



The Greenhouse decorated for the holidays, with a couple younger members of the Ecovillage enjoying the lights. Ken Reidel, below right, helped organize the event held last month.

A JOLLY HOLIDAY ON THE HILL

The seeds for the Holiday on the Hill at the Greenhouse event held on Dec. 4th and 5th began growing in mid-summer, with the fruit very evident in the abundance of wonderful things to see, to taste and to buy in the Ecovillage greenhouse during the annual Price Hill event!

Ken Reidel put in many, many hours to make this event a real success, planning down to the last detail. He also generously donated his own handmade items, including a beautiful quilt raffled off and won by Ecovillage treasurer Merrybeth McKee!

Other handmade items included stained glass ornaments, ceramic items and needle-felted animals. Ken supplied delicious cookies and candies, while Nate Reidel's pickled vegetables proved as popular as his father's yellow catsup, made with yellow tomatoes.

A group of Guatemalan women starting a cooperative, the "Tamaler@s del Norte", chose the greenhouse as the pick-up location for their pre-ordered tamales, drawing in extra visitors and creating an



occasional hectic scene as people jostled for their hot tamales!

The event raised over \$600. It was also the first time we used the "NextDoor" webring to advertise an event, which proved successful at bringing new folks to the Ecovillage.

JANUARY ECOVILLAGE TOUR

The December ecovillage tour will be on Saturday, Jan. 23, at 9am. The tour starts at the Imago Earth

Center. The cost is \$10 per person, or an hour of volunteer work. If you or someone you know would like to get to know more about the Enright or McPherson ecovillages, it's a nice way to spend a morning. Reservations required: (513) 921-1932 or email jschenk@imagoearth.org.

EVENTS

Soup Night and Store Tour

Are you curious about what's going on at the ecovillage store? Do you like soup and community fellowship? Then join us for some tasty, belly-warming soup at 6pm followed by a brief tour of the store at 7pm! You'll see what we've done, hear about what we plan to do next, and learn about what you can do to help with this community project! Meet at 6pm Wednesday, Jan.13, at 3632 West 8th St. Bring a bowl or mug, spoon, bread or side, and a beverage.

Martin Luther King Day, ERUEV Drivers Needed!

The annual MLK event at Music Hall (Monday, Jan. 18) promises to have fewer talking heads and more exciting performances this year, including Suellyn Shupe in the MLK Chorale. Several Ecovillagers thought it would be a great activity for younger residents who would enjoy NKU's Black Theater Ensemble, S.W.E.R.V.E. and Wordplay Cincy Scribes. There are at least a dozen Ecovillage youth, as well as kids who live nearby, who would love to attend but need transportation.

Can you help drive some of these future leaders? Contact Nancy Sullivan at her FB page or else by email, badgmur@gmail.com.

Imago's Continued Workshops on Community

Imago's EarthSpirit Rising project will bring Miriam Therese MacGillis, via Skype, to the Imago Earth Center on April 30. The workshop will run from 9:30am to 4:30pm.

MacGillis is the Director of Genesis Farm in New Jersey. For years they have offered workshops and internships to help people learn about our connection to the Earth. They are now moving toward working out ways that the Earth itself, through their land at Genesis Farm, can communicate with people interested in developing a deep connection with the Earth. In this Skype workshop Miriam will talk about our connection to Earth and how they are helping this land communicate with learners who come to the Farm.

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE VILLAGE

Go Solar and Save

Merry Beth McKee and Matt Trokan on Terry Street are the most recent ecovillage residents to go solar. It is hard to notice from the street but they installed six solar panels that will generate roughly 60% of their electricity. The panels have a 25-year warranty and are estimated to save 40 tons of CO2 over that timeframe. The 1.7 kw system installed by Dovetail Solar cost \$6.50 per watt and has an estimated 10 year pay back period. They also will receive federal and local tax credits for roughly 30% of the cost. "I wish we could have installed four more panels to cover 100% of our electricity. It would have brought down the cost per watt and been a shorter pay back, but we did not have the southern facing roof space," said MerryBeth. The solar panels will increase their property value as well.

In addition to the electricity cost savings, tax savings, and environmental benefits they will also be able to sell renewable energy credits (REC) or an electronic certificate identifying the location, year, and type of energy produced. Ohio is one of 16 states that have a renewable portfolio standard program that requires electric companies to meet benchmarks for renewable energy by buying or producing REC's. Currently, Ohio's program is frozen or stalled, which has bottomed out the REC market, but hopefully the program will be revived soon.

"It has never been a better time to go solar. We got a bid several years ago and the cost had dropped substantially. For us the time was right. Our next step is to sign up for Duke's new daytime rate which will pay us more for the energy we produce during the day and less for the energy we use at night," Matt said.

Making Your Home Energy Efficient

Housing is one of the main locations of our large energy footprint. This is due for one thing on the age our housing stock, which is 100 years old, and many of the structures were not insulated, nor were the windows and doors caulked to prevent drafts from the cold infiltrating into the structure. As we became aware of Climate Change and the importance of reducing our footprint, this problem became one that the home owner was motivated to correct.

In the 1980's independent contractors began offering insulation services. They used a variety of materials all claiming to be the most effective. There was foam, cellulose, fiberglass, rock wool, etc. Jim and Ei-

leen Schenk purchased their 9 room house in 1974. It was built in 1910. They soon became aware of the lack of insulation and began looking for a contractor and the most effective material. They chose the foam insulation. Over the years they had the house insulated three times. Technology kept improving and made many advancements.

Jerry Ropp, a neighborhood contractor, along with his late wife Jeanne Staas, insulated many of the 110 houses in the ecovillage. It is remarkable now to receive information from Duke Energy on how much energy has been saved in most recent years. One individual shared that he had his roof insulated. He had the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance come to the house and do a blow-door test before and after he had the work done, which they helped to finance. They estimated that he would reduce his energy consumption by 21%. Others have cut energy use by 50% by tightening their homes and insulating their roofs and walls and using more energy efficient lighting and appliances.

It is important to spread the word about effective ways to reduce your energy footprint. Combining do-it-yourself techniques like turning off appliances and lights when not in use, chalking around windows, doors and baseboards to stop leaking air. Climate Change is still a problem we are all facing. Locally the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance is a nonprofit organization that offers to do blow door tests of your home and helps finance energy conservation measures. Their phone number is (513) 621-4232

— Eileen Schenk for the Ecovillage Green Group

LIVING IN NATURE

It was good to notice the winter solstice, the longest night of the year, a few nights ago. A number of us sat in the dark with just a few candles lit. We imagined our kin the owls, who are out and about in the dark and even nest this time of year. And all the others who live near, like the woodchucks which hibernate in winter, unlike the owls.

It felt good to slow down, to accept and enjoy the darkness, but know that the sun now starts rising earlier and setting later, continuing until the summer solstice in June. Tuning in like this always helps me get grounded in the midst of the Christmas frenzy of advertising and buying.

On the solstice I renewed my resolution to slow down more often, opening the windows of my closed-in self, regularly reaching out with grateful curiosity through my senses and imagination to

the life of our place, this community of owls, woodchucks, deer, woods, creek watersheds, scudding clouds, pouring rain, brilliant sunlight. All part of the landscape that drains into the Ohio River or its tributaries. In the coming year I want to keep opening up and learning more from this land community that surrounds and supports me, instead of getting caught up so often in the built world that we've surrounded ourselves with. Happy new year!

— Bill Cahalan

DOGS IN THE 'HOOD

Bruno is a German Shepherd/hound mix with Kentucky roots and an Italian name. Bruno means brown, but he was actually named for Bruno Mars. Bruno (the dog) is one of 7 and hails from Boone County where he was adopted from a shelter by Lynne and Stephen. He is only 1 year old, big and strong, and definitely likes to play, take walks, and hike in the woods. For his first six months, he went to work at the NKU arena with Stephen but then got too big for the job.



Bruno knows how to relax when at home which is probably why he doesn't like vacuum cleaners or lawn mowers. He has learned commands like: fetch, chow (when time to eat) as opposed to the Italian "ciao" for hello or good bye, sit, and lay down. Two of his favorite dogs on Enright are Lulu (previously featured) and T-Rex (T-Rex have you been featured?) plus he gets along with children in the neighborhood. (Spud, the beagle, is the only one who seems to not get along with this newer dog on the block. Sorry Bruno, he's just jealous.) So, next time you see Bruno, say woof.

— Deborah Jordan (looking for dog tales)

TIP OF THE MONTH

Put a damp hand towel in the microwave oven and let it run on high for 2 minutes. It will create enough hot steam to wipe down the oven. The towel will be very hot so be careful if you use it to clean with. Wear oven mitts so you don't get burned.

