net. All the casual FB chats were driving me crazy. When I first started using a computer long ago, I was resentful of the instant replies people expected and it's even worse with FB and Messenger so I'm taking a break from that, too.

You remain my friends even while I'm dropping out for a while.
For the Earth Always,

Iona

'Whoever You Are, Wherever You Are, We Need You': 15-Year-Old Greta Thunberg Calls for Global Climate Strike

"Science has clearly told us that we need to act now to keep the planet within 1.5 degrees of warming," the young climate activist says in calling for a day of action on Friday.

By Andrea Germanos

Common Dreams: December 12, 2018

Greta Thunberg, the 15-year-old Swedish activist, on Wednesday called for a global climate strike. The day of action was set for Friday at "your school" or "anywhere you feel called."

Thunberg, who's made headlines for her now-weekly school strikes to urge her home country to take bold climate action, made the call from Katowice, Poland, where she's attending the COP24 climate talks, now in their second week.

Unfortunately, she said in her video announcing the strike, "As of now, there are no signs of commitment to climate action. Our emissions are still increasing. At the same time... the science has clearly told us that we need to act now to keep the planet within 1.5 degrees of warming," she continued. "Whoever you are, wherever you are, we need you now to stand outside your parliament or local government office to let them know that we demand climate action."

Her call has already gotten support from noted author and climate activist Bill McKibben. Praising her "terrific idea," McKibben said that while it's no small task to urge young people to walk out of their classrooms, "Kids who are in school today are going to spend the next 70 or 80 years dealing with an overheated world. The most important thing right now," he said, "is to start taking care of that. I am glad that we are seeing leadership from the youngest people."

As a #ClimateStrike 2018 call-to-action explains: Heat waves, floods, and hurricanes are killing hundreds and devastating com-



Photo Screengrab/Twitter

Teenage Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg, seeing little hope for a good outcome at COP24, just called for a global climate strike.

munities across the world. Climate change is already a deadly reality. Governments are meeting for the U.N. climate talks right now in Poland, and despite the latest stark warning from climate scientists that we have only 12 years to reverse course, politicians are ignoring their call. What use is it learning facts if adults ignore them? That's why Greta and her fellow students are walking out of school to teach politicians a lesson in leadership.

Addressing world leaders as the climate conference kicked off, Thunberg said, "We have not come here to beg the world leaders to care for our future. They have ignored us in the past and they will ignore us again. We have come here to let them know that change is coming whether they like it or not. The people will rise to the challenge."

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Source: <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2018/12/12/whoever-you-are-wherever-you-are-we-need-you-15-year-old-greta-thunberg-calls-global>

What on Earth is The Go-Back Club?

A Simple-Living/Action Brigade

Our Motto: *Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without.*

Founder/Editor: Iona Conner

Wire Editor: Allen Hengst

Established: September 2013

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What is The Go-Back Club all about?

We want to change people's hearts. Our members live simply (or try to) so that our collective carbon footprint grows smaller and smaller every day. We are working toward a common goal of reducing our individual im-

pacts on climate change to protect future generations and all life.

Who are we trying to attract?

We hope to reach people who are concerned about global warming and realize that they are part of the problem but don't know what to do. We invite them to join our Club. Please tell your family and friends about us. They can go to www.gobackclub.org to learn more.

What are we trying to achieve?

Our members are part of the global movement of people who know that global warming is an immediate threat and who want to prevent further harm and even reverse the situation.

We look to others for inspiration.

People are "like a blind man walking randomly toward a cliff. The only thing that will save him is to go backwards." Michael Mann (GBC board member, climate scientist, member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), told us a couple of years ago referring to tipping points on a visit to Penn State, where Mann is director of the

Earth Systems Science Center

"Our life is frittered away by detail. Simplify, simplify, simplify! Simplicity of life and elevation of purpose." Henry David Thoreau

Guidelines for Submissions

Please send me your stories and photos. I rely on our members' contributions. I'm not looking for ugly. I'm not looking for dark. I'm not looking for hatred. I'm looking for the opposites to help raise our readers' spirits. There is enough ugly and dark and hateful in the world. This newspaper provides an antidote – BEAUTY, LIGHT, LOVE. (Funny is OK, too!)

Please send stories directly via email to ionaconner@pa.net and include jpg photos with captions and photo credits. Don't worry about grammar or punctuation; I proofread and edit everything without changing the content.

It's very hard for me to work on Facebook, although I find many great stories there. That's why I want you to send everything to me through email. I often will ask questions on Facebook after I receive your material, but that's not how I want to receive your work initially.

Fair Use Law: <http://copyright.gov/fair-use/more-info.html>

Fair use is a legal doctrine that promotes freedom of expression by permitting the unlicensed use of copyright-protected works in certain circumstances. Section 107 of the Copyright Act provides the statutory framework for determining whether something is a fair use and identifies certain types of uses—such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research—as examples of activities that may qualify as fair use. Section 107 calls for consideration of the following four factors in evaluating a question of fair use:

(1) Purpose and character of the use, including whether the use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes: Courts look at how the party claiming fair use is using the copyrighted work and are more likely to find that nonprofit educational and noncommercial uses are fair. This does not mean, however, that all nonprofit educational and noncommercial uses are fair and all

commercial uses are not fair; instead, courts will balance the purpose and character of the use against the other factors below. Additionally, "transformative" uses are more likely to be considered fair. Transformative uses are those that add something new, with a further purpose or different character, and do not substitute for the original use of the work.

(2) Nature of the copyrighted work: This factor analyzes the degree to which the work that was used relates to copyright's purpose of encouraging creative expression. . . .

(3) Amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole: Under this factor, courts look at both the quantity and quality of the copyrighted material that was used. If the use includes a large portion of the copyrighted work, fair use is less likely to be found; if the use employs only a small amount of copyrighted material, fair use is more likely. . . .

(4) Effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work: Here, courts review whether, and to what extent, the unlicensed use harms the existing or future market for the copyright owner's original work. In assessing this factor, courts consider whether the use is hurting the current market for the original work (for example, by displacing sales of the original) and/or whether the use could cause substantial harm if it were to become widespread. . . .

Please note that the Copyright Office is unable to provide specific legal advice to individual members of the public about questions of fair use. See 37 C.F.R. 201.2(a)(3). For further information, see <https://www.copyright.gov/fair-use/more-info.html>.



Fair Use Logo



Photo <https://www.pexels.com/photo/red-and-white-gift-box-with-ribbon-bow-697224/>

There are many wonderful people and organizations in this issue of Groundswell News who need support that we hope our readers who have so much will give to those who have so little, not just now but throughout the year.

Merry or Misery? Shoppers Urged to Avoid Christmas Gifts Linked to Slavery

By Sonia Elks

Thomson Reuters Foundation: December 20, 2018

LONDON – Christmas holidaymakers have been warned by officials and campaigners not to inadvertently fund slavery with their gift lists as awareness grows over forced and child labor used in a list of products from princess dolls to sparkly make-up.

Festive goods ranging from toys to novelty jumpers to counterfeit designer bags may be produced using child slaves or other abused workers in often-complex global supply chains and consumers should be asking questions, experts said.

About 25 million people are estimated to be trapped in forced labor, according to the United Nation's International Labour Organization (ILO), and anti-slavery campaigners said their work may be found in many popular gifts.

"We are all even more aware at Christmas that we are not all in the same situation – that you may be in a happier situation than someone else in the world," said Suzanne Hoff of the anti-trafficking organization La Strada International. "It's not only a good time of year to think about that but also to think 'How I can I ensure that I don't contribute to the further exploitation?'"

One of this year's must-have toys may have been made by workers earning less than 1 pound (\$1.26)* an hour, it emerged. Workers at a Chinese toy factory making

Disney and Fisher-Price dolls worked illegal overtime and received no holiday or sick pay, according to an investigation by rights groups Solidar Suisse and China Labor Watch.

Neither Disney nor Mattel replied to requests for comment.

British government officials have warned that buying fake goods, from handbags to mobile phones, could support sweatshops and child labor.

"Border Force are at ports, airports, and mailing rooms, working hard to keep these knock-off goods out of the country, depriving criminals of illicit profits and keeping consumers safe," Immigration Minister Caroline Noakes said in a statement.

Make-up, mobile phones, and jewelry may all be tainted by slavery in the sourcing of raw materials, according to CORE, a UK-based watchdog on corporate accountability.

While embracing the trend for a novelty reindeer jumper might come with a heavy price as the clothing industry has been hit by repeated scandals over mistreating workers, as demand for cheap, fast fashion soars, according to the UK's Environmental Audit Committee.

Even the Christmas dinner is not immune. Fruit and vegetables may have been produced using forced labor, with experts, including Britain's anti-slavery body Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority, warning agriculture workers are vulnerable to

abuses including debt bondage.

After-dinner chocolates may come with a not-so-sweet aftertaste as plantations from Brazil to Ghana have been found to use child labor by various studies including by the Brazilian Federal Labor Prosecution Office and ILO.

Experts urged consumers to consider transparency over sourcing while doing any last-minute shopping and to press for change by asking brands what action they are taking.

"Why not take a moment whilst you're watching the telly on Boxing Day to write or reach out on social media to customer services of the brand of your favorite gift or two?" said Joanna Ewart-James, of the anti-slavery group Freedom United. "Let them know how much you love your new present and ask what they are doing to ensure the workers in their supply chains are not exploited."

*\$1 = 0.7906 pounds

Reporting by Sonia Elks @soniaelks; Editing by Belinda Goldsmith. The Thomson Reuters Foundation is the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, that covers humanitarian news, women's and LGBT+ rights, human trafficking, property rights, and climate change. Visit <http://news.trust.org>.

Source: <http://news.trust.org/item/20181220015430-jzpch/>



Fundraiser for TEAM 54 Project

These three paintings by Art Pasqual are for sale at \$500 each.

Art will donate 10% of his profits to TEAM 54 Project.

Top: view of ant (market day)

Middle: harvest day (tapisca-corn)



Bottom: bird's eye view
(harvest of coffee, flowers and bananas)

I roll my paintings and put them in a plastic tube so that they are very safe. Prices vary depending on the measurements, but the three oil canvases shown are all 24 by 32 inches.

Contact: Art Pasqual at pascual15@hotmail.es, facebook as Art Pasqual Antonio Pur or call +502 55565902 (WhatsApp).



**IF WE ARE TO CHANGE OUR
WORLD VIEW, IMAGES HAVE
TO CHANGE. THE ARTIST NOW
HAS A VERY IMPORTANT JOB
TO DO. HE'S NOT A LITTLE
PERIPHERAL FIGURE
ENTERTAINING RICH PEOPLE,
HE'S REALLY NEEDED.**

- Vaclav Havel -

www.brainyquote.com/quotes/vaclav_havel_120731

Washington D.C. Passed Historic Bill Mandating 100% Renewable Power By 2032

Submitted by Carolina Pena, Bolivia

The unanimously-approved legislation puts the nation's capital at the vanguard of climate policy – even as the federal government is going in reverse.

By Alexander C. Kaufman
HuffPost: December 18, 2018

City lawmakers in the District of Columbia voted unanimously on December 18, 2018 to pass legislation mandating 100 percent renewable electricity in the capital by 2032.

The Clean Energy D.C. Omnibus Act of 2018 doubles Washington's current policy, which says that by 14 years from now, the nation's capital must be getting half its electricity from zero-emissions sources like solar and wind.

The legislation, which is expected to become law, increases fees on electricity from coal and gas and establishes a task force to set some of the nation's most aggressive energy-efficiency standards for existing buildings.

It also goes beyond the utility sector, requiring that all public transportation and privately-owned fleet vehicles emit zero carbon dioxide by 2045, putting it in line with California's newly-adopted auto emissions target. The provision applies to fleets with more than 50 passengers, according to Utility Dive, meaning the ride-hailing services Uber and Lyft are included.

"This bill should be a boost to advocates nationwide," Camila Thorndike, D.C. campaign director for the Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund, said in a statement. "Finally some good news out of Washington. We did it."

The legislation, which would apply to federal government buildings including the White House, comes as the Trump administration is bolstering the oil and gas industries and rolling back nearly every major policy aimed at reducing emissions.

"Even though by ourselves we are a small jurisdiction, we can serve and have served as a model for other jurisdictions," Mary Cheh, the Democratic councilwoman who authored the original bill, said in a statement. "More importantly, we are in a loose association with other local and state jurisdictions so that even though the federal government is in default of international



Photo: Joe Sohm/Visions of America via Getty Images
The Lincoln Memorial (left) and Washington Monument in Washington, DC honor two famous American presidents (Abraham Lincoln and George Washington) and are thronged with tourists from all over the world who want to learn more about the United States.

climate accords, we will meet them."

The city generates little of its own electricity, meaning it buys renewable energy credits to meet its power goals. It's made significant progress over the past few years. In 2015, the city's credits went mostly to electricity generated from biomass, including wood and the pulp-based substance called black liquor, the U.S. Energy Information Administration reported in 2016. By last year, nearly 64 percent of those credits went to wind, according to a Public Service Commission report from May.

Just as the city council was voting on the bill, the District of Columbia announced plans to join nine northeastern states – Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Virginia – to form a regional cap-and-trade market to limit vehicle emissions early next year.

The bill's passage puts Washington at the vanguard of municipal climate policy, and sets an example other large cities are likely to follow. Across the U.S., two states and more than 90 cities have pledged to adopt 100 percent renewable electricity, according to the Sierra Club. Six cities – Aspen, Colorado; Burlington, Vermont; Georgetown, Texas; Greensburg, Kansas; Kodiak Island, Alaska; and Rock Port, Missouri – have already hit their targets.

But no major city has adopted as far-reaching a climate policy as Washington.

New York City, the nation's largest and most economically influential metropolis,

is considering a bill to establish strict new energy-efficiency standards for big buildings, its largest source of climate pollution. The real estate industry and its allies are fighting the effort. New York also sued big oil companies last year – a case now pending appeal – and is moving to divest its \$200 billion pension funds of oil and gas stocks.

In October, the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world's leading climate research body, determined that world governments must halve global emissions in 12 years to avoid warming of 2.3 degrees Fahrenheit above pre-industrial temperatures. Beyond that level of warming, climate change is forecast to be catastrophic, particularly for coastal cities like Washington and New York.

The congressionally-mandated National Climate Assessment, a report drafted by scientists at 13 federal agencies, confirmed many of those findings last month.

"This bill is among the most ambitious pieces of climate legislation in the country, and today it became law because the D.C. community demanded it," Mary Anne Hitt, director of the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal campaign, said Tuesday in a statement. "The decisions made and policies discussed within the nation's capital affect the country, and the world."

Source: https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/dc-historic-climate-bill-renewable-power_us_5c195218e4b08db990587aea

"Turns Out," Says Ocasio-Cortez, "Everyday People Like It When We Fight for Everyday People."

By Jon Queally

Common Dreams: December 18, 2018

Citing a new poll that revealed 81 percent of people overall support the idea of a bold and ambitious 'Green New Deal,' Rep.-elect Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez celebrated the simple political concept that when you push for policies that are good for a majority of people, a majority of people like it.

"Turns out," the Democrat from New York declared in a Monday night tweet, "everyday people like it when we fight for everyday people!"

The tweet included a link to a story published by Earther earlier in the day highlighting a poll by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication and George Mason University showing that more than 8 out of 10 respondents from "across the political spectrum support the progressive plan to combat climate change by rapidly weaning the U.S. off fossil fuels."

According to Earther:

The findings are stunning but also come with a couple caveats, namely that most people haven't heard much about the Green New Deal, and they may not know of its connection to incoming representative [Ocasio-Cortez], a bete noire in the right wing fever swamps. Still, the fact that the idea enjoys broad support in a semi-vacuum shows that before Americans descend into their political bunkers, progressive policies are actually quite popular.

The Green New Deal is a set of aspirational goals in line with the best available climate science. Among those goals are switching the U.S. electrical grid to 100 percent renewable energy by 2030, improving energy efficiency, and setting up policies for a green jobs guarantee while planning a just transition for fossil fuel workers as they move into new economic sectors. If it sounds good to you, you're not alone.

That progressive policies are, in fact, very popular is something studiously ignored by corporate media outlets obsessed with the false idea that the U.S. is a center-right nation, a myth which critics note is peddled by the same "radical centrists" who dominate Capitol Hill, the cable news shows, NPR, and the nation's major newspapers.

As the Huffington Post notes about the Yale survey:

The survey's description of the Green New Deal's tenets did not mention that more than 40 progressive members of Congress are championing the policy. The group includes Rep.-elect Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-

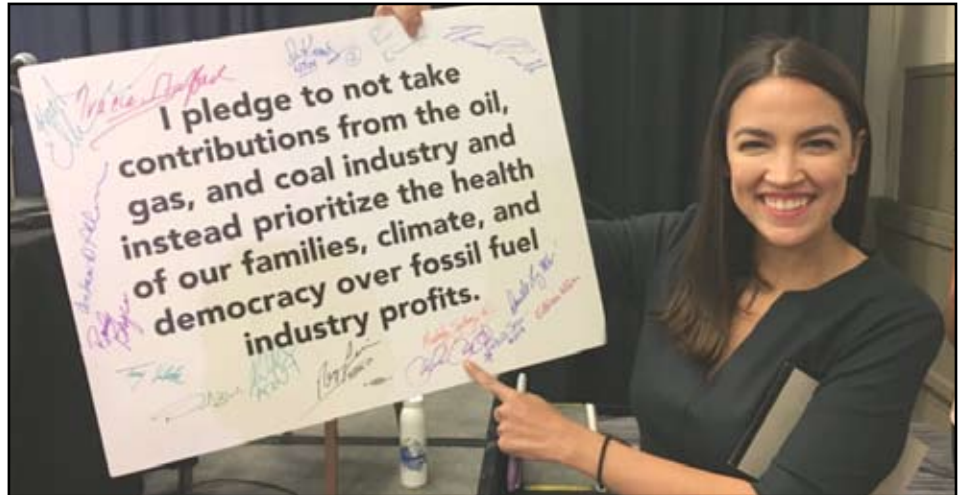
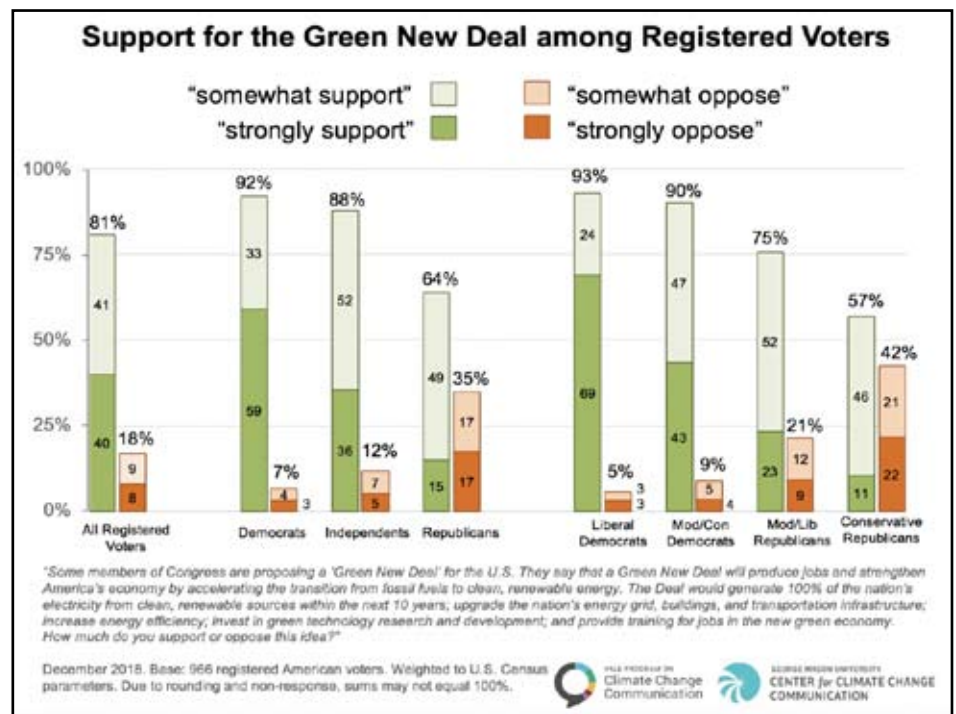


Photo: Ocasio2018 Campaign

"Turns out," Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the Democrat from New York, declared in a Monday night tweet, "everyday people like it when we fight for everyday people!"



Source: Yale Program on Climate Change Communication and George Mason University

N.Y.), Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), and Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.).

Study after study shows Americans evaluate policies more negatively when they are told politicians from an opposing party back the ideas, and more positively when they are told politicians from their own party are in support. The findings therefore indicate that although most Republicans favor the Green New Deal in principle, they are not yet aware that the plan is proposed by the political left.

The popularity of the ideas, says Ocasio-Cortez, is exactly why the Republican Party


– not to mention many members of the Democratic and media establishment – remain so deeply afraid of those espousing and pushing for them.

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Source: <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2018/12/18/turns-out-says-ocasio-cortez-everyday-people-it-when-we-fight-everyday-people>

Trump Trumped: Climate Negotiators Reach an Overtime Deal to Keep Paris Pact Alive

Submitted by C.B., Pennsylvania USA

By Brad Plumer, *excerpt* 
The New York Times: December 15, 2018

KATOWICE, Poland — Diplomats from nearly 200 countries reached a deal on Saturday to keep the Paris climate agreement alive by adopting a detailed set of rules to implement the pact.

The deal, struck after an all-night bargaining session, will ultimately require every country in the world to follow a uniform

set of standards for measuring their planet-warming emissions and tracking their climate policies. And it calls on countries to step up their plans to cut emissions ahead of another round of talks in 2020.

It also calls on richer countries to be clearer about the aid they intend to offer to help poorer nations install more clean energy or build resilience against natural disasters. And it builds a process in which countries that are struggling to meet their emissions goals can get help in getting back on track.

The United States agreed to the deal de-

spite President Trump's vow to abandon the Paris Agreement. Diplomats and climate change activists said they hoped that fact would make it easier for the administration to change its mind and stay in the Paris Agreement, or for a future president to embrace the accord once again. The United States cannot formally withdraw from the agreement until late 2020. . . .

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/15/climate/cop24-katowice-climate-summit.html>

10 "Green" Industry Terms Everyone Should Know

By Jyoti Jennings Roth 
Tales by Trees: October 18, 2018

Every field of work or area of philosophy has its own language, its own "jargon," and uses specific terms that have specific meanings within that arena. Since education about environmental sustainability is crucial for all of us, it is also very important that we foster an understanding of the major terms that surround planet conservation.

1. FOOTPRINT

The "footprint" of any activity or entity measures the effect being made on the environment. Simply put, it refers to the mark something or someone leaves on the Earth's ecosystem. It is often used to discuss a "carbon footprint," i.e. the amount of carbon dioxide emissions being generated and released by a process. Being able to quantify one's footprint is very valuable for then trying to balance out any negative effects to the planet.

2. LIFECYCLE ASSESSMENT

Each product has a "lifespan" or "lifecycle," starting from when the raw materials were collected to its processing, manufacturing, distribution, shipping, use, repair, and eventual disposal — or recycling. A life-cycle assessment looks at the total "life" of a product and its impacts on the environment from beginning to end. This gives a much bigger perspective on the sustainability or ecological footprint of a product.

3. CARBON NEUTRAL

Another name for this is to have a "net zero carbon footprint." Essentially it means that all carbon emissions have been balanced out by some kind of offset, such as



planting trees which absorb carbon dioxide from the air, or by purchasing a certain number of carbon credits. It is usually used in the context of carbon dioxide release from vehicles, energy production, or other industrial processes.

4. SUSTAINABLE

This is a term with an extremely wide usage. It is generally used to refer to anything that is related to conservation or preserving the Earth's natural resources. More specifically the term "sustainable" actually means to balance the rate at which anything is being depleted with the rate at which that same substance or property is being replenished. So, those seeking a sustainable Earth are trying to ensure that resources are replenished just as much as they are used up. Since resources are not being exhausted, such a system can be sustained indefinitely.

5. RENEWABLE

Renewable resources in the context of Earth-friendly initiatives are those which can be naturally replenished, at least in a reasonable timeframe for humans. It often refers to energy sources such as wind, sun, water, or geothermal. Renewable energy

provides power in four main areas: electricity, air and water heating/cooling, transportation, and off-the-grid energy services.

6. RECYCLABLE

Instead of using materials once and disposing of them, recycling is the process of taking waste materials and re-processing them into new products. This cuts down on resource use by giving products and materials a longer "life-span." It is especially predominant with plastic and paper materials.

7. UPCYCLING

Closely related to recycling, upcycling is what we call it when someone reuses waste materials and/or discarded objects to create something new. It could be something completely different, or it could be simply taking a piece of furniture and updating it with repairs, paint, or other creative spin. Part recycling and part art, upcycling challenges the imagination in the spirit of conservation.

8. REGENERATIVE DESIGN

Regenerative design is centered around the theory of creating a system that "regenerates" or restores its own sources of

10 Terms continued on next page

10 Terms *continued from previous page*

energy and materials. It is based on the self-sustaining ecosystems that occur in nature, with the goal being a “closed loop input – output” model, wherein the output is greater than or equal to the input. Regenerative design is used with regards to urban environments, buildings, economies, industries, and basically anything to do with creating a human ecosystem that integrates seamlessly with the rest of the Earth.

9. NET POSITIVE

Net positive, a concept developed by Forum for the Future, is a business model that puts more into the environment than it takes out. In order to accomplish this, every emission created and resource used is accounted for and directly compensated for in kind. For example, if trees are used as a raw material, even more trees must be planted in order to not only replace the trees used but result in a “net positive” number of trees. The idea is that business as usual in such an organization results in a “plus” amount of natural resources rather than a “minus” at the end of the day.

10. CIRCULAR ECONOMY

A circular economy is one which attains a sustainable future by operating in symbiosis with the environment and resources. The use of resources is optimized for

maximum efficiency, and materials and products are returned to the system at the end of their “lifespan” to be used in another way. The goal is to create a sustainable supply chain, with manufacturing processes so carefully aligned that the output or waste of

one cycle feeds the next cycle in a circular pattern.

Source: <https://www.talesbytrees.com/10-green-industry-terms-you-should-know/>



Interested in Sustainable Art & Design?

Tales by Trees is a net positive art and design company from Finland. Our mission is to create beautiful and meaningful objects that rebuild the planet, piece by piece. Our products increase natural resources.

The Seed

The Seed is a minimalist design sculpture that decorates your home or office. Made from sustainably grown Nordic birch and designed by award winning Finnish designers Elina Helenius and Saara Renvall, it is beautiful for the eye, soothing for the touch, and a symbol of the forest. To order (they're expensive!) and learn more, go to <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/sustainable-art-design-for-your-home#/>

Three Little Ideas to Help Planet Earth



Washing Maching in a Sink

Photo by Linda Lowber
It's a five-gallon bucket with a handy dandy wooden mop handle stirrer. It works... wish I had a wringer-outer... but my hands work... and towels! Maybe it will keep my hands strong!



Getting Out the Last Few Drops

Photo by Iona
When your creams and lotions or toothpaste start running out, don't despair, you can get a few more applications by cutting the tube in half and using your fingers to remove what's left before buying a new container.




Patching and Repairing

Photo by Iona
Our couch is almost 30 years old and the foam cushioning was starting to poke through worn out places. Fortunately I found a tiny piece of fabric which matches pretty well and patched it up.

Quoting 'The Lorax': Judges Emphatically Reject Pipeline Crossing Appalachian Trail

Submitted by Fran Staret
and Allen Hengst, USA

By Laurel Wamsley, *excerpt* 
National Public Radio: December 14, 2018

A federal appeals court has thrown out a power company's permit to build a natural gas pipeline across two national forests and the Appalachian Trail – and slammed the U.S. Forest Service for granting the approvals in the first place. In a decision filed Thursday by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Virginia, a three-judge panel declared the U.S. Forest Service “abdicated its responsibility to preserve national forest resources” when it issued permits for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline to build through parts of the George Washington and Monongahela National Forests and a right of way across the Appalachian Trail.

“This conclusion,” they wrote in a unanimous judgment, “is particularly informed by the Forest Service’s serious environmental concerns that were suddenly and mysteriously assuaged in time to meet a private pipeline company’s deadlines.”

The judges cited Dr. Seuss’ *The Lorax*: “We trust the United States Forest Service to **‘speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues.’**” The court concluded that the Forest Service’s decisions violated both the National Forest Management Act and the National Environmental Policy Act, and found the Forest Service lacked the authority to grant the pipeline a right of way across the Appalachian Trail. The Atlantic Coast Pipeline would originate in West Virginia and stretch across Virginia and North Carolina. As the judges detail, the project would make a considerable impact on the landscape:

“Construction would involve clearing trees and other vegetation from a 125-foot right of way (reduced to 75 feet in wetlands) through the national forests, digging a trench to bury the pipeline, and blasting and flattening ridgelines in mountainous terrains. Following construction, the project requires maintaining a 50-foot right of way (reduced to 30 feet in wetlands) through the [two national forests] for the life of the pipeline.”

They note that in 2015, as the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) prepared to conduct an environmental impact statement on the project, the Forest Service noted concerns about landslides and slope failures, as well as impact on groundwater, soil, and endangered species. A draft of FERC’s environmental impact statement stated that the pipeline route was designed



Photo: <https://thetrek.co/appalachian-trail/photographers-favorite-images-appalachian-trail/>
We trust the United States Forest Service to ‘speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues.’” The court concluded that the Forest Service’s decisions violated both the National Forest Management Act and the National Environmental Policy Act, and found the Forest Service lacked the authority to grant the pipeline a right of way across the Appalachian Trail.

to go through national forest lands rather than National Park Service lands, as the latter, which would likely necessitate congressional approval.

The Southern Environmental Law Center was one of the environmental groups that filed the lawsuit challenging the Forest Service’s issuance of the permits. “I think what happened here is for years the Forest Service was asking tough questions about this project and requesting additional information and it turned on a dime when the Trump admin-

istration came into power,” Patrick Hunter, a lawyer with the Southern Environmental Law Center, told West Virginia Public Broadcasting.

“Federal agencies can change their minds, but they have to [have] good reasons for doing it and they didn’t have a good reason to change their mind and turn on a dime like this and I think that came through in this decision-making. The pipeline route that Dominion has chosen cannot be approved as of

Lorax continued on next page

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The Atlantic Coast Pipeline originates in West Virginia and would stretch across Virginia & North Carolina (ACP)

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The Appalachian Trail is a beloved American treasure used by millions. It is 2,190 miles long, runs through 14 states along the Eastern part of the United States. Approximately 3 million people visit it every year, some of whom hike the whole distance and are called “Through Hikers.”

You can find locations and information on A.T. Shelters, A.T. Communities, Trail Clubs, Parking Areas, Hostels and Outfitters. at <http://appalachiantrail.org/home/google-ppc/Appalachian-Trail-Map>

Map at the left from ACP, <https://acpstory.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=335658a450e24dca8b4668d297fb45f6>

right now, and so if they want to keep working on this thing, they’re going to have to go back to the drawing board,” Hunter told the broadcaster. “All of the agencies that have to issue approvals for this pipeline — their approvals depend on this one pipeline route. And since that can no longer be built as planned, I think that calls all of those other approvals into question.”

Dominion Energy, the pipeline’s lead developer, said it will appeal immediately to the full appeals court. “If allowed to stand, this decision will severely harm consumers and do great damage [sic] to our economy and energy security,” Aaron Ruby, a spokesman for Dominion Energy, said in a statement to NPR ...

Natural gas pipelines are buried. From ground level, hikers would see a marker alerting them to the pipeline under their boots, and a gap where the trees had been clear-cut. No trees are permitted to grow over top of a pipeline, because their roots can damage it ...

As the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* notes, the environmental concerns are serious: “The panel said the Forest Service’s ‘insufficient analysis of landslide risks’ also became clear when the Columbia Gas Transmission Pipeline, cited by FERC as an example of an existing pipeline built across sensitive terrain in the Appalachian Mountains, ruptured and exploded in early July after a landslide in West Virginia.”

Last week, following another order by the 4th Circuit, Dominion voluntarily suspended work on the project while it addresses issues with its permits.

Source: <https://www.npr.org/2018/12/14/676950106/quoting-the-lorax-court-pulls-permit-for-pipeline-crossing-appalachian-trail>

Note from the Editor: I have read this book to hundreds of people. If you love trees, you need to also read this story to hundreds of people. **We speak for the trees!**



“Just the facts, Ma’am.”

A Few Facts About Climate Change

This best-known quote from the TV series *Dragnet* was never actually said by Sgt. Joe Friday... or at least not quite. It was used in a pseudo-parody movie with Dan Aykroyd adapting the phrase from two similar statements: “All we want are the facts, ma’am” and “All we know are the facts, ma’am.”

(<https://www.strategicamerica.com/blog/2012/10/just-the-facts-maam/>)

By John Conner, Pennsylvania USA

In 2015, leaders of the world’s nations met in Paris to design a program for combating Climate Change. At that point there was much pessimism over our ability to grapple with the two major forces that were producing the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation and harmful agricultural practices, all of which were combining to raise the Earth’s mean temperature and produce calamitous conditions. And do it in the very near future.

At that point we had only 9-10 years left to ignore the warning of the world’s scientists. To achieve this objective, radical steps were necessary. Promises were made; participants agreed to meet in a few years to assess progress and reaffirm commitments. Not only are the lives of our children and grandchildren at stake, but the very existence of all forms of life.

Therefore now, in early 2018, the time is ripe for a candid assessment of our predicament. We have passed the point of ignoring the consensus of the International Panel of Climate Change – 97% of the world’s climate scientists – and choosing instead to enrich the world’s energy corporations beyond their wildest dreams.

It is clear that the primary actors are the governments and citizens in the developed nations because of the magnitude of their emissions of greenhouse gas emissions, the peoples of the smallest and most vulnerable nations bear a great responsibility.

The Independent: “Pacific island Tuvalu calls for 1.5 degrees local global limit or faces ‘total demise.’ Global sea levels have risen seven inches over the past 100 years and rising water threatens to entirely destroy the island in the next 50 years.

“Cyclone Pam, which devastated the island earlier this year, had a huge influence on the island’s economy, affecting about 188,000 people in the surrounding area and destroying 95% of its agricultural sector.”

The Guardian: “Many of the planet’s most prized destinations, places considered exquisite and idyllic, where nature seems bountiful and people appear at ease, are under threat. In less than a decade climate change sea-level rise could force thousands

of people to migrate from some of the world’s 52 small island developing states.

“Such states boast a diversity of cultures, natural resources, biodiversity, and indigenous knowledge that makes them mainstays of our planetary economy of Singapore, to one of the least explored countries of the world where 1,000 cultural groups are thought to exist, to the very remoter Niue, which is one of the world’s coral islands – each small island developing state is endowed with its own unique attributes.”

Modernity vs. Developing States

1. Global warming is likely to reach 1.5C between 2030 and 2052 at the current rate.
2. Hurricane Michael inflicted \$30 million of damage and killed 45 people on Florida.
3. The physical shifts we’re inflicting on the planet will extend longer than the entire history of human civilization.
4. There have been four other episodes in Earth’s half-billion-year history of animal life when carbon dioxide has poured into the atmosphere in greater volumes, but never at greater speeds.
5. Even at the end of the Permian Age, when huge injections of carbon dioxide from volcanoes burning through coal deposits culminated in ‘The Great Dying’, the carbon dioxide content of the atmosphere grew at perhaps a tenth of the current pace.
6. Two centuries ago, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was 275 parts per million (ppm), it has now topped 400 ppm and is rising more than 2 ppm per year.
7. The extra heat that we trap near the planet every day is equivalent to the heat from 400,000 bombs the size of the one that was dropped on Hiroshima.
8. In the past 30 years we’ve seen all 20 of the hottest years ever recorded.
9. There is a 35% chance that because of unexpectedly high economic growth rates, the UN’s worst case scenario for global warming was too optimistic.
10. Most of the human pullback will be slow – Vietnam, the Mekong Delta, the Alaskan Coast, the Louisiana Gulf Coast, Hawaii, Jakarta, Boston, Norfolk, Maryland. We will retreat from most of the

world’s non-urban shorelines in the not very distant future. We can walk away methodically or flee in panic.

11. Rising temperatures have begun to narrow the margins of our inhabitation, this time in the hot continental interiors. Nine of the 10 deadliest heat waves in history have occurred since 2000 – India, Pakistan, Oman, Montreal, Death Valley, Korea, Europe, Algeria.

12. For a few days in June, temperatures in Pakistan and Iran peaked at slightly above 129 F. June 29 was the warmest night in history – 109F in Oman.

13. July 2018 – hottest month on Earth in Death Valley.

14. Increased heat and humidity have reduced the amount of work people can do outdoors by 10%, a figure predicted to double by 2050. As the planet warms, a crescent-shaped area encompassing parts of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the North China Plain (1.5 billion people) is at high risk of such temperatures in the next half century. Across this belt, extreme heat waves that currently happen once every generation could, by the end of the century, become annual events with temperatures close to the threshold for several weeks each year, which could lead to famine and mass migration.

15. By 2070, tropical regions that now get one day of truly impressive humid heat a year can expect between a hundred and 250 days, if the current level of emissions continues.

16. We share the planet with many other creatures. We have already managed to kill off 60% of the world’s wildlife since 1770 by destroying their habitats, and now higher temperatures are starting to take their toll – peak-dwelling birds, coral reefs, etc.

17. Some people will be forced to relocate in order to find enough water. By 2050, if temperatures rise by 2 degrees, a quarter of the Earth will experience serious drought and desertification. As the number of days that reach 86 degrees F or higher increases, corn and soybean yields across the U.S. grain belt could fall by between 22 and 49 percent – droughts, deep-plowing, over-drawn aquifers.

Facts continued on next page

Team 54 Member Accepted to Join Al Gore in March 2019 at Atlanta for the Climate Realty Leadership Training

NIGERIAN SELECTED TO ATTEND THE PRESTIGIOUS CLIMATE REALITY LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA.

Mr. Iyaknse UdoAka from Essien Udim Local government area, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, has been selected to attend the Climate Reality Leadership Training in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

Climate Reality Leadership Training is a global network of individuals working to solve the climate crisis and create a sustainable future for the Earth.

The program takes great leaders and makes them exceptional through the provision of training in climate science, communications, and organizational management to better tell the story of climate change and inspire communities and individuals everywhere to act.

Iyaknse, while interacting with the press, recently, said he is passionate about youth development and environmental justice. "I have a deep desire for youth development and environmental justice," he said. "For me to pursue the fulfillment of this passion, I signed on with Team 54 Project, a non-governmental organization working around the globe to raise awareness about the impact of climate change on the environment and the health of people," Iyaknse added.

Commenting on what fires his passion, Mr. Udoaka states that he has come to the

realisation, from scientific reports, that a transition to cleaner energy – especially renewables – is the ultimate solution to climate crisis. More also, he opines that for the fact that the poor, children, young people, and the elderly are disproportionately being affected the most, he has chosen to change such narrative and seek more climate science education and likely relevant solutions to help his country, Nigeria, act in order to avert a bleak future.

"I wish that more platforms like the Climate Reality Leadership Training were created to engage young men and women to be empowered and equipped for the realization of a cleaner environment in the future," Iyaknse concluded with excitement.

Iyaknse hopes to leverage the network he would build at the three-day training to scale up effort in running his NGO known as Sustainable Nigeria Initiative, which works to address health, economic and environmental issues through engagement in green skills training, climate change advocacy, earth greening programs and strengthening the start-up ecosystem for Nigeria.

Climate Reality training is free, but participants must pay the costs of travel and lodging to attend the training. To this end, Mr. UdoAka plans to fundraise the \$2,600 that he needs to fund his attendance at the training through public appeal. In order to meet the target before the deadline of



Photo by Iyaknse UdoAka at the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Abuja, Nigeria

February 20, 2019, UdoAka has appealed that donations from you to help him offset his trip expenses be sent to the following accounts:

PayPal: orphielmarsh_foundation@yahoo.com.

Contact Iyaknse at iyaknseudoaka@gmail.com.

Facts *continued from previous page*

18. The Arctic cannot become the new Midwest. There is no rich topsoil in the Far North. The ground is underlaid with permafrost, which can be found beneath a fifth of the Northern Hemisphere. As the permafrost melts, it releases more carbon into the atmosphere. Great economic losses from a warming Arctic.

19. Peak-dwelling birds are going extinct. As temperatures climb, the birds can no longer find relief on higher terrain. Coral reefs, rich in biodiversity, may soon be a tenth of their current size.

20. By 2050, if temperatures rise by 2 F, a quarter of the Earth will experience serious drought and desertification. San Paulo and Capetown came within days of running out of water last year.

21. We've already over-pumped the aquifers that lie beneath most of Earth's breadbaskets.

22. Since James Hansen testified to Congress 30 years ago, carbon emissions have increased each year except 2009 (Recession).

23. By 1882, Exxon research pointed to potentially catastrophic events, requiring major reduction in fossil fuel combustion. They planned to move much of their operations to the Arctic. Their plan was to emphasize the uncertainty of the scientific data about Climate Change.

24. In 2017, 90% of Americans did not believe that there is a scientific consensus.

Contact John at grassroots!@pa.net.

Calling for prayers for John when he has knee surgery and a back procedure in January. Here he is in much better health, posing in front of the fence he built around our mini orchard several years ago.



Sometime In 1992, the River Helped the People Survive the Drought.

By Ekwe, Chiwundu Charles
Founder Milk Basket Foundation
Owerri, Nigeria

It was around August 1992 in Amakohia Owerri North, Imo State Nigeria, there came a water draught. As a child we did not understand what may have caused the public water system to stop. Water could only be obtained by trekking miles to a hand pumping tap owned by UNICEF (which is commonly used in developing countries for both community supply and self-supply of water and can be installed on boreholes or hand-dug wells) or by fetching water from a small river called Nworie.

This river was remarkable because it was another source of water during this draught. It wasn't just any river where people go to fish, bathe, and fetch water, it was special.

At that time there was a man called Oyola who took care of the river. He worshiped the river deity; you dare not pee, defecate, or throw trash into the stream. He was always lurking somewhere looking out for anybody trying to desecrate River Nworie. Legend had it that it was handed down to him from his forefathers who were the custodians of the river. I loved him because he made sure the water was always clean.

People drank from this very stream – there was a section for washing under the bridge where women bathed, washed their clothes and pots. Another section, which was deeper, was for fishermen and dare-devil youngsters challenging themselves in a race. It was fun and I learnt how to swim in this very stream.

Fast-forward to 2018, the river has been overturned by trash, thousands and thousands of rubber cans, plastic bags, straws, bags, bottles, all sorts of trash, you name it. 85% of people living in the urban areas don't dispose of their refuse properly, some throw it into the gutter during high rains, some are dumped on the road side, others are thrown directly into the small stream, all of which are depositories around the community which flow down to the river.

What a shame.

The fishermen who used to be found selling fish close to the river are nowhere to be found. "All the fishes are gone" – what have we done?

We are destroying the world slowly. This trash flows straight into the underground water channels and poisons our water. No one is safe again.

Studies have it that drug residues in



"This is what the river looks like now," wrote Chiwundu when he submitted this photo.

drinking water are a growing problem in the opinion of environmental experts. Ten active ingredients have been detected several times, including various painkillers, says the toxicologist Dr. Hermann Dieter from the Federal Environment Agency, including bezafibrate, diclofenac, ibuprofen, antibiotics and X-ray contrast agents have been found several times in the water.

The fact is: more than 100,000 pharmaceuticals are in circulation worldwide and hard water is the secret cause of many, if not all, diseases that arise from poisons in the digestive tract. It contains a high dose of inorganic minerals that form new insoluble compounds with the most common oily and fatty substances that the body cannot utilize.

PLEASE SAVE THE WATER AND FISHES. STOP WATER POLLUTION AND INDISCRIMINATE DISPOSAL OF WASTE WATER OR SOLID WASTES.

Wikipedia: The Nworie River is a river that passes through Owerri and drains into the Otamiri River at Nekede. The length of the river from its source to its confluence is 9.2 km. The river is heavily polluted; in 2017 the local government issued warnings against using water from the river.[1][2]

References

1. "Danger looms in Imo over polluted Nworie River." *Vanguard News*. 2017-01-11. Retrieved 2018-06-21.
2. "Figure 2. Map of Nworie River". *ResearchGate*. Retrieved 2018-06-21.



Photo Courtesy Akeza.net

News Flash from Emmanuel: *“On December 22, I will present Greening Burundi Project and invite people to love, respect the Environment protection and Educate inhabitants to take the adequate measures for environment conservation for a show that will be broadcast on Radio Buja FM for one hour. So I’m special about this show and I’ll talk about the preservation of the environment. Journalists are interested in what I am doing.” Emmanuel is admiring local flowers called Granta Jaune.*

Part IV: “Greening Burundi” Tree Nursery Being Created by 24-Year-Old and His Team

(Part I ran in our November 2018 issue of Groundswell News, Part II ran in the December issue and Part III ran in the first part of January 2019. If you’d like to see those copies, please email Iona at gobackclub@pa.net.)

By Emmanuel Niyoyabikoze, Burundi

Latest Facebook Posts

November 25 at 1:10 PM ·

#YounginAction.

Happy with a state of advancement of my current project “Greening Burundi.”

My goal is to plant millions of fruit and protection trees in order to protect against climate change and hunger.

Some baby trees grow favorably and others are in the course of their growth, even though there are plenty of difficulties.

More than 40,000 trees are available in the nursery.

Your support will be our joy because the preservation of our dear planet is a duty of everyone.

I thank everyone who is helping me materially, morally, and financially in order to run well this project and make these baby

trees in good conditions.

December 11 at 3:51 PM ·

I am revolted by the desertification which in an alarming way affected the soil, thus curbing a sufficient agricultural production in my community. I decided to launch a project for the environment and named it “Greening Burundi.”

“Together for a Better Place, Protect our Dear Planet and Preserve our Health”

Contact Emmanuel at niyoyabikozeemmanuel@gmail.com.

ACTION YOU CAN TAKE

EMMANUEL NEEDS MONEY TO KEEP HIS DREAM OF GREENING BURUNDI GOING STRONG. PLEASE SEND A DONATION VIA WESTERN UNION TO EMMANUEL NIYOYABIKOZE IN BURUNDI OR SEND A CHECK TO THE GO-BACK CLUB (ADDRESS ON PAGE 2) AND IONA WILL GET IT TO HIM.



Photos Courtesy Greening Burundi

Emmanuel Niyoyabikoze studied human health and became a nurse. Now he’s studying Earth Health and Tree Health and putting all his time and energy into healing the planet, which in turn will heal the people. He is not currently working as a nurse but building a tree nursery instead.





iyakn-
seudoa-
ka@ma
com

Photos Courtesy Evrard Guei

Climate change education with all people. Evrard giving a presentation during the restitution of a training at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Ivory Coast Man Inspires Others While Teaching About Climate Change and Planting Trees

By Evrard Guei, Ivory Coast

Hi everyone,

I would like to share my story with you, if you agree.

To begin, let me tell you who is Evrard Guei and why did I leave studies for associations in life and where my commitment comes from.

My name is Evrard Guei. I am a young Ivoirian guy, from a four-children family. I am the first boy with two sisters and a little brother. I am known as “Evrard le Palmier” since Felix Houphouet Boigny University of Cocody.

My love for the community commitment began early since I was in college with the founding of the health club in modern Bangolo High School that today still exists.

Before any, I would like to talk about this health club.

After a report made in the high school (which every day knew a huge insalubrity), I took the initiative to provide boxes for each classroom and to organize some health days. It was a nice experience that really marked me and particularly in the club's longevity.

Oriented in medicine after the college at Nangui Abrogoua University, I took my book money to attend association meetings. This propelled my friends and I to



UNDER THE MANGO: Evrard's Facebook post with this photo: “Great is my joy after this activity with children under the mango tree.”

create our own association: MARIGO YOUNG AFRICA.

Indeed, after the military-political crisis that the Ivory Coast experienced, my friends and I decided to create our own structure to help the African youngness to believe in their potentiality, to undertake themselves and never rely on others.

Having initiated several integration projects, we were stopped by some people who

claimed to want to accompany us in the realization of our projects, but who were mainly trying to make money and steal our projects.

After the Marigo project failed, I engaged myself in coordination of Ivoirian students. I was the Social Affairs Officer of the National Executive Office. I participated in several national workshops and it is this

Inspiring continued on next page

Inspiring *continued from previous page*

function that really opened the doors of the associative life.

After the coordination of Ivory Coast students, I joined the youth parliament of Ivory Coast, with the position of national coordinator of the community of Cocody, in charge of the national mobilization.

Later, I campaigned with the national movement and platform.

All this great experience has allowed me today to create my own association that fights for the welfare of farmers, who fight against climate change: EARTH NEVER WORKS (LA TERRE NE TRAHIT JAMAIS) meaning the land never betrays. This title came from an observation because for young people, the work of the land is not profitable, the civil service no longer hires and so young people prefer to go to Europe, to die in the sea; also, parents were discouraged. It was necessary to create this movement.

After studying with farmer parents, I was saddened to see that many of them die poor, despite all the hard work they were doing. I started several professional trainings.

I traveled through several cocoa areas of my country and exchanged with farmers. I

also participated in several Food and Agriculture Organization high-level workshops.

With this commitment that is only growing every day, with this fight for a green world, I have undertaken several actions of tree planting, which today allowed me to have several other coordinations in other African countries such as Gabon, Madagascar, Guinea Conakry, which carry out several reforestation activities.

With climate change education as my priority, I teach children in many neighborhoods in my community to be eco-citizens.

Associations in life taught me a lot and I still have a lot of challenges to overcome but I'm working very hard and doing my best every day.

I invite everyone, any organization, anyone willing to help me to continue this fight for a better world. I need partners who share my enthusiasm and values for caring for the Earth.

Contact:

GUEI EVRARD

+22507807514

Email: evrardguei1@gmail.com

Facebook: evrard guei (le palmier)



Evrard held a tree-planting ceremony honoring different people and places. Here he is planting a tree with a sign reading, "UN ARBRE POUR LE CLIMATE, BRICE DU CROS"

Young People Work Hard to Raise Money for Orphans

By Chelsea Chuckie Chea, Liberia

(Part I) A few months ago, we all got together as a youth leader to make a change into our country. The initiative was a great one and I was very much happy to go in the street to shine shoes and wash cars for the orphans to have a good living place. The initiative was successful we raised money and renovated two orphanages.

This was an initiative we were carrying on as a group leader. The project was under Save an Orphan initiative. I just joined the initiative to shine shoes to make orphans smile.

Everything was used for the renovation of the orphanage.



(Part II) December 13, 2018

I had a wonderful time with my friends at the beach side yesterday. It was nice meeting with new friends. Everyone worked together as a team to see how best we get a clean place. In our quest to promote youth involvement in environmental

protection through beach cleanups in Liberia, our team of conscious young Liberians gathered together yesterday behind the mansion for the biggest youth-led Beach cleanup in Liberia.

In our world of today, human action on the beaches are costing the lives of marine

species and just a few people have been concerned about these species in Liberia, we're poised to change that narrative as young people by opposing the status.

We are going to give back to our communities through voluntarism and community service.

Earth Repair Project in Zimbabwe Fights Desertification with Tree Planting

By Bigboy Museumwa, Zimbabwe

REPAIR EARTH PROJECTS

Repair Earth Projects (REP) was started in April 2016 and mobilizes communities to curb environmental degradation through tree planting. Our mission is to raise tree seedlings and to plant and protect them in partnership with local communities. We also protect endangered species and ensure that living tree stumps, tree roots, and seeds are re-vegetated.

The REP founder, Bigboy Museumwa, was inspired by the works of the Permaculture co-founders (Bill Mollison and David Holmgren) to champion an ecological way of valuing trees; designing low carbon lifestyles and livelihoods to combat the rampant deforestation gripping Zimbabwe.

Drastic environmental degradation has reduced watershed and soil protection and also biodiversity. REP has so far donated more than 10,000 trees in pursuit of our goal of helping to restore the planet through educating communities to value the importance of trees in environmental conservation and in sustaining lives.

Deforestation leading to desertification is mainly caused by the headlong rush to grow tobacco, seen as the only source of foreign currency for upcoming farmers. This has endangered species of indigenous fruit trees (eg., Mizhanje) and non-fruit trees (eg. Musasa and Mupfuti).

We have already made noticeable progress and believe we are on the right track. Communities have given much needed support to the fruit and non-fruit trees we raised and provided them with. The project has great potential for growth, but we face financial constraints denying us the chance to grow to our projected level. So far, we



Photos by Bigboy Museumwa

(left) Tree planting in Harare North Constituency. (right) Tree planting at Hatcliffe Primary School

have donated trees to schools, orphanages, and old people's homes, colleges, councils, etc.

We invite about 15 volunteers when we have a tree planting event. I manage the tree nursery with my other day partners.

With support, in five years, we hope to have touched very many lives in different parts of the country on the importance of environmental conservation and the restoration of ecosystem functions. By then we hope to be fully established across the country and able to promote protection of wetlands and to re-green Zimbabwe.

We need to find partners who can help us curb the alarming desertification gripping Zimbabwe. We want to get our own land and fence it. In the communal areas,

we can get land for about \$1,500 for approximately five hectares, then fence it for trees conservation and nursery set up. Zimbabwe needs to be re-greened. People can make donations through Western Union.

Our contact details:

Repair Earth Projects
c/o Bigboy Museumwa
PO Box A306
Avondale
Harare
Zimbabwe

Email: bm4agreenplanet@gmail.com;
restoretheplanet@yahoo.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Repair-Earth-Projects-515644638946833/>

HOWARD ZINN (THE LATE, GREAT AUTHOR, ACTIVIST, AND FRIEND OF COMMON DREAMS) EXPLAINED THE PHENOMENON IN WORDS BETTER THAN WE EVER COULD: "TO BE HOPEFUL IN BAD TIMES IS NOT JUST FOOLISHLY ROMANTIC. IT IS BASED ON THE FACT THAT HUMAN HISTORY IS A HISTORY NOT ONLY OF CRUELTY BUT ALSO OF COMPASSION, SACRIFICE, COURAGE, KINDNESS."

"WHAT WE CHOOSE TO EMPHASIZE IN THIS COMPLEX HISTORY WILL DETERMINE OUR LIVES. IF WE SEE ONLY THE WORST, IT DESTROYS OUR CAPACITY TO DO SOMETHING. IF WE REMEMBER THOSE TIMES AND PLACES – AND THERE ARE SO MANY – WHERE PEOPLE HAVE BEHAVED MAGNIFICENTLY, THIS GIVES US THE ENERGY TO ACT, AND AT LEAST THE POSSIBILITY OF SEND-ING THIS SPINNING TOP OF A WORLD IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION."

Found at Common Dreams, <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/2229-to-be-hopeful-in-bad-times-is-not-just-foolishly>

World of Wonder



Digital Art Created for Groundswell News by Carson Walters, USA (with the following words)

“I’ve always found it vital to enjoy the simple, often overlooked pleasures in life – whether it means becoming one within the chanting of the spring breeze, to being completely encapsulated by the moon’s haunting, glowing judgment, in complete darkness.

“Realism in art has never been my specialty – let alone the fact that digital art on it’s own is a completely new field for me. With digital, there almost seems to be an infinite number of new things to look out for, that never seemed to be present at all with just traditional pencil and paper.

“I don’t claim to be a master artist, but you don’t have to be one to enjoy it. Art is a world all in its own, where you can let your mind truly soar beyond any limitations imaginable. Pick up the pen, pencil – you name it – and follow your heart.”

Orphans Need Food and Rent Money

By Ssengendo Yasin Signalaminat, Uganda

We thank our sister from USA who sent our kids some candies and books for the kids, so whoever is interested in sending a package, this is our mailing address, though it takes about four weeks to reach to Uganda.

SSENGENDO YASIN SIGNALAMINAT
P.O.BOX, 428
JINJA UGANDA
+256759273161

Thank you who ever donates to the needy. Faith without deeds is dead!

Some are orphans by one parent and others have no parents; they are total orphans. Others were street kids due to bad or mistreatment by parents! And end up on street.

Currently there are 19 girls and 17 boys ages 2 to 11 living in the Jinja Church Children's Home and Orphanage. Monthly rent is \$250 and feeding them costs \$400 a month.

Having a stable home for the children is one of our visions so that we end paying rent bills because it is very expensive for us to pay rent bills every month. Today morning I had to go and see the engineers in Jinja town to ask them what it can cost us to have a beautiful home for the children and they were so good because they told me what building we can have on one acre for both boys and girl.

ROOMS NEEDED

- 3 rooms for boys and each room will occupy six kids or boys
- 3 rooms for girls and each room will occupy six girls or kids
- 1 room to work as office where we shall keep our records for the organization
- 1 room to use it as kitchen
- 1 room as the store for the orphanage home and wall fence on the orphanage home for security reasons and to keep the children safe. The engineer told me he will just need a small labor fee of \$1,000 only to do the work but the immediate needs are for food and rent.

Thank you very much. May God bless you and other well-wishers.

ACTION YOU CAN TAKE

WAVE, MONEY TRANSFER, WORLD REMIT,
MOBILE WALLET OR MONEYGRAM
FIRST NAME: SSENGENDO
LAST NAME: YASIN SIGNALAMINAT
CITY: JINJA; COUNTRY: UGANDA
CONTACT:+256778265525
EMAIL: SSENGENDO80YASIN80@GMAIL.COM



Photos by Ssengendo Yasin Signalaminat

Children at Jinja Church Children's Home and Orphanage enjoy gifts received from a donor in the U.S. We are really starving. If there are good people with good hearts, let them atleast help us with some few donations for feeding us! Feeding and rent are our major problem "If we get a serious friend with a giving heart, \$60 can support each kid each month – education, feeding, medical, and clothing – as we wait for big miracles."



By an Orphan for Orphans: Messages from a Liberian Orphan Advocate

By Ahmed A. Paasewe, Liberia
Facebook Posts

Ahmed A. Paasewe is feeling excited with Amos Sawboh and 24 others at African Methodist Episcopal University. December 10 at 8:53 AM Monrovia, Liberia

He did capture me unknowingly when I kept smiling. What a compromising smile that I continue to maintain even when I'm sad. Anyway, I chose not to be sad anymore because I've been sad and tasted the worst pain that comes to humanity.

What is a smile? An emotional feeling that exists in me and continues to keep me handsome before both my enemies and lovers. Why should I stop smiling and be sad? I need not to be acrimonious and gloomy because sadness fetches away smile and makes human ugly, it destroys human hope; it leads human to uncertain opportunity; it kills human potentials; it reduces human thought about things and it makes humans feel powerless and worthless.

#NOESummit18

#TeamOrphansConcern

#Concentrated_Mind

December 14 at 6:49 AM

#NOESummit18

It was an honor to serve as one of the Children Panelists on the National Orphans Empowerment Summit.

I felt stratified, satisfied, and dignified discussing some trending issues confronting the Orphans Communities. Representing Ebola-Orphans, I did articulate on how E-Orphans have been forgotten so soon. Yes! Ebola is over, but Ebola victims are still existing. Children affected by the deadly epidemic are inadequately supported and soon forgotten. My questions yesterday were: Did Ebola end without victimizing children? Where are those programs designed during the Ebola Crisis to further aid children affected? Answers: Children were victimized, and programs were designed but those programs didn't achieve. And today, children affected are street vendors, money-making machines, and harmful species. There's a need to reformulate programs to effectively aid children victimized by death to reach their full potentials.

Again, I did remind the orphan audiences about been a conscious minded and determine person in order to reach their



full potentials through my story. It wasn't magic others play to become who they are. They knew who they wanted to be and worked arduously. There were obstacles, and discrimination but others assaulted with courageous and determine mind. So,

they too can do the same.

Thanks to Team Orphan Orphan Concern for the platform.

#NOESummit Panelist

#Team Orphans Concern

#Making Orphans Smile



Photo by Ken

Omoto Abraham Owuor is in the white t-shirt posing with volunteers from Germany who come to learn and share with K5. The children are Abraham's friends' children who love learning farm techniques.

Permaculture Group in Kenya Teaches Many People Many Things = No Hunger Here!

By Omoto Abraham Owuor, Kenya

I am Abraham from Kenya majorly from Homabay county at a village called Kawiya in central Kochia location. Nice to meet you all in this wonderful organization. I am a permaculture teacher and designer at our permaculture Farming project called K5 Village Project. Below is information about our project. We are a group of young farmers who came together and formed a farming group that deals with farming and agricultural program activities in Kawiya village and work to end poverty in our community.

This is a Permaculture and Organic farming Project in Kenya, Homa Bay with a vision to educate and empower the rural communities to escape extreme poverty. We envision a community where young and adult people who are willing to work, get trained, and take a little risk can support themselves and their families in

farming through shared information and new farming technology/ innovation on permaculture and organic farming in order to facilitate an open source approach to decentralized permaculture education.

Our page exists for members to share information with each other about permaculture and organic farming concepts, strategies, and tactics, to help empower people who lack the resources and access to information on permaculture and organic farming and make it easier for people to learn more.

If you are new and would like to learn more about permaculture and organic farming, please check out https://www.facebook.com/pg/abrahamowuor/about/?ref=page_internal.

We are focusing to support practices and policies that will sustain young and adult, independent and prosperous farmers, now and in the future, through Re-Connecting with the Earth-care and People-care

through gardening and knowledge and experiences that lead to a more Holistic, sustainable Life and escape from extreme poverty !!

We also welcome the following Volunteering Programs Opportunity!!

- Environmental program
- Creating project website
- Social work
- Bee keeping
- Poultry farming
- Fish farming
- Animal husbandry
- Drawing and designing
- Organic farming

Teaching of farming skills and technology

- Farmer-to-Farmer Training
- Sustainable Farming Practices

We are committed to:

- Treating all people with respect, dignity,

K5 continued on next page

K5 continued from previous page



Photo by Abraham

This is the banana guild with water channel for holding water and compost to help in growing bananas around the top part.

and fairness

Taking both personal and group responsibility including:

- Being accountable for our actions
- Measuring and sharing our contribution to the community
- Making and keeping commitments
- Demonstrating openness, honesty, clarity, good faith and integrity in all our communications and encouraging shared leadership in our community.
- A participatory decision-making and conflict resolution process

We are training farmers how to make the swale. We have four days to train in different villages more than 70 farmers will have the knowledge.

A banana circle is a classic permaculture technique. That's because it's a perfect partnership between edible plants and waste. It's a way for you to compost food scraps and wastewater like you would in a regular compost pile while simultaneously creating an ideal growing environment for bananas and other plants.

To plant a banana circle in your garden, simply dig a circular pit about two meters wide and one meter deep. Take the soil you've removed and mound it around the pit. This is where you will plant your bananas, and the pit is where you'll create a new compost pile.

If you still need reasons as to why you must include bananas in your diet, here are incredible benefits of eating banana:

- High Fibre Content. Banana is loaded with fibre, both soluble and insoluble.
- Heart Health

- Ease in Digestion
- Powerhouse of Nutrients
- High Source of Potassium
- Blood Pressure
- Helps Fight Anemia

To make a PayPal donation, use omitoabrahamowuor@gmail.com. Thank you.



Photo Courtesy Bidi Bidi Refugees Settlement

We are making banana guild in a refugee camp in Uganda in June this year. Abraham volunteered to help teach the refugees. The woman bending over is Shafira, the other women are Rafida and Helen. The man with the spade is Moses and the one with the jembe is Victor. This took place in Bidi Bidi Refugees Settlement scheme in northern Uganda, Yumbe district.



Photo by Naftaly

Abraham is helping Charles in blue, Tina, and Kevin plant kales inside the K5 village project farm.



Photo by Mummy

Pendo and Unice are harvesting bananas and pawpaws with Abraham.



Photo by Irine

Abraham is teaching farmers farm techniques.



Photo by Lavin

Community farmers making a swale using an A-frame. A swale is a ditch and mound, or berm and basin, on contour. Contour being the key here as swales, unlike diversion drains, are meant to infiltrate water for irrigation, not move them around such as what a canal or water channel would do.



Photo by Lavin

We are filling the keyhole garden with organic waste and adding water. The women are Sufuria and Jane. Abraham and Omondi are carrying water.

Introducing a Unique African College Student Whose Dream is to be a Humanitarian

By Jennis Rue, Liberia

My name Jennis Rue. I was born September 1, 1997 in Cote d'Ivoire in the capital city Abidjan. My parents are Liberian. I have three siblings. My mother's name is Wachen Boley and my father's name is Moses Rue. It was during the Liberian civil war when my parents escaped and went to Cote d' Ivoire; during that time I was born. From there we became refugees and then I also started my elementary education.

In 2010 during the misunderstanding between the two presidents after the election, it was also looking like war, so we had to move to Ghana on another refugee camp called the Buduburam camp. That's the place we started a new life again.

When we just moved to Ghana, my parents were not having anything to pay for our tuition, so we had to stop school for one year. During that time, I made use of the Buduburam refugee catering training school. I was the smallest in that school. I was 13 years. Each time I was going to school people use to ask me why I am not in school? And why I am attending training school? I used to tell them that my parents were not having money to pay my tuition and also as a female, it is good to learn training to help yourself tomorrow in life.

After that God blessed my parents, they were able to pay my tuition again for me to continue my education. My parents decided for us to move back home. In 2012, we came back to our mother land Liberia. And started a new life again. When we just came, we were living with my mother's small sister. From there God blessed my parents with money; they were able to move on their own.



Photo by World Bank employee

Jennis Rue at the World Bank Youth Summit in the conference room of the German embassy.

Time came it was not easy; my mother had to go to the village to sell flour, sugar, cornmeal by the cup and oatmeal by the pack just for us to survive. My mother is not really an educated woman, that is why she really wanted us to learn.

Time came God blessed my mom, she was able to send money for us to continue our education again.

In 2013, we started attending St. Michael Catholic high school. My mother only used to pay for my tuition but she never used to give me recess. What really used to help me

for my transportation and recess was the training I learned in Ghana. Sometimes I use to come from school and sell my cakes just to get my transportation for the next day.

In 2016 by the grace of God, I graduated from the St. Michael high school. After that my prayer was, "God please direct me to my destiny." My dream was to work at the World Bank and work with other volunteer youth organizations and motivate unprivileged children and to be a humanitarian. And that can only happen if I get the opportunity to enter in university. So, my prayer was, "God please help me with scholarship or please help me to

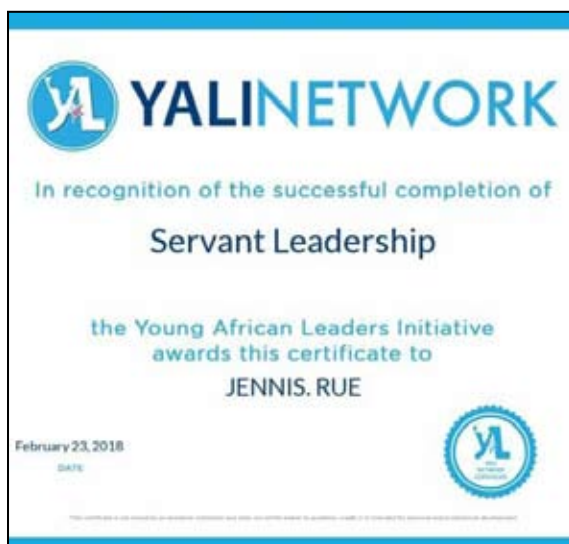
get sponsor or please Help my mom for her to get money and pay for my university tuition." That was my biggest prayer. I always used to ask God for that opportunity every day.

By the grace of God, in 2017 God blessed my mom with money to pay for my first semester tuition in Stella Maris Polytechnic University with a major in Accounting. In April 2018, the first organization I joined was the Foundation Christian Health Relief services. It sent me to the U.S embassy for four months training in Excel and PowerPoint. From there I started working with other youth volunteer organizations. In 2018 November I joined the Africa Youth Organization.

In December 2018, I was invited at the German embassy for the World Bank Youth Summit discussing on unleashing human capital. In December I was also invited as a motivational speaker for underprivileged children.

I also bake cakes to sell. I can get money from there and pay for my tuition. All that I can pray to God for is for me to get money and buy my own oven and other baking materials, because I can use wood to bake.

Actually this month is really wonderful. Even with some challenges, I still make my way to work to my dream.





Photos by Paul Odiwuor Ogola

Farmer Felix Ondoro poses with his wife Diana Onwuor Ondoro and their children; the baby is Luka Modrich and the girl on the left is Trecy Achieng. This picture was taken when Paul did a follow-up visit to the family's farm.

People in Rural Communities in Kenya Learn Permaculture as a Way to Feed Themselves

I am Paul Odiwuor Ogola, a permaculture teacher and designer. My mission is to bring permaculture knowledge and technology to my community. We are an approved Registered Community Base Organization permaculture farming group with the Government of Kenya facing climate changes, low investment, and relative isolation. We are situated in the south western part of Kawiya village located in the northern part of Korayo. sub location Kochia, central location Rangwe district in Homabay County, Kenya.

The village is 10 square kilometers with a population of 1,800 people, one public school, three private schools, and 15 churches. The primary occupations in the village are sustenance farming, carpentry, blacksmithing, tailoring, and small businesses which are under Lake Victoria ecosystem environmental, with a vision to educate and empower the rural community to escape extreme poverty.

We envision a community where young and adult people who are willing to work, get trained and take a little risk so they can support themselves and their families in farming through sharing the information and new farming technology/innovation on Permaculture and Organic farming to facilitate an open source approach to



Women in the permaculture community carry firewood.

decentralized Permaculture education.

We are focusing to support practice and policies that will sustain young and adult, independent and prosperous farmers, now and in the future through re-connecting with the Earth-care and people-care through gardening, knowledge, and experiences that lead to a more holistic, sustainable life and escape from extreme poverty.

We are committed to:

1. Treating all people with respect, dignity, and fairness/

2. Taking both personal and group responsibility including:

- Being accountable for our actions,
- Measuring and sharing our contribution to the community, and
- Making and keeping commitments.

3. Demonstrating openness, honesty, clarity, good faith, and integrity in all our communications and encouraging shared leadership in our community.

4. A participatory decision-making and

Permaculture continued on next page

Permaculture *continued from previous page*



Many hands create a mandala using brick. Then the people will plant different crops, mostly herbs at the center while different veggies will be planted in the outer spaces.

conflict resolution process. !!

Lastly, am calling for the consideration to partner with you in our project to help in its extension support to the community. We are looking forward to hearing more from you.

Contact:

Paul Odiwuor Ogola
Project Director.
<https://www.facebook.com/permoafrica/>
Contact Paul at permoafrica@gmail.com
or +254718081711.

After a long period of time doing observation and interaction about how the Kales can be productive in a sack garden, as seen above, Paul decided to add more Kales in the remaining sack garden.



Photo by Leon Simweragi

This photo was taken by Leon Simweragi in 2013 when he was monitoring children's issues in displaced camps in the Masisi territory in North Kivu, in DR Congo. There were many camps near Goma City.

33-Year-Old Father Helps Other Children

By Leon Simweragi, DC Congo

Let me say that I'm used to French; English is my third language of communication, so there are many mistakes and misunderstanding.

One comment: Our website (www.ajvdc.org) is under construction by a friend who is in the UK, who has accepted to design and host it, there are many things to update, we need to add updated activities, programs, and new partnerships we are having. It depends on the time our friend will give to update. So a grant that will help to improve our website is welcomed.

The Go-Back Club philosophy: living simple, oh yes there is a big difference of American and African living. I don't know much about American habits, but in our region we may say that we are living simple, depending on natural food, but people are imitating and want to copy lifestyles from western. Living simple will help to protect our nature, produce, and eating local, and avoid CO₂ emissions, I don't have many comments on this philosophy.

I mean I'm still in this stage of life, in our Country DR Congo, the law recognizes every one from 14 to 35 years old, 75% of people of DR Congo are youth, many of them are disadvantaged youth, unemployed, ex-rebels, but some are trying in social businesses, and get engaged in politics and social movements like LUCHA... to try to change things.

I'm now 33 years old. I'm not so old, but I'm married to my beautiful wife, Roberta, and we have already one lovely baby boy, Robert.

Association de Jeunes Visionnaires pour le Développement du Congo (AJVDC)

I started the AJVDC group in 2010 and registered it in 2011. We have started initiatives of peacebuilding in Goma and around Goma in IDPs camps (Interiors Displaces Peoples) and in other villages in Masisi rural territory of North Kivu province Eastern of Congo.

Goma City of Peace: These are our efforts to raise youth and community awareness on how we can be peace builders in

our region, As you may know our country, Democratic Republic of Congo, is facing a very long unstable situation, wars, and conflicts. Many young people have been enrolled in negative armed groups, that are fighting day and night in many regions of the country. People are living many negative consequences of this situation: several displacing of people, more than 8 million people already killed since 1998 up now, many cases of rapes of women and girls, poverty, diseases, and climate change crisis.

I have been concerned and lost many family members, friends; I have even fled and lived as refugee in Uganda for three years. After that I had come back and try to work for change, to work for peace and development. I have launched a big program of promoting youth civic engagement in peacebuilding, sustainable development, and protection of environment and climate change solutions. We have not succeeded to get necessary supports. We are still calling for supports (grants and partner-

Leon continued on next page



Photos <http://www.internationalcitiesofpeace.org/cities-listing/goma-d-r-congo/>

International Cities of Peace welcomes Leon Simweragi and his colleagues who have created an initiative for Goma, D.R. Congo: City of Peace. The group has formed the Association de Jeunes Visionnaires pour le Développement du Congo (AJVDC). As Leon says, "We believe that youth can play a great role for peace and development in our country DR Congo. Nowadays youth are playing double role, as victims and actors, in the disasters if war and conflicts in Eastern Congo." Leon is the man wearing a blue striped shirt sitting behind the man in

Leon continued from previous page ships) to develop this program that aims to reintegrate more than 1,000 disadvantaged youth. I loved so much to join this International Cities of Peace, I hope Mr. Fred, who is the CEO can tell you more. <http://www.internationalcitiesofpeace.org/cities-listing/goma-d-r-congo/>

I'm trying to explain the very negative impacts of Climate Change in communities livelihood and in sustainable development of our country.

We have realized that Climate Change crisis are affecting all domains of lives of our communities, and it is raising conflicts (lands conflicts, food crises, education, health) so we have to join our efforts to fight against climate change.

CONGO GREEN BRIGADE aims to build community resilience and adaptation capacity to face Climate Change. We are developing Concept Note (project idea) and hope to raise funds and investments focused in our wounded region, Lake Kivu Basin of 12,061 Km², with more than 5 million people. The project aims to Build Resilience and Adaptation Capacities to face Climate Change of vulnerable rural Communities, to improve the most substantial activity of people (Agriculture,

Aquaculture, Livestock), improve the source of energy, and to Restore the vast degraded land through agroforestry (planting at least 4 million trees by 2021, with more than 500 youth ex-combatants and women farmers). We call for Green Climate Funds and to other grants or funders for support to implement this project.

Umununtu Movement Project was founded by Mr. Fabio and reached out via TEAM 54 Project network. We are representing the DR Congo branch; we aim to develop projects that will improve communities' lives and to protect the environment and promote climate change solutions.

We are intervening in some main domains: Helping communities to produce organic food, improving water access, and promoting Climate Actions such as planting trees. We have started pursuing our goal through our GREEN EDUCATION Program which consists of installing Garden Schools, Tree Nurseries, and Livestock (rabbits, chickens, and porcs) at schools and universities. We are talking to 100 Schools with 200,000 students now, and see how we will work together. Students will learn how to produce food and help to generate seedlings to surrounding

communities. We are also developing some projects to improve communities' access to Clean water.

I'm still very concerned of crisis that our country and region is facing – poverty, hunger, youth unemployment– and I need to act for the change.

We request for your support to get good contacts, grants, and any other supports.

Leon Simweragi
Umuntu Movement DR Congo &
Congo Green Brigade &
AJVDC Youth peace group
Goma – DR Congo



Photo by Leon's wife, Roberta
Leon Simweragi and his son, Robert

PERMACULTURE FARM IN NEPAL HOSTS GUESTS FOR WORK, YOGA, FUN, AND R&R

By Jeeban Bastola, Nepal (from <http://amritkunja.com/about-amrit-kunja-organic-permaculture-farm/>)

Amrit Kunja Organic Permaculture Farm (AKOPF) is situated on the hillside overlooking the picturesque Shyankodi valley and the majestic Begnas Tal lake, Amrit Kunja is certainly not your ordinary, run-of-the-mill farm. The farm was started 30 years ago by Surya Bastola. Since our humble beginnings, the farm has now become a thriving oasis of plant and animal life.

The farm boasts an extremely rich variety of plants. Overall, there are more than 500 species of plants that have been deemed useful to humans and/or animals. These are mostly made up of vegetables, fruit trees, and medicinal plants. Everything at the farm is 100% organically grown, without the use of any harmful pesticides, fertilizers, fungicides etc.

At Amrit Kunja, all the fruits and vegetables that are eaten on a daily basis come straight from our very own soil (besides the odd addition from neighbors' farms). We also receive fresh milk daily from our two family buffaloes. On special occasions, we may catch some fish from one of our ponds. The diversity and richness of plant life here at Amrit Kunja makes our home the perfect abode for many beautiful birds, butterflies, insects, and other animals (both small and large). Amrit Kunja harvests many different fruits, vegetables, herbs, and spices; but our most prized crop is that of Piper Nigrum (i.e. Black Pepper).

We are the first Piper Nigrum farm in the Western Development Region of Nepal. Besides being a highly renowned and favorite spice used for cooking around the world, good-quality, organic Piper Nigrum has a multitude of medicinal benefits (see website section on Piper Nigrum). It is also the perfect permaculture crop, as it does not require its own area to grow. Instead, you will witness hundreds of Piper Nigrums climbing their way up the variety of trees at Amrit Kunja, in perfect harmony.

Although Amrit Kunja is first and foremost a fully functioning and producing organic farm, we are also so much more than that. We like to see ourselves as a center for growth, personal development (mental, physical, and spiritual), learning, sharing and experiencing a new way of life.

One of the unique aspects to Amrit Kunja is that we have managed to combine traditional Nepalese farming methods and knowledge with new and experimental



All photos taken by Jeeban Bastola at Amrit Kunja Organic Permaculture Farm. Jeeban Bastola (in the maroon sweatshirt) poses with his son, Jibis, and guests.

approaches. As such, you have the opportunity to learn from the ancient expertise that exists, as well as freely contribute with any ideas you have. We have maintained our authenticity as a family owned and run farm. We are as down-to-earth and genuine as you can get, as well as being innovative and forward-thinking. Life at Amrit Kunja is beautifully simple. There are certainly no luxurious or expensive facilities, but our family and the many other wonderful people that call this place home prefer it that way."

By Trevor Falkenhagen, Canada

I would like to share my story about my most gracious hosts, Jeeban and Bishnu Bastola at the lovely Amrit Kunja Organic Permaculture Farm (AKOPF) near Begnas Tal, 20 minutes from Pokhara in Nepal.

When I first arrived, I was greeted with such warmth and immediately felt like part of the family. I have stayed with them on and off for just over one month while I go trekking and make trips to Lakeside. I was fortunate to take part in the Tihar festivities and even made the two-day walk to Sikles from the farm's front door, a must see for anyone who will come visit.

While on the farm there is always something to do, whether it's feeding the goats and water buffalo or watering the plants. I've watched and learned as Amma cooks the most amazing and delicious Nepali meals.

I've helped clear land and prepare the soil for planting of garlic, cauliflower, broccoli, and spinach. We've harvested many different kinds of beans and legumes. AKOPF even has six bee hives, including a traditional one where the bees make their



Jeeban Bastola and his son, Jibis

Nepal continued on next page



Top left: Begnas Lake view from Amritkunja Farm

Top right: Begnas Lake and Rupa Lake view

Middle left: Boating on Begnas Lake

Middle right: Working time with agrovolunteer Estel Coloma from Spain harvesting pineapples

Bottom left: Jeeban and guest digging and making the land for vegetable planting

Bottom right: Piper nigrum on Jeeban Bastola's host hand



Nepal *continued from previous page*

own honeycombs just like in the wild.

I will always remember the time I got to spend at AKOPF; I learned so much about Nepali culture first hand and staying at the farm has been a humbling experience. I highly recommend anyone visiting Nepal to stay with Jeeban and his family, I hope to return in the years to come.

Contact Information

Farm owner: Jeeban Bastola

Farm name: Amrit Kunja Organic Permaculture Farm

Address: province no 4 , kaski district, Pokhara metropolitan -28, Shynakhudi.

Email: anjanjb@gmail.com

Website: amritkunja.com

Phone:+977-9825113728,9846619381

Plan a Working Vacation Today in an Earth-Respecting Community in Africa



Photo by Matthew Patricks

Volunteers at Matlawie Ecological Regenerative Center in Ghana helped build and decorate this tipi made of felt.

Matlawie Ecological Regenerative Center

Apply to Volunteer

Matthew A. Onyeanula Patricks is the CEO/Founder of Matlawie Ecological Regenerative Center. He is a certified Agro-Ecologist, Permaculturist, Slow-foodist, Climate Change Activist, Eco-Designer, Humanitarian, Peace Advocate, Creative Artist, Wellness Coach, Sportsman, Wisdom Teacher, Tipi builder, Earth Home builder, and a Missioner.

VISION

Our vision is for humans, animals, fruits, vegetables, etc. to peacefully and happily coexist in our Ecological Center (Community), creating an example of regenerative/sustainable agriculture and sustainable living in Have region, thereby making them gain access to their basic needs such as education, land, capital, tools, etc. A reshaped society/community where the love of caring for the people prevails, respect

for the Earth is well embraced, and sharing fairly the surplus of produce is encouraged and taken as a watchword. Constantly conscious of improving and maintaining well-balanced, functioning, and preserved ecosystems – the climate, which is connected to our general health and well-being.

MISSION

Teach, empower, and promote peace and culture, regenerative/sustainable agriculture, community development through the use of regenerative/ecological – natural systems approach. We have been able to address problems faced by poor inhabitants – farmers, etc., model patterns for organizations, institutions, industries, and agricultural firms, etc. We are steadfast and always on the move, creating and providing significant solutions and thereby taking action against climate change.

Volunteer Activities: Agriculture work, arts, sports, women's empowerment, animal care, conservation work, teaching, **Earth Works:** Digging, weeding (clearing), site development/designing, eco-buildings (natural sustainable buildings) for base camps and eco-stay, preparing the soil, planting, organic production of vegetables: mulching and helping in maintaining and harvesting/collecting, help create new plant nursery and then transplanting to the field once the plants are ready, also feeding farm animals, etc.

Amenities: Nice accommodations with private and shared rooms, vegetarian food. 14-day stay minimum.

Contact Matthew at +233 54 582 4003, m.me/matlawieecologicalregenerativecenter, matlawie@gmail.com, or <https://www.givingway.com/organization/matthew-patricks>

So...true heart...my love for you
will fill the Universe.



By Darren Hey

Ho there, people of the Earth!
I have listened, and heard the Earth cry out.
Not because she needs us...she is a powerful enough being to look after herself. She cries out as a lover, who wants to be seen, to be heard, to be touched with devotion; to be shown respect for her sacrifices. She cries out for your sacred reconnection as her children, and stewards of her lands, sky, and seas.

The Earth is your home.
Her flesh is your flesh, her life is your Life.
Your allegiance should not be to artificial

and chemical constructs that twist, poison, and derange Life expression.

As you treat your environment, so you treat your own body...as you treat your own body, so you treat your environment. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree...Life reflects to us the truth always...it's not hard for us to see the lack of self-respect and reverence for our Life here.

We have one body...we have one Earth. You would think we knew how to care for them? Reconnect with Nature through the feedback in your body...and reconnect with your body through sense contact with the natural; and remember the Earth is your greater home, not just the concrete slab upon which you make your bed at night.

So land here, both feet on the ground! Your mind may be in the stars, but your body is of the Earth.

You are here now...were you not here before? Can you be certain you're not returning again? So, whether you know it...or believe it...let's make the Earth a home we all want to return to...and if you don't...then make it a place of safety and prosperity for all who follow...just in case it is you.

#RegenearthProject
#NaturalLawHealsAll
#EarthCarePeopleCareSelfCare
#RegenerateEarth #RegenerateRelationship
#RegenerateBody
#PermacultureWithSoul



Flower photos by Fran Staret, Pennsylvania USA



Remember your dreams.



Messages from Our Friends



Climate change is now affecting every country on every continent. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives, costing people, communities, and countries dearly today and even more tomorrow. Weather patterns are changing, sea levels are rising, weather events are becoming more extreme and greenhouse gas emissions are now at their highest levels in history. Without action, the world's average surface temperature is likely to surpass 3 degrees centigrade this century. The poorest and most vulnerable people are being affected the most.

Affordable, scalable solutions are now available to enable countries to leapfrog to cleaner, more resilient economies. The pace of change is quickening as more people are turning to renewable energy and a range of other measures that will reduce emissions and increase adaptation efforts. Climate change, however, is a global challenge that does not respect national borders. It is an issue that requires solutions that need to be coordinated at the international level to help developing countries move toward a low-carbon economy.

To strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, countries adopted the Paris Agreement at the COP21 in Paris, which went into force in November of 2016. In the agreement, all countries agreed to work to limit global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees centigrade. As of April 2018, 175 parties had ratified the Paris Agreement and 10 developing countries had submitted their first iteration of their national adaptation plans for responding to climate change.

Roberto Santi, Liberia

We need to open source all of our sustainable technologies and information!!
IMMEDIATELY

I'm so sick of going to climate conferences, presentations, or events and am consistently interrupted from broadcasting the event through Facebook live. This would allow my international Facebook friends network [who are also in the same field] to attain this information coming

from accredited professionals in a first-world country. The UCSC staff stopped me from broadcasting the Climate Change Conference a few months ago because it was supposedly intellectual property.

Paul Hawken just told bookshop Santa Cruz to stop me from broadcasting. Paul said his presentation is his selling point.

It's frustrating. He and others are trying to profit off this crucial information rather than releasing it for free. He would rather profit from people showing up at his book signing events rather than warning the masses about climate change through social media.

There were over 100 people at his event. It was full to capacity and many people had nowhere to sit or hardly anywhere to stand. Paul's stance on this no-video [all cell phones off] rule he has imposed is hypocritical and isn't very eco, people driving their vehicles from all over the region just to show up for an hour, listen to his speech, get a book signed, and leave right after. Paul profiting off climate change by trying to sell this book and get more people to attend his future events is no different than the oil industries profiting off fossil fuels.

This is just my personal opinion and insight of the situation. It doesn't mean that I'm always right.

Alekz Londos, California, USA (Page 17 Issue #46A)

Thanks Iona. Just bought a bunch of metal straws for stocking stuffers and made several donations to environmental causes and to a project for women in a small village in Ethiopia. We all need to pitch in.

Thanks for all you do every day 24/7!
"G" **AKA Dylan**, Pennsylvania USA

Thank you for keeping us posted.
Dalmas Tiampati, Kenya

I pretty hope you are doing very good. Thank you so much for the update and your kind hearted. May you receive strength and ability to do more.
Maxwell Nana Amankwah, Ghana-Cape Coast

WOW. You have an amazing collection of stories. Have you ever considered a simple website or a blog. The various stories on different parts of the story is unique in my limited experience. Kudos to you.

Michael Josefowicz, Canada

I'm glad you are ok now and thanks for letting us your friends know about what happened to you.

My thoughts and prayers are with you.

Please give my love to John.

Udeme Udoaka, Nigeria

It is indeed a blessing to be your friend and I can't thank you enough for featuring me once again. What makes it even more special is the effort you have put into supporting my fundraising, especially in this season of giving and caring.

You make the world a better place for everyone with noble intent and vision. I am very thankful for the opportunity to contribute to your incredible newspaper in the future.

Raj Phukan, India (page 14, Issue #46A)

Good morning dear Iona Conner. I see your mail but I'm very happy to read it and see the opportunity. I'm very interest by tree planting and want to have the chance to do it. Now how to have money to do it??

Thanks, dear

Abdoulaye Congo, Burkino Faso

I admire your work Aunt. You search, type, and post...all the work, and you do it everyday.

Prince Timmy, Nigeria

Sorry to hear about your scary health alert. Glad you're OK. We can't afford to lose you or John!

Very nice January newspaper. It's so professional, important, and the song so real - about your dear Mother!

Tyla Matteson, Virginia USA

(**Note from the Editor:** Other than my sister, Tyla is the only other person on my email list to have known my mother, as we grew up on the same street and played together as children.)

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Thanks, Iona. It's wonderful to see my article among so many other inspiring and engaging stories!

Jeremy Lent (page 20, Issue #46A)



We are wasting our time trying to fight global warming while living in a market economy that does not respect life in the name of jobs and wealth and ignores 80% of the world population with no jobs or hope to have a decent life, including all the creatures that have already gone because of our fault. Political boundaries and money issues become meaningless in a dying planet.

Only united will we be able to solve all these problems and have a chance to prolong life. Human activity must be focused on learning the science of Earth, protecting and restoring the ecosystems 100%. Mother Earth is wiser than humans in ruling the world. The science of Earth will grow more than ever along with our creativity. There's no way out, but a new model of civilization, the emergency is worth the change.

Carmen Arzate Vernis, Mexico

Hi to my friends.

Let me write this email about my achievement during this year. Without your support I shouldn't achieve even one of my targets:

- Registration company
- Good relationships
- Good connections

Things are many and I'm not able to list all of them.

Thank you so much for your support and may God Help you all.

Wishing you in anticipation. Happy Merry Xmas and New Year.

Yours,

Clement Musonda, Zambia (solar cookers)

With this little message, I wanted to thank everyone for thinking about my birthday.

It was with great joy that I discovered messages from all over the world on my birthday.

24 years is not nothing, and it is very moving to know that I'm not alone.

I was overwhelmed, filled with joy, and became very happy to have a mass of people from all over the world wishing me a happy birthday, blessings, victory, good health, success in my future life and my current activities.

I thank all who have expressed their wish to me and it is very great.

As being an actor in setting our world better, I will increase my efforts to beat and arrive at this destiny or wish that I don't

hesitate to cross.

I would like to see a success in the Greening Burundi project and other actions running in the community.

I beg you to continue to pray for me and support for this commitment decided and viewed to reach. I want that my dream which is to make our world a better place will become true.

<<Tomorrow begins today>>

"Together for a better world"

Emmanuel Niyoyabikoze, Burundi

(Note from the Editor: All this time I thought Emmanuel was already 24 and so my headlines stated that. I'm pleasantly shocked to learn that he accomplished all that he has accomplished already by the age of 23!)

Sent from Good morning!

Good evening!

Good afternoon!

Good night!

Honourable and comrades.

So we are holding in our shoulders big and huge responsibility toward of this state because we are representing most of categories in our community so for that reason we supposed to facing this challenges together in orders to be Example for the next generations so let our successful talk and let our accomplish talk instead of us and let our development and progress make huge sound to let others listen to those greatest generation.

"BN NEW GENERATION hope "

Adam Sigar, Uganda

Submitted by **Tony Jackson, Lagos, Nigeria**

<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/1015959---if-you-fail-never-give-up-because-f-a-i-l-means>

