

# The Ridge Runner

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## Strength in CommUnity

By Kate Reidel

There is often a kind of admiration associated with intentional communities. The outside world sees the wonderful work being done, and the progress toward sustainability. Certainly, our social media image looks pretty, as we show only the very best parts of us. Here at Enright Ridge, the reality is that our intertwined lives and passions can be complicated and messy. Similarly, the residents of most unintentional communities connect by sharing only the best of themselves, keeping the messy, complicated parts hidden behind the walls of their homes.

“many of us moved here because we want to live closely with others and to share our lives with a group of people with similar values.”

However, many of us moved here because we want to live closely with others and to share our lives with a group of people with similar values. Moving from a mainstream neighborhood to an intentional community can be a difficult transition. Even someone who shares the values and goals with those held by the community can have trouble. The interpersonal difficulties people experience in community are the result of the lack of three things: the lack of conflict resolution and communication skills, a lack of trust in others (and a lack of time spent building trust), and, a lack of commitment to staying even when things get rough. *(Continued on page 03)*

## Membership on the Ridge

By Jamie Gaines

I nervously checked the time on the old coffee maker as I waited for the first ecovillagers to arrive to the first all-member meeting of 2016. The meeting was scheduled to start at 4pm and it was already 3:55! Was it true that membership participation was non-existent in the ecovillage? I paused, took a deep breath and remembered, “This is not my old life, one of deadlines and unnecessary urgency, but one of patience and intentionality.” Besides, most people lived within a quarter mile, they’d surely arrive soon. Fifteen minutes later the room was packed. Not only was membership alive and well here at Enright Ridge, but with the collective visioning and work that was done, it will soon be thriving!

More than 30 residents attended the meeting, where we did small-group brainstorming, briefly went over the opportunities for involvement, and had a gallery walk to get more in-depth information about committee work. *(Continued on page 04)*



Ecovillage members & potential members participating in small-group brainstorming

# Living in Nature

By Jim Schenk

The other day I went down to the creek behind our house with my grandson, Jonah. It had rained the day before, so the hill going down was slippery, and the water in the creek was flowing. I find it fascinating to watch children playing in water and soil. They become totally entranced. And while their attention may be short in some areas, when it comes to water and soil they can spend hours playing. We took sticks and sailed our “boats” down the creek. They frequently got caught, and without frustration he would throw another “boat” in and watch it sail down the creek and over waterfalls.

I have to admit, I’m not as agile as my six-year-old grandson. He would scurry ahead of talking, splashing, and jumping from rock to rock. He had boots that kept his feet dry, but slipping and sliding did not keep his clothes clean.

Although I’m not as nimble as him, I haven’t lost my fascination for ambling down creeks. At times I would stop and soak in my surroundings. Standing in the creek with hills on both sides, trees swaying in the breeze, and a bit of new life peaking up through last year’s fallen leaves I experienced a real sense of awe. All I could think of is what an honor it is to be a human being. We are from the Earth and as such, have the privilege of being “the Earth conscious of Itself.”

Seeing my grandson eagerly entering into this phenomena is extremely heartwarming. Sadly, as a culture, we have lost this sense of connection to our world. I am happy that Jonah, with the help of his parents (and of course his grandparents), is experiencing the wonder of being a human through his interaction with other species, rocks, soil and water around him, and we did bring a bit of that soil home with us. 🌱🌳🌲

# Little Free Library

The goal of the Little Free Library program is to, “promote literacy and the love of reading by building free book exchanges worldwide and to build a sense of community as we share skills, creativity and wisdom across generations.”

There are over 36,000 Little Free Library book exchanges around the world including our very own right here on Enright Ave! We have a nice selection of paperback novels, children’s books, and even a few video games

If you’re looking to learn something new, the little free library also has some interesting non-fiction. Come on down to 534 Enright and take a look; “Take a book, Return a book.”

For more information about the Little Free Library program, visit [www.littlefreelibrary.org](http://www.littlefreelibrary.org)



# Night at the Movies

By Eileen Schenk

The Ecovillage Green Group has initiated a documentary series about sustainability. We have identified three areas of interest and concern (plastics, trees, and water). We will be showing films that provide us with relevant information as well as identify pathways to solutions.

Film screenings will be on the 3rd Friday of the month from 7:30pm to 9:00pm at Imago Earth Center. There is no fee, and we will provide popcorn as well as non-alcoholic beverages. You may bring snacks and drinks to share. Please come with family and friends to learn about these important issues. The film series is being co-sponsored by Community Earth Alliance, Imago, the Sierra Club, and Environmental Community Organization (ECO).

# Neighborhood Block Watch

By Suellyn Shupe



A few years ago, Officer Dawson, community liaison officer from District 3, came to a neighborhood meeting to show us how to start a Block Watch. At that time, twenty two households signed up to communicate by email with Block Watch Captains on Enright and McPherson.

The purpose of the Block Watch is to promote community safety by maintaining open communication among neighbors, with the police, and city officials. I am one of four Captains who signed up to perform the communication aspect of this service, and the mailing

list currently has 36 recipients on Enright, McPherson, and Terry.

A few of the 36 actively keep watch and report suspicious activities. When people who are up to no good realize that they are being watched, they are less likely to carry out their intentions in our neighborhood. If they do, they are more likely to be arrested.

If you are not on the Block Watch list and would like to be, please email me ([suellyn7@yahoo.com](mailto:suellyn7@yahoo.com)) and I will add you to the list to receive periodic updates from District 3, as well as what’s going on in the neighborhood. 🌱🌳🌲

## Plastic in the 'Hood

By Deborah Jordan

As I was walking one day, I noticed a plastic Kroger bag hanging in my neighbor's tree. Usually I wouldn't think much about it, but today I thought how disposable plastic is an environmental and human health hazard. And we are overwhelmed by plastic.

These thoughts came after seeing the movie *Bag It*, the first in the Sustainability Film Series presented by the Enright Green Group (EGG). It was both disturbing and entertaining. To take one example of the "disposable" plastic problem, "60,000 plastic bags (are) consumed in the U.S. every 5 seconds. They are made using non-renewable resources, either petroleum or natural gas." (onegreenplanet.org) When we throw these bags away, they don't go away. Instead, they clog landfills, rivers, and oceans.

One young person who saw the film said it was, "scary." I reassured her we could do something about it. What can we do



to avoid disposable plastics? Consider Kroger, clerks used to offer paper or plastic, now it's all plastic unless you specifically ask for paper. Take individual action and bring reusable bags for purchases. If you forget your bag, ask for paper or see how much you can carry as Jeb Berrier in the documentary did, "commando style."

We can also take collective action and write to Mayor Cranley highlighting the plastic problem and asking for a surcharge on plastic bags. Other cities have done this or banned plastic bags altogether.

Write Kroger executives about kicking the plastic habit as Whole Foods has. After all, Kroger's is headquartered in Cincinnati. Talk to Matt Trokan from the Sierra Club to learn more. Stay tuned as EGG is thinking up a "Plastics are Forever" challenge. It could be fun and make things less scary for our children. 🌱🌱

## Strength in Community

(Continued from page 01)

Relationships can be inherently tricky, so in community the deepening of many relationships all at once is even more difficult. We all bring our own "baggage" with us to our relationships, but the challenge is to not shy away when someone sees inside of our "bag," or when we get a glimpse inside another's. When our baggage is exposed, it is an opportunity to practice compassion and compromise; two values that build trust. But we must have good communication and the ability to resolve our conflicts in a healthy way. Without compassion and compromise we are unable to deepen our relationships.

I committed to this community (and the relationships within it), because I know that I can only become aware of what I need to work on when my relationships reflect and expose my shortcomings. It is often difficult to see our own faults without the close trusting relationships that develop in an intentional community. I could easily make excuses or convince myself that the messy situations of life are someone else's fault. But with those I trust deeply I am able to more easily accept what they experience. I trust those who show me compassion when I am struggling, and those who are willing to compromise and truly understand my point of view.

The third difficulty that I see people having when joining a community is the commitment to sticking it out through the hard times. Just as in a family there are times that get tough; moods swing, buttons are pushed, wounds exposed, and boundaries crossed. Often our first reaction is a fight or flight reaction. However, both of these reactions are fear based and allow us a way to continue holding on to our deficiencies. What happens when we pause before we react? The feeling subsides and we begin to think clearly again, capable of feeling compassion and considering compromise. Those who are committed to sticking it out work through those reactions quicker and come to compassion and compromise with more authenticity. In that work we are offered the best gifts that living in community has to offer: the gifts of supported personal growth, trust, love, and being witnessed as our authentic selves. These aren't common gifts offered by neighbors who just happen to live nearby. These are gifts that become accessible by living intentionally within a community of people who are willing to share the contents of our lives (and bags) with each other.

I love what M. Scott Peck said, "There can be no vulnerability without risk; there can be no community without vulnerability; there can be no peace, and ultimately no life, without community." Do you still hide your baggage inside your home? Do you share yourself, messiness and all, with others? Do you experience compassion and compromise? Do you trust those in the community? If you are someone who is ready to deepen your relationships in the community, you could begin by engaging with your neighbors, joining a committee, attending a potluck or social event, or offering to help someone in need. Once the doors begin to open you will be given an opportunity to practice communication, and build trust. I encourage you to not shy away from the baggage we all carry. To open our bags and start cleaning them out is the best way to discover our authentic selves and enjoy who we are right now. 🌱🌱

## Events at Imago

### Spring Equinox Celebration



7pm Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>

Ahhh spring! Celebrate the arrival of the spring season with us. We will open our senses & hearts to the season by using traditions and rituals that have been practiced for hundreds of years. This is a fun way to connect to this exciting season of re-birth and activity.

### Honoring the Directions

7pm Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup> - 10pm Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>

Honoring "the directions" is a way of connecting with the seasons of our lives and respecting the earth and our ancestors. In this retreat, we'll explore the various directions and their qualities. With ritual, circle/group conversation, and art-making as our tools, we'll dive deep into our stories and their connection to the earth.

**Lodging:** There will be on-site camping (recommended). For folks coming from out-of-town, who prefer not to camp, accommodations can be suggested. Commuting is also welcomed.

For more info visit the Imago website ([www.imagoearth.org](http://www.imagoearth.org))

## News from the Farm Project

2016 CSA brochures are now available, pick yours up from the greenhouse today!

### Upcoming CSA Event

Join us for Open House on Saturday March 26th from 10am to 1pm at the green house (824 Enright Ave).

## Kroger Community Rewards

If you shop at Kroger and are not currently participating with another organization that is part of the Community Reward Program, consider signing up for the Enright Ridge Urban Ecovillage or our NPO number 72224.

The Ecovillage's CSA receives the rewards based upon a percentage of food type items purchased after you sign up. If you are currently signed up you need to sign up again this year, and again next year to continue to participate. Register online at [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com).

## Membership on the Ridge

(Continued from page 01)

In our small-group work we asked three important questions:

- What can we do together that we can't do alone?
- What can ERUEV do for its members? and
- What does ERUEV need from its members?



The results of our small-group work were both motivational and insightful, and will help us shape ecovillage membership to the needs and desires of its members. The responses to the first question make it very clear that we understand that we are, in fact, more effective when we act collectively. This collective action will allow us to provide the services and support for the needs of ERUEV members. And the responses for the last question couldn't have been more accurate. That is to say, we need the participation, commitment, skills, and energy of all of our members. We also need the forbearance, patience, authenticity, and love that are an integral part of intentional living.

Of course, our meeting wasn't all business. As a special treat we had the musical stylings of a talented trio that was dubbed the, "McPherson Three." Our newest members, Tim, Isabel, and George Gruenhagen shared their talents with us playing a set of amazing songs. Others shared their skills as well, graciously donating some unique and door prizes that added some fun and excitement to the event.

This all-member meeting was just the beginning of great things to come here at Enright Ridge. As our member involvement increases, so will our journey toward living intentionally and making a positive impact (both locally and globally) on our Earth community.

If you were unable to attend the all-member meeting, don't worry, we still want to hear from you! Contact Jamie if you are a renewing member that needs to pay dues for 2016. If you are interested in learning more about membership at Enright Ridge Urban Ecovillage, contact us at [membership@enrightecovillage.org](mailto:membership@enrightecovillage.org).

## Tip of the Month

By Sheryll Bruneault

When flushing and refilling your car radiator, be very careful with the leftover antifreeze. It is sweet-tasting, but toxic. Thirsty animals may drink it and die.

## Ecovillage Tour

The March ecovillage tour will be on Saturday, March 26 from 10am to 12pm, and starts at the Imago Earth Center. The tour is \$10 per person, free for members (regular or associate) and people they refer. If you or someone you know would like to get to know more about Enright Ridge Urban Ecovillage, it's a nice way to spend a morning.

Reservations Required:  
(513) 921-1932 or e-mail [jschenk@imagoearth.org](mailto:jschenk@imagoearth.org). For more information visit [www.enrightecovillage.org](http://www.enrightecovillage.org).

