

# The Ridge Runner

December 2016  
Volume 11 Issue 12

## In This Issue

### Strength in CommUnity

Page 01 & 02

### Solar Energy

Page 01

### Living in Nature

Page 02

### Common Roots Events

Page 02

### Gas & Electric Aggregation

Page 02

### Imago Events

Page 03

### 2017 Exec. Board

Page 03

### YouTube Shorts

Page 03

### Farm Project News

Page 03

### Holiday on the Hill

Page 04

### Tip of the Month

Page 04

### Gratitude

Page 04

### Transitions

Page 04

### Ecovillage Tour Info

Page 04

## Strength in CommUnity

By Jamie Gaines

Enright Ridge Urban Ecovillage is a pretty amazing place for a variety of reasons: its proximity to downtown Cincinnati and its cultural assets, Imago's nature preserve and hiking trails, and of course the invaluable resource of its residents and members. The support of like-minded people dedicated to living simply, connecting with one another, and working to repair our damaged planet are just a few of the reasons many people want to move here and become involved. Indeed, the ecovillage is a wonderful community to live in. But sadly, many ecovillagers aren't able to actually *live* in the ecovillage; they simply spend the night.

And that's no wonder, it's all too easy to get caught up in the day-to-day rush that has us scrambling from appointment to appointment with hardly a moment to catch our breath. There are many things that draw our attention away from the life we are seeking to live. From work and meetings to sports practices and family events, we can have a lot of obligations outside of the ecovillage. Couple this with the notion that Enright Ridge is just a non-profit that we volunteer our time for, and it's easy to give our lives in the ecovillage a low priority.

Unfortunately, in mainstream culture work performed without earning money (i.e. volunteer work) is often looked at with less esteem than paid work. Sure ecovillage is unpaid, hard work, and (sadly) under appreciated. But should we really be referring to ecovillagers as "volunteers?" Sure we are not compensated with U.S. currency for many of the efforts we put forth in the ecovillage, but do we receive nothing in return? *(Continued on page 02)*

## Solar Energy – It really is worth doing!

By Jim Schenk

Solar energy really does make sense. The cost of solar has dropped in the past 10 years. There is a non-profit organization promoting solar called Solarize Cincy. ([www.solarizecincy.org](http://www.solarizecincy.org)) There is the 30% federal discount (that may not be renewed after December 31st) plus \$2,000 off through Solarize Cincinnati. If you go on their website and put in your address they will tell you if your roof would be good for solar.

We have solar panels. They are covering all our electric needs. We will have it totally paid for in 9 years, which is almost up. After that our electric is free for years to come. It is well worth checking out, especially before the new year!



# Living in Nature

By Bill Cahalan

I'm walking north on Enright in the late afternoon. I see two big red oak trees shimmering in the breeze a few hundred yards ahead, soaking up the sunlight from the west. I have watched their lush green all summer and now the leaves are bronze. The aliveness of the shimmering trees seems to reach out to me. I pause and vividly imagine their breathing in concert with mine, and with the breathing of countless animals, plants and people. I can also sense the trees absorbing the sun's energy, and their roots drawing up water and nutrients.

I believe all plants, animals, microbes, natural communities, the Earth itself, our solar system and beyond are actively, with their own kind of intelligence, ordering and maintaining themselves through cycles of growth and decline. They eventually dissolve, their parts scattering and gathering again in new forms. So just as with fellow humans, we can imaginatively enter into these non-human lives. This is empathy which early humans learned to enable their survival as hunters, gatherers and fishers...as well as to feed their sense of wonder and mystery.

But these days, to avoid losing this ancient skill, I have to regularly get out of my house and out of my shell, opening myself to the world, often stopping and just gawking for a while. When I move through the landscape in this way I'm not looking for the physical exercise I get from my brisk walking. This kind of alert walking not only helps me tend the gardens, yard, and woods well, but seems vital to living joyfully in communion with the family of life here on the ridge and beyond.

## Upcoming Events @ Common Roots

**Open Mic Night**  
Every Thursday!

**Holiday on the Hill**  
December 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Hip Hop Showcase**  
December 9<sup>th</sup>

**Dave Hawkins &  
Peg Buchanan**  
December 16<sup>th</sup>

**Roaring 20's  
Cocktail Party**  
December 17<sup>th</sup>

**Samsara  
Music Company**  
December 23<sup>rd</sup>

# Gas and Electric Aggregation

By Jim Schenk



Now that cooler temperatures have arrived and we begin to heat our homes, it is important to consider where we get our power. Being mindful of our energy consumption is not only good for our planet, but can bring some relief to our pocketbooks as well.

We just received a letter about enrollment for Cincinnati's aggregation program for gas and electric. We are already enrolled, as we've found it is the best way to save money. A lot of companies send us info by mail or come around and try to sell us a better deal. There really isn't one. The city, because it has a large number of customers, is able to negotiate a really good deal for those who belong.

The other great thing is the energy company the city chose is a 100% green company. All of its electric is generated by alternative energy sources. If you have selected another company, I would strongly recommend returning to the aggregate program. Google "Cincinnati Aggregation

Frequently Asked Questions," for more information.

# Strength in CommUnity

(Continued from page 01)

Yes, the ecovillage happens to be organized as a 501(c)(3) non profit for legal purposes, but Enright Ridge is more than that. The ecovillage is a community formed to have a high degree of social cohesion and teamwork; in other words, an *intentional* community. The Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) believes intentional communities are, "pioneers in sustainable living, personal and cultural transformation, and peaceful social evolution." Much like a home owner that doesn't get paid to do routine maintenance or improvements on their home, we don't simply volunteer our time; we are **stakeholders** in our community. We receive the benefit of a safer community, connection with our neighbors, support from one another to live a life we know is more fulfilling, and so much more.

So, how can we make the shift that so many of us yearn for? How can we achieve the simple lifestyle that allows us to abandon the stressful hustle and bustle of the "rat race?" How can we eliminate distractions in our lives that prevent us from focus on the things that are truly meaningful to us? These are complex questions that are difficult to answer, but there is hope. Beginning in January we'll be starting "Community Café," which is an informal gathering over coffee or tea to discuss the issues we face that cause us to not be present in our lives. We'll discuss ways we can be more intentional in our decisions, and provide each other support in these life-changing transformations. We can achieve so much more together than we can alone. Stay tuned for more information!

## Imago Events

### Upcycled Holidays

Saturday, December 10 (1p - 3p)

\$15 (Kids 12 & Under Free)



The amazing Adrian is back to lead another wonderful workshop of holiday cheer made out of "trash". Adrian brings a room full of materials and ideas and you use your creativity to make beautiful gifts and holiday decorations. Bring a homemade and artsy touch to your holidays. Register at [imagoearth.org](http://imagoearth.org)

*Adrian Hawk is an artist, art educator and*

*Imago board member. Adrian makes and teaches art that is planet friendly focusing on reusing materials and being inspired by nature. Adrian's workshops fill up fast, so don't delay!*

## Winter Solstice Celebration

Friday, December 16 (6p - 8p)

Join Imago for our most popular celebration, the Winter Solstice! We will reflect on the gifts of the past year and look forward to the coming year and the return of the sun.

We'll start with a potluck at 6:00 followed by the celebration at 7:00. The celebration involves reflection, storytelling, art-making and a history of Solstice celebrations from around the world. Families welcome.



## 2017 Executive Board

Enright Ridge Urban Ecovillage saw many exciting changes in 2016 including the opening of Common Roots, acquiring the "Ice House" property at the corner of Price & Enright, and the adoption of ERUEV's new Membership Policy. These changes were made possible by the leadership of the 2016 Board.

More big changes are in store for 2017 including the new ERUEV Executive Board. **Jamie Gaines** will assume the role of **President**. **Kim Brown** will continue to serve as **Vice President**. **MerryBeth McKee** will stay on as **Treasurer** And one of ERUEV's newest members, **Jane Gensic**, will step into the role of **Secretary**.

The Executive Board, as well as the Chairs of ERUEV's standing committees, are committed to further affect positive change in the ecovillage by continuing to improve communication, our organizational structure, and documentation. The 2017 Board will also focus on ecovillage finances, and improving ERUEV's business ventures. Stay tuned for more exciting advancements in 2017!

## YouTube Shorts

By Isabel Gruenhagen

The Eco Green Group (EGG) has brought several films with ecological themes to our community. We will continue to do these film series, but for those of you who simply can't wait for the next film (or who have trouble making it to the film screenings), we have a solution! Starting in December, keep an eye on your inboxes. Each week, the EGG committee will send out an email with a few short ecological videos from YouTube. These will range from TED Talks and documentaries to humorous ads and kid-friendly videos. Watch at your own leisure, share with your family and friends, and maybe even learn a thing or two!

## News From the Farm Project

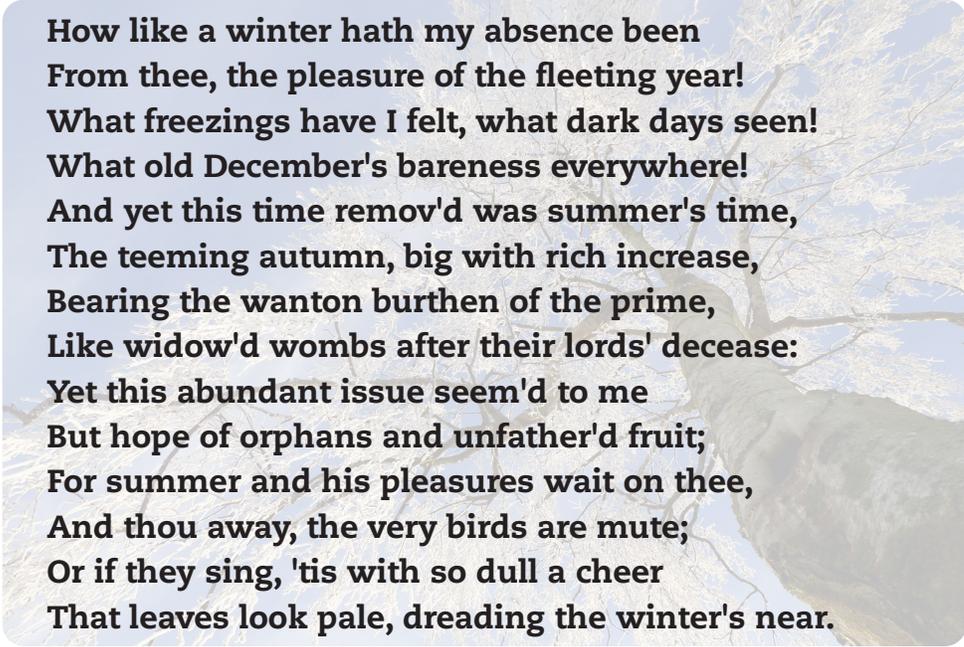
As the 2016 season has drawn to a close, I was thinking about the specific vegetables I have enjoyed during the May to October season: the different types of lettuces, beets (and their green tops), kale, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, ground cherries, potatoes, squash, and a variety of herbs. I also used CSA-grown cabbage to make my first batch of homemade sauerkraut with onions, and caraway seeds. I'd like to attribute how well it turned out to my culinary skills, but I know having the freshest, locally-grown produce didn't hurt! I look forward to the spring and the beginning of the 2017 growing season.

Although the 2016 season has come to a close, the Farm Project Committee is not resting on its laurels. Planning for the 2017 season is well underway, including the rebranding of the CSA. The Farm Project is seeking to become more diversified and accessible, and fresh. The rebranding team is off to a great start and hopes to make an announcement by the middle of February. Stay tuned for more information!

Thank you to all those who purchased their vegetables at the Eighth & Enright Farmer's Market on Saturdays during the summer. We appreciate your support for ERUEV's Farm Project's Market project and hope you enjoyed eating locally as much as I did. We look forward to offering more vendors and variety in 2017!

## How Like a Winter Hath My Absence Been

By William Shakespeare



**How like a winter hath my absence been  
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!  
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!  
What old December's bareness everywhere!  
And yet this time remov'd was summer's time,  
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,  
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,  
Like widow'd wombs after their lords' decease:  
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me  
But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit;  
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,  
And thou away, the very birds are mute;  
Or if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer  
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.**

## Transitions

Josie Watson recently accepted a position with Santa Maria Community Services. She is working in their youth program in Lower Price Hill.

Welcome new ERUEV residents Amy and David Bentley. They had not planned to move out of their Northern Kentucky home for years- until they discovered the house for sale at 500 Enright at the end of the street! Their young children will find lots of company on the street and we'll probably see their assortment of canines walking, as well.

Ross Rattanasena came to Cincinnati to work on the presidential campaign and lived at Suellyn Shupe's house for ten weeks. He's returned to D.C., but we may see him again during the midterm elections. He did an amazing job as an organizer.

## Tip of the Month

Winter is coming! If you haven't already, now is the time to winterize your home. There are several quick and easy solutions for making your home nice and toasty without breaking the bank!

Using energy efficient curtains is one of the easiest methods. On the south side of your home, keep them open on sunny days to achieve solar gain, and close them all at night.

You can also contact Duke Energy to see if you qualify for the "Weatherization Assistance Program."

## Gratitude

Many thanks to Ken Reidel and Rikki Dennis for teaching two excellent classes in silk scarf dyeing. You may have seen some of the gorgeous scarves at the Holiday on the Hill event.

Thanks to Suellyn Shupe for opening her house as a "campaign station" for three weekends during election season. Many people had an opportunity to experience the Ecovillage as a result!

## Contribute to the RidgeRunner!

Do you have an idea for an article, something to share with the community, a community photo, or a funny comic that you've created? Then we want YOU to contribute to the RidgeRunner! 99.9% of the content in the RidgeRunner is created by our residents and members. The RidgeRunner is an excellent way to share ideas with the rest of the ecovillage which disseminates information, encourages dialogue, provides support, and compels action!

Don't have a full article, but just an idea for a feature or article? We're looking to hear your ideas as well! RidgeRunner staff would be happy to help articulate your thoughts. Send your idea or submission to:  
[jschenk@imagoearth.org](mailto:jschenk@imagoearth.org).



## Ecovillage Tour

The December ecovillage tour will be on Saturday, December 24, 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).



P.O. Box 5206  
Cincinnati, OH 45205  
[www.enrightecovillage.org](http://www.enrightecovillage.org)